



ONE TORAH FOR ALL

One Torah shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.
Exodus 12:49

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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Ephrayim: The Firstborn of YHWH

Discovering why YHWH calls Ephrayim His firstborn son

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 31:9

“They shall come with weeping; and with supplications will I lead them; I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephrayim is My first-born.”

The first thing of which to take note in this passage is that YHWH is speaking of a future time. When He spoke these words they had not come to pass yet. This brings several questions to mind. Among these questions are: “What is it that shall cause Ephrayim to become the firstborn of YHWH?” and “Why does YHWH call Ephrayim His first-born when it is through the tribe of Yehudah which Mashiach shall come?” Discovering the answer to these questions, and others like them, is crucial to understanding the place of Ephrayim in prophecy as well as the future of all of Israel.

First, let us examine a few of the verses in this context to gain some understanding of what will be happening at the time when YHWH shall call Ephrayim His firstborn son.

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 31:1-2

1 “At that time,” says YHWH, “will I be the Elohim of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people.”

2 Thus says YHWH, “The people that were left of the sword found favor in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest.”

Please notice it is those left (the sword has devoured many of them) who YHWH calls “His people.” Please take note of the following passage from the Brit Chadasha (New Testament).

1st Thessalonians 4:17

then we that are alive, those who are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Master in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Master.

The phrase “those who are left” suggests from the original languages those who survive a war, that is, those who survive the sword. Is this speaking of the same time as the prophet Yirmeyah? While we cannot say for certain, it is speaking of the same type of incident, those who survive being killed. It is these who shall become the people of YHWH.

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 31:8

“Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travails with child together; a great company shall they return here.”

Please note where it is from which YHWH shall bring these survivors. It is from the north country as well as from the furthest regions of the world. It will be all those who are blind, lame, pregnant women, as well as those women who already have children. It will be a great many people according to the prophet Yirmeyah. These are those whom YHWH states shall become His people.

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 31:10-11

10 “Hear the word of YHWH, you nations, and declare it in the isles afar off; and say, ‘He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd does his flock.

11 For YHWH has ransomed Ya’aqov, and redeemed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.”

Notice YHWH states it is those He scattered in the first place who He shall gather once again. Whom did He scatter? Was it not the northern kingdom of Israel, the ten tribes of the north? To be sure! Is it any wonder then that when speaking prophetically of this return, YHWH often begins by saying He shall bring them from the “north” or “northern” country? Is YHWH actually giving us another clue as to the identity of these people being from northern Israel? To be sure! These people are also known as Ephrayim.

Please notice what the prophet to the northern kingdom prophesies over the house of Israel.

Hoshea 1:8-10

8 Now when she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived, and bore a son.

9 And YHWH said, “Call his name Lo-ammi; for you are not My people, and I will not be your Elohim.”

10 “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, ‘You are not My people, it shall be said unto them, “You are the sons of El Chay.””

YHWH would no longer call the ten tribes of the north “His people.” However, at a later time YHWH would once again call them “His people.” This prophecy is referenced by Shaul directly and by Kepha indirectly.

Romans 9:25-26

25 As He says also in Hoshea,

***“I will call those My people, which were not My people;
And her beloved, that was not beloved.”***

26 And it shall be, that in the place where it was said unto them,

***“You are not My people,
There shall they be called sons of El Chay.”***

From the time of Yeshua to present, this is taking place; people who were once scattered are now being gathered back into the fold of His family and they are called the sons of El Chay. Those who were not His people, that is, Ephrayim, are becoming His sons.

Kepha Aleph (1st Peter) 2:9-10

9 But you are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for Elohim's own possession, that you may show forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light:

10 who in time past were not a people, but now are the people of Elohim; who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

Ephrayim had ceased to be the people of Elohim. However, through Mashiach Yeshua they have now received mercy. Because of receiving this mercy, they are now adopted into the family of Ephrayim.

Romans 8:14-15

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of Elohim, these are sons of Elohim.

15 For you received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but you received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

All those who once were far off have now been brought near by the Spirit of grace and mercy and these are adopted into the family of YHWH and He calls them His sons.

Ephesians 2:13

But now in Mashiach Yeshua you that once were far off are brought near through the Blood of Mashiach.

Now please notice what Mashiach Yeshua says of the tribe of Yehudah (Judah).

Matithyah (Matthew) 23:37-39

37 “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones them that are sent unto her! How often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

39 For I say unto you, you shall not see Me henceforth, till you shall say, ‘Blessed is He that comes in the name of YHWH.’”

Mashiach Yeshua came through the tribe of Yehudah. Nothing will ever change this truth. However, for the most part, the southern house has rejected Yeshua as Mashiach because of the leadership of that house. Now, please take prayerful note of one of the major purposes of why Mashiach Yeshua came as a man.

Matityah (Matthew) 15:24

But He answered and said, "I was not sent to any except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

For whatever reason YHWH has, it was actually part of His plan that the majority of the house of Yehudah does not accept Yeshua as Mashiach until such time as all those who were scattered had been regathered back into the family of YHWH. Those who are adopted back into the tree of Israel are once again called the sons of El Chay. It is because of this adoption, it is because of their faith and trust in Yeshua as Mashiach, that these formerly cast off ones are now part of the firstborn of YHWH. Ephrayim is called the firstborn of YHWH because he accepts Yeshua as Mashiach before Yehudah does. This is why YHWH calls Ephrayim His firstborn son.

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