

The Ambassador Journal Presents:



THE SHEPHERDS OF ISRAEL – Part 1

*A Concise Commentary on
Ezekiel 34*

Vanita Lynn Warren, Ph.D. Pastoral Theology
"The Ambassador Journal (TAJ)" Online Presentations

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ABOUT

The Shepherds of Israel is a 3-Part Presentation regarding the individuals who are accountable for leading God's people over the centuries, whether they are Jews or Christians. In Part 1, you will learn about the Divided Kingdom, Rabbinic Judaism, the Talmud, some Jewish History, and specifics about the Shepherds and Rulers of the House of Jacob among the Nations.

VANITA LYNN WARREN

OUTLINE: THE SHEPHERDS OF ISRAEL – Part 1

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Welcome!

THE SHEPHERDS OF ISRAEL – Part 1

Hello! I'm Dr. Vanita Warren, and I would like to welcome you to "The Ambassador Journal (TAJ)" Online Presentation of The Shepherds of Israel: A Concise Commentary on Ezekiel Chapter 34.

In this 3-Part presentation you will learn about God's Sheep. You will learn about who they are, and more importantly, who are their earthly shepherds.

In Part 1, you will learn about such things as:

- *A Kingdom Divided*
- *Rabbinic Judaism & the Talmud*
- *Religious Leaders, Then & Now*
- *Some Jewish History*
- *Shepherds & Rulers of the House of Jacob*

In Parts 2 and 3, you will learn about:

- *The Judeo-Christian Block Party*
- *Who Is God's Flock (Sheep)*
- *Who Are Their Shepherds*
- *God Is One God*
- *The Fallen Tabernacle of David*
- *Digging Deeper*
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Ezekiel 34:12

Ezekiel 34:12 states: As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so I will seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. There are many questions in this one Scripture verse that can be asked and answered.

1. Who is the Shepherd?
2. When was He, or when is He among His scattered sheep?
3. Who are the scattered sheep He is seeking out?
4. Why and how were they scattered?
5. Where did the scattered sheep go?
6. How will the Shepherd deliver them from all the places where they were scattered?
7. What does scattered sheep have to do with the Shepherds of Israel?

From the perspective of the Shepherds of Israel, these are just some of the questions that will be answered in this presentation.

Let's get started!

The Shepherds of Israel that we are referring to in this presentation, are the spiritual leaders of the House of Jacob. First, however, we must understand who or what the "House of Jacob" is; who was scattered; when were they scattered; and to where were they scattered.

The House of Jacob:

When I speak of the House of Jacob, I am referring to this "house" as "all Israel"; meaning all of the descendants of "Jacob." Jacob is Isaac's son and Abraham's grandson. After wrestling with God, who had manifested Himself in the form of a "Man" in Genesis 32:24-32, and prevailing against Him; God changed Jacob's name to Israel. Thus, when we are talking about Jacob or "All Israel," we are talking about the members of the 12 Tribes, or sons of Jacob and their descendants.

For the purpose of this presentation; I will refer to the House of Jacob as "Jacob" or as "All Israel"; rather than the House of Israel. This will eliminate confusion. This is because, as you should know, the House of Jacob—the 12 Tribes, were divided. This is when the Kingdom of Israel was divided and split into two separate Houses; 1) the House of Judah in the South (which basically comprised the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and the Levites); and the divided House of Israel in the North (which comprised the remaining 10 Tribes). The Northern tribes retained the name "Israel," but they did not include the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, or the Levites. The Northern Tribes are also referred to as "Ephraim" in Scripture. The name "Israel" is all over Scripture. But because the Kingdom is still divided to this day, when reading Scripture one must ascertain, if the Word is referring to all of Jacob, meaning "All Israel." Or, is it referring to only a part of Jacob, or the House of Israel, which is the 10 Tribes of the Northern Kingdom and their descendants; who were scattered as a result of the Assyrian Captivity and lost their identity.

When Yeshua said, that He was sent to the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel, He was not referring to "All of Jacob." He was not referring to the House of Judah and their descendants (the Jews) into which He was born. The House of Judah was never lost or scattered in such a manner that they lost their identity. They are in a state of diaspora, but they are not lost. Thus, the context of Ezekiel 34:12 is referring to members of the Northern Kingdom and their descendants—the Lost Sheep or the 10 Lost Tribes.

Religious Leaders in Scripture

First, I would like to give you a quick overview of the types of individuals who were responsible for having some authority or influence over God's people.

Who are the Levites? The Levites are simply descended from the Tribe of Levi (Jacob's 3rd son from Leah). The priestly line descended from Levi.

Who are the Priests? In Judaism, a Priest is a Kohen/Kohanim (plural). They are halakhically (according to Torah) required to be of direct patrilineal descent from Aaron (Moses' brother); who descended from the Tribe of Levi. The Kohanim were Levite priests, who performed the work of holiness in the Temple. The Kohanim (Priests) were always from the Tribe of Levi; but not all Levites were Kohanim; because not all Levites are in the line of Aaron.

Levites, who were not Kohanim, played music in the Temple or served as guards. They are divided into three groups and descended from Levi's sons. The descendants of Gershon, are Gershonites; the descendants of

Kohath are Kohathites; and the descendants of Merari are called Mararites. Each group filled different roles in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple services.

What is a Prophet? A Prophet is a spokesperson for God. Deuteronomy 18:18-20, God said: *“I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.”* The Hebrew prophets were often rejected and persecuted; and in some instances, such as Hosea, prophetic parables were exemplified by their own personal lives. The validity of a true prophet of God is that they are never wrong.

Who were the Sadducees? The Sadducees were a prominent sect of Jews during the 2nd Temple era. Being contemporaries of the Pharisees and Essenes, the Sadducees filled many social, religious and political roles. Sadducees held a high social status and were often from wealthy families. Many, not all, of them were high priests and aristocratic. The well-known unique characteristic of the Sadducees was their rejection of the Oral Torah, promulgated by the Pharisees. In addition, theological disputes often arose over their denial of life after death. Sadducees did not believe in a resurrection.

Who were the Pharisees? (Including Paul) The Pharisees were a group that primarily came from a group of scribes and sages. The is derived from the Hebrew and Aramaic *parush* or *parushi*, which means “one who is separated.” Pharisees held to many traditions that were not written in the Torah. They justify these traditions by claiming were delivered in the Oral Torah. For example, Pharisees believe that all Jews had to observe the purity laws (which applied to the Temple service) *outside* the Temple. Yet, it is their continued adherence the oral law and traditions in the face of future assimilation that made them (as Josephus put it): the most expert and accurate expositors of Jewish law.

Initially, the traditions of the Pharisees were solidified by their constant debates with the Sadducees. However, much of the discussions and writings over the centuries grew into how to adapt to life in exile, without the Temple. Battles with Christianity and the secular world further solidified Pharisaic traditions. These periods of change signaled the conversion of Pharisaic Judaism to the Rabbinic Judaism we are familiar with today. This will be touched on again in a moment.

Spiritual Leaders

When Ezekiel penned these words concerning the spiritual leaders of the House of Jacob; he was surely referring to the priests and religious leaders of his day. Matthew Henry described them as the princes, magistrates, priests and Levites; including the Great Sanhedrin. The Kingdom of Israel has always been a Theocracy. That is, governed by divine guidance or by officials who are regarded as divinely guided.

The Sanhedrin

The Sanhedrin is the ancient Jewish court system. The Great Sanhedrin was the supreme religious body in the Land of Israel during the time of the Holy Temples. Tannaitic sources describe the Great Sanhedrin as a religious assembly of 71 sages who met in the Chamber of Hewn Stones in the Temple in Jerusalem. It was made up of a Nasi (President) an Av Beit Din (the Chief of the Court), and the Mufla (69 general members). Its authoritative decisions were issued under the name Beit HaMidrash. There were also smaller Sanhedrins in every town in the Land of Israel, as well as a civil/political Sanhedrin. The Talmud tractate Sanhedrin, identifies two classes of rabbinical courts called Sanhedrin, a single Great Sanhedrin (71 sages) and a Lesser Sanhedrin of 23 judges.

The earliest record of a Sanhedrin was recorded by Josephus who wrote of a political Sanhedrin convened by the Romans in 57 bce. However, about 30ce, the Great Sanhedrin began to lose much of its authority, and after the Temple was destroyed in 70ce, so was the Great Sanhedrin. A substitute Sanhedrin in Yavneh took over many of its functions, under the authority of Rabban Gamliel. And from Yavneh, the Sanhedrin moved to different cities in the Galilee, eventually ending up in Tiberias. Although not explicitly stated, it is understood that it was the Sanhedrin who convened over the trial of Yeshua; as well as over other incidents such as Acts 5:26-39 and Acts 6:12-15; where Scripture simply refers to them as the Council. The Sanhedrins were a very important element of the Spiritual Leaders, who God held accountable for the oversight of His people. They functioned well into the Christian era, up until the abolishment of the rabbinic patriarchate in about 425 C.E. It was eventually dissolved after continued persecution by the Roman Empire and Christian opposition.

Rabbinic Judaism or Rabbinism

Thus, as you can see, the body of Spiritual Leaders who are responsible for the House of Jacob, and whom God continues to hold accountable, has not only existed continually; but that responsibility has expanded over the millennia. Even up to Yeshua's time the Priests, Pharisees, and Sadducees continued their oversight of the descendants of the Southern Kingdom of Judah who lived in the Land of Palestine and surrounding regions.

Due to the dissolution of the Sanhedrin and its authoritative structure; since the late 5th and early 6th Centuries c.e., Rabbinic Judaism, or the *Yahadut Rabbanit* ([Hebrew](#): יְהוּדוּת רַבִּינִית), has been the guiding authority for Judaism. Particularly after the codification of the Babylonian Talmud. This Spiritual Leadership authority grew out of Pharisaic Judaism and is foundationally based upon the belief that Moses not only received the written Torah from God at Mt. Sinai; but he also received an oral explanation of it, known as the "Oral Torah." Sadducees and Samaritans do not recognize an "Oral Torah," as a divine authority nor do they adhere to the Rabbinic traditions used to interpret Scripture. But in respect to overall Judaism today, they are clearly the minority opinion.

However, during the 9th century C.E., a number of sects arose that denied the existence of an oral Torah. One the main sects came to be known as Karaites (literally, People of the Scripture), and they were distinguished from the Rabbinates or Rabbinical Judaism.

As previously mentioned, as we move forward in time, the priests and former Spiritual Leaders of Israel (particularly the Pharisees) have become modern-day rabbis. And the authority, which no longer existed due to the absence of a Sanhedrin, has been assumed by Rabbinic/Talmudic Judaism.

Rabbinic Judaism

Rabbinism, or *Yahadut Rabbanit*, is the mainstream form of Judaism. It came to ultimate fruition about in the 6th century after Yeshua; resulting from the Pharisaic Judaism and the codification of the Babylonian Talmud a few centuries before. It is based on the belief that Moses received a Written Instruction (Torah) from God (the first Five Books—called the Pentateuch in Christian vernacular), as well as the oral explanation, of it, which is called the "Oral Torah."

The Talmud

As I said, the Oral Torah was given as a more detailed explanation of what the Torah meant and how to interpret it and apply God's teaching and instruction. Orthodox Judaism believes God gave the Oral Torah to Moses, and Moses passed it along orally to Israel; and it has been handed-down to the present day. It was in "oral form" handed-down by word of mouth until about the 2nd Century c.e. Around that time, it was compiled and written down in a document called the Mishnah. Over the next few centuries, additional commentaries elaborating on the Mishnah were written down in Jerusalem and Babylon. These additional commentaries are known as the

Gemara. The Gemara and the Mishnah together, make up what we call the Talmud. This was completed in the 5th century c.e.

The two Talmuds are the Jerusalem Talmud and the Babylonian Talmud. The Babylonian Talmud is more comprehensive, and is the one most people mean if they just say "the Talmud" without specifying which one. Thus, the Oral Torah was subsequently codified in the Mishnah and the Gemara. The Talmuds are interpreted in Rabbinic literature and they detail subsequent rabbinic decisions and writings. [In KSI's view, It's a combination of religious commentary and Rabbinic interpretation of God's Law—similar to the way our U.S. Courts develop what we call "case law." Where instead of specific cases being discussed and cited, the Talmud is a plethora of Rabbinic opinion on various sides of a particular issue]. Thus, the Talmud offers a variety of views on every issue, without always clarifying which view is the accepted one. Nevertheless, Rabbinic authority is predicated on the belief that the Torah cannot be properly understood without the interpretations of the Rabbis and Sages in the Oral Torah. In addition to the codified text of Talmuds, there are additional commentaries on the Talmud by important Jewish sages. Two of these were the medieval greats: Rambam (Maimonides) and Rashi.

The Great Rabbis

Rashi (circa 1040-1105) is an acronym for *Rabbi Shlomo Itzhaki*. Shlomo Yitzchaki or *Salomon Isaacides* in Latin, was a medieval French rabbi and author of a comprehensive commentary on the Babylonian Talmud, as well as a commentary on the entire Tanakh. Rashi's work remains a major cornerstone of modern Jewish study and interpretation. His commentary on the Talmud, which covers nearly all of the Babylonian Talmud (a total of 30 tractates), has been included in every edition of the Talmud since its first printing by Daniel Bomberg in the 1520s. His commentary on Tanakh—especially on the Chumash ("Five Books of Moses")—is now considered an indispensable aid to students of Judaism at all levels.

Rambam (circa 1135-1204) is also an acronym for Rabbeinu Moshe ben Maimon; meaning "Our Rabbi/Teacher Moses Son of Maimon." His name was further modified in Greek and Latin, into the *Moses Maimonides*, as we know him as today. Born in Cordova (Spain) Rambam was a preeminent medieval Sephardic Jewish philosopher, physician, and astronomer who became one of the most prolific and influential Torah scholars of the Middle Ages. He also worked and taught in Egypt and in Morocco.

So what has happened in the interim?

The year 1204 was over 800 years ago. What's been going on with the Spiritual Leadership of the House of Jacob—particularly the Southern Kingdom of Judah now in Diaspora.

The Greek word **diaspora** (διασπορά, means: "scattering"). In this case it refers to the scattered population of the Southern Kingdom (House of Judah) whose origin lies within the smaller geographic locale of the Land of Israel (HaEretz).

As I said, the Shepherds of Israel are the former and present day religious and spiritual leaders of the House of Jacob. Although we have been talking about the descendants of the Southern Kingdom of Judah (the Jews); both Houses of Jacob have modern shepherds. That is: the scattered Northern Kingdom of Israel who are among the nations have their shepherds; and the Southern Kingdom of Judah who are in Diaspora had their Rabbinic shepherds. However, Judah's shepherds had little control of the big picture. The rulers of the Nations were in control, and they included descendants of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and their shepherds. These were the Christian Nations and alleged "Shepherds for Christ."

From the tenth and eleventh centuries onward, there were established Jewish communities in most of the major towns of Germany and France, with Jews excelling in commerce. During the interval of relative harmony,

the great Talmudic academies of Germany and France were able to develop intense intellectual activity. Rashi lived in Troyes in northern France. However, by 1240, whole wagonloads of the Talmud were publically burned in the streets of Paris. There began a descent of Jewish acceptance, from their heights of scholarship and commercial prosperity, into a maelstrom of murderous assault, and arbitrary expulsion that made Jewish life so perilous in the late Middle Ages. This was partially due to the mutual antagonism of the Jews and the early Christians; as well as the anti-Jewish resolutions of the early Church councils. Around 1009, the burning of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem pretty-much crystalized simmering anti-Jewish sentiment among Christians. These were just a few of the many elements that exposed Judah to the wrath of the Church Reformers.

With the beginning of the Crusades, this anti-Jewish sentiment erupted into increased violence. It is evident that from the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries, the fortunes of Western Christendom and of its Jewish minority varied inversely. The growing power of the national monarchies and of the Church—although often bitter rivals—resulted in an increasing impoverishment and isolation of the Jews. The *Inquisition*--a group of institutions within the judicial system of the Catholic Church intended to combat anything they considered to be heresy; started in 12th Century France. During the 14th Century, a more direct relationship prevailed. The calamities that befell Western Europe during the 14th Century ushered in a double-dose of disaster for Judah. Christians looked for a cause of all their misfortunes—particularly the Black Death (bubonic plague). Judah again became the proverbial scapegoat. Throughout the world, Jews were reviled and accused in all lands of having caused it; allegedly by poisoning the water and the wells; supported by coerced confessions of Jewish victims of terror.

In the 15th Century, specifically 1480, the *Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition* (Spanish Inquisition) was established in 1480 by Catholic Spanish monarchs Ferdinand (of Aragon) and Isabella (of Castile). In all, between 1481 and 1808, more than 300,000 persons were brought up on charges before the Spanish Inquisition; and of these at least 10% or 30,000 were publically executed. The targets of the Spanish Inquisition were Muslims, Protestants, and mostly Marrano Jews (Conversos) (Jews who either sincerely converted to Christianity; or those who faked their conversion to Christianity and practiced Judaism in secret). Either way there were treated as outsiders. The inquisition was not really concerned with whether “professing Jews” practiced their own religion, so long as they did not interfere in the affairs of Christians. Thus, Marranos/Conversos were always under suspicion as to the sincerity of their professed Christian faith. Nevertheless, on March 31, 1492, Ferdinand and Isabella signed an edict expelling all Jews (except Conversos) from Spain. By May 1, the edict of expulsion had been promulgated, and the exodus of more than 100,000 Jews began. By the end of July, not one single professing Jews remained on Spanish soil.

Judah searched for deliverance in the West, but their “Christian Shepherds” were brutal and unrelenting. The majority who were banned from Spain went to Portugal; but they had to pay for the privilege of settling in the then Kingdom of John II of Portugal. That didn’t last long. John II’s successor, Emanuel I, contracted a marriage with the daughter of the Spanish monarchs, and as a precondition, Portugal had to rid themselves of their Jews. In 1496 the Judah was again expelled—this time from Portugal. The term “Sephardim” encompasses those of Judah who left Spain and Portugal either as Jews or as Conversos, as well as their descendants.

Their choices of new homelands were severely limited in the late 15th and 16th Century. Whole regions of Western Europe (England, Wales, France, Sicily, Sardinia, Germany, Austria, Hungary, and now, all of the Iberian Peninsula) was off-limits to legal Jewish settlement. Among the few regions where Jews could openly settle in numbers were the Ottoman Empire, mainland Italy, and Poland. The Spanish and Portuguese refugees were well-received by the Ottoman Sultan Bajazet II. By the middle of the 16th Century, during Suleiman’s reign, Constantinople had about 50,000 Jews. However, the spiritual center of Ottoman Jewry during the 16th Century was Safed in Upper Galilee (Palestine). Italy, however, was a different story. While the Renaissance brought some

hope and enlightenment; Jews were not free from discrimination or restrictions. Another turning point came in 1555, when on July 12th, Pope Paul IV published, yet another decree, ordering that all Jews be segregated in their own quarters, forbidden to go out at night, barred from all but menial occupations, and forced to wear a distinctive yellow hat to distinguish them from other peoples. Those confined quarters became known as “Ghettos.” The term was originally used in Venice to describe the part of the city to which Jews were restricted and segregated. At the beginning, there was no deprivation or persecution in the original Venetian ghettos. It was an area of “legal” separation.

Along comes the Protestant Reformation

The era found the few Jews of Germany trapped between Catholic and Protestant battles. Italian Jewry was clearly under Papal control, and a Church aggressively combating Martin Luther’s Protestant rebellion. This turned out to be disastrous for Judah. The Catholic Church was resolved to crush everything that they perceived to be heresy, and Jews were regarded as an equal threat as the Protestants. In 1553, the papacy endorsed the burning of the Talmud. In addition, the Jews of Italy were ordered into ghettos in Rome, and expelled from nearly all other places under papal control. By the 17th Century most of the world’s Jews lived in Eastern Europe and in the Ottoman Empire. In the middle 18th Century East Europe had a million and a half Jews of which the largest community was in Poland. At the end of the 18th Century Poland was subjugated by Russia and lost its independence. Harsh residential restrictions forced Jews to establish the “Pales of Settlement” similar to the ghettos of Christian Europe. Within a single century, Russian Jewry would become the largest single community known to Jewish history up to that time.

Pogroms

A pogrom is a violent riot aimed at the persecution and/or massacre of a particular ethnic or religious group of people. The word is Russian, and it means to violently destroy, wreak havoc, and demolish. It basically means to violently “harm.” In this case it was directed at the Russian Jewish population. The term originally entered the English language to describe 19th and 20th Century attacks on Judah within the then Russian Empire; and mostly within the Jewish *Pale of Settlement* (modern day Ukraine and Belarus). The 1821 Odessa pogroms marked the start of the nineteenth century wave of pogroms within the Russian Empire. However, between 1881–1884 was the worst period, when over 200 anti-Jewish pogroms happened. Of course, many pogroms were in the midst of the Russian Civil War, which followed the Russian Revolution of 1917.

At any rate, an estimated 70,000 to 250,000 civilian Jews were killed throughout the Empire, leaving more than 300,000 Jewish orphans. Grim scenes were repeated dozens of times during the waves of pogroms that swept over Russian Jewry during the 1880s and 1890s, and again between 1903 and 1906. Images of an age of freedom had never been forgotten among Judah. Now, secular ideas of a political homeland were also emerging. Although scarce, important lines of continuity were still maintained in Jerusalem, Safed, Jaffa, and Hebron communities in Palestine. Palestine never became the birthplace of any other nation. Every one of its conquerors had their original home and seat of government somewhere else. Still, Judah always cherished the hope of renewed independence and the restoration of Zion. Thus, the cataclysms that befell Russian Jewry during the 1880s and 1890s have often been identified as the period of Zionism’s birth.

The Hope

For a long time, this desire of Judah for their homeland was merely a vague hope without any concrete plans to achieve it. Yet, within a single generation, the prayer had become a concrete political prospect. In the late 1800s, Theodor Herzl started a movement which culminated with Chaim Weizmann and the founding of Zionism. Political Zionism was a movement dedicated to the creation of a Jewish state. It saw a “State” of Israel as a necessary refuge for Jewish victims of oppression, especially in Russia, where pogroms had decimated Jewish

populations. “Zionism,” of course, comes from the word “Zion,” which is the name of a stronghold in Jerusalem. Over time, the term “Zion” came to be applied to Jerusalem in general, and later to the Jewish hope of restoration—spiritual as well as secular/political. Zionism, itself, was not intended to be a religious movement. [In KSI’s view, it was political—and still is—driven by the need to relieve Judah of the global oppression they have experienced in foreign nations throughout all the years of their Diaspora].

Faith can turn out to be too much trouble for some. Early Zionists sought to establish a secular state of Israel, recognized by the world, through purely legal means; [rather than the Biblical Theocracy prophesied in scripture]. Theodor Herzl, for example, was a completely assimilated secular Jewish journalist. He felt little attachment to his Jewish heritage until he covered the trial of Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish captain in the French military who was (unjustly) convicted of passing secrets to Germany. The charges against Dreyfus brought out a wave of anti-Jewish sentiment that shocked Herzl into realizing the need for a Jewish state. Early Zionists were so desperate for a refuge at one point that they actually considered a proposal to create a Jewish homeland in Uganda. Alaska and Siberia were also proposed as possible alternatives. Yet, the only land that truly inspired Judah—and correctly so—was Israel’s ancient homeland, which at that time, was still part of the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire known as Palestine.

The Road to Holocaust: Germany between the Wars

This is a long story, but for the sake of this presentation, I will present a concise, but pertinent overview. World War I, World War II, and the time in-between is important in our discussion concerning the Shepherds of Israel. The House of Jacob always winds-up at the center of discussions in world affairs, and are nearly always participants—whether “willing” or simply unintentional or unwilling victims. With the Industrial Revolution and the proliferation of Democracy by Western powers; by this time, Jews had become central to the shaping of U.S. and European culture. However, in Europe, the question of the Jews as part of European society and yet still outside it, was now pivotal.

The political and cultural configuration of Europe after WWI and before WWII is pertinent. The Weimar Republic (the unofficial designation for the “German State” between 1919 and 1933) is a good starting place. The official name of the German State was the “German Reich” (*Deutsches Reich*), which was a continuation of the name from its pre-1918 Empire days. However, *World War I* brought an end to empires in Central Europe, Russia, and Ottoman Turkey. Bolshevism arose in the USSR, although there were still potent forces of nationalism. A large and insurmountable debt burdened Europe; particularly the insupportable reparations imposed on Germany through the Treaty of Versailles as a result of losing the war; as well as their loss of its colonial empire. Germany would have to pay reparations for the devastation caused by the war. This was, as Abba Eban put it, a “neurotic period.” The German people saw reparations as a national humiliation; while the German Government worked to undermine the validity of the Treaty of Versailles and the requirement to pay. Several plans were implemented over time, and they all failed. Germany was generally considered as defaulting on paying the reparations; and in March 1930, the German Government collapsed and was replaced by a new coalition. In June, Allied troops withdrew from near Mainz, Germany—the last occupation zone in the Rhineland—and the German Government proposed further refinements to the reparations. Their demands were refused.

During 1931, a financial crisis began in Germany. In May, the largest bank in Austria collapsed, sparking a banking crisis in Germany and Austria. In response, the German government announced that Germany was suspending reparation payments. This resulted in a massive withdrawal of domestic and foreign funds from German banks. By mid-July, all German banks had closed. In light of the crisis and with the prospect of Germany being unable to repay her debts, U.S. President Herbert Hoover intervened. In June, Hoover proposed a one-year moratorium on reparation and war debts.

It was deemed by many that the payment of reparations caused a major crisis which had disastrous effects on the German economy, resulting in the German Government printing more money as the currency collapsed. Hyperinflation began and printing presses worked overtime to print Reichsbank notes. By November 1923 one US dollar was said to be worth 4,200,000,000,000 marks. Reparations allegedly accounted for most of Germany's deficit in 1921 and 1922, and were the root cause of the massive hyperinflation. The people of Germany blamed the Weimar Republic for the country's defeat and for the humiliating terms of the Treaty of Versailles. A series of events brought the Weimar Republic to an end. Democracy ultimately collapsed and a single-party state was created. The end of the Weimar Republic marked the beginning of what we know as Nazi Germany.

Through much political positioning, Hitler was appointed as German Chancellor on 30 January 1933. The Nazi Party then began to eliminate all political opposition and consolidate its power. The rest is history, and the Holocaust is the most memorable atrocity of World War II. Yet, the Holocaust was not an anomaly. It could not have occurred without the deep-seated anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism that permeated previous decades and centuries. There was no country in Europe that lacked an anti-Semitic chapter in its history in the period between the two World Wars. In a few years in the 1930s, the Hopeful Dream of the German Jews was shattered, culminating in the living hell of the Shoah. When the Nazi horror erupted over Europe, the Jewish population of the continent was over 8 million. The Nazi era only lasted 12 years-4 months. Hitler committed himself and his nation to their "Final Solution."—an ultimate war against the Jews. It is estimated that of the 3.3 million Jews in Poland in 1942, on the eve of the Final Solution; 3 Million (about 90 percent) were exterminated. Similar percentages hold for Austria and Hungary; as well as 75% in the Netherlands.

The victims of the Holocaust were ultimately liberated. Of approximately 811,000 Jewish refugees embraced by various countries between 1933 and 1943; 190,000 came to the U.S.; 120,000 went to Palestine, and about 65,000 went to England. In addition, in 1943, the Danish underground smuggled some 7,000 Jews out of Nazi-occupied Denmark and safely into Sweden. However, the place where the "new Jew" was mostly emerging was in Palestine. The Jewish population in the Holy Land had grown from 78,000 in 1900 to 475,000 in 1939. In the two decades between the World Wars, Zionism had neither squandered its opportunities nor fully used them. But by 1945, the National Home had a Jewish population of about 600,000. Judah never gave up hope that they would someday return to HaEretz in Israel. That hope is expressed in the song *Ha-Tikvah* (The Hope), the anthem of the Zionist movement and the current National Anthem of the State of Israel. Israel's first flag went up on May 14, 1948, when David Ben-Gurion proclaimed the nation's independence. Whether the story is an Abraham-Hagar or Rebekah-Jacob man-made interference in Divine promises is yet to be determined; and a major item of debate. Nevertheless, Israel had resumed its place in political history.

Restoration (Man-made or God-made?)

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As I said previously, for a long time, this desire of Judah for their homeland was merely a vague hope without any concrete plans to achieve it. Yet, within a single generation, the prayer had become a concrete political reality. Political Zionism was dedicated to the creation of a secular State of Israel, recognized by the world, through purely legal means. They were not interested in the Biblical Theocracy prophesied in Scripture and

promised by God. And the atrocities of the Holocaust were the unquestionable impetus for the world to meet that demand.

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Whether our story is an Abraham-Hagar, or Rebekah-Jacob *man-made interference* in Divine promises is yet to be determined; as well as a topic of unending item of debate. Nevertheless, Israel has resumed its place in political and spiritual history. That being said, one of the main things I want to point out is that the Shepherds of Israel (both Christian and Jewish) have had a decisive hand in the long and global history of the whole House of Jacob. It has truly been a spiritual battle in the midst of carnal intentions and motivations. It's a question of "conscience accountability" and of "identity awareness" among God's people. We must understand who we are, and who have been our shepherds.

So again, the Shepherds of Israel are also the present day religious and spiritual leaders of both Houses of Jacob. As we moved forward in time, the priests and former Spiritual Leaders of Israel (particularly the Pharisees) have become modern-day rabbis. And the authority, which no longer existed due to the absence of a Sanhedrin, has been assumed by Rabbinic/Talmudic Judaism. The events of the past 800 years or so, have greatly impacted how Judah sees themselves, and how the world sees them, including their Christian brethren. Therefore, I'd like to give you an idea of what the main parts of modern-day Judaism look like, and what their Shepherds believe and teach post World War II.

Chasidic Judaism: In the 1700s, modern movements began to develop in Eastern Europe. This is when Chasidism was founded by Israel ben Eliezer, known in Jewish circles as the Baal Shem Tov, or the Besht. Before Chasidism, Judaism emphasized education as the way to get closer to G-d. Chasidism emphasized other, more personal experiences and mysticism as alternative routes to G-d. Today, Orthodoxy and even the liberal movements of Judaism today have been strongly influenced by Chasidic teachings. Chasidic sects are organized around a spiritual leader called a Rebbe or a *tzaddik*, a person who is considered to be more enlightened than other Jews. A Chasid consults his Rebbe about all major life decisions. Chasidism continues to be a vital movement throughout the world.

Reform Judaism are what I call "Ethnic Jews" and are the most liberal of people who call themselves Jews in modern times. Reform Judaism does not believe that the Torah was written by God. They believe that the Bible was written by separate sources and redacted together. Reform Jews do not believe in observance of commandments as such, but they retain much of the values and ethics of Judaism, along with some of the practices and the culture. The original, basic tenets of American Reform Judaism were set down in the "Pittsburgh Platform." Many non-observant, nominal, and/or agnostic Jews will identify themselves as Reform when pressed to specify. According to Judaism 101 sources, 35% of American Jews identify themselves as Reform, including 39% of those who belong to a synagogue. They are "religious" in their own way, and there are approximately 900 Reform Jewish synagogues in the United States and Canada.

Conservative Judaism grew out of tensions between Orthodoxy and Reform. Formed in 1913 at the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, its roots in the Jewish Theological Seminary of America go back into the late 19th Century. Conservative Judaism maintains that the truths found in the Tanakh and other Jewish writings did come from G-d, but were transmitted by humans and contain a human component. They generally accept the binding nature of halakhah, but believe that the Law should change and adapt, absorbing aspects of the

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predominant culture while remaining true to Judaic values. As within Christianity, there are variations among the different synagogues. Some are indistinguishable from Reform, except that they use more Hebrew; while others are practically Orthodox, except that men and women sit together. Approximately 26% of American Jews identify themselves as Conservative, with about 33% of them actually belonging to a synagogue, and there are approximately 750 Conservative synagogues in the entire world today.

You can find out more by visiting Judaism 101 at <http://www.jewfaq.org/movement.htm>

Religious Leaders Now

As you now know, the beliefs and practices of Rabbinic Judaism have their roots in the great Jewish scholars and sages of the ages, such as Rashi and Maimonides. And, as we apply the typology to our present day; rabbis and Jewish spiritual leadership have the responsibility of being the “Shepherds of Israel.” With centuries of persecutions, pogroms, and anti-Semitism, Zionism can easily be perceived as the much needed and inevitable outcome.

This was a detailed overview of the Shepherds of the House of Judah who has been dispersed into the Nations since 70 c.e. and the Fall of Jerusalem. In the midst, we were exposed to the Shepherds of the House of Israel within the confines and dictates of Christendom, and their rocky relationship with the House of Judah.

The Rest of the House of Jacob

Let’s briefly discuss the rest of the House of Jacob (the House of Israel) who has been scattered among the Nations since the Assyrian Captivity. It’s no usual to look at Christendom from this perspective; and it’s a view that many avoid and/or completely distort. Nevertheless, it’s time to look at the other side of the Judeo-Christian spectrum, and the Shepherds of Israel responsible for the people of God scattered among the nations who are not Jews. Who are not part of the House of Judah. They are God’s Sheep who really don’t understand what that means.

Origin of the Christian Faith

I will presume that you have a basic understanding of the origin of the Christian faith. Basically, that would translate into: Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, began His ministry around 30 years of age; was tried and crucified by the Romans under Pontius Pilate as our Suffering Messiah who died for our sin; was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; rose from the dead on the third day, ascended into Heaven; and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will return a second time as our Conquering Messiah and usher in His Millennial Kingdom. Since the death of Jesus, (whom I refer to as Yeshua), and the rise of Christianity throughout the globe, we have amassed numerous Christian doctrines and denominations which are broadly and fundamentally categorized as either Catholic or Protestant.

I believe that the traditional models of Christian Theology employed by Christendom ***are not*** exactly what Yeshua intended; nor taught to His Apostles and Disciples. When I say the “traditional models,” I’m referring to the fundamental Catholic and Protestant theological models we are accustomed to. As we know, even within those models there is much variation. We call those differences denominational. Then, we further divide and categorize our faith in Yeshua according to man-made denominational doctrine and belief.

I don’t want to give a lesson in Christian History because the basics should be familiar to most people listening to this lecture. However, I will suffice it to say that Christianity (Israel among the Nations) has evolved considerably since the time of Yeshua, and I’m strongly certain that it doesn’t look anything like the 1st Century Ekklesia of the Apostles and Paul, who first called themselves (Followers of Messiah) at Antioch. Modern Christianity has many different shepherds, on many different pages, with many different doctrines. Like the rabbis of Talmudic Judaism, Christian shepherds all have “essentials” in common that are generally agreed to regardless

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of denomination. However, also like Talmudic Judaism, they do not have the essentials of Yeshua, the Apostles, and Paul. Both Rabbinic Judaism and traditional Christianity are lacking 1st Century Essentials; for the simple fact that they are lacking in the truths of each other. Judaism lacks Yeshua; and Christianity lacks Torah and God's Teaching and Instruction. Yeshua is the Living Torah and His 1st Century Essentials are crucial as well as needed in order to fully understand our Judeo-Christian faith.

These divisions among the House of Israel, which are readily accepted by the Church as "normal," were ever intended by Yeshua, or the writers of the New Testament. It is only by the work of the Holy Spirit that most of the major foundations and essential Scriptural truths are still in place. **It is this plethora of division that incites me to unity, and a passion for the reconciliation of the two Houses of Jacob.**

Yet, hope has arrived, and restoration is on the horizon! During the 19th and 20th Centuries, Christians began to embrace the Hebraic roots of their faith. Today, there is a seemingly "New Kid" on the block. *The Prodigal Son* has returned.

Thank you for participating in our lesson. Please view Part 2 next.

For more teaching on the House of Jacob and the Restoration of the Fallen Tabernacle of David, visit my website at www.vanitawarren.org

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN OUR LESSON!

THE SHEPHERDS OF ISRAEL-PART 1

A Commentary on Ezekiel 34

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