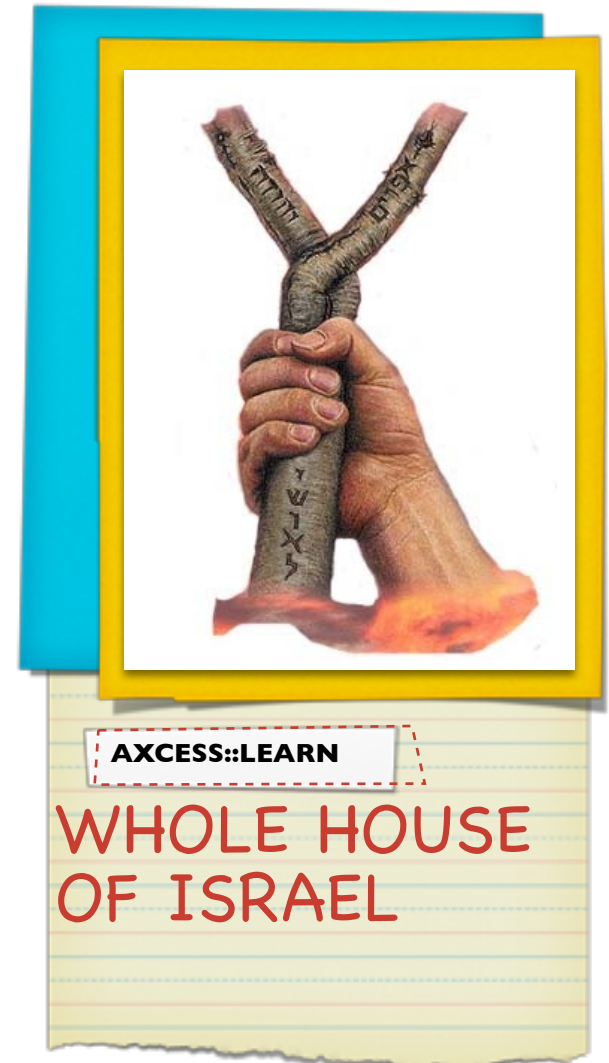




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\*\*\* Approaching Scripture through the Hebrew mindset and context can help us to appreciate more fully and to properly interpret what the passage is actually intending to communicate.

^^study notes adapted from The Complete Jewish Study Bible, MacArthur Study Bible, & Torah Class



## GENESIS 48 (part 3)

### THE WHOLE HOUSE OF ISRAEL

—The Southern Kingdom was made up of Y'hudah and Binyamin and this was called the Kingdom of Y'hudah.  
—The Northern Kingdom is what the Scriptures call "Israel" or the Kingdom of Efrayim.  
—The Levites were in a special category and were not counted as part of either of the two houses of Israel.

"Efrayim mixes himself with the peoples" (Hosea 7:8-9)  
The Northern Kingdom is compared to a half-baked cake; in other words, they are incapable of being turned over to cook completely through (like a pancake), so they will end up being useless.  
—Ashur (Assyria) conquers the Northern Kingdom around 725 BC and scatters the Efrayim-Israelites after 10 years of battles between them. They were eventually spread all over 120 conquered nations. About 5 percent of the total Efrayim-Israelites remained in their land.

The Northern Kingdom made a treaty with Assyria and paid tribute to Assyria in exchange for remaining a separate nation. 130 years later in 600 BC Babylon became the new world power and Nebuchadnezzar conquered Y'hudah. They were allowed to retain their separate identity. Some Jews were brought back to Babylon and thousands more were left in Y'hudah to care for the land.

### EFRAYIM WOULD BE A GROUP OF NATIONS

**Genesis 48:17-19** "many nations"/"a multitude of nations"  
God views the physical world in two groups: Israelites and Gentiles...or more commonly heard "Jews and Gentiles."  
—Here, Ya'akov prophesied that Efrayim was to "become a fullness of the Gentiles"...meaning, Efrayim would be a special and important blessing to non-Hebrews.  
—1200 years after the prophetic cross-handed blessing of Ya'akov over Yosef's two sons, Efrayim and M'nasheh, Efrayim was indeed scattered and large segments of the population absorbed by the Gentiles.

### EFRAYIM & Y'HUDAH REUNITE

**Ezekiel 37:15-22** Following Ezekiel's prophecy and vision of the Valley of Dry Bones (v.1-14), the prophet continued to describe both the redemption and hope of the people of Israel. God promised that he "will take the people of Israel from among the nations where they have gone and gather them from every side and bring them back to their own land." —see sidebar: CONTEXT... / 1948...

## UNDERSTANDING THE END TIMES

**Revelation 7:1-8** The context of this passage is that it occurs in the Tribulation period (*aka "The Time of Jacob's Trouble"*). We read about this great event called the "sealing of the 144,000 witnesses." These witnesses are all from the tribes of Israel, and these witnesses are listed tribe by tribe:

*12,000 people x 12 tribes = 144,000 witnesses*  
—2 names are missing from the list: Efrayim & Dan  
—2 names are added back: Yosef & Levi  
Why was Dan removed? In Genesis 39 as Ya'akov blesses his sons, we learn that Dan is going to have a serious problem with idolatry (*some believe the Antichrist will rise out of a connection with Dan*).  
What happens with Efrayim? In Ezekiel we learn that Efrayim and Y'hudah will be reunited in the End Times. But here, Yosef is added back in place of Efrayim.

**Revelation 7:9-14** Another group of believers is described here as being from every nation, tribe, people, and language. Who are these people? "These are the people who have come out of the Great Persecution. They have washed their robes and made them white with the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. 7:14 /\*Isa.1:18)

**Revelation 7:15-17** Why are the Levites un-set-apart and included again as a tribe of Israel? Because there is no more need for a special priestly tribe to officiate temple services. All men who survive the Tribulation are believers and will be as priests in service. All redemption will be complete. It will be finished. There will be no more need for the Levites to be set apart as a ransom for Israel's firstborn. Levites' unique role will be completed, and so they'll be returned to their heritage, Israel.

**Psalms 102:1-19** In verse 14 the psalmist says "your servants" will love Israel's very stones (not just God's chosen people). ALL those who love Him, Jew or Gentile will simply fall in love with Israel.  
"May this be put on record for a future generation; may a people yet to be created praise ADONAI" (v.18). This refers to the body of Gentile believers who will become part of the spiritual or true Israel. According to this prophecy, we will all love Israel and praise God.

**Romans 11:11-26** Why was this God's plan? To give His Torah to Israel, then gave a Saviour through Y'hudah, then pass the torch to the Gentiles to carry the gospel back to the Jews who they learned it from?

## NOTES

### HEBREW WORD DEFINITIONS

**goy** - nations / Gentile / non-Israelite  
**mela ha goyim** - a fullness of Gentile nations

### CONTEXT FOR BOOK OF EZEKIEL

The book of Ezekiel was written by a man, Ezekiel, while he was living in Babylon. He was among the exiles of Y'hudah—so he was a Jew that was hauled off to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Efrayim-Israel ceased to exist more than a century before this time.

### 1948: The Land of Israel Reunited

The messianic hope for the people of Isra'el has always been tied to the restoration of their land. God told Ezekiel that the Northern Kingdom (*Isra'el*) and the Southern Kingdom (*Y'hudah*) will no longer be two nations but instead one nation in the land. Both Isra'el and Y'hudah had been conquered by the pagan nations around them, which took many into forced exile. Yet despite this enforced Diaspora, God renewed this hope, reminding his people that they would one day be a united people, restored back to the land of Isra'el as a single nation. The events surrounding Isra'el's becoming a nation in 1948 can be explained by no other word than "miracle." [*Land of Israel, CJB notes*]

### REALITY OF DUALITY—EZEKIEL 37

—On a physical, earthly level, we have the two houses of Israel—Efrayim & Y'hudah—coming back together to form one nation of God as they were at their inception almost 3000 years ago.  
—On a spiritual level, the reunion is ultimately about the Gentile believers in Christ, possibly represented in some way by Efrayim, who are going to come together with the Jewish believers in Christ, represented by Y'hudah. Together, these are spiritual Israel, or the true Israel that Paul speaks of.