



### LESSON 4

# WHO'S WHO?

## THE DESCENDANTS OF ISRAEL

We learned in Lesson 3 that God referred to His People Israel as “sheep” in the Old Scriptures, and Jesus used this same comparison in the New Scriptures. These “sheep” were also described as “lost.” We know that God “divorced” (put away) Israel and brought about her captivity and deportation into Assyria and Babylon. Only a small remnant later returned to Jerusalem. What, then, happened to the vast majority of Israelites taken into captivity? Did they disappear from history and cease to exist as a people (as is commonly taught throughout Christendom), or can their descendants be identified today? And, what about the blessings promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob regarding their descendants? Did those promises end when the Old Covenant ended (1 Sam. 8), or has God continued to honor them? These questions will be the subject of this lesson.

## GOD'S PROMISES TO HIS PEOPLE

The first eleven chapters of the Bible cover many centuries, including awesome and terrifying calamities. Then in chapter twelve God speaks to one man, Abraham. From this chapter on, for over a thousand pages, the Bible is about Abraham and his descendants.

God made **promises** to Abraham, and He repeated those promises (**covenants**) to Isaac and Jacob. All of these promises and covenants have to do with the future of Jacob's children. The vast majority of the Scriptures deals exclusively with these “heirs” of the covenants and the promises. The Bible calls these people “the children of Israel.”

### COVENANT

A **covenant** is an agreement between two or more parties to do or refrain from doing some act(s). It is sometimes called a compact or a contract. The Hebrew word is **beriyth** meaning “a compact.” The Greek word is **diatheke** (*dia*: “through,” and *tiheimi*: “to place or set.” Thus, “covenant” means “a setting or placing” of an agreed set of terms.

Covenants can be “unilateral” (where the party on one side is solely responsible to perform the terms) such as God's promises to Abraham and his descendants; or they can be “bilateral” (where parties on both sides must perform) such as the Old Covenant between God and Israel at Mount Sinai.

In effect, promises made by God can be covenants certain to be carried out. A covenant is in force as long as the terms of it are operative. The viability of a covenant rests upon the obligation of the named parties to perform and/or obey the rules and conditions stated in the covenant.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

1. In Genesis 12:2, God promised Abram that He would make of him a great \_\_\_\_\_.
2. God told Abram, in Genesis 13:16, that He would make his seed as the \_\_\_\_\_ of the earth.
3. In Genesis 15:5, God promised Abram that his \_\_\_\_\_ would be as the stars of heaven.

### Read Genesis 17.

4. In verse 2, God told Abram that He would make a **covenant** with him and would \_\_\_\_\_ him exceedingly.
5. In verses 4 and 5, God called him Abraham and said that he would be a father of many \_\_\_\_\_.
6. In verse 7, God's covenant with Abraham was that He would be a God to him and to his \_\_\_\_\_ after him.
7. God said, in verses 19 and 21, that He would establish an everlasting covenant with \_\_\_\_\_ and with his seed after him.
8. According to Genesis 28:3-4, Jacob was to become a \_\_\_\_\_ of people and was to receive the blessing of \_\_\_\_\_.
9. In Genesis 28:14, God told Isaac's son, Jacob that his seed shall be as numerous as "the \_\_\_\_\_ of the earth." (Compare with Genesis 13:16.)
10. God told Jacob (Israel), in Genesis 35:11, that a \_\_\_\_\_ and a company of \_\_\_\_\_ would be of him.
11. After the people of Israel cried unto God because of their bondage in Egypt, Exodus 2:24 says that God remembered His \_\_\_\_\_ with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
12. Considering the promises made in the above verses, would it make any sense that God would destroy or forget the majority of Abraham's descendants? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

The verses above, along with others, make it plain that God's promises to Abraham were passed to Jacob and his descendants (Israel). These descendants of Israel's patriarchs were to be a great number of people and would become a multitude of nations.

However, it is a common teaching throughout the church world that when God caused the millions of Israelites to be driven from the land of Palestine into captivity, He discarded the majority of them forever; thus, they became lost to Him. According to this distorted line of reasoning, all that remained of the vast numbers of God's people were a small number of "Jews" who moved to Jerusalem under the reign of Cyrus. Did God, in fact, cast away the majority of His people, thus negating the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

## FIND THE ANSWERS

1. In Romans 11:1-5, did God reserve a “remnant” of Israel? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
2. In Psalms 94:14, would God “cast off” and “forsake” all His people? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
3. According to Jeremiah 32:40, will God “turn away” from His people? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
4. Considering the above verses, does it make sense that God would forever cast away and forsake His remnant whom He sent into captivity? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
5. Ezekiel 34:6 tells us God’s sheep (flock) are scattered. In verse 11, does God say that He will “search” and “seek” them out? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
6. In Luke 19:10, Jesus said He came to “seek” and “save” that which was \_\_\_\_\_.
7. In Matthew 15:24, Jesus said He was sent to the “lost sheep of the house of \_\_\_\_\_.”
8. Considering these verses, was Jesus sent to fulfill God’s promise to Abraham? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
9. In Matthew 10:6, the disciples were sent to the “lost” sheep of the house of \_\_\_\_\_.
10. In light of the above verse, would it make any sense for Jesus to send His disciples to people who no longer existed? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

### Read Jeremiah 31:31-34

11. Prophesying to the Israelites in captivity, Jeremiah says in verse 31 that God will make a New Covenant with the House of \_\_\_\_\_ and the House of \_\_\_\_\_. (Hebrews 8:8)
12. In verse 33, God would put His \_\_\_\_\_ in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and He would be their God and they would be His \_\_\_\_\_. (Hebrews 8:10)
13. Considering the above two verses, is it logical that Jesus’ New Covenant would be for non-Israelites who could not relate to the Old Covenant? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
14. In the closing book of the Old Scriptures, Malachi 3:6, God says to Israel, “I am the LORD, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are NOT \_\_\_\_\_.”
15. Would the above statement have any value if God had not preserved a remnant of Israel (Jacob’s descendants) according to his promise to Abraham? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

The preceding verses of Scripture show that God does not cast away His saints. In fact, He made additional promises to them while they were in captivity. If God did not cast away and forsake His saints in Israel, then how is He fulfilling the promises He made to their forefathers?

## **FIND THE ANSWERS**

### **Read Luke 1:67-73**

1. Speaking of Jesus' birth, Zacharias said in verse 72 that Jesus had come to perform the mercy promised to Israel's \_\_\_\_\_ and to remember God's holy \_\_\_\_\_.
2. In verse 73, Zacharias said that Jesus had come to remember God's oath which He swore to father \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Would the above statements have any real meaning if Jesus' primary mission was to non-Israelites? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No.
4. In Romans 9:4, Paul said the covenants and promises of God pertained to \_\_\_\_\_.
5. In Romans 15:8, Paul stated that Jesus Christ confirmed the \_\_\_\_\_ made unto the fathers (of Israel).
6. Considering the long-range implications of God's promises to the Israel fathers, would the above statements by Paul make sense if most of the Israelites had ceased to exist? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No.
7. Chapter 36 of Ezekiel describes the future restoration of scattered Israel. In verse 26, God said He would give them a new \_\_\_\_\_ and put a new \_\_\_\_\_ in them.
8. Isaiah spoke of a future Jerusalem in Isaiah 62:2, and that it would be called by a new \_\_\_\_\_.

**NOTE:** The faithful descendants of Israel later became known as "Christians." The "New Covenant" was instituted by King Jesus, whereby He is "quickening" (giving life to) them by the power of His spirit (See Hebrews 8:10.) This subject will be covered more in later lessons.

The promises God made to Israel's fathers included an increase in numbers, blessings of the land, and of the sea, that God would be their God, and they would be His people. He also promised them a new and better covenant. These promises would have little significance if Israel devolved into a band of Christ-hating Jews. To embrace the theory that only a handful of Israelites remained after the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities would make a mockery of God's promises and mercy ... plus it would diminish the significance of Jesus' redemptive work which was first to the lost sheep of the House of Israel (Mtt. 10:6, 15:24).

God, unlike man, is faithful in keeping His promises and covenants. He did not abandon His people Israel even though the majority of Israelites abandoned Him (1 Sam. 8). The descendants of the millions of Israelites taken into captivity have continued to migrate and multiply over the centuries. The following summary traces the history of racial Israel from the captivity period to modern times.

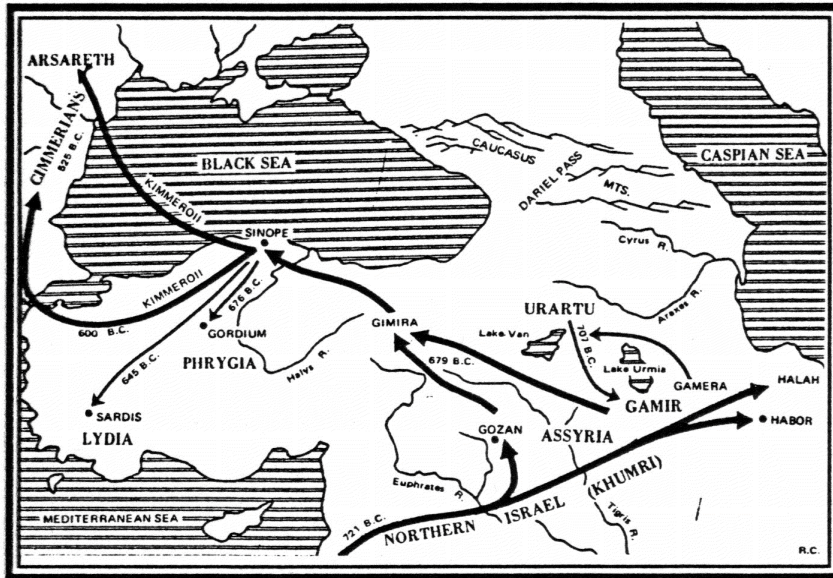


# ISRAEL IN HISTORY

In tracing the steps of our Israelite ancestors in their westward migration, it is important to realize that secular history often did not use the terms "Israel" and "Israelites" in referring to them (nor to us, their descendants). We must look for secular names if we hope to follow them through secular history.

For example, Assyrian historical stone writings found by archaeologists at Nimrud refer to the Israelites as "**Khumri**" named after Israel's king Omri. "Omri" in Hebrew begins with the consonant "Gayin" which was pronounced as guttural "Gh" or "Kh." It is the first letter in "Gaza." "Omri" would have pronounced "Ghomri" which became "Khumri" in Assyrian. Later Assyrian cuneiform writings, in the form of frontier post reports (707 B.C.), refer to these same people as "**Gamera**" or "**Gimira**."

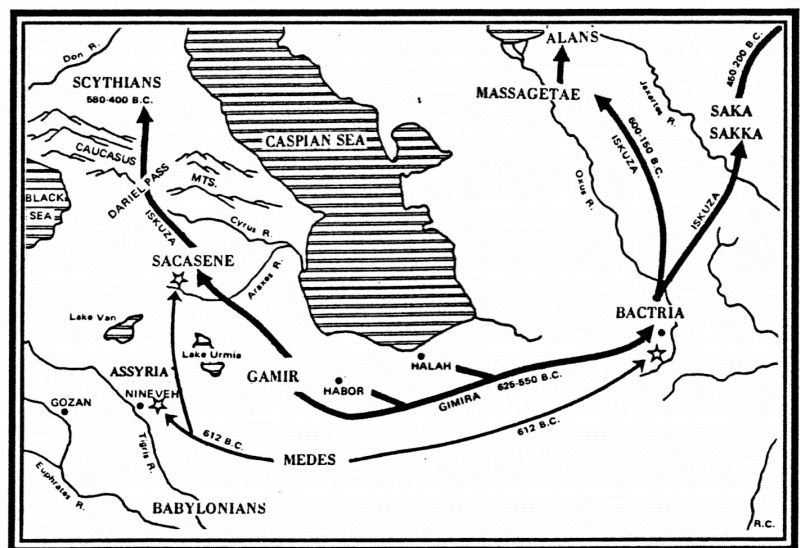
Assyrian tablets recorded (about 679 B.C.) that the Assyrian army defeated the **Gimira** with large numbers of them (Israelites) escaping the shores of the Black Sea. Greek records refer to these Gimira as "**Kimmeroii**" which is translated into English as "**Cimmerian**." Greek historical records indicate that the Cimmerians captured the Kingdom of **Phrygia** (695 B.C.) and later **Lydia** (662 B.C.). Subsequently the Lydians (about 600 B.C.) drove them out of Asia Minor into the Carpathian regions, called Ar-sareth or Mountains of Sereth. The map (left) traces the movements of these Israelites according to their secular names.



Israel – Khumi – Gamera – Gimira – Kimmeroii – Cimmerians

serving part of the name Arsareth. Since "ar" in Hebrew meant "mountain" (symbolic of "nation" or "city"), it is probable that Arsareth was a city – the city of Sereth located near the Sereth River northwest of the Black Sea.

When the Assyrians were under attack by both the Medes and Babylonians, the main body of Israelites in Media accepted an alliance with Esarhaddon which allowed them to establish colonies in Sacasene in the north and Bactria in the east. (See map at the right.) The two colonies came under pressure from the Medes after Assyria fell in 612 B.C. to the Medes and Babylonians, causing the main body of Israelites in Sacasene to cross the Araxes River, passing northward through the Daryl Pass (Daryal or Israel Pass) in the Caucasus Mountains and occupy the steppe regions of South Russia. There they became known by the Greek name "**Scythians**."



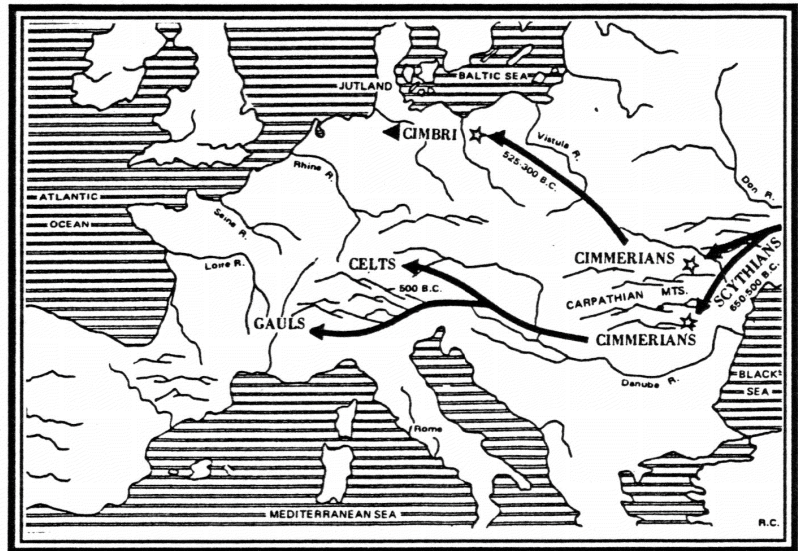
(Israel – Khumri) – Gimira – Iskuza – Scythians = Saka – Massagetae

Those Israelites that had settled east in Bactria migrated still further east into Central Asia, some even as far as the borders of China. Most of our history of this eastern division of Israelites is found in Persian inscriptions which refer to the Israelites as "**Saka**" or "**Sacae**." The Assyrians called these colonies **Gimira**, but later "**Iskuza**," a name which may have been derived from "**Isaaca**," or **House of Isaac**, the name which the Israelites called themselves. In 1847, Henry Rawlinson copied the inscription off the Behistun Stone. The inscription is approximately 15 meters high by 25 meters wide and 100 meters up a limestone cliff from an ancient road connecting the capitals of Babylonia and Media in western Iran. It was authored by Darius the Great (522-485 B.C.) The Behistun Stone has the same inscription written in three languages – Persian, Elam and Babylonian. The name "**Saka**" in the old Persian and Elamite inscriptions is rendered **Gimira** in the Babylonian version.

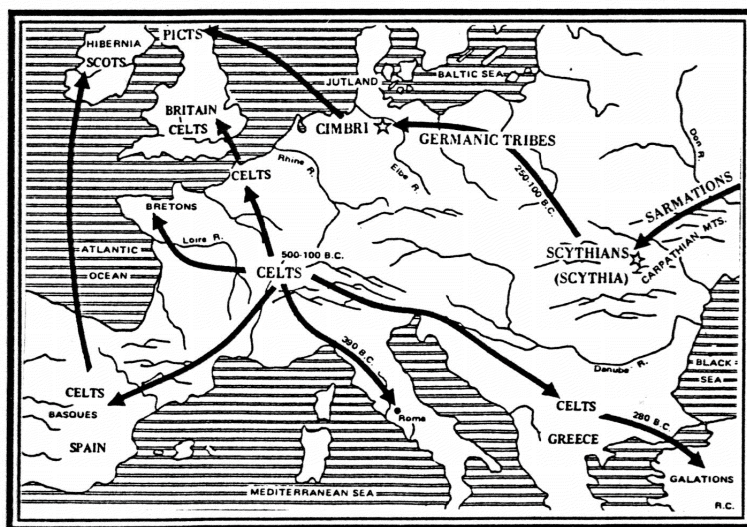
When Nineveh fell in 612 B.C. The Assyrian Empire was split between the Medes and Babylonians, with the Medes taking over the territory to the north and northwest and the Babylonians assuming control over the lands to the south and southwest. The Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, in a series of invasions against the Southern Kingdom of Judah, captured and deported the remnant of Israelites in that area. Finally moving against Jerusalem he captured the city and took the balance of the nation of Judah to Babylon.

In 539 B.C. Cyrus, King of Persia, overthrew the Babylonian Empire. He then sent a remnant of Judah to Jerusalem where they carried Cyrus' state religion of Zoroastrianism. Cyrus commissioned Zerubbabel to build him a temple in Jerusalem 539 – 500 B.C..

Meanwhile, the **Scythian** Israelites, who migrated north through the Daryal Pass (Pass Of Israel), began moving westward and came into collision with the **Cimmerian** Israelites who had earlier migrated around the west of the Black Sea. The Cimmerians were consequently driven north and west. A small group moved into the regions of the Baltic where the Romans called them by the abbreviated name of **Cimbri**. The Greeks gave the same account but called them "**Germirians**." The main body migrated as scattered bands into South Germany between 500 and 450 B.C. and became known as **Celts** and **Gauls**. (See map above.)



Cimmerians – Celtic tribes



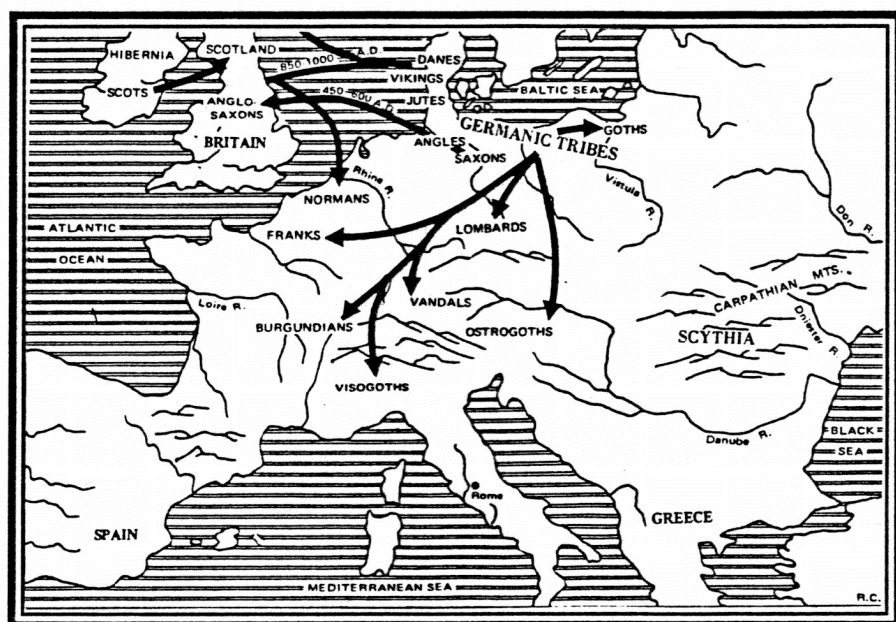
Israel Migrations

By the end of the 4th century B.C., **Scythians** in South Russia came under attack by "Sarmations" and were driven north toward the Baltic regions, pushing the **Cimbri** Israelites west to Jutland (N. Denmark, the Cimbrian Peninsula) and to the coasts of Holland and France. As the **Celts** spread west and north across France, some moved across the English Channel into Britain. About 390 B.C., one group invaded Italy and sacked Rome. Around 280 B.C., others reached Greece, and as they migrated back into Asia Minor, the Greeks called them "**Galations**." (See map at left.) This would indicate that Paul's letter to the Galations" were to his kindred Israelites.



To prevent the confusion between the “Sarmations” (who now occupied “Scythia”) and the original “Scythians,” the Romans began calling them by their Greek name “**Germirian**” or “**German**” for the genuine “Scythian” (“Germanus” being the Latin word for “genuine”). Thus, in Roman records, the name “Scythian” was dropped in favor for **German**. The **Cimbri** were finally driven out of their area by the **German** Scythians. A residue of one group reached Spain, while the main body reached Italy where they were almost wiped out by the Roman legions. A few Cimbri did escape to northern Britain to become the **Picts**. The Celts continued to pour into Britain to form the “bedrock” of the **British** race. One group in Spain (the Iberian Peninsula) were called “the **Iberes**” (the Gaelic name for “Hebrews”), moved into Ireland as **Scots**. Those remaining in Spain became known as Basques; others, in France, became known as **Bretons**.

During the succeeding centuries the Scythian Germans broke up into many divisions, possibly in some instances into their original Israel tribal families. These groups formed the **Goths, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Danes**, and **Vikings** (to name just a few). Then other Germanic tribes poured into the lands vacated by the Celts and established the Gothic nations of the **Vandals, Lombards, Franks, Burgundians** and **Ostrogoths**.



Scythians – Germanic tribes

Between 450 and 600 A.D. Some of the Angles and Saxons moved into Britain as **Anglo-Saxons**. Between 850 and 1000 A.D. The Danes and Vikings raided the coasts of Britain, establishing some colonies, while others settled in Iceland and Greenland. One group moved into France as **Normans**. The Celtic **Scots** of Ireland, for the most part, moved into northern Britain and established the Nation of Scotland.

(Some of the preceding information and maps are taken from Sheldon Emry's *Heirs Of The Promise*)

The preceding “synopsis” helps to answer two great mysteries of history: (1) What happened to the millions of Israelites who were believed to have “disappeared” from history south of the Caucasus; (2) Where did the countless thousands of Scythians and Cimmerians come from that seemingly “appeared from nowhere” north of the Caucasus – both at the same time in history. There is no longer any “mystery.” They were one and the same people. **They were migrating Israelites.** The so-called “lost tribes of Israel” really were never lost. They only lost their identity as they migrated westward over the centuries. They were pioneers in search of lands of their own.

Here we see the fulfillment of God’s promises to Israel as they migrated to their “appointed” places: to western Europe, to the Isles in the west, and then on to America. The New Covenant and Kingship of Christ led many of our pioneer ancestors westward as they sought freedom and new frontiers.

## THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO ISRAEL

After the death and raising of Jesus, His disciples preached the gospel (good news) of the Kingdom of God and the present Reign of King Jesus. This good news was delivered first to the Israelites in Judea and then Samaria, and then carried to dispersed Israel in the nations. The new and better covenant promised to Israel was unfolding. Since then, the Beast System has fought against it and caused confusion world-wide. But God still has a remnant of Israelites who are not led astray by the deceptions of the churches.

### FIND THE ANSWERS (Refer to map on page 40)

1. Acts 1:8, Jesus told the disciples they would be His witnesses in \_\_\_\_\_ and in all \_\_\_\_\_, and in \_\_\_\_\_, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.  
(Note the geographical order given for the spreading of the news of Christ's Reign.)
2. In what city did the disciples first preach the Gospel after Jesus' raising? (Acts 1:12; 2:1 & 5)  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who was Peter preaching to in Acts 2:14 & 22, and 3:12? \_\_\_\_\_
4. In Acts 8:5, where did Philip go to preach Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
5. According to Acts 9:3 & 20, where did Paul first preach Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Acts 11:19 indicates that the word was preached as far as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Acts 11:26 tells us the disciples were called \_\_\_\_\_ first in Antioch (Syria).
8. According to Acts 16:6, in what region did Paul and Timothy preach? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Acts 16:9 & 12, record the preaching of Paul and Timothy in the land of \_\_\_\_\_.
10. According to Romans 1:7, Paul wrote this letter to the Christian Israelites in \_\_\_\_\_.
11. 1 Corinthians 1:2 and 2 Corinthians 1:1 indicate that Paul wrote these letters to the Christian Israelites (ecclesia) in the city of \_\_\_\_\_.
12. According to Galatians 1:2, Paul wrote this letter to the Christian Israelites (ecclesia) in the Roman province of \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Ephesians 1:1 tells us that Paul wrote this letter to the Christian Israelites (saints) which were at the city of \_\_\_\_\_.
14. According to Philippians 1:1, Paul wrote to the Christians Israelites (saints) at the city of \_\_\_\_\_.



### **FIND THE ANSWERS** (Refer to map on page 40)

1. According to Colossians 1:2, Paul and Timothy wrote to the Christian Israelites (saints and faithful brethren) in the city of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The first verses of 1 and 2 Thessalonians indicate that Paul, Silvanus and Timothy were writing to the Christian Israelites (ecclesia) in \_\_\_\_\_.
3. According to James 1:1, this letter was written to the \_\_\_\_\_ tribes (of Israel) scattered abroad.
4. 1 Peter 1:1 says that Peter wrote his two letters to the \_\_\_\_\_ scattered throughout the Roman provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (all in Asia Minor).

### **CHRISTIAN ISRAEL**

The preceding verses of Scripture clearly show that the Gospel was carried to dispersed Israelites in the areas of Asia Minor and Europe. As we saw earlier, these were the areas into which the Israelites migrated as they chose to separate from the Jewish influence in Judea after Jesus ascended his Throne. God had salted these lands with Israelites in preparation to receive the preaching of the Gospel of Christ and His Kingdom and the establishment of the New Covenant. These descendants of dispersed Israel were the same people the English translators of the Bible mislabeled "Gentiles." These were the people (nations) to which Christ sent Paul and the apostles to "bear His name" (Acts 1:8; Acts 9:15).

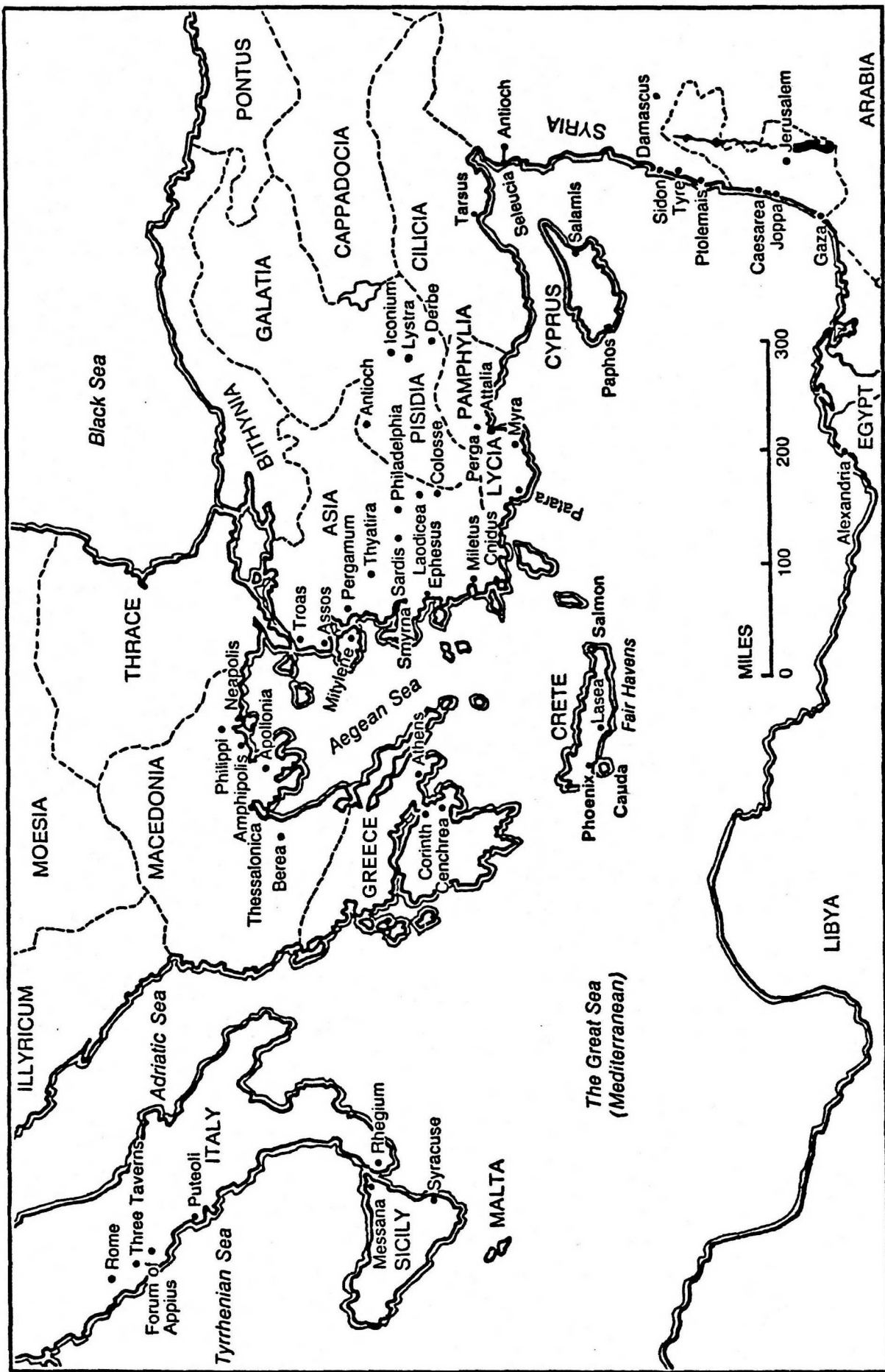
Secular history records the preaching of this same Gospel throughout Europe, Ireland, Scotland, and England. With the invention of the printing press, God provided the means by which the Scriptures were made available to all of dispersed Israel throughout Europe, bringing with it the Age of Enlightenment, the Reformation, and the Age of Discovery. But with progress came commerce, and the Beast System follows close behind commerce. The bankers of the Old World were plotting their conquest of the New World.

An undeveloped continent to the west, "The New World," attracted pioneers. British and European Israelites initiated a migration to this new American wilderness, that began as a trickle and later became a flood. They called America "The Wilderness" and "New Canaanland." The pioneers came to find freedom and to escape the Old World Beast System that had spoiled Britain and Europe.

God's sheep (Israel) kept moving westward, away from the corrupting and enslaving serpent systems of the old lands of their captivity and the Jewish/Babylonian corruption. God drew them "one of a city and two of a family" as they sought Zion. They migrated westward to find freedom to worship Christ. Christian pioneer families learned knowledge and understanding (Jeremiah 3:14,15). In the early histories, they called themselves "the seed of Abraham." They gave their children and villages Israel names, and God blessed them. But in time, the Beast System followed to take a spoil as it had in England and Europe.

True Christianity (New Jerusalem) spread westward, carried by pioneers who were descendants of the Israel forefathers – God's chosen people. The marks of New Jerusalem's blessings can be seen in them. However, many Israelites chose to follow the Beast System and are still blinded to their true ancestry. These have accepted the false Judaized teachings of the churches ... that they are non-Israelites. They are also blinded to the truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, to the present reign of King Jesus, and to the meaning of the New Covenant. They have been Judaized on these crucial doctrines as well.

The majority of Israelites today live as "children of the flesh" rather than "children of the spirit." What do these terms mean? What did Paul mean when he said in Romans 9:6 that "they are not all Israel which are of Israel"? Who are the real "children of promise" and "heirs of the kingdom"? Who is the "remnant" and the "elect" spoken of in the New Scriptures? These questions will be the subject of the next lesson.



MAP OF PLACES MENTIONED IN ACTS AND THE EPISTLES



## ANSWER KEY

### LESSON 4

## WHO'S WHO?

#### Page 32

1. nation (speaking of Israel)
2. dust (indicating vast numbers)
3. seed (speaking of his descendants)
4. multiply (indicating many descendants)
5. nations (including Israel nations)
6. seed (referring to Israel)
7. Isaac
8. multitude; Abraham
9. dust (indicating vast numbers)
10. nation; nations
11. covenant (promises of blessings)
12. No (they would be empty promises)

#### Page 33

1. Yes
2. No (nor forsake His inheritance)
3. No (He never abandons his sheep)
4. No (God is faithful and just)
5. Yes (God will cause this to happen)
6. lost (physically and spiritually)
7. Israel (the remnant of Israel)
8. Yes (Abraham's children heard Jesus)
9. Israel (the remnant of Israel)
10. No
11. Israel; Judah (both houses)
12. laws; people (see Ezekiel 36:26-28)
13. No (the New Covenant was compared to the Old Covenant)
14. consumed (ceased, ended, destroyed)
15. No (God's promises are true)

#### Page 34

1. fathers; covenant
2. Abraham
3. No (Jesus was sent first to Israel)
4. Israelites (the covenant people)
5. promises
6. No (the promises were to Israel)
7. heart; spirit (Compare with Jer. 31:33)
8. name (Christians)

#### Page 38

1. Jerusalem; Judea; Samaria
2. during Pentecost in Jerusalem
3. men of Israel (Israelites)
4. in the city of Samaria (in Samaria)
5. Damascus (in Syria)
6. Phoenicia; Cyprus; Antioch
7. Christians (followers of Christ)
8. Galatia (in Asia Minor)
9. Macedonia (in Europe)
10. Rome (in Italy)
11. Corinth (in Greece)
12. Galatia (in Asia Minor)
13. Ephesus (in Asia Minor)
14. Philippi (in Macedonia)

Note: It may be helpful to locate the above mentioned cities and areas using the map on page 40. Also note that these are the areas into which dispersed Israel migrated.

## Page 39

1. Colossae (in Asia Minor)
2. Thessalonica (in Macedonia)
3. twelve (all the tribes were dispersed)
4. strangers (dispersed Israelites)

(Note: The Greek text of 1 Peter 1:1 reads considerably different from the *KJV Version* text. Peter's exact words were "**to the elect exiled of the dispersion.**"

Peter was writing to elect Israelites who were exiled and dispersed into Asia Minor.

## NOTES