

# THE OLIVE TREE MYSTERY.

A detailed analysis of the Old Testament presentation of  
the olive tree of Israel and its relationship to  
Romans Chapter 9-11 and other  
New Covenant Scriptures.

Written by  
Lloyd Dale

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## ***Author's Preface***

### **A QUESTION: WHO IS ISRAEL?**

Please allow me to share the following with you: The Father has permitted me to be in a very unique situation. He has given me the time and led me into my study with the determination to answer the question—who is Israel? At first glance that does not appear to be much of a question, we, who have been in the ministry for years, think that we know who Israel is; past, present, and future. The Father, through His Holy written WORD, has given me the surprise of my life! Please permit me to explain.

Some time ago the Holy Spirit prompted me to begin a very detailed and systematic study of Biblical Israel. It dominated nearly every waking thought and even intruded into my sleep at times during the first six months. It is certainly the most interesting and illuminating study I have ever done. Through this study, the Father has transformed my knowledge of Israel and of Scripture.

My study began with the eleventh chapter of Romans. As I prayed and mediated upon the olive tree spoken of in that chapter, I began to sense an expectant urgency that had not been present before. Therefore, I began to sketch an olive tree. An olive tree with roots, a trunk, and branches; what could it mean? Could there be something here that had been missed or overlooked in previous study? Then I noticed that Paul said don't be "ignorant of this mystery." What mystery? I began to pray that the Holy Spirit would reveal (i.e. illuminate) the mystery to me.

## Some definitions

In any study there is a need to rightly and clearly define our terms, to properly delineate our materials and to expectantly serve the Savior of Israel. In this spirit, please permit me to provide proper definitions for some terms we often use:

**Hebrew(s)**—Abraham was the first man called a Hebrew (Gen. 14:13) therefore, the term Hebrew can be properly defined as Abraham and his descendants. Abraham was not a Jew/Judahite, he is never called that in Scripture. He was a Hebrew.

**Israel** or Israelites—A name of Jesus Christ, given by YHWH to Jacob upon the confession by Jacob of who and what he was – a Supplanter. Jacob/Israel (the first Israelite) declared that the sons of Joseph, Ephraim, the younger and Manasseh, the elder **would carry the name of Israel** and that **they would become a multitude in the midst of the earth**: “let my name (Israel) be named in them,...and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.”(Genesis 48:16) Therefore, only the descendants of Jacob/Israel can properly be called Israel or Israelites. Jacob/Israel was not a Jew/Judahite. He is never called that in Scripture. He was Israel, the first Israelite.

In the Bible there are many warnings to the Israelites that if they disobeyed Yahweh (their husband, Jer.31:32) and broke the Mosaic Marriage Covenant they would be punished by being put out of the land and scattered into all the nations (Lev.26:33, for the full picture see vss.13-46, also see Deut 4:25-27) however, the warnings of this banishment also included a promise of restoration:

**And yet for all that**, when they be in the land (nations) of their enemies, I will not cast them away neither will I abhor them, to destroy

them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am Yahweh their God...I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am Yahweh (their husband, Jer.31:32). (Leviticus 26:44-45, etc. emphasis and comments added.)

But if from there (among the nations) you shall seek the LORD thy God, you shall find *Him*, if you seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. When you art in tribulation (among the nations), and all these things are come upon thee, even in the last days, if you turn to the LORD thy God, and shall be obedient unto his voice; (For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he swore unto them. (Deuteronomy 4:29-31, et al. comments added)

In spite of many warnings, the Israelites did disobey their husband, Yahweh, and broke their marriage covenant and became harlots (Jer.3:8, 2Ki.17, etc.) and by 721 BC the last of Israel had been carried away out of the land, out of the Marriage Covenant relationship, and lost their identity as Israel, only the tribe of Judah was left (2Ki.17:6, 18, 23, 2ki.18:11-12) which Yahweh had rent (2ki.17:21) from Israel. Thus Israel was divorced from Yahweh (Jer.3:8), cast from the land, and lost their identity as Israelites. However, in the fullness of times (Gal.4:4; Eph.1:10) during the last days (Heb.1:2; 1Pet.1:20) of the Mosaic Marriage Covenant, Yahweh honored His promise of redemption through the New Marriage Covenant which he made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah (Jer 31:31ff; Heb 8:8ff; et al.) and sent the Messiah to redeem Israel. The Messiah gathered the believing remnant (Rom.11:5) from both houses (Israel, aka gentiles, and Judah, aka Jews) of Israel into Himself, the new green branch (Isa. 4:2, 11:1, 60:21; Jer.23:5, 33:15; Eze.117:22; Zec.3:8 John 15:1ff; Rom.11:1ff, see also Ps.8:15; Pr.11:25) of the olive tree (Rom.11). **And “so all Israel is saved”** (Rom.11:26), given a new name (Isa.62:2; Rev.2:17; Acts 11:26) and the redeemed of

Israel became the ekklesia (church); the Israel of God (Gal.6:16), redeemed, restored, and chosen (1Pet.2:9-10) in Jesus Christ.

**Jew(s)**—more properly called the house of Judah; sometimes referred to as the house of David—the name Judahite/Jew was given to them as a derogatory term by their captors, the Babylonians. The house of Israel (the 10 northern tribes plus many from the southern kingdom) was long gone when the house of Judah was punished by God for their idolatries and taken into the Babylonian captivity. (II Kings 17:18)

It would *be better if we would not use the term “Jew”*, however since it is in common usage today, we must properly define it. The term Jew is never, repeat, never used for the whole house of Israel (the 12 tribes) nor for the northern kingdom (10 tribes, in the land or scattered among the gentiles) in scripture and should never be used to refer to the house of Israel today or to refer to the whole of Israel (12 tribes). The Jews represent only a fraction of the fullness of Israel that exists in the world today. Judah was never called a “Jew” in scripture. The house of Judah was given this name (Jews) by their Babylonian captors; even as the house of Israel was given other names (Khumri, Cimmerians, etc.) by their Assyrian captors and others during and after their “disappearance” (Diaspora) into the Assyrian captivity.

It is commonly considered in our time that the term Jew represents all Israelites and the term Gentile represents all non-Israelites. *However, a very through examination of the Bible will reveal a completely different concept.*

After such a through examination it becomes apparent that the term Jew is never used to describe anyone but the house of Judah and those associated with them, of the tribe of Benjamin and of the tribe of the Levities. One

does not find any other **tribe** of Israel ever associated with the term “Jew” Thus; it becomes certain that the word “Jew” is never used in the Bible to refer to any of the tribes of the Northern Kingdom. It clearly does not refer to all Israelites.

### **Gentile(s)**

Now what about the term Gentile? In the Old Testament the word “gentile” is translated from the Hebrew word *Goy* (sometimes spelled *goy* and *goyim* if plural). In the book of Genesis this word is used every time God speaks to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in reference to them becoming a nation, company of nations/gentiles, multitude of nations/gentiles, etc.

In the New Testament the word “gentile(s) is translated from the Greek word *ethnos* [ethne; plural] as also are the English words nation(s) and heathen(s). This word, as used in the New Testament, must always be interpreted by its context. Unfortunately, Most commentators on and readers of the New Testament think about it as if it were used exclusively of non-Israelites. However, this conception is not accurate. As is demonstrated by the following verses, it must always be interpreted from the context of the passage in which it is found. In 1 Peter 4:3 it is used in reference to non-Israelites. In 1 Corinthians 12:2 it is translated “pagans” and refers to those who do not believe in God no matter what ethnic/racial group is involved. In Acts 17:26 it is translated nations and is used in reference to a multitude of people. In this particular reference it refers to the whole human race or all of mankind.

Anton Darnes, in a book which he wrote, states, “It can be said positively that in no case in the Bible, either in the Old Testament or the New does the word gentile refer or apply to any of Israel.” That is a pretty emphatic

statement, and *he is wrong*. In Luke 7:3-5 (and others) ethnos is translated “nation” and it is clearly referring to the Jews, i.e. descendants of the house of Judah. Thus, it is apparent that it is not used exclusively of non-Israelites. *It is apparent from all the misunderstanding on this issue that a lot of people have not done their homework.* As we will see as we continue, the word ethnos is used in reference to Jews 4 times in John 11:48-52; Caiaphas’ statement that He die for the nation and the children of God that were scattered abroad. (This is a clear reference to the scattered northern kingdom, house of Israel) and in Romans 9:24 ethne is translated gentiles and is used in reference to the “divorced” Israelites i.e. that is the descendants of the Northern tribes scattered into the nations. It is our considered opinion that, while there are exceptions this is its primary usage throughout the New Testament. That is, it is primarily used in the New Testament and in many passages of the Old Testament in reference to Israelites, i.e. the descendants of the Northern tribes that were taken into the Assyrian captivity and from there eventually scattered or “sown” to all the “nations” of the world. I repeat, the term “Gentile” is predominately used of the Israelites of the northern Kingdom who had been divorced by God and put away (Jer.3:8) i.e., scattered amongst the peoples of the world and had thus become Gentiles, no longer known as Israelites but known as Gentiles -- put away and unacceptable in YHWH’s sight until their redemption as Gentiles in Christ Jesus, the Messiah of Israel. When according to Paul in Rom.11:17 they are recognized as branches of a wild olive tree, not an apple tree etc. **but a wild olive tree.**” A wild olive tree is a cultivated olive tree (Israel) gone wild, or prodigal (see the parable of the prodigal son, i. e. Israel, which is the true story recorded above in a greatly condensed form).

Without the correct definitions and usages of these words much of the truth contained in the New Testament has been effectively concealed and has not been, indeed cannot be, applied correctly. In addition to this, much Bible Prophecy has not been, indeed cannot be, interpreted correctly.

We must consistently define and use these terms properly if we wish to understand the message given by our Great God Yahweh, through His prophets.

Dear one, we pray that you will carefully read and study the message given in this book and then please communicate with us.

# INTRODUCTION

Please bear with us and we will show you something from the Bible that will revolutionize your life. We are not trying to force a change in your views, but we would enjoy being used of Yahweh to bring you to a fuller and more complete understanding of what the Bible conveys to mankind.

Many people have believed that the northern kingdom (ten tribes) returned with the southern kingdom (two tribes) from the Babylonian captivity. A good example of this is found in the writings of James B Jordan.

In his book Through New Eyes, in the chapter entitled “the Worlds of Exile and Restoration,” on page 255, he states:

All the children of Israel come to be considered as part of these "Judahites," even those of the already-exiled **NORTHERN TRIBES** who joined back up with Judah during the Babylonian exile."<sup>13</sup> (Emphasis added)

And in footnote #13 referenced there he states:

The idea of the “ten lost tribes” is wholly mythical. For conclusive proof we need only call attention to Luke 2:36. The Northern tribes were carried off by Assyria, and joined up with the southern exiles later on.

“Conclusive proof?” Jordan notwithstanding, *Luke 2:36 does not prove any such thing*. The only thing that this passage proves is the fact that in the first century, at the time of the birth of Jesus Christ:

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

The salient point of proof here is that at the time of the birth of the Messiah one person named Anna knew that her personal ancestry traced back to the tribe of Assher. *Contrary to Jordan’s totally unsubstantiated statement*, it does not prove that her ancestors were exiled to Assyria in the 8th century BC, joined up with the Jews who were in exile in Babylon in the 6th century BC, and came back to Jerusalem when Cyrus and his successors permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem, Judaea from Babylon.

We are cognizant of the “grotesque aspects of the sociology of modern American Protestantism” called Zionism. Essentially in that area, we would agree with what Jordan has written about Zionism. However, in our opinion, derived from long and careful research, he makes some egregious errors in some portions of that which he has written.

On page 177 of his chapter on Christian Zionism..., Jordan states, “Biblically speaking, a Jew is someone who is covenanted into the people of the Jews by

circumcision.” That statement is neither accurate nor complete.

First, as to the completeness: In order to become a Jew (that is a Judahite, more about this later) the Torah required that the person be circumcised, participate in the Passover, and live among/or with the tribe of Judah (Deut.13:48, 49; et al.).

Second, as to the accuracy: In the above statement Jordan uses the term “Jew” as a synonym for all the 12 (actually there were 13) tribes of Israel. **That is totally without Biblical warrant.** While it is true that Abraham was an ancestor of the Jews, he was NOT a Jew (more about this later) and he was never called a Jew or referred to as a Jew in the Bible! If you think he was, please show us the reference(s). By the same token, the people of Abraham’s household were not Jews (whether they were in the covenant or not is quite a different matter). In a like manner Jacob was not a Jew, he was a Hebrew and by being given the name “Israel” by Yahweh-Yahshua, he became the first Israelite, but he was not then, nor did he ever become a Jew. For that matter NO Israelites became Jews (Judahites) until after the tribe of Judah, their namesake, was given their inheritance in the promised land of Canaan. Then their Inheritance became know as Judaea, after Judah, and the people that lived in that land became known as Judahites (Jews). See Jordan’s own definition of “Jew” quoted below.

Third, more about accuracy: Biblically, Paul clearly tells us in Romans 2:27-28 that “one is not a Jew, which is one outwardly:” and that circumcision does not make one a true Jew, only faith in the Lord Yahshua the Christ does this. Thus Biblically, Jordan is not accurate in what he stated there. (By the way are you aware of the impact these verses have on Revelation2:9 and 3:9)

On page 255 of “The worlds of Exile...”, Jordan clearly and accurately defines the term “Jew”: **“Jew. This comes from Judahite, and is exclusively post-exilic”**. What Jordan does not state here, but nevertheless demonstrates in the very next sentence, is that the root of the word Judahite is Judah i.e. the tribe of Judah and they lived in the land of Judaea. In this Jordan agrees with Josephus:

So the Jews prepared for the work (of rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple): **that is the name they are called by from the day that they came up from Babylon**, which is taken from the tribe of Judah, **which first came to these places** (Judaea), and thence both they (the tribe of Judah) and the country (Judaea) **gained that appellation**. (Antiquities of the Jews, Book XI, ch.V, sec.7, comments & emphasis added)

While it is true that other Israelites, who joined up at one time or another with the tribe of Judah, (1 Kings 12ff) came to be known as Judahites - which term was, in relatively modern times, corrupted into the slang term “Jew” - there is no Biblical or historic evidence which we have found that demonstrates that any members of the “already-exiled northern tribes” “joined back up with Judah during the Babylonian exile”. In fact, the first century Jewish historian states:

...but then **the entire body of the people of Israel** (i.e. the descendants of the tribes of the northern kingdom) remained in that country; wherefore there are but two tribes (i.e. Judah and Benjamin) in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, **while the ten tribes** are beyond Euphrates till now (Josephus’ day), and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers. (Antiquities of the Jews, Book XI, ch.V, sec.2: comments and emphasis added)

Thus, Jordan egregiously errors by stating, “All the children of Israel came to be considered as part of these “Judahites,” even those of the already-exiled **NORTHERN TRIBES** who joined back up with the Judah during the Babylonian exile”. (Emphasis added) The simple truth is, as we hope to convincingly demonstrate in this book, that **none of the previously exiled northern tribes returned with the Jews from the Babylonian captivity.**

It would be true that if any members of the other tribes joined up with the tribe of Judah at any time after Judah took up residence in their portion of the Promised Land they would have become known as Judahites. However, there is no Biblical record that the people of the northern tribes, who did not live in Judaea, were ever called Jews, before or after the Assyrian exile, or at any other time for that matter.

Furthermore, it is clear from Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and others that the **descendants of Israel** (the northern tribes), divorced – put out of the Marriage Covenant, put out of the land, and put out of their kingdom -- vanquished [Ho.1:4, see also I Kings 14:15-16 and II Kings 17:18]) by Yahweh **were not to return to Yahweh and receive “their own land” until THEY WERE TO BE GATHERED INTO THE MESSIAH.**

The erroneous notion that the descendants of the ten tribes returned with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin from the Babylonian captivity, asserted with such force by Jordan and many others, is in our opinion, pure myth and has no factual basis in the Bible or elsewhere. **That particular myth has produced many egregious errors in Biblical understanding.** As the result of this particular pernicious error, Jordan and many others, both in the reform camp and in the dispensational camp, have seriously erred in their understanding of certain portions of Scripture.

Dispensationalists often state that the “church age” is not prophesied in the Old Testament. Their silly notion of a “parenthetical” church age is built completely upon the idea that the Old Testament prophets did not foresee the New Testament church. This whole erroneous notion stems from their failure to understand the true Biblical identity of the “people of God”. When the Bible is permitted to correct that misunderstanding; ***the error of the “parenthetical church” is totally destroyed.***

Will Rogers, the great American cowboy philosopher, once stated something to the effect that our ignorance is not the problem. Rather “the problem is **what we think we know that simply is not true**”!!! A very careful study of the Bible pertaining to the true identity of the people of Yahweh will more than demonstrate the accuracy of his observation.

Another serious error that Jordan makes, because of his faulty understanding of two separate events; the Assyrian Exile/Diaspora of Israel and the Babylonian captivity of Judah, is demonstrated on page 182 of “The Sociology of the Church.” Jordan states, “Until the Jews repent and convert (as Romans 11 promises that someday they shall).”

Properly understood, in the context of the above discussion, *Romans 11 does not make any such declaration*<sup>1</sup>. Check the history of this view for yourself and you will find that particular error is a relatively modern phenomena; which apparently has a source

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<sup>1</sup> In a document entitled “The Future of Israel Reexamined” (Biblical Horizons No. 27, July 1991) Jordan apparently recants the position quoted above, and apparently now takes the position that Romans 11 does not teach a future conversion to Christianity by the Jews as a nation. If this is indeed his current position, he is now correct on this point.

similar to the source of the Darby-Scofield error within the dispensational camp.

Now let's take a look at Romans 11: The portion of Romans 11 that most who perpetuate this error use to support their error is verse 26:

And **SO** all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob;....for Yahweh has concluded them **ALL** in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon **ALL**. (Rom.11:26 & 32, emphasis added)

The particular portion of verse 26 that is used to support their false argument is the phrase "all Israel shall be saved". The key to understanding the true meaning of this phrase is left out of their quote whenever these "errorists" quote this verse. That key is the supposedly simple little word "**SO**"! Our English word **so** means "in this manner" and every lexicon we have checked defines the Greek word used here the same: "in this manner".

What manner of salvation has the Apostle put forth? Simply stated, all who believe are grafted into the Olive Tree (Jesus Christ), those who are grafted into the Olive Tree are "the election who have obtained" salvation by faith and are grafted into the Olive Tree. The elect, whether they be Jew or "gentile", when they are grafted into the Olive Tree are the Children of promise, the Israel of God. When that process is complete "all Israel shall" have been saved. Paul is not saying any more or any less than that!

Those who perpetuate these errors do not understand the "Olive Tree" as it is presented in the totality of Scripture. In both the reform and the dispensational camps they erroneously claim that "the root of the olive tree is the Jew." That simply is neither Biblically accurate nor true!! You can take your nourishment, strength, and support,

etc. from the Jews if you wish, personally, we prefer to get our's from the true Root of the Olive Tree, our Lord and God, Jesus the Christ, the eternal Yahweh-Yahshua!!

Paul flatly states that “the Root is Holy” and because of that the recently broken off branches of the Jewish (house of Judah, Rom.11:17, 20 & 23-24) and the long ago broken off branches (Jer. 11:16) and become wild olive branches (the house of Israel, Rom.9:23-30; 11:17 & 24) can be made holy by being grafted into the Holy BRANCH, the Lord Yahshua the Christ. In Romans 15:12 Paul quotes Isaiah 11:1:

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a **branch** shall grow out of His roots:

Jesus Christ stated in Rev. 22:16:

I Yahshua...am the root and the offspring of David.

These three verses clearly and unmistakably declare to us that Yahshua **the Christ is both the root and the righteous Branch** (see also Jer.23:5 & 33:15) **of the Olive Tree of Israel**, not the Jews!

If we read our Bibles carefully and thoroughly enough, we will learn that the united nation Israel (all 13 tribes) is symbolized as a “Green Olive Tree” (Jer.11:16). The Root of this tree is Yahweh-Yahshua, the maker of the irrevocable covenant with Abraham. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the trunk of this great tree. With Jacob, the trunk began to grow into two great branches (Remember Jacob had two wives and two families which eventually produced the 13 tribes of Israel; Ephraim and Manasseh were adopted by Jacob/Israel, Ephraim effectually replaced Joseph, and Manasseh was added making thirteen, however, the Levites did not receive a portion of the promised land, thus only 12 tribes received land portions in Canaan).

A careful study of the breakup of the Kingdom of Israel after the Death of Solomon reveals that Judah a son of

Leah was the ancestor of Rehoboam and that Joseph the son of Rachel was the ancestor of Jereboam thus keeping the identity of the two branches intact, even through the breakup of the Davidic Kingdom (the falling down and ruin of the tabernacle of David, Amos 9:11).

The one great branch (the house of Israel) was broken out of this olive tree (Jer.11:16) when Yahweh divorced (Jer.3:8) the northern Kingdom of Israel and put them out of His house into the Assyrian Exile/Diaspora. From that point on the great olive tree had only one branch until that branch was also broken out as the result of unbelief (Rom. 11:18-20 & 32) when the house of Judah continued to reject their Messiah. This recently broken off branch[es] (Rom.3:23, 11:19) was soon to be consumed in the fires of the destructive wrath of Yahweh-Yahshua (Matt.24 & 25; Heb.10:26-27; etc.) upon Jerusalem (the house of Judah - the harlot wife of Yahweh; Rev. 16, 17, 18, & 19; see the chapters “Yahweh’s wives” and “Aholibah” for a full discussion of this).

At that point, the tree would have been nothing but a desolate stump, but by the grace of Yahweh the Branch of Righteousness (Jer.33:14-15 & 23:5), Jesus Christ, was “caused...to grow up...” And the elect (the chosen remnants of the two houses; Jews-house of Judah and Gentiles - house of Israel - divorced and sown [gentilized] in the nations) were grafted (Rom.11) into this new Branch of Righteousness (Jer.33:14-15, etc.) to become a glorious Green Olive Tree unto Yahweh, The Israel of Yahweh-Yahshua (Gal.6:16), The Bride of Christ (Rom.7:1-6; Rev.21:1-2, 9-10ff), The New Jerusalem (Heb.11:13-16, 12:22-24; Rev.21:9-10).

The above is a concise, Biblically accurate presentation of the fulfillment of the New Covenant (Jer.31:31ff & Heb.8:8ff) that Yahweh made with the house of Judah (Jews) and the house of Israel (DIVORCED/Gentilized Hebrew-Israelites, thus inclusive of all Gentiles (Amos 9:12) in the New Testament [Whosoever will may come, Matt.10:34; Mark 8:34; John 3:16; Rev.22:17, etc.]).

