



One New Man Study Lesson Eight

The Biblical Beginnings Of The Jews, Hebrews and Israel

The Torah is the pivot of Judaism for in the Torah is recorded the Creation, the Flood, the call of Abraham, the lives of the Patriarchs, the sojourn in Egypt, the rescue from Egyptian bondage and the revelation of the priestly sacrificial system which foreshadow the work of Messiah Himself. Any Messianic Jewish perspective, therefore, must be clear in its understanding of Torah and the early covenants God made with Israel.

Jewish history begins with Abraham. The whole story of Abraham and the eventual birth of Isaac is miraculous and points to the Messiah Yeshuah. Isaac, like Yeshuah, is the only son of his father, miraculously conceived, and offered up as a sacrifice to God for the sake of obedience to His Father and for the benefit of others. Sarah was supernaturally enabled to bear this child just a MIRIAM (Mary) supernaturally conceived by God's Holy Spirit. From Isaac sprang JACOB who became ISRAEL.

Although the term "JEW" is derived later from the tribe of Judah, it has come to refer to all Israelites: the descendants of Jacob - or Israel - Abraham's grandson. God's covenant with Israel begins with Abraham, so we might say Abraham, in this sense, was the first Jew. The word "Hebrew" was first used to identify Abram's family (Gen. 14:13). It was Abraham's grandson, Jacob, who was first called "Israel" after he wrestled with God (Gen. 32:28). Later, the nation of Israel was divided into two sections, the southern tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the ten northern tribes. A "Jew" is literally a physical descendant from the ten northern tribes. However, God calls Judah and Ephraim, "Israel" in Ezekiel 37:16. Today the term "Jew" is used to identify all the physical seed of Abraham through his son, Isaac. Paul, who was from the tribe of Benjamin, called himself a Jew, an Israelite and a Hebrew (Phil 3:5, Acts 21:39, and Romans 11:1), proving all three terms are used interchangeably.

The reason this is so important in relation to the harvest is that Jews need Gentile believers and Gentile believers need Jews. If Ruth the Gentile had not attached herself to Naomi the Jew, she would have never met Boaz. The fruit of this marriage produced Obed, the grandfather of King David. Yeshuah was descended from King David. If Esther, the Jew, did not marry King Ahasuerus, the Gentile, the Jewish people would have perished. When the Jews were spared, it spared a revival among the Gentiles. The book of Esther says many became Jews:

Esther 8:17 - And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good

day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

There will be no ONE NEW MAN without the Gentile fulfilling his destiny. Salvation has come to the Gentile to evangelize the Jews (Romans 11:11b). When the Jews are saved it will literally bring life from the dead (Romans 11:15). The One New Man will cause the dead religious church to explode with the glory of God! The blindness on the eyes of the Gentile Church is as supernatural as the blindness on the eyes of the Jewish people. The jealousy is demonic, not spiritual! The parable of the prodigal son illustrates this truth. Sid Roth gives an excellent application of this parable:

“The younger son is a type of the Jewish people. The older son is a type of the Gentile church. When the younger son returned home, the father (a type of Father God) held a great celebration with food, music, and dancing. The older brother was jealous. Luke 15:28 states that he was "angry (with deep-seated wrath) and resolved not to go in" (Amp.). He didn't understand the One New Man. He didn't realize that the Jew must be grafted into the Body of Messiah in order to have the Wedding Supper of the Lamb (the heavenly feast enjoyed by the Messiah and His Bride, the church). The older brother couldn't comprehend the truth expressed by Yeshuah that He would not return until the Jewish people were restored by the Father (Matthew 23:39). He couldn't see that by being in the seed of Abraham, everything the father had was HIS (Luke 15:31).

When the Jew comes back to the Father, God will bring a new type of music and dancing into the church. Religious Gentiles, who are stuck in their traditions, will be angry over this new wave of worship and will refuse to participate. After 2,000 years of living with the pigs (the younger brother ended up feeding the pigs), we Jewish believers have a lot of rough edges. Gentile Christians (older brother) have a sweetness because of generations of knowing the Messiah. The Jewish believers so desperately need to be embraced by their older brothers (THE GENTILE CHURCH). There is one Body. The Body of Messiah is not Messianic Jewish and Gentile Christian. It is NOT having joint meetings. There is no wall of separation! When God sees the Body, He doesn't see Jew and Gentile but He sees His SON YESHUAH. He is the ONE NEW MAN, the King of the Jews!”¹

A. The Beginning Of The Jews

Out of all the Gentiles, God set one man apart for Himself. From this man He made a new people, physically and covenantally distinguished from all the others. That man was Abram, soon to be called Abraham.

¹ Roth, Sid. *The Last Lap*. Messianic Vision Press, Brunswick, GA., 2001

We know little of Abraham's early life. He came from Ur of the Chaldeans with his father, Terah; he settled in Haran, whence he was later called forth. Some scholars believe Abrams' family was completely pagan while others feel there were some in Abram's home who recognize the one true God. Either way the nature of God's call to Abraham was unique. The new people created from Abram were to be different and set apart from the Gentiles:²

Numbers 23:9 - For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.

Genesis 12:1-3 - Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: [2] And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: [3] And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curses thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

God instituted the covenant of circumcision with Abram to set apart this new people:

Genesis 17:10-11 - This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised. [11] And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt you and me.

In addition to the circumcision, God changed his name from Abram to Abraham declaring His intention of making Abram not only set apart as father of the Jews, but also the father of a multitude of Gentiles. Abraham recognized the voice of God and obeyed both the command to separate from his family and to circumcise himself and all his descendants.

Genesis 12:4-7 - So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. [5] And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. [6] And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. [7] And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there he built an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.

A nation must also have a land. This promise of land is part of the covenant made with Abraham as well as circumcision and the powerful prosperity God promised Him for his obedience. God said He would give the land of Israel to

² Gruber, Dan. *The Church and the Jews*. Serenity Books, Hagerstown, MD, 2000

Abraham's seed forever or as an everlasting possession. We consistently read that this promise is eternal!

Genesis 13:14-15 - And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: [15] For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

Genesis 15:18 - In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

Genesis 17:19 - And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

Genesis 26:1-4 - 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. [2] And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: [3] 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; [4] 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;

Genesis 28:12-14 - And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. [13] 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 whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; [14] And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt 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.

The covenant is passed down through Abraham's son, Isaac, and then to Jacob - whose name was changed to ISRAEL - and to his twelve sons. God's covenant is offered by His grace, not as a response to works. God required faith, issuing in obedience. Abraham "believed the Lord and he reckoned it to him as righteousness." (Gen. 15:6).

B. The Lineage Of Abraham

The Bible tells us that Abraham took Sarah as his wife who could not conceive a child. Since she could not conceive, Abraham prayed that his son Ishmael (born of Sarah's handmaiden Hagar) would be his heir. Ishmael was physically circumcised and the son of Abraham, but God told Abraham that his descendants would not be named, and his inheritance from God would not go,

through Ishmael. His name and his inheritance would go to Isaac, his child who would be born of Sarah (Gen. 21:12).

Ishmael was Abraham's descendant, literally his "seed," but in the sight of God, he was not truly Abraham's SON. For when Isaac was finally born and God called Abraham to offer him up, He said, "Take Isaac, your son, your ONLY SON, whom you love, ...and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will tell you." (Gen. 22:2) From God's perspective, the only TRUE SON of Abraham was Isaac. He was physically descended from Abraham and had Abraham's FAITH. The physical descent was not sufficient. Ishmael was also circumcised. That also was not sufficient. Though he was physically descended from Abraham and had been physically circumcised according to the covenant that God made with Abraham, he still was not considered a true son. After Abraham's death, the faithfulness and promise of God continued to and through Isaac. God continued to select out a particular lineage for His plan of redemption. He continued to call Himself by the name of his people. He now became the "God of Isaac."

Isaac married Rebecca who gave birth to twins, Esau and Jacob. Esau was the first-born. They had the same mother and same father, but they were to be two peoples and not one:

Genesis 25:23 - And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.

Contrary to custom and law, the younger son, Jacob, inherited the promise, the blessing AND THE NAME OF ABRAHAM. He was Jewish, but his twin brother Esau, was not. God made that choice, according to his purpose, before either of them was born. God became the "God of Jacob." Jacob married two sisters, Leah and Rachel, and had children by them and their two maidservants. God said to Jacob:

Genesis 35:11-12 - 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 thy loins; [12] And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.

Jacob, whom God named "Israel," had 12 sons, who gave their names to the 12 tribes of Israel. His fourth son, JUDAH (Yehudah) from the root word that means "PRAISE." The name "Jews" <Yehudim> is also derived from this root. Jews were created to be PRAISE to God. The word "Jew" in its different forms appears about 200 times throughout the Bible. The terms "Jew," "Hebrew," and "Israelite" are all terms used to designate the same thing:

"Hebrew" is the oldest term. It is derived from the name of Eber, the great, great, and great-grandfather of Abraham. The word is first applied in the Bible to Abraham in Gen. 14:13 and to Joseph in Genesis 39:17 who is called a "Hebrew" slave. Later, the children of Israel became slaves in Egypt. God would choose Moses to redeem His people out of Egypt. He appeared to Moses in a burning bush and told him:

Exodus 2:23-25 - 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. [24] And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. [25] And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.

Exodus 3:6 - Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

*Exodus 3:18 - And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shall come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, **The Lord God of the Hebrews** hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.*

The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, calls Himself "THE LORD GOD OF THE HEBREWS" He calls all of Jacob's descendants in Egypt bondage "Hebrews." God identified Himself with the people He created. The Hebrews are also called, "the sons of Israel," i.e. Israelites. These are equivalent terms. Moses told all Israel:

Deut. 15:12 - And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

Jonah said, "I am a Hebrew.... and I fear the Lord God of heaven." <Jon. 1:9). So the word "Hebrew" is applied in the Bible to describe Abraham, Joseph, and Jonah, all of Jacob's descendants in Egyptian bondage and all Israel. Judah was used to designate the southern kingdom from the time Israel was divided in the days of Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:20). Even then, however, the term "JUDAH" also included the tribe of Benjamin, the Levites, and priests. Also, there were those from other tribes of Israel who chose to be part of Judah. <2 Chr. 10:17; 11:14,16; 15:9; 31:6)

Some have tried to teach that Abraham was not Jewish because the term "JEW" does not appear until later in history, referring to the descendants of Judah. They then make a theological separation between the "Jews" and their fathers. But by that reasoning, neither Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Moses, Aaron,

Gideon, Samuel, Jonah, Paul, etc.- would be Jewish either. Nor would any of the descendants of Judah who lived more than 20 years before the exile of the northern kingdom. That is not the way the term is used in the Bible. The word is used in the New Covenant to designate those who lived in Judea (John 11:54), the religious leaders (7:13), the children of Israel in the land as opposed to those from the Diaspora (Acts 10:39), and the children of Israel as opposed to the Gentiles (Acts 14:5). Paul was from the tribe of Benjamin and called himself a Jew (Acts 21; 39) as well as an Israelite (2 Cor. 11:22) and a Hebrew (Phil. 3:5). The New Covenant uses the word "Greek" to describe Hellenistic Jews, the Gentile inhabitants of the territory once encompassed by Alexander's empire (Romans 1:14) and all Gentiles (Romans 2:9,10).

The term JEW has been given to all those who are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the Bible it is also used synonymously with the term "Israel." By the time of Jesus the term "Jew" had become a designation of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob no matter where their particular tribe or place of residence - be it Israel or the world. This has all been documented to say this: A Jew is a Hebrew is an Israelite. That is the Biblical meaning of Israel. Israel is NOT the church. The CHURCH is not Israel. Gentiles are not spiritual Jews. We are Gentiles. The Jewish people are Jews. We are Greeks; the Jews are Hebrews. If you do not have an understanding of this you will not understand the Jewish roots of Christianity and thus, you will not understand God! Your salvation experience was cut out of a Jewish olive tree from which sprang a Jewish covenant and Jewish promises. Furthermore, a Jewish redeemer and Messiah paid for it with His own blood.³

Lesson Eight Study Questions:

1. The Torah is the pivot of _____.
2. Paul was from the tribe of _____ and called himself a Jew (Acts 21; 39) as well as an _____ (2 Cor. 11:22) and a Hebrew
3. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, calls Himself "THE LORD GOD OF THE _____"
4. The term _____ has been given to all those who are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
5. A Jew is a _____ is an Israelite. That is the Biblical meaning of _____.
6. _____, inherited the promise, the blessing AND THE NAME OF His grandfather ABRAHAM. He was Jewish, but his twin brother _____, was not.
7. God made that choice, according to his _____, before either of them was born. God became the "God of _____."
8. If _____, the Jew, did not marry King Ahasuerus, the Gentile, the Jewish people would have perished. When the Jews were spared, it sparked a revival among the _____.
9. Israel is NOT the _____. The CHURCH is not _____.
10. _____ are not spiritual Jews.

³ Finto, Don. *Your People Shall Be My People*. Regal Books, 2001, Ventura, CA.