

FAQ VOL II

A WORK IN PROGRESS

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MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS

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Frequently Asked Questions

VOLUME II

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Frequently Asked Questions, Volume II is a multi-year work in progress. Please note how the text may be corrected, updated, or amended, before final publication. Page numbers are also likely to be altered.

Abbreviations and Special Terms

The following is a list of abbreviations for reference works and special terms which are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as *TWOT* for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

ABD: *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AMG: *Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament*
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament
Ara: Aramaic
ASV: American Standard Version (1901)
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)
b. Babylonian Talmud (*Talmud Bavli*)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.
BDAG: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)
BDB: *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.
CGEDNT: *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Barclay M. Newman)
CGL: *Cambridge Greek Lexicon* (2021)
CHALOT: *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holladay)
CJB: Complete Jewish Bible (1998)
CJSB: Complete Jewish Study Bible (2016)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls
EDB: *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*
EJ: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*
ESV: English Standard Version (2001)
Ger: German
GNT: Greek New Testament
Grk: Greek
HALOT: *Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler and Baumgartner)
HCSB: Holman Christian Standard Bible (2004)
Heb: Hebrew
HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible
IDB: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
IDBSup: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement*
ISBE: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*
IVPBBC: *IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)*
Jastrow: *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (Marcus Jastrow)
JBK: New Jerusalem Bible-Koren (2000)
JETS: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
KJV: King James Version
Lattimore: *The New Testament* by Richmond Lattimore (1996)
LITV: *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* by Jay P. Green (1986)
LES: *Lexham English Septuagint* (2019)
LS: *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott)
LSJM: *Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie)
LXE: *Septuagint with Apocrypha* by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
LXX: Septuagint
m. Mishnah
MT: Masoretic Text
NASB: New American Standard Bible (1977)
NASU: New American Standard Update (1995)
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*
NEB: New English Bible (1970)
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*
NETS: New English Translation of the Septuagint (2007)
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*
NIV: New International Version (1984)
NJB: New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic (1985)
NJPS: Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures (1999)
NKJV: New King James Version (1982)
NRSV: New Revised Standard Version (1989)
NLT: New Living Translation (1996)
NT: New Testament

OT: Old Testament

REB: Revised English Bible (1989)

RSV: Revised Standard Version (1952)

t. Tosefta

Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament

Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*

TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*

TLV: Messianic Jewish Family Bible—Tree of Life

Version (2014)

TNIV: Today's New International Version (2005)

TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*

UBSHNT: United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New
Testament revised edition

v(s). verse(s)

Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and
New Testament Words*

Vul: Latin Vulgate

YLT: Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898)

WMB: World Messianic Bible (2020)

Two-House, Status of Movement

How would you describe the current status of the Two-House sub-movement? What is your relationship as a ministry toward it?

The following material has been adapted from J.K. McKee, *Are Non-Jewish Believers Really a Part of Israel?* (McKinney, TX: Messianic Apologetics, 2024), pp 208-211.

As the original 2013 analysis of our ministry publication *Are Non-Jewish Believers Really a Part of Israel?* was closing, I summarized the three major sectors, at the time, which one was likely to encounter of “the broad Messianic movement.” What did I say about the Two-House sub-movement, and was any progress actually made—away from some of the extremes which were too frequently encountered a short decade ago?¹

The **Two-House sub-movement**, while rightly acknowledging that there are unfulfilled prophecies involving the descendants of the exiled Northern Kingdom of Israel/Ephraim, is going to have to stop promoting the unsupportable idea that just about every non-Jew in the Messianic movement, must be one of those descendants, and instead look to pockets of people groups which sit within the sphere of influence of the old Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Empires.

While some fierce debates raged in the late 1990s and into the late 2000s, over the **Two-House** issue of Judah and Ephraim—it widely faded into the background throughout the 2010s. Today in the mid-2020s, one is actually not too likely to hear about a non-Jewish person enter into a Messianic Jewish congregation, and forcibly claim that he or she is some sort of “Ephraimite,” a long-lost member of the exiled Northern Kingdom of Israel/Ephraim. In the early 2010s, in no small part due to how a major proponent of Two-House openly began to promote polygamy as a valid lifestyle for men, many Two-House supporters began to move away from Ephraimite and Lost Tribes identity issues—and instead shifted toward what they considered a much better approach: Hebrew Roots.² Of course, Hebrew Roots in the mid-2020s means something much different than just examination of the Hebrew Scriptures or study of the Hebrew language. Many who once used the terminology Hebrew or Hebraic Roots

¹ If necessary, do consult the previous Messianic Apologetics FAQ, “Two-House Teaching.”

² This shift was broadly recognized, to various degrees, in IAMCS Steering Committee. (2014). *One Law, Two Sticks: A Critical Look at the Hebrew Roots Movement, A position paper of the International Alliance of Messianic Congregations and Synagogues (IAMCS)*. Available online via <<http://iamcs.org>>.

Two-House, Status of Movement

with those things in mind, have had to use alternative terminology, such as “faith heritage in the Scriptures of Israel.”

While many in Messianic Judaism continue to remain negatively disposed, when legitimate questions about the Divided Kingdom era of Ancient Israel are asked, and about seemingly unfulfilled prophecies such as Ezekiel 37:15-28—some worthwhile progress has actually been made in Messianic Judaism on the issue of the Lost Tribes. Jonathan Bernis, of Jewish Voice Ministries, has been a significant advocate of helping disenfranchised groups in Africa and South Asia, which have widely been considered legitimate descendants of the exiled Northern Kingdom by authorities in Israel. The *Jewish Voice Study Bible* (2022) notably includes an appendix on “The ‘Lost Tribes of Israel,’” including a map which traces various dispersions one would indeed consider to be within the sphere of influence of the old Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Empires.³

Because of the transition in the 2010s of many Two-House advocates, into the more generic “Hebrew Roots,” there has been very little written or produced from a Two-House specific perspective since. This is not surprising, as throughout the 1990s and 200s, Two-House advocates were seen to seldom, if ever, review the sordid and rebellious history of the Northern Kingdom of Israel/Ephraim, as particularly encountered in the Books of Kings and Chronicles. Some of the few things one can find written on the Two-House teaching, lamentably, have come from a point of view tainted by a support for polygamy.⁴ Interestingly, though, there has been some academic writing trying to probe a number of the themes, which can involve the Northern Kingdom of Israel/Ephraim, and the salvation of the nations/Gentiles in the First Century C.E.⁵

To be sure, some of the main prophecies involving the Southern Kingdom of Judah and Northern Kingdom of Israel/Ephraim (i.e., Isaiah 11:12-16; Jeremiah 31:6-10; Ezekiel 37:15-28; Zechariah 10:6-10), will be fulfilled in future history by God’s sovereign plan. That they will not be fulfilled, along the lines of how now, a disappearing Two-House sub-movement expected, is absolutely certain.

³ “The ‘Lost Tribes of Israel,’” in Kent Dobson with Jonathan Bernis, *Jewish Voice International Ministries NIV First Century Study Bible*, 2011 NIV (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022), pp 1855-1856.

⁴ Peter G. Rambo, *Ten Parts In The King: The Prophesied Reconciliation of God’s Two Witnesses* (Kindle Direct Publishing, 2018); *Authority, Headship and Family Structure (According to Moses)* (Kindle Direct Publishing, 2020).

⁵ Jason A. Staples, *Paul and the Resurrection of Israel: Jews, Former Gentiles, Israelites* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024).