

REGATHERED, REUNITED AND RESTORED:
THE ESCHATOLOGICAL INFLUENCE OF אָפְרַיִם ETYMOLOGY
ON THE אָפְרַיִם TEXTS OF THE PROPHETS

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Abbreviations

1-2 Macc	<i>1 Maccabees</i>
2 Bar.	<i>2 Baruch</i>
2TP	Second Temple Period
3d	third
4Q1	<i>4Q1 Frag. 12 Genesis-Exodus a.</i>
4Q372	A Joseph Apocryphon ^b (4Q372)
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
anal.	analogy
ANE	Ancient Near East
BEB	<i>Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible</i>
BDB	<i>Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i>
BHt	<i>Biblia Hebraica Transcripta</i>
BKC	<i>The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures</i>
caus.	causative, causatively
cer.	ceremony, ceremonial, ceremonially
cf.	<i>confer</i> , compare
1 Cl	<i>1 Clement</i> —List 1
DBL	<i>Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)</i>
denom.	denominative, denominatively
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
<i>et seq.</i>	and following
GELS	<i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint: Revised Edition</i>

gener.	generally
GHCLOT	<i>Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures</i>
GJs	Gospel of James (Protevangelium Jacobi), II A.D.—List 1
HBD	<i>The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary</i>
hif	Hiphil
Hiph.	Hiphil
Hs	Similitudes
JE	<i>The Jewish Encyclopedia</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
K&D	Keil C. F., and F. Delitzsch. <i>Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament</i> . Translated by J. Martin et al. 25 vols. Edinburgh, 1857-1878. Reprint. 10 vols. Peabody, Mass., 1996
lit.	literally
fig.	figuratively
espec.	especially
LN	<i>Louw-Nida Greek-English Lexicon</i>
LXX	<i>Septuagint</i>
masc.	masculine
mor.	moral, morally.
MT	Masoretic Text
N	north (ern)
NAC	<i>New American Commentary</i>
nom.	nominative
NT	New Testament

OT	Old Testament
Piel	<i>Pi'el</i>
Sanh.	<i>Sanhedrin</i>
Sir	<i>Sirach, Ben Sira</i>
spec.	special
syn.	synonym
T. Jos.	<i>Testament of Joseph</i>
T. Jud.	<i>Testament of Judah</i>
Tg. Onq.	<i>Targum Onqelos</i>
Tg. Ps.-J. trans.	<i>Targum Pseudo-Johnathan</i> transitive, transitively
TWOT	<i>Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament</i>
v. vv.	Verse, verses

INTRODUCTION

One of the eschatological views of Israel that characterized Second Temple Period literature emphasized the fate and future of an Israel that would be regathered, reunited and restored in the Messianic Kingdom. This eschatological future of Israel is derived in part from the message of the Prophets, however, a key element often overlooked in the interpretation of their prophetic message is the etymological development of אֶפְרַיִם terminology. אֶפְרַיִם was the son of Joseph who was born to him in Egypt, however, the name continued to develop as a theological term. This paper will examine these etymological developments from the earliest mentions of אֶפְרַיִם in the Genesis narrative to the development of אֶפְרַיִם as a national identification for Israel. These developments lay the foundation for a categorical system which identifies the ways in which אֶפְרַיִם is used in scripture and contributes to an overall exegetical framework that is essential for the interpretation of the אֶפְרַיִם texts in the Prophets. For the purpose of this paper, three key אֶפְרַיִם texts from the Prophets will be studied, Ezek 37, Isa 11 and Jer 31.

There are four categories that demonstrate the ways in which אֶפְרַיִם is used in scripture, either as the person of אֶפְרַיִם, as a tribal descriptor, as a land, regional or geographic designation and later as a national identity. Each category contributes to the subsequent developments of the term, but it is this final category of “Ephraim-Israel” as a national identity for Israel that is essential for the proper exegesis of אֶפְרַיִם in the Prophets. By the time of the writing Prophets, אֶפְרַיִם had become an appellation for the nation of Ephraim-Israel, a term which identified the ten northern tribes. These ten tribes eventually became the Northern Kingdom of Israel who were ultimately exiled as a result

of the Assyrian conquest ca. 722 B.C.E.¹ The term Ephraim-Israel refers to either the ten tribes, the exiles from the ten tribes or to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, depending upon context.

The categorical system of אֶפְרַיִם terminology, establishes an exegetical framework that identifies essential related terminology, concepts and biblical themes. The etymology of אֶפְרַיִם serves as the foundation of the structure, and the related terminology found within related key passages serve as supporting pillars of the exegetical framework. Together with the foundation of the categorical system, the pillars produce a substantial exegetical substructure which support the interpretation of the אֶפְרַיִם texts in the Prophets. The purpose of this exegetical framework is to create an interpretive tool for biblical exegesis of the אֶפְרַיִם texts.

When considering the message of the Prophets, questions arise regarding the use of אֶפְרַיִם terminology. Why is אֶפְרַיִם specifically mentioned? To whom were the Prophets referring when they spoke of אֶפְרַיִם? What were the eschatological expectations of the Prophets? An awareness of the etymology of אֶפְרַיִם aids in answering these questions and serves to identify the eschatological expectations of the Prophets themselves, of a wider 2TP audience and ultimately of the NT authors. Analysis of the three key אֶפְרַיִם texts (Ezek 37, Isa 11 and Jer 31) will be examined in light of the etymology of אֶפְרַיִם and in consideration of the early eschatology that characterized much of 2TP literature.

Jewish and Christian scholars alike have noted that in respect to the figure of the Messiah, “It is inappropriate to speak of a single normative stream of Judaism in the postexilic period or throughout the period of the Second Temple. Diverse interpretations

1. Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, 2 ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008, 411.

of common traditions were entertained by different groups.”² While a varied collection of Jewish eschatological views cannot be narrowed down to a single eschatological view of a messianic figure, there is little variation with regard to 2TP views concerning the regathering, reunification and restoration of Israel in the Messianic Kingdom. This eschatological perspective is firmly established in the biblical texts and would continue to influence both the Jewish and Christian movements in the centuries following the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E.

THE EXEGETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE CATEGORIES OF אֲפָרָיִם, PILLARS AND אֲפָרָיִם TEXTS

The study of אֲפָרָיִם begins with identifying and categorizing the etymological developments of אֲפָרָיִם terminology. Each occurrence of אֲפָרָיִם in scripture is identified and placed into one of four categories. In some cases, overlap exists between multiple categories, but one is usually dominant.

In Table 1.1 in the Appendix, each instance of אֲפָרָיִם is listed with scripture references and placed in one of the four categories, along with a brief summary of the content of the verses, and a list of key terms, concepts, biblical themes and related passages that form the pillars of the exegetical framework. Frequent reference to the Appendix will aid in identifying important texts and related terminology and themes throughout the paper. The goal in creating this exegetical framework is to provide a tool for the biblical exegesis of the אֲפָרָיִם texts, particularly in the Prophetic books. For the purpose of this paper, the discussion of the אֲפָרָיִם texts in the Prophets will be primarily limited to the three key passages of Ezek 37, Isa 11 and Jer 31.

2. James H. Charlesworth et al., eds., *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010), xv, Logos.

The **אֶפְרַיִם** categories provide the foundation for the exegetical framework. The next step involves the construction of the pillars of the framework. This is accomplished by the exegetical analysis of key passages of scripture within each category that contains **אֶפְרַיִם** nomenclature. Analysis of the scriptures within the four categories of etymological development yields contextual definitions and serves to identify related terms and theological concepts which serve as the four pillars of the exegetical framework. The key terms gleaned from this analysis define the theological distinctives which are essential to understanding the etymology of **אֶפְרַיִם** and undergird later biblical uses of **אֶפְרַיִם** nomenclature. Thus, each category has a corresponding pillar that together support the Prophetic books containing **אֶפְרַיִם** terminology. This exegetical framework is the key to a biblical theology of **אֶפְרַיִם** because it is built on the etymological root of **אֶפְרַיִם** and considers the taxonomic structure of the changes in its use over time.

Laying the Foundation: The Four Categories of **אֶפְרַיִם**

The construction of the exegetical framework begins with laying the foundation of the categorical system. These categories serve to identify the ways in which **אֶפְרַיִם** is used throughout scripture and can be divided into four distinct categories: 1) Person, 2) Tribe, 3) Land, Regional or Geographic designation and 4) National Identity. This **אֶפְרַיִם** taxonomy is the foundation upon which an exegetical framework is constructed.

Before the pillars of the framework can be constructed, the categories of use must first be identified. Each category builds on the developments from each of the previous categories, making the use of this taxonomic system a categorical imperative for the exegesis of **אֶפְרַיִם** terminology.

The Four Pillars of the Exegetical Framework

Each foundational category has a corresponding pillar within the exegetical framework. Each pillar is derived from its associated category and related terms within that category are identified and defined. Each category has a corresponding structural pillar upon which these related terms and themes are inscribed. These categorical foundations and their related pillars are the supporting structures upon which the interpretation of the Prophets rest. These three elements: the categorical foundation, corresponding structural pillars and the מִפְּרָשֵׁי texts in the Prophets together form this exegetical framework.

The four pillars of the exegetical framework demonstrate how the etymological developments of מִפְּרָשֵׁי are incorporated with the biblical themes and related terminology. These are critical elements for exegesis. It is this relationship between the categorical foundation and the theological distinctives of the pillars of the exegetical framework that are the key to accurately interpreting the מִפְּרָשֵׁי texts.

In the Prophetic books, the prophets employed מִפְּרָשֵׁי terminology in order to convey a prophetic message that served to establish eschatological expectations for the nation of Israel. Without these categories and corresponding pillars, the message of the Prophets becomes obscured and interpretation becomes elusive and inaccurate in its conclusions. When the categorical usage of מִפְּרָשֵׁי is considered and the related terms from each pillar are identified, the prophetic message comes into clear view and a proper biblical theology is attained.

The Five Books of Moses

Traditional Judeo-Christian belief supports the Mosaic authorship of the Torah, or

Pentateuch, otherwise known as the five books of Moses. In the *New American*

Commentary on Genesis, Kenneth Mathews acknowledges that:

“The Torah consists of the first five books of the collection, Genesis through Deuteronomy, but it was not originally viewed as five distinctive works. Rather, the Torah was one book. The singular “Book of Moses,” “book of the law,” or simply “book,” is attested in exilic and postexilic times (e.g., 2 Chr 25:4; 34:14; 35:12; Ezra 6:18; Neh 8:3, 5; 13:1) and in Mark’s Gospel (12:26).³

Although much of modern scholarship has formerly relied upon the use of the documentary hypothesis,⁴ more recent scholarship has shifted in favor of Mosaic authorship. For this reason, continued use of the documentary hypothesis runs counter to well-established traditions of Judaism and Christianity. However, knowledge of such a system is valuable in navigating the scholarship on the subject of the five books of Moses.

In his comprehensive work on the history of Israel, John Bright acknowledges the necessity of this transition away from the documentary hypothesis. According to Bright, “It has become increasingly evident that a new and more sympathetic evaluation of the traditions is called for.⁵ This represents a favorable shift in scholarship in favor of Mosaic

3. K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, vol. 1A, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 42, Logos.

4. The documentary hypothesis references the system of classifying the various ways in which the divine name is used throughout the Torah. This hypothesis argues against Mosaic authorship and for the collection of various texts by different authors now reflected in the Torah. The various texts of the Pentateuch (also referred to as the five books of Moses) are organized into a classification based on the use of the divine name in each text. These texts are divided into the categories J-the Yahwist (referring to the use of יהוה, YHVH, or Yahweh), E-the Elohist (the use of Elohim), D-Deuteronomic (references Deuteronomy), and P-Priestly (references the writing of the Levitical priests). For a detailed discussion of the documentary hypothesis, and its use in modern scholarship see “Documentary Hypothesis” in: Douglas K. Stuart, “Documentary Hypothesis,” in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, ed. John D. Barry et al., (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Logos.

5. According to Bright, “This conclusion is not reached on dogmatic grounds, but because of various lines of objective study that have played upon the problem and forced a revision of previously held notions...when the documentary hypothesis was developed, little was known at first hand of the Ancient Orient...It was easy therefore, in the absence of an objective frame of reference for evaluating the traditions, for men to doubt the historical worth of documents so far removed from the events of which they tell, and,

authorship of the Torah or Pentateuch.

CATEGORY 1: THE PERSON OF אֶפְרַיִם

Category 1 is the Person of אֶפְרַיִם. אֶפְרַיִם first appears in the narrative of Gen 41 and is the etymological root of all later אֶפְרַיִם terminology. This first occurrence in scripture identifies אֶפְרַיִם as the second son of Joseph who was born to him in Egypt (Gen 41:52). Additional passages in the Genesis narrative that refer to the person of אֶפְרַיִם are found in Gen 41:52; 46:20; 48:1, 5, 13-14, 17, 20 and 50:23. All subsequent etymological developments in the categories that follow build upon the initial exegesis of אֶפְרַיִם as a personal name.

In Category 1, all occurrences of אֶפְרַיִם refer to the personal identify of Joseph's son. All related terminology defined within Category 1 forms the first pillar of the exegetical framework. This first pillar and its related terms rests firmly on the foundation of Category 1 usage as the Person of אֶפְרַיִם. Since this personal identity is carried forward into subsequent categories it is therefore essential to all later interpretations of אֶפְרַיִם. For this reason, Category 1 is the single most important category in the exegetical framework.

The Birth of אֶפְרַיִם: First Mention

The first mention of אֶפְרַיִם in scripture occurs in the birth narrative of Gen 41. In Egypt, two sons were born to Joseph, Manasseh, Joseph's firstborn, and אֶפְרַיִם his second born. Both sons were born to him through his Egyptian wife, Asenath:

Now before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On, bore to him. Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh, 'For,' he said, 'God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household.' He named the second Ephraim, 'For,' he said, 'God

viewing Israel in isolation against a foreshortened perspective, to posit for her earliest period the crudest beliefs and customs." John Bright, *A History of Israel*: Fourth Ed. (Westminster: John Knox Press, 2000), 69.

has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction’ (Gen 41:50-52).⁶

The Hebrew name in v. 52 of the BHT is אֶפְרַיִם.⁷ There is general agreement amongst most commentators concerning the meaning of אֶפְרַיִם as “fruitful.” The *Enhanced Brown Driver Briggs* identifies that “The personal name of אֶפְרַיִם in v. 52 is ‘connected with הַפְרָה, Hiph. of פָּרָה.’”⁸ Strong’s identifies אֶפְרַיִם as a “dual of a masc. form of 672 [אֶפְרַת]; double fruit.”⁹ In the TWOT, the fruitfulness of אֶפְרַיִם is noted with respect to person, tribe and the relationship to the root פָּרָה.

The verb *pārā* is used twenty-nine times in the OT, most often in Gen (fifteen times). *pārā* appears twenty-two times in the Qal, seven times in the Hiphil (with the meaning “make fruitful”)...The root *pārā* is at the heart of the name of one of the tribes of Israel. Genesis 41:52, “[Joseph] named the second son Ephraim (*’ep̄rāyim*) because God has made me fruitful (*hipranî*) in the country of my affliction.” The same promise and sustenance came to Jacob at Bethel (Gen 28:3; cf. 48:4).¹⁰

The name אֶפְרַיִם carries the masculine plural ending. The TWOT additionally notes “The name is said to mean ‘double fruit,’ evidently from the presence of the dual ending.”¹¹ With this Hiphil plural ending, it derives its meaning as “doubly fruitful.” This double fruitfulness is applied to the second son of Joseph here, and as the term continues to develop, the concept of “double fruitfulness” is expanded (Gen 48, Deut 33:17).

This fruitfulness is connected to the fruit of the womb. This can be traced back to the earliest parts of Genesis in the creation narrative. At creation, God commands Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 1:27-28). “Be fruitful” in 1:28 is translated form

6. All scripture references are from the NASB unless otherwise noted.

7. Wolfgang Richter, Christian Riepl, and Johann Peter Rechenmacher, *Biblia Hebraica Transcripta* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Ge 41:52. Logos.

8. Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, “אֶפְרַיִם,” *BDB* 68, Logos.

9. James Strong, “אֶפְרַיִם,” *Strong’s*, 15, Logos.

10. Victor P. Hamilton, “פָּרָה 1809,” *TWOT* 734, Logos.

11. Charles L. Feinberg, “אֶפְרַיִם 151,” *TWOT* 66, Logos.

פְּרֹו,¹² which again stems from the root פֶּרָה. Similar to the command of God to be fruitful and multiply in Gen 1:27-28, Joseph sees the birth of his second son as a continued blessing of the fruit of his womb.

The phrase in Gen 41:52, of the BHT is בְּיַהֲפִרְנִי אֱלֹהִים בְּאַרְצִי עָנִי,¹³ “For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.” Joseph’s reason for naming his second son אֶפְרַיִם is precisely because God had made Joseph fruitful. This meaning is explained in the phrase בְּיַהֲפִרְנִי (ki-hiphrani), “for he has made me fruitful.” Nahum Sarna notes that “All biblical Hifil forms of the stem *p-r-h* refer to the blessing of abundant posterity.”¹⁴ Hence the personal name אֶפְרַיִם reflects the *abundant* fruit of the womb. With the birth of אֶפְרַיִם, Joseph had two sons. The blessing associated with fruitfulness of his offspring provides the context for other terminology germane with “fruitfulness.” This pattern of abundant posterity, multiplication and fruitfulness will continue in the etymological development of אֶפְרַיִם into Categories 2-4.

אֶפְרַיִם is similarly translated by Sarna as “fertile.”¹⁵ Sarna relates that “The name originally must have meant either ‘fertile land,’ from the stem *p-r-h*, or ‘pastureland,’ from *’afar*, preserved in postbiblical Hebrew.’ Either etymology would aptly describe the future territory of the tribe bearing this name.”¹⁶ Sarna describes the fruitfulness of אֶפְרַיִם in terms of fertility, rather than simply fruitful, but retains the essential meaning in reference to the fruit of the womb. In his comments, Sarna looks forward to the

12. Christo Van der Merwe, *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2004), (Ge 1:28), Logos.

13. Wolfgang Richter, Christian Riepl, and Johann Peter Rechenmacher, *Biblia Hebraica Transcripta* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Ge 41:52, Logos.

14. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 289. Logos.

15. Sarna, *Genesis*, 289.

16. Sarna, *Genesis*, 289.

fruitfulness of the tribe and tribal lands of מִן־רֶפְרָא. Both fruitfulness in terms of fertility and tribal lands reflect the nature of the blessing of the fruitfulness of the womb, but the inclusion of a reference to the tribe and tribal lands by Sarna suggests a reference to numerous descendants, describing a quantitative element related to the abundant fruitfulness of מִן־רֶפְרָא. The quantitative nature of the blessing in terms of abundant fruitfulness and fertility are essential exegetical tools with regard to the continued development of the term מִן־רֶפְרָא.

Rather than interpreting מִן־רֶפְרָא as “fruitful,” the LXX renders Gen 41:52 as, “τὸ δὲ ὄνομα τοῦ δευτέρου ἐκάλεσεν Ἐφράιμ, Ὅτι ὑψώσέν με ὁ θεὸς ἐν γῆ ταπεινώσεώς μου.”¹⁷ Instead of fruitful, the LXX translates מִן־רֶפְרָא (ki-hiphrani) as ὑψώσέν. Instead of “he has made me fruitful” the phrase in v. 52 is rendered “because God has *exalted* [ὑψώσέν] me in the land of my humiliation.” The *Dictionary of Biblical Languages* defines ὑψόω as, “to lift up, exalt, [or] elevate.”¹⁸ Rather than stating the blessing in terms of fruitfulness, ὑψώσέν (hyposen) is used to denote being lifted high or exalted from the root ὑψόω (hypsoō). This is also the way Strong’s defines ὑψόω: “to *elevate...exalt, [or] lift up.*¹⁹

The LXX emphasizes that Joseph was *exalted* (rather than fruitful) in the land of his affliction. Rather than following the Hebrew root of מִן־רֶפְרָא as רֶפָא or “fruitful,” emphasis is placed on the elevated status of Joseph. Therefore, most English translations follow the Hebrew. However, the use of ὑψώσέν (hyposen) is contextually appropriate as it relates to the afflictions of Joseph and his exalted status in Egypt, the land of his

17. Randall K. Tan, David A. deSilva, and Isaiah Hoogendyk, *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear Septuagint: H.B. Swete Edition* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), Ge 41:52. Logos.

18. James Swanson, “ὑψόω,” *DBL*, Logos.

19. James Strong, “ὑψόω,” *Strong’s*, 75, Logos.

affliction. However, it also directs attention toward the blessings and prophecies concerning אֶפְרַיִם which continue to emphasize the future *exaltation* of his son אֶפְרַיִם, such as that expressed by Jacob to Joseph in the blessing of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh (Gen 48:19-20).

Concerning Manasseh, Jacob told Joseph that “...his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations” (Gen 48:19b). The LXX shows the *elevation* of אֶפְרַיִם in terms of being exalted or greater than his brother (*cf.* Gen 48:19b and Gen 41:52). אֶפְרַיִם would be greater than Manasseh and the younger son was to be exalted above his elder brother (48:19). Therefore, the LXX provides a link to the nature of the blessing as both a quantitative blessing in terms of the continued fruitfulness of the womb through his descendants (*see* Gen 41:52 and 48:15-22) and as a blessing of preeminent or exalted status bestowed upon אֶפְרַיִם by the patriarch. The terms אֶפְרַיִם, fruitful, doubly fruitful and exalted are terms for the Category 1 pillar (*see* Appendix).

The Blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh: Genesis 48

The next passage of scripture in which אֶפְרַיִם is encountered is Gen 48. Joseph was told that his father was ill and took with him his two sons and went to Jacob’s bedside (Gen 48:1-2). In the following verses, Jacob related to Joseph how God had blessed him, telling of God’s promises of blessing to him and his descendants. In doing so, Gen 48 continues the theme of fruitfulness first found in Gen 41:

Then Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, and He said to me, ‘Behold, I will make you fruitful and numerous, and I will make you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession’” (Gen 48:3-4).

Here Jacob reflects on the covenant blessing of fruitfulness. In the DSS in 4Q1, the term in v. 4 is מַפְרֵךְ,²⁰ “will make you fruitful.” The fruitfulness here hearkens back to Gen 41:52 as מַפְרֵךְ is the same term found in both 41:52 and 48:4.

In addition to the fruitfulness mentioned in 48:4, there is a reference to a quantitative aspect of the blessing. This quantitative element in v. 4 is described by the term numerous, thus “I will make you fruitful and numerous.” In the BHt, the Hebrew is, מִפְרֵךְ וְהִרְבִּיתִּיךָ.²¹ מִפְרֵךְ וְהִרְבִּיתִּיךָ or “and I will make you numerous” comes from the root רָבָה. The BDB defines רָבָה as a verb meaning “[to] be, or become, much, many, great...[to] become many, numerous: a. of a people, Ex 1:10, 12 (J), v 20 (E), Dt 6:3; 8:1; 30:16 Zc 10:8; 1 Ch 5:23; 23:17 לְמַעַן רָבוּ; especially + פָּרָה be fruitful and multiply.”²² The fruitfulness of אֶפְרַיִם here builds upon the concept of fruitfulness from Gen 41:52 as the fruitfulness of the womb.

Fruitful occurs with the term “numerous” in 48:4 from the Hebrew רָבָה, from (וְהִרְבִּיתִּיךָ in the BHt).²³ The DBL defines רָבָה as “multiply, i.e., increase a number or quantity (Ge 1:22), note: in some contexts to increase a number has an associative meaning of increasing the status of an object; (piel) increase, make numerous (Jdg 9:29; Ps 44:13); (hif) cause to increase, make numerous (Ge 17:2).²⁴ The hifil form of רָבָה referenced in Gen 17:2 reinforces the numerous increase as defined in Gen 48. In *Gesenius’ Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* רָבָה is defined as “(1) To be Multiplied, Increased, Gen. 1:22, 28; 9:1, 7; Exod. 1:20; and often; to be

20. *4Q1 Frag. 12 Genesis-Exodus a*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010. Logos.

21. Wolfgang Richter, Christian Riepl, and Johann Peter Rechenmacher, *Biblia Hebraica Transcripta* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Ge 48:4. Logos.

22. Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, “רָבָה,” *BDB* 915, Logos.

23. Wolfgang Richter, Christian Riepl, and Johann Peter Rechenmacher, *Biblia Hebraica Transcripta* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Ge 48:4, Logos.

24. James Swanson, “רָבָה,” *DBL*, Logos.

many, to be numerous, Ps. 139:18. (2)—(a) to become great, 1 Sam. 14:30; to become greater...[and in the hifil form] Also to multiply, to increase.”²⁵ This continues to define the fruitful multiplication initially defined in Gen 41:52. Jacob would be fruitful and *numerous* in terms of descendants, the fruit of the womb.

Instead of fruitful and numerous, the LXX renders v. 4 ἀξάνω καὶ πληθύνω. ἀξάνω is “a prolonged form of a prim. verb; to grow (“wax”), i.e. enlarge...grow (up), (give the) increase.” According to *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* ἀξάνω can also mean, “to increase, to cause to grow”.²⁶ The Greek text opts for an emphasis on the quantitative element of the blessing, by emphasizing the “increase” rather than fruitfulness itself. Instead of “I will make you fruitful,” the LXX relates this in the phrase “I will make you increase.” However, there is agreement between the Greek and Hebrew texts, in that both renderings have essentially the same meaning in reference to fruitful increase.

The term “numerous” is translated from πληθύνω, in the LXX meaning, “to increase (trans. or intrans.):—abound, multiply.”²⁷ πληθύνω is usually rendered ‘to multiply’...(mostly rendering forms of רבה).²⁸ Thus the phrase ἀξάνω καὶ πληθύνω, can be interpreted as “I will make you increase and multiply.” When compared to “fruitful and numerous” it is evident from the Hebrew and the Greek texts that abundant, fruitful multiplication is intended. This provides a contextual link also to the double fruitfulness of the masculine plural form of the name יִפְרֹאֲם established in Gen 41:52. Gen 48 expounds upon the kind of fruitfulness that יִפְרֹאֲם and Manasseh would experience.

25. Wilhelm Gesenius and Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, “רָבָה,” *GHCLLOT* 754, Logos.

26. Johan Lust, Erik Eynikel, and Katrin Hauspie, “ἀξάνω,” *GELS*, Logos.

27. James Strong, “πληθύνω,” *Strong’s*, 58, Logos.

28. Johan Lust, Erik Eynikel, and Katrin Hauspie, “πληθύνω,” *GELS*, Logos.

The emphasis of these verses in Gen 48 is not only on fruitfulness, but on the *abundant* fruitfulness of the descendants of Jacob. God told Jacob that he would be a לְקַהֵל עַמִּים ,²⁹ (liqhal ammin), a “company of peoples.” This company (קהל) can refer to any large group of people. The DBL defines קהל as an “assembly, community, congregation...crowd, throng, mob, company.”³⁰ Strong’s also defines the root of קהל (qâhâl) as an “assemblage...assembly, company, congregation, [or] multitude.”³¹

With these words, Jacob recounted to Joseph the covenant blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant which God gave to him at Luz, also known as Bethel (*see* Gen 28:10-15). The fruitful and numerous blessing imparted to Jacob in the Abrahamic Covenant would result in Jacob becoming לְקַהֵל עַמִּים , a company of peoples. It is through this announcement that Jacob defined the nature of the blessing he would extend to Josephs’ sons, namely the Abrahamic Covenant.

In the LXX “company of peoples” is translated from the Hebrew לְקַהֵל עַמִּים to the Greek “συναγωγὰς ἐθνῶν”³² (Gen 48:4). Συναγωγή is typically translated in the NT as assembly or synagogue, however, συναγωγή can be interpreted as any “collection...gathering (of people), company 1 Mc 7,12; gang, band Ps 21 (22),17; congregation, assembly, host Ex 12,3; [or] multitude Ez 38,4.”³³ Strong’s defines συναγωγή as “an *assemblage* of persons; spec. a Jewish “*synagogue*” (the meeting or the place); by anal. a Christian *church*:—assembly, congregation, synagogue.”³⁴ The present

29. Wolfgang Richter, Christian Riepl, and Johann Peter Rechenmacher, *Biblia Hebraica Transcripita* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Ge 48:4. Logos.

30. James Swanson, “קהל,” *DBL*, Logos.

31. James Strong, “קהל,” *Strong’s*, 102, Logos.

32. Randall K. Tan, David A. deSilva, and Isaiah Hoogendyk, *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear Septuagint: H.B. Swete Edition* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), Ge 48:4. Logos.

33. Johan Lust, Erik Eynikel, and Katrin Hauspie, “συναγωγή,” *GELS*, Logos.

34. James Strong, “συναγωγή,” *Strong’s*, 68, Logos.

context of 48:4 relates to an assembly or collection of peoples. With the previous descriptors of fruitful and numerous, this refers to a large number or multitude of peoples.

This fruitful multiplication is also found in *Targum Pseudo-Johnathan*: וַאֲמַר לִי הָא וְנָא מַפְיִשׁ לָךְ וּמַסְגִּי לָךְ וְאִתְּנִינָךְ לְכַנְשֵׁת שְׁבִטִין וְאִתְּן ית ארעא הקדא לברך בתרך אהסנת עלם.³⁵ The JPS Tanakh translates this passage on Gen 48:4 from Tg. Ps.-J. as “And He said to me, Behold, I will increase thee and multiply thee, and make thee an assemblage of tribes, and will give this land to thy sons after thee for an everlasting inheritance.” This same rendering of the Hebrew in Tg. Ps.-J. is found also in *Targum Onqelos*.³⁶ In 48:4, Jacob is expounding on the covenant promise God made to him at Bethel (35:11). By specifically naming אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh, Jacob indicated that it was אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh who would become a multitude of peoples (48:4, 16), (not tribes as seen in the JPS translation). This initial declaration applied to both אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh, meaning that both tribes would become numerous.

Jacob’s words in 48:3-4 echo the covenant words expressed to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The covenant blessings were expressed to the patriarchs in terms of posterity, of being made fruitful and numerous (Gen 35:4-12). The term used in 48:4 is “מְפְרֶה” or “fruitful” from פָּרָה. In BDB the meaning of פָּרָה is defined as, “[to] bear fruit, [or] be fruitful...Assyrian pir’u, posterity.”³⁷ It is notable that מְפְרֶה is in the participle form of the verb which indicates imminent action, describing something that God is about to do. The participle can identify “Imminent action (on the point of occurring) [such as illustrated

35. Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to the Pentateuch* (Hebrew Union College, 2005), Ge 48:4, Logos.

36. Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon, *Targum Onqelos to the Pentateuch* (Hebrew Union College, 2005), Ge 48:4, Logos.

37. Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, “פָּרָה,” *BDB* 826, Logos.

in] הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי עֹשֶׂה דָבָר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל I am about to do a thing in Israel (1 Sam. 3:11).”³⁸ Jacob’s mention of the covenant promises related to him in Gen 35:11 strengthens the case for the use of the participle form here, in that Jacob is about to bless Joseph’s sons and extend the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant to both אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh, but with a greater measure to אֶפְרַיִם (Gen 48:15-22).

God’s promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was a blessing of fruitfulness, in terms of *numerous* descendants. אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh were evidence of that continued blessing of fruitfulness and descendants which God had promised to Jacob. This agrees with the following statement in 48:4 when he further describes fruitful and numerous by stating “I will make you a company of peoples.” Fruitful, numerous, increase, multiply and company of peoples are additional terms on the first pillar for Category 1.

The Adoption and Preeminence of אֶפְרַיִם

Within the blessing of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh in Gen 48, is the theological concept of adoption. While Joseph was a son of Jacob, אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh were Jacob’s grandsons. Yet in the following verses Jacob states, “Now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. But your offspring that have been born after them shall be yours; they shall be called by the names of their brothers in their inheritance” (Gen 48:5-6). Two things are significant in this text, the adoption of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh and the preminent status of אֶפְרַיִם over Manasseh.

38. Christo Van der Merwe, et al., “§20.3. The Participle, (ii) Imminent action (on the point of occurring),” *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, electronic ed., (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 162, Logos.

Central to this passage is the understanding of the nature of adoption in the ANE. When Jacob recalled the covenant promises in vv. 3-4, he laid the foundation for his actions in the subsequent verses, namely the adoption of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh. Sarna notes that, “As heir to the blessings, Jacob has the right to decide who is to be included in the ‘community of peoples’ that will be known as Israel. Because only he who receives the divine blessing directly can impart it.”³⁹ Thus, Jacob intended to include both of Joseph’s sons as his own. As such, the blessings Jacob imparts entitles his grandsons to the full rights of sons.

Adoption was a legitimate legal proceeding, well-known throughout the ANE. The ABD defines adoption as “The creation of a kinship relationship between two individuals that is recognized as essentially equivalent to one stemming from natural descent.”⁴⁰ Evidence of adoption as a common custom in the ANE can be found in ancient law codes. According to the ABD:

These “Law collections (often called law codes) and adoption contracts are our primary types of documentation. The latter are more abundant and also more reliable, since the function of the collections is debated and their treatment of adoption incomplete. Contracts have their limitations as well; they do not as a rule present the circumstances leading to the adoption, or the age of the parties. Stipulations regarding adoption differed from contract to contract and “code” to “code” so that one cannot expect to discover general laws which governed Mesopotamian (or biblical) practice.”⁴¹

Two such law codes are the Code of Hammurabi and the Laws of Eshnunna and both mention adoption in these ANE law codes.⁴²

39. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 325, Logos.

40. Frederick W. Knobloch, “Adoption,” *ABD* 76, Logos.

41. Frederick W. Knobloch, “Adoption,” *ABD* 77, Logos.

42. “Schorr (1913) and Kohler, Koschaker, and Ungnad (1909–23) have collected a number of OB adoption texts; see also texts and bibliography in Ellis 1975. Speiser (1930) and Cassin (1938) present MB Nuzi texts with discussion (see also dissertations cited in Eichler 1989: 116–17 nn. 51, 56). References to

Sarna describes the declaration in Gen 48 in legal terms which signified the well-known practice which indicated the boys adoption.

The language and narration are noteworthy for their legal precision. The adopter is invariably called Israel (cf. 35:10); there is a declaration of intent comprising the careful, unambiguous designation of the persons involved and those excluded (vv. 5–6); the true identity of the boys present is established through interrogation of the father (vv. 8f.); certain physical acts reinforce the oral declaration (vv. 10–12).⁴³

In these oral and physical demonstrations, Jacob effectively adopted אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh as his own sons. Any sons born to Joseph afterward were to be Joseph's own sons. They would be named by their brothers (אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh) in their tribal inheritance (48:6).

In Gen 48:5, Jacob reverses the birth order, mentioning אֶפְרַיִם before Manasseh. This reversal signified Jacobs' promotion of אֶפְרַיִם to the status of firstborn. In the *Bible Knowledge Commentary* Allen P. Ross states, "When Joseph saw that his father was blessing Ephraim over Manasseh, he protested. But Jacob's words, I know, my son, I know, expressed the confidence of his faith: he was blessing according to the divine plan, not according to normal custom."⁴⁴ This divine plan was related in Gen 25:23 concerning the greater status of Jacob over his own older brother. Jacob's own history provides additional context for his blessing of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh in Gen 48. In the years following, the adoption of Joseph's sons, the ascendancy of אֶפְרַיִם would become evident. Ross notes that "Ephraim became a leading tribe in the Northern Kingdom, much

adoption in the law collections (see ANET) are Codex Hammurabi (CH) §§170–71, 185–93; Laws of Eshnunna §35; and Middle Assyrian Laws (MAL) §A 28; cf. doubtfully MAL §A 41, Lipit-Ištar §27. Other types of documents occasionally mention adoption. We read of the adoption of a foundling in "The Legend of Sargon" (ANET, p. 119) and, with details of the adoption procedure, in the lexical series ana ittišu (Landsberger 1937: 44–47)." Frederick W. Knobloch, "Adoption," *ABD* 77. Logos.

43. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 325, Logos.

44. Allen P. Ross, "Genesis," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 97, Logos.

superior to the tribe of Manasseh, as Jacob had predicted.”⁴⁵

The statement by Jacob that אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh shall be to Jacob *as* Reuben and Simeon is indicative of the adoption of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh as legitimate sons of Jacob. The text reveals the promotion of אֶפְרַיִם to the status of firstborn and the promotion of Manasseh to the status of the second born son of *Jacob*. Reuben was the natural firstborn son of Jacob and Simeon his second, but his statement elevated אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh. אֶפְרַיִם however was further elevated to the status of the firstborn, not only of Joseph, but of Jacob (*cf.* Gen 48:5-6, and 49:1-7).

In mentioning אֶפְרַיִם before Manasseh and then comparing these two sons of Joseph to the two sons of Jacob, (Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn, and Simeon, Jacob’s second son), Sarna asserts that, “The parallel drawn between the two sons of Joseph and the two oldest sons of Jacob exemplifies the new legal status of the former.”⁴⁶ Hence, אֶפְרַיִם is elevated in status to the firstborn of Jacob (rather than Reuben) and Manasseh to the status of second born (rather than Simeon). In a statement on the adoption of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh in the *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, the authors note that:

While Jacob does not disinherit Reuben and Simeon, he adopts Joseph’s sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, and gives them prioritized standing in inheritance. The adoption practice and formula here are very similar to those attested in the Code of Hammurabi. Additionally, one Ugaritic text features a grandfather adopting his grandson. In one sense this adoption could be seen as the means by which Joseph is given the double portion of the inheritance due to the firstborn, since two of his sons receive shares from Jacob’s inheritance.⁴⁷

This prioritized standing is evident in the text of Gen 48 and the adoption of the two sons

45. Allen P. Ross, “Genesis,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 97, Logos.

46. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis, The JPS Torah Commentary* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 326, Logos.

47. Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Ge 48:5–6, Logos.

of Joseph explains the “double portion” inheritance in 48:22.

While the term “firstborn” does not appear in the text of Gen 48 in direct reference to אֶפְרַיִם, a later reference to אֶפְרַיִם as firstborn does occur at Jer 31:9, “Ephraim is My firstborn.” Despite the absence of a direct reference to אֶפְרַיִם as firstborn in Gen 48, the adoption event is the precedent for his status as firstborn and evidence in support of Jeremiah’s use of the term in Jer 31:9.

The Jewish historian, Josephus, mentions the adoption of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh in Ant.:

1. (194) Now when Jacob had lived seventeen years in Egypt, he fell into a disease, and died in the presence of his sons; but not till he made his prayers for their enjoying prosperity, and till he had foretold to them prophetically how every one of them was to dwell in the land of Canaan. But this happened many years afterward. (195) He also enlarged upon the praises of Joseph; how he had not remembered the evil doings of his brethren to their disadvantage; nay, on the contrary, was kind to them, bestowing upon them so many benefits, as seldom are bestowed on men’s own benefactors. He then commanded his own sons that they should admit Joseph’s sons, Ephraim and Manasses, into their number, and divide the land of Canaan in common with them; concerning whom we shall treat hereafter.⁴⁸

Josephus speaks of the prophetic nature of the blessing as well as the adoption of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh and their admittance as legitimate sons of Jacob and co-heirs with them. These things would come to pass in the history of Israel, but many years following the events recorded in the patriarchal blessing of Gen 48-49.

Philo also mentions the adoption of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh, stating, “And what shall we say of the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh? Are they not, in strict accordance

48. In Whiston’s commentary on this passage in Josephus, he notes, “As to this encomium upon Joseph, as preparatory to Jacob’s adopting Ephraim and Manasses into his own family, and to be admitted for two tribes, which Josephus here mentions, all our copies of Genesis omit it (ch. 48); nor do we know whence he took it, or whether it be not his own embellishment only.” Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987), 65, Logos.

with nature, compared to the two eldest sons of Jacob, Reuben and Simeon?”⁴⁹ This comparison is a direct parallel between the firstborn and second born sons of Joseph to the firstborn and second born of Jacob. The reason for the promotion of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh can be seen in the text of Gen 49:3-7:

Reuben, you are my firstborn; My might and the beginning of my strength, Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power. ‘Uncontrolled as water, you shall not have preeminence, Because you went up to your father’s bed; Then you defiled it—he went up to my couch. ‘Simeon and Levi are brothers; Their swords are implements of violence. ‘Let my soul not enter into their council; Let not my glory be united with their assembly; Because in their anger they slew men, And in their self-will they lamed oxen. ‘Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel.’

The loss of the preeminence of Reuben and Simeon is here noted immediately following the Gen 48 adoption, blessing and promotion of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh (48:1-22).

Additionally, Gen 49:3-7 provides the reason for their loss of status and the context for the mention of Reuben and Simeon in Gen 48:5. Reuben and Simeon would continue as sons and inheritors of Jacob, but אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh would achieve ascendancy above them.

An additional element of adoption is found in Gen 48:12, “Then Joseph took them from his knees, and bowed with his face to the ground.” Joseph places his two sons on or between the knees of Jacob. This act of placing children “on or between the knees” is a reference to “receiving or placing someone else’s child on the knees [which] signified adoption.”⁵⁰ It is important to note that אֶפְרַיִם was born to Joseph by an Egyptian woman (Gen 41:50), a Gentile. Although at this time, the prohibition against the taking of foreign wives was not in effect (Deut 7:1-6), the inclusion of the half-Egyptian sons of Joseph

49. Charles Duke Yonge with Philo of Alexandria, *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 349, Logos.

50. Frederick W. Knobloch, “Adoption,” *ABD* 77, Logos.

and their adoption as full sons of Jacob is noteworthy.

As the blessing of Jacob continued, Jacob took Josephs' sons, and drew them to himself in order to bless them. His actions reveal a special preference of one son over the other. As Jacob drew the boys near:

Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them close to him. But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn. (Gen 48:13-14).

Jacob intentionally crossed his hands, placing אֶפְרַיִם, the younger son under his right hand. When Jacob blessed Josephs' younger son rather than Manasseh, his firstborn, Joseph interrupted in order to redirect Jacob's attention to his firstborn son, Manasseh. Jacob responded by telling Joseph that his younger son אֶפְרַיִם "shall be greater than he, [Manasseh] and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations" (Gen 48:19b).

Both sons would be "a multitude in the midst of the earth" (v.16), but only אֶפְרַיִם would be "a multitude of nations" (v.19). Jacob ends with the proclamation that the names of Joseph's sons would be a blessing. "He blessed them that day, saying, 'By you Israel will pronounce blessing, saying, "May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!"' Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh" (Gen 48:20). Additional terms for the Category 1 pillar are the theological concepts of adoption and the preeminence of אֶפְרַיִם.

אֶפְרַיִם as Firstborn

Although the term "firstborn" is not explicitly mentioned in reference to אֶפְרַיִם in the Gen 48 narrative, אֶפְרַיִם is directly identified as the "firstborn" in Jer 31:9b, "For I am a father to Israel, And Ephraim is My firstborn." This raises a crucial question, why is

אֶפְרַיִם referred to as “firstborn?” Apart from the adoption of אֶפְרַיִם in the Gen 48 narrative, Jeremiah’s words acknowledging אֶפְרַיִם as “firstborn” is obscure and contradictory (*cf.* Gen 41:52). In order for Jeremiah’s reference to firstborn in Jer 31:9 to be clearly understood, אֶפְרַיִם must first be understood as a Category 1 term.

Since אֶפְרַיִם was actually the *second* son born to Joseph (Gen 41:52), the status of אֶפְרַיִם as “*firstborn*” (Jer 31:9) is theologically significant. According to the birth narrative of Gen 41, Manasseh, not אֶפְרַיִם is Joseph’s firstborn son (Gen 41:52). It is the text of Gen 48 that provides the background for the adoption of אֶפְרַיִם. Gen 48 reveals the preeminence given to אֶפְרַיִם above his older brother Manasseh. It is the adoption of אֶפְרַיִם that defines his new status as firstborn in Jer 31:9. Therefore, the exegetical analysis of the Category 4 text of Jer 31 depends upon the knowledge of the use of אֶפְרַיִם as a Category 1 term (*see* Appendix).

Additional evidence for אֶפְרַיִם as the firstborn comes from Deut 33:17, “As the firstborn of his ox, majesty is his, And his horns are the horns of the wild ox; With them he will push the peoples, All at once, to the ends of the earth. And those are the ten thousands of Ephraim, And those are the thousands of Manasseh.” The term “firstborn in 33:17 is בְּכֹר which is defined by Strong’s as “to *burst* the womb, i.e. (caus.) *bear* or *make early fruit* (of woman or tree); also (as denom. from 1061) to *give the birthright*:—make firstborn, be firstling, bring forth first child (new fruit).”⁵¹ The TWOT also defines בְּכֹר as “firstborn.”⁵² K&D describe the elevated status of אֶפְרַיִם:

It is...Ephraim, whom the patriarch Jacob raised into the position of the first-born of Joseph (Gen. 48:4ff.). All the sons of Joseph resembled oxen, but Ephraim was the most powerful of them all. He was endowed with majesty; his horns, the strong weapon of oxen, in which all their strength is concentrated, were not the

51. James Strong, “בְּכֹר,” *Strong’s*, 21, Logos.

52. John N. Oswalt, “244 בְּכֹר,” *TWOT*, 108, Logos.

horns of common oxen, but horns of the wild buffalo (*reem*, Num. 23:22), that strong indomitable beast (cf. Job. 39:9ff.; Ps. 22:22). With them he would thrust down nations, the ends of the earth, i.e., the most distant nations (vid., Ps. 2:8; 7:9; 22:28).⁵³

Firstborn is another related term for the first pillar of Category 1.

The Abrahamic Covenant: Fruitful Blessings and the Fullness of the Nations

The Abrahamic Covenant is first referenced in Gen 15:1-21. The blessing of אֲפָרַיִם in Gen 48 is framed in covenant language which reflects the belief of Jacob, Joseph and Moses (as the author of Genesis) in the Abrahamic Covenant as well as their confidence in God's promises concerning their future. References to the covenant הַבְּרִיתָה made with Abraham, otherwise known as the Abrahamic Covenant, can be found in Gen 15:1-21; 17:1-22, while covenant renewals to Isaac and Jacob can be found in Gen 26:24, 28 and 35. Jacob's reference to the covenant promises in Gen 48:3-4 are most reminiscent of God's blessing to Jacob in Gen 35:9-12:

Then God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram, and He blessed him. God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; You shall no longer be called Jacob, But Israel shall be your name." Thus He called him Israel. God also said to him, "I am God Almighty; Be fruitful and multiply; A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, And kings shall come forth from you. "The land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you, And I will give the land to your descendants after you."

God declares to Jacob in Gen 35:10 (11) "אֲנִי אֵל שַׁדַּדַּי, וְרַבָּה וְרַבָּה גוֹי וְקַהֲלֵי גוֹיִם יִהְיֶה מִמֶּנִּי"⁵⁴ "I am El Shaddai, be fruitful and multiply, a nation and an assembly of nations shall come from you." In v. 11, פְּרָה is used for "fruitful" and רַבָּה for "multiply." The LXX similarly

53. Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 1014, Logos.

54. Wolfgang Richter, Christian Riepl, and Johann Peter Rechenmacher, *Biblia Hebraica Transcripta* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Ge 35:11, Logos.

translates “be fruitful and multiply” as “αὐξάνου καὶ πληθύνου,”⁵⁵ or “increase and be multiplied.” αὐξάνου emphasizes the *increase* of the fruitfulness of the womb demonstrated by פָּרָה in the Hebrew. Thus there is agreement between Gen 35:11 and Gen 48:4 in terms of fruitfulness and numerous multiplication of descendants.

That the Abrahamic Covenant is in Joseph’s mind when he names his youngest son אֶפְרַיִם is evidenced in the linkage of the term אֶפְרַיִם to the descriptions given in Gen 41 as well as in the blessing of אֶפְרַיִם in Gen 48 and in the Patriarchal Pronouncement of Gen 49. Further evidence of the relationship between the multitude of peoples or fullness of nations (מְלֶאכֶת־הַגּוֹיִם, melo hagoyim) of אֶפְרַיִם in Gen 48:19 to the Abrahamic Covenant is best observed in Gen 17. The same language is used here of fruitful multiplication:

“I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will *multiply you exceedingly*.” Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a *multitude of nations*. “No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a *multitude of nations*. I will make you *exceedingly fruitful*, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you. I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God” (Gen 17:2-8, emphasis added).

Here, יְהוָה expressly states his intent to multiply him exceedingly and that he had made Abraham אֲבִי הַמְּוֹן גוֹיִם, (hamon goyim) a father of a multitude or a multitude of nations. GHCLLOT defines הַמְּוֹן as “(from the root הִמְוָה)...(1) the sound, noise of a shower, 1 Ki. 18:41; of singers, Eze. 26:13; Am. 5:23; especially of a multitude, 1 Sa. 4:14; 14:19; Job 39:7. Hence—(2) a multitude of men itself. הַמְּוֹן קוֹל the noise of a multitude, Isa. 13:4;

55. Randall K. Tan, David A. deSilva, and Isaiah Hoogendyk, *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear Septuagint: H.B. Swete Edition* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), Ge 35:11, Logos.

33:3; Dan. 10:6. הַמְּנוּן גוֹיִם Gen. 17:4, 5. ה' עַמִּים Isa. 17:12, [or] many peoples.”⁵⁶ הַמְּנוּן גוֹיִם carries with it the idea of many nations or peoples; an idea that from the very beginning of the Abrahamic Covenant reveals God’s intention to greatly bless and exceedingly multiply Abraham and his descendants after him.

That this blessing was intended beyond simply large numbers of Israelites is demonstrated by the context supplied in the following verses. הַמְּנוּן גוֹיִם is repeated in Gen 17:5 and followed by the description of being made exceedingly fruitful, “וְהִפְרֵתִי אֶתְּךָ” וְהִפְרֵתִי אֶתְּךָ מְאֹד” or “and I will make you exceedingly fruitful.” The presence of the Hebrew emphatic מְאֹד מְאֹד (meod, meod) reveals that his intent is to make them *abundantly* fruitful. The BDB defines מְאֹד as “muchness, force, abundance, [or] exceedingly.”⁵⁷ The text of Gen 48 likewise demonstrates Jacob’s awareness of the fruitful increase of his descendants as a fulfillment of the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant. This accounts for Jacob’s mention of the covenant promises given to him in Gen 48:3-4.

It is important here not to stop with a mere quantitative qualification of these verses, thus limiting the interpretation to numeric multiplication. It is important to note the significance of fruitfulness in the context, not only of the generations of descendants who would be born through Abraham, which is clear in the passage, but also to the *nations* and *kings* (v. 6) which would come from him, “וְנָתַתִּיךָ לְגוֹיִם וּמְלָכִים מִמֶּנִּי יֵצְאוּ.”⁵⁸ This can be rendered “and I will make nations of you and kings shall go out from you” (Gen 17:6). The fruitful multiplication of Abraham’s descendants and the elevation of Abraham to the father of a multitude of nations is supported also by the name change

56. Wilhelm Gesenius and Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, “הַמְּנוּן,” *GHCLLOT* 227, Logos.

57. Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, “מְאֹד,” *BDB* 547, Logos.

58. Christo Van der Merwe, *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2004), Ge 17:6, Logos.

from Abram as “exalted father” to Abraham, a “father of a multitude” (v. 5).

Furthermore, it was not merely *a nation* but *a company of nations* that would come from Jacob (v. 11). Similar to the לְקַהֲלֵ עַמִּים (liqhal ammim) company of peoples in 48:4 is the mention of a company of nations here as וְקַהֲלֵ גוֹיִם.⁵⁹ Peoples is listed in 35:11 as גוֹי rather than עַמִּים in 48:4. The BHt renders as “גוֹי וְקַהֲלֵ גוֹיִם יִהְיֶה מִמֶּךָ” (35:11) “a nation and a company of nations shall be (come) from you,” while the LXX renders this as “ἔθνη καὶ συναγωγαὶ ἐθνῶν ἔσονται ἐκ σοῦ” or “a nations and an assembly of nations will be from you.” The LXX rendering of ἔθνη is in the nom. plural as opposed to the singular Hebrew noun גוֹי. It is both “a nation” Israel that would come from Jacob but also “a company or assembly of nations” which would come from him. Thus, in the Abrahamic Covenant we find the blessing of fruitful multiplication within the nation of Israel and also in the company of nations among outside of Israel. Thus, it could be stated that through the twelve sons of Jacob, Israel would become the גוֹי (nation of Gen 35:11) and Ephraim-Israel would become the וְקַהֲלֵ גוֹיִם (company or assembly of nations (plural, גוֹיִם) through אֶפְרַיִם (and to a lesser extent Manasseh; *cf.* Gen 48:16; 19-22). Meaning the Abrahamic Covenant of becoming nations (plural) meant that assemblies of peoples would be found among the nations through the sons of Joseph. These prophecies speak to the eventual historical realities that came to pass through the history of Ephraim-Israel as a nation (*see* Appendix, Category 4). אֶפְרַיִם would be scattered among the Gentile nations. The NT speaks of the Abrahamic Covenant in terms of adoption, Gentile inclusion and the descendants of Abraham in Pauls’ writings in Romans (*see* Rom 9-11). It is important to note the variations in the usage of גוֹי and עַמִּים. According to BDB, גוֹי can refer to a

59. Wolfgang Richter, Christian Riepl, and Johann Peter Rechenmacher, *Biblia Hebraica Transcripta* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Ge 35:11, Logos.

nation or to a people and in the plural גוֹיִם to nations or peoples, but it can also be used when referring to Gentiles or non-Jewish peoples.⁶⁰ גוֹי has numerous meanings depending upon the context and grammar as noted in the DBL:

People, nation, i.e., a large group based on various cultural, physical, geographical ties, often extended clan relationships (Ge 10:5; 25:23); 2. LN 4.1–4.37 a population of an animal (Joel 1:6; Zep 2:14); 3. LN 11.12–11.54 the Gentiles, i.e., a national group or groups that are not Jewish, with the associative meaning of being uncultured, pagan and heathen (Ne 5:8).⁶¹

גוֹיִם is used here to describe a company of peoples and is applied to the descendants of Abraham prior to the events of Gen 48-49. This means not only can גוֹיִם refer to the twelve tribes, but also to the peoples who would later be identified as אֶפְרַיִם or Ephraim-Israel as a nation (a reference to the ten northern tribes) in the Prophetic writings of the אֶפְרַיִם texts (*see* Appendix Category 4).

GHCLLOT defines קהל as “congregation, assembly, as קהל גוֹיִם Gen. 35:11; and קהל עַמִּים Gen. 28:3; 48:4; an assembly, a crowd of nations. Especially the congregation of the people of Israel; fully called קהל יִשְׂרָאֵל Deu. 31:30.”⁶² While קהל גוֹיִם can refer to the congregation of Israel, this present wording (35:11) seems to refer to something beyond the twelve tribes of Israel. Evidence that a group of people beyond the twelve tribes of Israel can be seen by comparing קהל גוֹיִם in Gen 35:11 to מְלֵאֵי-הַגּוֹיִם in Gen 48:19. קהל גוֹיִם relates not only to the Abrahamic Covenant, but also to the Gen 48:19 blessing of מְלֵאֵי-הַגּוֹיִם (melo hagoyim). In short, Israel is the nation, Joseph’s sons אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh would be the assembly of nations. This is demonstrated in the extension of the Abrahamic Covenant specifically to the sons of Joseph (Gen 48:3-4).

60. Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, “גוֹי,” *BDB* 156, Logos.

61. James Swanson, “גוֹי,” *DBL*, Logos.

62. Wilhelm Gesenius and Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, “קהל,” *GHCLLOT* 726, Logos.

In Gen 48:19b, Jacob tells Joseph, “his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.” The BDB defines “multitude” from multitude of nations מְלוֹא (melo) as “fulness...Gn 48:19 + 19 times; מְלוֹ Ez 41:8; sf. מְלוֹא Is 42:10 + 3 times; מְלוֹאָה Dt 33:16 + 12 times.”⁶³ GHCLLOT also defines מְלוֹ as “(1) *fulness (Fülle)*; hence *that which is full*,”⁶⁴ as does TWOT, “מְלוֹ (*mēlō*) *fulness*.”⁶⁵ The definition of מְלוֹ as fullness is in agreement with the company of peoples in 48:4, but expresses something more unique about אֶפְרַיִם. In the extensive definition of the DBL, מְלוֹ is defined as:

What fills, what makes something full, an amount, quantity, or length that fills a space completely (Ex 16:33; Eze 41:8), note: in some contexts related to a specific amount that fills a container, or the hand; 2. LN 63.1–63.4 fullness, everything, all, i.e., the totality of a collection or mass (1Ch 16:32); 3. LN 11.1–11.11 group, formally, abundance, i.e., a gathering or categorization of those of a similar class or kind (Ge 48:19; Isa 31:4).⁶⁶

Therefore, in Gen 48:19, מְלוֹא־הַגּוֹיִם can be translated as either multitude of nations, multitude of peoples, fullness of nations or fullness of peoples and relates directly to the Abrahamic Covenant’s usage of becoming an assembly or multitude of nations. The best description here may be the fullness of nations.

In her article in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, Chee-Chiew Lee proposes that there are essentially two ways קְהַל גּוֹיִם may be interpreted in Gen 35:11. She raises the question of identity in reference to this “company of nations:”

Surely, the nation of Israel shall come from Jacob, but who is this “company of nations (קְהַל גּוֹיִם) that shall come from Jacob? Despite this enigmatic statement in Gen 35:11, few interpreters have addressed the issue. Those who comment on the phrase, קְהַל גּוֹיִם, maybe categorized in two ways. First, some interpret קְהַל גּוֹיִם as

63. Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, “מְלוֹ,” *BDB* 571, Logos.

64. Wilhelm Gesenius and Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, “מְלוֹ,” *GHCLLOT* 474, Logos.

65. Walter C. Kaiser, “1195 מְלוֹא,” *TWOT* 505, Logos.

66. James Swanson, “מְלוֹא,” *DBL*, Logos.

referring to the tribes of Israel. Second, others point out that it alludes to Gen 17:4-5, where God promised to make Abraham ‘the father of many nations.’⁶⁷

The connection between 35:11 and 17:4-5 sets the two passages in opposition. One applies to the tribes of Israel while the other refers to the many nations (17:4-5).

However, a comparison of both passages to 48:19 may reveal a connection to both Gen 17:4-5 and Gen 35:11. The comparison of 17:4-5 to 48:19 demonstrates the relationship between *מְלֵאֵה־מְנוּחָה*⁶⁸ and *מְלֵאֵה*, in terms of multitude and fullness respectively. Gen 17:4-5, 35:11 and 48:19 each contribute to the understanding of the “fullness” of the nations or peoples identified in 48:19. The significance of *מְלֵאֵה־הַגּוֹיִם* is that Gen 48:19 specifically uses this language to describe *אֶפְרַיִם*, a distinction which will continue in the etymological development of *אֶפְרַיִם*, particularly in Category 4. Lee further presents several views related to the use of *מְלֵאֵה־הַגּוֹיִם* in Gen 48:19, noting that many commentators see *אֶפְרַיִם* as becoming a *מְלֵאֵה־הַגּוֹיִם* or multitude of nations over Manasseh.⁶⁹ The view of ascendancy of *אֶפְרַיִם* over Manasseh *only* may be too narrow as it fails to account for the distinctives of the fullness of the nations that is specific to *אֶפְרַיִם*. Lee rightly concludes that “[The] reiteration of the Abrahamic promise to Jacob in Gen 35:11 is a development of Gen 17:4-5. While the promise that Abraham will become ‘the father of many nations’ may still be fulfilled to some extent by his physical descendants, the promise that Jacob will become ‘a nation and a company of nations’ can only be fulfilled beyond his physical

67. Chee-Chiew Lee, “גוֹיִם in Genesis 35:11 and the Abrahamic Promise of Blessings for the Nations,” *JETS Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, vol. 52 (September 2009): 467-482.

68. Wolfgang Richter, Christian Riepl, and Johann Peter Rechenmacher, *Biblia Hebraica Transcripta* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Ge 17:5, Logos.

69. Chee Chiew Lee cites the views of *מְלֵאֵה־הַגּוֹיִם* several scholars: Westermann, who proposes the phrase as a reference to increase, Hamilton who suggests an intermixture of non-Israelite people in the tribe of Ephraim, Speiser who asserts that Ephraim would become large enough to be a nation itself, and Waltke who suggests Ephraim is used to refer to the northern tribes of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Chee-Chiew Lee, “גוֹיִם in Genesis 35:11 and the Abrahamic Promise of Blessings for the Nations,” *JETS Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, vol. 52 (September 2009): 469-470.

descendants.”⁷⁰ This is supported by מְלֵאֵה־הַגּוֹיִם in Gen 48:19. Mathews also defines מְלֵאֵה־הַגּוֹיִם as “fullness of nations,” stating:

By a division of the inherited blessing between Ephraim and Manasseh (v. 19), the patriarch alleviates a father’s anxiety about the eldest’s future (cf. 17:20; 21:18–21; 27:36–40). Ephraim, however, will be more numerous (cf. Num 2:18–21; Deut 33:17), fathering a “group of nations” (*mělo’ haggôyim*).⁵⁵⁶ This expression occurs only here, although it rings similar to the promise made to Abraham (“a father of many nations,” 17:4–6) and repeated to Jacob (“a community of nations,” 35:11).⁷¹

This description of Abraham as a father of many nations is helpful in the analysis of fullness of nations, as 48:19 seems to indicate an increase beyond the tribal population of אֲרָצְיָם, thus supporting Lee’s view of a multitude of nations beyond the borders of Israel.

In Everett Fox’s translation of 48:19, he translates מְלֵאֵה־הַגּוֹיִם as “full-measure of nations!”⁷² Mathews and Fox see a connection here to a *fullness* of nations rather than simply a large number or multitude of Israelites. The fullness of nations speaks to a number of nations or peoples outside the nation of Israel, thus, Gen 17:4-6 and Gen 35:11 work together to communicate this Abrahamic promise in terminology specific to אֲרָצְיָם. Abraham as a father of nations gives rise to the belief in a fullness of nations which would come from outside of Israel through Abraham. The Gen 48:19 connection to אֲרָצְיָם is of particular significance to the later interpretations of אֲרָצְיָם among the nations.

Mathews also acknowledges the connection between Gen 35 and Gen 17, noting that “Ephraim, however, will be more numerous (cf. Num 2:18–21; Deut 33:17), fathering a “group of nations” (*mělo’ haggôyim*). This expression occurs only here, although it rings

70. Chee-Chiew Lee, “גּוֹיִם in Genesis 35:11 and the Abrahamic Promise of Blessings for the Nations,” *JETS Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, vol. 52 (September 2009): 467-482.

71. K. A. Mathews, *Genesis* 11:27–50:26, vol. 1B, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 881, Logos.

72. Fox, Everett, *The Five Books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; a New Translation with Introductions, Commentary, and Notes*, (New York: Word Publishing), 1995, Logos.

similar to the promise made to Abraham (“a father of many nations,” 17:4–6) and repeated to Jacob (“a community of nations,” 35:11).⁷³ The identification of fullness of nations has a clear connection to Israel, however it is only through the continued development of אֲפֹרְיִם as a Category 1 term through the transitions in Categories 2 through 4 that will demonstrate how this fullness may relate to אֲפֹרְיִם, Israel and to the descendants of Abraham.

In his commentary on Genesis, James McKowan alternatively sees no distinction between אֲפֹרְיִם and Manasseh in the text. McKowan notes that “The blessing concludes with the idea that they should ‘grow into a multitude,’ a major emphasis in almost every blessing pronounced in Genesis, not just in the patriarchal narratives but also in the primeval history (cf. 1:22, 28; 9:1; 12:2; 22:17; 28:3; 35:11).”⁷⁴ His implication here is that both אֲפֹרְיִם and Manasseh would be numerous *among* the tribes of Israel. His premise relies upon the reality that v. 16 refers to both sons, however, v. 19 clearly indicates that אֲפֹרְיִם is given a status above or greater than his older brother Manasseh, indicating a status beyond that indicated in v. 16.

It is through the blessing of Jacob to אֲפֹרְיִם and Manasseh that the Abrahamic Covenant is extended to the two sons of Joseph:

He blessed Joseph, and said, “The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, The angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; And may my name live on in them, And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth (Gen 48:16-17).

73. “Although in the wilderness census Manasseh’s clans outnumbered Ephraim’s (Num 26:34), eventually Ephraim’s power outstrips Manasseh (Delitzsch, *New Commentary on Genesis*, 2.362); Ephraim is the center of Jeroboam’s Northern Kingdom (1 Kgs 12:25) and represents the whole of the north, paralleling Judah to the south (e.g., Isa 11:13; Hos 5:5).” K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, vol. 1B, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2005), 881, Logos.

74. James McKeown, *Genesis, The Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), 183, Logos.

When Jacob proclaimed that the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would live on in אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh, he declared the adoption of his two grandsons and conferred upon them the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant as well. Jacob’s blessing that they would be a multitude in the midst of the earth applied to אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh (v. 16). In the contrast between אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh the text says of Manasseh: “and he also shall become a people and he also shall be great,” “וַיְגַדְלֵהוּ וַיְהִי־לְעַם וַיְגַדְלֵהוּ וַיְהִי־לְעַם וַיְגַדְלֵהוּ.”⁷⁵ The BHT likewise lists מְלֵאֵי־הַגּוֹיִם (melo hagoyim) in v. 19.⁷⁶ The LXX similarly translates this passage as “καὶ οὗτος ἔσται εἰς λαόν, καὶ οὗτος ὑψωθήσεται”⁷⁷ “and this one will become a people and this one will be exalted.” By comparison however, Jacob says of אֶפְרַיִם, “וְאֵלֶּיךָ אֶתִּיּוֹ הַקָּטָן יִגְדַּל מִמֶּנּוּ וְנִרְעָו יִהְיֶה מְלֵאֵי־הַגּוֹיִם”⁷⁸ “but nevertheless, his brother the younger shall be greater than he and his offspring shall become מְלֵאֵי־הַגּוֹיִם (melo hagoyim) the fullness of the nations.” By contrast, אֶפְרַיִם received the greater blessing, but the Hebrew indicates how much more אֶפְרַיִם will be blessed in מְלֵאֵי־הַגּוֹיִם (melo hagoyim).

The LXX uses “πληθος ἐθνῶν” (plethos ethnon)⁷⁹ to translate מְלֵאֵי־הַגּוֹיִם (melo hagoyim) in 48:19. According to Strong’s, πληθος plēthōs, can mean “a fulness, i.e. a large number, throng, populace:—bundle, company, [or] multitude.”⁸⁰ Thus, πληθος carries the same meaning of fullness as מְלֵאֵי, but like מְלֵאֵי can also be translated as multitude. The NIV84 translates v.19 as follows: “...Nevertheless, his younger brother

75. Christo Van der Merwe, *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2004), Ge 48:19, Logos.

76. Wolfgang Richter, Christian Riepl, and Johann Peter Rechenmacher, *Biblia Hebraica Transcripta* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Ge 48:19, Logos.

77. Randall K. Tan, David A. deSilva, and Isaiah Hoogendyk, *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear Septuagint: H.B. Swete Edition* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), Ge 48:19, Logos.

78. Christo Van der Merwe, *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2004), Ge 48:19, Logos.

79. Randall K. Tan, David A. deSilva, and Isaiah Hoogendyk, *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear Septuagint: H.B. Swete Edition* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), Ge 48:19, Logos.

80. James Strong, “πληθος,” *Strong’s*, 58, Logos.

will be greater than he and his descendants will become a group of nations.” According to v. 19 in the NIV84, אֶפְרַיִם is destined to become a “group of nations” thus emphasizing the plurality of nations. This translation fits well with understanding מְלֵא־הַגּוֹיִם as a fullness of nations or a number of nations since it is not merely within Israel that אֶפְרַיִם would experience this fullness, but as a group of nations outside of the Israelite population.

Sarna defines the “Hebrew *melo*’ *ha-goyim*, [as] literally ‘the fullness/mass of the nations.’ Jacob transfers to Ephraim the contents of the blessing that he himself had received (v. 4; 35:11). This is probably an interpretation of the name ‘Ephraim’ that is suggestive of fertility (see Comment to 41:52).⁸¹ Tg. Ps.-J. comments on מְלֵא־הַגּוֹיִם in Gen 48:19:

וְסָרַב אָבוּי וְאָמַר יְדַעְנָא בְרִי יְדַעְנָא דְהוּא בּוּכְרָא אוּף חִכְימָנָא דְאוּף הוּא יְהִי לְעַם רַב וְאוּף הוּא יִסְגִי
וּבְרָם אַחֵי קַלְיָא יִסְגִי יְתִיר מִנִּיהּ וּבְנוֹי יְהוֹן סְגִיאִין בְּעַמְמָנָא

‘But his father was not willing, and said, I know, my son, I know that he is the firstborn, and also that he will be a great people, and will also be multiplied; yet will his younger brother be greater than he, and his sons be greater among the nations.’⁸²

According to Tg. Ps.-J, אֶפְרַיִם was destined to become “greater among the nations.”

The usage of גוֹיִם is entirely dependent upon context. גוֹיִם can mean either nations or peoples. That the term refers to a multitude or large number of peoples is supported by Gen 15:5b “Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’” That Abraham’s

81. Sarna notes concerning “the fullness/mass of the nations” that “This is how Targ. Jon. and Ibn Ezra understood the phrase.” Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 329, Logos.

82. The English translation is rendered from the JPS Tanakh. “Targum Johnathan on Genesis 48,” Sefaria.

descendants would be numerous is supported elsewhere in relation to the Abrahamic Covenant scripture (Gen 22:17; 32:12; 47:27; 48:4; Deut 10:22).

The other usage of גוי or גוים is as nation(s). This interpretation of a “nations” rather than a multitude of peoples is seen in Genesis 15:13-14 “God said to Abram, ‘Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions.’” Nation in v. 14 is “אֶת־הַגּוֹי” or “the nation.” The nation that they will serve will be judged (namely, Egypt). Israel likewise can be referred to as a גוי or nation (Ex 19:6).

As the etymological development of אֶפְרַיִם and the relationship to the Abrahamic Covenant are traced through scripture, the context for the quantitative, fruitful multiplication as well as the promise for a fullness of nations and kings must be kept clearly in view as they guide the meaning and interpretation of later biblical texts. The question which arises in the analysis of אֶפְרַיִם as a Category 1 term is in what way would אֶפְרַיִם become מְלֵא־הַגּוֹיִם, a fullness of nations? As the conversation transitions to the NT, the question becomes, who may be identified as Israel? These questions can only be answered through the continued analysis of the etymological developments of the term אֶפְרַיִם within the taxonomic system.

מְלֵא־הַגּוֹיִם (melo hagoyim) is one of the most significant key terms identified in the related terminology of Category 1 Pillar. However, although the meaning of the phrase is rooted in Category 1, it has tremendous value as an interpretive tool in the exegesis of the אֶפְרַיִם texts in the prophetic passages of Ezek 37, Isa 11 and Jer 31 in Category 4.

Additional Pillar terms for Category 1 are: מְלֵא־הַגּוֹיִם (melo hagoyim) as multitude

of nations or fullness of nations, multiply, increase, לַקְהָל עַמִּים (liqhal ammim) as company of peoples, and גוֹי or גוֹיִם goyim as nations or peoples.

The Abrahamic Covenant and Land Inheritance

A discussion of Category 1 related terminology is incomplete in its relationship to the Abrahamic Covenant without considering the subject of the Promised Land. Land promises are an inseparable part of the Abrahamic Covenant and their relationship to the אֲפָרָיִם texts throughout scripture continues to emphasize these promises.

In Genesis 17:8, יְהוָה said to Abraham, “I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.” The land promises of Gen 17:8 are valuable in identifying the covenant language in Gen 48 and effectively demonstrate how the concept of fruitfulness in the naming of אֲפָרָיִם is closely linked to the land inheritance first mentioned in the Abrahamic Covenant. In Gen 48:3, Jacob recounts how God had appeared to Him “at Luz in the land of Canaan.” Sarna notes that Luz “is the original name of Bethel, according to 28:19. At this site Jacob received a momentous revelation after he had returned from Paddan-aram, recounted in chapter 35. His name was changed to Israel, and the promises made to Abraham and Isaac were reiterated.”⁸³

Luz was the name of the city in Canaan before Joseph named the place Bethel (Gen 28:19). After Jacob recounted the blessings of posterity יְהוָה promised, he mentions also the promise that יְהוָה “will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession” (Gen 48:4). This everlasting possession was “עוֹלָם אָדָמָה” (olam

83. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 325, Logos.

huzzat),⁸⁴ an eternal or everlasting possession that would endure. The TWOT defines עולם as:

forever, ever, everlasting, evermore, perpetual, old, ancient, world, etc. (RSV similar in general, but substitutes “always” for “in the world” in Ps 73:12 and “eternity” for “world” in Ecc 3:11.) Probably derived from ‘ālam I, “to hide,” thus pointing to what is hidden in the distant future or in the distant past... Though ‘ōlām is used more than three hundred times to indicate indefinite continuance into the very distant future, the meaning of the word is not confined to the future.⁸⁵

In the present context of v. 4 עולם refers to the future promises of descendants and land inheritance of the Abrahamic Covenant. The use of עולם indicates that for Jacob, these events are still yet future.

CATEGORIES 2 & 3: THE TRIBE OF אֶפְרַיִם AND אֶפְרַיִם AS A LAND, REGIONAL OR GEOGRAPHIC DESIGNATION

Categories 2 and 3 cover the etymological developments of אֶפְרַיִם as it transitions from a term identifying the Person of אֶפְרַיִם in Category 1 to a term describing the tribe and its associated lands. Because of the close association of the tribe to its tribal land inheritance, these two categories will be examined together.

Category 2 is the Tribe of אֶפְרַיִם. This second category traces the etymological development of אֶפְרַיִם from its use as a Category 1 term referring to the Person of אֶפְרַיִם to the use of אֶפְרַיִם as a tribal designation. References to the tribe of אֶפְרַיִם occur first in the five books of Moses (Num 1:10, 32-33; 2:18, 24; 7:48; 10:22; 13:8; 26:28, 35-36; 34:24 and Deut 33:17), then in the historical books (*see* Appendix), in Psalms (Ps 60:7; 78:9, 67; 80:2; 108:8), and only once in the Prophets in Isa 9:21. These tribal references speak

84. Christo Van der Merwe, *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2004), Ge 48:4, Logos.

85. Allan A. Macrae, “עולם 1631,” *TWOT* 672, Logos.

to the history of the tribe of אֶפְרַיִם. This tribal history spans hundreds of years and had a direct influence upon latter etymological developments of אֶפְרַיִם.

In the Patriarchal Pronouncement (or Blessing of Jacob), Jacob specifically indicates that the blessings are given to the twelve tribes” (Gen 49:28). These tribal blessings were given to each of the sons of Jacob as tribal representatives. Gen 49 does not explicitly name אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh, however their inclusion is implied with the blessing of Joseph (vv. 22-26). This is evidenced in the comparison between the blessings of Joseph and the blessings of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh (*cf.* Gen 48:1-22; 49:22-26 and Deut 33:13-17).

Because of the adoption of Joseph’s sons and their inclusion among the twelve tribes of Israel, the tribal lists in scripture vary. Some tribal lists omit Joseph while אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh are named. Others include Joseph and eliminate the mention of Joseph’s sons (*cf.* Gen 35:22-26 and Deut 33). Both אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh received an inheritance and tribal land allotment among the other sons of Jacob (Num 1:10, 32-34). The preeminence of אֶפְרַיִם over Manasseh is evident the naming of אֶפְרַיִם before Manasseh in the tribal list as well as in the tribal number given in the census of Num 1:32-34. The preferential status given to אֶפְרַיִם over Manasseh (the natural firstborn son of Joseph) is indicative of the fulfillment of the blessing of Gen 48 (Num 1:33). The beginning of this blessing is encountered as אֶפְרַיִם terminology develops from a Category 1 term as the Person of אֶפְרַיִם to a Category 2 term as the Tribe of אֶפְרַיִם. According to Sarna:

“The texts that record Manasseh as being the natural first-born must reflect an exceedingly early and authentic phase in the history of the Israelite tribal relationships, a phase in which Manasseh enjoyed hegemony over Ephraim. There would be no conceivable reason to invent such a tradition, given subsequent developments. The...[text of Gen 48]...provides an explanation for the reversal, with Ephraim becoming the more powerful and more influential of the two tribes,

even to the extent that its name eventually became synonymous with the kingdom of Israel. This phenomenon is traced to Jacob's blessing. Following his adoption of Joseph's two sons, Jacob now exercises his prerogative to set aside chronological priority and to grant Ephraim preferential status."⁸⁶

The preferential status of אֶפְרַיִם thus becomes the transitional point for later etymological developments within Category 4. As אֶפְרַיִם continues to develop as a tribal term, the historical events of the twelve tribes will contribute to the final Category 4 etymological development of אֶפְרַיִם into a term of national identity. In this final transition אֶפְרַיִם will develop from the tribal and geographic terms (Category 2 & 3) into a term which will become synonymous with the Northern Kingdom of Israel (Category 4). Thus, the tribal status of אֶפְרַיִם becomes an essential category for understanding these later developments.

A Tribal History of Israel

Prior to אֶפְרַיִם becoming an appellation for the ten northern tribes of Israel as a nation, אֶפְרַיִם is first referred to as the tribe of אֶפְרַיִם. Undoubtedly, the most significant event in the history of the nation of Israel was the Exodus from Egypt. Following the Exodus of Israel and their deliverance from Egyptian slavery, אֶפְרַיִם as a tribe would eventually attain ascendancy amongst the northern tribes.

From the time of the Exodus through the period of the Judges, Israel was a tribal confederacy with God as her King. The tribal system is evidenced as early as Gen 48-49 and continued to develop throughout the history of Israel through the monarchic period. Ralph K. Hawkins posits that "according to the biblical traditions, from the beginning of their life in Palestine down to the rise of the monarchy, a period of some two hundred

86. "On Manasseh as first-born, see Gen. 41:51; 48:14, 18; Josh. 17:1. For Ephraim as the northern kingdom, cf. Isa. 7:5, 8, 9; Jer. 31:9; Hos. 4:16f.; 5:3; 7:1; etc." Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 328–329, Logos.

years, Israel existed as a loosely organized system of tribes. When the Hebrews began to settle in the Central Hill-Country, they began to do so as tribes.”⁸⁷ During this period the tribal confederacy had no king but God.

The tribal history of אֶפְרַיִם is consistent with the prophetic descriptions of the fruitfulness and increase of אֶפְרַיִם discovered in Category 1. In the *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, the tribe of אֶפְרַיִם is described as a dominant tribe in that “Ephraim became a great tribe, and its members often held prominent positions. The first census taken in the wilderness lists the total of Ephraimite soldiers as 40,500 (Nm 1:33).”⁸⁸ This demonstrates the initial stages of fulfilment of the fruitfulness prophesied to אֶפְרַיִם. Sarna notes the multiplication of the tribe of אֶפְרַיִם by comparing the two censuses taken in the wilderness:

The two censuses taken in the course of the wilderness wanderings show the populousness of the Joseph tribes. At the beginning of the period, Ephraim and Manasseh jointly numbered 72,700 male adults (Num. 1:32–35). Forty years later, the figure was 85,200 (Num. 26:28–37), exceeding the combined population of Reuben and Simeon. Moses’ farewell address in Deuteronomy 33:17 refers to “the myriads of Ephraim” and “the thousands of Manasseh,” and the huge population posed a special problem for Joshua in the allotment of tribal territories recounted in Joshua 17:14–18.⁸⁹

The fruitful increase of אֶפְרַיִם among the tribes of Israel in this passage builds on the earlier prophecies of Jacob regarding the fruitfulness of אֶפְרַיִם. Furthermore, the greater numbers of אֶפְרַיִם effectively demonstrate the greater status of the younger brother and his elevated status above his elder brother Manasseh.

87. Ralph K. Hawkins, “From Disparate Tribes to ‘All Israel,’” *The Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin* 50 (2005): 29–30, Logos.

88. Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, “Ephraim, Tribe Of,” *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 712, Logos.

89. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 328, Logos.

As the nation of Israel continued to progress from the period of the judges, under Israel's first king, Saul, and under the united and divided monarchies, a significant tribal history unfolded.⁹⁰ In his book *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Eugene Merrill describes the tribal tensions that developed between the twelve tribes, namely between the ten northern tribes and the southern tribe of Judah. "During the long period of the judges...there emerged a perceptible tension between the principle of Judah's royal destiny on the one hand and the tribe's alienation from the north, on the other."⁹¹ This tribal division between north and south sets the context for the future developments of אֶפְרַיִם nomenclature.

Categories 2 & 3 Tribe and Tribal Lands

The etymological developments of אֶפְרַיִם as a Category 2 term describing the Tribe of אֶפְרַיִם intersects here with Category 3: אֶפְרַיִם as a Land, Regional or Geographic Designation. This third category demonstrates the development אֶפְרַיִם nomenclature to describe the tribal lands, territory or regions of אֶפְרַיִם. The scripture references in Category 3 may refer directly to the tribal lands or simply to "the hill country of Ephraim," or even the "gate of Ephraim" (2 Kgs 14:13; 2 Chron 25:23, Neh 8:6; 12:39).

The numerous geographic references to אֶפְרַיִם are a useful interpretive tool as they direct the readers' attention to the specific regions of Israel in which significant events occur. Although a complete analysis of the Category 3 Geographic designations is

90. For an overview and general history of events in the biblical timeline and the history of Israel, visit: <https://www.tiki-toki.com/timeline/entry/768139/Biblical-Timeline/>. This biblical timeline was created to highlight the overview of the Prophetic books, including significant historical events beginning with the exodus of Israel from Egypt to the Roman Empire. Valerie J. Camp, "Biblical Timeline," *Tiki-Toki*, Accessed Oct, 2, 2019.

91. Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, 2 ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008, 334.

beyond the scope of the paper, the relevant passages and associated Pillar terms are noted in the Appendix.

Categories 2 and 3 represent the correlation between the tribe of אֶפְרַיִם and the associated tribal lands and territories. They also demonstrate a connection to the geographic regions in relation to subsequent developments of אֶפְרַיִם terminology in Category 4. As אֶפְרַיִם began to transition from a tribal term to a national one, these geographic designations began to be associated with the territories of the northern ten tribes. Therefore, in scripture, אֶפְרַיִם may refer to the tribe, tribal lands (of אֶפְרַיִם), or to the entire region of the ten northern tribes.

אֶפְרַיִם first became dominant as a tribe among the twelve. Because of the size of the tribe, the tribal lands were extensive (Josh 16:1-10). According to *Eastons' Bible*

Dictionary:

“The boundaries of the portion of the land assigned to Ephraim are given in Josh. 16:1–10. It included most of what was afterwards called Samaria as distinguished from Judea and Galilee. It thus lay in the centre of all traffic, from north to south, and from Jordan to the sea, and was about 55 miles long and 30 broad. The tabernacle and the ark were deposited within its limits at Shiloh, where it remained for four hundred years. During the time of the judges and the first stage of the monarchy this tribe manifested a domineering and haughty and discontented spirit.”⁹²

Easton also notes the dominance of Judah among the tribes of Israel:

The inheritance of the tribe of Judah was at first fully one-third of the whole country west of Jordan, in all about 2,300 square miles (Josh. 15). But there was a second distribution, when Simeon received an allotment, about 1,000 square miles, out of the portion of Judah (Josh. 19:9). That which remained to Judah was still very large in proportion to the inheritance of the other tribes. The boundaries of the territory are described in Josh. 15:20–63.”⁹³

92. M. G. Easton, “Ephraim, Tribe of,” *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893), Logos.

93. M. G. Easton, “Judah, Tribe of,” *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893), Logos.

The contentious relationship between the tribes would eventually lead to the division of the northern and southern tribes years later in the divided monarchy and the eventual fall of the Northern Kingdom. However, before the monarchy began, two tribes would emerge as dominant among the twelve.

The Dominance of Two Tribes: אֶפְרַיִם and Judah

As the history of the nation of Israel progressed, two tribes emerged as dominant among the twelve: אֶפְרַיִם and Judah. Two Psalms fall within Category 2 in the exegetical framework because they describe the dominance of the tribes of אֶפְרַיִם and Judah. In of the Psalms of David, אֶפְרַיִם is identified as the “helmet” and Judah as the “scepter” (Ps 60:7 (59:9); 108:8). Both Psalms have nearly identical wording and David refers to the two tribes: אֶפְרַיִם מְעוֹז רִאשִׁי יְהוּדָה מְחֻקְקִי “...and Ephraim is the helmet of My head; Judah is My scepter (or ruling staff)” (Ps 60:7b). The term describing the helmet of אֶפְרַיִם is translated from the Hebrew מְעוֹז (mā‘ôz), defined by the TWOT as a “place or means of safety.”⁹⁴ The head רִאשׁ may refer to either the literal head or possibly to the firstborn status of Ephraim. One possible definition according to the DBL defines רִאשׁ as:

head, i.e., the crucial part of the body containing the brain stem and other most crucial sensory input parts such as eyes, mouth, ears, etc...2. LN 84.1–84.15 source, i.e., the beginning point from which a spatial extension occurs...3. LN 81.3–81.11 top, i.e., the uppermost height of an object...[or] 4. LN 37.48–37.95 head, leader, chief, i.e., a person or national entity who rules and governs as a figurative extension of the head as a crucial body part.⁹⁵

The TWOT describes the term מְרֻאשׁוֹת from the root רִאשׁ as “place at the head, [or] head place”⁹⁶ Hence, v.7 is usually translated as helmet or protection of the head.

94. Carl Schultz, “1578 עוֹז,” *TWOT* 652, Logos.

95. James Swanson, “רִאשׁ,” *DBL*, Logos.

96. William White, “2097 רִאשׁ,” *TWOT* 825, Logos.

The LXX translates the “protection” or “helmet” as κραταίωσις, which GELS interprets as “*strength*.”⁹⁷ This strength speaks to the nature and role of the largest tribe in the north as Israel’s strength and protection. The use of κραταίωσις is confirmed by a similar use of the term in the apocryphal book of Judith 7:22: “Therefore their young children were out of heart, and their women and young men fainted for thirst, and fell down in the streets of the city, and by the passages of the gates, and there was no longer any *strength* [κραταίωσις] in them.”⁹⁸

The term קֶרֶן is used to describe the “scepter” of Judah and is an apt description for the royal status prophesied to Judah (Gen 48-49). The DBL defines קֶרֶן as “ruling staff, scepter, i.e., a stick used for many purposes, including as a sign of power.”⁹⁹ The LXX uses βασιλεύς instead, changing the meaning from “scepter” to “king.”¹⁰⁰ The DBL defines βασιλεύς as “king, a term in itself used of both petty kings and the most powerful of kings.”¹⁰¹ The Hebrew and Greek both reflect the ruling status of Judah.

The Psalmist indicates the elevated status of both מְרִיבֵי and Judah as head and scepter respectively. In this way, the Psalm demonstrates the special status of both tribes, מְרִיבֵי as the largest and dominant was in the role of protector and to Judah was given the status of ruling. This elevated status of the tribes can be traced back to the blessings of Jacob (Gen 48-49). In the blessing of Jacob to Judah, Jacob had imparted the blessing stating that, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between

97. Johan Lust, Erik Eynikel, and Katrin Hauspie, “κραταίωσις,” *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint: Revised Edition* (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft: Stuttgart, 2003), Logos.

98. *The Apocrypha: King James Version* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1995), Jdt 7:22, Logos.

99. James Swanson, “קֶרֶן,” *DBL*, Logos.

100. Randall K. Tan, David A. deSilva, and Isaiah Hoogendyk, *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear Septuagint: H.B. Swete Edition* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), Ps 59:9, (60:7), Logos.

101. James Swanson, “βασιλεύς,” *DBL*, Logos.

his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples” (Gen 49:10).

K&D describes the differences in the two tribes in terms of מְרִיָּא as the more powerful and Judah as the royal tribe: “The proudest predicates are justly given to Ephraim and Judah, the two chief tribes; the former, the most numerous and powerful, is David’s helmet (the protection of his head), and Judah his staff of command (מַחֲזֵקֶה, the command-giving = staff of command, as in Gen. 49:10, Num. 21:18).”¹⁰² In the BKC, Ross likewise acknowledges the special status of the two tribes stating, “Ephraim, a centrally located and large tribe in Israel, was strong. Like a helmet she was a defense for the nation. Judah was the scepter of the Lord, that is, David (from Judah) was God’s ruler...”¹⁰³ The words of the psalmist highlight the dominance of מְרִיָּא in the north and Judah in the south. In T. Jud. 1.6, a correlation is identified between Judah and the scepter which is understood in its relationship to rule or kingship: “And it happened that as I matured, my father declared to me, ‘You shall be king, achieving success in every way.’”¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, the commentary on the DSS Fr. 2 states in reference to Gen 49:10:

The scepter [shall not] depart from the tribe of Judah ... [Gen. 49:10]. Whenever Israel rules, there shall [not] fail to be a descendant of David upon the throne. For the ruler’s staff is the Covenant of kingship, [and the clans] of Israel are the divisions, until the Messiah of Righteousness comes, the Branch of David. For to

102. Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 5 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 411, Logos.

103. Allen P. Ross, “Psalms,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 838, Logos.

104. “It is Judah’s obedience that leads to his being rewarded by his designation as king rather than an arbitrary divine choice, as might be inferred from Gen 49:8–10. Cf. TJud 17:5f.” James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1 (New York; London: Yale University Press, 1983), 795–796, Logos.

him and his seed is granted the Covenant of kingship over his people for everlasting generations which he is to keep...¹⁰⁵

The term for scepter in 49:10 is שֵׁבֶט (shevet). The TWOT defines שֵׁבֶט as a “Rod, staff, scepter, tribe. This noun commonly denotes a rod. It was used for beating cumin (Isa 28:27), as a weapon (II Sam 23:21), and as a shepherd’s implement either to muster or count sheep (Lev 27:32; Ezk 20:37), or to protect them.”¹⁰⁶ This scepter is described as a ruling staff or מִזְרָה just as in Ps 60:7. The ascendancy of אֶפְרַיִם is therefore distinct from the special status of Judah. While אֶפְרַיִם was given preferential status as the “helmet” or “protection,” Judah is given the “scepter” of kingship.

The descriptions of both tribes therefore do not conflict with each other, in that neither is dominant over the other, but that each are dominant in different ways. אֶפְרַיִם as the helmet of the head reflects the preferential status and blessing of the firstborn (Gen 48:17-20 and Jer 31:9) and Judah reflects to the status of kingship (Gen 49:10).

The Blessing of Moses: Deuteronomy 33

In the passage known as the blessing of Moses, Moses pronounces prophetic blessings over the tribes Israel (Deut 33:13-17). This passage represents a blessing given by Moses that builds on the previous given to אֶפְרַיִם by Jacob (Gen 48). Sarna notes that “Moses bestows upon Joseph a fertility blessing in his farewell address in Deut 33:13–17, and he explicitly refers to ‘the myriads of Ephraim’ and ‘the thousands of Manasseh.’”¹⁰⁷ These “myriads” are described in v. 17 by the Hebrew term רִבְבוֹת. This is normally

105. Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, Revised and extended 4th ed. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 302, Logos.

106. Bruce K. Waltke, “2314 שֵׁבֶט,” *TWOT* 897, Logos.

107. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, *The JPS Torah Commentary* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 289, Logos.

translated as myriads and carries with it the idea of an innumerable number.¹⁰⁸ It is used to refer to “multitude, myriad, ten thousand...myriad, 10,000: of great number of pers” as defined by the BDB.¹⁰⁹ The term רַבְּבוֹת is likewise used elsewhere in scripture to refer to abundantly large numbers. The DBL defines רַבְּבוֹת as “countless, myriads, innumerable, i.e., a virtually countless number (Ge 24:60; Nu 10:36; Dt 33:2; Ps 3:7[EB 6]; SS 5:10; Eze 16:7+).¹¹⁰ These abundantly large numbers show a continued demonstration of fruitfulness that is appropriate to the “doubly fruitful” blessings inherent in the name of אֶפְרַיִם (Gen 41:52). Such terminology in Deut 33 shows Moses’ understanding of the nature of the blessing in terms of exceedingly fruitful multiplication.

This fruitfulness is further supported and defined in the blessing of Moses to Joseph. Moses declares of Joseph, “As the firstborn of his ox, majesty is his, And his horns are the horns of the wild ox; With them he will push the peoples, All at once, to the ends of the earth. And those are the ten thousands of Ephraim, And those are the thousands of Manasseh” (Deut 33:17). נָגַח (nagah) occurs in the piel form in Deut 33:17, which according to the DBL identifies that נָגַח in the piel form, the term may be defined either as “gore, i.e., the piercing motion of a horn into the body of a person...destroy, formally, gore, i.e., an attacking motion that will destroy another...[or] push, i.e., a pushing motion to move another in a linear motion.”¹¹¹ While the term may refer to goring or destroying, it is typically translated in v. 17 as “push” which best fits the context of pushing the peoples to the ends of the earth.

108. Christo Van der Merwe, *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2004), Dt 33:17, Logos.

109. Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, “רַבְּבוֹת,” *BDB* 914, Logos.

110. James Swanson, “רַבְּבוֹת,” *DBL*, Logos.

111. James Swanson, “נָגַח,” *DBL*, Logos.

The LXX translates *κερατιεῖ*¹¹² or “push” as “to gore...to butt with horns...[or] to push.”¹¹³ Butting with horns may also reflect the idea of pushing the peoples. Arguably, rather than thrusting “down” the nations, this may be indicative of the scattering of אֲפֹרִיִם to the nations (Deut 29:25-28; 30:1-5), reflecting the later history of the scattering of the northern tribes of Ephraim-Israel to the nations in the Assyrian exile.¹¹⁴ In this case, Moses is looking forward to the history that would eventually unfold.

The text of Deut 33 describes the tribe of אֲפֹרִיִם and its rise among the twelve to a role in which אֲפֹרִיִם would be responsible for “pushing the peoples to the ends of the earth” (v. 17). The rise in the sins of Israel among the northern tribes under the Ephraimite king Jeroboam would ultimately be responsible for their exile. Interpreting נָגַן in vs. 17 as “pushing” would then refer to the dispersion of the northern tribes in a passage that might otherwise be interpreted as goring or destroying the nations. Dispersion through “pushing” is a more applicable translation to the immediate context of v. 17 and the prophetic passages of Gen 48-49.

The tribal histories and related texts within Categories 2 and 3 serve to identify essential related terminology and provides a necessary historical background and context for a future fulfilment that framed the eschatological expectations of the Prophets. These significant events in the history of Israel and of the tribe of אֲפֹרִיִם provide essential context in examining the purely predictive prophecies concerning אֲפֹרִיִם. Early prophecies, including prophetic passages in the five books of Moses such as the blessing

112. Randall K. Tan, David A. deSilva, and Isaiah Hoogendyk, *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear Septuagint: H.B. Swete Edition* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), Dt 33:17, Logos.

113. Johan Lust, Erik Eynikel, and Katrin Hauspie, “*κερατίζω*,” *GELS*, Logos.

114. אֲפֹרִיִם eventually became a term which referred to the ten tribes of what would later become the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The ten tribes would be dispersed in the Assyrian Conquest. (*see* Category 4).

of אֶפְרַיִם and Manasseh (Gen 48), the Patriarchal Pronouncement (Gen 49), and the Blessing of Moses (Deut 33) are a part of this tribal history and should not be passed over when interpreting the אֶפְרַיִם texts in the Prophets. These early prophecies were central to the message of the Prophets, but these passages are often overlooked in their interpretation. The terms and texts for the Category 2 Pillar are: Psalm 60:7, 108:8, helmet, protection, strength, head, scepter, ruling staff, the Blessing of Moses (Deut 33:17), myriads, push, and ends of the earth.

CATEGORY 4: אֶפְרַיִם AS A NATIONAL IDENTITY

The fourth and final category of the exegetical framework is Category 4, אֶפְרַיִם as a National Identity. This last category of the exegetical framework represents the final stage in the etymological development of אֶפְרַיִם in which the term אֶפְרַיִם transitioned from a tribal and regional term to a term of national identity. In Category 4, אֶפְרַיִם can refer to the ten tribes, the Northern Kingdom of Israel or the exiles from northern tribes who were exiled in the Assyrian Conquest ca. 722 B.C.E. Because אֶפְרַיִם in all of these contexts refers to the ten northern tribes collectively known as “Israel,” the term Ephraim-Israel is used as descriptor for the Category 4 use of אֶפְרַיִם as a national identity.

אֶפְרַיִם as national identity is perhaps one of the most overlooked elements in interpreting biblical prophecy as it serves to identify the instances in which the prophetic message applied specifically to Ephraim-Israel in its national context. With the exception of 2 Chron 25:7 and 10, all references to אֶפְרַיִם as a nation occur in the Prophets, including Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Obadiah and Zechariah (*see* Appendix). The אֶפְרַיִם texts of Ezek 37, Isa 11 and Jer 31 will be the main texts highlighted in Category 4. Although space prevents a detailed recounting of the extensive history of Israel and its

transition to a national term, an overview of key events in the history of the nation is essential in examining the development of אֶפְרַיִם as a national identity.

Tribal Transitions: אֶפְרַיִם and Judah

Just as אֶפְרַיִם developed as a term of national identity for the Northern Kingdom, Judah developed as a term of national identity for the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The use of אֶפְרַיִם in Category 4 is best seen in light of the interactions between the terms אֶפְרַיִם, יִשְׂרָאֵל (Israel), יְהוּדָה (Judah) and יוֹסֵף (Joseph) within the passages outlined in this category.

The history of the nation of Israel began following the Exodus with the emergence of a tribal confederacy. It is from this tribal confederacy that the monarchy emerged. Arthur G. Patzia and Anthony J. Petrotta describe this transition as a tumultuous time in the nations' history. "The shift from a theocratic tribal confederacy (in which God rules) to rule by a king brought about many social, political and religious changes in the life of God's people."¹¹⁵ Over time, Israel began to long for a king in a desire to be like the surrounding nations. 1 Sam 8:4-7, records the gathering of the elders of Israel who summoned the prophet Samuel to ask him to appoint a king for Israel "to judge us like all the nations." Allen C. Meyers in the *Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* describes the role of the prophet Samuel as a key figure during this period of transition: "Samuel becomes a leading figure in Israel, acting as a judge and a prophet leading Israel in the transition from tribal confederacy to the monarchy under Saul."¹¹⁶ The kingdom of Israel initially began under Saul (1 Sam 9:15-10:27) and continued under the reigns of

115. Arthur G. Patzia and Anthony J. Petrotta, "Succession Narrative," *Pocket Dictionary of Biblical Studies* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 108–109, Logos.

116. Allen C. Myers, "III. Structure and Contents: A. Samuel," *EDB* 910, Logos.

David and Solomon in the united monarchy. According to the HBD:

The first king of Israel was actually Saul, but in many ways his rise to power and subsequent reign were similar to those of the judges. He was at least a transitional figure. David first became king over Judah (2 Sam. 2:1–7) and then over Israel (5:1–5), after which he conquered Jerusalem (5:6–12) and initiated what is called the united monarchy (ca. 1000 BCE). This period was short-lived, however, ending with the death of David’s son and successor, Solomon, ca. 922 BCE.¹¹⁷

According to the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Judah initially began under David. “Upon the death of Saul, David erected the tribe of Judah into a separate kingdom (2 Sam. 2:1 *et seq.*).”¹¹⁸ However, the united monarchy would not long survive and the kingdom would soon be divided. By the time of king David, tribal rivalries were common and Judah emerged as the chief rival of אֶפְרַיִם. In the BEB, Ellwell confirms that, “Judah was Ephraim’s main rival, and even under David that animosity was evident (2 Sm 18; 19:41–20:22).”¹¹⁹

This rivalry eventually led to one of the most significant events in the history of Israel, the split of the kingdom into the divided monarchy. For this reason, several related key terms that emerge in Category 4 must be included with the fourth Pillar of the exegetical framework. Because אֶפְרַיִם is developing as a national term describing Ephraim-Israel, Category 4 requires an accurate identification of the terms “Israel” and “Israelite” and “Samaria.”

According to the *HarperCollins Bible Dictionary* “Israelite (i.e., the northern) kingdom had its capital at Shechem, then at Tirzah, and finally at Samaria.”¹²⁰ Myers

117. Kent Harold Richards, “United Kingdom, United Monarchy,” *HBD* 1078, Logos.

118. Isidore Singer, ed., “Judah, Tribe of,” *JE: A Descriptive Record of the History, Religion, Literature, and Customs of the Jewish People from the Earliest Times to the Present Day, 12 Volumes* (New York; London: Funk & Wagnalls, 1901–1906), 330, Logos.

119. Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, “Ephraim, Tribe Of,” *BEB* 712, Logos.

120. James L. Crenshaw and Mark Allan Powell, “Israelites,” *HBD* 417, Logos.

notes that “Samaria was established as Israel’s capital on a hill purchased by King Omri from Shemer (1 Kgs. 16:24).”¹²¹ The reasons for this were largely geographic. The tribal lands of אִשְׂרָאֵל were centrally located in the northern regions of Israel.

According to the HBD, there is an important the relationship between the term “Israelites” and references to the Northern Kingdom:

Before the Davidic empire split into two separate kingdoms in the tenth century BCE, the term “Israelites” signified those who traced their ancestry to Jacob (Israel), the son of Isaac and Rebekah, grandson of Abraham and Sarah. After that event, it properly connoted only those Hebrews who traced their ancestry to the ten tribes that constituted the northern kingdom, Israel, as opposed to the tribes inhabiting the southern kingdom, Judah.¹²²

This transition from ancestral to national is also described by James Newell:

“Two political states of Judah and Israel that came into existence shortly after the death of Solomon (1 Kings 11:43) and survived together until the fall of Israel in 722 B.C. The Northern Kingdom, known as Israel, and the Southern Kingdom, known as Judah, were operated as separate countries from approximately 924 B.C. until 722 B.C. (1 Kings 12). At times, the two countries were at war with one another. At other times, they cooperated in a friendly alliance. The Northern Kingdom came to an end in 722 B.C. when the Assyrians destroyed the capital city, Samaria. The Southern Kingdom fell to the Babylonians in 587 B.C.”¹²³

Thus, in the Category 4 classification of אִשְׂרָאֵל, the term develops as an appellation for the nation known as the Northern Kingdom, Israelites, Israel, and Ephraim-Israel. These definitions demonstrate the equity between the terms אִשְׂרָאֵל, Israel, Israelite and Northern Kingdom or northern tribes. Newell’s classification of the “two political states of Judah and Israel” comprise the definitions of both the Southern and Northern Kingdoms and he contextualizes them in relation to the historical events that ended them.

The ABD further defines אִשְׂרָאֵל as “the tribal territories of Israel, the name of

121. Allen C. Myers, “Samaria,” *EBD* 906, Logos.

122. James L. Crenshaw and Mark Allan Powell, “Israelites,” *HBD* 417, Logos.

123. James Newell, “Divided Kingdom,” *HolBD* 433, Logos.

which was often synonymous with that of the N kingdom of Israel.”¹²⁴ Merrill also identifies the connection between אֶפְרַיִם and the Northern Kingdom noting that, “The death of Solomon paved the way for one of the most decisive and traumatic events in Israel’s long history: the formal and permanent division of the kingdom between the ten tribes of the north, henceforth known as Israel or Ephraim, and the tribe of Judah in the south.”¹²⁵ Merrill describes אֶפְרַיִם as “Israel” and as the “ten tribes” in the north, thus equating אֶפְרַיִם with the Northern Kingdom of Israel. These identifiers are synonymous and interchangeable and demonstrate אֶפְרַיִם as a national term.

It is the ascendancy of אֶפְרַיִם amongst the northern tribes which led to this nomenclature. Its size and central location positioned the tribe as the religious center of Israel in the period of the Judges. The *Lexham Bible Dictionary* shows how אֶפְרַיִם terminology transitioned from a tribal and geographic term (Category 2 & 3 terms) to a national term (Category 4 term):

The city of Shiloh, located in the hill country of Ephraim, served as a central gathering point for Israel during the conquest (Josh 18:1; 22:12). The tabernacle and the ark of the covenant were located in Shiloh during the period of the Judges, making Ephraim Israel’s religious center (Judg 18:31; 1 Sam 1:24). The ark was removed from Shiloh during Samuel’s day, but Ephraim continued to be a major center (1 Sam 4:4). Samuel established Saul as king and gave his farewell address in the city of Gilgal in Ephraim (1 Sam 11:14–15). The political and religious center of Israel shifted to Jerusalem after David became king. After the reign of Solomon, Ephraim—along with the other northern tribes—split from Judah and Benjamin. The northern kingdom was led by Jeroboam, an Ephraimite, who established Shechem as its first capital (1 Kgs 12:16–25). Eventually, Samaria became the capital (1 Kgs 16:23).¹²⁶

The preeminent status of אֶפְרַיִם prophesied in Gen 48 in Category 1 thus becomes

124. Henry O. Thompson, “Ephraim (Place),” *ABD* 556, Logos.

125. Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, 2 ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008, 331-332.

126. Charles Meeks, “Ephraim, Place,” ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Logos.

increasingly evident in the development of אֶפְרַיִם in Category 4. This final etymological development demonstrates the convergence of the taxonomic system and how each category contributes to the successive etymological developments of אֶפְרַיִם terminology. For this reason, Israel as a national identity can best be described by the appellation Ephraim-Israel.

The First Occurrence of אֶפְרַיִם as a National Identity

The first occurrence of אֶפְרַיִם as a national identification occurs in 2 Chron 25:6-7 when Amaziah, king of Judah went to battle against the Edomites. “He hired also 100,000 valiant warriors out of Israel for one hundred talents of silver. But a man of God came to him saying, ‘O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the Lord is not with Israel nor with any of the sons of Ephraim.’” In v. 6, יִשְׂרָאֵל (Israel) is used to describe the hired warriors and in vs. 7, יִשְׂרָאֵל is equated with אֶפְרַיִם. Amaziah was told that the Lord would not be with Israel nor with any of the sons of אֶפְרַיִם. This is the first clear reference to אֶפְרַיִם as Ephraim-Israel. The NAC confirms the use of אֶפְרַיִם as a reference to the Northern Kingdom in this passage: “The Lord was not with Israel, that is, with the Northern Kingdom, as the term “Ephraim” indicates.”¹²⁷

Merrill cites the rejection of Ephraim-Israel because such an alliance “was tantamount to making an ungodly alliance, which was made pointedly clear to him by a man of God...who reminded the king that the LORD was not with Israel, so He would not be with Judah in battle if Israel went along.”¹²⁸ In this, Merrill identifies “Israel” as a

127. J. A. Thompson, *1, 2 Chronicles*, vol. 9, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 321, Logos.

128. Eugene H. Merrill, “2 Chronicles,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 638.

term for the northern tribes. God would not be with Judah if “Israel” went along.

The Fall of Two Kingdoms

The fall of the two kingdoms of Ephraim-Israel and Judah provide the necessary historical background to the key **אִשְׂרָאֵל** texts in the Prophets. Israel would be the first to fall to the Assyrian Empire and subsequently Judah would fall to the Babylonians. Events which led to the fall of the Northern Kingdom are attributed to the sins of Jeroboam, the Ephraimite king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (1 Kgs 12:25-38; 2 Chron 11:15). The prophet Ahijah pronounced the fall of the kingdom to Jeroboam in 1 Kgs 11:

Now Ahijah had clothed himself with a new cloak; and both of them were alone in the field. Then Ahijah took hold of the new cloak which was on him and tore it into twelve pieces. He said to Jeroboam, “Take for yourself ten pieces; for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and give you ten tribes’” (1 Kgs 11:29b-32).

The idolatrous worship of Ephraim-Israel was the chief reason for the division (1 Kgs 11:33). The split that preceded the divide occurred in the days of king Rehoboam, when he announced a heavy burden upon Israel (2 Chron 10). Upon hearing this, the Israelites replied, “‘What portion do we have in David?’ We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. Every man to your tents, O Israel...So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day” (2 Chron 10:16b, 19). In response, Rehoboam assembled an army to restore the ten tribes to the kingdom (2 Chron 11:1), but God intervened sending Shemaiah who instructed them to return home. However, in the face of the idolatrous practices of Jeroboam (2 Chron 11:14-15), many of the Israelites from the north abandoned their homes and settled in Judah (2 Chron 11:13-17). This event signaled the migration of many people from the ten northern tribes to the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

The idolatrous worship of Ephraim-Israel in the days of Jeroboam (1 Kgs, 12:25-

33; 17:16; 2 Chron 11:15) would lead to the judgment of the nation at the hand of the Assyrian Empire. By 722 B.C.E., the Northern Kingdom had fallen to the Assyrian Empire after a three-year siege (1 Kgs 17:4-6; 18:9-10).¹²⁹ The Prophets had been sent as covenant enforcers to remind Israel of their covenant promises and to call them to repentance. When Israel failed to respond to the warnings, the promise of the coming judgment arrived. The fall of the Northern Kingdom would precede the fall of the Southern Kingdom and with the protection of Ephraim-Israel gone, Judah would have little help to resist the siege of the Babylonians. Thus, the Kingdom of Judah would fall to the Babylonian Empire and be dispersed into Babylon ca. 586 B.C.E.¹³⁰

Following the fall of Samaria in the north, the ten northern tribes were exiled from the land of Israel (2 Kgs 17:6, 23, 18:11) and Samaria was resettled with foreigners (2 Kgs 17:24-41). The *Easton's Bible Dictionary* describes the dispersion of the ten tribes by the Assyrian Empire:

During the siege of Samaria (which lasted for three years) by the Assyrians, Shalmaneser died and was succeeded by Sargon, who himself thus records the capture of that city: "Samaria I looked at, I captured; 27,280 men who dwelt in it I carried away" (2 Kings 17:6) into Assyria. Thus after a duration of two hundred and fifty-three years the kingdom of the ten tribes came to an end. They were scattered throughout the East.¹³¹

Moshe Greenberg notes that "After the Assyrian annexation of the peripheral territories of the kingdom (731), the remaining heartland—the area of the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim—was called Ephraim. This designation appears (alongside "Israel") frequently

129. For a detailed account of Assyrian Conquest, see John Bright, *A History of Israel*: Fourth Ed. (Westminster: John Knox Press, 2000), 269-309.

130. A detailed history of the final years of the Kingdom of Judah prior to the fall to Babylon through the period of the exile and eventual restoration of the Babylonian exiles to the Land of Israel can be found in the comprehensive work of John Bright, *A History of Israel*: Fourth Ed. (Westminster: John Knox Press, 2000), 310-343.

131. M. G. Easton, "Israel, Kingdom of," *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893), Logos.

in Hosea (e.g., 4:17; 5:3; 11:8), and occurs in Isaiah (e.g., 7:17; 11:13) and Jeremiah (e.g., 31:18, 20 [17, 19]) as well.”¹³² The nobles were carried away into exile and people from foreign nations were resettled Ephraim-Israel, however the king of Assyria re-imported some of the princes back to Samaria. It is from this mixed population that the group known as the Samaritans emerges. The ABD defines Samaritans as, “The people who dwelt in Samaria, particularly in the tribal regions of Manasseh and Ephraim, and who have maintained a unique identity to the present.”¹³³

The 2TP book of *Ben Sira* speaks to the events of Rehoboam and Jeroboam using Ephraim-Israel terminology in Manuscript B XVII Verso 47:23-24. “Rehoboam, who through coun[sel] caused the people to riot...Until one arose who should not have a memorial, Jeroboam, son of Nebat, who caused [Israel] to s[i]n,...and set a stumbling block before Ephraim...to drive them...their land. For their sin grew exceedingly...and they so[ld] themselves over to all evil.”¹³⁴ The terms Israel and עִפְרַיִם are used to refer to the events that precipitated the fall of Ephraim-Israel to the Assyrians.

In Category 4, the exiles from ten northern tribes in the Assyrian Conquest (722 B.C.E.) were known by the appellation עִפְרַיִם as Ephraim-Israel.

In Category 1 מְלֵאֵי־הַגּוֹיִם was blessed by Jacob to become a מְלֵאֵי־הַגּוֹיִם (melo hagoyim), a fullness of nations (Gen 48:19). The connection between Category 1 and Category 4 is best described by מְלֵאֵי־הַגּוֹיִם. The Category 4 use of עִפְרַיִם as a national identity is most applicable to the interpretation of מְלֵאֵי־הַגּוֹיִם as “fullness of nations.” When Ephraim-Israel

132. Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 22A, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 754, Logos.

133. Robert T. Anderson, “Samaritans,” ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 940, Logos.

134. “B XVII Verso: Translation by Benjamin H. Parker and Martin G. Abegg,” *The Book of Ben Sira*.

was scattered to the nations, the exiles continued to live among the nations in which they were scattered. In these nations, the people of the former Northern Kingdom intermarried and settled among the foreign nations. Back in the land of Israel however, the Samaritan population emerged from those Israelites who remained from the Northern Kingdom. Those who remained were few in number with the majority of the tribes remaining in exile. Therefore, in the dispersion of the ten northern tribes among the nations אֲפֹרִיִם continued to grow as a population. This may indicate the nature of מְלֵא־הַגּוֹיִם, as the fullness of nations. אֲפֹרִיִם and the ten tribes did not cease to exist, but they did fade into the native population of foreign nations.

The growth of אֲפֹרִיִם into a fullness of nations happened in the history following the dispersion *among* the Gentile nations. The Samaritans therefore represent a unique group among Ephraim-Israel as a people who maintained their identity with the Northern Kingdom. The remainder of the exiles integrated and intermarried with the Gentile nations. Hence, the majority of Ephraim-Israel became “lost” in the sense that many of these exiles lost their connection to their former heritage. In a later Christian writing from the 3rd Century C.E., the term “lost tribes” first appears. According to the ABD:

The 3d century Christian Latin poet Commodian (in the *Carmen* and *Instructiones*) and the author of the *Acts of St. Matthew* may preserve an otherwise lost Jewish apocalyptic and apocryphal work that apparently described the living conditions of the lost ten (or nine and a half) tribes which were taken into exile by the king of Assyria. According to early rabbinics Rabbi Akiba claimed these tribes would not return, but Rabbi Eliezer disagreed, arguing that they shall move from darkness to light (*m. Sanh.* 10.3).¹³⁵

135. “...it is clear that the legend was widely known and influential. Did a Jew, perhaps in the late 1st century compose an exegetical expansion based on OT passages, especially 2 Kgs 17:23 (cf. 1 Chr 5:26, Isa 11:11, Jer 31:8, and Ezek 37:19–28)? Around 100 C.E. three Jewish works—namely 4 Ezra (13:34–51), 2 Baruch (77:17–26), and Josephus’ *Antiquities* (11.5)—referred to this legend or document.” James H. Charlesworth, “Lost Tribes, The,” ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 372. James H. Charlesworth, “Lost Tribes, The,” ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 372, Logos.

Later rabbinic texts demonstrate the continuation of a belief in the dispersion. These texts show the reconciliation of the rabbinic opinion of Rabbi Akiva can be found in the Babylonian Talmud composed ca. 450-550 C.E.:

מתנ"י עשרת השבטים אינן עתידין לחזור שנא' (דברים כט, כז) וישליכם אל ארץ אחרת כיום הזה מה היום הולך ואינו חוזר אף הם הולכים ואינן חוזרים דברי ר"ע ר"א אומר כיום הזה מה יום מאפיל ומאיר אף עשרת השבטים שאפילה להן כך עתידה להאיר להם

MISHNAH: The ten tribes are not destined to return to Eretz Yisrael, even during the messianic era, as it is stated: “And He cast them into another land, as it is this day” (Deuteronomy 29:27). Just as the day passes never to return, so too, the ten tribes go into exile and do not return; this is the statement of Rabbi Akiva. Rabbi Eliezer says: “As it is this day,” meaning just as the day darkens and then the sky brightens the next day, with regard to the ten tribes as well, although it is dark for them now, so it is destined to brighten for them.¹³⁶

However, Rabbi Shimon ben Yehuda harmonized this text by asserting that according to the text of Deut 29:27:

גמ' ת"ר עשרת השבטים אין להם חלק לעוה"ב שנאמר (דברים כט, כז) ויתשם ה' מעל אדמתם באף ובחמה ובקצף גדול ויתשם ה' מעל אדמתם בעוה"ז וישליכם אל ארץ אחרת לעוה"ב דברי ר"ע ר"ש בן יהודה איש כפר עכו אומר משום ר"ש אם מעשיהם כיום הזה אינן חוזרין ואם לאו חוזרין

GEMARA: The Sages taught in a baraita (Tosefta 13:12): The ten tribes have no share in the World-to-Come, as it is stated: “And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation; and He cast them into another land, as it is this day” (Deuteronomy 29:27). “And the Lord rooted them out of their land” indicates in this world; “and cast them into another land” indicates for the World-to-Come; this is the statement of Rabbi Akiva. Rabbi Shimon ben Yehuda of the village of Akko says in the name of Rabbi Shimon: If their actions continue to be “as it is this day” and they continue to sin, they do not return to Eretz Yisrael. And if not, and they repent, they return to Eretz Yisrael.

Thus, the disparate views were reconciled by the rabbis.

To date, the Jews continue to pray the *Shemoneh Eshrei* otherwise known as the Amidah.¹³⁷ This prayer contains in the tenth benediction a prayer for the return of the

136. “Sanhedrin 110b: The Babylonian Talmud, The Williamson David Edition,” *Sefaria*.

137. Dov Bloom, “What Is the Amidah? Understanding the Shemoneh Esrei,” *Chabad.org*. Accessed September 15, 2019. https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3834226/jewish/What-Is-the-Amidah-The-Silent-Prayer.htm#Summary

exiles:

תקע בשופר גדול לחרותנו. ושא גם לקבץ גליותינו. וקבצנו יחד מארבע פנות הארץ. ברוך אתה ה',
מקבץ נדחי עמו ישראל

Sound upon the great shofar for our freedom and raise the banner to gather our
exiles, and gather us together from the four corners of the earth. Blessed are You,
O Lord, Who gathers together the dispersed of His people of Israel.¹³⁸

Within Judaism, a demonstrable expectation of a regathering of the exiles in the
Messianic Kingdom has been preserved.

The terms for the Category 4 Pillar are: Israel, Israelite, Judah, Joseph, Samaria,
Ephraim-Israel, Northern Kingdom of Israel, northern tribes, Assyrian exile, exiles of the
Assyrian Conquest and Assyrian exiles.

Interpretive Issues: אִפְרַיִם in Prophecy

When considering the purely predictive prophecies contained in the key texts of
Ezek 37, Isa 11 and Jer 31, the Assyrian exile is largely overlooked. The reasons for this
are not unwarranted. The Assyrian exile preceded the Babylonian exile by more than a
hundred and thirty years and a number of people from the northern tribes returned to
Judah *prior* to the Assyrian conquest. Therefore, a representation of all Israel, that is
people from all twelve tribes, could be found within the Southern Kingdom of Judah. As
a result, these northern tribes became part of the Southern Kingdom *prior* to the time of
the Assyrian exile (2 Chron 11:13-17). In addition, some of the exiles were transported
back to Israel by the King of Assyria (2 Kgs 17, 18). Thus, at the time of the fall of the
Northern Kingdom, there was within Judah (the Southern Kingdom of Israel) a continued

138. "Siddur Ashkenaz, Weekday, Shacharit, Amidah, Gathering the Exiles," *Sefaria*, Accessed
November 1, 2019.
https://www.sefaria.org/Siddur_Ashkenaz%2C_Weekday%2C_Shacharit%2C_Amidah%2C_Gathering_the_Exiles.1?ven=Sefaria_Community_Translation&lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en

representation from all twelve tribes. This means there would have been a representation of all twelve tribes among the exiles who returned from *Babylonian* captivity. Therefore, it can be argued that the return from Babylonian captivity fulfills the prophecies regarding the return of exiles from all twelve tribes. However, the prophecies concerning the Messianic Kingdom set high expectations for the future of Israel. It has been noted by scholars such as David W. Pao and N.T. Wright that the return from the Babylonian exile failed to meet the expectations presented in the Prophets.

When the return of the Babylonian exiles failed to fulfill such hopes, the exact definition of ‘exile’ underwent a transformation. The physical sense was substituted by a moral if not a cosmic sense. Moreover, since the exile was understood as the punishment for sins, one may agree with Wright that ‘return from exile simply is the forgiveness of sins,’ although a concern for the Land continues to exist.”¹³⁹

Pao addresses the prophetic passages in Isaiah including Isa 9 which speaks of a future regathering and reuniting of the formerly divided kingdom and a reconstitution to the Land of Israel. However, in order to reconcile the failed hopes, Pao and Wright seek a new interpretation for the exile, instead opting for a spiritual interpretation rather than a literal one.

Michael Vlach presents an alternative view. Rather than searching for a new meaning for exile, he remains faithful to the literal interpretation of the Prophets. Vlach posits that Israel should maintain its identity and prophetic future because the conditions presented by Isaiah, Ezekiel and Jeremiah were not fulfilled in the return from Babylon and “unfulfilled prophecy is a major reason why there must be a future millennium.”¹⁴⁰ In

139. David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isianic New Exodus*, (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2016), 145.

140. Michael J. Vlach, *He Will Reign Forever: A Biblical Theology of the Kingdom of God*, (Silverton, OR: Lampion Press, 2017), 562.

response to those who opt for a spiritual interpretation of these unfulfilled prophecies,

Vlach argues that:

It is precarious to hold that some OT promises were literally fulfilled with the first coming of Jesus, but other promises and prophecies are fulfilled spiritually. This introduces an inconsistency. It is accurate that many aspects of Jesus' first coming are fulfilled literally (i.e. literal descendant of David, born in Bethlehem, etc.) but others are fulfilled spiritually (national and physical promises)? To date we have never experienced harmony among the nations, the restoration of the animal kingdom, the unification and restoration of Israel to her land etc. Can we simply spiritualize these and say they are already fulfilled?"¹⁴¹

The results of spiritualizing the interpretation of these prophecies may have the appearance of faithfulness to the fulfillment of Jesus in the NT, but it overlooks the eschatological expectations clearly presented in the Prophets which portray a regathering, reuniting, and restoration for Israel to the Land. This kind of spiritualization may lead to replacement theology. In his article in the *Conservative Theological Journal*, Vlach asserts that:

Many Christians throughout church history have held to a view concerning Israel and the church known as 'replacement theology.' 'Replacement theology,' as Thomas Ice explains, 'is the view that the Church has permanently replaced Israel as the instrument through which God works and that national Israel does not have a future in the plan of God.' Replacement theology is based on two premises: (1) God has permanently rejected National Israel, and (2) the church has replaced or superseded Israel in God's plan. The end result is that the church has become the inheritor of God's covenant blessings originally given to Israel, and Israel will not be restored as a nation with a distinct identity and function.¹⁴²

If the Church becomes the replacement of Israel interpreting the purely predictive prophecies in Ezek 37, Isa 11 and Jer 31 results in spiritualized rather than literal

141. Michael J. Vlach, *He Will Reign Forever: A Biblical Theology of the Kingdom of God*, (Silverton, OR: Lampion Press, 2017), 562.

142. "'Supersessionism' is also used as a synonym for the title, 'replacement theology...'" According to Walter C. Kaiser, 'Replacement theology, then, declared that the Church, Abraham's spiritual seed, had replaced national Israel in that it had transcended and fulfilled the terms of the covenant given to Israel, which covenant Israel had lost because of disobedience.'" Michael J. Vlach, "Has the Church Replaced Israel in God's Plan? A Historical and Theological Survey of Replacement Theology," *Conservative Theological Journal*, Volume 4, no. 11 (2000), 6, Logos.

interpretations. However, a future literal fulfillment for Israel need not necessarily displace the future salvation of the Gentile nations. In fact, the OT predicts this (Isa 42:6, 49:6, 52:10; Ps 65:5).

The Deuteronomic Texts: Exile and Return

Another key text in the interpretation of the אֲפָרָיִם texts in the Prophets is the prophetic passages which foretell a future exile and return for Israel. These prophetic passages are found within the Deuteronomic texts of Deut 29-30 and the blessing of Moses in Deut 33 (*see* Category 2). These passages contain essential prophecies regarding the future of Ephraim-Israel. These early prophecies lay the foundation for the development of the kingdom eschatology found within the prophetic books.

The related passages in the Prophetic books found in the אֲפָרָיִם texts of Category 4 reveal similar beliefs in the dispersion of Israel followed by a Messianic hope of deliverance that would ultimately be achieved in the Messianic Kingdom. This would occur through the events of the regathering, reuniting and restoration of the two kingdoms of Ephraim-Israel and Judah, to the Land of Israel in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant (*see* Appendix). This regathering, reuniting and restoration stem from these Deuteronomic texts.

In Deut 29, the prophet Moses renewed the covenant made with Israel at Horeb, reminding all Israel including the men, wives, children and the גֵר (ger), the stranger and foreigner among them of the covenant promises and the experiences they have just encountered with the God of Israel in the wilderness. Moses reconnects these covenant promises back to the Abrahamic Covenant and establishes that Israel is to be his people and that יְהוָה would be their God (v.13). Knowledge of the etymological development of

Ephraim in Category 1 demonstrates the relevance of the Abrahamic Covenant in terms of the dispersion of Ephraim-Israel among the nations. The covenant reminder issued by Moses was followed by a warning against idolatry and a promise that Israel would experience the curses pronounced at Mt. Ebal (Deut 28:15-68). The promise of exile is noted in Deut 28:63b-65:

...you will be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it. Moreover, the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known. 'Among those nations you shall find no rest, and there will be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul' (see Lev. 26:33, 36; Deut 4:27-28; Neh 1:8).

The exile was foretold by Moses in Deut 29:20-29. Future generations of foreign nations would look upon the curses experienced by Israel and declare these things occurred due to the sins of Israel in worshipping foreign gods in Deut 29:26, "and the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger and in fury and in great wrath, and cast them into another land, as it is this day" (see 2 Chron:17-22). Evidence of the dispersion of the northern tribes is found in *A Joseph Apocryphon*^b (4Q372) which tells of the dispersion of the northern tribes and also tells of a future repentance and salvation for Ephraim-Israel:

And for all this, Joseph was thrown to un[known] lands, to a strange nation and they (the northern Israelites) were dispersed in the whole world...And for all this, Joseph [was put] into the hands of strangers to consume his strength and break his bones until the time of his end...cried to the mighty God that He should save him from their hands. He said, 'My Father and my God, do not abandon me to the hands of the nations. Execute judgement for me so that the humble and the poor may not perish...' ¹⁴³

4Q372 parallels the promises to Israel related by Moses in Deut 30:1-6. Joseph would be thrust into the hands of strange nations. They would experience the curses and be

143. Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, Revised and extended 4th ed. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 307-308, Logos.

scattered to the nations, but if they repented, and returned to יהוה he promised to regather them and settle them again in the Promised Land:

If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. The LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live (Deut 30:4-6; *see also* Deut 10:16; Jer 4:4; Rom 2:29, 11).

These Deuteronomic texts provide the context for the beliefs demonstrated by the Prophets in the regathering, reuniting and restoration of Israel. These are the texts from which the prophets drew their message.

Messianic Kingdom Expectations in the Second Temple Period

The expectation of a future kingdom which would culminate in the regathering of the twelve tribes from the nations, the reuniting of the formerly divided kingdoms of Ephraim-Israel and Judah and the restoration to the Land are found within numerous 2TP texts. The T. Jos. cites the expectation of a salvation for the people of Israel and the Gentiles. “Do ye therefore, my children, observe the commandments of the Lord, and honour Judah and Levi; for from them shall arise unto you the Lamb of God, by grace saving *all the Gentiles and Israel*. For His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, which shall not be shaken” (emphasis added).¹⁴⁴ In Tob., an apocryphal book attributed to the “alleged author, [Tobit,] a Jewish exile living in “the Assyrian capital of Nineveh[!]” in

144. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds., “The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,” in *Fathers of the Third and Fourth Centuries: The Twelve Patriarchs, Excerpts and Epistles, the Clementina, Apocrypha, Decretals, Memoirs of Edessa and Syriac Documents, Remains of the First Ages*, trans. R. Sinker, vol. 8, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1886), 35, Logos.

the late 8th and 7th centuries B.C....”¹⁴⁵ he reports the experience of the Assyrian captivity and his associated prayers and hope of return:

The book of the words of Tobit...Who in the time of Enemessar king of the Assyrians was led captive out of Thisbe, which is at the right hand of that city, which is called properly Nephthali... Now all the tribes which together revolted, and the house of my father Nephthali, sacrificed unto the heifer Baal. But I alone went often to Jerusalem at the feasts, as it was ordained unto all the people of Israel by an everlasting decree... And when we were carried away captives to Nineve, all my brethren and those that were of my kindred did eat of the bread of the Gentiles. But I kept myself from eating; Because I remembered God with all my heart (Tobit 1:1-2, 5-6, 10:12).¹⁴⁶

Tobit reports being carried into exile with his brothers from the northern tribe of Naphtali. Tobit's repentance reveals his understanding of the reason for their captivity.

Tobit's prayer is found in Tob. 3:3-5:

Remember me, and look on me, punish me not for my sins and ignorances, and the sins of my fathers, who have sinned before thee: For they obeyed not thy commandments: wherefore thou hast delivered us for a spoil, and unto captivity, and unto death, and for a proverb of reproach to all the nations among whom we are dispersed. And now thy judgments are many and true: deal with me according to my sins and my fathers': because we have not kept thy commandments, neither have walked in truth before thee (Tob. 3:3-5).¹⁴⁷

The words of Tobit reflect the Deuteronomic texts understanding of the future dispersion of Israel to foreign nations. He also mentions specifically the words of Amos in Tob. 2:6 (Amos 8:10). Tobit's prayer for returning to the land likewise demonstrates the belief in a future return to the land of his forefathers in which the tabernacle would be rebuilt, the captives would rejoice again in Jerusalem and that many nations would come to Israel

145. Carey A. Moore, "Tobit, Book of," *ABD* 585, Logos.

146. *The Apocrypha: King James Version* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1995), Tob 1:1-2, 5-6, 10-12, Logos.

147. *The Apocrypha: King James Version* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1995), Tob 3:3-5, Logos.

bringing gifts with them (Tob. 13:9-10). In the final chapter of Tob., as he nears his death, he speaks to his son of the future return from captivity to the land of Israel stating:

...our brethren shall lie scattered in the earth from that good land: and Jerusalem shall be desolate, and the house of God in it shall be burned, and shall be desolate for a time; And that again God will have mercy on them, and bring them again into the land, where they shall build a temple, but not like to the first, until the time of that age be fulfilled; and afterward they shall return from all places of their captivity, and build up Jerusalem gloriously, and the house of God shall be built in it for ever with a glorious building, as the prophets have spoken thereof. And all nations shall turn, and fear the Lord God truly, and shall bury their idols. So shall all nations praise the Lord, and his people shall confess God, and the Lord shall exalt his people; and all those which love the Lord God in truth and justice shall rejoice, shewing mercy to our brethren (Tobit 14:4-7).¹⁴⁸

Here Tobit describes the Israelites scattered in the earth indicating that this would be the state of the captives until the “time of that age be fulfilled.” After this, the captives would return from “*all places of their captivity*” (14:5) and all the nations would worship the Lord.

Philo likewise demonstrates his own understanding of a future regathering, return and restoration. Philo, was “a contemporary of Jesus (about 20 B.C. to A.D. 50). [And] a member of a wealthy Jewish family in Alexandria, Egypt.”¹⁴⁹ Philo spoke of a reconciliation with God that would take place at some future time in which captives, “even though they may be at the very extremities of the earth, acting as slaves to those enemies who have led them away in captivity, still they shall all be restored to freedom.”¹⁵⁰ This belief was well after the return from Babylonian exile (these events of

148. *The Apocrypha: King James Version* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1995), Tob 14:4–7, Logos.

149. James Taulman, “Philo Judaeus,” ed. Chad Brand et al., *HolBD* 1293–1294, Logos.

150. Charles Duke Yonge with Philo of Alexandria, *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 680, Logos.

the return are noted extensively in Ezra-Nehemiah), indicating the presence of a belief in a future period of return and restoration.

In the first century text of 2 Bar. (2 Baruch), Deut 30:19-20 is directly referenced: “Remember that once Moses called heaven and earth to witness against you and said, “If you trespass the law, you shall be dispersed. And if you shall keep it, you shall be planted” (2 Bar. 84.2).¹⁵¹ 2 Bar. 78.5-7 relates the sins of Israel as the reason for their captivity:

Therefore, I have been the more diligent to leave you the words of this letter before I die so that you may be comforted regarding the evils which have befallen you, and you may also be grieved with regard to the evils which have befallen your brothers, and then further, so that you may consider the judgment of him who decreed it against you to be righteous, namely, that you should be carried away into captivity, for what you have suffered is smaller than what you have done, in order that you may be found worthy of your fathers in the last times. Therefore, if you think about the things you have suffered now for your good so that you may not be condemned at the end and be tormented, you shall receive hope which lasts forever and ever, particularly if you remove from your hearts the idle error for which you went away from here. For if you do these things in this way, he shall continually remember you. He is the one who always promised on our behalf to those who are more excellent than we that he will not forever forget or forsake our offspring, but with much mercy assemble all those again who were dispersed (2 Bar. 78.5-7).¹⁵²

Baruch acknowledges the captivity as a just judgment for the sins Israel had committed, challenging Israel to consider her suffering will lead to a “hope which lasts forever” that would culminate in the assembling of the dispersed (78.7) “in the last times.”

Ben Sira likewise speaks to the regathering of all the tribes of Israel in B VI

Verso 36:13-22:

Gather all the tribes of Jacob...that they may take possession of the land as in the days of old. Have compassion on the people who are called by your name...Israel,

151. James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1 (New York; London: Yale University Press, 1983), 650, Logos.

152. James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1 (New York; London: Yale University Press, 1983), 648, Logos.

whom you have named 'Firstborn'. Have compassion on your holy city...Jerusalem, the place of your dwelling. Fill Zion with your majesty <some of your majesty...and your temple with some of your glory. Give evidence of the first of your deeds...and bring to pass the revelation spoken in your name. Grant the rewards due those who have hoped in you...and let your prophets be vindicated. May you hear the prayer of your servants <your servant>...according to your favor <in your favor> toward your people. And let [a]ll the ends of the earth know <see>...that you are God..."¹⁵³

Once again, this passage relates a belief in a future return to the land, the establishment of Jerusalem and a future temple, that God might be known to the ends of the earth. The significance of Sir is that it is a post-exilic writing, composed well after the exiles of Assyria and Babylon.¹⁵⁴ Sir reflects the 2TP belief in the restoration of the twelve tribes to the land that had yet to be fulfilled at the time this was written.

These 2TP texts each speak to the post-exilic eschatological expectation of the regathering, return and restoration of Israel. They also demonstrate the association of their belief in the sins of the people as the reason which led to the dispersion as demonstrated in the Deuteronomic texts. The fullness of the hope of their eventual return to the Promised Land was for them an eventual reality in which God would bring restoration to Israel and to the nations of the world. These 2TP writings have a demonstrable connection to the Deuteronomic texts that support the latter writings of the Prophets (*cf.* Jer 23:3; Bar 4:36-37; 5:5, 6; 2 Mac 2:18; 4 Ezra 13:12f 1 En 90:33 Pss Sol 17:30).

153. "B VI Verso: Translation by Benjamin H. Parker and Martin G. Abegg." *The Book of Ben Sira*.

154. "The book of Ben Sira was composed in Hebrew c. 180 B.C.E. by a sage in Jerusalem bearing the name שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יֵשׁוּעַ בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן סִירָא Shim'on ben Yeshua' ben 'El'azar ben Sira (to cite the name of the author as presented in Manuscript B at 50:27, 51:30), or Yeshua' ben 'El'azar ben Sira (via the Greek version at 50:27) – but which has come down to us, regardless of the specific forenames, as simply Ben Sira (again, see Manuscript B at 51:30: שִׁירָא בֶּן סִירָא 'who is called Ben Sira')." "Introduction," *The Book of Ben Sira*.

אֶפְרַיִם IN THE PROPHETS:
EZEKIEL 37, ISAIAH 11 AND JEREMIAH 31

Having established the categorical system of אֶפְרַיִם etymology and the related terms of the categorical pillars that comprise the exegetical framework, these supporting structures can now be applied to the אֶפְרַיִם texts of Ezek 37, Isa 11 and Jer 31. These אֶפְרַיִם texts are the primary texts which demonstrate the Category 4 use of אֶפְרַיִם nomenclature as Ephraim-Israel (for other related texts in the Prophetic books, *see* Appendix). The occurrences of אֶפְרַיִם terminology in the Prophets generally concerns the purely predictive prophecies in the אֶפְרַיִם texts. Each of these Category 4 passages contribute to a biblical theology of Israel in the Messianic Kingdom. The etymological development of אֶפְרַיִם as a national identity is of tremendous import in identifying the eschatological views of the Prophets concerning the future of Israel during the anticipated Messianic Kingdom.

The texts of Ezek 37, Isa 11 and Jer 31 speak specifically of Israel using Ephraim-Israel terminology. The ABD supports the Category 4 use of אֶפְרַיִם in these texts as a national identity, noting that “In numerous passages in the prophetic writings, “Ephraim” designates the N kingdom of Israel, since Ephraim actually encompassed the real territorial center of this geopolitical region (cf. esp. Isa 7:2, 5, 8, 9, 17; 9:8, 20; 11:13, etc.; see also Jer 31:9, 18, 20; Ezek 37:16, 19).”¹⁵⁵ It is in these three key passages in the Prophets that אֶפְרַיִם is most clearly demonstrated in its national context as representative of Ephraim-Israel. Additionally, these passages are supported by the related אֶפְרַיִם texts in the Prophetic books.

As these passages occur within sections of purely predictive prophecies, from the

155. Siegfried Herrmann, “Ephraim (Person): Ephraim in the Bible,” *ABD* 551, Logos.

perspective of the prophets, they speak to a future fulfillment in the Messianic Kingdom. It should be noted that just as these passages use אֶפְרַיִם to refer to the national identity of Ephraim-Israel, in the same way, Judah when referenced in these passages likewise refers to the national identity of Judah as the Southern Kingdom of Israel. Therefore, the distinction of אֶפְרַיִם as a Category 4 term is paramount to the exegesis of these key prophetic texts.

Two Sticks, אֶפְרַיִם and Judah Reunited: Ezekiel 37

The אֶפְרַיִם text of Ezek 37 begins with the well-known two sticks prophecy of Ezek 37:15-28. In this passage, יְהוָה instructs Ezekiel saying:

“And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, ‘For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions’; then take another stick and write on it, ‘For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions.’
“Then join them for yourself one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand (Ezek 37:16-17).

On the first stick, the phrase, “for Judah and for the sons of Israel his companions” (v. 16) is to be inscribed. This is rendered from the Hebrew ¹⁵⁶ לְיְהוּדָה וְלִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲבֵרָיו, and in the BHt ¹⁵⁷ לְיְהוּדָה וְלִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲבֵרָיו. On the second stick, the prophet is to write “For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions” (v. 16). This is rendered from the Hebrew ¹⁵⁸ לְיוֹסֵף עֵץ אֶפְרַיִם וְכָל-בְּיַת יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲבֵרָיו with identical rendering in the BHt.¹⁵⁹ At first יִשְׂרָאֵל (Israel) is used to describe יְהוּדָה (Judah), then יִשְׂרָאֵל is used to

156. Christo Van der Merwe, *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2004), Eze 37:16, Logos.

157. Wolfgang Richter, Christian Riepl, and Johann Peter Rechenmacher, *Biblia Hebraica Transcripta* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Eze 37:16, Logos.

158. Christo Van der Merwe, *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2004), Eze 37:16, Logos.

159. Wolfgang Richter, Christian Riepl, and Johann Peter Rechenmacher, *Biblia Hebraica Transcripta* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Eze 37:16, Logos.

describe יוֹסֵף (Joseph) and אֶפְרַיִם. Thus “all the house of Israel” in vs. 17 can be identified as Ephraim-Israel.

The description of the two sticks refers to a branch or piece of wood as עֵץ (etz) may refer to a “tree, i.e., [or] any kind of relatively large woody plant.”¹⁶⁰ The GHCLOT likewise defines עֵץ as “a tree...a staff, a bone.”¹⁶¹ The LXX renders stick as ῥάβδος. ῥάβδος may refer to “a relatively slender piece of wood varying in length, *rod, staff, stick*...[or] Of a shepherd’s staff.”¹⁶² This type of stick may indicate a staff or scepter which is initially in two pieces which is to be joined into אֶחָד (echad) or “one” (37:17). אֶחָד may simply mean one, however it may also refer to the uniting of the two pieces as אֶחָד may mean both one in number and/or a unity as defined by DBL: “number one...[or] in unity, formally, one shoulder, i.e., pertaining to serving in a unified or unanimous manner.”¹⁶³ That these two sticks may understood as being be joined together as a rulers scepter may be understood from the surrounding context. The symbolism of the act is described in the following verses. When the Israelites saw Ezekiel, and asked the meaning of this, he was to explain:

Say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.”’ “The sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes. ‘Say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations and no longer be divided into two kingdoms (Ezek 37:19-22).

160. James Swanson, “עֵץ,” *DBL*, Logos.

161. Wilhelm Gesenius and Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, “עֵץ,” *GHCLOT* 646, Logos.

162. William Arndt, “אֶחָד,” Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 902, Logos.

163. James Swanson, “אֶחָד,” *DBL*, Logos.

This uniting of the two sticks was to symbolize the reuniting of the divided kingdoms of Ephraim-Israel and Judah. Robert Chisholm notes that “This action symbolized what the Lord would do for his exiled people. He would bring back both the Israelite and the Judahite exiles back to the land and make them one nation again, ruled by one king, David.”¹⁶⁴ This is the understanding conveyed in the BKC as “The uniting of the sticks pictured God’s restoring *and* reuniting His people in the land as a single nation (cf. Hosea 1:11).”¹⁶⁵ K&D argue that rather than a scepter, “גִּזְיָא signifies a staff or rod. Ezekiel would undoubtedly have used מִטְּבֵל for a staff. Nor have we even to think of flat boards, but simply of pieces of wood upon which a few words could be written, and which could be held in one hand.”¹⁶⁶ However, in consideration of Gen 49:8-10 and Ps 60:7 and the clear references to the scepter of Judah discovered in Categories 1 and 2, the symbolism of a rulers scepter in the hand of a Messianic figure (Ezek 34:23-24; Ezek 37:24-28) is appropriate to the context. K&D do note however that the stick of Joseph refers to:

...the kingdom represented by this piece of wood which was in Ephraim’s hand, inasmuch as the hegemony was with the tribe of Ephraim. Instead of the wood, therefore, the tribes (not staffs) of Israel, i.e., the Israelites who constituted these tribes, are mentioned as his associates. God will put these upon the wood of Joseph (יִזְרְאֵל), i.e., will join them together, and then place them with the wood of Judah, i.e., the kingdom of Judah, and unite them into one wood (or nation).¹⁶⁷

The two sticks were not in the hand of אֶפְרַיִם, however, but were to be “one in my hand,” indicating that in the hand of the Davidic king, they would be one. Thus, the stick was not

164. Robert B. Chisholm Jr., *Handbook on the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Minor Prophets*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 280.

165. Charles H. Dyer, “Ezekiel,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1299, Logos.

166. Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 9 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 314, Logos.

167. Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 9 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 315, Logos.

placed in the hand of אֶפְרַיִם, but in the hand of the King who would reunite them.

Moshe Greenberg likewise understands עֶזְרָא as “symbolizing both king and kingdom.”¹⁶⁸ This comparison of אֶפְרַיִם to Judah demonstrated the chief rivalries in Israel. Greenberg describes that “The proper rival of Judah was Joseph (see the contest for the richest blessing in Gen 49, and for the primogeniture in 1 Chron 5:1–2).”¹⁶⁹ In the *Harvard Theological Review*, John B. Whitley gives support to the interpretation of עֶזְרָא as representative of a “‘scepter/ shepherd’s staff/tribe’ so that the symbolic unification of the tablets signifies both the restoration of the monarchy and the uniting of the tribes” citing references from Tg. Ps.-J. which describes the staff as שֶׁבֶט.¹⁷⁰ These passages reveal the intent to reunite the two kingdoms in a restoration of these rivalries. Furthermore, this passage reveals the link between Joseph and the appellation of אֶפְרַיִם in relation to the Northern Kingdom. This restoration would be accomplished in the hand of a Messianic King who would reunite the Northern Kingdom of אֶפְרַיִם and the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

In these verses, the prophet foretells of the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. There are four main elements to this prophecy regarding the future Israel’s two kingdoms as identified in the latter verses of Ezek 37:15-28. First is the *regathering* of Israel (v. 21, 23). Second is the *reuniting* of Israel into one nation and one kingdom. This is the reuniting of the formerly divided kingdoms of Ephraim-Israel, the ten northern tribes, and the kingdom of Judah and the two southern tribes (v. 22, 24). Third is the

168. Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 22A, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 753, Logos.

169. Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 22A, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 754, Logos.

170. John B. Whitley, “The Literary Expansion of Ezekiel’s ‘Two Sticks’ Sign Act (Ezekiel 37:15-28).” *Harvard Theological Review*, 108 (2015): 322, Academia.

restoration of Israel to the Promised Land to be God’s people in the Land (Ezek 37:21, 22, 25, *cf.* Gen 12, 15, 17; *see* Category 1). Fourth is the establishment of the kingdom with His sanctuary in their midst forever (Ezek 37:22-26). This fourth element relates when this regathering, reuniting and restoration would be accomplished. Ezekiel pronounced that all of these things would be accomplished in a future Messianic Kingdom. This is the understanding of K&D,¹⁷¹ and the BKC.¹⁷²

The ABD identifies the prophecies of Ezek 37 as speaking to the future realities of the nation of Israel in the Messianic Kingdom. According to the BEB, “The prophets proclaimed that Ephraim and the other northern tribes would one day be reunited with the southern kingdom of Judah in the messianic kingdom (Hos 1:11). The division introduced by Jeroboam I would be healed when a king descended from David would rule over Judah, Ephraim, and all the tribes of Israel (Ez 37).”¹⁷³ This is also how Lamar Eugene Cooper Sr. interprets Ezek 37. “Thus God was going to restore and reunite the nation under one king (vv. 18–22). Furthermore, the nation would never again be divided (v. 22), and never again would the people serve idols (v. 23).”¹⁷⁴

Greenberg takes a slightly different approach to the text. While he agrees that this speaks to a promise of regathering and return, Greenberg posits that in the statement:

“I will deliver my people from the lands of east and...west, and I will bring them

171. “The first (vv. 21–23) promises (a) the gathering of the Israelites out of their dispersion, their restoration to their own land, and their union as one nation under the rule of David (vv. 21, 22)...” Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 9 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 316, Logos.

172. “37:18–28. The uniting of the sticks pictured God’s restoring and reuniting His people in the land as a single nation (cf. Hosea 1:11). Cleansed from their backsliding ... they will be My people, God said, and I will be their God (cf. Ezek 11:20; 14:11; 36:28; 37:27).” Charles H. Dyer, “Ezekiel,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1299, Logos.

173. Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, “Ephraim, Tribe Of,” *BEB* 712, Logos.

174. Lamar Eugene Cooper, *Ezekiel*, vol. 17, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 326, Logos.

home to dwell in Jerusalem...” Promise of deliverance from a place leads to promise of return to home; but in our passage the return home is already behind us (vs. 21). And if the point here is deliverance from sin, why not say so instead of intruding *moš^ebotehem* “their dwelling places” into the sentence?¹⁷⁵

Here Greenberg is referring to the Hebrew מושב which is translated usually as “seat, assembly, dwelling-place.”¹⁷⁶ Greenberg relies on support from the LXX’s use of μιαινω which may be defined as “to *sully* or *taint*, i.e. *contaminate* (cer. or mor.):—defile.”¹⁷⁷ Greenberg’s interpretation puts emphasis on deliverance from the sin and transgression of idolatry rather than on deliverance from the *places* in which they had sinned. Cleansing from transgression and idolatry are clear from the use of “וְלֹא יִטְמְאוּ וְיִדְבְּלוּ לְיָהוּהָ”¹⁷⁸ “and not defile themselves with their idolatry.” This also finds support in the word פָּשַׁע or transgression. פָּשַׁע may be defined as “a *revolt* (national, moral or religious):—rebellion, sin, transgression, trespass.”¹⁷⁹ The Hebrew here is וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי אֹתָם מִכָּל מוֹשְׁבֵי חַטֹּאתֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר חָטְאוּ וְיִדְבְּלוּ.¹⁸⁰ This phrase may be translated “and I will deliver them from all their *dwelling places* (מוֹשְׁבֵי חַטֹּאתֵיהֶם) *in which* (בְּהֵם) they sinned.” Some translators render vs. 23 as “apostasy” rather than “dwelling places.” However, “Most Hebrew manuscripts read ‘all their dwelling places where they sinned’ instead of ‘all of their apostasy by which they sinned.’”¹⁸¹ Greenberg does acknowledge the connection to the location of exilic lands to the Ezekiel passage noting, “...the context indicates an exilic location, favoring

175. Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 22A, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 756, Logos.

176. Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, “μιαινω,” *BDB* 444, Logos.

177. James Strong, “μιαινω,” *Strong’s*, 48, Logos.

178. Christo Van der Merwe, *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2004), Eze 37:23, Logos.

179. James Strong, “פָּשַׁע,” *Strong’s*, 97, Logos.

180. Christo Van der Merwe, *The Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2004), Eze 37:23, Logos.

181. Rick Brannan and Israel Loken, *The Lexham Textual Notes on the Bible*, Lexham Bible Reference Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), Eze 37:23, Logos.

Abarbanel's view: 'Their dwelling places were in the lands where they sojourned and they sinned there, as our master Moses said; "there you shall worship other gods," etc. (Deut 28:36, 64 [one might adduce Ezek 14:3ff.; 20:39, in support]).'¹⁸² These texts as well as Isa 11 and Jer 31 and numerous others support the idea of returning from exilic lands (*see* Appendix, Category 4).

In his comprehensive analysis of the Ezekiel 37 text, Jason Eric Beals, describes three different views of the Ezekiel text, the ideal view, the historical view, and the symbolic view. According to Beals:

The most common and prevalent interpretation of Ezekiel is the symbolic view. This view sees the future temple in Ezekiel fulfilled in Christ and the Church. Ezekiel's vision was not intended to find a fulfillment in a literal way...The historical view interprets the temple described in Ezekiel 37:27-28 and chapters 40-46 as fulfilled in history. This was fulfilled when the exiles returned to the land from the Babylonian deportation.

Alternative to the historical view and the symbolic views is the ideal view which Beals describes as a view which

...sees Ezekiel's vision of the temple in chapters 40-60 as an apocalyptic dream or an ideal. The vision is a type of plan for what God will do for His people. All of the details and descriptions of Ezekiel's vision points to the ideal transformation that will overcome the people when God dwells in their midst...To view these details as symbolic for an ideal future is to treat this section differently than the rest of Ezekiel without any textual support...There is no valid argument in the text to treat the chapters 8-11 as rooted in historical reality and then treat 40-46 as symbolic of optimal spiritual truths.¹⁸³

Beals statements apply also to the context of Ezek 37. To interpret these events in any way other than that presented in the context of the chapter is to apply a different set of interpretive rules to different sections of Ezekiel. This principle applies to Ezek 37 and

182. Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 22A, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 756, Logos.

183. Jason Eric. Beals, "National Restoration and The Divine Dwelling Place in Ezekiel 37:15-28," Master's Thesis: The Master's Seminary, 2013: 11-14.

the other prophetic texts as well.

In the NAC, Cooper posits that the OT prophecies as conveyed in Ezek 37 should not quickly be dismissed in favor of the Church, but that a careful examination should consider the prophetic significance of Israel as well as the Gentiles. According to Cooper:

Ezekiel clearly envisioned the transformed land of Israel in chap. 36 and the national resurrection of Israel in chap. 37. We must take care not to banish the Israel of the old covenant from the picture in favor of the church. Thus the promises of Israel are not promises to be collected exclusively by the church. When Jesus established the church and turned to the Gentiles (Matt 21:33–46; 1 Pet 2:4–8; Luke 2:32; 13:6–10), it was with the same missionary purpose he had for Israel. His plan was to include all people in the presentation of salvation. That missionary purpose was set forth in Exod 19:1–8. The arrival of the church age did not circumvent Israel but was God’s plan to share his salvific love with all people (Rev 22:17). It also assured that Israel would someday be included in the fulfillment of this promise (Rom 10:1–21; 11:25–33).¹⁸⁴

Coopers’ interpretation allows for a view that favors the regathering, reuniting and restoration of Israel without the exemption of Gentile salvation and inclusion with Israel. His comments do not *exlude* the Church or Israel, but rather sees a Gentile *inclusion* (Rom 11) as a part of the salvific plan of God. This plan was intended for Israel specifically, but also for the entire world (Jer 31:34; Isa 49:5-6).

The Ingathering of the Exiles: Isaiah 11

The early portions of Isa 11 are descriptive of the coming Messianic Kingdom, describing the idyllic conditions that will occur with the reign of the Davidic King (vv. 1-10). The BKC acknowledges that “Isaiah undoubtedly was thinking of God’s promise to David (2 Sam. 7:16) that a Descendant of David will rule over his kingdom (cf. Isa. 9:7) forever. This Branch, the Messiah (cf. Jer. 23:5), will bear fruit, that is, prosper and

184. Lamar Eugene Cooper, *Ezekiel*, vol. 17, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 322, Logos.

benefit others.”¹⁸⁵

The אֶפְרַיִם text of Isaiah 11 begins in v.11. The restoration and regathering described in Isa 11 demonstrates the prophets’ own belief in a future regathering, reuniting, and restoration. Just as Ezekiel spoke of a regathered, reunited, and restored kingdom to Israel, Isaiah begins with a description of returning exiles which God will recover for “the second time.” This return can be described as a “second Exodus.” This is derived from two aspects of Isaiah 11: 1) v. 11 which says, “Then it will happen on that day that the Lord Will again recover the second time with His hand The remnant of His people, who will remain, From Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, And from the islands of the sea” and 2) vv.15-16 which describes the drying of the “sea of Egypt” and the remnant walking over “dry shod” (v. 15) and the direct comparison to the Exodus from Egypt in v. 16. This passage is preserved in the DSS in 1Q Isaiah a 11:

11 והיה ביום ההוא יוסיף אדוני שנית ידו לקנות את שאר עמו אשר ישאר
30 מאשור וממצרים¹⁸⁶

God would acquire with his hand the remnant of his people from Assyria and from Egypt.

The other nations listed together with the “islands of the sea” are representative of the nations of the entire world. This is the view of the NAC:

These nations represent places all over the world where Jewish people might live and work: in the south (Egypt and Cush), the north (Assyria and Hamath), the east (Elam and Babylon), and the west (islands of the sea). The Lord’s restorative work will be complete so that none of his people will be left behind involuntarily in some distant nation.¹⁸⁷

This is also the interpretation of the BKC which relates that: “In verses 11–16 Isaiah

185. John A. Martin, “Isaiah,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1056, Logos.

186. *1Q Isaiah a* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010), Is 11:11.

187. Gary V. Smith, *NAC* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2007), 276, Logos.

spoke of the Lord's gathering the people of Israel and Judah from all over the world. He compared it to a second "Exodus," like the release from Egypt about 700 years earlier."¹⁸⁸ K&D describe this second exodus as a prophetic future exodus:

There was no such *diaspora* of Israel at the time when the prophet uttered this prediction, nor indeed even after the dissolution of the northern kingdom; so that the specification is not historical, but prophetic. The redemption which the prophet here foretells is a second, to be followed by no third; consequently the banishment out of which Israel is redeemed is the ultimate form of that which is threatened in Isa. 6:12 (cf., Deut. 30:1ff.). It is the second redemption, the counterpart of the Egyptian. He will then stretch out His hand again (*yōsiph*, supply *lishloach*); and as He once delivered Israel out of Egypt, so will He now redeem it—purchase it back (*kânâh*, opp. *mâcar*) out of all the countries named.¹⁸⁹

The timing of the writing reveals the future hope in a return from all foreign lands under Messiah. Isa 1:1-10 are descriptive of the conditions to which the remnant would return, a Davidic King in a peaceful kingdom. The ingathering of the exiles is described in v. 12 of 1Q Isaiah a:

ונשה נס
Col. XI, Isaiah 11:12–14:1
1 לגואים ואסף נדחי ישראל ונפוצות יהודה יקבץ מכנפות הארץ¹⁹⁰

1Q Isaiah a therefore renders v. 12 as “and he will gather the נָדָח (scattered) ones of ישראל (Israel)...and he will raise a banner for the nations and he will gather the נָדָח (scattered) and the יִנְפְּצוֹת (dispersed) ones of Judah.” Identifying אֶפְרַיִם here as a Category 4 term, Israel is identified as a Pillar 4 related term. The mention of אֶפְרַיִם and Judah thus indicate a regathering of Ephraim-Israel and Judah from the four corners of the earth. Strong's defines נָדָח (*nadach*) as “to *push* off; (to expel, mislead, strike, inflict, etc.):—banish,

188. John A. Martin, *BKC* 1057, Logos.

189. Carl Friedrich Keil, *K&D* 7:187, Logos.

190. *1Q Isaiah a* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010), Is 11:12.

bring, cast down (out), chase, compel, draw away, drive (away, out).¹⁹¹ נָדַח supports the idea of an exiled population by the subsequent use of וַיִּפְּצוּת. וַיִּפְּצוּת comes from the root פּוּץ meaning, “to *dash* in pieces, lit. or fig. (espec. to *disperse*):—break (dash, shake) in (to) pieces, cast (abroad), disperse (selves), drive, retire, scatter (abroad), spread abroad.”¹⁹² The TWOT defines נָדַח as “[to] impel, drive away, banish.”¹⁹³ The term נָדַח is used to refer to the banished ones of Ephraim-Israel (*see*. vv. 12-13). The term נִפְּצָה is used to describe the “scattered” or “dispersed ones” of Judah. In the TWOT נִפְּצָה can mean to “break, dash, beat in pieces; overspread, scatter, disperse.”¹⁹⁴

The אֶפְרַיִם text here further demonstrates the context of the regathering of Ephraim-Israel and Judah as the Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel in the v.13 of IQ Isaiah a:

13 וסרה קנאת
2 אפרים וצוררי יהודה יכרתו אפרים לוא יקנא את יהודה ויהודה לוא יצר את אפרים¹⁹⁵

As a result of the regathering of the two dispersed kingdoms of Ephraim-Israel (The Northern Kingdom) and Judah (the Southern Kingdom), “Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, And Judah will not harass Ephraim.” This is the view noted in the BKC, “In that day of regathering, Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom) will not be jealous of Judah (the Southern Kingdom) and the South will have no hostilities toward the North.”¹⁹⁶ The NAC describes this regathering in its Messianic context: “Once everyone is back in the peaceful land with a new Davidic king, the people will give up their feelings of

191. James Strong, “נָדַח,” *Strong’s 76*, Logos.

192. James Strong, “פּוּץ,” *Strong’s 94*, Logos.

193. Leonard J. Coppes, “1304 נָדַח,” *TWOT 556*, Logos.

194. Milton C. Fisher, “1394 נִפְּצָה,” *TWOT 587*, Logos.

195. *IQ Isaiah a* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010), Is 11:13.

196. Martin, *BKC*, 1057, Logos.

inferiority, jealousy, superiority, and acts of war...But in this new era there will be a reversal of present hostilities between the nations during the Syro-Ephraimite War (7:1–6; 9:21).”¹⁹⁷ This reconciliation between Ephraim-Israel and Judah when viewed with the reuniting of the two kingdoms in Ezek 37 signal the first two aspects of the kingdom hopes which they anticipated as a result of this “second exodus.”

Jer 16:14-15 also foretells of this second exodus:

‘Therefore behold, days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when it will no longer be said, “As the Lord lives, who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt,” but, “As the Lord lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where He had banished them.” For I will restore them to their own land which I gave to their fathers. (see Ps 106:47; Isa 14:1; Jer 3:18; Jer 23:5-8).

This return is described not only as a second exodus in Jer 16, but as a greater exodus in the sense that this event will be more memorable than the first Exodus to the point that at future Passover festivals, a time when Israel would typically remember their Exodus from Egypt (v. 14), Israel will proclaim instead “As the Lord lives who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north and from all the countries where He had banished them...” (Jer 16:15). This event would be of such significance that the former Exodus from Egypt would not be remembered, and this second Exodus would overshadow the first. This was a promise to gather Israel from the nations and settle them in the Promised Land (Gen 12, 15, 17, 22; Deut 28-33). Pao, Wright and others have noted, the Babylonian exile fails to meet the points of the Jer 16 oracle. Had the return from Babylon fulfilled this prophecy, successive Passover festivals surely would have long

197. “These conflicting interests and hostilities go back to the time of Saul and David when the northern tribes made Ishbosheth, Saul’s fourth son, king of Israel, while Judah made David their king (2 Sam 2:8–11). These conflicts resulted in the division of the nation into Israel and Judah after the death of Solomon (1 Kgs 12). Later Israel and Judah fought several wars against one another (2 Kgs 14:11–14; 16:5–9).” Smith, 276–277, Logos.

been celebrated over the return of Israelites from all over the world who were resettled in the land.

Greenberg also cites “The anticipated reconciliation between south and north, Judah and Ephraim...reminds us that reunion remained an ideal long after the ten tribes had disappeared from the scene (e.g. Ezek 37:15–28).”¹⁹⁸ For Greenberg, these events were fulfilled in the past return from Babylonian exile as seen in the events recounted in Ezra-Nehemiah. Chisolm, like Pao Wright and Greenberg asserts that “In depicting the return from exile as a second exodus...[the] use of earlier traditions must be viewed as a creative form of literary allusion, not necessarily a literal description of the future.”¹⁹⁹ However, related passages throughout the Prophets parallel the descriptions of the regathering of the dispersed peoples of Israel and similarly apply to אֶפְרַיִם and Judah (Ezek 37:16-17, 22; Jer 3:18, Hos 1:1; *see* Appendix Category 4).

Alternatively, K&D posit that this return speaks of an ultimate regathering, noting that:

In vv. 14 and 15 the prophet opens to the people a view of ultimate redemption from the affliction amidst the heathen, into which, for their sin, they will be cast. By and by men will swear no more by Jahveh who redeemed them out of Egypt, but by Jahveh who has brought them again from the land of the north and the other lands into which they have been thrust forth. In this is implied that this second deliverance will be a blessing which shall outshine the former blessing of redemption from Egypt. But just as this deliverance will excel the earlier one, so much the greater will the affliction of Israel in the northern land be than the Egyptian bondage had been.²⁰⁰

198. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 19, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 268, Logos.

199. Robert B. Chisolm Jr., *Handbook on the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Minor Prophets*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 46.

200. Carl Friedrich Keil, *K&D*, 168, Logos.

This regathering to the land from the region of the north according to K&D was indicative of a second deliverance which would outshine the Exodus from Egypt.

If the text of Isa 11:15-16 is to be interpreted literally, then the future Exodus will be defined once again by the parting of waters. According to Sarna:

The biblical and Near Eastern images give reason to suggest that the words *heherim* (lit., “doomed”) and *ba ‘yam* in Isa. 11:15 should best be read as *heheriv* (dry up) and *baka ‘yam* (split [the] sea), respectively. The proposed verb *baka ‘* was presumably corrupted orthographically; indeed just this verb occurs in Torah’s account of the splitting of the sea (Exod. 14:21).²⁰¹

The BKC and NAC both look to the future Millennial Kingdom for the fulfillment of the Isa 11 regathering. According to the BKC, “When Israel returns to her land at the beginning of the Millennium, God will prepare the way for her.”²⁰² The NAC notes the Gentile inclusion in the gathering of the exiles stating that “The second half of the chapter focuses on the gathering of the remnant of both Gentile and Hebrew peoples from the distant corners of the earth (11:10–16).”²⁰³ Once more the connection between the mention of אֲפֻרְיִם along with the idea of Gentile inclusion is noteworthy. If Gen 48:19 is interpreted as “fulness of nations” under אֲפֻרְיִם, then the Gentile inclusion may well occur in part by way of אֲפֻרְיִם. This view of a regathering of Ephraim-Israel and Judah in the future Messianic Kingdom is supported by the numerous 2TP works. אֲפֻרְיִם as a Category 4 term serves to identify the numerous prophetic texts that support this interpretation (*see* Appendix Category 4).

201. Michael A. Fishbane, *Haftarot, The JPS Bible Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2002), 436, Logos.

202. John A. Martin, “Isaiah,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1058, Logos.

203. Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 1–39*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2007), 270, Logos.

The Restoration of Israel: Jeremiah 31

By the time of Jeremiah, אֶפְרַיִם had developed as a Category 4 term of national identity which referred to Ephraim-Israel. In this section of the prophets, the restoration to the Promised Land of Israel is emphasized. While the term Judah identified the southern two tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Jer 31 begins with the declaration that “At that time,” declares the LORD, “I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people.” This defines the scope of the prophecies that follow. Like Ezek 37 and Isa 11, Jeremiah declares that “at that time,” meaning in the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, God would once again be the God of all of the people of Israel. This could only happen if the two kingdoms are reunited. The prophet Hosea recounts the birth of his son to Gomer: And the LORD said to him, “Name him Jezreel; for yet a little while...and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel” (Hos 1:4). After the birth of his first son and daughter, God instructed Hosea, “Name him Lo-ammi, for you are not My people and I am not your God (1:9b). Lo-ammi is found in the DSS of 4Q79 “לא עמי,”²⁰⁴ meaning “not my people.” The sins of Israel led to the promised exile (Deut 29-30) and as a result, God declared that they would no longer be his people (lo-ammi)²⁰⁵ and that he would no longer be their God. But the prophet announces that this condition was not permanent, for “Yet the number of the sons of Israel Will be like the sand of the sea, Which cannot be measured or numbered; *And in the place Where it is said to them, “You are not My people,” It will be said to them, “You are the sons of the living God”* (Hos. 1:10b,

204. *4Q79 Minor Prophets D* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010), Ho 1:9, Logos.

205. For a complete discussion on the identity of Gomer and her children and the background to the prophecies of Hosea, see Robert B. Chisholm Jr., *Handbook on the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Minor Prophets*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 336-367.

emphasis added.) In the very place that the prophet made this declaration, he declared its future reversal. The Ephraim-Israel and Judah would be in the land and God would again say to them “you are the sons of the living God” (Hos 1:10; *cf.* Rom 9:24-26)²⁰⁶. V. 11 continues that “the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel will be gathered together.” As Pillar 4 terms, Judah and Israel identify these two as the Southern Kingdom and Northern Kingdom respectively.

Jer 31:4-6 contain Category 3 terms of geographic references which identify that the prophet is speaking of Ephraim-Israel. *4Q72 Jeremiah c* records הַנְּבִיא מְבִיא אוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ צָפוֹן [נְבִיא מְבִיא אוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ צָפוֹן] “Behold, I am going to bring them from the land of the north and I will gather them from the remotest part of the earth.”²⁰⁷

Like the key text of Isa 11, Jer 31:9 speaks of the regathering in what Isa 11 describes as a second exodus. According to the BKC, “God assured the Northern Kingdom that He will restore her. Those who had survived the sword (probably Assyria’s destruction of Israel) will yet experience God’s favor as He leads them into the desert for their new Exodus (*cf.* 16:14–15; 23:7–8; Hosea 2:14–15).”²⁰⁸ The Hebrew manuscripts show that with weeping they would come “בָּאָה בְּבֹכָה.” בָּאָה may be interpreted as go or come. This is defined in the DBL as “LN 15.1–15.17 (qal) come/go, i.e., make linear movement of a general kind.”²⁰⁹ Alternatively the LXX leads to the translation of they “went out” with weeping rendering ἐξέργουμαι instead for going out as defined in the

206. Paul speaks of a Jew and Gentile or Jew and “nations” in Rom 9:24-25 “even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles. As He says also in Hosea...” In the following verses, Paul quotes directly from the text of Hosea 1:10. The link to the Gentiles or nations and Jews may be explained in the nature of the dispersion of the northern tribes. Among the nations, Ephraim-Israel became absorbed among the Gentiles, thus the remnant may be found “among the gentiles” (Rom 9:24).

207. *4Q72 Jeremiah c*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010), Je 31:8, Logos.

208. Charles H. Dyer, *BKC* 9:1169, Logos.

209. James Swanson, “בָּאָה,” *DBL* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997). Logos.

DBL: “2002 ἐξέρχομαι (*exerchomai*): vb.; ≡ DBLHebr 3655; 1. LN 15.40 go/come out.”²¹⁰ The LXX demonstrates the comparison of weeping when going out into exile as opposed to returning to the land with weeping. Greenberg favors the interpretation of weeping upon the return to the land noting, “Other commentators, too, express a preference for this interpretation, but the MT rendering is more dynamic, with the returning through weeping and supplicating Yahweh as he leads them along. Also, one should note that *bo*’ in the perfect means “come (in),” not “go,” in 31:12.”²¹¹

In 31:8 Jeremiah speaks of a great company returning to the land. *4Q72 Jeremiah c* reveals this phrase to be “קהל גדול” (*qahal gadol*).²¹² This may be interpreted as a great assembly or a great multitude. Here also a connection to the אֲפָרַיִם terminology discovered in Gen 48:19 in the Category 1 Pillar term “מְלֵאֵי-הַגּוֹיִם.” This term normally rendered multitude of nations or fullness of nations is further demonstrated in Jer 31:9: “With weeping they will come, And by supplication I will lead them; I will make them walk by streams of waters, On a straight path in which they will not stumble; For I am a father to Israel, And Ephraim is My firstborn.” This is strengthened by the use of אֲפָרַיִם following the description of the returning remnant as קהל גדול, a great multitude, thus providing further evidence of the growth of Ephraim-Israel into the fullness of nations among the nations of the world.

In his commentary on the haftorah text of Jer 30-32, Sarna states:

...these oracles deal with the return of Israel (the northern tribes) and Judah (the southern tribes) to their homeland. Prophecies addressed to both groups begin this collection (30:4–17), with others to either Israel or Judah following thereafter (see

210. James Swanson, “ἐξέρχομαι” *DBL* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), Logos.

211. Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 21B, *AB* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 425, Logos.

212. *4Q72 Jeremiah c*, (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010), Je 31:8–9. Logos.

30:18–31:22 and 31:23–39, respectively)...The haftarah emphasizes God’s love for Israel and His promises to restore the nation to its homeland. This divine commitment is portrayed as ancient and ongoing—beginning with the Exodus from Egypt and continuing through the exile.²¹³

Jeremiah speaks of these days in Jer 31:31, “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.” The house of Israel in v. 31 is a reference to Ephraim-Israel and the house of Judah to the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Jeremiah, declares the certainty of the promise of יהוה, the promise was עולם (olam), for eternity (eternal, forever, or without end)²¹⁴ (Jer 31:35-40).

The tribal history of אֶפְרַיִם provides the context for the exile. Because אֶפְרַיִם had become the dominant tribe amongst the northern tribes, the term developed as an appellation to refer to all ten of the northern tribes of Israel. K&D acknowledge the reference to אֶפְרַיִם but deny any allusion to the preferred status of אֶפְרַיִם over Judah:

The first-born of Jahveh,” in Ex. 4:22, means the people of Israel as compared with the other nations of the earth. This designation is here transferred to Ephraim as the head and representative of the ten tribes; but it is not likely that there is in this any allusion to the preference which Jacob displayed for the sons of Joseph, Gen. 49:22ff. compared with v. 4 (Venema, J. D. Michaelis, Nägelsbach),—the advantage they obtained consisting in this, that Ephraim and Manasseh were placed on an equal footing with Jacob’s sons as regards inheritance in the land of Canaan; in other words, they were elevated to the dignity of being founders of tribes. There is no trace in this prophecy of any preference given to Ephraim before Judah, or of the ten tribes before the two tribes of the kingdom of Judah. That the deliverance of Ephraim (Israel) from exile is mentioned before that of Judah, and is further more minutely described, is simply due to the fact, already mentioned, that the ten tribes, who had long languished in exile, had the least hope, according to man’s estimation, of deliverance. The designation of Ephraim as the first-born of Jahveh simply shows that, in the deliverance of the people, Ephraim is in no respect to be behind Judah,—that they are to receive their full share in the Messianic salvation of the whole people.²¹⁵

213. Michael A. Fishbane, “Haftarot,” *The JPS Bible Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2002), 377–378, Logos.

214. James Strong, “עולם,” *Strong’s*, 86, Logos.

215. Carl Friedrich Keil *K&D*, vol. 8, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 272, Logos.

Here K&D compares the Exod 4:22 mention of Israel as the “firstborn” of God to אֶפְרַיִם as firstborn but sees firstborn not as achieving a preference over Judah, however, the presence of the term firstborn is in itself a reference to the special status of אֶפְרַיִם as a Category 1 term. However, it is *not* a preference over Judah, but a preeminent status of both אֶפְרַיִם *and* Judah. אֶפְרַיִם was granted the status of firstborn while Judah was granted the blessing of the scepter in Gen 49:10, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes.” This can be seen in the text of Psalm 60:7 “Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine; Ephraim also is the helmet of My head; Judah is My scepter” (*see* also Ps 108:8). K&D emphasize the assurance that יהוה would grant the deliverance, to אֶפְרַיִם and Judah, and that both would share in the Messianic salvation of *all Israel*.

In the NAC, F.B. Huey attributes the firstborn status of אֶפְרַיִם in v. 9 to:

The uninhibited elation resulting from anticipation of return home is reflected in the description of Israel as the “foremost” (lit. “chief” or “head”) of the nations. Israel was hardly a great nation at that time in terms of wealth or power. But God promised that his elect nation, once a reproach (24:9; 29:18) and an outcast among the nations (30:17), would attain preeminence like that of a firstborn son (v. 9; cf. Ps 89:5; Isa 61:7) and would lead all the nations in worshiping the true God (Isa 2:2; cf. Amos 6:1).²¹⁶

The reference to אֶפְרַיִם is again to Ephraim-Israel. Although אֶפְרַיִם was scattered among the nations, Ephraim-Israel would again attain the preeminence prophesied to the descendants of אֶפְרַיִם in Gen 48 (Category 1).

Despite the sins of Ephraim-Israel, God would have compassion on them and bring them back to the land (Jer 31:18-20). According to Huey:

These verses furnish a miniature theology of repentance centering on the verb *šûb*, “turn,” which occurs seven times in vv. 16–21. It is used of Israel’s physical

216. F. B. Huey, *NAC* 16:271, Logos.

return to the land (vv. 16–17, 21), of their sinful turning from God (translated “strayed” in v. 19), and of their spiritual return to God (translated “restore” and “return” in v. 18). In vv. 18–19 God quoted Israel’s penitential confession which he desired and determined to hear. The quotation, therefore, served both as instruction and prophecy.²¹⁷

Repentance was the condition for the fulfillment of the prophecy. In true repentance, God will regather אָפְרָח and settle them once again in the Land.

Jeremiah related the prophecy with a sense of certainty regarding the fulfillment of these promises.

Thus says the LORD, Who gives the sun for light by day And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; The LORD of hosts is His name: ‘If this fixed order departs From before Me,’ declares the LORD, ‘Then the offspring of Israel also will cease From being a nation before Me forever.’ (Jer 31:35-36).

For Jeremiah and those who heard his message, these promises were certain. This accounts for the multitude of 2TP writings which demonstrate the fervent hope in a future return, regathering and restoration to the land of Israel. For this prophecy to fail, the fixed order of the sun, moon and stars would have to fail. As long as they remain, the promise remains.

NEW TESTAMENT IMPLICATIONS

During his earthly ministry, Jesus spoke extensively of the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven is a major biblical theme in the Gospel of Matthew, in the writings of Paul and throughout the NT. As the NT texts are considered, the question arises regarding the fulfillment of the OT prophecies concerning Israel and the Kingdom. Israel must be identified in a way that is faithful to the OT and the words of the Prophets, and in line with NT revelation including the words of Jesus.

217. F. B. Huey, *NAC* 16:276, Logos.

The last words of Jesus are recorded in the book of Acts. His disciples came to him and asked:

“Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:6-8).

Jesus’ words to his disciples were not words of dissent. He did not say he would not establish his kingdom, only that it was not for them to know the times or epochs. This is Vlach’s view as well.²¹⁸ Jesus’ words define the scope of the mission, from Jerusalem to the remote parts of the earth. According to the history of Israel and the words of the prophets, these remote places were the places to which the nations were scattered.

Ephraim-Israel had been dispersed in the Assyrian exile to the Gentile nations.

Furthermore, James writes to “To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad” (Jas 1:1b).

After years in the dispersion, Ephraim-Israel lived in these Gentile lands intermarrying among them. While some have attempted a search for “the lost tribes” of Israel. Rather than attempt a search for these “lost tribes,” it is important to consider the commission in Acts 1:1-6. The disciples were sent to everyone everywhere. The message is thus for Israel and for every Gentile believer.

Ephraim-Israel is today among the Gentile nations of the world. Errors in theology occur when groups around the world claim exclusive status as Ephraim-Israel.

218. “The disciples also expected the restoration of Israel. That is why they asked, ‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?’ (Acts 1:6). The lack of correction from Jesus and the fact that they asked this question after forty days of kingdom instruction from the risen Christ (cf. Acts 1:3) strongly indicates that their perception concerning a restoration of Israel was correct. Certainly any claim that Matthew 21:43 teaches the permanent rejection of Israel must adequately deal with other passages of Scripture that strongly suggest the opposite.” Michael J. Vlach, “Has the Church Replaced Israel in God’s Plan? A Historical and Theological Survey of Replacement Theology.” *Conservative Theological Journal* Volume 4 (2000), No. 11, 19, Logos.

The Assyrian Empire exiled the people of the northern tribes to the nations and evidence of the ten tribes has been found in the nations of the world. No one group can claim to be “the ten lost tribes.” Others view the group of the Samaritans as “the” group identified as the former Ephraim-Israel. Again, this one group has established a genetic linkage to Ephraim-Israel, however, they are not the *only* surviving group to do so.

When considering the message of the prophets, and the אֶפְרַיִם texts in particular, the nations should be the standard to which scholars look. Although the field of genetics provides a significant tool in the study of these tribes, their identity in light of a future regathering, reuniting and restoration would not be lost to God who long prophesied their return (Deut 29-30). This future regathering, reuniting and restoration of Israel is neither an exclusive salvation for Israel, nor is the Church a replacement for Israel. It is a promised salvation for Israel *and* a promised salvation for the Gentile nations in accordance with the Abrahamic Covenant in which Abraham is identified as a father of a multitude of nations.

Any discussion of the regathering, reuniting and restoration of Israel in the Messianic Kingdom as spoken of by Ezekiel, Isaiah and Jeremiah is incomplete without mention of Rom 9-11. The connection between the Abrahamic Covenant, מְלֵאֵה-הַגּוֹיִם, (fullness of nations) and אֶפְרַיִם must be examined in light of NT evidence. A discussion of Rom 11 should be examined in conjunction with the אֶפְרַיִם texts in Ezek 37, Isa 11 and Jer 31. Furthermore, the relationship between the fullness of nations in Rom 11:25 should be addressed in relation to Gen 48-49 and the Deuteronomic texts.

One possible parallel to אֶפְרַיִם and מְלֵאֵה-הַגּוֹיִם may be found in Rom 11:25. In the Tyndale Hebrew translation of Rom 11:25 is the phrase מְלֵאֵה-הַגּוֹיִם, translated as “fullness

of the nations.” The standard English translation is “fullness of Gentiles.” The Greek text renders this as “πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν,” “fullness or full number of nations.”²¹⁹ The Hebrew and Greek translations both acknowledge the fullness of nations, which can be interpreted here as Gentiles or Gentile nations. The subject of the text of Romans 9-11 is the salvation of Israel and the Gentile inclusion through the salvific work of Jesus. If the rendering of רְגִלָּתְךָ is brought forward from Gen 48:19 in the context of Paul’s message concerning Gentile inclusion, the partial hardening would reference the hardening of Israel until the “fullness of nations” has come in. The Greek text of Rom 11:25 states “ἄχρι οὗ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ”²²⁰ or “until which time the fullness of the nations has come in.” It is then the fullness of the nations which comes in which will mean the salvation of all Israel. Rom 11:12-15 reveals that the transgression of Israel would lead to salvation for the nations (Gentiles) and that the fullness or fulfillment of the nations would bring *more* salvation as indicated in vv. 12-15.

Following this revelation of “more” salvation, v. 24 speaks of the grafting in of the Gentiles and therefore indicating the ingathering of the “fullness of the nations.” This may be indicative of a link to the Gentile nations, the places to which Ephraim-Israel was scattered. Paul states very clearly in v. 2 that God has not rejected his people, but that their hardening serves a purpose, namely the salvation of all Israel *and* the Gentiles. It through the ingathering of the “fullness of the nations” that all Israel would be saved. Thus reconciliation would come to Israel and the Gentiles of the world. This seems to demonstrate a cogent link not only between Israel and the Gentile nations, but the text of

219. W. Hall Harris III, *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear New Testament: SBL Edition* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010), Ro 11:25, Logos.

220. W. Hall Harris III, *The Lexham Greek-English Interlinear New Testament: SBL Edition* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2010), Ro 11:25, Logos.

Gen 48:19 and מְלֵא־הַגּוֹיִם. This does not diminish the Gentile salvation as Paul takes care to describe the Gentile inclusion apart from any ethnic link to Israel. Gentiles of every stripe are included in the salvation for all who believe (vv. 11-12, 23-24).

If the full number of Gentiles comes in (v. 25) and this means the salvation of all Israel, then how would the “fulfillment” of the Israelites in vv. 12-15 bring “more” salvation (indicated in vv. 12-15)? מְלֵא־הַגּוֹיִם and the אֲפֻרְיִים texts may provide the answer. The etymology of אֲפֻרְיִים and the exegetical framework may be the key to interpreting Romans 11 and related passages which speak to the salvation of Israel and Gentile inclusion. This may be the necessary context for the future salvation of the world which would follow the “fullness of the Gentiles” and the salvation of all Israel. If this passage is understood as fullness of the nations, the salvation of all Israel in v. 25 becomes clear. Further study on the subject of אֲפֻרְיִים, the connections to מְלֵא־הַגּוֹיִם (Gen 48:19), the Abrahamic Covenant and the Messianic Kingdom is needed and these texts require the examination of prophetic fulfillment in light of the NT.

The first Century writing of the *Epistle of Barnabas* written, ca. 70-132 B.C.E., supports the concept of Gentile inclusion noting specifically the inclusion of the nations that believe in God in uncircumcision. The Epistle speaks of these things in the context of Jacob’s blessing to Ephraim:

“And in another prophecy Jacob speaketh more plainly to Joseph his son, saying; Behold, the Lord hath not bereft me of thy face; bring me thy sons, that I may bless them. And he brought Ephraim and Manasseh, desiring that Manasseh should be blessed, because he was the elder; for Joseph led him to the right hand of his father Jacob. But Jacob saw in the spirit a type of the people that should come afterwards. And what saith He? And Jacob crossed his hands, and placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim, the second and younger, and blessed him. And Joseph said unto Jacob, Transfer thy right hand to the head of Manasseh, for he is my first-born son. And Jacob said to Joseph, I know it, my son, I know it; but the greater shall serve the less. Yet this one also shall be blessed. Mark in

whose cases He ordained that this people should be first and heir of the covenant. If then besides this He also recorded it through Abraham, we attain the completion of our knowledge. What then saith he to Abraham when he alone believed, and was ascribed for righteousness? Behold I have made thee, Abraham, a father of nations that believe in God in uncircumcision.”²²¹

This passage in the *Epistle of Barnabas* demonstrates the belief in the ascendancy of אֲבֹרְתֵי, the adoption, and Abraham as a father of nations. The Epistle looks to the Abrahamic Covenant for the “completion of...knowledge,” declaring Abraham to be “a father of nations” for the *uncircumcised*. The passage demonstrates the belief in the salvation and covenant promises given to the adopted sons of Jacob (אֲבֹרְתֵי and Manasseh) and also to the *uncircumcised Gentiles* who believe in God. For these Gentiles, their father is Abraham, the father of nations (Gen 12, 15, 17, 22, 28, 35). This adoption of אֲבֹרְתֵי and Manasseh contributes further to the interpretation of Romans 11 and the NT understanding of adoption.

While the sons of Jacob are the subject of the covenant promises and blessings, the OT consistently looks to the future salvation of Israel as well as the Gentile nations.

Vlach explains:

“In the clearest language possible, the Old and New Testaments explicitly teach a future restoration of national Israel. Not only was this the message of the Old Testament prophets (cf. Joel 3:1ff., Amos 9:11–15, Zephaniah 3:20, Zechariah 12:10) but this was what Paul clearly taught in Romans 11:26 when he wrote that “all Israel will be saved.”²²²

The salvation of the nations is variously understood throughout the OT and NT as Gentile inclusion *with* Israel.

221. Joseph Barber Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, *The Apostolic Fathers* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1891), 282, Logos.

222. Michael J. Vlach, “Has the Church Replaced Israel in God’s Plan? A Historical and Theological Survey of Replacement Theology,” *Conservative Theological Journal Volume 4* 4, no. 11 (2000): 19, Logos.

What remains if these prophecies are yet future? In an article discussing the “new exodus” versus “no exodus,” Gary Yates asserts that the reason these prophecies remain unfulfilled is due to the lack of repentance among Israel. According to Yates, “YHVH has promised restoration to the exilic community, but promised blessing can be forfeited by disobedience to YHVH...The message of the Masoretic Text of Jeremiah is that the exile is continuing and ‘unended’ as long as the exiles persist in their disobedience.”²²³ For Yates, the promise of the second exodus is firmly established. “YHVH will restore his people from exile with a second exodus even greater than the first (Jer. 30-33)...” These events will culminate in the future when the people of Israel attain the position of which Deut 30 foretells. In repentance, they will return.

CONCLUSION

It must be stated that at present in the modern nation of Israel, there are indeed a representation of all twelve tribes among the Jewish nation to this day. However, Jews and Christians alike continue to discuss this eschatological perspective of exile and return in terms of “Israel.” It is certain that neither all of the Assyrian exiles nor the Babylonian exiles have yet to *fully* return from captivity and therefore are still dispersed among the nations. This perspective relies upon the biblical texts which point to the eschatological expectations of the Prophets who anticipated a future return to the land of Israel in the last days when God’s Kingdom would be established.

The message of Ezekiel, Isaiah and Jeremiah in the מִן־אֶפְרַיִם texts examined in this study reveal the eschatological belief in the regathering, reuniting and restoration of Israel in a future Messianic Kingdom. The origins of these beliefs did not rest with the

223. Yates, Gary E. “Isaiah’s Promise of the Restoration of Zion and Its Canonical Development,” Liberty University: *Faculty Publications and Presentations*, Paper 22, Accessed May 28, 2018.

Prophets, but with the expectations clearly communicated in the Deuteronomic prophecies of Deut 29-30. The fervent hope of Israel is certainly for the future establishment of this kingdom and the coming of the Messiah. The fervent hope for Christians is for the future return of Jesus and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. As the discussion of these prophetic passages continues, further study of the אֲפֻרָיִם texts may lend additional insight into the prophetic hopes and future of the people of Israel and the Gentile peoples of the world. אֲפֻרָיִם may indeed represent the fullness of the nations that will represent the salvation of all Israel and be the event that brings salvation not only to Israel, but to the world in the eschatological Kingdom of God.

Appendix

Table 1.1 Exegetical Framework: The Categories of אפרים, Pillars, and אפרים Texts

אפרים Categories	Scripture	Summary	Categorical Terms and References/ Pillar terms Related Terms & Texts
Category 1: Person	Gen 41:52	Birth of Ephraim	First occurrence
	Gen 46:20	Son of Joseph	Genealogy of Jacob; Egypt
	Gen 48:1	Brought to Jacob at his death	
	Gen 48:5	Adoption of Ephraim and Manasseh	Firstborn; adoption of Ephraim by Jacob
	Gen 48:13-14, 17, 20	Blessing Ephraim	Adoption and blessing Preeminence of Joseph over Reuben and Simeon
	Gen 50:23	Ephraim's sons	Descendants of Ephraim
	Deut 33:17	“As the firstborn of his ox, majesty is his, And his horns are the horns of the wild ox; With them he will bpush the peoples, All at once, to the ends of the earth. And those are the ten thousands of Ephraim, And those are the thousands of Manasseh.”	The Blessing of Moses (Deut 33). Context: 33:1 “Now this is the blessing with which Moses athe man of God blessed the sons of Israel before his death...Of Joseph he said, ‘Blessed of the LORD be his land, With the choice things of heaven, with the dew, And from the deep lying beneath, And with the choice yield of the sun, And with the choice produce of the months. ‘And with the lbest things of the ancient mountains, And with the choice things of the everlasting hills, And with the choice things of the earth and its fullness, And the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush. Let it come to the head of Joseph, And to the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers.’”
	Jer 31:9, 18, 20	‘With weeping they will come...For I am a father to Israel, And Ephraim is My firstborn ...I have surely heard Ephraim grieving...Bring me back that I may be restored , For You are the LORD my God...Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a delightful child? Indeed, as often as I have spoken against him, I certainly still remember him...’	Context: Jer 31:10 Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, And declare in the coastlands afar off, And say, “He who scattered Israel will gather him And keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.” Jer 31:36 ‘If this fixed order departs From before Me,’ declares the LORD, ‘Then the offspring of Israel also will cease From being a nation before Me forever.’ +Firstborn and Kingdom

Category 1 Pillar Terms:			Category 1 Pillar terms/themes/concepts: fruitful, doubly fruitful, exalted, numerous, firstborn, adoption, preeminence of Ephraim, Abrahamic Covenant, מְלֵאֵי-הַגּוֹיִם (melo hagoyim) as multitude of nations or fullness of nations, multiply, increase, לִקְהַל עַמִּים (liqhal amim) as company of peoples, and גּוֹי or גּוֹיִם goyim as nations or peoples, Promised Land.
Category 2: Tribe	Num 1:10, 32- 33	Head of tribe, census Genealogy and numbered men in vv. 32-33	
	Num 2:18, 24	Tribal encampment	Position and numbered men
	Num 7:48	Leader of Ephraim	7th day offering at dedication of tabernacle
	Num 10:22	Standard of Ephraim	Tribes set out; journey from Sinai
	Num 13:8	Spy from Ephraim	One of the spies from the 12 tribes sent to Canaan
	Num 26:28, 35- 36	Census of fighting men after the plague; families of Ephraim	Families of the tribe of Ephraim
	Num 34:24	A leader in Ephraim; tribal allotment of land designated by lot to a leader of each tribe	*Tribal and Land Tribal representative for land inheritance
	Deut 33:17	Moses blesses the tribe of Ephraim	The Blessing of Moses: Moses blesses the 12 tribes including Ephraim; compare with the blessing of Jacob in Genesis 48-49 fits 2 categories: Person and Tribe
	Josh 14:4	Tribal land inheritance; explains 2 tribes of Joseph and why Levi receives no land inheritance	*Tribal and Land Tribal and land inheritance; fits 2 categories
	Josh 16:4- 5, 8-10	Tribal land inheritance for the sons of Joseph	*Tribal and Land
	Josh 17:8- 10, 15, 17	Tribal land inheritance for the sons of Joseph	*Tribal and Land
	Josh 19:50	Tribal land inheritance for the sons of Joseph	*Tribal and Land
	Josh 20:7	City of refuge in Ephraim	Land, city, Shechem; *tribal and land

	Josh 21:5, 20-21	Levite cities from the families of Ephraim	Land, city, Shechem; *tribal and land
	Judg 1:29	Ephraim did not drive out Canaanites	*tribal and land
	Judg 5:14	From Ephraim; tribe	Song of Deborah and Barak
	Judg 7:24	Gideon gathers men from Ephraim	Against Midian
	Judg 8:1-2	Men of Ephraim; grapes of Ephraim	*Tribal and Geographic
	Judg 10:9	House of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	Judg 12:1, 4-6, 15	Conflict between Jephthah and the Ephraimites	*Tribal and Regional
	Judg 17:1,8	Man from the hill country of Ephraim, v. 8 hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	Judg 19:18	Hill country of Ephraim; I am from there	*Tribal and Regional
	1 Sam 1:1	Hill country of Ephraim; Ephraimite	*Tribal and Regional
	2 Sam 2:9	Hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	2 Sam 20:21	Man from the hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	1 Kgs 4:8	Man in the hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	1 Kgs 11:26	Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite	
	1 Chron 6:66-67	Tribe of Ephraim; hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	1 Chron 7:20, 22	Descendants of Ephraim	
	1 Chron 9:3	Some from Ephraim lived in Jerusalem	
	1 Chron 12:30	Sons of Ephraim	
	1 Chron 27:10, 14, 20	Of the sons of Ephraim	
	2 Chron 15:9	All from Ephraim and other tribes gathered in Jerusalem	
	2 Chron 19:4	People from the hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional

	2 Chron 28:7, 12	Mighty man of Ephraim, sons of Ephraim	
	2 Chron 30:1	Letters to Ephraim	
	2 Chron 30:18	People from Ephraim	
	2 Chron 34:9	From Ephraim and inhabitants	*Tribal and Regional
	Ps 60:7	Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine; <i>Ephraim also is the helmet of My head; Judah is My scepter.</i> (emphasis added)	Ephraim described as helmet/ head Judah described as scepter
	Ps 78:9, 67	Sons and tribe of Ephraim	
	Ps 80:2	Before Ephraim	
	Ps 108:8	Gilead is Mine, Manasseh is Mine; <i>Ephraim also is the helmet of My head; Judah is My scepter.</i> (emphasis added)	Ephraim described as helmet/ head Judah described as scepter
	Isa 9:21	Manasseh devours Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh, And together they are against Judah.	Tribes against each other
Category 2 Pillar Terms:			Category 2 Pillar terms/themes/concepts: Psalm 60:7; 108:8, Helmet, head, protection, strength, scepter, ruling staff, myriads of Ephraim, push, ends of the earth and the Blessing of Moses in Deut 33:17
Category 3: Land/ Regional/ Geographic	Num 34:24	A leader in Ephraim; tribal allotment of land designated by lot to a leader of each tribe	*Tribal and Land Tribal representative for land inheritance
	Deut 34:2	Land of Ephraim; land of Israel shown to Moses by God opposite from Jericho before he dies	
	Josh 14:4	Tribal land inheritance; explains 2 tribes of Joseph and why Levi receives no land inheritance	*Tribal and Land
	Josh 16:4-5, 8-10	Tribal land inheritance for the sons of Joseph	*Tribal and Land

	Josh 17:8-10, 15, 17	Tribal land inheritance for the sons of Joseph	*Tribal and Land
	Josh 19:50	Tribal land inheritance for the sons of Joseph	*Tribal and Land
	Josh 20:7	City of refuge in Ephraim	Land, city, Shechem ; *Tribal and Land
	Josh 21:5, 20-21	Levite cities from the families of Ephraim	Land, city, Shechem ; *Tribal and Land
	Josh 24:30, 33	Hill country of Ephraim	Joseph buried
	Judg 1:29	Ephraim did not drive out Canaanites	*Tribal and Land
	Judg 2:9	Hill country of Ephraim	Joshua buried
	Judg 3:27	Hill country of Ephraim	Ehud kills Moabite king
	Judg 4:5	Hill country of Ephraim	Deborah Judges in Ephraim
	Judg 7:24	Hill country of Ephraim	Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim
	Judg 8:1-2	Men of Ephraim; grapes of Ephraim	*Tribal and Geographic
	Judg 10:1	Hill country of Ephraim	Tola lived in Ephraim
	Judg 10:9	House of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	Judg 12:1, 4-6, 15	Conflict between Jephthah and the Ephraimites	*Tribal and Regional
	Judg 17:1, 8	Man from the hill country of Ephraim, v. 8 regional hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	Judg 18:2, 13	Hill country of Ephraim	
	Judg 19:1, 16	Hill country of Ephraim	
	Judg 19:18	Hill country of Ephraim; I am from there	*Tribal and Regional
	1 Sam 1:1	Hill country of Ephraim; Ephraimite	*Tribal and Regional
	1 Sam 9:4	Hill country of Ephraim	
	1 Sam 14:22	Hill country of Ephraim	

	2 Sam 2:9	Hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	2 Sam 13:23	Near Ephraim	
	2 Sam 18:6	Forest of Ephraim	
	2 Sam 20:21	Man from the hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	1 Kgs 4:8	Man in the hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	1 Kgs 12:25	Built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim	
	2 Kgs 5:22	Hill country of Ephraim	
	2 Kgs 14:13	Gate of Ephraim, Jerusalem	Gate of Ephraim
	1 Chron 6:66-67	Tribe of Ephraim; hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	2 Chron 13:4	Hill country of Ephraim	
	2 Chron 15:8	Hill country of Ephraim	
	2 Chron 17:2	Cities of Ephraim	
	2 Chron 19:4	People from the hill country of Ephraim	*Tribal and Regional
	2 Chron 25:23	Gate of Ephraim; Jerusalem	Gate of Ephraim
	2 Chron 30:10	Cities of Ephraim	
	2 Chron 31:1	In Ephraim	
	2 Chron 34:6	Cities of Ephraim	
	2 Chron 34:9	From Ephraim and inhabitants	*Tribal and Regional
	Neh 8:16; 12:39	Gate of Ephraim vv. 8:16, 12:39	Gate of Ephraim is a reference to Jerusalem
	Isa 7:2	Camped in Ephraim	See 7:1 Aram is Syria; Syro-Ephraimite War
	Jer 4:15	For a voice declares from Dan, And proclaims wickedness from Mount Ephraim.	>Kingdom and Geographic

	Jer 31:6	“For there will be a day when watchmen On the hills of Ephraim call out, ‘Arise, and let us go up to Zion, To the LORD our God.’”	>Kingdom and Geographic
	Ezek 48:5-6	Beside the border of Manasseh, from the east side to the west side, Ephraim, one portion. Beside the border of Ephraim, from the east side to the west side, Reuben, one portion.	
	Obad 1:19	“Then those of the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau, And those of the Shephelah the Philistine plain; Also, possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria, And Benjamin will possess Gilead.”	<p>>Kingdom and Geographic (primarily Geographic)</p> <p>Note house of Joseph in v. 18 “Then the house of Jacob will be a fire And the house of Joseph a flame;</p> <p>v. 19 describes territory of Ephraim</p> <p>Obad vv. 19–20: identifies territories that will be restored. People in the Negev will inherit Edom.</p> <p>Obad vv. 19–20 describes return to tribal territories; tribal lands extended</p> <p>See: Num 24:18, Isa 11:14, and Amos 9:11–12.</p>
	John 11:54	Therefore Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only NT reference to Ephraim; as territory/ city (Geographic)
Category 3 Pillar Terms:			Category 3 Pillar terms/themes/concepts: Shechem, the hill country of Ephraim, the gate of Ephraim, Jerusalem, and the house of Joseph
Category 4: National Identity/ Ephraim-Israel/ 10 Northern Tribes/ Northern Kingdom	2 Chron 25:7, 10	“But a man of God came to him saying, ‘O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the LORD is not with Israel nor with any of the sons of Ephraim... Then Amaziah dismissed them, the troops which came to him from Ephraim, to go home...”	2 Chr 25:7–8 reference here is to Israel as the Northern Kingdom; Ephraim is used here as Ephraim-Israel national identity
	Isa 7:5, 8-9, 17	“The LORD will bring on you, on your people, and on your father's house such days as have never come since the day that Ephraim	See Isa 7:1–2 context

		separated from Judah, the king of Assyria.”	
	Isa 9:9	“And all the people know it, That is, Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, Asserting in pride and in arrogance of heart:”	Context: “But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them.” Isa 9:1-2
	Isa 11:13	Then the jealousy of Ephraim will depart, And those who harass Judah will be cut off; Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, And Judah will not harass Ephraim.	Context: “Then in that day The nations will resort to the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal for the peoples... Then it will happen on that day that the Lord Will again recover the second time with His hand The remnant of His people , who will remain, From Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, And from the islands of the sea... And will gather the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth... And the LORD will utterly destroy The tongue of the Sea of Egypt... And there will be a highway from Assyria For the remnant... Just as there was for Israel In the day that they came up out of the land of Egypt.” Isa 11:10-12, 15-16 (emphasis added) See: Jer 16:14-15 “...when it will no longer be said, ‘As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but, ‘As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of the north...’” Jer 16:14-15 See also Ps 106:47; Isa 11:11; 14:1; Jer 3:18; 23:8; 24:6
	Isa 17:3	The fortified city will disappear from Ephraim, And sovereignty from Damascus And the remnant of Aram	Context: Isa 17:1–3; Ephraim, represented Israel, Damascus represented Aram; both will be defeated (v. 3). Assyria defeated Aram ca. 732 and Israel ca. 722. LXX says “abandoned forever”

	Isa 28:1, 3	Woe to the proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim, And to the fading flower of its glorious beauty, Which is at the head of the fertile valley Of those who are overcome with wine!...The proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim is trodden under foot.	Warning to Northern and Southern Kingdoms
	Jer 4:15	For a voice declares from Dan, And proclaims wickedness from Mount Ephraim.	Warning comes from the northern part of Israel, Dan. >Kingdom and Geographic
	Jer 7:15	I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brothers, all the offspring of Ephraim.	God will do to Judah what he did to Ephraim-Israel, the Northern Kingdom
	Jer 31:6	“For there will be a day when watchmen On the hills of Ephraim call out, ‘Arise, and let us go up to Zion, To the LORD our God.’”	>Kingdom and Geographic
	Jer 31:9, 18, 20	“With weeping they will come... For I am a father to Israel, And Ephraim is My firstborn ...I have surely heard Ephraim grieving, ‘You have chastised me, and I was chastised, Like an untrained calf; Bring me back that I may be restored...Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a delightful child? Indeed, as often as I have spoken against him, I certainly still remember him...”	Context: Jer 31:10 “Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, And declare in the coastlands afar off, And say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him And keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.’” Jer 31:36 “‘If this fixed order departs From before Me,’ declares the LORD, ‘Then the offspring of Israel also will cease From being a nation before Me forever.’” +Firstborn and Kingdom
	Jer 50:19	And I will bring Israel back to his pasture and he will graze on Carmel and Bashan, and his desire will be satisfied in the hill country of Ephraim and Gilead.	“‘Israel is a scattered flock, the lions have driven them away. The first one who devoured him was the king of Assyria, and this last one who has broken his bones is Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. ¹⁸ Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I am going to punish the king of Babylon and his land, just as I punished the king of Assyria... ²⁰ In those days and at that time,’ declares the LORD, ‘search will be made for the iniquity of Israel, but there will be none; and for the sins of Judah, but they will not be found; for I

			will pardon those whom I leave as a remnant.” Jer 50:17-18, 20
Ezek 37:16, 19	<p>““ And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, “For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions”; then take another stick and write on it, “For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions....say to them, “Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.’”</p>	<p>Context: Ezek 37:21-22</p> <p>“²¹ Say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; ²² and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations and no longer be divided into two kingdoms.”’</p> <p>First stick is Judah and the sons of Israel from the Southern Kingdom Second stick is Joseph, the stick of Ephraim; the tribes of the Northern Kingdom</p>	
Hos 4:17	Ephraim is joined to idols; Let him alone.	<p>“Ephraim” is used to refer to the Northern Kingdom of Israel in Hosea. See: Hos 1:10, 2:23, לֹא-אֲמִי “Lo-ammi” not my people</p> <p>Compare: Rom 9:24-26 (Gentile inclusion); v.26 quotes from Hos 1:10 when it says, “And IT SHALL BE THAT IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, ‘YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,’ THERE THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF the LIVING GOD.” Rom 9:26</p>	
Hos 5:3, 5, 9, 11-14	Moreover, the pride of Israel testifies against him, And Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity; Judah also has stumbled with them. (v. 5)	<p>Context: Hos 5:3,15</p> <p>“I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from Me; For now, O Ephraim, you have played the harlot, Israel has defiled itself...I will go away and return to My place Until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.”</p>	

	Hos 6:4, 10	“What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? For your loyalty is like a morning cloud And like the dew which goes away early...In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing; Ephraim's harlotry is there, Israel has defiled itself.”	
	Hos 7:1, 8, 11	“When I would heal Israel, The iniquity of Ephraim is uncovered, And the evil deeds of Samaria, For they deal falsely; The thief enters in, Bandits raid outside...Ephraim mixes himself with the nations; Ephraim has become a cake not turned...So Ephraim has become like a silly dove, without sense; They call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.”	Ephraim mingles/ mixes with the nations See Ps 106:35 But they mingled with the nations And learned their practices... See also Ezra 9:1-10:44; mixed marriages
	Hos 8:9, 11	“For they have gone up to Assyria, Like a wild donkey all alone; Ephraim has hired lovers...Since Ephraim has multiplied altars for sin, They have become altars of sinning for him.”	Context: “Israel is swallowed up; They are now among the nations Like a vessel in which no one delights.” (v.8)
	Hos 9: 3, 8, 11, 13, 16	“They will not remain in the LORD'S land, But Ephraim will return to Egypt, And in Assyria they will eat unclean food.” (v.3)	
	Hos 10:6, 11	“The thing itself will be carried to Assyria As tribute to King Jareb; Ephraim will be seized with shame And Israel will be ashamed of its own counsel...Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh, But I will come over her fair neck with a yoke; I will harness Ephraim, Judah will plow, Jacob will harrow for himself.”	

Hos 11:3, 8-9, 12	<p>“Yet it is I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them in My arms; But they did not know that I healed them...How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I surrender you, O Israel?...My heart is turned over within Me, All My compassions are kindled. I will not execute My fierce anger; I will not destroy Ephraim again. For I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst, And I will not come in wrath...Ephraim surrounds Me with lies And the house of Israel with deceit; Judah is also unruly against God, Even against the Holy One who is faithful.”</p>	<p>Hos 11:8 How can I give you up, O Ephraim?</p> <p>See Jer 31:20 and Isa 49:15 Compassion vs. rejection</p> <p>Hos 11:10 ...will come trembling from the sea</p> <p>Hos 11:10 demonstrates returning remnant (see Isa 11:11–16; 35:10; 60:4; Jer 16:15).</p>
Hos 12:1, 8, 14	<p>“Ephraim feeds on wind And pursues the east wind continually; He multiplies lies and violence. Moreover, he makes a covenant with Assyria, And oil is carried to Egypt...And Ephraim said, ‘Surely I have become rich, I have found wealth for myself; In all my labors they will find in me No iniquity, which would be sin...’Ephraim has provoked to bitter anger; So his Lord will leave his bloodguilt on him And bring back his reproach to him.”</p>	<p>Context: “Therefore, return to your God, Observe kindness and justice, And wait for your God continually...Now Jacob fled to the land of Aram, And Israel worked for a wife, And for a wife he kept sheep. But by a prophet the LORD brought Israel from Egypt, And by a prophet he was kept.” Hos 12:6, 12-13</p>
Hos 13:1, 12	<p>“When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling. He exalted himself in Israel, But through Baal he did wrong and died...The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up; His sin is stored up.”</p>	<p>Context: “Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from death? O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion will be hidden from My sight.” Hos 13:14</p>
Hos 14:8	<p>“O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am like a luxuriant cypress; From Me comes your fruit.”</p>	<p>Context: “Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, For you have stumbled because of your iniquity. Take words with you and return to the LORD. Say to Him, ‘Take away all iniquity And receive us graciously, That we may present the fruit of our lips. ‘Assyria will not save us, We will not ride on horses; Nor will we say again, “Our god,” To the work of our hands; For in You the orphan finds mercy.’ I will heal their apostasy, I will love them freely, For My anger has turned away from them.” Hos 14:1-4</p>

	Obad 1:19	<p>“Then those of the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau, And those of the Shephelah the Philistine plain; Also, possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria, And Benjamin will possess Gilead.”</p>	<p>>Kingdom and Geographic (primarily Geographic)</p> <p>Note house of Joseph in v.18 “Then the house of Jacob will be a fire And the house of Joseph a flame...” “House of Joseph” in v. 18 is a national term of identification as the Northern Kingdom of Israel and thus synonymous with Ephraim-Israel.</p> <p>v. 19 describes territory of Ephraim</p> <p>Obadiah vv. 19–20: identifies territories that will be restored. People in the Negev will inherit Edom.</p> <p>Obad vv. 19–20 describes return to tribal territories; tribal lands extended</p> <p>See: Num 24:18, Isa 11:14, and Amos 9:11–12.</p>
	Zech 9:10, 13	<p>“I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth...For I will bend Judah as My bow, I will fill the bow with Ephraim. And I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece; And I will make you like a warrior's sword.”</p>	<p>In v. 13 the bow and arrow comparison with Judah (bow) and Ephraim (arrows); speaks to reuniting these divided Kingdoms; a reuniting of the Northern Kingdom of Israel with the Southern Kingdom of Judah</p>

	Zech 10:7	“Ephraim will be like a mighty man, And their heart will be glad as if from wine; Indeed, their children will see it and be glad, Their heart will rejoice in the LORD.”	Context: ““I will strengthen the house of Judah, And I will save the house of Joseph , And I will bring them back...I will whistle for them to gather them together, For I have redeemed them; And they will be as numerous as they were before. ‘When I scatter them among the peoples, They will remember Me in far countries, And they with their children will live and come back. ‘I will bring them back from the land of Egypt And gather them from Assyria; And I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon Until no room can be found for them. ‘And they will pass through the sea of distress And He will strike the waves in the sea, So that all the depths of the Nile will dry up; And the pride of Assyria will be brought down And the scepter of Egypt will depart’” (Zech 10:6, 8-11, emphasis added).
Category 4 Pillar Terms:			Category 4 Pillar terms/themes/concepts: Israel, Israelite, Judah, Joseph, Samaria, Ephraim-Israel, Northern Kingdom of Israel, northern tribes, Assyrian exile, exiles of the Assyrian Conquest or Assyrian exiles

*Tribal and Land, Regional, or Geographic

+Firstborn and Kingdom

•Only NT reference to Ephraim

>Kingdom and Land, Regional or Geographic

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