

Joseph & Judah

Two Brothers and the Two Houses of Israel in End-Time Prophecy

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Introduction

Biblical Types and Antetypes

A MAJOR KEY TO UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL PROPHECY IS TO RECOGNIZE the relationship between antetypes and types in the Scriptures. This means that an event or a series of events occurred once, was recorded in the Scriptures, and then at a later time a similitude of the event repeats itself, but with different characters and scene.

An *antetype* is a type or pattern of something that occurs *before* the actual event occurs (sometimes incorrectly referred to as an *antitype*, which means *opposite* rather than *before*). In other words, the first event predicts or points prophetically to the future event. This is a way for the Creator to give clues and hints about future events that will come to pass. Those who are ardent students of his Word and those “who have (spiritual) ears to hear” will pick up on these clues and be able to have a sense of what the Creator is going to do at some future date. In this way, those who diligently seek him are rewarded with understanding or “inside information” about what he is planning to do in the future. At the same time, his divine plans and purposes will be obscured from those who don’t have a diligent heart to seek him and his truth, and who could possibly misuse the truth, if they were to discover it, for selfish purposes if they were to learn it.

Similarly, the Gospels record that Yeshua explained deep spiritual truths via parables *not* to make the meaning clear to the general public, but rather to obscure it. His teachings were meant to be understood *only* by those whom he had called that they might know the mysteries or secrets of the kingdom of Elohim (Matt 13:10–11; Luke 8:9–10).

For thousands of years, the prophets of the Bible, as well as biblical students, scholars and sages have understood the concept of antetypes and types and it has helped them to understand Bible prophecy and future events.

Biblical antetypes are identified in three ways. First, the Scriptures themselves identify events as being antotypical. Examples would be:

- ☞ The life of Moses pointed to Yeshua (Deut 18:15–19; Heb 3:3–6).
- ☞ The serpent on the pole pointed to Yeshua’s crucifixion (John 3:14).
- ☞ The rock from which the Israelites drank prefigures Yeshua (1 Cor 10:4).
- ☞ The manna the Israelites ate prefigures the Word of Elohim or flesh of Yeshua (John 6:32, 48–51).
- ☞ Aaron as the high priest was antotypical of Yeshua’s high priesthood (Heb 5, 7 and 8).
- ☞ The sacrificial system pointed to Yeshua’s atoning death on the cross (Heb 9 and 10).
- ☞ Jonah in the whale is a prophetic picture of Yeshua’s death and resurrection (Matt 12:40).
- ☞ Melchizedek was an antetype of Yeshua (Heb 7).
- ☞ The first exodus (or redemption of Israel out of Egypt) was prototypical of a second exodus or redemption of Israel out of the world in the end times (Isa 11:11; Jer 23:7–8).

The Jewish sages from antiquity have also identified antetypes. Examples would be:

- ☞ The difficulties surrounding Jacob’s return to the Promised Land after 20 years of exile in Babylon (un-

der Laban, Gen 31–33) is antotypical of the difficulties surrounding the return of Jacob’s descendants to the land of Israel in the last days, which the Scriptures call “Jacob’s Trouble” (Jer 30:7).

- ☞ The life of Joseph prefigured that of a Messiah Son of Joseph, the Suffering Servant.
- ☞ The life of David prefigured that of a Messiah Son of David, the Conquering King.
- ☞ The seven-day week is antotypical of the seven thousand years of man’s tenure on this earth.

Christian Bible teachers have identified antetypes in the Scriptures, as well. Examples would be:

- ☞ The Passover lamb was antotypical of Yeshua’s crucifixion.
- ☞ Isaac’s near sacrifice and the ram caught in the thicket in Genesis 22 was antotypical of Yeshua’s death.
- ☞ The tabernacle of Moses pointed in all aspects to the ministry of Yeshua as Savior and Redeemer.

Finally, Hebrew roots teachers have identified antetypes in the Scriptures. Examples would be:

- ☞ The biblical feasts point to the steps in YHVH’s plan of salvation for mankind centering around the first and second comings of Messiah.
- ☞ The stages of the biblical wedding point to YHVH’s plan of salvation for mankind.
- ☞ YHVH’s judgments on Egypt point prophetically to his judgments on Babylon the Great in the last days.
- ☞ In like manner, the story of Joseph’s interacting with his brothers (starting in Genesis chapter 37 through 46) is antotypical of future events that are to happen on a national level with the children of the patriarchs.

In this study, we will examine the events of Joseph and Judah in Egypt to see how they relate to the houses of Joseph or Ephraim (broadly speaking, the Christians) and Judah (broadly speaking, the Jews) in the last days. Remember that although the events and details of antetypes and types correlate, they do not match each other perfectly in every detail. There should, however, be enough similarities between the two that to the rational and biblically astute mind the juxtaposition of the two is not a logical stretch. Some of these parallels the writers of Scripture tell us about, while others we must arrive at through our own diligent and careful analysis of the Scriptures.

Joseph and Judah (the Two Houses of Israel)

In what follows, we will see types and shadows that point to the end-time reunification of the two houses of Israel (Joseph/Ephraim and Judah/the Jews), and to Yeshua the Messiah whose role it would be to regather and reunite the two houses of Israel by laying his life down as a ransom or substitute for his brothers. In this study, we will discuss the following themes:

- ☞ reuniting lost family members
- ☞ reconciliation and healing of wounds and offenses between families
- ☞ forgiveness of past wrongs, offenses and misunderstandings
- ☞ prophetic shadows of Yeshua the Messiah

Let’s now analyze the events in the life of Joseph (and to a lesser degree, Judah) as they occurred chronologically to see how they pointed forward to events that would occur in the future including the end times.

Joseph Taken as Captive to a Gentile Nation (Gen 37)

Joseph was sold into slavery and taken as a captive to Egypt. Similarly and prophetically, Joseph’s descendants (Ephraim and Manasseh), along with their fellow tribesmen of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (or house of Israel), were taken as captives into Assyria (ca. 723 B.C.). From there they were scattered around the world (into spiritual “Egypt,”¹) where the biblical prophets predicted they would remain until the final regathering at the end of the age (just prior to and at the coming of Messiah²). We will understand this more as we proceed.

1 Amos 9:9; Hos 7:8; 8:8; Deut 28:64; 30:4; 32:26; Ezek 34:6,12; 36:19; 37:21

2 Ezek 37:21; Hos 3:5; 6:11; Deut 30:4; Jer 16:15; 23:8; 30:3; 31:23; 32:44; 46:27; Mic 4:6–7; Isa 27:11–13; cp. Matt 24:27–31

Joseph: From Slave to Ruler (Gen 37, 41)

At first, Joseph was a slave and a prisoner in Egypt, but then he prospered and was elevated to a position of leadership there. Likewise, in the future, Joseph's descendants (Ephraim, Manasseh, and the rest of the house of Israel) would start out as slaves and captives in Assyria (in the eighth century B.C.), but would later become leaders and rulers in their captive nations and would actually have their own nations just as Jacob prophesied would occur to Ephraim and Manasseh (that they would become a multitude of nations, Gen 48:19). We believe that these nations have become the primary Christian nations (of which America is the leader). As we shall see below, the ancient Jewish sages, based on their understanding of the Scriptures, foresaw that the nations of the ten tribes would spread the truth of Messiah Son of Joseph, the Suffering Servant (Yeshua the Messiah at his first coming) around the world. This would help to prepare the way for the Messiah Son of David (Yeshua the Messiah at his second coming).

How do we know that many people in the major Christian nations would be the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh? The answer is found in understanding the prophecy that Jacob made on his death bed over Joseph's two sons. In Genesis 48 while prophesying over Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, Jacob crossed his hands over their heads making the symbol of the paleo-Hebrew letter *tav* ✠ (like our letter *t* or *x* in our English alphabet), which resembles a cross and pictographically means in that ancient Hebraic script "sign of the covenant."³ Jacob then spoke of the Heavenly Messenger of YHVH (the Hebrew word *malak* being mistranslated as "angel" in most Bibles), understood to be the preincarnate Yeshua, who had redeemed him from *all* evil and who would bless the lads (see Gen 31:11–13). Jacob then prophesied that the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh would become like "fish in the midst of the land."⁴

In light of this prophetic symbolism, which religious group on earth today fulfills the religious symbolisms in Jacob's prophecy as to who the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh would be? Which religion on earth today uses the fish as their symbol, speaks of a Messenger from YHVH as their Redeemer, and has the sign of the paleo-Hebrew letter *tav*, which looks like a cross? The Buddhists? The Moslems? The Hindus? Even the Jews? No! Only Christianity fits this enigmatic criteria. Many Christians are without a doubt the literal descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh. Those who are not, according to the Apostle Paul, in some unique sense become the descendants of Abraham once they come to saving faith in Yeshua (e.g., Gal 3:7,29).

The Jewish rabbis from antiquity have understood the prophetic implications of the events and prophecies surrounding Genesis chapters 37 through 49. For example, in Genesis 48:18 Jacob prophesies that the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh would become "a multitude of nations." What do the rabbis say about this prophetic verse as pertaining to the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh?

- ✎ Ibn Ezra declares that many nations will descend from him (i.e., the word מלא [melo], "fullness," connotes "abundance," the phrase meaning: And his seed will become the abundance of the nation [*Neter; Karnei Or*]).⁵
- ✎ R[abbi] Avraham ben HaRambam states that the expression denotes abundant profligacy to a point that they will have to inhabit lands of other nations. This is an allusion to Ephraim's expansive territory.⁶
- ✎ Radak says that this refers to the exile when the lands of others will be filled with his scattered descendants.... See also Hos 7:8: "Ephraim shall be mingled among the nations."⁷
- ✎ *The ArtScroll Bereishis/Genesis Commentary* says of this verse, "What kind of blessing was this prediction that one day [Jacob's] descendants—the Ten Tribes—would be scattered among the nations? R[abbi] Munk explains: while it is true that the dispersion was caused by the unfaithfulness and sinfulness of Ephraim's descendants (Hos 7:8ff), Jacob's blessing was not in vain for "they will return to God" and will have their share in the world to come ([*Talmud*] *Sanhedrin* 110b). And R. Eliezer adds: 'Even the darkness in which the Ten Tribes were lost will one day become as radiant as the day' (according to the version of *Avos d'Rabbi Nosson* 36). And in the perspective of history, did not these exiled children of

3 *Hebrew Word Pictures* by Dr. Frank Seekins; Living Word Pictures Inc., Phoenix, AZ, 2003, p. 11..

4 Literal translation of Gen 48:14–16 from the *ArtScroll Stone Edition Tanach*

5 *ArtScroll Bereishis/Genesis Commentary*, p. 2121.

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*

the Patriarchs enlighten the nations among whom they were scattered? They did so by teaching their conquerors the fundamental ideas of the knowledge and love of God, ideals they had never forsaken. Hence they too have a messianic vocation and their Messiah the ... Messiah son of Joseph (*Succab* 52a), also called Messiah son of Ephraim (*Targum Yonasan* on Exodus 40:11), will play an essential role in humanity's redemption, for he will be the precursor of the ... Messiah Son of David...."⁸ (emphasis added, especially note part in bold type).

Joseph Resembles an Egyptian (Gentile)

Joseph lived in Egypt, became Egyptian, resembled an Egyptian in appearance and even married an Egyptian. When his brothers saw him, they didn't suspect that he was their Hebrew brother.

Prophetically, Joseph's physical descendants (the house of Israel and later, Christians) would be carried captive into heathen Gentile nations where they would live as Gentiles in a sort of spiritual Egypt. There they would be all but cut off from the Hebraic roots of their faith and would be indistinguishable from the heathen nations in which they were mixed (Hos 7:8; 8:8; also note Yeshua's Parable of the Prodigal Son, Luke 15:11–32). Some see the prodigal son in Yeshua's parable as a picture of the modern Christian who was cut off from the Hebrew roots of his faith (or his father's house), but who will eventually return to the faith of his fathers as prophesied in Malachi 4:4–6).

Joseph Meets His Brothers (Gen 42)

While in Egypt, Joseph became aware that his brothers (and father) were still alive. He recognized who they were, but they didn't recognize him, since he resembled an Egyptian (a Gentile).

In the end times, Christians, who many of Joseph's descendants would become according to Genesis 48:14 and 16, have begun to recognize Judah as their brother. Until this time, most of Christianity had either persecuted the Jews, believed that Christians had spiritually replaced the Jews, or were ambivalent toward the Jewish people. This attitude of many Christians toward Jews, however, began to change in the 1960s with the beginning of the "Jews for Jesus" movement which helped Christians to become aware of the need to evangelize the Jews. The result was that many Christians themselves began to become interested in the Hebrew roots of the Christian faith. Beginning in the 1960s, many Messianic Jewish congregations began forming for Jewish believers in Yeshua, but surprisingly often seventy-five percent of the members of those congregations were actually non-Jewish "Gentile" Christians who were seeking to understand and even practice the Jewish roots of their faith!

From the Jews for Jesus or Messianic Jewish Movement of the 1960s came two unexpected results:

- ☞ As Messianic Jewish congregations formed, a large percentage were "gentiles" and not Jewish.
- ☞ In the early 1980s, the Messianic Israel or "Two-House" Movement was birthed through Angus and Batya Wootten.

In this latter movement, which is occurring in the 21st century church, Christians are beginning to open their eyes not only to the fact that the Jews are their brothers, but that they themselves are Israelites and are descendants from the ancient tribes of Israel (Gen 48:14,16; Rom 9:24–27). As this is occurring, very few Jews (as was the case with Judah of old) recognize that these "Gentile" Christians (like Joseph) are their long lost kinsman who are returning after they were long ago dispersed throughout the world as Jacob, Moses (Deut 30:3; 32:26), and the other prophets predicted would happen. Yeshua clearly stated that it was his ministry and that of his followers to regather these lost Israelites (Matt 10:6; 15:24).

Many Christians are now seeing the relevance and fulfilment of many biblical prophecies concerning the regathering of the ancient lost tribes of Israel⁹ to the land of Israel (Deut 30:4; Isa 56:8; Ezek 34:13; 36:24), and their reunification with their brother Judah/the Jews (Ezek 37:15–28). They understand this reunification will occur just prior to the return of Yeshua the Messiah (Ezek 37:24–28).

They have also begun to read and understand the mission of Yeshua and his disciples to regather the "lost sheep" of the house of Israel (Matt 15:24; 10:6), and Paul's clear statements that all those who come to faith in Yeshua are now Israel and are the literal seed or descendants of Abraham (Eph 2:11–19; Gal 3:7,8,14,28,29).

⁸ Ibid. pp. 2121–2122.

⁹ Hos 3:5; 6:11; see also Deut 30:4; Jer 16:15; 23:8; 30:3; 31:23; 32:44; 46:27; Mic 4:6–7; Isa 27:11–13; cp. Matt 24:27–31

Furthermore, they have become aware of the fact that it is Israelites who will have a part in the kingdom of Elohim as exemplified by the New Jerusalem, which has only twelve gates that are named after the twelve tribes of Israel. There is no Gentile gate (Rev 21:12)!

Joseph: Antetype of Yeshua the Savior (Gen 42)

Joseph acted as a savior to his brothers and family to save them from death in a time of famine. Prophetically, Christians (who are, at least in part, descendants of Joseph) present Yeshua son of Joseph as the Savior to the world (including to the Jews) to save people from spiritual death.

Viewing Joseph's role as a savior to the Israelite people in their time of need as a prophetic picture of Yeshua's similar role as Savior should not seem strange to the reader. In pre-Christian Jewish literature, the Jewish sages identified two Messiahs that were to come: one whose life would resemble Joseph and was referred to as the suffering servant or "Messiah Son of Joseph" (*Mashiach ben Yoseph*), and a second Messiah whose life and ministry would resemble that of David, and who they referred to as the warrior king or "Messiah Son of David" (*Mashiach ben David*). The Jewish sages came to this conclusion because while reading the messianic prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures (OT) they saw two different, even conflicting Messiahs whose roles were very different from each other. What was not known by the ancient Jewish sages, which was a subject of much debate, was which Messiah would come first, when he would come, would he be the same person or two different individuals, and how much time would separate their two comings.

For believers in Yeshua, this is not a dilemma, because we can look back in time and clearly see that Yeshua fulfilled the Suffering Servant role at his first coming, and will fulfill the Conquering King role at his second coming. But two thousand years ago, without the benefit of historical perspective, this was not an easy matter to figure out. Even the disciples were at times in a quandary as to which mission Yeshua was to fulfill as evidenced by their last question to him before his final ascension, "Will you at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6).

Allusions to Yeshua the Messiah's role as the Son of Joseph can be found in the following biblical passages:

- ☞ The Suffering Servant will die a martyr's death for the sins of his people (Isa 52:13–53:12).
- ☞ In the end of times, the Jews will look upon him whom they pierced and mourn for him as one mourns for his only son (Zech 12:9–10).
- ☞ In verse one of Psalm 22 are some of the last words to come out of Yeshua's mouth while he hung dying on the cross. This psalm predicts certain aspects of the Suffering Servant Messiah's ministry.
- ☞ John 1:45 may be a double entendre allusion to Yeshua as being not only the (adopted) son of Joseph, the husband of Mary, but to his being Messiah Son of Joseph, as well.

In Genesis 45:1–15 when Joseph finally reveals himself to his brothers, we see that Joseph, as an antetype of Yeshua, had mercy on his brothers who were now penitent for their sins against him. Joseph wept for joy and embraced his brothers (verse 14) when being reconciled to them. Past hurts and wrongs were forgiven. Prophetically, this points to Yeshua, our Savior and Redeemer, who lovingly accepts the repentant sinner and warmly embraces and welcomes him into Elohim's spiritual family and kingdom (Ezek 18:27–32 and Ps 103:10–18).

Continuing with our comparison between Joseph and Yeshua, we see that during the remaining years of the famine, all of the Egyptians became indebted to Joseph as he judiciously doled out the stored wheat to those in need. In order to save their lives, the inhabitants of the famine-ravished land gave their lives and land to be servants of Joseph (who was a type of Yeshua) in exchange for food (Gen 45:13–26, 47:23). Yeshua, likewise, has bought us with the price of his blood (1 Cor 6:20; 1 Pet 1:18–19; Rev 5:9). Similarly, in the Apostolic Scriptures, the disciples of Yeshua are called to be his bondservants—a term the apostles apply to themselves numerous times.

Joseph's Brothers Didn't Recognize Him as Their Brother (Gen 42:6, 8)

Joseph's brothers did not recognize him, though he recognized them. This is prophetic of what would happen between the brothers in the future—they again wouldn't recognize each other.

To understand how this scenario would play out prophetically, we have to know who Joseph's descendants would become. Ephraim and Manasseh, Joseph's sons (Gen 41:50–52) would not only become whole nations or people-groups, but would become the leaders of other nations as well (see Ezek 37:16; Hos 6:10; 11:12; 2 Chr 30:1, 10–11).

Prophetically speaking, as Judah (the leader and spokesman of the brothers and whose descendants are the modern-day Jews¹⁰ didn't recognize Joseph, so the Jews have not recognized Joseph's descendants—the house of Ephraim—who constitute a major portion of the lost sheep of the house of Israel today (Matt 10:6; 15:24). The Jewish rabbis have long recognized that their Ephraimite brothers (along with those from the other tribes who had forgotten their identity) are scattered and will someday return by the divine hand of the Almighty and in fulfillment of numerous biblical prophecies. For example, Rabbi Jacob Immanuel Schochet acknowledges that through the efforts of the Messiah, the ingathering of the exiles, including the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom, will occur, and they will be reunited with Judah and together the whole house of Israel will serve YHVH as stated in Ezekiel 20:32–37, 40–42¹¹. The *Talmud* (the Jewish oral law) confirms this view position and states that the ten lost tribes will return to the land of Israel at the end of the age in conjunction with the coming of the Messiah to be reunited with their Jewish brothers¹².

Joseph's Brothers Didn't Recognize Him as Their Savior (Gen 42–44)

Joseph's brothers didn't recognize that Joseph was their savior (from famine). Prophetically, and in our time, most Jews neither recognize Christians (the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh) as their brothers, nor that the Jesus of Christianity is their Savior who will supply spiritual food for which their hearts are longing (but not finding in rabbinical Judaism), but that he died to redeem them from their sins.

The Scriptures prophecy that this spiritual blindness would occur to many of the children of Israel, including the Jews. We read about this in Isaiah 8:14 and Romans 11:25.

The Concept of Deliverance Through Substitution (Gen 42:17–19, 24)

Joseph made known to his brothers a way of deliverance through substitution in that they would all be saved if Simeon were held back for ransom.

Continuing our comparison between Joseph and Yeshua, what religious people-group in the last two thousand years has been making known to the world the way of deliverance through the substitutionary (sacrificial, blood atonement) work of Messiah Yeshua the Son of Joseph at the cross of Calvary? The Jews or the Christians?

Interestingly, even though Joseph suggested that substitution be made so that the brothers might live (verse 19), it was Judah who ended up laying down his life as a ransom for Benjamin, his youngest brother, by becoming surety for him (Gen 44:32–34). In prophetic fulfillment of this antetype, we see that it was Yeshua the Messiah, son of Joseph, who descended from Judah, and who offered to lay down his life that his brothers (you and me) might live¹³.

Judah's actions are antotypical of those of Yeshua the Messiah in the following areas:

- ☞ Both sought to please their fathers.
- ☞ Both acted out of unconditional love for their younger brother.
- ☞ Both stood to gain nothing personally, but rather stood to lose much, if their plan did not work. Judah, a prince, would become a slave in Egypt; Yeshua would become a slave to death and hell, if he sinned.
- ☞ Both Judah and Yeshua were willing to lay down their lives for their brethren because of their love for their father (Gen 44:18–34; John 8:28; chapter 17).

It is interesting to note that classic Christian commentator, Matthew Henry, draws a similar analogy between Judah's actions here and Messiah Yeshua, as well.¹⁴

Additionally, Judah's love for his father and Benjamin, and his willingness to lay down his life as a ransom to become a slave in Egypt to Joseph, is analogous to Messiah Yeshua's love for the lost sheep of the house of Israel to whom he came to reach out and to ransom in order to bring them back into the sheepfold of Israel (John 10:15–16; Matt 10:6; 15:24).

10 *ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash* commentary on Deut 32:26, p. 1106

11 *Mashiach—the Principles of Mashiach and the Messianic Era In Jewish Law and Tradition*, pp. 20–22, by Jacob Immanuel Schochet quoting from Sanhedrin 110b; Bamidbar Rabba 16:25; etc.

12 *Everyman's Talmud—The Major Teachings of the Rabbinic Sages*, by Rabbi Abraham Cohen, pp. 354–355.

13 Mark 10:45; Matt 20:28; 1 Tim 2:5; John 10:11, 15, 17–18; 1 John 3:16

14 *A Commentary On the Whole Bible*, vol. 1, p. 243, by Matthew Henry

Judah Approaches Joseph (Gen 44:18)

Judah came near to Joseph willing to lay down his life for his younger brother (Gen 44:18–34). This is another prophetic picture of the future Messiah who would come to this earth in willingness to give his life as a ransom to save his brothers. The Scriptures call Yeshua the “Lion of the tribe of Judah” (Rev 5:5) who initiated the process in seeking to save his brothers who were spiritually lost (Rom 5:8; Luke 19:10; Matt 18:11;), and who Yeshua referred to as the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt 10:6; 15:24).

Joseph Had to Reveal Himself (Gen 45)

The brothers didn’t recognize Joseph because he resembled an Egyptian; he had to reveal himself to them. Today, Christians (the descendants of Joseph according to Gen 48:16,18 and Rom 9:24–27 and the descendants of Abraham according Eph 2:11–19; Gal 3:7,14,28,29), are revealing themselves to their brother Judah through several ways:

- ☞ Through donating money to Jewish relief agencies.
- ☞ Through Christian tourism of Israel.
- ☞ Through Christian interfaith organizations (Bridges for Peace, Christians United for Israel, Christian Friends of Israel, etc.).
- ☞ Through the Messianic Jewish Movement
- ☞ Through the Messianic Israel Movement.
- ☞ Through America’s (and Britain’s) military, political and economic support of the nation of Israel.

Two Messiahs in One Story

Judah and his brothers didn’t recognize Joseph; he had to reveal himself to them (Gen 45:1–4). They were “blinded” to who Joseph was. Most of Judah has spiritual blindness to this day (Rom 11:25). They are largely blind to Yeshua the Messiah, son of Joseph, and to the fact that Christians (many of whom are the descendants of Abraham through Joseph) are their long lost brothers. So in our story, Judah plays a dual role: that of spiritually blind Judah and that of the Messiah, the Lion of the tribe of Judah. His former role is prophetically emblematic of the Jewish nation including the modern Jews who have been largely blind to their Messiah (the Son of Joseph), and in the latter role as Yeshua the Messiah who was willing to lay down his life to save his brothers.

Even as Judah was a prophetic antetype of the Jewish people and the Jewish Messiah, likewise Joseph also fulfilled an antetypical role of the Messiah. He too was the spiritual father of his people—Ephraim and Manasseh—the dominate tribes of the Northern Kingdom of Israel who went into apostasy and become as “lost sheep” among the nations of the world (Hos 7:8; 8:8; Ezek 34:16 and numerous other scriptures). Therefore, Joseph prophetically represents the “lost sheep of the House of Israel” *and* the Messiah who would come and seek out those sheep.

The Jewish rabbis have seen a prophetic picture of the coming Messiah Son of Joseph, the Suffering Servant in the story of Joseph. They have written about the Suffering Servant, a Messiah Son of Joseph figure, who they felt would be a descendant of Ephraim and who would come to redeem the lost sheep or exiles of the House of Israel in preparation for a second Messiah to come. They refer to him as the Conquering King or Messiah the Son of David.¹⁵ Although I have found no instances where they also identify Judah with the coming Messiah, it is not hard to see some allusions to this in the interplay between Joseph and Judah. Let’s note what the rabbis write about Joseph as well as the descendants of his grandsons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Notice the striking similarities between modern Christians and those the rabbis viewed would be the followers of Messiah Son of Joseph?

What kind of blessing was this prediction that one day [Jacob’s] descendants—the Ten Tribes—would be scattered among the nations? R[abbi] Munk explains: while it is true that the dispersion was caused by the unfaithfulness and sinfulness of Ephraim’s descendants (Hos 7:8ff), Jacob’s blessing was not in vain for “they will return to God” and will have their share in the world to come ([*Talmud*] *Sanhedrin* 110b). And R. Eliezer adds: ‘Even the darkness in which the Ten Tribes were lost will one day become as radiant as the day’ (according to the version of *Avos d’Rabbi Nosson* 36). **And in the perspective of history, did not these exiled children of the Patriarchs enlighten the nations**

¹⁵ Mesorah Publications *ArtScroll Bereishis/Genesis Commentary*, vol. 1(b), pp. 2121–2122

among whom they were scattered? They did so by teaching their conquerors the fundamental ideas of the knowledge and love of God, ideals they had never forsaken. Hence they too have a messianic vocation and their Messiah the ... Messiah son of Joseph (*Succah* 52a), also called Messiah son of Ephraim (*Targum Yonasan* on Exodus 40:11), will play an essential role in humanity's redemption, for he will be the precursor of the ... Messiah Son of David....¹⁶ (emphasis added, note bolded part).

The Family of Israel Is Finally Reunited/Regathered (Gen 46:1–7)

These verses recount the move of Jacob and his family to Egypt where they were reunited with Joseph and his family. This event prophetically foreshadows a time in the future that the Jewish rabbis call the final redemption, which is to occur just prior to and at the coming of Messiah Son of David as he comes to establish the Messianic Era (Millennium). The rabbis teach that part of that final redemption includes the reunification of the two houses of Israel into one kingdom under Messiah Son of David, which is prophesied in Ezekiel 37:15–28. Interestingly, from antiquity, the Jewish sages have chosen Ezekiel's prophecy as the corresponding scripture passage from the biblical prophets (called the Haftarah) which, in their understanding, best correlates to the Torah portion (*parashah*) that includes Genesis 46. These sages understood that the events recorded here in the lives of the patriarchs are indications of future events that would occur in the lives of their descendants.

The final redemption or regathering and then the reuniting of Judah and Ephraim at Messiah's return is mentioned numerous times in the Scriptures (e.g., Hos 5:15–6:4; 1:11; Acts 3:21; Ezek 37:25). This will be a supernatural work of the Spirit of Elohim (Ezek 36:19–32).

Life in the Land of Goshen (Gen 46:34)

After the reunification of the divided family, the Israelites settled in Goshen, which was in the Nile River delta area and was, and to this day is, the prime farm land of Egypt. It was a veritable promised land compared to the arid regions of Canaan.

Prophetically, could Israel's settling in Goshen after being reconciled and reunited be a spiritual shadow picture of the Millennium? I believe so.

The Jewish rabbis and sages have long taught that history for the people of Israel is continually repeating itself in cyclical patterns as YHVH accomplishes his purposes among his people over and over again. He is continually endeavoring to reveal his plan of redemption and reconciliation to those who have eyes to see. He is continually reaching out the loving hand of redemption to the next generations of Israelites. This cycle, like a wheel that keeps turning around and around, will turn one more time in the last days in what the Jewish rabbis refer to as the final regathering of the exiles or the final redemption of Israel. This will involve not only the resurrection of the dead, but the reuniting of the divided kingdom of Israel, the regathering of the Israelite scattered exiles back to the land of Israel, and the coming of the Messiah who will set up his reign over this earth called the Messianic Era. This is even better known in Christians circles as the Millennium. The Jewish rabbis and sages have taught this for thousands of years—and still teach it—because they had read and believed what the biblical prophets have written in this regard.

Conclusion

I believe that the story of the reuniting of Joseph with his brothers a prophetic antetype speaking to the future reunification and redemption of the two houses of Israel with the Messiah as the initiator and focal point of this redemptive process. This process began to occur at the first coming of Yeshua and will culminate at his second coming and it involves the regathering of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. This process will climax at the end of the age where the Children of Israel will be regathered and reunited to worship YHVH in spirit and in truth (John 4:23) under the rulership of King Yeshua the Messiah, Son of Joseph/David (Ezek 37:15–28) during the one-thousand-year-long Millennium.

¹⁶ Ibid. pp. 2121–2122.