

NOT JUST

a report



a journey



Dear family and friends,
This is not just a letter about "not just" a journey. We would like to share with you why we started organizing trips like this during Succoth. We ourselves dislike group travel and we found out most of the participants did too. Why then, do we still bring groups together? As a group we are more visible and we believe time has come for Ephraim to be recognized as believers from the nations, who are being gathered for God's purpose at this time. To identify yourself with Ephraim, you should know who you really are! In some translations of Jer.31:19 Ephraim is heard saying: "After I was made known to myself or after I was instructed, I felt ashamed", which is why he repented. Knowing yourself can on the one hand be confusing or challenging, but also very enriching. It raises questions to all of us about God's purpose with Judah and Ephraim. So because of journeys like this, dialogue starts within the group, not just between Ephraim but also with Judah. Something of that dialogue, and what we have learned during this trip, we would like to share with you in this letter. Maybe it will encourage you to join the next trip during Succoth in 2015. More and more people amongst Judah are beginning to understand who we are, and some have even said, we have been waiting for you for 2000 years. This confirms what Zechariah writes concerning the stick of unity, which was broken at the time of Yeshua's death and resurrection (Zech.11:14). Now the two sticks are coming together. The mystery of Judah and Ephraim sometimes is called the best-kept secret or the greatest deception of this time. Perhaps this letter will help you to decide for yourself if it is given to you to know this mystery (Mat.13:11). May the anointing, you received from Him, teach you about these things.

START OF THE JOURNEY *Prophetic Welcome*

We begin every trip with a prophetic welcome in the Kidron Valley, also called the King's Valley. We know from Genesis 14:17, where we read that after the victory of Abraham on his enemies, Melchizedek, the king of Salem (later called Jeru-salem), came out to meet Abraham with bread and wine. You could say that this was his prophetic welcome to the Promised Land. Because of the history of Absalom, we know that this place, in the lifetime of David, was also called the King's Valley (2 Sam.18:18). Today the Ir David Foundation has started using this name again. Because of the King of Righteousness, not only our relationship with God has been restored, but we may also call Abraham our father (Rom.9:6-8). Therefore the King's Valley is a very appropriate place to confirm both our relationship with God and with Judah, by taking bread and wine, which is the sign of the renewed covenant and the restoration of the family. That family feeling plays an important role in understanding God's plan with Judah and Ephraim.





Prophetic map of the journey

Sometimes you have to look at the map with different eyes. During this journey we visited four specific areas with a prophetic meaning and purpose, of which we would like to tell you more in this report. Someone said during this trip, that the itinerary was well planned and thought about. Indeed the Ruach Hakodesh (the name we use in Israel for Holy Spirit) inspired us, when we made the program. We also had marvelous guides: Hanoach, Mickey, Eytan and David.... who all in their own way contributed to new Biblical understandings and insights, we received during this trip about the land and the people. However, it is our desire that above all God will be our guide.

There is a relationship between Judea and Samaria, and there is a relationship between the Desert and Jerusalem. The places, as well as the people living there (or are called to live there), play a role in God's Plan. The hourglass tells us that time is running out. We still have opportunities to become involved in God's plan, but before we can be used in this final hour, we must understand the role of Israel. How important this role is, God already began to reveal to Iris from the moment she was called when she was 11 years old. Now we begin to see happening, what she did not understand at that time. It is a privilege to be in the Land and "see" what God has to say to us at this time (Hab.2:1). Here is the report of what we saw, heard and learned during the journey at Succoth.

JUDEA - JUDAH

Judea is the inheritance of Judah, but the Jews, who live there, are probably offspring of all twelve tribes. Because Judah kept the scepter, despite persecution and attempts to wipe out all the Jews, Judah has returned to the Land and now reigns over all Israel, even the disputed area of Samaria. However, Judea is an important area around Jerusalem and the people who persevere in Judea will probably determine the preservation of Jerusalem.

That was also the case at the time of the establishment of the state of Israel. This is what we clearly saw at the Sound and Light Show in Kfar Etzion and also in Oz VeGaon, where a national park has been established in memory of the three boys, who were killed this summer, which caused the latest war against Hamas in Gaza. As expressed in the name of the park, Judah has the courage and the power to hold on against all odds and in spite of the price they have to pay for their perseverance to remain in Judea.

Who are these Jews, who persevere?

Most Jews in the settlements are orthodox Jews, who love Torah and live accordingly. This was clearly seen in the parents of the killed teenagers, but also in rabbi Yehuda Glick, who survived an attack on his life. In him, and in many others, we see an example of a true Jew, truly circumcised of heart, who makes us jealous and makes us say: *"We will go with you, because we have heard (and seen) that God is with you"* (Zech.8:23). These Jews are the ones who begin to understand who we are: Ephraim, who is coming out of the Church.





How is it possible that to the contrary Messianic Jews do not understand this?

Is it, because we as believers in Yeshua make a separation between the Old and the New Covenant? We have noticed that in turning back to our Jewish roots, we long to become like the first Church at the time of the (Jewish) Apostles. There is no doubt that the coming of Yeshua has brought about a big change. Peter tried to explain this to the Israelites of those days. He called on his people to repent and explained that Yeshua has to remain in heaven until the time of the restoration of all things has come (Acts 3:19-21). Peter compares Yeshua with the prophet who will come after Moses and warns, that the one who does not listen to this prophet, will be removed from the people and destroyed. If you read this quickly you could conclude, that all Jews who do not believe in Yeshua are no longer His people. That made me look to the original text in the Torah in Deuteronomy 18:19 where it says in that case, God will require accountability from that person. That is a big difference from being removed from the people. Why did Peter not say that? Or did he include the other punishment mentioned at many other occasions in the Torah, when circumcision, the Shabbat, Pesach for example are mentioned? There it talks about being destroyed from the people. Why then right here, it speaks of "accountability"? This word comes from the Hebrew word "drash", which means asking questions or interrogate someone. The word "midrash" has been derived from this word to describe a Jewish way of Bible study. Sometimes it is necessary to ask more questions. This is what happened during our trip. We all still have many questions, but that is a good thing. According to the Jewish people the Bible has been written in such a way, that we always want to ask questions

Is this the best-kept secret or the biggest deception of this time? Although certain things became clear during this trip, most people went home with more questions, than when they came. Rightly so, when these questions come from God! This is the best way to "midrash" with Him. As Christians (and as Jews) we are inclined to ask our questions to our rabbi or our pastor. We are searching for answers. Those answers then become the foundation of "our theology", on which we build our religion. But in my opinion, it ultimately undermines our relation with "Theo". Perhaps nowadays we consult others, someone well known and with a big ministry, or someone who writes good books. How often, just as an example, do we say: Jim says this or Eddy says that, but Iris says something different.



One of the milestones along the Way of the Patriarchs
Since our hearts have been turned back to the fathers, we have discovered spiritual milestones, which mark the way to the mystery of the restoration of Israel.



Gush Etzion



In Gush Etzion we learn about the pioneers of Judea and are deeply touched at the place where the last combatants in Judea fell, when they fought for the preservation of Jerusalem.



Not far from this battleground other pioneers still become victims of this on-going battle in Judea. In Oz VeGaon we were reminded of the courage and perseverance of Judah. We were addressed by Nadia Matar from Women in Green and a member of the Knesset.



Often the discussion goes like that. In the same way questions came from people in our group. One of those questions was about the opinion of Bob Fisher. This Messianic Jew has written several good books, in which he speaks of what he calls “the bizarre claim of the so called ten lost tribes”. What comes to me in his book is the strong ethnical division he makes, but on the other hand he highlights the spiritual unity in Yeshua. If that is so, is the role of Israel only physical? This again highlights the difference between natural Israel (the Jews) and the Church, to which both Jew and non-Jew belong if they believe in Yeshua. If Israel are God's people, who are we? Has God a separate plan with the Church and another plan for Israel? What about the Messianic Jews, do they belong to Israel on one side, but on the other side to the Church? Or are there a spiritual and a physical Israel? These are some of the questions, and there are many more, which arise when we begin to think about Israel. From the moment I started to understand the role of Ephraim in relation to Judah, I also began to understand the role of Israel. It's like the pieces of the puzzle are beginning to come together. But because we do not have all the pieces yet, one sees only his or her part of the puzzle, while the other pieces have become a bit vague, and therefore we do not see the whole picture yet. This reminded me of the TV game “Get the picture”. Even though you do not have all the pieces yet, you can already guess the whole picture.



Unfortunately there is a lot of disagreement about the final picture. A man like Bob Fisher has brought together a lot of good puzzle pieces, but the pieces we have brought together, he has not yet seen. If he just looks over his shoulder and compares his pieces with our pieces, he thinks it will never fit. His conclusion is that we either fit the pieces together wrongly, or we have found the wrong pieces. People can be so convinced about their own pieces of the puzzle that they do not understand that others also got their pieces of the puzzle from God, which they need to fit in the part God has entrusted to them.

What we like to do most, is showing others some of the beautiful pieces we have found, and put them together in front of them, hoping that, just like us, they will begin to see the whole picture.

Do you get the picture?

We see in Judah that some of whom you would least expect it, do understand who we are, and even talk about it together. However, they don't always know how to relate to these Christians that are coming out of their churches looking for Judah. Some don't use that name anymore, but they still believe in Jesus whom they now call Yeshua. Rabbi Jeremy Gimpel talks about this on the “Voice of Israel”.

https://soundcloud.com/voiceofisrael/inspired-nov04-2014?utm_source=Are+You+a+Lost+Soul+Radio%3F&utm_campaign=voice+of+israel+1&utm_medium=email

The theme is “Are you a Soul from the Lost Tribes of Israel?”



Most Messianic Jews do not understand, that there are believers from the nations who identify themselves with Ephraim, which might be the best-kept secret God is revealing today. That brings us to the inheritance of Ephraim: Samaria, where we learned more about the history of Ephraim and how important it is to know these things.

SAMARIA - EPHRAIM

When we visited mount Gerizim, the mountain of blessing, we looked down on Shechem and remembered not only the vision Hanoah had there about Ephraim, we were also reminded of Joseph, who received Shechem as an inheritance from Jacob (= Israel), after he gave the blessing of the first born to Ephraim and promised him he would become a fullness of nations (Gen.48:22). This was confirmed when the bones of Joseph were taken to Shechem and buried there (Jos.24:32). Joshua made a covenant with the people and warned them that they would become a witness against themselves, in case they would deny God (Jos.24:17-27).

On mount Ebal, the mountain of curse, we were reminded that if we deny God and come under the curse, there would always be an opportunity for reconciliation. Joshua, not only in name an image of Yeshua, but also in turning the curse into a blessing, did not build an altar on the mountain of blessing, as most people usually think, but on the mountain of curse (Jos.8:30-35). The whole congregation of Israel, which included women, children and strangers, were present there.



This is an example of how God sees all of Israel. It is made up of a mixed multitude, strangers included! That is why Paul says when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in and the hardness of the rest of Israel is removed, *SO* all Israel will be saved (Rom.11:25-26). This is not the Church and Israel, it is Israel the Church or for better words the whole congregation of Israel.

This mystery, how Israel will be restored, the Lord started to unfold, when Israel entered the Promised Land for the first time, led by Joshua of the tribe of Ephraim, together with Caleb of the tribe of Judah.

However, Israel fell apart. That was highlighted when Mickey, our guide in Samaria, took us to Peduel, to a beautiful viewpoint, called the "balcony of Israel". Why did he take us there? Mickey pointed to an Arab village, which is built on the historic site of Zereda. Someone, who plays an important role in God's plan with Ephraim, came from the village of Zereda (1 Kings 12:26). When he, Jeroboam, was on his way to Jerusalem, he met the prophet Ahijah, who told him, that he would become king over ten tribes of Israel, who would later be called the house of Israel or Ephraim. During the developments that followed God said, that everything happened because of His doing (1 Kings 12:24). That does not mean that all that happened to the northern kingdom of Israel, is the will of God. Eventually the ungodliness of Ephraim led to their scattering (as seed) among the nations. This was God's will and His way to eventually bring forth a harvest from Ephraim out of the nations, which will be restored to Israel. This is probably the best-kept secret God is revealing today, until the whole mystery of God, revealed to His servants the prophets, will be fulfilled at the blowing of the last trumpet (Rev.10:7).

How important is it to identify ourselves with Ephraim? Is it just a metaphor, which is not even mentioned in the New Covenant?

These are the kind of questions we talked about in the discussion, or rather dialogue, which transpired after the trip. In answering this question I would like to refer to someone from "Ephraim", besides Bob Fisher, whom we used as an example of a response from a Messianic Jew.

Victor Schlatter is a brilliant thinker and writer (Janny does not really like his style), who in a special way can challenge you with truth, which can be confirming and convincing. But he is not an apologist, like Bob Fisher. In his books the physical and spiritual world come together. In his first book "Where is the body?", he already wrote about Judah and Ephraim, which I was very happy about at the time. His last book is called "Genetically Modified Prophecies", in which the "lost tribes" are mentioned, even though his focus is not only on our physical origin. He brings together the spiritual and the physical aspects of God's plan, which we too believe are very important in understanding God's plan.



Hanoch is pointing to Joseph's tomb from the place where he saw the vision of the return of Ephraim.

See: <http://shevetachim.blogspot.nl/2011/02/letter-399-open-vision.html>



A military escort takes us to Mount Ebal.



The altar of Joshua, a place to think about the Master Plan of God



In Peduel Mickey (Judah) reads the story of Jeroboam (Ephraim).



Therefore we are not depending on our physical origin as an addition to our spiritual salvation (which we so often see in the Ephraimite movement). But when we see that the physical world, the whole creation, is a metaphor of the spiritual world, we will begin to understand the master plan of God and realize we do not need to turn to the tree of knowledge of good (and evil), as it has developed in the world, to for example determine our DNA to prove we are an Israelite.

Though Victor Schlatter, as a scientist, is from another caliber as we are, there are some similarities. Apart from the insights God has given us about the role of Judah and Ephraim in His plan, we have in fact both been missionaries on the same island. He in Papua New Guinea and we in West Papua! (His website: <http://www.spim.org.au/books>)

Which role has our DNA in the plan of God with Ephraim?

We do not believe that it is the purpose of God to prove through DNA that we originate from Ephraim (or any other tribe), but that He chose to fill the earth with His promise through the seed of Abraham. This physical seed can be inseminated spiritually. We have a clear example of this in the insemination of Yeshua. When we become believers, a spiritual insemination takes place in our physical man, which might only have a very small part of the DNA of Abraham (after centuries of mixing). Therefore it is said that we are born again from incorruptible seed (1 Pet.1:23). That is the same (spiritual) "seed" through which Yeshua was born. We all know this spiritual rebirth and that is why we begin to call ourselves "Born Again Believers", especially those who do not like to use the name Christian anymore, because of the church history they have broken away from. Since many believers have now realized we should be grafted into the Olive Tree, we have also begun to understand something about the "fullness of the gentiles" and therefore we might call ourselves "believers from the nations", perhaps also to not offend Judah. But when we speak about "being grafted in", this is not just a spiritual experience. Because when we get in touch with Judah, for whom DNA is very important, we begin to realize that our DNA somehow still plays a role in the plan of God. In some cases it becomes so important that people begin to look for "proof" that they belong to the family. This is also the case with the ones who have discovered something of the mystery of God's plan with Ephraim, by which the spiritual aspect gets lost or seems to get less important. But these are the two aspects, God emphasizes time and time again in His Word and through His creation.

How important then is it to call ourselves Ephraim?

You could say, that it is the side of the family in which we are reborn. Insemination took place in the rejected part of the family of Abraham. Lo-Ruchama has become Ruchama in the family of Hosea. Hosea, which has the same root and meaning as the name Yeshua, points us to the kinsmen redeemer, but is also an example of the Father of the family. Remarkably the word Lo-Ruchama, not loved, is derived from the word "racham", which means womb, the place where the insemination of the seed takes place. Because we are born again, we now know that we are loved and belong to His people. You do not need a DNA test to prove that! However, the physical DNA played a role in scattering the seed (and in it His promises) among the nations, in order to bring forth a great harvest.

Before we can really use the name Ephraim, we must understand that this name does not just refer to one tribe of Israel, but it is a generic name for the house of Joseph, which points to the gathering of the believers, or the fullness of the nations.

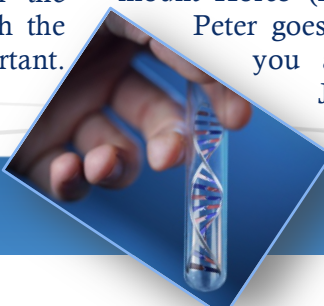
When Jeremiah says that Ephraim will get to know himself (Jer.31:19-20) and is called by the Father His dear son, you would say that the name is mighty important. The deeper meaning of the name points to the harvest, as a result of the sowing of God's people among the nations. Great will be the day of Jizreel, when the final harvest will be gathered in and all Israel will be saved (Hos.1:11).

Then the question remains, why did Yeshua and the apostles not talk about this?

In my opinion they did, but they used other metaphors or parables, for example the parable of the Prodigal Son. Someone from the group suggested that Paul compares us with Jews, who are circumcised of the heart (Rom.2:29). But this really is only one comparison, because in other places we are often referred to as "gentiles" (goyim).

Although they do not mention Ephraim, Paul and Peter refer to us as people who were once not loved, but are now beloved. They clearly make a connection between believers from the nations and Ephraim or the rejected Israelites of the Northern Kingdom (Rom.9:24-26 & 1 Pet.2:9-10). Peter calls us a royal priesthood, and in doing so he points to Israel, who was received as a holy nation, a kingdom of priests at mount Horeb (Ex.19:6). The amazing thing is that

Peter goes on to say: Dearly beloved, I warn you as sojourners and strangers. In the Jewish Bible we are called temporary residents there (1 Pet.2:11).





Here you see that in spite of the fact we have become part of the nation, we are still sojourners. Even though Paul in the letter to the Ephesians clarifies to us that we have become fellow heirs, he does not clearly say that we have returned to our inheritance. But perhaps after so many generations we have been alienated from the promises, we now need to learn again what these promises are.

In the letter to the Galatians Paul does not talk so much about our identity, but more about our position. We are no longer slaves! We have been redeemed from the curse: the punishment of sin is death, of which the Torah makes us aware. If we are truly free, the law will be written on our hearts, that is what Paul talks about in 2 Cor.3:3 and without saying it clearly, he refers to Jeremiah 31:31-33 and the whole message of that chapter. It also talks about knowing YHWH. Everybody will know Him, so we do not need the confirmation of our brothers. It is the anointing we received from Him that will teach us of all things (1 John 2:27).

Are all believers (born again Christians) Ephraim?

I do not believe that we can say that Ephraim stands for all believers from the nations (gentiles / heathens depending on the translation of goyim). However, it is clearly mentioned that there will be a fullness of gentiles, which seems to be an “amount” of people that will fill a void. God wants Israel to be as numerous as they should have been, if they had not fallen apart (Hos.1:10 & Zech.10:6-8).

We see undeniably that among Christians not everybody has the same love for Israel. But if you become aware of your adoption, just like in the natural, you want to know your original family. That is why you begin to search. It is clearly the Spirit who is leading us in that search and we believe God has started this movement, to ultimately reunite His family. This is one of the greatest mysteries that is being fulfilled today.

Because Ephraim is often seen as a “selected” or “elite” group, which feeds the idea that this is a kind of new replacement theology, it causes a lot of resistance and criticism. If we should call it a new theology, we better call it a “completion theology”.

Does God make a difference between believers?

I believe He does. At first a better description of a selected group would be a set apart or holy people. Yeshua says that many are called, but few are chosen (Mat.22:14). Peter says that we have to make our calling and election sure (2 Pet.1:10).

Maybe this is what God is asking from us right now. We can do this through studying, or by being instructed, but also by being obedient to His Word. For some people this means they have to live in the Land, while others are still waiting for “marching orders”.

Is it really necessary that we as Ephraimites should live within the larger borders of Israel and also make “aliyah”?

I do not believe that we should or even can make “aliyah” in the same way as Judah. I do not think it is a personal choice or preference to “live” in Israel. I think we have to listen very carefully to the instructions of God. I do not believe, as some rabbis suggest that we should go through some kind of “re-covenanting”, because this process already started when we repented and were born again and entered into the New Covenant. If we would follow the rabbis, we would deny how Yeshua redeemed us to the family. I also do not believe that our DNA should determine our return to the family, even though it plays a role in the plan of God.

When I was thinking myself about the possibility of making “aliyah”, God spoke and said, Iris would you like to be a citizen of the State of Israel? I realized that what I long for most, is that the Kingdom of God will be restored to Israel, just like the apostles asked for after the resurrection of Yeshua (Acts 1:6). It is that Kingdom I want to be part of. So, for me at this moment it is not the time to make “aliyah”, although spiritually I have already made “aliyah”.

Is it important that Ephraim unites himself?

After the trip during Succoth we have seen that people wanted to continue to meet in order to talk about these issues regarding Ephraim. Nobody really wants to start another denomination or movement. Because this movement has already been started by God Himself. Just like in the days of Jeroboam, when He divided Judah and Ephraim, He is now initiating the reunification of the two houses of Israel.

Even though we were originally open to partake in an Ephraim National Congress, the Lord has stopped us from becoming involved. Through the verses from Hosea 13:12-13, He began to make us aware about the need for Ephraim to repent first before even thinking about making plans to be reunited. These verses talk about the iniquity of Ephraim as being bound up and hidden, or as in other translations: his sin is stored away. The labor pains of a woman will come upon him, but he is like a child lacking wisdom, not knowing the time of his birth.



We asked ourselves is Ephraim ready to be born as a nation? Or will we produce an “Ishmael”, if we do not discern the right time? This reminded us of another verse about labour pains: “We were pregnant, we cringed, but it seemed like we gave birth to wind. We brought no salvation to the land and those inhabiting the world did not come to life” (Is.26:18). In dialogue with the group Isaiah 37:3 was also mentioned, which says: “Children are ready to be born, but there is no strength to bring them to birth”. Another remark was added to it:

I think the woman in labour is speaking to us, that we really should ask God for guidance and direction in the movement of Ephraim. We have seen that many leaders, who returned to the Hebrew roots of our faith, started to do their own thing and as a matter of fact returned to where they came from (religion). They only use different names now.

Buildings made by man are dangerous – we have left so many mistakes behind us –let us not make the same mistakes again.

Although most of us see that by God’s guiding hand Judah has been brought back to the Promised Land, we all agree (probably) that the State of Israel is not the final fulfillment of the promise of redemption to Israel. From the prophecies in the last chapters of Ezekiel (from 34) we know that they / we will return and that certain things will begin to happen in the Land. In the case of Judah this has been partly fulfilled, however Israel is not yet complete.

Should that be the reason to follow the example of the return of the Jewish people, as in the days of the first Jewish Zionist Congress?

We understand on the one hand this can be a source of inspiration for Ephraim, but should we not on the other hand walk in the way the Lord shows us? I was reminded of the words the Lord spoke to us: “Once more I will make a way through the wilderness”. According to Jewish tradition at the time of the first Exodus Ephraim left prematurely from Egypt, but was defeated in the process. Shouldn’t we be careful to not make the same mistake and move forward before His appointed time? And what kind of action should we take? The following points of action were suggested:

- Establish an acceptable definition of Nationhood
- Develop national awareness
- Create and maintain a global network of the House of Joseph
- Develop media tools to make “Ephraim” known to the general public
- Formulate, adopt and implement governmental principles

- Establish and maintain a National Fund
- Establish and maintain an Embassy in Israel
- Create and maintain administrative committees necessary for governmental functions

We do not want to discourage people to participate in this congress, which will be held in Ariel just after Shavuot, because if the Lord puts it on your heart to go, do go. But we would like to express our personal reservations.

We noticed that a “definition of nationhood” should be biblically based, but that it is not the intention of the Congress to discuss different theological views. On one hand we do understand this, because of the diversity in views about Ephraim, which would probably cause more division. But without a biblical foundation of unity what will be the strength of nationhood?

The other points mentioned for discussion, we feel are focused more on principles of this world, or in other words can become the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good (and evil), while missing the reason God is reuniting Judah and Ephraim, so that the nations will know that He, YHWH is sanctifying Israel (Ez.37:28). We were also reminded of the words of Yeshua: “My kingdom is not of this world”. Should we, as Ephraim, be part of a worldly system or of the new world order to become one with Judah?

However because, from having been Lo-Ammi, it has been made known to us that we are now God’s people (Ammi, My people), I do not believe we should be creating “another” nation, by establishing an Embassy of Ephraim in Israel.

I surely believe that the founding of the Christian Embassy was inspired by God, but it also made clear that Christians are a different people from the Jews, because an embassy represents another nation, another kingdom. By establishing an embassy of Ephraim or the B’ney Yoseph, we are actually saying: we belong to another nation. If we also combine this with a kind of government representing people in “exile”, we come close to the way the Palestinian Authority is representing their people. Even though their interests are far apart from ours, there are similarities, because Ephraim also in some way wants to return to his inheritance. Will Judah understand the difference?

If we will dwell on this a little more we do realize, we probably do not want to establish another nation, because we are the lost ones of the nation God has preserved throughout many generations.



That miracle makes it possible to be grafted into Israel. Because, as we have said before, we believe not only spiritual aspects play a role in the restoration of Israel, we therefore need to turn to God and ask Him how He wants to unite us as a nation. When Israel first became a nation they were gathered before Him as a people, also called a congregation, at mount Sinai. But now, Paul says, you have come to mount Zion, to the city of the Living God... See that you do not reject the One who is speaking... saying: "One more time I will shake, not only the earth but also heaven... in order for us to inherit a Kingdom that cannot be moved (Hebr.12:22-28). This is what Judah longs for, the coming of the Messiah and the restoration of the kingdom of God on earth. Yeshua taught us to pray for that Kingdom. That is why I do not regret I cannot make "aliyah" now, because I really do not want to be a part of the state of Israel, but I want to be a part of His Kingdom! In that desire I long to become one with Judah.

If that desire will grow stronger among Ephraim and is being fed by the word of God, a great rebirth of a nation will take place, greater than what happened in 1948. It will be a united Israel, as intended by God and mentioned in Isaiah 66:6-9, and it will be followed by the restoration of all things as mentioned in the continuing verses.

But what should Ephraim do?

Some people think Ephraim has brought forth much fruit and the time has come to come forth as one nation. But if you honestly look at Ephraim you will see a very divided nation, spread out over many continents, not really knowing who they are. What we see in Europe and also in Asia, people become aware of their relationship within the family of God, but still need to be instructed. In some translation of Jeremiah 31:19, it says that only after Ephraim repented, he was instructed or made known to himself and was full of remorse. Maybe it is like the verse in Hosea 13:12, mentioned before, that we need to be made aware of the sins of Ephraim that have been stored away and will lead to a national repentance. We believe that kind of repentance may only come after Ephraim is instructed about himself. Therefore, at the moment, especially in the Netherlands, but also when visitors come to Israel, we spend time teaching theses mysteries about the house of Joseph and how we have become a fullness of nations through the preaching of the gospel of Yeshua.

We do not want the seed that has been sown among the nations, to wither or go to waste, because according to Hosea the day of Jizreel (= God will sow) will be great, when the children of Judah and the children of Ephraim are gathered together and will appoint one head over themselves (Hos.1:11).

Before this happens, Hosea prophesied that although Ephraim has been fruitful among their brethren, the wind of the Lord will dry up their spring because of their iniquity (Hos.13:12-16). The punishment of Ephraim for their sins was supposed to last for 390 years (Ez.4:4-5), but because they did not repent, even in their exile, the punishment was increased sevenfold (Lev.26:18). The exile of Ephraim among the nations lasted 7 x 390 years. This means that 2730 years after having been deported from the land (around 720 BC) and being mixed as a seed among the nations, which has born much fruit (= Ephraim), the time of harvest has come. So the time of the great ingathering or the great return has come! Returning means repentance (Jer.31:18-20 & Hos.14:1-4). Hosea ends his prophetic message with these words:

Let the wise understand these things and let the discerning know them. For the ways of YHWH are straight, and the righteous will walk in them... (14:9)



A beautiful song about the return of Ephraim:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oV70RLfZIII>

During our trip through Samaria we also visited Shiloh. Shiloh is situated in the mountains of Ephraim. It is the place where YHWH lived among His people in the Promised Land for the first 369 years. However, He gave up his dwelling place in Ephraim. He rejected the tent of Joseph and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim. He chose the tribe of Judah, mount Zion which He loved and made it His sanctuary (Ps.78:60 & 67-69).

About 2000 years ago God also gave up His permanent dwelling place in Zion, to live in tents of the Holy Spirit among the nations. But now He longs to return, or as He Himself spoke to us and said:

"I too want to make "aliyah". I want to go home!" What is He waiting for? He awaits the restoration of His people and the restoration of the place He has chosen for His name. This takes us to Jerusalem.



JERUSALEM

It took a while before David found out which place God has chosen for His name. But eventually, through a series of events and a challenge by God Himself, it was made clear to him, that the house of God should be built on mount Moriah.

The two most important places, we always visit in Jerusalem are the Temple Mount and the City of David. One could say, is it not more important to visit the Garden Tomb or even the Church of the Holy Sepulcher? In that case, we would prefer to visit the Garden Tomb, because that surely is very a good place to find peace to contemplate the death and resurrection of Yeshua. However, this also applies to the Temple Mount. That is the place of reconciliation, where we are reminded of the many sacrifices that took place, and how the Father was willing to sacrifice His son for the atonement of our sins. From the grave Yeshua takes us to the Father and to the house of His Father. His Father's house is a house of prayer for all nations. It is the place of which YHWH, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says: "There are yet others I will gather, besides those gathered already" (Is.56:7-8). This looks very much like a saying of Yeshua: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring.... and they shall be one fold and one Shepherd" (John 10:16).

In the same context Isaiah mentions that strangers who have joined themselves to YHWH, who keep the Sabbath and hold on to the covenant, should NOT say: "YHWH has separated me from His people". On the contrary He wants to make us part of His people! (Is.56:3-8)

After having lived in the City of David ourselves for eight years, it is always special to return and see the latest developments.

This is where Iris received the following word:

"Son (daughter) of man, see with your eyes and hear with your ears and pay attention to all that I will show you, because the reason I brought you here is so that I could show this to you and you need to proclaim everything you see to the house of Israel" (Ez.40:4).

We still talk about what we have seen in Jerusalem, even though we have already moved to the desert.

We first needed to learn how great God's love is for the place He has chosen for His name, in order to become involved in His return to Jerusalem.

"Now since you know My love for Jerusalem", said the Lord, "I am going to graft you into My people." Many have asked us: "But you have already been grafted into His people?" Spiritually that is a true. Many people now understand this, but has it already become a reality?

Maybe some Jews understand what God has been revealing to the believers from the nations, but most of them do not understand this mystery, Paul has been talking about. Therefore we decided this year to participate in the Jerusalem March as Ephraim, expressing that we are looking for our brothers. Just like Joseph at first had been looking for his brothers, but eventually became a stranger to them, whom they did not recognize, until at the time he revealed himself to his brothers. This was an emotional moment, even in the streets of Jerusalem during the march. When Joseph wept, it says that the Egyptians and Pharaoh heard it. One day we believe many will hear the weeping of the great reconciliation that will take place among God's people. This was only a small beginning.





JERUSALEM MARCH



It was a great opportunity to tell people who we are. The songs we sang about Ephraim moved the people to tears.



According to Hanoch we have made history. Because it is "His Story" we are glad we can be involved..



Hanoch is so happy Judah and Ephraim have found each other.





THE DESERT

Ezekiel describes how the glory of God has left the Temple through the East gate and placed itself on the mountain at the eastside of the city (Ez 9:3-11:23). According to Jewish tradition this happened in ten stages and in the same way the “shekinah” of God will return from the desert to His throne. The word “shekinah” comes from the Hebrew word “shachan” that means living or dwelling somewhere. It does not appear in the Bible, but is used by the Jews to describe the presence of God in particular in the Temple.

The first dwelling place of God among His people was the tabernacle in the desert. He journeyed with them to the Promised Land and as mentioned before, His first residence in the Land was Shiloh in Ephraim. Thereafter He eventually “moved” to mount Zion, now known as the Temple mount. At the destruction of the second temple, the glory of God returned to His throne in heaven. One could say, that Yeshua has gone before Him and with His return, we can expect that after Yeshua will have put all enemies under His feet (1 Co.15:25), God will return to the place He chose for His name.

During the trip we might not have been aware that we have followed that road of glory. We do not know exactly at which point in the desert His glory will return to Jerusalem. We do know that the mountain at the eastside of Jerusalem is the place where He will put down “His feet” (Zech.14:4).

Because the Lord spoke to us, that He wanted to meet us in the desert, we moved there two years ago. We are aware that this was not just for a short visit, but for an appointed time determined by Him, which is connected to the words He has been speaking to us and we refer to as the so called “one more times”. In this case He said: “One more time I will make a way through the wilderness”.

Because of the prophetic meaning of “Bozrah”, He has led us to the place where we now live in Hatzeva. We have already told you more about this in our newsletters. However many of you might never have considered the thought that the Messiah will come from Bozrah (cf. Is.63:1-8). Jewish people understand this prophecy in light of the Judgment that will come over the nations at the time of the recompense for the controversy of Zion (Is.34:1-8).

At the end of our journey we took time to consider the importance of Bozrah at the end time and the mention of a Holy Highway on which the redeemed will return to Zion (Is.35:8-10). This led of course to more questions from the group. But sharing our thoughts together has helped to discover more of the plan of God.

Do you really expect that the Lord will gather all the redeemed in such a small place like Bozrah, before returning to Jerusalem?

Of course we do not expect that the Lord will literally gather all of His sheep (Bozrah means sheepfold) in Bozrah. First of all according to the prophecy or vision of Isaiah the outpouring of the wrath of God, compared with treading a winepress, will have taken place already, when the One who is mighty to save appears from Bozrah. So if we are made to think of a physical army gathered for battle, it would be more likely this would have taken place somewhere in the Arabian desert behind the mountains of Edom, which is not a strange thing to think about today, when you look at what ISIS is doing there. Other people think that the gathering of armies will take place in the Jezreel Valley near Megiddo, because of the connection with the armies gathered at Armageddon. Others would place this end time battle a bit further south of Bozrah near Petra. What I see and want to show people is the prophetic meaning of Bozrah. God often uses physical places as an example of what will be happening in the spiritual world. So how do we look at Bozrah? I look at it as an image of gathering the sheep, which will have become one flock and the Breaker, the one leading them, will pave the way for the army to pull out. Portions like Micah 2:12-13 and Rev.19:11-21, but also Is.13:1-6 seem to describe a similar end time scenario about which we could teach in great detail.

However, if you start to understand more about the day of the Lord, the day of YHWH, and our participation in it, you will become aware that this will not just be a physical battle at the end time. I see this “meeting” in the desert and the gathering in Bozrah in relation to the meeting in the air, mentioned by Paul. But not in order to escape as in the rapture, but still like a kind of a rapture, which will take us to a place where we can participate in carrying out the wrath of God. Because when the judgments of God will be in the earth, all inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness (Is.26:9). This fits with another picture of Judah (the bow) which He will bend and fill with Ephraim (His arrow) in order to be used by Him at the end time (Zech.9:13). Because we believe this can only happen at the time of the first resurrection, the end time battle will be a “supernatural” battle, in which we are called to become involved in. This will usher in the millennium, which will lead to the restoration of the Kingdom of God on earth.



THE END OF THE JOURNEY

Prophetic farewell

We ended our journey with the “havdalah”. It was not only literally the end of the Sabbath, but also the end of a special “sabbatical time” in the Land. I think that the symbols of the “havdalah” were very appropriate to end this journey. At the end of the Sabbath and at the start of the normal weekdays a special candle with several wicks is lit to show that the Sabbath has enlightened us. It becomes a kind of torch, which shines in the darkness. We hope that all participants of this journey went home with a burning torch and that His light will continue to give new insights and revelation to them. That is why some Jewish families at the end of the Sabbath dip their fingers in the wine in which they have just put out the “havdalah” candle and touch the eyes of their children, blessing them with the life and the fire of the Sabbath. After drinking from a “cup that overflowed”, which is also customary for the closing of Shabbat, we blessed each other with revelation and deeper insights into the plan of God.

Besides this “havdalah” ending, we also had a prophetic ceremony at what we call the “Chavah Tree”. It is a pomegranate tree, which we planted in Tamar in accordance with a dream Iris had in 1978. In it she saw herself presenting a fruit to Yeshua, who put that fruit back onto the tree. Thereafter the Lord spoke and said, “Iris, like the first woman who took the fruit from the tree, I will use you to bring the fruit back on the tree”. We believe that this is an image of the restoration of all things, in which the Lord wants each one of us to participate. Just like Eve, as a rib that came from the side of the first Adam, we have come from the wounded side of the last Adam. Adam and Eve are the only people on earth, who were not born like the rest of mankind. This also applies to the last Adam, Yeshua, and maybe also to the “woman” (cf. the mystery of the Bride) who came forth from His side. Therefore we might call her the last Chavah (Eve).

As a symbolic and prophetic act, we took a pomegranate and brought it back to the tree. Of course we ourselves cannot put it back on the tree, but by bringing it symbolically at the feet of Yeshua, we expressed our desire for Him to return as our Redeemer. We know that because of His death on a tree (Gal.3:13), in a sense, the fruit has already been returned to the tree. However there still remains a desire for the redemption of all things.





We have tried to give you an impression of "not just" a journey during the Feast of Tabernacles and the reason why it was so special. We have also tried to include you in the dialogue that came out of it and is still continuing. We hope this might challenge you to do some more personal research before God and maybe He will allow you to join us on the next journey during Succoth of which we will send you some more details in another email. So, maybe we can say: "See you next (biblical) year in Jerusalem!"

Wishing you Blessings and Shalom,

Janny & Iris.

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The dialogue that was started in Israel, will continue



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