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State of the Reunion: Part II

by Hale Harris

Editor's Note: In the Article, "State of the Reunion: Part I," Hale asked us to consider the state of the reunion of Judah and Ephraim in the last days—to consider our frame of reference and to question whether or not we have a proper perspective in the matter. Hale showed us that our challenge is to have a frame of reference that is centered in Messiah Yeshua—because that is the only way that we will be able to move forward in our Reunion.

Part II:

Let us begin Part II with Galatians 2:19-20: **"For through the Law I died to the Law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me."**

These are ultimate frame of reference verses. This is foundational New Covenant understanding. This is why we are told to be baptized, or immersed in the mikveh, if you prefer. Baptism is a New Covenant ritual that speaks of our death, burial, and resurrection in Messiah. This concept is all-important as it regards living out our New Covenant life. By faith we are placed IN HIM. When it says you have been crucified with Messiah, this is not just figurative language. Somehow, someday, in a dimension that transcends time you were put on the cross with Yeshua and you died. The scriptures say our "old man" (*anthropos*), the old nature we inherited from Adam that was steeped in sin, was put on the cross with Messiah and crucified with Him. That's a done deal. Today's program is not about trying to reform and fix the old man; the old man has been put to death.

So you do not have two natures. You now have the nature of your Heavenly Father. You are a new creation—the Holy Spirit and your spirit have become one (1 Cor. 6:17). This is the heart of the good news.

Most of us know about Yeshua's death. But we often overlook the reality of our own death. I probably don't have to tell you that death is very final. You ever hear about people who stage their own death so the bad guys (or maybe even the good guys) will quit looking for them? Well, this was not a staged or fake death—this was the real thing. You were placed IN HIM and you died IN HIM. If you look up the scriptures concerning this, they are all in the past tense. Yeshua kept the Law perfectly, something we can't do; He took the punishment for the sins of all the sons of Adam, and He died. We were immersed (*baptidzo*) into that death (Rom. 6:3).

Why wasn't Yeshua's death all that was needed? Why did we have to die also? The reason is twofold: According to the Law it's illegal for a husband who has divorced his wife to remarry her if she has gone and been with another man. The House of Israel went and committed spiritual adultery. In the book of Romans, Paul, writing from the wife's (our) perspective, explains that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as that person lives. A married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living, but if he dies, she is free from the law binding herself to her husband. But then Paul writes something startling: **"Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God" (Rom. 7:4).**



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Yahweh's redemptive plan is ingenious. Yeshua died and we died with Him. No more debt. No more slavery. No more legal obligation. You can't make a cleaner break from the old order than death. If you don't believe me, go try and collect money from a dead man. I'm not talking about his estate; I'm talking about him personally. He won't care how many collection calls you make because he's no longer here. But it gets better still: since death could not hold Yeshua down, He rose from the dead and we were raised up with Him as new creations! We're not only dead to the old order, we're alive in Him as new, resurrected creatures. And **"whom the Son sets free is free indeed"** (John 8:36). Israel is legally free to marry, to be joined in union with the one she is betrothed to.

Now, all this had better be your frame of reference because you're going to act according to what you believe. Yes, it's true that you are a sinner saved by grace, and where would we be apart from that act of atonement. But that's not the ultimate goal or focus of New Covenant life. The goal is intimacy with the Creator once again, walking in union with Him, living a life of holiness, power and new-creation life through the Holy Spirit.

Hosea 4:6 says, **"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."** The Hebrew word translated "destroy" is from *damah*. There are other Hebrew words that are translated "destroy" or "annihilate" but *damah* can also mean, "to be dumb or silent." It carries with it the aspect of being neutralized or rendered inconsequential. This truly describes what happens to a New Covenant Israelite when they fail to understand and appropriate the radical, transformative truth of the gospel. One can be an heir of a wealthy, mighty King, but if you are ignorant of your royal rights and privileges, it will benefit you little.

While it is a fact that we are new creations with a new nature, there is still the flesh to deal with. I'm not talking about literal flesh and blood, but rather thought patterns or habits that are not in accordance with the Kingdom of God. The flesh may give rise to very negative conduct in your life, or you may have very functional, well-adjusted flesh that allows you to do many good things and present yourself to society in admirable ways. Regardless, the flesh is human effort independent of God; its strength and resources are disconnected from the true source, which was always supposed to be God. As we read in John chapter 15, **"the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine"** (vs. 4). So many of us struggle to *produce* fruit, when Yeshua asks us to rest in Him and *bear* fruit. There is a huge difference.

Rest and complacency are not the same thing. We are to live a life of rest in Yeshua's completed work on the cross. Yeshua said, **"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light"** (Matt. 11:28-30). Rest for your souls—this is what Shabbat is really about. Our walk with Yahweh is not a "He does 70% and we do 30%" deal. Yes, we are called to have faith, and true faith results in obedience and good works, but these righteous deeds are born out of resting and rejoicing in restored relationship. Don't focus on your performance or where you may be falling short. This is the deception we find so prevalent today in the Torah movement. I understand how we arrived here: In our former "church lives" we never really lived the New Covenant life—we were simply taught a "new-law," moralistic lifestyle by our church, denomination, or society. Since this didn't work for us, we came to believe that focusing on the real Law would solve our problems. It doesn't. This is because Torah is not the goal. It was given to bring us to Yeshua who would restore us to relationship to the Father (Gal. 3:24-25). We then live out of the union of us in God and God in us.

There is much more that could be said about this subject, but remember this: Genesis 3:1 tells us, **"The serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made."** Paul connects this information with a specific issue in 2 Corinthians 11:3, **"But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ."** The gospel is simple and pure. It is the good news of Yeshua's completed work on the cross, which we are to proclaim to the world. Satan, in his craftiness, wants to complicate and confuse the truth; therefore, he replaces God's best with a "good" substitute. This substitute is fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This tree of morality and performance-based living defrauds the New Covenant believer of true life in the Spirit. People can be moral without the cross, without the Holy Spirit, and without true faith. We need to live out of our true life source and out of our standing of reconciliation, freedom from sin, and freedom from guilt. Let's reclaim the truth that the enemy has mixed and diluted. Let's reclaim and believe the Good News for Israel.

Hale Harris is the President of B'nai Ephraim International (www.bnaiephraim.com), the Shepherd of Beit Ephraim Congregation in Billings, plus he is a co-owner of the Big Horn Trout Shop in Montana (www.bighorntroutshop.com)—and, he is a long time friend of and co-worker with the MIA.

Please Help My Friends...

by Batya Wootten

I want to share something that is very personal and dear to me.

In the mid-Seventies, Angus and I were privileged to go on a tour of Israel. It was a unique tour in that we were with "Jewish Believers in Messiah," which was a bit of a phenomenon at the time. It also meant that we were not seeing Israel through a "normal Christian lense." We were instead seeing that the God of Israel was preserving the modern Nation of Israel. During our visit, we got to meet with Jewish people who told of miraculous stories about their preservation. A few years later, on our second visit to the Land, we heard even more of these stories. On our flight over, we met the then Treasurer of the City of Jerusalem and he graciously invited us to his home for a Havdallah (close of the Sabbath) celebration. Many people shared their personal testimonies with us on this trip and we again knew for certain that the Holy One of Israel had His chosen city engraved on His hand. We knew that He had brought the Jewish people back to the Land and that the wise would see it and be glad.

By this time we had created our House of David Catalogue and through it, we offered a variety of books that helped to explain Israel. One of those books was "Battle for Israel" by Lance Lambert. It was a small, powerful book that was filled with testimonies about Israel's miraculous preservation, especially during her wars. Lance told of Egyptians who said they saw a "giant hand in the sky" and thus were afraid to proceed further in trying to run over Israel in their tanks. Other Egyptians refused to attack an all-but defenseless kibbutz in the Negev because, every night, they saw "men in white robes who were protecting it." Another story told of an unusual strong whirlwind that uncovered mines in a field, and Israeli soldiers were able to cross a heavily laden mine field and escape their attackers.

I told these stories often because I wanted people to know that the Holy One loved His Jewish people, was protecting and even restoring them. And, as I continued my studies of Israel, I also saw the "other house of Israel," Ephraim. I saw the many promises that had been made to those of Israel's Northern Kingdom, and I knew that my God was protecting and gathering them, too. With every fiber of my being I knew that the Almighty loved "both the houses of Israel" and that He fully intends to make them, and their companions, "one stick" in His Holy hand (Isa 8:14; Eze 37:15-28). This truth too, is something that the wise should see and be glad for it.

Sadly, I found that even as some did not rejoice over Judah's return to the Land, so there were those who did not rejoice over Ephraim's reappearing. Nonetheless, we are told to "Sow with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek YHVH until He comes to rain righteousness on you" (Hos 10:12). We are supposed to "break up unplowed ground" and "not sow among thorns." But, to be honest, sometimes, when I tried to share the truth about Ephraim and Judah and their restoration, I felt that I met with some very hard ground—it sometimes felt a bit like hitting a rock with a pickax. (Excuse me while I let my inner farm girl out.)

It is a hard thing to teach when some in attendance do not want to hear what you want to say. And this was the case one day when I was teaching in Washington State. I could feel the strong resistance of a few, but on the other hand, I could hear a loud "Amen" repeatedly coming from one corner. It was the voice of a man who would not be intimidated, it was the voice of, Retired Israeli Lt. Col. David Yaniv.

My friend, Michele Liben had told me of David and his writings. When I read them, I found I was quite impressed with his accuracy and his faithfulness to the Word. And now, here we were, with the Colonel loudly cheering me on. His encouragement that day far outweighed any negative vibes that might have been in the room.

I soon came to know David and his wife, Sheila, and to learn a bit of their incredible testimony. Then, one day, David was in Orlando and it was my turn to be in the audience listening to him. However, David did not really need to have me cheer him on. We were at an MIA Conference and the people loved the message about Israel's restoration, and they absolutely loved David.

I listened as David told of living in Israel and being in the military. Then he began to tell about a miracle that he had experienced. As an Israeli tank commander, David found himself in a mine field, surrounded by 600 Syrian tanks whose drivers were bent on destroying them. David's men then got out of their tanks and began to use their



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bayonets to try to expose the mines so they could escape. Suddenly, a strong wind came that lasted for only seconds, however, it was so strong it that it blew 30 inches of soil off the ground and exposed all the mines in the field. That miracle allowed David and his men to crawl through them and to escape.

David said he didn't believe in God at the time and was completely shocked by the experience.

As I sat in the room and listened to his testimony, I was shocked. I had told thousands of people about this same story, and now, here was the tank commander standing before me! I had no idea that David had been part of a miracle that had so touched my heart so many years before.

David continued to share his unbelievable testimony. He told us that he made it through a mine field only to soon be injured while working on the kibbutz where he lived. He fell, and his fall led to an operation, which resulted in a medical mistake that left him paralyzed from the waist down.

Confined to a wheelchair, David was often home alone. One day, while flipping through the TV channels, he saw a show called "The 700 Club." Thinking it would be a "club for men," David began to watch the program, and rather than hearing about "ladies," David instead began to hear about "Jesus." In secret, and behind locked doors, David watched the program every day and ultimately accepted Yeshua as his Messiah. Then one day, a word of knowledge was given about a man in a wheelchair who was going to be healed. When David heard that word, he quickly prayed, "Please Lord, let it be me." That night, David awoke in bed, and for the first time in more than seven years, he could feel his lower body.

David then walked into his doctor's office—and the doctor was amazed. He even had doctors come from all over Israel to examine David. They declared that he was a "Medical Miracle," but David said, "No. Jesus healed me."

That testimony, his refusal to compromise the truth, led to David and Sheila being expelled from their kibbutz and being forsaken by their family because they would not compromise the truth about their faith in the Messiah.

With that, the Yanivs came to the States and went to school at Christ for the Nations. They later started Roots Messianic Congregation in Lynnwood, Washington and became Ambassadors for a large Messianic Jewish organization. But, one day, they were told that "Gentiles could not hold an office" in the organization. To which David replied, "Are you crazy!? If it weren't for them we wouldn't know about Jesus!"

David's testimony was that he resigned, and returned to the organization everything they had given him. He was not going to stand by and let people be treated unfairly. He then began to search to see if anyone else understood the need to love and appreciate the Jew and the non-Jew too.

What he said next brought me to tears. He looked at me and playfully said:

"And then, one day, this crazy lady came to town and she began to preach the same things that I believe!

"I knew she was having a hard time because some of the people just didn't get it, but my 'Amens' were so loud that you could probably have heard them six blocks away!

"And I have been telling people about that crazy lady and this crazy Organization ever since.

"It is my hope that, for the rest of my days, I will be able to serve the MIA and the goals that it stands for."



I hardly have words for how it made me feel to have someone I have been telling people about, say that he has been telling people about us. Words just simply fail me. The feeling is too precious for me to try to describe. I am so greatly humbled, and I am inspired to want to give back to someone who has given us so much.

David Yaniv was there for the beginning of an era. He saw the God of Israel move in a mighty way in order to preserve His people. David has personally known the healing hand of our Messiah. He and his wife have paid an untold price to stand up for the truth. They did not camp where it was comfortable, but once again stood up for the restoration of Ephraim Israel. David and Sheila Yaniv are unflinching pioneers, and we dearly love them for it—and they need our help now. David desperately needs our prayers for healing. I do not lightly ask for prayer, because I personally know its transforming power. When we ask for prayer, it is not done to appear to be "spiritual." I ask for prayer for David because I personally know that you can feel the prayers of the faithful when you are in need.

The Yanivos also need financial help. They have no retirement fund. We, the Body of Messiah, have to help them at this time. We are supposed to place our offerings on undefiled altars and we can do that with the Yanivos. Anything that you designate for them will go in its entirety to David and Sheila Yaniv.

The Word tells us that the Gospel is to the Jew first, and that Gospel tells us to help and care for our elders.

If ever you have wanted to do something for Judah, please do it now—with the Yanivos.

Please, please, help us to help them. They are our friends and they need us.