

# Home is where the heart is

Written by: Todd D. Bennett  
www.shemayisrael.net

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In the previous message, we discussed the words of Yahushua concerning a house divided.

There are several different accounts found in the Brit Hadasha texts.

In Mark we read: "*. . . if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.*" Mark 3:25

We know that when He spoke these words He was actually in a house. (Mark 3:19)

It was not the house of His physical family, and while in this setting, Yahushua expanded on the concept of a house, and a family.

*"<sup>31</sup> Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him. <sup>32</sup> And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You. <sup>33</sup> But He answered them, saying, 'Who is My mother, or My brothers?' <sup>34</sup> And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, 'Here are My mother and My brothers! <sup>35</sup> For whoever does the will of Elohim is My brother and My sister and mother.'" Mark 3:33-35*

While His physical family was outside the house, He stated that His true family consisted of those sitting around Him, in a circle, within the house.

So, we have our physical families, but they are not always connected with us or aligned with our beliefs. When we join the Covenant with YHWH, we have a new family which may or may not include our physical family.

Recall our discussion last week on swords?

Yahushua not only told His disciples to buy a sword, He also stated that He came with a sword.

*“<sup>34</sup> Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. <sup>35</sup> For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; <sup>36</sup> and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ <sup>37</sup> He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. <sup>38</sup> And he who does not take his execution stake and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. <sup>39</sup> He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.”* Matthew 10:34-39

In verse 35 and 36, Yahushua is quoting Micah 7:7, and the context is a faithless and corrupted society – a wicked and adulterous generation similar to where we find ourselves today.

When you stand up for the truth, that decision is bound to result in division. How many of you know this to be true?

Sure, the family you grew up with may believe in Jesus. But when you try to introduce them to Yahushua and His Commandments how do they respond?

Do they accept and promote a Jesus wrapped in a LGBTQ flag who just loves everyone? That is what the anti-christ in Rome is currently teaching.

Or do they recognize and follow the true Messiah named Yahushua, Whose identity has been hidden and Whose teachings have been twisted by the wicked ones?

It's a distinction with an eternal difference, because Yahushua not only came with a sword, He is also going to send fire.

Remember what John prophesied?

*"His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."* Matthew 3:12

YHWH previously built His House on a threshing floor, which was a prophetic picture of the future House that will be built by the Messiah. (2 Chronicles 3:1)

Before Yahushua builds His House, He is going to clean out His threshing floor with unquenchable fire. That is the language of judgment.

In fact, He specifically stated: *"<sup>49</sup> I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! <sup>50</sup> But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished! <sup>51</sup> Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. <sup>52</sup> For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. <sup>53</sup> Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and*

*daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.” Luke 12:49-53*

I hear some Christians sing “Send Your Fire Lord” and “Let Your Fire Fall Down on Me.” I don’t think they really understand what they are asking for.

Yahushua wanted to judge the planet when He came the first time, but He had work that He needed to do first. Imagine if He judged the planet and didn’t renew the Covenant with Yisrael?

Thankfully, He renewed the Covenant through His blood so that we can be saved from the fire.

When He rains down fire in the future, He is essentially going to “kosher” the planet. His fire will cleanse the planet by incinerating and judging all evil. In a previous message we discussed the first judgment by water and the second judgment by fire.

Remember the parable of the wheat and the tares? Here is what Yahushua meant by the parable.

*“<sup>37</sup> He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. <sup>39</sup> The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. <sup>40</sup> Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. <sup>41</sup> The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, <sup>42</sup> and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” Matthew 13:37-43*

The tares will be taken and burned. The key is to be left behind and gathered into the House, like wheat into the barn. (see Matthew 3:12 and 13:30)

The fire destroys and purifies like a refiner's fire. So you had better be filled with the gold and silver of righteousness. (Malachi 3:3)

The works of the lawless are likened to wood, hay and stubble. They will not endure the fire. (see 1 Corinthians 3:11-12)

So, contrary to the Jesus presented by Christianity who promotes peace and love, Yahushua the Messiah spoke words of judgment and division.

He did not speak words that unified families. He was prophesying that families would divide because of Him.

As a result, we want to make sure that we are in the family defined and represented by Messiah, because he will be vouching for us before the Father.

*"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. <sup>33</sup> But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven."* Matthew 10:32

I pray that Yahushua confesses us all before the Father!

But it's no secret. He will only confess those who He knows – the wheat that He gathers into His barn. You must be among those surrounding Him in the house – not those who are outside the house claiming to be related to Him.

Of course, this blows the argument of the Jewish people right out of the water. They claim that the Covenant Land belongs to them simply because they can prove that they are “Jewish” - whatever that means.

The true test is whether He knows you, and His family consists of His sheep. Those who hear His voice and “shema” – listen and obey.

He told the Yahudim in Jerusalem *“<sup>26</sup> . . . you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”* John 10:26-27

Remember the words that the Father spoke on the mountain to Peter, James and John when Peter was suggesting that they build three succas for Yahushua, Moses and Elijah?

*“And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!’”* Luke 9:35

The Father instructed us to listen to Yahushua.

He previously told Moses that He would send a prophet like him, and that we should listen to Him.

*“<sup>18</sup> I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. <sup>19</sup> And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My Name, I will require it of him.”*  
Deuteronomy 18:18-19

Yahushua came in the Name of YHWH and spoke on behalf of His Father. Yahushua said that only those who do the will of the Father will be in the Kingdom, and He specifically stated that He does not know those who practice lawlessness – i.e. those who disobey the Commandments. (Matthew 7:21-23)

It's really very simple.

So it's important to know and understand who your family is.

A house divided results in new and different houses. A house of five will turn into a house of two and a house of three – two houses.

This is an interesting subject for me as my family has converged in New York to pack up and move out of our house of many years. We finally have a signed contract, and a closing date is scheduled for the end of the month. Praise YHWH!

Thank you all for your prayers, and please continue to keep us in your prayers as we finish up the process.

As we pack up a bunch of stuff, I am amazed at all of the junk that has amassed in cupboards, cabinets, closets and drawers over the years.

Sifting through all of the accumulation, we find little nuggets of photos and things from the past that jog certain fond memories. I can see the sadness in my children as they reminisce about the past where they grew up.

While my family called this cedar structure a home for around 25 years, we also had a lot of memories elsewhere, which prompted my daughter to rhetorically posit: "What is a home?"

That's an important question to consider, especially if you claim to belong to the House of Yisrael, or the House of Judah.

As we looked at pictures of our travels throughout the world, and in our RV, it was clear that while the structure in New York may have

been our “home base,” it was definitely not the only place we called home.

The answer to the question distilled down to the fact that home was where our family was together – unified around Yahushua.

Our home is wherever Yahushua leads us. Wherever He wants us to be. Ultimately, our home will be in the Covenant Land. Currently, we are dwelling in “succas” (temporary dwellings) until He gathers us home.

Is that your definition of a home?

Most Americans are taught that home ownership is an integral part of the American Dream, and your greatest investment. The importance of home ownership is built into our society and ingrained into our psyche.

We live in a consumer driven culture where people are obsessed with buying homes, building homes, maintaining their homes, repairing their homes and improving their homes.

They then continue on an endless quest to acquire more and better items to fill and decorate their homes.

I would hazard that a majority of people’s spare time, outside of their jobs, is focused on their homes.

Now compare that to how Yahushua spent His time.

He didn’t own a home, and He instructed His disciples to follow Him while He was on the move spreading the Good News of the Kingdom.

After the resurrection, when they returned to their boats and careers, He reminded them that they were supposed to be fishing for the “sons of Elohim.” That was why there were 153 fish in the net. In Hebrew, the term “sons of Elohim” equals 153. (see John 21)

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived in tents. It was not until Jacob crossed over, and returned to the Land, that we read about him building a house.

*“And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, built himself a house (beit), and made booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.”* Genesis 33:17

Even though he built a house, that did not last long. He journeyed on to Shechem where he then bought some land. As we discussed last week, he did not settle down there either. He had to proceed to Beit El – The House of El.

How many people are buying land and building homes when they should be getting rid of their idols and visiting Beit El?

Last week, when I was still in Texas, I pulled out a Torah scroll to show a brother the first word of the Torah “b’reshit” – spelled “bet” “resh” “aleph” “shin” “yud” “taw.”

It is translated as “In the beginning” and you don’t glean much information from the English.

The Hebrew text is an entirely different story. It is filled with information.

For instance, the first letter of that first word is an enlarged “bet.”

The “bet” is the second letter in the Hebrew aleph-bet, and it represents a house in the ancient pictographic script.

Think about that. The entire Torah actually begins with a large picture of a house. If that’s not sending a message, I don’t know what is.

And if that wasn’t powerful enough, the Hebrew word for “house” (beit), spelled “bet” “yud” “taw,” is also contained within that first word – “b’reshit.”

Clearly, a house is important. It’s just a question of “which house?”

Well, look no further than the second letter of that first word – “resh.”

The letters “bet-resh” literally mean “house-head,” and form the word “bar.” The Hebrew word “bar” means son, and the head of the house would be the first-born son.

So, we want to be in His House – the house built by Elohim. The house of the first-born Son.

We also see from the first word “b’reshit” that the house is filled through a “covenant” (brit) of “fire” (esh).

So your house better be a covenant house, otherwise it will simply burn up by fire.

And that brings us back to the family.

The family of Elohim consists of those in Covenant with Him. His people are called Yisrael – not the Christian Church.

The people of Yisrael are those who follow Him. Currently they are in exile, scattered throughout the world.

While there are some who try to claim that the House of Yisrael was restored long ago, that simply is not the case

I mentioned last week about Jeroboam, and the sin of the golden calf at Beit El.

Ezekiel prophesied that the House of Yisrael would be punished for 390 years for their sins.

*“<sup>4</sup> Lie also on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the House of Yisrael upon it. According to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity. <sup>5</sup> For I have laid on you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days; so you shall bear the iniquity of the House of Yisrael.”* Ezekiel 4:4-5

We know that the House of Yisrael was removed by the Assyrians around 721 BCE, which means that we would be looking for a return around 331 BCE.

That didn't happen. There was no regathering of the scattered lost sheep. In fact, this was the time when Alexander the Great defeated the Persian Empire and Hellenized the Land, which later fell under Ptolemaic rule until the Hasmonean Revolt.

That means the punishment was extended as Moses foretold in Leviticus 26. That portion of the Torah details an important principle, and establishes the fact that the punishments rendered by YHWH would be multiplied seven times if the people refuse to turn and obey.

Remember that the House of Judah was exiled by the Babylonians for their sins.

According to Jeremiah, that exile would last for 70 years.

*“And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.”* Jeremiah 25:11

*“For thus says YHWH: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.”* Jeremiah 29:10

When the seventy-year exile period was coming to an end, we find Daniel seeking an answer regarding the fulfillment of Jeremiah’s prophecy.

*“<sup>1</sup> In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans - <sup>2</sup> in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of YHWH through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.”* Daniel 9:1-2

I urge you to read how Daniel prayed and repented with fasting in sackcloth and ashes on behalf of the House of Judah. (Daniel 9:3-20)

We do not see any evidence of this type of conduct from the House of Yisrael. Indeed, they assimilated into the Nations during their exile, and completely lost their identity - exactly as Hosea had prophesied. (Hosea 1)

The House of Yisrael failed to repent and obey after the 390 years had expired. As a result, their punishment was multiplied seven times to 2,730 years.

That is why we read about Yahushua coming for the lost sheep of the House of Yisrael. They were still lost when He walked the Earth.

In fact, their punishment did not end until around the year 2009, give or take some years, due to the fact that there were multiple Assyrian exiles.

The question is whether you, like Daniel, have been praying about this matter?

When is the last time you repented for the sins of your forefathers, and sought the end of the punishment over the House of Yisrael?

When was the last time that you sat fasting in sackcloth and ashes?

I'm serious. That's what our forefathers did to express their humility. Are we better than them? Just because we live in a more "modern" era doesn't mean that we approach YHWH any differently.

Here is another question: Do you even want to return to the Land?

From my experience, most people don't. They are comfortable in Babylon, just like most of the Yahudim who failed to return after their exile period was over.

Maybe a visit some day when things calm down, but right now it's too dangerous.

That's what I hear all of the time, and I find it simply amazing.

Imagine if there were actual giants roaming the Land as in the days of Abraham.

Remember that Abraham's father Terah was originally called out of Babylon, but he stopped short in Haran. I wonder if he feared the giants like the first generation of Yisraelites that left Egypt?

That is a clear demonstration of the difference in the faith taught by Christianity, and the faith required by Elohim.

If this generation refuses, YHWH will use the next generation. If you are too rooted in Babylon to follow Him, He will simply bypass you. He'll let you die in Babylon, or the wilderness.

But what about grace? I can hear the Christians protesting now.

Well, YHWH is definitely longsuffering, but He is not going to change His plan for you. You need to align yourself with Him.

Most Christians want to go to heaven, but that's not the future that their Bibles describe.

They fail to understand that there is a specific Land attached to the Covenant Promises. The Land is real. It's not a metaphor, and the Covenant that was renewed and made great by the blood of Yahushua ha'Moshiach includes that Land.

That Land is located on this planet, not in heaven. The promise of a home with Elohim began with a Garden planted by YHWH, and it ends with a City that will descend from heaven, and be planted on a renewed Earth.

So our focus should be on a future home, here on Earth.

Hosea prophesied that the House of Yisrael would be punished, but there would be a return, similar to when Yisrael was brought out of Egypt.

*“<sup>11</sup> I will also cause all her mirth to cease, Her feast days, Her New Moons, Her Sabbaths - All her appointed feasts. <sup>12</sup> And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees, of which she has said, ‘These are my wages that my lovers have given me.’ So I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them. <sup>13</sup> I will punish her for the days of the Baals to which she burned incense. She decked herself with her earrings and jewelry, and went after her lovers; But Me she forgot, says YHWH. <sup>14</sup> Therefore, behold, I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her. <sup>15</sup> I will give her her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt. <sup>16</sup> And it shall be, in that day, says YHWH, That you will call Me My Husband, and no longer call Me My Master, <sup>17</sup> For I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, and they shall be remembered by their name no more. <sup>18</sup> In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air, and with the creeping things of the ground. Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth, to make them lie down safely. <sup>19</sup> I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; <sup>20</sup> I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know YHWH. <sup>21</sup> It shall come to pass in that day that I will answer, says YHWH; I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth. <sup>22</sup> The earth shall answer with grain, with new wine, and with oil; They shall answer Jezreel. <sup>23</sup> Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, and I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy; Then I will say to those who were not My people, ‘You are My people!’ And they shall say, ‘You are my Elohim!’” Hosea 2:11-24*

YHWH says He will allure the House of Yisrael, bring her into the wilderness and speak comfort to her.

Remember the Valley of Achor? It was the entranceway into the Promised Land beyond Jericho.

Here is what happened there after Jericho was destroyed: *“<sup>20</sup> And Achan answered Joshua and said, Indeed I have sinned against YHWH Elohim of Yisrael, and this is what I have done: <sup>21</sup> When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it.”* Joshua 7:20-21

Achan wanted Babylon more than he wanted to obey. He actually stole from YHWH, since the gold and silver were supposed to go to the treasury.

That was a grievous event which impacted all of Yisrael. They were being defeated by the enemy, because the camp was defiled by Achan.

Here was the response:

*“<sup>24</sup> Then Joshua, and all Yisrael with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had, and they brought them to the Valley of Achor. <sup>25</sup> And Joshua said, Why have you troubled us? YHWH will trouble you this day. So all Yisrael stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. <sup>26</sup> Then they raised over him a great heap of stones, still there to this day. So YHWH turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day.”* Joshua 7:24-26

The Valley of Achor literally means Valley of Trouble. That great heap stood as a witness to the fact that Yisrael had to get cleaned up in order to proceed through the threshold and into the Land.

Have you ever considered the impact of your actions? I know that Americans have been taught to be free and independent, but that stops at the Valley of Achor.

Have you robbed Elohim and caused Him trouble? Have you lusted for Babylon and caused trouble for Yisrael? Our predecessors in the House of Yisrael surely have.

Well, the good news is that in the future, the Valley of Achor will be a door of hope – Petah Tiqvah.

As Yisrael, we can all participate in that process.

If you want to move into the house you need to get rid of your idols. If you can't let go, then you will remain in Babylon.

Jeremiah prophesied that the future return of Yisrael would be greater than the exodus from Egypt.

In fact he declared: *"<sup>14</sup> Therefore behold, the days are coming, says YHWH, that it shall no more be said, 'YHWH lives who brought up the children of Yisrael from the land of Egypt,' <sup>15</sup> but, 'YHWH lives who brought up the children of Yisrael from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.' For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers."* Jeremiah 16:14-15

If I am not mistaken, during the last Passover, everyone was still talking about the Exodus from Egypt. Right?

Therefore, this prophesied return had not occurred yet.

That is no surprise because before this promised return, Yisrael would be in seclusion for a long time.

*“<sup>4</sup> For the children of Yisrael shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. <sup>5</sup> Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek YHWH their Elohim and David their king. They shall fear YHWH and His goodness in the latter days.” Hosea 3:4-5*

Did you catch that? David their King.

David was from the House of Judah. He ruled from Hebron over the House of Yahudah for seven years, until the House Yisrael anointed him as their King.

After the death of Solomon the nation was divided into two houses – the House of Yisrael and the House of Judah.

The House of Yisrael no longer looked to the House of David for a King.

So Hosea was pointing to more than a return. Hosea was talking about a restoration of the Kingdom of Yisrael.

Ezekiel also described the restoration of Yisrael. Last week we talked about the prophecy of the two sticks. Read the prophetic words that follow:

*“<sup>21</sup> . . . Thus says Adonai YHWH: Surely I will take the children of Yisrael from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; <sup>22</sup> and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Yisrael; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again. <sup>23</sup> They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse*

*them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their Elohim. <sup>24</sup> David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. <sup>25</sup> Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever. <sup>26</sup> Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. <sup>27</sup> My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their Elohim, and they shall be My people. <sup>28</sup> The nations also will know that I, YHWH, qadosh Yisrael, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.” Ezekiel 37:21-28*

Here we read about David again. So the house divided will be a House reunited.

Right now we see people occupying the Land who are trying to keep the House of Yisrael out.

I suspect that the events we see occurring throughout the world will ultimately change that situation.

Therefore, we need to be found watching, waiting and ready to return home if we follow Yahushua, and want to be in His Covenant Family. We need to be wise and maintain oil in our lamps.

So as I continue packing and sifting through all my stuff, I recognize that this life is not about building a personal kingdom here on earth. It's not about building bigger and better houses to hold all our stuff, and it's definitely not about settling down.

Instead, its about our journey that leads to His House – Beit El.

YHWH is described as the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – all nomadic herdsmen.

They lived in tents and continued on the Covenant path with the hope of a future promise of Land.

When YHWH led the Children of Yisrael out of Egypt, He lived in a tent as they lived in tents through their wilderness journey.

We are not in the Land, so we should be walking the same path, with the same expectation of a future promise of a return to that Land.

They say that home is where the heart is?

How true that is, and what you consider to be home is an indicator of the condition of your heart.

You must have a circumcised heart, free from the lusts of Babylon, in order to enter through the door of hope into the House of Elohim.

Berakhot

Todd

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**Shema Yisrael (Hear O Yisrael) are the words that Yahushua spoke when asked what was the First Command.**

***“The first of all the Commandments is: ‘Hear, O Yisrael, YHWH our Elohim, YHWH is one.’”***

***Mark 12:29***

***“He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”***