

YAHWEH, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, IS WITH US!

“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins...”

([Isaiah 58: 1](#))

Sermon Notes

Study Carefully & Study Prayerfully

The 144,000

1. Introduction

There is a prophecy in the New Testament concerning **144,000 Israelites** who, in the closing days of this age, are to be sealed in their foreheads with the **seal of the living God**. Christian groups in the past have written volumes in answer to the question: **Who are the 144,000 Israelites?** We quote the prophecy:

Revelation 7: 1: *“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.*
2: *And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having **the seal of the living God**: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,*
3: *Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, **till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.***
4: *And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.”*

Because the **144,000** are of **“the tribes of the children of Israel”** We will first answer the question: **WHO IS AN ISRAELITE?**

Is an Israelite:

- A physical descendant of Jacob who may (or may not) believe in the God of Israel; but **does not** accept Yeshua (Jesus) as the Messiah of Israel?
- A physical descendant of Jacob who does believe in the God of Israel: and who **does** accept Yeshua as the Messiah of Israel?
- A member of the 'ten lost tribes of Israel' which, some groups believe, migrated to the north and finally became the nations of Britain, America and western Europe?
- See **A Voice In The Wilderness** article on [British Israel](#).
- A Gentile convert to Christianity, regardless of which nation he/she may come from?

Yes, **Who is an Israelite?** This question must first be answered before we can identify the **144,000 Israelites**.

2. What Happened to Ancient Israel?

The following facts are given to help the reader understand Israel's background.

- During the reign of Solomon's son **Rehoboam** the ancient kingdom of Israel split in two.
- Ten tribes under a man called **Jeroboam** broke away and formed the northern kingdom of **Israel**;
- Leaving two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) together with some priests to form the southern kingdom of **Judah**.
- Some time later, because of blatant sin, God allowed Israel to be taken into captivity.
- Later still the kingdom of Judah (the Jews) suffered the same punishment - captivity - and for exactly the same reason - blatant sin!
- Judah was carried to Babylon for a captivity lasting 70 years.
- During that time the Promised Land lay desolate, except for a few poor folk and some foreigners.

It is common knowledge that after the 70 year captivity in Babylon many - **though not all** - Jews returned to the Promised Land. **But what happened to the exiled Israelites who were previously taken captive?** Many Christians believe that the **exiled Israelites** never returned to the Promised Land, only the exiled Jews did. **This is not what the Bible teaches.** In Ezekiel 4: 1-6 we read an amazing passage about Israel's punishment lasting some **390 years**. No matter how we calculate the **390 year** period it would certainly have finished long before the Saviour's birth in Bethlehem. It could well be that the end of the **390 years** coincided with the end of Judah's captivity. Besides this, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah provide dozens of references about the **Israelites returning to the Promised Land with the Jews**. A few texts are given below to prove this:

- Ezra 7: 7
 - *“And there went up some of the **children of Israel**, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king.”*

- Ezra 7: 13
 - *“I make a decree, that **all they of the people of Israel**, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.”*

- Ezra 7: 28
 - *“... And I was strengthened as the hand of the LORD my God was upon me, and I gathered together **out of Israel** chief men to go up with me.”*

- Ezra 6: 16
 - *“And the **children of Israel**, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy,”*

- Ezra 6: 21
 - *“And the **children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity**, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD God of Israel...”*

- Ezra 9: 1
 - *“Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The **people of Israel**, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands...”*

- Ezra 10: 1
 - *“Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him **out of Israel a very great congregation** of men and women and children: for the people wept very sore.”*

- Ezra 10: 5
 - *“Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, **and all Israel**, to swear that they should do according to this word. And they sware.”*

- Nehemiah 7: 7 & 66
 - *“... The number, I say, of the **men of the people of Israel** ... The whole congregation together was **forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore...**”*

- Nehemiah 9: 1
 - *“Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the **children of Israel** were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them.”*

- Nehemiah 12: 47
 - *“And **all Israel** in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah...”*

These texts clearly prove that many Israelites did return to the Promised Land after Judah's 70 year Babylonian captivity.

3. Israel In Apostolic Times

Was Israel still in the Promised Land in apostolic times? The answer is **Yes**. The New Testament contains over 70 references about Israel being in the Promised land in apostolic times. Did not the Saviour specifically state that he was sent to find the **lost sheep of the house of Israel**? Though Jesus, to our knowledge, never preached a single sermon outside Israel, he most certainly did fulfil his mission and found many lost sheep of the house of Israel. This means that Israel must have been in the Promised land for him to find those **lost sheep**. Listed below are a few texts to prove that the **children of Israel** were in the Promised Land in apostolic times. The tribe of **Asher** is specifically mentioned in Luke 2: 36.

- Luke 1: 80
 - *“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.”*

- Luke 2: 36
 - *“And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the **tribe of Aser: (Asher)** she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;”*

- Matthew 15: 24
 - *“But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the **lost sheep of the house of Israel.**”*

- Luke 7: 9
 - *“When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, **not in Israel.**”*

- John 1: 31
 - *“And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest **to Israel...**”*

- John 1: 47
 - *“Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an **Israelite** indeed, in whom is no guile!”*

- John 3: 10
 - *“Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a **master of Israel**, and knowest not these things?”*

- John 12: 13
 - *“Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the **King of Israel** that cometh in the name of the Lord.”*
- Acts 2: 22
 - *“Ye **men of Israel**, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:”*
- Acts 2: 36
 - *“Therefore let all the **house of Israel** know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”*
- Acts 3: 12
 - *“And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye **men of Israel**, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?”*
- Acts 4: 8
 - *“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and **elders of Israel**,”*
- Acts 4: 10
 - *“Be it known unto you all, and to all the **people of Israel**, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.”*
- Acts 5: 21
 - *“...But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the **children of Israel**, and sent to the prison to have them brought.”*
- Acts 5: 35
 - *“And said unto them, Ye **men of Israel**, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.”*
- Acts 9: 15
 - *“But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the **children of Israel**:”*
- Acts 13: 16
 - *“Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, **Men of Israel**, and ye that fear God, give audience.”*

- Acts 13: 24
 - *“When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to **all the people of Israel.**”*
- Acts 21: 28
 - *“Crying out, **Men of Israel, help...**”*

Scripture indicates that the **early Christian church was made up of believers from every tribe in Israel.** When, in the first century AD, the church was persecuted and scattered abroad, the apostle James wrote to these scattered Israelite Christians in the following terms.

James 1: 1: *“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the **twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.**”*

James was here writing to believers in Jesus Christ: believers who were members of the 12 tribes scattered abroad. It is hardly likely that he meant the early Israelites who were taken into captivity some 800 years before!

These texts clearly prove that many from the twelve tribes of Israel, some of whom were believers in Jesus Christ (Yeshua the Messiah) were in the Promised Land in apostolic times.

4. True Israelites

‘But,’ some will ask, **‘isn’t the true Israelite or Jew far more than just a physical descendant of Jacob?’** The answer is **‘Yes, a true Israelite is not simply a blood-born descendant of Jacob: but a converted and obedient true believer in Yahweh the God of Israel.’**

Romans 2: 28: *“For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:*

*29: **But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.**”*

Currently there are tens of thousands of faithful and obedient **Israelis** (the modern term used to describe Israelites and Jews) who worship the Almighty God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. These believers are **true Israelites!** The prophet Elijah had to learn this fact centuries before the apostle Paul mentioned it. **Modern Christian leaders should heed the lesson.**

Romans 11: 2: *“God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God **against Israel**, saying,*
3: *Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.*
4: *But what saith the answer of God unto him? **I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.***
5: *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”*

Besides faithfully obeying the Holy One of Israel, the modern Israeli has a further truth to learn: that **YESHUA (Jesus) the Son of God is the Messiah**. We are happy to write that reports coming in from Israel and elsewhere tell of thousands of Israelis now accepting Yeshua as their Messiah. **This faithful Messianic nucleus, together with many obedient Gentile converts who are grafted into the Olive of Israel, constitute the TRUE ISRAEL OF GOD!**

5. Israel's Future

Now that we have identified the true Israelite as an obedient believer in **Yahweh the Holy One of Israel**, let us take a brief look at Israel's performance in the past. All Bible students know that ancient Israel - in the main - failed to accept Jesus as the Messiah and, as a result, the nation was **partially blinded** to the truth it had refused to acknowledge. This partial blindness was to last **till the full number of believing Gentiles had come in: after which Israel's blindness would be removed**.

Romans 11: 25: *“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness **in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.**”*

Shortly after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, Israel was banished from the Promised Land to the ends of the earth. Since then millions of Gentile Christians have joined the church: causing many leaders to think that the Almighty had rejected His chosen people Israel and that the **Christian Church** is now the true Israel of God! **This is a tragic misconception:** for the Bible plainly states that **Yahweh will never cast away His people Israel for all that they have done**. To be sure some unbelieving branches are pruned off the **Olive of Israel:** but the nation, though blinded and scattered, still has a faithful and obedient nucleus who are reckoned as **Yahweh's chosen people**. (Ezekiel 11: 16-17, Isaiah 41: 8-14, Jeremiah 31: 35-37, Romans 11: 1-2)

6. Purified As Silver

Bible prophecies clearly state that in the last days the people of Israel would be regathered to the Promised Land to be **purified as silver**. Listed below is a prophecy proving this.

Ezekiel 36: 19: *“And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them.*
20: *And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land.*
21: *But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went.*
22: *Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.*
23: *And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.*
24: *For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.*
25: *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.*
26: *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.*
27: *And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*
28: *And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.*
29: *I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you.*
30: *And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen.”*

We are currently witnessing the re-gathering of Israel. Close on 7,000,000 have returned to the Promised Land this century and the number is growing!

7: The New Covenant

We hear a lot these days about Christians being **under the new covenant**. What does this mean? A **covenant** is a compact, a legal agreement, a bond between two or more parties. The **old covenant** was the agreement made at Mount Sinai between the Almighty and the people of Israel. Yahweh gave Israel certain commandments which if kept would attract His blessing, but if disobeyed would bring cursing. Israel agreed to obey but more often than not - **failed**. The fault was in Israel, not in the law. The Almighty then decided to make a **new covenant - with the house of Israel and the house of Judah**. Carefully note that the **new covenant** is not made with the Gentile Church but with Israel and Judah! This time the Almighty's law - the very same law previously inscribed on stone - is inscribed in the

believer's mind. (forehead)

Hebrews 8: 8: *“For finding fault with them, he saith, **Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:***
9: *Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.*
10: ***For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:***
11: *And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.”*

Note two vital points in the above passage:

- The new covenant is made with **Israel and Judah.**
- And it would be different from the old covenant **‘made with their fathers who were led out of Egypt.’**

In other words the new covenant is made between the **Holy One of Israel** and the **blood-born descendants of Jacob, whose distant ancestors were led out of Egypt.**

To ensure that this vital fact is fixed in your mind I will repeat it: **The new covenant is made between Yahweh the Holy One of Israel and the end-time Israelites whose forefathers the Almighty led out of ancient Egypt in the days of Moses!**

The new covenant is not made with the Gentile Church; which could hardly claim that the Almighty took their fathers by the hand and lead them out of Egypt. No, the new covenant is made with the modern-day descendants of the Israelites who left Egypt in the days of Moses. When the new covenant is finally implemented, believers **‘shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.’** That is what the Bible is saying. This brings us back to the question: **Who are the 144,000 Israelites?**

Revelation 7: 4: *“And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes **of the children of Israel.**”*

The prophecy means exactly what it says: **The 144,000 are Israelites from the 12 tribes of Israel.**

You may well ask **‘are no Gentile converts included in that number?’** We do believe that some faithful and obedient Gentiles may well be classified as Israelites and included in the 144,000. If so, they will be those who do not baulk at the idea of being called Israelis or Jews. In ancient days when a foreigner decided to believe and obey the God of Israel he/she was reckoned as an Israelite.

Examples of this are **Rahab** the harlot, **Ruth** the Moabitess, **Obed-edom** the Gittite and **Uriah** the Hittite. These foreigners, because of their faith in the Most High and obedience to His law were reckoned as Israelites. In view of these examples, our judgment is that **some** elect Gentiles, those who have accepted Yahweh's Seal (His name, character and law) in their foreheads (minds) and who do not balk at the idea of being classified as Israelites, could well be included in the 144,000. But, and we must emphasize this, **the majority of the 144,000 sealed servants of God are the faithful, obedient, end-time, blood-born descendants of Jacob**. It would be confusing, to say the least, for God to say that the 144,000 were 'of the children of Israel' if they were not.

What about the INNUMERABLE MULTITUDE mentioned in Revelation 7: 9-17? These are true believers in Jesus the Lamb of God, from all the other nations of the world.

Revelation 7: 9: *“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of **all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues**, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;*
10: *And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*
11: *And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,*
12: *Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*
13: *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?*
14: *And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.***
15: *Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*
16: *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.*
17: *For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”*

No doubt these believers will, in the course of time, clearly see the necessity of obeying the Almighty's law; for the phrase '**wash their robes**' means just that. They will begin to keep the commandments aided by the merits and power of the Saviour's life.

8. Summary

1. In the final days of this age **144,000 Israelites** are to be sealed in their foreheads (minds) with the

seal of the living God. In order to identify these people it is necessary to first answer the question:
Who is an Israelite?

2. Ancient Israel and Judah blatantly sinned against the Almighty, who allowed them to be carried away from the Promised Land into captivity.
3. After Judah's 70 year captivity in Babylon many Israelites joined with their Jewish brethren and returned to the Promised Land: where they continued till apostolic times. When Israel rejected **Yeshua the Messiah** the Almighty partially blinded the nation to the truth it had rejected, and scattered His people to the ends of the earth.
4. Bible prophecy tells us that though Israel was partially blinded and scattered, **the Almighty never rejected His chosen people**. Instead He said He would re-gather them to the land He promised to their ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He would then purify them as a silversmith purifies silver and open their eyes to the truth they had previously rejected.
5. A **true Israelite** is far more than a blood-born descendant of the patriarch Jacob. A true Israelite is one who believes in the God of Israel and who endeavours to keep His commandments. All true Israelites will in the course of time accept Yeshua (Jesus) as their Messiah.
6. The Almighty has scheduled Himself to make a **new covenant with the houses of Israel and Judah**. It will be different from the first covenant He made with their ancestors at Mount Sinai. In the **new covenant Yahweh** will inscribe His law in the hearts and minds of His people: after which it will be unnecessary for Israelites to teach each other about the Almighty: for all will know Him. This inscribing of the Almighty's law on heart and mind could well coincide with the prophesied sealing of the 144,000.
7. **The 144,000 Israelites are converted, end-time, blood-born descendants of the Israelites who were brought out of Egypt in the days of Moses**. It could well be - and we hope it is - that some Gentile believers, those who do not balk at the idea of being classified as Israelis or Jews, will be numbered with them: but that is for the Almighty to decide.

And now may the Holy One of Israel be with you all. Further information on Israel see [Israel, The Chosen of God](#).

AMEN

In the Son's Name for the Father's glory.

Elder: Max W. Mader



A Voice In The Wilderness - Canada

www.avoiceinthewilderness.org

www.avitw.ca

