



The Restoration of Israel

IN discussing the return of the people of Israel to the land of promise after the seventy years' desolation and captivity in Babylon, C. T. Russell states on page 251 of volume III "Studies in the Scriptures" as follows:—

“...the vast majority of the ten tribes, as well as of the two tribes, did not avail themselves of the opportunity to return to the land of promise, preferring Babylon and other lands, many among them having fallen into idolatry and lost their respect for God's promises...the returning little band of less than fifty thousand were all the Israelites then remaining, of all the tribes, who by the act of returning to the land of promise showed that they still held to the faith of Abraham. It was to the descendants of these fittest ones, sifted out of all the tribes of Israel—though principally of the two tribes [Judah and Benjamin], and all called Jews after the royal and predominating tribe [Judah]—that our Lord presented himself and the Kingdom at the first advent, as representing the holy nation, Israel entire.”

Now, if the above is held to represent the correct teaching of the Bible, how are we to understand the following Scriptures? We shall state our difficulties in the form of questions, to which we would like Scriptural answers:—

QUESTION 1. In 1 Kings 11:28-40 is the account of how the Lord, through his prophet Ahijah, foretold to Jeroboam that the kingdom would be rent out of the hand of Solomon. That ten tribes would be given to him, Jeroboam, and two tribes to the son of Solomon, Rehoboam.

When the division took place after the death of Solomon, Rehoboam wanted to prevent it by fighting against Jeroboam. But the Lord forbid it, saying; “for this thing is from me.”—1 Kings 12:16-24.

In view of the above, is it not Scriptural, and even reasonable, to maintain that this division was necessary, and so ordered of the Lord for the fulfilment of some Divine purpose?

QUESTION 2. It is sometimes argued that the Lord dealt hardly with "Israel," the ten tribes, because of their wickedness—See 1 Kings 12:26-31; 13:33, 34. But on the other hand it is said of "Judah," the two tribes, that it "did evil in the sight of the Lord... above all that their fathers had done."—1 Kings 14:22.

What proof therefore have we that "Judah" was less sinful than "Israel"?

QUESTION 3. In the above quotation from volume III of "Studies" it is stated that "Israel," the ten tribes, had an "opportunity to return to the land of promise" after the captivity. But what proof is there, either Scriptural or historical, that "Israel" had such opportunity?

Would it not, rather, be correct to maintain that in so far as the Divine Plan is concerned, the mission of the ten tribes or "Israel" was of an entirely different nature to that of "Judah"?

QUESTION 4. The warning of the "seven times" of punishment (in Leviticus 26) was spoken to the nation of Israel, long before the division of the tribes. Applying the period of seven times to "Israel" and "Judah" separately, we notice the following:-

(a) "Israel" was carried away captive by the Assyrians in B.C. 721 (See the International Bible Dictionary, top of page 280). Counting "seven times," or 2520 years, from 721 B.C., we reach the date 1799 A.D.

(b) "Judah" was carried away captive, and the seventy years' desolation of the land began, in 606 B.C. Beginning from this date 606 B.C. the "seven times" of punishment ended in 1914 A.D.

Now, the period between 1799 and 1914 is known to us as the "time of the end." This is surely not without significance?

QUESTION 5. Upon what evidence can it be claimed that the names "Jew" and "Israelite" are synonymous? Can any Scripture be cited to show that the name "Jew" was ever applied to the ten-tribed, northern kingdom?

QUESTION 6. In Psalm 114:2 we read: "Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion."

Would it be correct for us to interpret this as a prophetic declaration that the "sanctuary" represents the Spiritual part of the Kingdom of God, to be developed out of "Judah"; while the

“dominion” represents the earthly part, to be developed out of “Israel”?

QUESTION 7. The Jewish historian Josephus says: “...there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the ten tribes are beyond Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by number”—Ant. 11:5:2.

Must we assume that Josephus was wrong?

QUESTION 8. In 1 Chronicles 5:25, 26 we read: “And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them. And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day.”

The books of Chronicles are believed to have been compiled after the Babylonian captivity. What proof is there that the tribes mentioned here ever had an opportunity to return to the promised land?

QUESTION 9. The Word of God declares that the “house of Judah” and the “house of Israel” are to be reunited in the latter days—See Jer. 3:18; 30:3.

The prophet Ezekiel, in chapter 37, speaks clearly of a reunion of “Israel” and “Judah,” likening them to two “sticks.”

But in the quotation we have taken from volume III of “Studies in the Scriptures,” it seems to imply that, because the ten-tribed “Israel” refused to avail itself of the opportunity to return to the land of promise, it therefore became non-existent, being completely lost among the Gentile nations.

How can the thought of a non-existent ten-tribed “Israel” be harmonised with the above texts?

QUESTION 10. Jeremiah declares: “And the Lord said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.” He then goes on to say: “At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord: and all the nations shall be gathered unto it... In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel...”—Jer. 3:11,17,18

In view of these distinct Scriptural references to “Israel” and “Judah” is it correct to hold that:-

(1) God had a special purpose in thus separating “Israel” from “Judah”?

(2) This purpose was to scatter the people of the ten tribes among the Gentile nations, that they as “Israel” might thus fulfil their God-given mission, namely, to prepare the human race and pave the way for the earthly part of the Kingdom of God (spoken of in the Bible as the “New Earth”—2 Pet. 3:13), by means of Bible Societies, etc., since the year 1799 A.D., when the “Papal Millennium” ended and the “time of the end” spoken of by the prophet Daniel began?

(3) The two-tribed “Judah,” on the other hand, had thus been set apart by the Lord God of Israel that it might be associated with the development of the heavenly, spiritual part of the Kingdom; but having failed in its mission it was rejected at the first advent of Jesus Christ, and the opportunity to establish the spiritual Kingdom was then passed on to all the “kindreds and tongues and peoples” of the world generally?

(4) When our returned Lord, at his second advent, takes to himself his great power as invisible King over all, the spiritual control of the Kingdom, that is, the “New Heavens” spoken of by the Prophets and Apostles, will be established first?

(5) When the faithful ones of the times before our Lord’s first advent, who are said to have received a “good report through faith” (see Heb. 11), shall appear in their “better resurrection” as the “princes in the earth,” that then “Judah” and “Israel” will be united for the purpose of taking their places in the earthly part of the Kingdom of God?

IN ANSWERING we shall bear in mind that we are dealing with questions that have been advanced for many years by those who think of the Anglo Saxon people as being the “Israel” of the Scriptures. For these questions are not new. The writer you quote, C. T. Russell, was aware of them when he wrote his volume; and in the “Watch Tower” for January 1897 he answers them again in an article entitled: “All the Israel of God.” As you have requested that we should give our own views, we shall endeavour to do so from a slightly different angle, also using the Scriptures, of course, as our sole authority.

A Comprehensive Answer

There is one grand Scriptural answer that comprehends all of these questions, if we will look steadily at the ultimate end of God's plan of salvation; and this answer is in reality given by the inspired Apostle Paul, when he speaks of how God cast off his covenant people Israel for a time, and how he will again receive them to his favour. For the Apostle then declares; "What shall the receiving of them be, but *life from the dead!*"—Rom. 11:7-15.

By raising the dead in his due time, the Lord shall bring to fulfilment all his promises, including that of reuniting the "houses" of Israel and Judah in their holy land. We must not overlook the fact that God, while he speaks of himself as the "Lord God of Israel," also names himself the "Lord of hosts."

For He who said: "I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel...and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land," also said: "Yet will I bring again the captivity of *Moab* in the latter days;" and; "Afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of *Amon*"; also: "It shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring again the captivity of *Elam*"—See Amos 9:14,15; Jer. 48:47; 49:6,39. And again, when speaking to Jerusalem the Lord says: "When thy sisters, *Sodom* and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and *Samaria* and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate."—Ezek. 16:53-56.

Thus we see that other nations besides Israel were given promises; and it is clear that the "captivity" from which these nations are again to be brought, or delivered, is their captivity in the great prison-house of death, otherwise the Lord could not fulfil these promises. Therefore Jesus declared that: "the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment [or: by judgments]"—John 5:28, 29, compare with Isa. 26:9.

That the reunion of "Israel" and "Judah" is directly connected with their being raised from the dead, is proved by the 37th chapter of Ezekiel. In verses 12-14 we read: "Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." Could anything be plainer than that?

Ezekiel was carried in spirit to the "valley of dry bones" (which is the valley of Jehoshaphat, the very ancient and extensive cemetery that lies immediately to the east of Jerusalem). Those "dry bones" are said to represent the "whole house of Israel" (verse 11). Ezekiel was in captivity in Babylon, and this prophetic vision of the resurrection from the graves was granted to him after Jerusalem was "smitten," that is, after the two tribes, or "Judah," were also carried captive to Babylon. Did the "whole house of Israel," which the dry bones represented, mean the ten tribes, or the two tribes, or both?

Ezekiel was a prophet in the time of the two tribes, long after the ten tribes had been carried away out of their land, and he was a priest—Ezek. 1:2, 3. His immediate concern was therefore more for the two tribes; but if it be contended (as some contend) that by the name "house of Israel" we must always understand that the ten tribes are spoken of, how is it that Ezekiel should concern himself about them, and not the two tribes? It is evident that the "whole house of Israel" means the whole twelve tribes; for all will come forth from their graves and know the Lord. And this, as we have seen, is thoroughly Scriptural, for "all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth."

In justice to ourselves, that we may gain a clear understanding of this question of the "house of Israel," it is well to realise that those who seek to identify the Anglo-Saxon race with the ten-tribed "Israel" do not comprehend about the resurrection of the dead. They, like most others in Christendom, imagine that when men die they go direct to heaven, etc.,—become spirit beings. They do not understand about the raising of the dead to human perfection. If they could only get to know about this, they would see that there is a deeper significance in many of these Scriptural statements about Israel and Judah.

On the sure authority of the Word of Truth, which "liveth and abideth for ever," we know that there is not a single individual of

all the descendants of Abraham who will not be awakened from his sleep in death at the voice of the Son of man; and we read that in Abraham and in his seed all the families of the earth will be blessed. Consequently, all since the creation of Adam, who have died because of Adam's sin, shall live again, as the Bible declares: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—1 Cor. 15:22.

When all are raised from the tomb, "every man in his own order" as the Scriptures explain (see 1 Cor. 15:21-26), they will be blessed with the knowledge of the truth, and through the judgments of the Lord will gain human restitution—Acts 3:20,21. For we know that our heavenly Father has, during the Gospel Age, been raising up to Himself a spiritual seed to Abraham who shall bless all the families of the earth, namely, Jesus Christ and his spirit-begotten body members, who are called in the Scriptures "the Israel of God"—Gal. 3:26-29; 4:28; 6:15,16.

We remember how the Sadducees of old, who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, propounded a theory to Jesus which they fancied he could not answer (Matt. 22:23-33); but the answer he gave was: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God" (verse 29).

So in our day, some think they have reduced us to silence when they ask: "If the Anglo-Saxon people, who possess so much of the earth, and under whom so many of the nations of earth are protected, are not the 'seed' promised to Abraham, which seed is to possess the 'gate of his enemies' (Gen. 22:16-18), then where is this seed? This promise of God, made so many centuries ago, must be fulfilled; and the Jews of the present day are not able to fulfil it."

Our answer, however, cuts right through all these supposed difficulties, just as did Jesus' answer to the Sadducees. For we also can say: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God"; for the "seed" that will possess the gate of his enemies is soon to come forth from the sleep of death (Gal. 3:26-29; 4:28); and the promise that God gave to his faithful ones of ancient days will be fulfilled when he brings again his people from their captivity in the graves, and places them once more in their land.

When Christ Jesus, in company with his joint-heirs, reigns over the earth (Rom. 8:14-17; 2 Tim. 2:11, 12), then shall be brought

to pass God's promise regarding "Israel" and "Judah" spoken by the prophet Ezekiel: "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all...and David my servant shall be king over them"—Ezek. 37:21-24. Jesus Christ, called the Son of David, shall possess the Kingdom and reign over the "house of Jacob" for ever, for to him it belongs according to the Scriptures, which "cannot be broken"—See Luke 1:30-33; Isa. 9:6,7; Jer. 24:5-7.

ANSWER 1. As the division of the tribes of Israel, after the death of Solomon, was foretold before Solomon's death, and was according to the Lord's arrangement, it must have been for the fulfilment of some Divine purpose. But what was this purpose?

We know of one purpose, and a very necessary one, namely, to separate the idolatrous majority of the tribes from those whom God knew would remain comparatively pure, so that his promise might be made sure to the house of David. For the Lord had said that he would give to Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, one tribe that "David my servant may have a light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen to put my name there."

This one tribe, Benjamin, added to the tribe Judah over which Rehoboam was king, was given for "my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel"—1 Kings 11:32-36. (In Josh. 18:28 Jerusalem is said to be one of the cities belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, and it was within the borders of their inherited land as at first allotted. Nevertheless it was King David of the tribe of Judah who drove out the Jebusites, and made it his capital city—2 Sam. 5:4-10).

Jeroboam, on the other hand, was given the ten tribes to reign over, because he was *not* of the royal line of David, but had been a servant of Solomon's. This man had been industrious, and was a mighty man of valour, and Solomon had given him a position of great trust. Jeroboam was ambitious, and the Lord saw that he would be a fit instrument for the purpose He had in mind, namely, to separate the ten tribes from the house of David.

The Lord therefore, caused his prophet Ahijah to meet Jero-

boam, and convey to him the fact that the Lord intended to make him king over the ten tribes after Solomon died. (When Solomon heard of this he sought to kill Jeroboam, who fled to Egypt and remained there till the death of Solomon—1 Kings 11:40). Through the prophet the Lord said to Jeroboam: “I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth”—1 Kings 11:37.

The Lord even promised Jeroboam that, if he would do right according to all that David had done, *his* house would be made sure, even as the house of David had been made sure—1 Kings 11:38. Nevertheless he knew what was in the heart of Jeroboam, and he had said: “thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth.” God knew what Jeroboam desired, and it pleased him to permit Jeroboam to do what he had in his heart, that the house of David might be left comparatively pure, and remain so until the coming of the greater Son of David, Jesus Christ—Psa. 89:35,36; Acts 13:33, 34.

For we read that when the Lord God forbad Rehoboam, king of Judah, to fight against the ten tribes in an endeavour to bring them back to the royal house, Jeroboam king of the ten tribes said in his heart: “Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: if this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their Lord... Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan. And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the house of the sons of Levi”—1 Kings 12:21-31. “So Israel [the ten tribes] rebelled against the house of David unto this day”—1 Kings 12:19.

The Scriptures say that Jeroboam caused Israel to “sin a great sin,” when he set up his gold calves for them to worship; and the whole procedure was exceedingly perverse, for the thing he said: “Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt,” had been said in the days of Moses by Aaron when he made the golden calf in the wilderness—Exod. 32:4. Because of this the Lord had then threatened to blot out the whole nation of

Israel—Exod. 32:7-10. Also Jeroboam’s choice of the city of Dan to put up his gold calf, and all the people of the ten tribes going thither to worship this idol, was perverse, because it was here that the apostate tribe of Dan had set up idolatrous worship many years before, as we read in the 18th chapter of Judges.

Why did the ten tribes, or “Israel,” rebel against the royal house of David? Because they were jealous! We read: “When all Israel [the ten tribes] saw that the king [Rehoboam of Judah] hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David”—1 Kings 12:16.

This same jealousy had manifested itself even in the days of king David himself, as we see in 2 Sam. 19:41-43; 20:1, 2. It was because of this earlier show of resentment and ill-will against Judah and the house of David, that the Lord knew that, given an opportunity, the ten tribes would surely break away and go into idolatry, and he therefore gave them this opportunity by making a man, who was not of the house of David, king over them. And Jeroboam, true to his apostate nature, which the Lord knew of, very quickly set up an apostate house of worship, wilfully making golden calves for the people to worship, perversely calling them “gods” that had brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt. No wonder this became a “great sin.” For, with a few exceptions only, all the people of the ten apostate tribes deliberately forsook the Lord and went to worship their idol gods, obeying a priesthood that had not been ordained of the Lord.

Thus we agree that, undoubtedly, the division of the tribes was necessary in order that the Divine purpose might be fulfilled. The Divine purpose would not have been fulfilled had the idolatrous tribes been permitted to overthrow the faith of *all* the people of the Lord.

ANSWER 2. We have no proof that “Judah” was less sinful than “Israel.” Degrees of sin do not make one acceptable or more acceptable with the Lord. For the Apostle tells us that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of the Lord.” “There are none righteous, no, not one”—Rom. 3:10, 23. It is quite evident that God has not dealt with any because they were sinless, his Son Christ Jesus being the only exception.

But the Scriptures declare clearly that through *faith* a sinner may be made acceptable. Abraham believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness—Rom. 4:3. Broadly stated, this is wherein “Judah” differed from “Israel,” for “Judah” manifested greater faith in the promises of God than did “Israel,” although they fell away from that faith time and again. As for “Israel,” the ten tribed kingdom, it never fell away from its *idolatry* throughout its entire career. The Apostle asks: “What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?” He himself answers: “Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid...”—Rom. 3:1-4.

But apart from the necessary faith, without which it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6), the Lord had his own great Name to consider; for he had separated the nation of Israel for a purpose, and would not allow all the twelve tribes to fall away permanently. This is shown us in a number of Scriptures, as, for example, in Isaiah 43:21, 25, the Lord says: “This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise... I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.”

In another place the Lord says: “For my name’s sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off”—Isa. 48:9-11. And in Ezekiel 20:13, 14 the Lord again says: “The house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them. But I wrought for my name’s sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out,”—from Ezekiel (see verse 10).

Incidentally you will have noted that the name “house of Israel” does not always mean the ten-tribed “house,” but quite often, and, indeed, more often, the whole twelve tribes.

ANSWER 3. You say, what Scriptural proof is there that “Israel,” the ten tribes had an opportunity to return to the promised land after the captivity in Babylon. The Scriptural proof is very clear and concise. It is contained in 2 Chron. 36:22, 23.

Cyrus, king of Persia, said: "All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up." This proclamation was spread throughout all the kingdom of Cyrus, which was the second "universal empire." For the first universal empire was under the kings of Babylon, and then, at the fall of Babylon the kings of Medo-Persia held sway over all the kingdoms, as Cyrus himself said.

The descendants of the ten tribes, like the descendants of the two tribes, could not have missed hearing this proclamation, and if any had a mind to take advantage of it, who could have prevented him going to the promised land? Therefore, all the people of Israel, the descendants of all the twelve tribes, had their opportunity to return to their promised land, and if any did not respond it was certainly because they had no faith in the Lord God of Israel, nor in His promises. They could not therefore have been pleasing to God.

Note, too, that this account is even more concise and to the point in Ezra 1:1-4, where Cyrus said that the "house" that was to be built in Jerusalem was the "house of the Lord God of Israel." And Cyrus added in his world-wide proclamation that: "Whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts," etc. So there could be no possible excuse for any of the people of Israel, whether of the ten, or of the two, tribes for not taking full advantage of this generous opportunity to return to their holy land.

We repeat, therefore, that those who did not return could not be pleasing to the Lord God of Israel; and the very fact that they did not respond to this free offer of Cyrus can be taken as direct evidence that they no longer regarded themselves as God's people. But that some responded we may be equally sure, for it would be strange indeed if the "house of the Lord God of Israel," now at that time to be built in Jerusalem, was not thoroughly representative of the whole twelve tribes of Israel.

We must, then, answer the second part of your 3rd question in the negative. The ten tribes, as such, had no mission, for they deliberately rejected the opportunity given them at that time to

have a mission. The people of all the tribes who manifested their faith in the Lord God of Israel and his promises, by immediately returning to their land to build again their temple, the “house of the Lord God of Israel,” were the ones who had a mission, namely, to be in the land of their inheritance, doing the service of the Lord, and thus be ready to receive their Messiah when he was due to come. For this was *the* culmination of all Israel’s hopes—Luke 3:15; 24:13-27; Acts 1:6.

ANSWER 4. The date you give for the deportation of the ten tribes from their land because of their idolatry is not correct. According to the true chronology of the Bible, the sixth year of Hezekiah, when this deportation took place, was 739-738 B.C., and not 721 B.C. (See 2 Kings 18:9-12.—Hezekiah began to reign in 745 B.C. according to the Bible chronology.)

Even in the days of this good king, Hezekiah of Judah, the ten tribes were given an opportunity to return to the true worship of the God of Israel. But we read that when Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel, the messengers were laughed at and mocked—2 Chron 30:1-10. The message to Israel ran thus: “Now, be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the Lord your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you... So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.” (The ten tribes had fallen so far away from the Lord God of Israel that this invitation to go up to serve Him in the temple at Jerusalem, and keep the passover, appeared, actually, to be a great joke!)

But though the idolatrous Israelites rejected the offer to come up to worship the Lord, we read that a *few* from the ten tribes hearkened and obeyed: “Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem. Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the Lord”—See verses 11-27 of 2 Chron 30.

Thus we see that there were always at least some of the ten

tribes who exercised their right to individual judgment, and showed their faith in the Lord God of Israel by adhering to the place where the Lord had been pleased to set his name. The idolatrous mass of the tribes of Israel could not overthrow these faithful few who separated themselves from all the tribes; and we may be certain that the Lord recognised and honoured *them* as being his true people. This faithful remnant from all the tribes were conspicuous, also, at the time of the division of the tribes at the death of Solomon.

When Jeroboam, king of the ten tribes, rejected the worship of the Lord God of Israel, he rejected the Lord's priests and Levites also, as we read: "For Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the Lord." Instead, it says: "He ordained him priests [of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi] for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves that he had made."—2 Chron. 11:14, 15.

Naturally, the Levites did not want to worship devils, and they therefore joined themselves to Rehoboam king of Judah, as did also some out of all the ten tribes: "And the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to him out of all their coasts. For the Levites left their suburbs and their possessions, and came to Judah and Jerusalem... And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers."—2 Chron 11:13, 14, 16.

We would say, then, that as it was in the days of the division of the tribes, and at the time of Hezekiah's passover sacrifice, so also at the time of the proclamation of Cyrus, king of Persia, some from all the tribes would remember the Lord God of their fathers, and desire to worship Him at Jerusalem. The opportunity was always presented to them, for the Lord would always aid such as desired earnestly to render worship to Him in the place where he had set his name—1 Kings 11:36. It could not be otherwise.

In answer to your question as to the significance of the two periods of "seven times" ending in 1799 and 1914, the period between these dates being known as the "time of the end," you will see that such significance cannot be admitted, as "Israel" was not carried away captive in 721 B.C. But in any case we have no authority for counting a separate "seven times" period upon the

ten tribes, for the kingdom of the Lord was not overthrown when these ten tribes were deported out of their land. The succession of kings who “sat upon the throne of the Lord” continued unbroken until the dethronement of Zedekiah in 606 B.C. Not so, however, with the kings of the ten tribes, in the line of which there were breaks.

The great period of the “seven times” of punishment could not begin until there was no longer a king sitting upon the throne of the Lord in Jerusalem. The warning had been addressed by Moses, as the mouthpiece of God, to Israel; and so long as some of the tribes continued in the land, conducting the service of the “Lord God of Israel” in the temple in Jerusalem where He had set His great name, the nation of Israel was still represented. But when Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple burnt, and the representative tribes carried away out of the land in fulfilment of the words of the Lord’s prophets, then, and not till then, the foretold “seven times” of punishment began. Thus the long period of 2520 years of punishment dates from 606 B.C. (or, properly, from autumn 607 B.C.). There is Scriptural evidence to prove that that other period of foretold punishment, namely, the seventy years’ desolation of the land, began at the same date, in autumn 607 B.C.

Both of these periods, the “seven times” and the seventy years’ desolation, are spoken of together in the 26th chapter of Leviticus by Moses—Compare with Jer. 25:11, 12; 2 Chron. 36:21. The prophet Daniel recognised that all these punishments spoken of by Moses had come upon his people, while he was captive in Babylon—Dan. 9:2, 11-13. This is one of the most beautiful connections in the time features of the Scriptures. As you know, the “seven times” of madness that passed over the head of Nebuchadnezzar, the first of the Gentile kings to rule over Israel for their punishment of “seven times” was representative of the great “seven times” that passed over the head of the great symbolical image which stood for the entire Gentile dominion—Dan. 2:31-45; 4:10-37.

Reverting to the two lines of kings, and the standing that they had before the Lord God of Israel: while it is true that occasionally a king of “Judah” did evil in the sight of the Lord, many of these kings are said to have “done right.” But of the kings of “Israel”

not even one is said to have done right in the Lord's sight. Of all these 19 kings of "Israel" it is written: "he did evil in the sight of the Lord." And most of them are said to have "walked in the way of Jeroboam [the first king of "Israel"] the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin"—See the following Scriptures among others that demonstrate the utterly apostate and sinful disposition of these kings of the ten-tribed "Israel"—1 Kings 15:29-34; 16:13-33; 2 Kings 3:1-3; 10:29-31.

Thus we read in 2 Kings 17:21-23—"For he [the Lord] rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king; and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the Lord, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; and departed not from them; until the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day."

All the kings of Judah did not do right, however, for some of them provoked the Lord to anger. Nevertheless the Lord was true to his promise to David, and would not destroy Judah, as we read, for instance, in the case of king Abijam, of whom it is said: "he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father: Nevertheless for David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem: Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite"—1 Kings 15:3-5. Of Jeroboam the king of Judah it is also said that he did evil in the sight of the Lord, but adds: "Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him always a light, and to his children"—2 Kings 8:16-19.

While Judah sometimes fell away from following the Lord owing to the evil reigns of some of their kings, there were great revivals at intervals (especially during the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah); but during all the period of the kings of the ten tribes there was not one single revival, nor any turn of a desire to worship the Lord God of Israel. The ten-tribed kingdom persisted in its worship of idols, and in rejecting the counsel of the Lord.

At the time when the Assyrian king Sennacherib threatened Jerusalem to destroy it, Hezekiah, king of Judah, prayed earnestly to the Lord, and was answered: "I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake"—2 Kings 19:34. It is very clear, therefore, that because of his own Name's sake, and for the sake of David his servant, to whom he had promised: "There shall not be cut off from David a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel" (See Jer. 33:17, marginal reading), the Lord God of Israel had pledged himself to preserve the "house of Judah," and the "house of David," even through the interval between the dethronement of Zedekiah and the birth of our Lord in Bethlehem. Thus our Lord Jesus was spoken of as the Son of David: and when the angel announced his birth to the virgin Mary he said that her Son would be given the "throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end"—See Luke 1:26-33.

While Jesus Christ did present himself as King in Jerusalem in fulfilment of the Scriptures (Matt. 21:4-11; Zech. 9:9), he knew that it was his Father's will that he should be rejected and slain, and that Jerusalem should be desolate and trodden down of the Gentiles for a long interval, until the "blindness in part" would pass away from Israel—Matt. 23:37-39; Luke 21:24; John 18:36, 37; 19:15; Rom. 11:25, 26. In the due time at his second coming Israel will recognise our Lord as the long-looked-for Messiah and King; and with him shall be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, selected during the interval of waiting—Luke 22:29, 30; Matt. 19:28; 2 Tim. 2:8-12; Rev. 3:21.

ANSWER 5. In the New Testament the names "Jew" and "Israel" are used so often in the same connection, that there seems little distinction between them, although it is true that "the Jews" are generally associated with the city of Jerusalem. I believe that the claim is true that C. T. Russell made, namely, that after the seventy years' desolation of the holy land, and Cyrus' great proclamation of freedom, the name "Jew" became synonymous with "Israel," and that these returned people of God represented the whole nation of Israel.

The descendants of the Lord's people who returned to the promised land had every right to the name "Israel"; but the name "Jew" was even more honourable, for it was the name of the

Royal tribe of Judah, out of which came the Messiah, the everlasting King of Israel. To the outside world Jesus Christ was known as “King of the Jews,” for this is what the “wise men from the east” named him, as also did Pilate when he wrote the title to put on the cross of our Lord—See Matt. 2:2; John 19:19. To the people of Israel, however, this was synonymous with calling him King of Israel, as we read in Matt. 27:42. For the chief priests and scribes and elders, mocking our Lord while he hung on the cross on which they read the title: “This is Jesus the King of the Jews,” said: “He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him”—Matt. 27:37-42.

See also John 1:49, where Nathanael whom Jesus had called an “Israelite indeed,” answered and said: “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.” And the question which the assembled Apostles addressed to our Lord immediately before his ascension into heaven, namely: “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?” shows that in their understanding the whole nation of Israel was there represented in Palestine—Acts 1:6.

We read that John the Baptist was “in the desert till the day of his showing unto Israel”—Luke 1:80. The people who flocked to him are here spoken of as “Israel.” Paul said: “I am a Jew”; but he also said: “Are they Israelites? so am I”—Acts 21:39; 2 Cor. 11:22; Philippians 3:5.

The Jews who crucified our Lord are addressed as “ye men of Israel”—Acts 5:21, 30, 35. See also Acts 13:14-16, 42, 43.

In Zech 8:23 we read that “ten men... shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying: “We shall go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.” And Jesus said: “Salvation is of the Jews”—John 4:22. Do these texts mean that God is not with Israel? and that salvation is not of Israel? I think we shall be correct if we regard “Jew” and “Israel” as being synonymous, even though sometimes a distinction can be seen.

The name “Jew” could not properly be applied to the northern, ten-tribed kingdom while they held aloof, although the name “Israel” was correctly applied to the southern two-tribed kingdom and not exclusively to the ten tribes. When Sennacherib’s army threatened Jerusalem, their spokesman is said to have cried out to

the people on the walls of the city “in the Jews’ language”—2 Kings 18:28. This was in the days of Hezekiah, less than eight years after the ten tribes had been removed by Sennacherib. Why was it then called the “Jews’ language”? Was it not also the language of Israel? Even in these early days the ten-tribed “Israel” was being taken little account of by outside nations.

And when Hezekiah heard of this threat against Jerusalem by Sennacherib, he prayed unto the “Lord God of Israel”—See 2 Kings 19:15, 20-22. But why did Hezekiah still think of God as being the “Lord God of Israel” when the ten-tribed “Israel” had been separated from Judah for so many years, ever since the death of Solomon? The ten tribes had openly rejected the worship of the Lord God of Israel, no longer claiming adherence to Him. On the contrary the two tribes, “Judah,” still continued to regard God as their Lord, claiming the promises made to Israel.

In the book of Esther the people of Israel are constantly spoken of as “Jews.” This was at a time in the history of Medo-Persia, the second universal empire, when Xerxes reigned, about 50 years after Cyrus (for the Ahasuerus spoken of in 1:1 is understood by some commentators to be Xerxes, father of Artaxerxes). As he reigned over all the then civilised world, from “India even unto Ethiopia,” all the people of the ten tribes, as well as of the two, were in his kingdom.

In verse 8 of the 3rd chapter of Esther we read: “And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king’s laws; therefore it is not for the king’s profit to suffer them. If it please the king, let it be written that they be destroyed.” The king responded by causing letters to be “sent by posts into all the king’s provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old...”—Est. 3:13.

But the narrative goes on to tell how the tables were turned in favour of the threatened people, and in 8:16, 17 we read: “The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour. And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king’s commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.”

It is not certain just when this important incident occurred (In the margin of reference Bibles the date is given as 510 B.C., or only 26 years after the proclamation of Cyrus), although it is understood by some to be in the reign of Xerxes, but at all events it was well within the time when the descendants of the ten tribes were living in these "provinces." Now, if the descendants of the ten tribes were not included in this incident under the general name of "Jews," then they could not have been known as the "certain people scattered abroad," whose "laws are diverse from all people." In other words, if the children of the ten tribes are not here spoken of as "Jews," then they were already so absorbed into the customs and manners of the Gentile peoples around them that they were not distinguishable.

In your list of questions you cite the Jewish historian Josephus as an authority in historical matters pertaining to the people of Israel. Well, even Josephus spoke of the people of Israel as being "Jews," right away back in the days of Moses! When speaking about the rebellion of Korah against Moses in the wilderness (Num. 16), Josephus writes: "That which is usually the case of great armies, and especially upon ill success, to be hard to be pleased, and governed with difficulty, did now befall the *Jews*; for they being in number six hundred thousand, and, by reason of their great multitude, not readily subject to their governors," etc.—See Ant. 4:2:1; and this is only one instance of many.

Was this a slip on the part of Josephus? No, not necessarily; for the tribe of Judah had been so long prominent in the world, that everything pertaining to the nation of Israel, no matter of what past century, was thought of as pertaining to the "Jews." Josephus cites a number of other historians who also used the name "Jew" as he had done; and this shows that in the eyes of the world, including the Jews or Israelites themselves, the names "Jew" and "Israel" had become synonymous. We could easily multiply instances in proof of this, but sufficient has been said to assure ourselves of its truth.

ANSWER 6. The Psalms are, many of them, written in poetical language, and the parallel form of stating anything is very common. That is, the thing said is often, in such poetical phrases, repeated in a different form. In verse 1 of this 114th Psalm we read: "When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people

of a strange language.” Here “Israel” and the “house of Jacob” are the same, and it is not necessary for us to read into this change in the name a special message. So also “Egypt” and “a people of a strange language” are the same, and it would be useless to try and think of a difference in meaning. This parallel form of expression is constantly met with throughout the Bible.

It is not therefore necessary to suppose that a two-tribe, and a ten-tribe, nation is referred to in verse 2, more especially as the words were written before any division took place. But if we still insist that there is a significance in this mention of Judah being the Lord’s sanctuary, and Israel his dominion, then we would say that “Judah” as the sanctuary of the Lord represents the Spiritual Temple class gathered out of all nations (as the Scriptures declare—Rev. 5:5-10), and not, as you suggest, developed out of Judah, the two tribes, as I understand you to mean.

And when the Lord, through the Psalmist, says: “Israel is my dominion,” this also I would apply to the Spiritual Kingdom of God; for it certainly does not apply to the idolatrous ten-tribed kingdom. For the dominion is naturally the inheritance of those who will be “kings and priests unto God,” that is, Christ and his joint-heirs. These joint-heirs are referred to in the Book of Revelation as the “hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel”—Rev. 7:3-8; 14:1-5. These are the Scriptural tribes of Israel—Rom. 8:14-17; 9:8, 22-33. Called the “saints of the most High,” they are given the dominion and kingdom over all the earth, because of their joint-heirship with the Son of God.

“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed... And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him”—Dan. 7:13, 14, 27.

ANSWER 7. We do not deny that Josephus was right when he

spoke of the ten tribes being beyond Euphrates, even in his day. It was a shame to them that they should have disregarded the Lord God of Israel for so long, and not have joined themselves to the people of Israel at Jerusalem, the city that the Lord had chosen to put his name. Three times in the year all the males of the people of Israel were enjoined to appear before the Lord in the place which he had chosen—Deut. 16:16. We read: “Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee: but at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in”; and this place was the city of Jerusalem from the time of king David—Deut. 16:5, 6; 1 Kings 11:32, 36.

This command of the Lord regarding the offering of sacrifices was very emphatic, as we see in Deut. 12:10-14,—“When ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit...then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there... Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest: but in the place which the Lord shall choose in one of thy tribes...”

It was in Shiloh where the Lord first put his Name; then, after the overthrow of Shiloh he chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved—See Jer. 7:12; Psa. 78:60, 67-72. “...So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh... Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim; but chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved. And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which he hath established for ever. He chose David also his servant...to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance...”

Although the Lord overthrew Jerusalem and the temple at the dethronement of Judah’s last king, Zedekiah, as he had previously overthrown Shiloh (Jer. 26:6), yet we see that he permitted his people to return to the holy land and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, so that once again all the males of the people of Israel could ascend to Jerusalem and appear before the Lord three times a year. The parents of Jesus are said to have gone to Jerusalem every year at the passover (Jesus went with them when he was twelve years of age,—Luke 2:41-49), and our Lord also observed this commandment—John 2:13.

In John 6:4, and 7:2, it speaks of the feasts of passover, and tabernacles, as being feasts of the Jews. But these feasts were commanded upon all the twelve tribes, and therefore the word "Jews" stood for all Israel; and it was obligatory upon all the males of all the tribes to resort to Jerusalem at the feast-times, if they desired to be regarded as the people of the Lord. There is every reason to believe that many of the scattered people of Israel did go up to Jerusalem. The "feast of weeks" at Pentecost was one of these three feasts; and in Acts 2:1-11 it speaks of many "Jews" (and at this time Jew was synonymous with Israel) who had come out of all countries to dwell in Jerusalem.

ANSWER 8. We have presented Scriptural proof that the people of Israel, whether of the ten tribes or of the two, had opportunity to return to their land after the seventy years' desolation. But we shall add further proof.

In 2 Kings 17:18-23 it says that the Lord "removed Israel out of his sight." In verse 21 it says that "He rent Israel from the house of David," because "Jeroboam drave Israel from following the Lord, and made them sin a great sin,"—he desired to leave the house of David of the tribe of Judah free from the idolatrous mass of the ten tribes. And in 2 Kings 17:6 it states that the "king of Assyria...carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes."

If you will look at a map, such as you can get at the end of many reference Bibles, you will see that Persia and Media are countries of great extent, and lie further east than Assyria. Halah and Habor, Hara and the river Gozan, are all in Assyria, comparatively near to Palestine, nearer than Babylon. Therefore, when Cyrus king of Persia became Emperor over all the then civilised world, having taken Babylon and all the countries that had been under the rule of Babylon, and published broadcast his great liberating decree, there is not any part where the proclamation would not be heard. Thus every descendant of the entire house of Israel, that is, of the whole twelve tribes, would hear that proclamation, and of the generous offer of monetary and other help to aid him to go up to Jerusalem, where the Lord God of Israel was again about to have his house built. The full opportunity was there.

In Ezra 7:12, 13 we read: “Artaxerxes, king of kings [that is, universal dominion Emperor,] unto Ezra the priest... I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests the Levites, which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee. Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counselors, to enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which is in thine hand; and to carry the silver and the gold, which the king and his counselors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem, and all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem...”—See the whole chapter.

Ezra himself said: “And I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me”—Ezra 7:28. This decree of Artaxerxes, king of Persia (in his 7th year of reign), applied to the captives in Babylon as well—Ezra 7:16.

Thus we see that, not only in the days of Cyrus, the first Emperor of this second universal empire, were the people of the God of Israel permitted if they would of their own freewill, and helped materially, to go up to Jerusalem, but the same generous offer, again with free assistance, was made by this other king of Persia, Artaxerxes, nearly seventy years later. And if any insist that such an offer must be made to *Israel*, why, then, here we have it stated in the 13th verse of Ezra 7—“all they of the people of Israel,” to whom the decree applied.

And in the days of Nehemiah, also, between the 20th and 32nd years of king Artaxerxes’ reign, over 80 to 90 years later than Cyrus, there was still opportunity for the people of Israel to return to their promised land and take part in the worship of the God of Israel—Neh. 5:14, 17. Nehemiah had prayed earnestly to the Lord concerning Jerusalem, and the Lord gave him favour in the eyes of Artaxerxes, who permitted him to go up to the city and repair the walls.

In his prayer Nehemiah said: “I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel”—Neh. 1:6. Also in Neh. 12:47 we read: “And all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of

Nehemiah, gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and they sanctified holy things unto the Levites..." And in Neh. 13:2, 3, the Lord's people are spoken of as the children of Israel in the days of Joshua, and still as Israel in the days of Nehemiah in Palestine.

In Ezra 8:35 all of the twelve tribes of Israel are recognised, when it says: "The children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, offered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel, twelve bullocks for all Israel." This custom of recognising the oneness of the nation of Israel in its twelve tribes is very ancient. As you will recall, a number of instances of this custom are given in the Scriptures. In Exod. 24:4 it says: "And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel."

And when the tribes of Israel were crossing Jordan, there was a great ceremony in the carrying of twelve stones out of the bed of the river and setting them up as a memorial—Josh 4:1-24. Also Elijah "took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob" and built his altar, at the time of his overthrow of the priests of Baal in the northern kingdom; for while these ten tribes had departed from the faith of Israel and were not worthy to be numbered with God's covenant people, yet, because of the overthrow at that time of the worship of Baal and the vindication of the Lord, Elijah trusted that the ten tribes would now return to the Lord God of Israel—1 Kings 18:31, 37.

At the dedication of the temple in Jerusalem, after the return to the land from Babylon, it says in Ezra 6:16, 17,—“And the children of Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy, and offered...for a sin offering for all Israel twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.” And in Ezra 10:5 we read: “Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word. And they swear.”

In view of the above Scriptures it is evident that there was no restriction, but on the contrary every aid given, to any of the people of *Israel* to escape from their land of captivity in the days of the kings of Persia, and return to their own land; and the fact

that those who responded were mostly of the house of Judah reflects great credit upon their loyalty to the Lord, and their faith in the ancient promises. In the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah there are frequent references to “Jews” but that “all Israel” was represented in the holy land from that time onward there is abundant evidence—See Neh. 11:20. The returned people had every right to call themselves “All Israel,” but those of any of the twelve tribes who refused to take advantage of the opportunity given them by Cyrus and Artaxerxes had no longer any right to the name “Israel,” nor to claim any of the promises that are granted as the result of faith.

The much maligned “Jews” of the present day still retain faith in the “Lord God of Israel” (even if not correctly informed in all things pertaining to the commonwealth of Israel), and still hope that a time will come when God will cause them to return to their holy land. Despite the heedless majority (and the majorities in all communities are heedless), some devout Jews still believe in the promises made to their fathers of ancient times. It is the faithful few who count with God, and because of this faithful few the majority are spared, and will, ultimately, be saved—See Rom. 9:27-29. As in the days of Elijah, the Lord had reserved unto himself seven thousand that had not bowed the knee to Baal, so in the days of the Apostles He had a remnant left who were faithful. It is not therefore too much to believe that, even in *our* day also the Lord has reserved a few to bring honour to his Name—1 Kings 19:18; Rom. 11:2-5.

But the great deliverance, spoken of in Jeremiah 16th chapter, is in reality the deliverance from the captivity of death. There are many of the Lord’s children who do not yet realise what the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ has secured for all mankind, whether of the nation of Israel or of all the nations of earth. But as you are aware, the death and resurrection of our Lord, the Son of God, who tasted death for every man, and rose again that he might be Lord of both the living and the dead, has secured that all men shall be raised from the dead and come to a knowledge of the truth, that they may gain the opportunity to live for ever—1 Tim. 2:3-6.

ANSWER 9. According to the Scriptures, the reunion of the “house of Israel” and the “house of Judah” in the latter days will

be through the operation of the resurrection of the dead. The entire 37th chapter of Ezekiel tells us of this resurrection-from-the-dead reunion: for this chapter must be regarded as a whole, from verse 1 onward. It is the Lord's explanation as to how, and when, the reunion is possible—"When I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves... I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord"—Ezek. 37:11-14.

Notice how the Lord says in Zech. 10:8,—"For I have *redeemed* them." They shall be as though they had not been cast off—in death.

Through the wonderful resurrection of the dead, when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and shall come forth (as Lazarus came forth!—John 11:22-27, 33-46), many things that now seem impossible shall be made possible. When we realise this Scriptural fact of the great reunion through the resurrection of the dead, we then perceive that there can be no other manner of reunion worthy of the name.

ANSWER 10. You may think we are stressing this matter of the resurrection too much, and making it apply too often in answering your points. But we cannot lose sight of it; for all these promises of reunion, forgiveness, etc., were spoken to the people who lived in the days of the prophets, and were intended to be put into operation with these people. The great reunion from the prison-house of death must therefore always be kept prominently before our minds.

In verse 11 of Jeremiah 3 it speaks about "treacherous Judah"; but in verse 20 of the same chapter the Lord also says: "Ye have dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel." Both "houses" were treacherous in the Lord's sight, because none are truly faithful. Only the very few amongst the people found favour with God, and only because of their faith. This is made abundantly clear in the Scriptures—See the 11th chapter of Hebrews.

(1) The purpose that God had in separating the ten tribes from the two tribes was, not to keep the ten-tribed nation distinct throughout the centuries, but, as we have shown from the Scriptures, to purify a section of his people Israel from the idolatrous majority, to preserve the "house of David" till Jesus Christ should come—See again Luke 1:31-33. The ten tribes very

early in their history manifested their disregard for this promise of the coming of the “King of Israel” through the house of David, and deliberately turned their backs on it, as we have seen—2 Sam. 20:1, 2; 1 Kings 12:16, 17.

(2) And an idolatrous people, such as the ten tribes consistently proved themselves to be; a people who never at any time manifested any faith in the Lord God of Israel and his promises (for we cannot produce any instance of saving faith, as we can in the case of “Judah”), could not prepare the way for the human race to receive the earthly part of the Kingdom of God. How could they inspire a faith and trust in the Lord God of Israel which they themselves lacked?

But with the Israel that returned to their holy land after the captivity it is different, as their whole history proves; and the faithful remnant, of whom the Apostle Paul speaks, who received Jesus Christ as the long-expected King of Israel, have undoubtedly been instrumental in instilling the hope of a future of blessing in the hearts of many in other nations. For if there are righteous and faithful people in Britain and America and other nations it is on account of the Christian faith, handed down from the days of our Lord’s first advent. Faithful Christians have paved the way, as our Lord said; “*Ye are the light of the world*”—Matt. 5:14; John 8:12.

(3) Your suggestion here is not in accordance with the Scriptures. It is not that “Judah” was associated entirely with the development of the heavenly (Scriptural) part of the Kingdom of God, but, rather, that to *Israel* was the opportunity given to become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. By Israel we mean the people who were there to receive the Lord if they would; for the Scriptures do not admit the thought that our Lord presented himself to “Judah” as a two-tribed nation, but to Israel, a people representative of the whole twelve tribes. But, the Scriptures declare, “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for”; but a remnant did receive it, and the rest were blinded—See Rom. 9:31, 32; 11:5, 7.

As those from out of Israel who had the necessary faith were short of the elect number required by God to be joint-heirs of his Son Jesus Christ, the opportunity was then passed on to the Gentiles, to as many as would believe. As we read: “Blindness in

part is happened to Israel [not Judah], until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved”—ultimately, when their blindness is turned away from them—Rom. 11:25, 26. That the message of God came to Israel, not Judah, is shown in Acts 13:16–, where we read that Paul addressed the “Men of Israel.” In verses 23 and 24 the Apostle continues: “Of this man’s [David’s] seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: when John had first preached before his [Jesus’] coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel...”

(4) The Spiritual part of the Lord’s Kingdom is established first. For the Scriptures declare that, without us (the church of the firstborn) they (the faithful ones of ancient days just enumerated) shall not be made perfect—Heb. 11:32-40. Those who manifested faith up to the time of John the Baptist will constitute the earthly part of the Kingdom, for they are promised a “better resurrection” than the rest of mankind—See Heb. 11:35. But we, of the Spiritual Kingdom, are provided with some still better thing, namely, the first, or chief, resurrection—Heb. 11:40; Rev. 20:6.

(5) The Scriptures show that John the Baptist was the last of those who “obtained a good report through faith”; and who, because of their faith, shall be raised from the dead in their “better resurrection.” From the time of John the Baptist a new order began, through the preaching of the Kingdom by Jesus Christ and his Apostles, as the Scriptures say: “The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the Kingdom of God is preached”—Luke 16:16. Jesus also said: “Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he...for all the prophets and the law prophesied until John”—Matt. 11:11-13.

Thus we see that from the time when our Lord and his Apostles preached the Kingdom of heaven, that is, the Spiritual part of the Kingdom, none were invited to the earthly part of the Kingdom. John the Baptist was the last of these; and even the least in the Spiritual Kingdom will be greater than John, although none greater than John had been born; for those who are Spiritual are necessarily higher than those who are earthly.

As the members of the heavenly or Spiritual part of the King-

dom of God cannot inherit their Kingdom with Christ until their resurrection, and as the faithful “Ancient Worthies” cannot sit down in the earthly part of the Kingdom until they also are raised from the graves (Matt. 8:11), neither can the remainder of Israel, of the ten tribes and of the two, be “saved” and be reunited as one under their King David, until they are brought forth from their captivity in death. The Scriptures show that the hope of the world is in the resurrection of the dead, through Christ Jesus the Son of God. The Lord will indeed “swallow up death in victory”—Isa. 25:8, 9; 26:19; 35:10.

The present-day Jews are the direct descendants of Israel. In spite of the many years they have been scattered throughout the earth they have retained their racial separateness. They are still a distinct people, and still retain faith in their God, the “Lord God of Israel.” Other peoples would like to identify themselves as God’s ancient Israel, and claim the promises made, just as did the Samaritans. But there is no other way by which they can receive this blessing except by being grafted in, and coming under the benefits of the new covenant along with Israel.

It is still true that “salvation is of the Jews,” even though all are not counted Jews unless they are so inwardly—John 4:22; Rom. 2:28, 29. They must have the faith of Abraham. But the time is near at hand when the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, and then, and not till then, they will recognise their King, the Lord Jesus Christ whom they pierced (Zech. 12:9-14; Jer. 31:1-14, 33-40,—the “whole valley of the dead bodies” referred to in Jer. 31:40 is the same as the valley of dry bones spoken of by Ezekiel in chapter 37. It is the valley of Jehoshaphat on the east side of Jerusalem, which even to this day is used constantly as a vast cemetery).

This matter of the return of the dead to earth once more was always prominent in the minds of the ancient prophets, and of the Apostles. But because the time was long the Jews of our Lord’s first advent had lost belief in it to a large extent, and even accused the Apostle Paul of heresy because he persisted in preaching it. Paul said: “Touching the resurrection of the dead, I am called in question by you this day”—Acts 24:21. The Jews could not comprehend that all the promises of God, and the logical outcome of everything spoken by the ancient prophets, depended upon

God's power to raise the dead. If God did not raise the dead, and bring them again to live on earth once more, how could he fulfil his promises to them?

Hear what the Apostle said to Felix: "This I confess unto thee, that after the way which they [the Jews] call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust"—Acts 24:14, 15. The whole trouble with the Jews was that they would not acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he had been raised from the dead and became the first-fruits of them that slept.

The Apostle Paul had had his eyes opened, and now could see the full significance of Christ's resurrection from the dead, and how all things written in the law and in the prophets, with respect to the future, were now assured. As he said in another place: "Because he [God] hath appointed a day [a 1000-year "day"—2 Pet. 3:8], in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead"—Acts 17:31. The more we realise the true meaning of our Lord's resurrection, the more hope we have toward God, for the unjust no less than the just.

See how this great doctrine of the resurrection of the dead had impressed itself so deeply in the Apostle's mind, so that it coloured everything he said. Speaking earnestly to Agrippa, Paul declared: "My manner of life from my youth, which was at first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, knew all the Jews...and now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?... For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light

unto the people and to the Gentiles”—Acts 26:1-23; Luke 24:44-48.

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” Thus spake Peter on the day of Pentecost—Acts 2:22-36. Note that it was all the house of Israel that was accounted guilty of our Lord’s crucifixion, and not merely the Jews or Judah.

It will not have escaped your attention how the Apostles Paul and Peter constantly refer to “all Israel,” and “all the house of Israel,” and “our twelve tribes,” showing that they thought familiarly of themselves and their people as being the rightful Israel with whom the “Lord God of Israel” was dealing. James also refers to the “twelve tribes,” and wrote his Epistle to them, referring to them as now being scattered abroad—Jas. 1:1. Notice that he did not say the “ten tribes scattered abroad.”

The people of Israel were scattered throughout the then civilised world, but were spoken of as “Jews,” because Jerusalem in Judea was now so well known everywhere. In the passage in Acts already cited (2:5-12) no less than sixteen nationalities are mentioned from which “Jews” are said to have come to dwell in Jerusalem. Anna the prophetess was of the tribe of Asher (Luke 2:36-38); but to outsiders all of Israel, no matter of what tribe, would be called Jews, as we have already noticed.

For a long time now many of the well-informed Jews have earnestly wished for the restoration of the ten tribes, as they know that the fulfilment of God’s promises to “Judah” are bound up with “Israel.” But they are at a loss to know where the ten tribes are, and are therefore mystified as to how God can restore them and “Judah” in the latter days.

The “Jewish Chronicle” (May, 1879) said: “While not a link is missing of the historical chain so far as the romance of the House of Judah is concerned, the Israelites, who were subjugated by the Assyrian power, disappear from the pages of history as suddenly and completely as though the land of their captivity had swallowed them up.” They say they believe the ten tribes are in existence, and all we require to do is to discover where they are.

The “Jewish Quarterly Review” (July, 1903) said: “The career of the Jews can be traced without difficulty throughout the subsequent centuries until the present day. Of that of the Israelites, the ten tribes, however, nothing authentic is known after their

departure from their fatherland to Halah and Habor by the river of Gozen and the cities of the Medes. With the beginning of their captivity, they seem to have passed from human knowledge.”

In “History and Literature of the Israelites,” Vol. I, page 489, C. and A. D. Rothschild say: “The ten tribes of Israel...were irretrievably lost; and a deep, impenetrable silence clings around their dispersion.”

Manasseh Ben Israel (in the time of Cromwell) was much exercised as to what had become of the ten tribes, since whose captivity “we no longer hear speak.” This was a constant source of disquiet with him, “For,” he argued, “the restoration of the kingdom of Judah is impossible without these ten tribes.”

And Rabbi Gersham wrote: “We are longing to find our lost brethren, who for over two thousand years have baffled all our efforts to discover their whereabouts, and are at this day a riddle even to the greatest of our illustrious Rabbis.”

In the “Jewish Religion,” Vol. I, page 256, it says about the ten tribes, since their captivity, that “to this day the researches of travelers and wise men have not been able to trace their fate.”

Yet in spite of their undoubted failure to discover what became of these ten tribes, a prominent and learned Jew, A. Neubauer, declared: “The hope of the return of the ten tribes has never ceased among the Jews in exile.” The secret of this hope is their continued faith in the promises of the Lord God of Israel, “for,” said A. Neubauer, “the return of the ten tribes was one of the great promises of the prophets.”

Do we, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, know of a solution to this difficulty of the Jews as to the whereabouts of their brethren, the ten tribes? and as to how God can fulfil his promise to restore them? Yes, we know! Where are they? In their graves! But are they not then lost irretrievably? No, for Jesus Christ, their long-looked-for Messiah, is able to raise them from the dead, by the power given Him by God the Father, as we have already seen. Through this greater Son of David the Lord God shall bring to pass all his promises, including those given in the 37th chapter of Ezekiel.

Through Hosea the Lord exclaimed to Israel: “O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help... I will ransom

them from the grave, I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes”—Hosea 13:9-14.

Our hope is altogether centred in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who, the Apostle says, “hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,” and who gladly laid down his life for us that “through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil”—2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14. No wonder, therefore, the Apostle exclaims, “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth”—Rom. 1:16. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit”—Rom. 8:1. Let us remember always that it is we who “walk after the spirit” who are “the Israel of God”; and that, in the due time, natural, or fleshly, Israel who have not believed in the gospel of Jesus Christ in the past may yet obtain mercy through our mercy—See Rom. 11:25-32. 

