

CHAPTER 13

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO TORAH

In order to fully understand the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, you **MUST** understand the covenant that God made with Abraham. Most Christians do not realize the significance of the covenant that God made with Abraham. Furthermore, most Christians do not see the covenant that God made with Abraham as being relevant for today. In fact, you cannot understand how the Old Testament is so intertwined and connected to the New Testament unless you understand the covenant that God made Abraham. You cannot understand how end-time Bible prophecy is so strongly associated with major world events like the Arab/Israeli peace process and the fight over Jerusalem unless you understand the covenant that God made with Abraham. The covenant that God made with Abraham is an **EVERLASTING** covenant (*Genesis 17:7*). The covenant that God made with Abraham is the gospel of the Kingdom of God (*Galatians 3:8*). In this chapter, we will study the importance of the covenant that God made with Abraham. In doing so, we will discover that the Gospel of the Kingdom of God is the Gospel according to Torah!!!

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM WAS MADE WITH JESUS

The complete redemptive plan of God is fulfilled according to the covenant that God made

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with Abraham. For this reason, Abraham is called the father of our faith (*Romans 4:16*). Furthermore, God tells us that we are to look unto (understand the covenant that God made with) Abraham our father and Sarah which bore us. In *Isaiah 51:1-4* it is written:

"Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. For the Lord shall comfort Zion ... Hearken unto me, my people: and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a TORAH shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people "

In *Genesis 12:1-3, 7*, God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees and promised that if He would follow after God that God would make him a great nation and give him a land. In *Genesis 17:1-8*, God reaffirmed His covenant with Abraham as it is written:

"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked to him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God "

The covenant that God made with Abraham was made with Jesus at the same time. In *Galatians 3:16* it is written:

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ "

All believers who have accepted Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior are heirs of the covenant that God made with Abraham. In *Galatians 3:29* it is written:

"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise "

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SEVEN PROMISES OF THE COVENANT THAT GOD MADE WITH ABRAHAM

1. Exceedingly fruitful (*Genesis 17:6*)
2. Nations shall come out of Abraham (*Genesis 17:6*)
3. Kings shall come out of Abraham (*Genesis 17:6*)
4. The covenant is with the seed of Abraham (*Genesis 17:7*)
5. God's covenant with Abraham is everlasting (*Genesis 17:7*)
6. The seed of Abraham will possess the land of Canaan (*Genesis 17:8*)
7. The possession of the land of Canaan is an everlasting possession (*Genesis 17:8*)

These seven promises have never been fulfilled in their FULLNESS. Even so, the covenant that God made with Abraham will be fulfilled BOTH physically and spiritually. Since the covenant that God made with Abraham is everlasting and eternal, these promises are still valid today and will be fulfilled through the events of the second coming of Jesus and the 1,000 year Messianic Age.

FROM ABRAHAM TO ISAAC TO JACOB

From Abraham, the covenant was passed to Isaac. In *Genesis 26:1-4*, it is written:

"And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed "

From Abraham, the covenant that God made with him was passed to Isaac and then to Jacob. In *Genesis 28:10, 13-14* it is written:

"And Jacob went out of Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land

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whereon you lie, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shall spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed "

Later, God reiterated His promise to Jacob and changed his name to Israel. In *Genesis 35:9-12* it is written:

"And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, Your name is Jacob: your name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be your name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of your loins "

FROM ABRAHAM TO ISAAC TO JACOB TO THE CHILDREN OF JACOB

Jacob had twelve sons who became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel. In *Genesis 49:1-28*, Jacob blesses his twelve sons. In *Genesis 49:28* it is written:

"All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them "

THE FULL BLESSING OF ABRAHAM WAS GIVEN TO EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH

One of the twelve sons of Jacob was Joseph. The blessing of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is bestowed upon the grandsons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh. Jacob adopts the grandsons of Joseph and gives them the blessing of the covenant that God made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and they are given the rights of the first born son and the fruitful fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham. In *Genesis 48:3-6*, it is written:

"And Jacob said unto Joseph, God almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an

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everlasting possession. 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, they shall be mine. And thy issue, which thou begetteth after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance "

Reuben and Simeon are the first born sons of Jacob. The double portion blessing of the inheritance belongs to the first born son. Not only is Jacob adopting Ephraim and Manasseh into his family by giving them his blessing, but they are being given the double portion blessing of the firstborn. Jacob's blessing upon Ephraim and Manasseh is recorded in *Genesis 48:13-16* as it is written:

"And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. 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. And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth "

EPHRAIM IS A PROPHETIC PICTURE OF THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

Generally speaking, Ephraim is a spiritual picture of Christianity. More specifically, Ephraim is a spiritual picture of the bride of Christ. How is this so?

When blessing Ephraim and Manasseh, Jacob crossed his hands while imparting the blessing. Normally, the blessing of the father is given with the right hand and placed upon the oldest child. The left hand would be placed upon the younger child. The right hand is symbolic of strength and authority. However, when Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh, Jacob gave the blessing of the right hand to Ephraim, the younger, and the blessing of the left hand to Manasseh, the older. In doing so, Jacob crossed his hands when he imparted the blessing. The cross is symbolic of Christianity.

Ephraim is a spiritual picture of the bride of Christ. The word Ephraim is the Strong's word 669. The Hebrew word, **Ephraim**, means "**double fruit**". Being exceedingly fruitful was a promise that God made to Abraham concerning his seed (*Genesis 17:6*). Being exceedingly

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fruitful can only be accomplished through the help of the Holy Spirit. Jesus prayed that His followers would be exceedingly fruitful (*John 15:8*). All believers who accept Jesus as Messiah and are exceedingly fruitful will be the bride of Christ. These believers would consist of both physical Jews and non-Jews and would include Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David.

Because there are many misplaced teachings which exist concerning Ephraim, let me take this opportunity to say who is Ephraim and what is not Ephraim. Ephraim is a SPIRITUAL PICTURE of a characteristic of the bride of Christ. Ephraim is NOT the following:

1. Ephraim is NOT associated with British Israelism
2. Ephraim is NOT associated with white supremacy
3. Ephraim is NOT associated with replacement theology
4. Ephraim does NOT represent the WHOLE of Christianity

Ephraim is a spiritual picture of the Bride of Christ who is exceedingly fruitful for the kingdom of heaven. This would consist of those believers who are born Jewish and those believers who are not born Jewish.

Those Christians who are not exceedingly fruitful have the characteristic of Manasseh. Manasseh is the Strong's word 4519. The Hebrew word, **Manasseh** means "**forgetful**". Manasseh is prophetic of those believers who "*forget*" to love God with all their heart, mind, soul and strength and do not grow to spiritual maturity and are not exceedingly fruitful for the kingdom of God. Manasseh is a spiritual picture of those believers who will be in heaven but will not be the Bride of Christ. Ephraim is a spiritual picture of those believers who will be in heaven and will be the Bride of Christ.

HOW ARE EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH A SPIRITUAL PICTURE OF CHRISTIANITY?

1. The blessing of Ephraim was imparted upon him whenever Jacob crossed his hands (*Genesis 48:16*)
2. Ephraim was ADOPTED into Jacob's family. Believers in Yeshua are adopted into the family of God (*Galatians 4:4-6, Romans 8:14-17, 22-23*)
3. Ephraim is the Strong's word 669 and means, "*double fruit*". God promised Abraham that his descendants would be EXCEEDINGLY FRUITFUL (*Genesis 17:6*)
 - a) This is a fulfillment of those believers who are exceedingly fruitful in the Kingdom of

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God through the help of the Holy Spirit and will be the bride of Christ (*John 15:1, 5, 8*)

b) Ephraim is the masculine word in Hebrew for the female equivalent Ephratah. Ephratah is another name for Bethlehem and is the place where Jesus was born (*Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:1-6*)

4. Ephraim is a term for the Northern Kingdom of Israel who forsook God's Torah. So has Christianity. (*Hosea 8:12*)
5. Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, instituted a substitute place of worship (Dan and Bethel) rather than Jerusalem (*I Kings 12:29, Deuteronomy 16:16*). Christianity worships in a church rather than a synagogue where Jesus worshiped.
6. Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, instituted substitute holidays rather than observing the dates and times of the Biblical holidays that God gave in Leviticus 23 (*I Kings 12:32-33*). Christianity has adopted Christmas and Easter from Roman Mythraism rather than keeping the Biblical holidays that God gave in Leviticus 23.
7. Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, instituted a substitute priesthood rather than have priests from the tribe of Levi (*I Kings 12:31*). Christianity allows pastors and priests to be ministers of the sheep of God who are not anointed and called by God into their office of ministry.
8. Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, mixed paganism with the true worship of the God of Israel and called it the true worship of the God of Israel. God called this the golden calf system of worship (*I Kings 12:29*). Christianity has mixed Roman and Babylonian practices and beliefs with the true worship of the God of Israel and calls it the true worship of the God of Israel.
9. Just like Ephraim (a picture of Christianity) was born in Egypt (the world), God's Bride (a remnant of believers in Jesus) are called to leave the Babylonian system of religious worship of God. (*Genesis 48:3-6, Zechariah 2:7, Revelation 18:4*)

DELIVERANCE FROM EGYPT ON BEHALF OF GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

At Mount Sinai, the covenant that God made with Abraham was made with the twelve tribes of Jacob, the children of Israel. In *Exodus 19:1, 3* it is written:

"In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day, came they into the wilderness of Sinai ... And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel "

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God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt because of the covenant that He made with Abraham. In *Genesis 15:13-14* it is written:

"And he (God) said unto Abram, Know of a surety that your seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance "

God called Moses on behalf of the covenant that God made with Abraham. In *Exodus 2:23-25* it is written:

"And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them "

Moses delivered the children of Israel from Egypt by the mighty hand of God. After God delivered the children of Israel from Egypt and the rulership of Pharaoh, God instructed Moses to take the children of Israel to Mount Sinai. In *Exodus 3:1, 11-12* it is written:

"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb ...And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And he said, Certainly I will be with you: and this shall be a token unto you, that I have sent you: When you have brought forth the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God upon this mountain "

In *Exodus 19:1-3*, Moses brought the house of Jacob, the children of Israel, to Mount Sinai to serve God.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM WAS MADE WITH ABRAHAM'S DESCENDANTS AT MOUNT SINAI

Many people view the covenant that God made with Abraham and the Torah that God gave to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai as two independent events and two separate covenants. In reality, they are the same covenant. The distinction is that God first made His covenant only with Abraham and Jesus. Physically, the Torah that God gave at Mount Sinai was given to the

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descendants of Abraham just as God had promised (*Genesis 17:7*). Spiritually, the Torah that God gave at Mount Sinai was given to the believers in Jesus as Messiah (*Galatians 3:29*). Physically, the Torah that was given at Mount Sinai was not only made with the children of Israel who were present but also with all future generations. In *Deuteronomy 29:14-15* it is written:

"Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath; But with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day "

Spiritually, the Torah that was given at Mount Sinai was also given to all those who accept Jesus as Messiah. In *I Corinthians 10:1-4* it is written:

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea: And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ "

Physically, at Mount Sinai, God desired to make His people a kingdom of priests. In *Exodus 19:5-6* it is written:

"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant (the covenant that God made with Abraham), then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel "

Spiritually, God desires to make all believers a nation of priests. In *I Peter 2:5, 9* it is written:

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ ... But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people ... "

Physically, the Torah that was given at Mount Sinai was made with the descendants of Abraham just as God had promised Abraham (*Genesis 17:7*). In reality, God's Torah has existed from the beginning of time. God's Word is His Torah. Jesus is the living Torah (*John 1:1-2*). The tree of life in the Garden of Eden was the Torah (*Proverbs 3:1, 18*). The Torah, the Tree of Life, will be given in the future for the healing of the nations (*Isaiah 2:2-3, Revelation 22:1-2*)

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THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL BECOME A NATION AT MOUNT SINAI

As we just discussed, God called Moses on behalf of the covenant that God made with Abraham (*Genesis 15:1-5, 13-14, 18-21, Exodus 2:23-25, Exodus 3:15-17*) to deliver the children of Israel from the bondage of the Egyptians. Since the Torah of God has existed from the beginning of time and because the tree of life in the Garden of Eden was the Torah and because Abraham kept the Torah of God (*Genesis 26:5*), the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai to the children of Israel was NOT a separate covenant from the covenant that God made with Abraham. It was a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham that his descendants would fulfill the covenant that God made with Abraham.

If these things are true, then what was the significance of the giving of the Torah to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai? The significance of the giving of God's Torah to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai was that the covenant that God made with Abraham would be extended to the descendants of Abraham and they would become a HOLY NATION UNTO GOD. Never before in history did God make a covenant with a specific NATION of people. In *Exodus 19:5-6* it is written:

"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a HOLY NATION ... "

GOD BETROTHED HIMSELF TO ISRAEL AT MOUNT SINAI

At Mount Sinai, God betrothed Himself to the children of Israel and entered into a marriage contract with them. In *Jeremiah 2:1-3* it is written:

"Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus says the Lord; I remember thee, the kindness of your youth, the love of your espousals, when you went after me in the wilderness, in a land, that was not sown. Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the firstfruits of his increase: all that devour him shall offend, evil shall come upon them, says the Lord "

There are two stages to the Biblical wedding. The first stage is betrothal and the second stage is the consummation of the marriage. During betrothal, you are legally married to your bride but

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you do not physically dwell with her.

At Mount Sinai, God betrothed Himself to Israel and entered into a marriage contract with her. In order for the marriage to be legal, both the bride and the groom must agree to the terms of the marriage. The terms of the marriage are stated in a **marriage document** known in Hebrew as a **ketubah**. When God betrothed Himself to Israel at Mount Sinai, the **ketubah** was seen as being the **Torah**. The children of Israel accepted the terms of the condition of the marriage by saying the words, "**I do**". In *Exodus 19:8* it is written:

"And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do..."

The terms and the conditions of the marriage including the blessing for obedience and the curses for disobedience is stated in *Leviticus 26* and *Deuteronomy 28*. In order to understand the covenant that God made with Abraham, we need to understand the blessings and the curses and the consequences of both actions.

The Biblical wedding that God gave to the Jewish people will always have two witnesses. They are called the friends of the bridegroom. One is assigned to the groom and one is assigned to the bride. Spiritually, the two witnesses that Jesus is the bridegroom and the Messiah are the Torah and the Prophets. Jesus spoke to His disciples that the Torah, Prophets and Writings are a witness that He is the Messiah (*Luke 24:36, 44*).

When God betrothed Himself to Israel at Mount Sinai, Moses was seen as one of the two witnesses whose primary job was to escort the bride (Israel) to meet the groom under the *chuppah* (Mount Sinai). In *Exodus 19:17*, Moses is seen escorting Israel to **Mount Sinai** which is a type of **chuppah** as it is written:

"And Moses brought forth (escorted) the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount "

WHAT IS THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF BETROTHAL?

The marriage of the children of Israel to God at Mount Sinai is prophetic of when God will marry His spiritual bride in the spiritual *chuppah* which is heaven. Spiritually speaking, everybody who accepts Jesus the Messiah into their heart and life by trusting in His shed blood on the tree/cross for the forgiveness of their sins is betrothed to Jesus, our bridegroom. Until the time of the resurrection of the dead and the marriage supper of the Lamb, we are legally married

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to Jesus, our bridegroom, but we do not physically dwell with Him.

The *ketubah* for all believers who accept Jesus into their heart and life is the Torah written upon our heart. This is the New Covenant (*Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 10:15-16*). During the time of the second coming of Jesus, the Bride of Christ will enter into the second stage of the Biblical wedding and will physically dwell with Jesus during the Messianic age and for all eternity.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GIVING OF THE TORAH AT MOUNT SINAI

The Torah that was given to the NATION of Israel at Mount Sinai is foundational for understanding the rest of the Bible and the covenant that God made with Abraham. We will now examine the significance of this event.

1. At Mount Sinai, God betrothed Himself to Israel. This is the first of the two steps in marriage (*Jeremiah 2:2-3*)
2. God gave the Ten Commandments
3. God established and instituted the Priesthood
4. God commanded the building of the Tabernacle
5. God gave instructions concerning the Sabbath and Biblical festivals
6. God gave a sacrificial system to atone for the sins of the people so that they could come near to God
7. God gave a religious and civil court system

a) The HIGH PRIEST was to be the ruler over the religious court system. His duty was to give rulings for the people based upon God's Torah (*Deuteronomy 17:8-11, Daniel 7:13-14*)

Spiritually, Jesus is THE HIGH PRIEST of God (*Hebrews 3:1, 4:14*)

b) The KING was to be ruler over the civil court. The king was to know God's Torah (*Deuteronomy 17:14-20*)

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JESUS AND HIS BRIDE WILL BE KINGS AND PRIESTS ON THE EARTH

1. Jesus is the KING of all the earth (*Zechariah 14:9, Philippians 2:9-11*) and over the Torah based government of God during the Messianic Age (*Isaiah 9:6*)

Jesus is BOTH HIGH Priest and KING before God (*Hebrews 3:1, 4:14, 7:1-4, 21-22, Revelation 19:11,13, 15-16*)

2. God's Bride is BOTH kings and priests before God (*Exodus 19:5-6, I Peter 2:5, 9, Revelation 5:10*)

God's Bride will rule and reign with Jesus during the Messianic Age and for eternity as kings having authority over the people on the earth and making judgments as priests according to the Torah (*Isaiah 2:2-4*)

As we discussed in Chapter 12, the Torah is a blueprint of heaven. Therefore, everything that God gave the children of Israel at Mount Sinai is a blueprint of heaven and a spiritual picture of eternity. The tabernacle is a blueprint of heaven (*Exodus 25:8-9, Hebrews 8:5, Revelation 21:1-3*). The Sabbath, feast days, and new moon are a blueprint of heaven and a spiritual picture of eternity (*Colossians 2:16-17, Zechariah 14:16, Isaiah 66:22-23, Revelation 21:1*)

THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM IS CONDITIONAL UPON OBEDIENCE TO GOD AND HIS TORAH

God promised Abraham that he would be the father of kings and nations who would be exceedingly fruitful and who would inherit a promised land (*Genesis 17:1-8*). In order to fulfill this promise that God made to Abraham, it was conditional upon God having an obedient people who would keep His Torah. God wanted His people to keep His commandments (Torah) and love

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God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. In *Deuteronomy 10:12-14* it is written:

"And now Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul. To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? "

In order for God to have a nation of people who would be kings and priests before Him and who would inherit the land that God promised Abraham, it was dependent upon God's people keeping His Torah with all their heart, mind, soul and strength. In *Deuteronomy 4:5-9* it is written:

"Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear of these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments SO RIGHTEOUS AS ALL THIS TORAH, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons "

The terms and the conditions of God's covenant with Abraham expressed through the giving of the Torah to the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai can be seen in *Leviticus 26* and *Deuteronomy 28*. The conditional aspect of obedience to the Torah in order to receive the blessings can be seen in *Deuteronomy 28:1-2* as it is written:

"And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God "

The connection with God fulfilling the covenant that He made with Abraham with God's people being obedient to His Torah can also be seen in *Leviticus 26:1-12*. In this scripture passage, we see the following:

IF you walk in my statutes and keep my commandments and do them (*Leviticus 26:3*) ... then God will give:

- a) Rain in due season (*Leviticus 26:4*)
- b) Peace in the land (*Leviticus 26:6*)
- c) Victory over enemies (*Leviticus 26:7*)
- d) Fruitful and multiply (*Leviticus 26:9*)

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- e) Establish God's Covenant (*Leviticus 26:9*)
- f) God setting His tabernacle among us (*Leviticus 26:11, Revelation 21:2-3*)
- g) You will be called my people (*Leviticus 26:12, Revelation 21:2-3*)

God setting His tabernacle among us and being called "**His people**" is the terminology to describe God dwelling with His Bride (*Leviticus 26:11-12 = Revelation 21:1-3*)

GOD PROMISED ABRAHAM A LAND FOR HIS PEOPLE

The fullness of the covenant that God made with Abraham was God's people dwelling in the promised land, keeping the Torah and God dwelling with His people. When God made a covenant with Abraham, God promised Abraham the land from the Euphrates to the Nile as His inheritance including the land of Canaan (*Genesis 15:18-21, Genesis 17:8*)

THE PUNISHMENT FOR DISOBEDIENCE WAS DISPERSION INTO THE NATIONS

If God's people were disobedient to God and disobedient to keeping the Torah of God, they would be punished by being scattered in all the nations of the earth. In *Deuteronomy 28:15, 36-37, 45* it is written:

"But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee ... The Lord shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone. And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee ... Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenest not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee "

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GOD WARNS AGAINST ADOPTING THE WAYS OF THE OTHER NATIONS

God also instructed the children of Israel that when they entered into the land of Canaan that they were to totally destroy the culture of the Canaanite people. In *Deuteronomy 7:1-5* it is written:

"When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them: Neither shall thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly, But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire "

In the scripture passage, God warned the people to not mix paganism with the worship of the God of Israel. In the previous section, we saw that God said that the punishment for disobeying His Torah was dispersion into the nations of the earth. When these things happened, the covenant that God made with Abraham could not be fulfilled until God's people turned back to the Torah and would keep it with all their heart, mind, soul and strength. If God's people would repent unto God when they are scattered in the nations of the earth, God promised to redeem His people and bring them back to the promised land and fulfill the promise that He made with Abraham. In *Deuteronomy 30:1-5* it is written:

"And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers "

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THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL ARE COMMANDED TO POSSESS THE PROMISED LAND

God commanded the children of Israel through the word of Moses to possess the land that God had promised Abraham. In *Deuteronomy 1:3, 5, 8* it is written:

"And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them ... On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this Torah saying ... Behold I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them "

TWELVE SPIES SEARCH OUT THE LAND OF PROMISE

In *Numbers 13:1-17*, God commanded Moses to search the land of Canaan which God had promised the children of Israel through the covenant that He made with Abraham. A summary of the events are as follows:

1. God sent twelve spies, one from each tribe to spy out the land that God promised Abraham to possess (*Numbers 13:1-17*)
2. Only Joshua and Caleb came back with news that the children of Israel could possess the land that God had promised
 - a) Joshua was from the tribe of Ephraim (Northern Kingdom)
 - b) Caleb was from the tribe of Judah (Southern Kingdom)
3. Ten spies came back with an evil report but Joshua and Caleb came back with a good report (*Numbers 13:17-20, 25-33*)
 - a) Spiritually, the ten spies = carnal believers with natural eyes (*Numbers 14:20-23*)
 - b) Joshua/Caleb = mature believers with spiritual eyes (*Numbers 14:24*)
4. God's punishment for an evil report was traveling 40 years in the wilderness. One year for each day of searching (*Numbers 14:26-34*)

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GOD COMMANDS JOSHUA TO CONQUER THE PROMISED LAND

When God commanded Joshua and the children of Israel to enter the promised land, God reiterated to Joshua the promise that He made with Abraham. In *Joshua 1:1-4* it is written:

"Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast "

THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL ONLY POSSESS PART OF THE PROMISED LAND

Following the death of Joshua, the children of Israel possessed (in part) the land that God promised (*Joshua 21:43-45*). The children of Israel did not possess the FULLNESS of the land that God promised Abraham. God promised Abraham that His descendants would possess the land from the Nile to the Euphrates (*Genesis 15:18-21*) including the land of Canaan (*Genesis 17:8*).

Since the promise that God made with Abraham is an EVERLASTING covenant (*Genesis 17:7-8*), then the covenant that God made with Abraham is yet to be fulfilled and therefore, is still valid today. In order to understand the Biblical background and solution to the unsettling events in the Middle East between the Arabs and the Israeli's and the battle over the control of Jerusalem, you need to understand the FULLNESS of the covenant that God made with Abraham. God's covenant with Abraham will not be fulfilled until Jesus returns and rules and reigns during the 1,000 year Messianic Kingdom with His Bride.

GOD APPOINTS JUDGES TO FINISH

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CONQUERING THE PROMISED LAND

Following the death of Joshua, we enter into the period of the Judges. During this period, there was still unconquered land which God had promised the children of Israel through the covenant that God made with Abraham (*Judges 1:27-33*). During this time, God allowed for some of the land that God promised Abraham to be left unconquered to test the hearts of the children of Israel to determine if they would be obedient to God's Torah and believe the covenant that God made with Abraham. In *Judges 3:1-4* it is written:

"Now these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan. Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof; Namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baalhermon unto the entering in of Hamath; And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses "

THE SINS OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL IN THE PROMISED LAND

When God gave the Torah to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai, He gave specific instructions to the people regarding how they were to conduct themselves in the presence of the other nations who dwelt in the land of Canaan (*Deuteronomy 7:1-5*). In these verses we see God commanded the people regarding the following things:

1. Do not make marriages with the daughters of the nations who dwell in the land of Canaan
2. Do not serve the gods of the nations that dwell in the land of Canaan
3. Destroy the places of worship of those nations who dwell in the land of Canaan including their altars, graven images and groves

Spiritually, God asks the same thing of His people today. This same culture that existed during the days when the children of Israel were instructed to conquer the promised land still exists today. This culture is a Babylonian based value system of the world and its ways. God continues to still command His people to depart from participating in the practices of this

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Babylonian based culture.

However, even today, God's people have committed the same sins as the children of Israel. They participate in the value system of the world rather than being separated from it. Just as God judged the children of Israel for their disobedience, God will also judge His people today as well. For this reason, in *Revelation 18:4*, it is written:

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues "

While in the land of Canaan, the children of Israel forsook the Torah of God and the covenant that God made with Israel. They served the gods of the Canaanite nations (*Judges 2:12*) and intermarried with their people (*Judges 3:5-6*). Because of these sins, the children of Israel did not conquer the land that God had promised Abraham. Therefore, the FULLNESS of the promise that God made Abraham remained unfulfilled. Nevertheless, when the children of Israel repented before God of their sins, God raised up judges who would deliver the children of Israel from their enemies. However, when the judge died, the children of Israel returned to their ways of sin and disobedience to God's Torah (*Judges 2:11-21*).

One of the gods that the children of Israel served in Canaan was Ashtaroth (*Judges 2:13*). Ashtaroth was the goddess of sex and fertility. Her influence is still among God's people today. Ashtaroth is known today as Easter. The custom of Easter eggs and rabbits is associated with the worship of Ashtaroth and the fertility of the earth and man. A overview of Israel's sin during this time and God's judgment upon the people for violating the Torah and not fulfilling the covenant that God made with Abraham is recorded in *Judges 2:11-21* as it is written:

"And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim: And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger. And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth, And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of the spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed. Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the land of those that spoiled them. And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them; they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord: but they did not so. And when the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the Lord because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them: they ceased not

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from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way. And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice; I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died "

ISRAEL DESIRES A KING

Following the period of the Judges, Israel began to cry out for a king. In *I Samuel 8:1, 3-10* it is written:

"And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel ... And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes and perverted judgment. Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the other nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them. And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king "

God warned Israel that if they chose a king to rule over them that they would treat the children of Israel with hardship. Furthermore, God warned the children of Israel that when they would cry unto God because of the burden placed upon them by their king that God will not listen and answer their prayer. Nevertheless, the children of Israel desired and asked for a king so that they could be like all the other nations. God was upset with the people because He wanted to be their king. In *I Samuel 8:18-20* it is written:

"And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you: and the Lord will not hear you in that day. Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles "

Saul becomes the first king of Israel (*I Samuel 10*). After the reign of Saul, David becomes the next king of Israel (*I Samuel 16:1-13*).

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GOD'S PROMISE OF MERCY TO DAVID

As discussed earlier in this book, David was a man after God's own heart (*Acts 13:22*) because David LOVED God's TORAH (*Psalms 119*). Therefore, God extended to David His mercy. God's covenant of mercy with David is found in *II Samuel 7:11-17* as it is written:

"And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee a house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David "

God's promise of mercy to David is found in *Psalms 89:1-4* as it is written:

"I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up forever; thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens. I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant. Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah "

WHY DID GOD EXTEND MERCY TO THE SEED OF DAVID?

God extended His mercy to David on behalf of the covenant that God made with Abraham and the Torah that was given to the children of Israel on Mount Sinai. Even though the nation of Israel forsook the covenant that God made with Abraham and was disobedient to God's Torah and broke it, God promised His mercy would be extended to David so that the covenant that God made with Abraham would be fulfilled through the coming of the Messiah. In *Psalms 89:20, 24, 28-36* it is written:

"I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him ... But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted ... My mercy will I

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keep for him forevermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my TORAH, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once I have sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me "

David reminded the nation of Israel to ALWAYS remember the covenant that God made with Abraham. In *I Chronicles 16:13-18* it is written:

"O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones. He is the Lord over God; his judgments are in all the earth. Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an EVERLASTING covenant, Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance "

Therefore, God extended His mercy to David so that God could fulfill the covenant that He made with Abraham. That promise included giving the land of Canaan as an inheritance to those who would believe and obey the conditions of God's covenant with Abraham. Finally, God promise of mercy to David was not a separate covenant from the covenant that God made with Abraham but was an extension of the covenant that God made with Abraham showing how it will be fulfilled.

THE REIGN OF SOLOMON

Following the reign of David, Solomon was made king over Israel. Solomon is widely believed to be one of the wisest persons who ever lived. Solomon wrote the wisdom of the Proverbs. But why was Solomon so wise? The wisdom and understanding that God gave to rule the people of Israel was a knowledge of how to keep the Torah and the commandments of God. God appeared to Solomon in a dream and asked Solomon what the Lord should give him. Solomon responded by asking God for wisdom to discern between good and bad (how to keep the Torah). In *I Kings 3:9-11, 14* it is written:

"Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine

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enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to thy words; lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee ... And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days "

It was during the reign of Solomon that Israel enjoyed the conquest of its greatest land area. The reign of Solomon is a prophetic picture of how things will be during the time of the 1,000 year Messianic Age.

SOLOMON'S KINGDOM IS DIVIDED

God told Solomon to keep God's Torah and His commandments and statutes. Failing to do so and following after other gods would result in God dispersing the nation of Israel into the other nations of the earth. In *I Kings 9:1-9* it is written:

"And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do, That the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon. And the Lord said unto him ... if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel forever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them: and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people: (being scattered among the nations - Deuteronomy 28:37) And at this house, which is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and to this house? And they shall answer, Because they forsook the Lord their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshiped them, and served them: therefore hath the Lord brought upon them all this evil "

Solomon disobeyed God and disobeyed His Torah by marrying the women of the nations who dwelt in the land of Canaan. God warned His people in the Torah to not marry the women of the nations who dwelt in Canaan (*Deuteronomy 7:1-4*).

Because God appeared to Solomon twice and instructed him to keep God's Torah, God was

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angry at Solomon for his disobedience and told him that his kingdom would be divided. In *I Kings 11:9-13* it is written:

"And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the Lord commanded. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend thy kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen "

Therefore, God's reason for judging Solomon was failure to obey the covenant that God made with Abraham and failure to keep God's Torah. Because of this disobedience, Solomon's kingdom became divided into the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom. The Northern Kingdom was called the house of Israel. The Southern Kingdom was called the house of Judah.

THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

Following the death of Solomon, his kingdom was divided just as God told him. Jeroboam, an Ephrathite, became the ruler of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Rehoboam became the ruler of the Southern Kingdom of Israel. Concerning the selection of Jeroboam as king of the Northern Kingdom, in *I Kings 11:30-38* it is written:

"And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces: 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 (But he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel): Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshiped 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. Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his 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: But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. 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. And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command

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thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee "

JEROBOAM WAS AN EPHRATHITE OVER THE HOUSE OF JOSEPH

Jeroboam was an Ephrathite over the house of Joseph. In *I Kings 11:26, 28* it is written:

"And Jeroboam the son of Nebat an Ephrathite ... and the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valor ... ruler over all the house of Joseph "

Earlier in this chapter, we saw how Ephraim is a spiritual picture of Christianity in general and the Bride of Christ in particular. Therefore, the Northern Kingdom of Israel is a prophetic picture of future Christianity. The Northern Kingdom was known by the following names:

1. The house of Israel (*I Kings 12:21, Jeremiah 31:31*)
2. The house of Joseph (*I Kings 11:28*)
3. Samaria (*Hosea 7:1, 8:5-6, 13:16*)
4. Ephraim (*Hosea 4:17, 5:3, 7:1*)

THE GOLDEN CALF SYSTEM OF WORSHIP

Earlier in this book, we saw that after God gave the Torah to the children of Israel on Mount Sinai, the children of Israel built a golden calf and worshiped it. We also noted that the golden calf system of worship was mixing paganism with the worship of the God of Israel and calling that system of worship, the worship of the God of Israel. In *Exodus 32:3-6* it is written:

"And all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, THESE BE THY GODS, O ISRAEL, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, TOMORROW IS A FEAST OF THE LORD. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings, and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play "

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The Northern Kingdom, Ephraim, the house of Joseph under the leadership of Jeroboam, instituted the same system of worship by mixing paganism with the worship of the God of Israel and calling that system of worship, the worship of the God of Israel. In *I Kings 12:28-30* it is written:

"Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: BEHOLD THY GODS, O ISRAEL, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan "

Bethel in Hebrew means, "House of God". Dan comes from the Hebrew word, *Din*, which means, "Judgment". This is prophetic that the people called the system of worship, "The House of God" but God called the system of worship, "Judgment".

JEROBOAM'S FALSE SYSTEM OF WORSHIP

Jeroboam instituted a false system of worship which mixed paganism with the worship of the God of Israel and called that system of worship, the worship of the God of Israel. This is prophetic of historical Christianity.

Jesus and his disciples were Torah observant Jews. The original Christian church was considered a sect of Judaism (*Acts 28:22-23*) and kept the Sabbath and Biblical Festivals found in *Leviticus 23* and worshiped in the synagogue. Later, when Christianity spread into the Western world and more and more Gentiles and less and less Jews were believers in the faith, Christianity through the influence of the Roman Catholic church began to mix paganism (mostly the Mythraic religion of the Roman Empire) with Christian beliefs and practices. Modern day Christianity is still influenced and still practices this mixture of paganism and the true worship of the God of Israel.

The predominant religion in the Roman Empire prior to the adoption of Christianity was Mythraism. Mythraism was centered around the worship of the sun god. The worship day of the sun god was Sunday. The birthday of the sun god was December 25.

Easter was a pagan practice of celebrating the rebirth of the fertility of the earth in the spring of the year. Historically, Easter was the worship of the sex goddess Ishtar. In the Bible, Ishtar is called, Ashtoreth. God condemned the nation of Israel for worshiping the sex goddess Ashtoreth (*I Kings 11:5, 33, II Kings 23:13*). While modern day Christianity does not LITERALLY worship the sun god or the sex goddess, it still practices the customs of this system of worship. However, all of these customs have been Christianized in their meaning and

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understanding by the devil to disguise the original practices and customs behind this system of worship.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GOLDEN CALF SYSTEM OF WORSHIP

The main characteristics of the golden calf system of worship is the following.

- 1. Forsaking the Torah of God**
- 2. A substitute day of worship**
- 3. A substitute place of worship**
- 4. A substitute priesthood**

Let us examine these characteristics in greater detail seeing how these were the sins of the Northern Kingdom and is prophetic of the sins of historical Christianity.

- 1. Ephraim, a term for the Northern Kingdom of Israel, forsook God's Torah and called it a strange thing (*Hosea 8:12*). Today, Christianity calls the Torah "*a strange thing*".**
- 2. Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, instituted a substitute place of worship (Dan and Bethel) rather than Jerusalem (*I Kings 12:29, Deuteronomy 16:16*). Christianity worships in a church rather than a synagogue where Jesus worshiped (*Luke 4:14-16*).**
- 3. Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, instituted substitute holidays rather than observing the dates and times of the Biblical holidays that God gave in Leviticus 23.**

Jeroboam changed the observance of the feast of tabernacles to the 8th month in the year (*I Kings 12:32-33*) rather than the 7th month which God had declared in *Leviticus 23:34*.

Christianity has adopted Christmas and Easter from Roman Mythraism rather than keep the Biblical holidays that God gave in Leviticus 23. Jesus kept the Biblical holidays (*Luke 2:41-42*)

- 4. Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, instituted a substitute priesthood rather than have priests from the tribe of Levi (*I Kings 12:31*).**

Christianity allows pastors and priests to be ministers of the sheep of God who are not anointed and called by God into their office of ministry.

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5. Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, mixed paganism with the worship of the true God of Israel and called it the worship of the true God of Israel. God called this the golden calf system of worship (*I Kings 12:29*). Christianity has mixed Roman and Babylonian practices and beliefs with the worship of the God of Israel and calls it the true worship of the God of Israel.

GOD'S JUDGMENT UPON HIS PEOPLE FOR FORSAKING HIS TORAH

When God betrothed Himself to Israel at Mount Sinai (*Jeremiah 2:1-3*), he entered into a marriage contract with them. The terms and conditions of the marriage contract is specified in a written document called a ketubah. Spiritually, God's ketubah with the nation of Israel is the Torah. The terms and conditions for breaking the marriage contract are given in *Leviticus 26* and *Deuteronomy 28*. One of the harshest judgments for breaking the Torah is dispersion into the nations of the world. In *Deuteronomy 28:15, 36-37* it is written:

"But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee ... The Lord shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone. And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all the nations whither the Lord shall lead thee "

Because of their disobedience to Torah, God's judgment came upon both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel. The Northern Kingdom of Israel was taken captive into Assyria. The Southern Kingdom of Israel was taken captive into Babylon. In addition, both the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom have been taken into worldwide captivity. The Northern Kingdom of Israel has assimilated into Gentile culture and has settled in all the nations of the world. The Southern Kingdom of Israel has remained Jewish and kept their identity with Torah but they also have been taken into worldwide captivity.

THE NORTHERN KINGDOM WAS TAKEN CAPTIVE INTO ASSYRIA

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Because of their disobedience to Torah, God's judgment came upon the Northern Kingdom of Israel, Ephraim, the house of Joseph, because they did not obey God's Torah but mixed the worship of the God of Israel with paganism and called it the worship of the God of Israel. God's judgment upon the Northern Kingdom for forsaking the Torah of God and their captivity to Assyria is given in *II Kings 17:7-23* as it is written:

"For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods. And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree: And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger: For they served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing. Yet the Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets and all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them. And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger. Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. Also Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight. For he rent Israel from the house of David: and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drove Israel from following the Lord, and made them sin a great sin, For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; Until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day "

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CAPTIVE INTO BABYLON

Just like the Northern Kingdom, Ephraim, the house of Joseph, the Southern Kingdom did not follow God's Torah. Therefore, the Southern Kingdom, the house of Judah, was taken captive into Babylon. The rejection of following the Torah of God by the house of Judah is given in *II Kings 17:19-20* as it is written:

"And Judah kept not the commandments of the Lord their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight "

God's anger upon the house of Judah for forsaking God's Torah can be found in *Jeremiah 44:2-23* as it is written:

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein, Because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, and to serve other gods, whom they knew not, neither they, ye, nor your fathers. Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn incense unto other gods. Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as at this day. Therefore now thus saith the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; Wherefore commit ye this great evil against your souls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling, out of Judah, to leave you none to remain; In that ye provoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to dwell that ye might cut yourselves off, and that ye might be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth? Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? They are not humbled even unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my TORAH, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers. Therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah. And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed, and fall in the land of Egypt; they shall even be consumed by the sword and by the famine; they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine: and they shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach. For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence. So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return

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into the land of Judah, to the which they have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return but such as shall escape. Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah saying, As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men? Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him that answer, saying, The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye, and your fathers, your kings, and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the Lord remember them, came it not into his mind? So that the Lord could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day. Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord, nor walked in his TORAH, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day. "

Because the Southern Kingdom, the house of Judah, did not follow God's Torah, they were taken captive to Babylon. In *Jeremiah 25:2, 4-10* it is written:

"The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying ... the word of the Lord hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened. And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ears to hear. They said, Turn ye again now everyone from his evil ways, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord hath given unto you and to your fathers forever and ever: And go after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no hurt. Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the Lord; that ye might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt. Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle "

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* Therefore, we can see that God judged both the Northern *
* Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom BECAUSE they had *
* FORSAKEN following His TORAH and the COVENANT that He *
* made with ABRAHAM. *

GOD'S JUDGMENT UPON THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

As stated earlier, the Northern Kingdom of Israel was also called Ephraim and the house of Joseph. Spiritually, the Northern Kingdom is a prophetic picture of future historical Christianity. The book of Hosea was written to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. In this book, God foretold the judgments of Ephraim, the house of Joseph, because they forsook His Torah. These judgments are also prophetic of the judgments of God upon historical Christianity. The following judgments are listed below:

1. Hosea 1:2 --> The land had departed from God
2. Hosea 2:5 --> Her lovers = other gods
3. Hosea 2:7 --> She is called to return to her first husband (God)
4. Hosea 2:8 --> The corn, wine, oil (Holy Spirit) languishes
5. Hosea 2:11 --> Mirth to cease (wedding terminology) along with:
 - a) Feast days
 - b) New Moon
 - c) Sabbaths
 - d) Destroy vines/fig trees
6. Hosea 5:3 --> God is speaking to Ephraim/Northern Kingdom (church)

The judgments of the Northern Kingdom of Israel for forsaking God's Torah are the same judgments that were brought upon historical Christianity for departing the Jewish roots of

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Christianity. The early church in the book of Acts was a powerful church. God performed many signs and wonders and miracles in the early years of the church. However, when the church began to depart from following the Torah, the Sabbath and Biblical Festivals found in Leviticus 23, God's manifestations of His Holy Spirit through mighty signs, wonders and miracles began to diminish.

Then, after mixing Roman Mythraism with Christianity, anti-Semitism along with biased teachings against God's Torah began to become widespread in the church. Eventually, this ushered in the dark ages. In forsaking the Torah, the church began to practice the customs and ways of the golden calf system of worship and departed from keeping the Sabbath and Biblical Festivals. Because God's people have committed spiritual whoredom, Jesus could not return for His Bride to marry her. His coming had to be delayed until she repented of her sins and started to observe the Torah. God's wait for His people to repent of their sins and return to Torah has been nearly 2,000 years. This was prophesied in *Hosea 5:15, 6:1-4* as it is written:

"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. 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 (2,000 years) will he revive us: in the third day (1,000 year Messianic Age) 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. O Ephraim (Christianity) what shall I do unto thee? O Judah (Judaism) what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away "

In *Hosea 5:15* it is written:

"I will return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence"

In *John 14:3*, Jesus said,

"And if I go to prepare a place for you ..."

In *Hosea 6:3*, it speaks about the return of the Messiah back to the earth as the rain. In *Hosea 6:2*, it says that it will be after two days which is a prophetic picture of 2,000 years of time.

The return of the Messiah at His second coming is not prophesied to take place until "**they acknowledge their offence**". What "**offence**" does the **Northern Kingdom (Christianity)** need to acknowledge? What "**offence**" does the **Southern Kingdom (Judaism)** need to acknowledge? Christianity must repent and acknowledge to God that they have forsaken Torah. Judaism must repent and acknowledge that Jesus is Messiah. Ironically, as more and more Christians are returning to Torah and the Hebraic roots of Christianity, more and more Jewish people are professing faith in Jesus as Messiah.

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HOSEA MARRIES A WHORE

The book of Hosea is written to foreshadow the judgment of the Northern Kingdom for forsaking the Torah and mixing paganism with the worship of the God of Israel. Even after God made a covenant with the children of Israel at Mount Sinai and instructed them to be a holy people (separate from the nations around them), Israel was always tempted to assimilate themselves with the nations around them and to follow their ways. Therefore, one of the judgments upon the Northern Kingdom for desiring to assimilate with the nations around them rather than remaining a separate and holy people before God was assimilation. In order to prophesy of this judgment of assimilation, God instructed Hosea to marry a whore. The children born in the marriage between Hosea and the whore named Gomer was prophetic of what would happen to the Northern Kingdom because they committed spiritual whoredom with the nations around them and followed after their gods. Whoredom in the Bible is symbolic of spiritual idolatry and forsaking the Torah and the true worship of the God of Israel. In Deuteronomy 31:16 it is written:

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them "

In *Judges 2:17* it is written:

"And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord; but they did not so "

Therefore, in order to symbolize this spiritual whoredom committed by the Northern Kingdom of Israel by forsaking the Torah and the covenant that God made with Abraham, God told Hosea to marry a whore. From this marriage, three children were conceived. In *Hosea 1:2-9* it is written:

"The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea. And 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, So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son. 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. And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel. And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name Lo-ruhamah: for I will no more have

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mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away. 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. Now when she had weaned Lo-ruhammah, she conceived, and bare a son. Then said God, Call his name Lo-ammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God "

The three children that Hosea had by Gomer were the following:

1. Jezreel which means "**God will sow**"
2. Lo-ruhammah which means "**No mercy**"
3. Lo-ammi which means "**Not my people**"

When God speaks to the Northern Kingdom saying that God will have "**no mercy**" and they are "**not my people**", this is the Biblical way of saying that God will cut off his covenant relationship with them.

GOD PROMISES TO FULFILL HIS COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

Even though God said that He would cut off His covenant relationship with the Northern Kingdom by telling him that He will show them "**no mercy**" and they will "**not be my people**", God makes an astonishing statement of love and mercy after He pronounces His judgment upon His people. In *Hosea 1:10* it is written:

"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 "

WOW! After making the statement to the Northern Kingdom that God would cut them off from the covenant that He had with them because they forsook His Torah and the covenant that He made with Abraham, God then prophesies that He will fulfill His covenant that He made with Abraham through this judgment !!!

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THE NORTHERN KINGDOM IS PROPHETIC OF CHRISTIANITY

In the book of Hosea, God's judgment upon the Northern Kingdom for forsaking the Torah and the covenant that He made with Abraham was **cutting them off from His covenant** and showing them "**no mercy**" because they would be called "**not my people**".

These EXACT words are used to describe those people who have accepted Jesus Christ as Messiah. In *I Peter 2:5, 9-10* it is written:

*"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ ... By ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who called you out of darkness into marvelous light: Which is times past were **NOT A PEOPLE** (Hosea 1:9) but are now the people of God (Hosea 1:10); which had **NOT OBTAINED MERCY**, (Hosea 1:6), but now have obtained mercy (Hosea 1:10) "*

Therefore, the judgment upon the Northern Kingdom of Israel who is prophetic of historical Christianity is summarized by the following characteristics:

1. Being taken captive by the kingdom of Assyria (*II Kings 17:7-23*). Prophetically, because God's people have forsaken His Torah, God's people would live in a Babylonian based political, economic and religious system that would be contrary to God's Word.
2. God also declared that his judgement would be the removal of her feast days, new moons, and Sabbaths because Ephraim had worshiped idols (*Hosea 2:11, 4:17, 5:1-2*). Historically, God removed the celebration of the Sabbath and feast days from Christianity because she forsook the Torah of God after the days of the first century church.
3. They would be dispersed, God would show no mercy toward them, and they would not be called His people. However, later God would show mercy upon His people and redeem them. (*Hosea 1:2-4,6-10, I Peter 2:5, 9-10*)
4. By rejecting God's Torah, God people would perish for a lack of knowledge of God's Word and therefore not be kings and priests (God's Bride) before God. (*Hosea 4:6*). Obedience to Torah was a condition for God making His people kings and priest before Him (*Exodus 19:5-6*)

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GOD'S COVENANT OF MERCY WITH DAVID

Even though both the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom forsook God's Torah and the covenant that God made with Abraham, God allowed the tribe of Judah to remain because of God's promise of mercy given to David. In *I Kings 11:31-32, 34-36*, it is written:

"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 (But he 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): ... Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his 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: But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. 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 to put my name there "

God's covenant of mercy with David is found in *Psalms 89:1-4* as it is written:

"I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up forever: thy faithfulness shall thou establish in the very heavens. I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant. Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah "

God covenant of mercy to David is an everlasting covenant. In *Isaiah 55:1-3* it is written:

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy, and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David "

God made an everlasting covenant of mercy with David. **Mercy in the New Testament is called grace.** God made an everlasting promise of **mercy to David** and his descendants so that God could fulfill His covenant with Abraham. In *Psalms 89:28-37* it is written:

"My mercy will I keep for him forevermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my TORAH, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with

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stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah "

God promised David that even though God's people would break His Torah, God would extend His mercy to them forever. God promised that one from the seed of David would sit on the throne of David forever. This would be fulfilled through Jesus the Messiah. God chose to show mercy upon the house of David and the tribe of Judah because David kept the commandments (Torah) of God (*I Kings 11:32, 34*). God did this for the sake of the city of Jerusalem (*I Kings 11:32*). Spiritually, the city of Jerusalem is the city of God's Bride (*Revelation 21*). Therefore, God promise of mercy to David was given as an extension of God's covenant with Abraham so that God could fulfill His covenant that He made with Abraham.

THE ROLE OF THE KINSMAN REDEEMER TO SAVE GOD'S PEOPLE

Because God had cut off his covenant relationship with the Northern Kingdom of Israel, God made a provision in the Torah that a near kinsman could redeem his brothers if their covenant was cut off from God. In *Leviticus 25:25* it is written:

"If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold "

Since the Northern Kingdom has sold their covenant inheritance with God by committing spiritual whoredom and forsaking the Torah and worshiping other gods, God made provision in the Torah that one of his brothers (a member of the Southern Kingdom, the house of Judah, the Jewish people) could redeem him. Therefore, Jesus was born a Jew from the seed of David to redeem the Northern Kingdom who was cut off from their covenant relationship with God. In doing so, Jesus brought a new (or renewed) covenant which was also Torah based. In *Jeremiah 31:33* it is written:

"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my TORAH in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people "

Jesus came to the earth so that God could fulfill His covenant with Abraham. This would be accomplished by the Messiah fulfilling the role of the kinsman redeemer and saving His people

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who lost their covenant relationship with God.

Jesus came to fulfill the following things:

1. Jesus came to redeem the Northern Kingdom by establishing a new (renewed) covenant because the first covenant had been broken because the people assimilated themselves with the nations around them and forsook God's Torah. In establishing a new (renewed) covenant with the Northern Kingdom who had assimilated into Gentile culture, God's salvation would be offered to ALL those who did not have a covenant relationship with God through the Torah by receiving the Messiah into their heart and life.
2. Jesus came so that God through the Holy Spirit could indwell His people so that they could have the power of God to keep His commandments and be obedient to the Torah of God. The indwelling Holy Spirit promised to write God's Torah upon the hearts of His people so that they would be able to keep God's Torah in spirit and in truth. (*Jeremiah 31:33, John 4:24, John 16:13, Hebrews 10:15-16, Revelation 21:1-3*)
3. Jesus would regather those who were dispersed in all the nations of the earth and bring them back to the land of Israel where they would obey His Torah when they returned. (*Isaiah 49:5-6, Ezekiel 36:24-28, 37:15-27, Acts 1:6-8*)

These things would be accomplished by the kinsman redeemer, the Messiah, during His two comings. During His first coming, Jesus played the role of Messiah ben Joseph, the suffering Messiah who would die for the sins of the world and establish a new (renewed) covenant. During His second coming, Jesus will play the role of Messiah ben David, the kingly Messiah who will gather the exiles of Israel (both Northern Kingdom [Christianity] and the Southern Kingdom [Judaism]) and bring them back to the land of Israel where they would be obedient to Torah and usher in the 1,000 year Messianic Age.

JESUS CAME TO FULFILL GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

Jesus came from the tribe of Judah to play the role of the kinsman redeemer in order to fulfill God's promise to Abraham through His mercy to David. (*Romans 1:3, Hebrews 7:14, Revelation 5:5*).

Jesus came to reign over the **house of Jacob** forever. The **house of Jacob** refers to a **united Northern Kingdom** (the house of Israel, Ephraim, the house of Joseph) **AND** the **Southern Kingdom** (the house of Judah, the Jewish people). Therefore, if Jesus is going to rule over the

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house of Jacob (a united Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom) they must be united at some time in history so that Jesus can reign over the house of Jacob during the 1,000 year Messianic Age and then for all eternity. In *Luke 1:31-33* it is written:

"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever: and of his kingdom there shall be no end "

In *Luke 1:67-73*, Zacharias prophesied by the Holy Ghost that God would redeem His people by bringing a deliver from the house of David to fulfill God's covenant with Abraham as it is written:

"And his father Zacharias, was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David: As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us: To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he swore to our father Abraham"

Through the words given to him by the Holy Spirit, Zacharias is associating God's redemptive work to be completed through Jesus to the promise that God made with Abraham through David. When this redemption is complete, Jesus will rule over a united Israel, the house of Jacob, forever (*Luke 1:31-33*).

Earlier in this book, we learned that the Torah that was given to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai was not an independent event from the covenant that God made with Abraham. Instead, it was a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham that God would fulfill His oath to Abraham through Abraham's descendants. We also learned that what made the event at Mount Sinai unique was that it was at Mount Sinai that the descendants of Abraham became a NATION. In addition, God entered into a marriage with the descendants of Abraham and the marriage contract was the Torah. Because the children of Israel were unfaithful in their marriage to God by being disobedient to God's Torah, God judged the nation of Israel and scattered them among the nations of the world. However, God made a promise to David that God would extend His mercy to the nation of Israel and fulfill His covenant that He made with Abraham through the redeemer of Israel, the Messiah. Therefore, God's promise of mercy to David was done to fulfill God's covenant with Abraham.

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JESUS, DAVID AND THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

David is the most predominant person in the Old Testament associated with the role of the Messiah. David is also characteristic of the Bride of Christ. Let us examine these truths.

First, let us see how the Messiah is associated with David.

1. David was from Bethlehem, in the land of Judah (*I Samuel 17:12*).
 - a) Bethlehem is called the city of David (*Luke 2:4*)
 - b) Jesus was born in Bethlehem (*Matthew 2:1*)
2. God called David "*His Son*" (*Psalms 89:26*)
 - a) Jesus is called God's son (*Matthew 3:16-17*)
 - b) Jesus is called the "*Son of David*" (*Luke 18:38-39*)
3. God promised David that His throne would be forever (*Psalms 89:2-3*)
 - a) Jesus came to sit on the throne of David (*Luke 1:31-32*)
4. David desired to build a house for the name of God (*I Chronicles 28:2*)
 - a) Jesus was faithful to build the house of God (*Hebrews 3:4-6*)
5. God's covenant with David was a covenant of mercy (*Psalms 89:2-4*)
 - a) Jesus extends mercy upon all those who believe on His name (*Luke 18:38-39*)
6. David went from being a shepherd to a king (*II Samuel 7:8*)
 - a) Jesus came at His first coming as shepherd (*John 10:11*)
 - b) Jesus will come during His second coming as king (*Zechariah 14:4, 9*)
7. Jesus has the key of David (*Revelation 3:7*)
 - a) Jesus is the root and offspring of David (*Revelation 22:14*)

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DAVID IS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

David is characteristic of the bride of Christ. We can see this from the following examples:

1. David in Hebrew means "*Beloved*". It is the Strong's Word 1732.
 - a) Beloved is a term for God's Bride (*Song of Solomon 3:6*)
2. David desired to build the house of God (*I Chronicles 28:2, 29:3*)
 - a) The Bride of Christ set her affections on building the house of God (*Colossians 3:1-2*)
3. David confessed that he was a stranger and sojourner on the earth doing the will of God (*I Chronicles 29:15*)
 - a) The Bride of Christ confesses that she is a stranger and pilgrim (*I Peter 2:11*)
4. David was the chosen of God (*Psalms 89:3*)
 - a) The bride is the chosen of God (*John 15:16*)
5. David loved Jerusalem and Jerusalem is God's chosen city (*I Kings 11:32*)
 - a) The heavenly Jerusalem is the city of God's bride (*Hebrews 12:23, Revelation 21*)
6. David was an Ephrathite which means "*double fruit*" (*I Samuel 17:12*)
 - a) The bride of Christ bears much fruit (*John 15:8, Galatians 5:22-23*)
7. God called David his firstborn (*Psalms 89:27*)
 - a) The bride of Christ is the firstborn of God (*Hebrews 12:23*)
8. David was anointed by God to accomplish His will (*Psalms 89:20*)
 - a) The bride of Christ is anointed to accomplish the will of God (*Isaiah 61:1,3,6,10*)
9. David was a man after God's own heart (*I Samuel 13:13-14, Acts 13:22*) because David

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loved God's Torah and kept His commandments (*I Kings 11:32, 38*)

a) The Bride of Christ will love Jesus and keep His commandments (*John 14:15*) and be called the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven (*Matthew 5:19*)

THE PURPOSE OF THE FIRST AND SECOND COMING OF THE MESSIAH

The fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham was dependent upon the obedience by the descendants of Abraham to God's Torah. God's covenant with Abraham was extended to the descendants of Abraham at Mount Sinai when they became a holy nation unto God and made a covenant with God to keep His Torah. Because the children of Israel broke the Torah, God dispersed both the Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom into exile among the nations. God's judgment upon the Northern Kingdom of Israel for forsaking His Torah was cutting them off from His covenant with them. However, because David kept the Torah of God, God granted mercy upon David so that God could fulfill the covenant that He made with Abraham.

The Messiah was promised to come from the lineage of David. There are two primary roles that the Messiah will fulfill during His first and second coming. During His first coming, Jesus played the role of Messiah ben Joseph, the suffering Messiah, who would be a Jew from the tribe of Judah and who would be a kinsman redeemer to the Northern Kingdom of Israel who became assimilated into the nations of the world. In doing so, the Messiah would bring a new (renewed) covenant so that the Northern Kingdom who was cut off from their covenant with God through disobedience to God's Torah could be grafted into a new covenant relationship with God (*Romans 11:16-24*). This new (renewed) covenant is also Torah based (*Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 10:15-16*). The new (renewed) covenant is the Torah written upon our hearts.

During His second coming, Jesus will play the role of Messiah ben David, the kingly Messiah who would gather both the engrafted Northern Kingdom who have assimilated into Gentile culture (Christianity) and the Southern Kingdom (Judaism) and bring them back to the land of Israel from all the nations of the world. Upon their return to the land of Israel from the nations of the world where they have been scattered, they will keep the Torah of God. After this, the kingly Messiah will return back to the earth to dwell with His people. This is the fullness of the completion of God's covenant with Abraham.

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THE FULLNESS OF GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

The fullness of the covenant that God made with Abraham has not yet been fulfilled. Let's re-examine several scriptures again so that we can understand the fullness of the covenant that God made with Abraham. In *Genesis 17:6-8* it is written:

"And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God "

In *Leviticus 26:3, 11-12* it is written:

"If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them ... And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people "

In *Genesis 17:6-8* and *Leviticus 26:3, 11-12*, we can see the fullness of God's covenant with Abraham. It consists of the following things:

1. God's people bearing much fruit (the fruitful works of the Bride)
2. God's people keeping His Torah (because it is written upon their heart)
3. God's people living in the land of Israel (from being scattered in the nations of the earth)
4. God dwelling with His people (His Bride)

THE GATHERING OF THE EXILES BACK TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL

In *Acts 1:6-8*, the Apostles asked Jesus if He was going to regather the exiles back to the land of Israel at His first coming. Jesus answered by saying that this event would happen through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon God's people to be a witness of this restoration. In *Acts 1:6-9* it is written:

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this

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time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight "

These are the very last words of Jesus before He ascended unto heaven. Therefore, they are **VERY** significant. The last words which we are reminded to understand prior to the ascension of Jesus unto heaven is the regathering of the exiles from **BOTH** the house of Israel, the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom through the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit. This is a **MAJOR** significant event and witness to the nations of the world prior to the second coming of Jesus.

The two primary duties of the Messiah is to bring salvation to the Gentiles and to regather **BOTH** houses of Israel, the Northern Kingdom (Christianity) and the Southern Kingdom (Judaism) back to the land of Israel. These two things can be seen in *Isaiah 49:5-6* as it is written:

"And now, saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob (all twelve tribes) again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth "

Therefore, in these two verses, we see the following two functions of the Messiah.

1. Salvation to the Gentiles
2. Raise up the tribes of Jacob (all twelve tribes) and restore the preserved of Israel (back to the land of Israel). God proclaimed this to be a light (easy) thing.

During the first coming of Jesus, He brought salvation to the Gentiles. During the second coming of Jesus, He will restore the preserved (remnant) of Israel back to the land of Israel by the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit.

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EPHRAIM (CHRISTIANITY) AND JUDAH (JUDAISM) BECOME ONE STICK

In *Ezekiel 37:15-27*, God promised that He would unite the two houses of Israel, Ephraim and Judah, and they would become one stick at the time of the reign of the kingly Messiah. When they became united, God would bring **BOTH** houses back to the land of Israel. When they returned back to the land of Israel from being scattered in all the nations of the world, they will keep the Torah of God in the land of Israel. Then, God promised to dwell with His people (bride). In *Ezekiel 37:15-27* it is written:

"The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph (Christianity), which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they have gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children forever: and my servant David shall be their prince forever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people "

In *Ezekiel 37:15-27*, we see the fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham as follows:

1. God's people living in the land of Israel (from being scattered in the nations of the earth) (*Ezekiel 37:21-22, 25*)

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2. God's people keeping His Torah (because it is written upon their heart) (*Ezekiel 37:23-24*)
3. God dwelling with His people (His Bride) (*Ezekiel 37:23, 26-27*)
4. The kingly Messiah, Messiah ben David, ruling over His people (*Ezekiel 37:22, 24*)

GOD'S PEOPLE FLEEING FROM THE LAND OF BABYLON

In *Revelation 18:4*, God commands His people to come out of Babylon as it is written:

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues "

There are many Babylons that have the people of God captive. There is religious Babylon, there is financial Babylon, there is political Babylon, and there is also the land of Babylon. The land of Babylon cannot be modern day Iraq. Very few Christians and Jews live in Iraq. Therefore, the land of Babylon has to have a spiritual application.

The most populous nation in the world today of Christians and Jews is the United States of America. The United States of America is the land of Babylon today. God's greatest judgment of any nation on the earth will fall upon the United States of America because no other nation of the world has been given the freedom to preach and hear the gospel of the Kingdom of God as the United States of America. Yet, America is the land of abortion, homosexuality, drugs, gambling and pornography. The United States of America is the modern day Sodom and Gomorrah. In *Jeremiah 50:4-6, 17-18, 51:50* it is written:

"In those days and at that time (a reference to the second coming of the Messiah), saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come (the assimilated Northern Kingdom/Christianity), they and the children of Judah together (the Southern Kingdom/Jews) going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion (the land of Israel) with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten. My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray (pastors in the church and rabbis in the synagogues), they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place ... Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him (the Northern Kingdom) and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones (the Southern Kingdom). Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria ... Ye that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still: remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind "

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In these verses in Jeremiah, we see the following:

1. The children of Israel (the Northern Kingdom/Christianity) fleeing Babylon and seeking their way to the land of Zion (Israel) (*Jeremiah 50:4*)
2. The children of Judah (the Southern Kingdom/Jews) fleeing Babylon and seeking their way to the land of Zion (Israel) (*Jeremiah 50:4*)
3. Their shepherds (religious leaders) in Christianity and Judaism have led the people of God astray (*Jeremiah 50:6*)
4. Those who have escaped the sword (judgment upon the land) are seeking the way to Jerusalem (*Jeremiah 51:50*)

EPHRAIM RETURNS TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL TO BE MARRIED TO GOD

In *Jeremiah 31:15-22*, we see the prophecy of Ephraim, the Northern Kingdom, who has been assimilated into the nations of the world (a picture of Christianity) returning back to the land of Israel after God chastens Ephraim for his sin (by departing from the Torah) and bestows mercy upon him (through God's promise to David and through the first coming of Jesus) and returns him back to the land of Israel where God will marry His people (His Bride). In *Jeremiah 31:15-22* it is written:

"Thus saith the Lord; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border. I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus: Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. Set thee up way marks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest: turn again, O virgin daughter, turn again to these thy cities. How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man "

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In these verses we see the following:

1. The children of Rachel, the house of Joseph (Northern Kingdom), a spiritual picture of Christianity being comforted (a term for the Holy Spirit --- *John 16:7*), to be God's witnesses to the restoration of Israel (*Acts 1:6-9*) back to the land of Israel (*Jeremiah 31:15-17*)
2. The restoration happens after Ephraim, the house of Joseph (Northern Kingdom), a spiritual picture of Christianity, repents from turning from God's Torah because of God's mercy upon Ephraim (*Jeremiah 31:18-20*)
3. God dwelling with and marrying His bride (*Jeremiah 31:22*). A woman shall encompass a man is an event in the Biblical wedding ceremony given by God and practiced by the Jewish people.

EPHRAIM (CHRISTIANITY): THE PRODIGAL SON

In *Luke 15:11-32* is a famous sermon topic within Christianity. It is the story of the prodigal son. Almost 100% of the time when I have heard this parable preached in church, the prodigal son is the hard core sinner who returns to God and gives his heart and life to Jesus. While hard core sinners need to return to God and give their heart and life to Jesus, the context of this parable in the days of Jesus was based upon the prophecies of the prophets of Israel that the house of Jacob (all twelve tribes) would be restored back to the land of Israel while keeping the Torah.

When Jesus came to the earth, the Northern Kingdom had already been scattered and assimilated into the nations of the world because they rebelled against God's Torah. Therefore, the two sons in the story would refer to the two houses of Israel, the house of Israel (the Northern Kingdom) and the house of Judah (the Southern Kingdom). It was the house of Israel, Ephraim, who had rebelled against the Torah of God and was the prodigal son. Therefore, it was the Northern Kingdom, Ephraim, who needed to return back home or back to God and His Torah.

Since the Northern Kingdom, Ephraim, is a spiritual picture of Christianity, this parable is also prophetic of future Christianity. Following the death and resurrection of Jesus, the early church which was a sect of Judaism and originally kept the Sabbath, feast days and the Torah, later began to depart from the Jewish roots of the faith. As the church became more Gentile and less Jewish, the church became more anti-Torah and anti-Semitic. This anti-Torah and anti-Semitic attitude is still present today within Christianity.

Since the Northern Kingdom, Ephraim, is a spiritual picture of historical Christianity, the prodigal son in the story refers to Christianity and God's plea with her to return back to His

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Torah and obey His commandments. For this reason, Jesus has the key of David (*Revelation 3:7*) because David loved God's Torah.

In *Luke 15:11-32* is the parable of the prodigal son as it is written:

"And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land: and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come: and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and entreated him, And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again: and was lost and is found "

Let us examine the details of this parable closer so that we can understand how the prodigal son is a reference to Ephraim who is a spiritual picture of Christianity.

1. A certain man (God the Father) had two sons (*Luke 15:11*)
2. The elder son is Judah/Judaism and the younger son is Ephraim/Christianity. Judaism dates back to the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai and Christianity dates back to the death and resurrection of Jesus.
3. The younger son (the Northern Kingdom, Ephraim/Christianity) spent his inheritance on riotous living (by departing from God's Torah) and went to a far country (the nations of the world) and was feeding on swine (a reference to not obeying the Torah) (*Luke 15:12-*

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13)

4. There was a famine in the land (a famine of the hearing and teaching God's Torah/Word-- *Amos 8:11*) and he (younger son/Ephraim/Christianity) decided to return to the Father and repent before Him (for departing from Torah) (*Luke 15:14-21*)
5. The Father was waiting for his younger son (Ephraim/Christianity) to return to Torah. When he repented, God the Father extended mercy to him (*Jeremiah 31:18-20*) (because of God's promise to David) and forgave him (*Luke 15:14-21*)
6. The joy of the Father was so great when the younger son (Ephraim/Christianity) returned (back to Torah) that God decided to fit him with the best robe (wedding garment) and put a ring on his hand (wedding terminology) (*Jeremiah 31:18-22, Luke 15:21-24*)
7. The elder son (Judah/Judaism) was in the field and inquired about the celebration that the father was giving the younger son (*Luke 15:25-26*)
8. It was told to the elder son (Judah/Judaism) that the younger son (Ephraim/Christianity) had repented (returned back to Torah) and God was waiting for the younger son's (Ephraim/Christianity) return and now that he has returned, there will be a wedding party (a marriage between the bridegroom and the bride) (*Luke 15:27*)
9. The older son was upset giving reason to the Father that he had never departed from the commandments (Torah) and the Father never had a wedding party for him. But now after the younger son had departed from Torah and returned, the Father was having a wedding party for the younger son. (*Luke 15:28-30*)
10. It was told the older son (Judah/Judaism) the he was forever with the Father (*Luke 15:31-32*)

Therefore, God is waiting for the prodigal son (Christianity) to repent of her sins of departing from God's Torah. When she does, God will celebrate with the greatest wedding party ever, the wedding between Jesus the bridegroom and the Bride of Christ!!!

THE CONCLUSION OF THIS CHAPTER

In order to fully understand the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and understand the comprehensive redemption plan of God including the marriage between Jesus and His Bride, you **MUST** understand the covenant the God made with Abraham. The fullness of the fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham involves the following things:

1. Preparing a people to be kings and priests before God and to rule and reign with Him on the earth
2. God's people dwelling in the land of Israel

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3. God's people being obedient to His Torah
4. God dwelling with His people for all eternity

This is the Gospel that was preached to Abraham (*Galatians 3:8*) and this is the fullness of the covenant that God made with Abraham.

THIS IS THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO TORAH!!!

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