

THE EPHRAIM-SCEPTER HERESY, #1

At John 8:32, we are told “**And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**” It is paramount, therefore, we find that **TRUTH** and never deviate from it, for without it the enemy’s shackles can never be broken. With this treatise, we will investigate a doctrine contrary to all that is Holy, and will only tighten our chains of servitude all the more. This great **FALLACY** is a formula for disaster, and when we are finished, we will see clearly how UN-Scriptural it is. The proponents of this heresy dub it “In Search Of The Missing Birthright.” Once analyzing the nature of the distortion and the unsoundness of its foundation, one can recognize it for the **FRAUD** it really is. Its very heading is a deception, for the “birthright” was never lost. The undeniable intent of this heresy has nothing to do with the “birthright”, but to remove the Scepter from the Tribe of Judah and transfer it to the Tribe of Ephraim. Let’s call it what it truthfully is! If the Scepter were to go to Ephraim, as they falsely claim, Ephraim would have everything and Judah nothing. Once grasping their subterfuge as a means to divert the eye toward the birthright while manipulating the Scepter, their entire shellgame is exposed.

After propagating the above highly misleading title-heading, the proponents of this false doctrine will say: “the birthright belonging to the House of Ephraim was hidden by the scribes who ruled the Sanhedrin” and that “the scribes also tried to distort the genealogy of the Messiah so as to create the appearance that the Messiah would descend from Judah and not Joseph Ephraim.” Continuing, they will claim that the motive was selfishly done “to enhance their own importance as they believed that they descended from Judah, and wanted to glory in being in the tribe from which the Savior-Messiah would be born.” Continuing, they make the unfounded claim, “we can safely assume that the scribes were learned Talmudic experts and that maybe they knew that they in fact were descendants of Satan but claiming to be the undiluted seed of Abraham through Judah.” How do you like that word “assume”? Answer: We can’t “safely assume” any such thing! Breaking down that word it reads “ass-u-me” (ass-of-me), and that is what they do!

Then they will walk you through Genesis 28:10-15 where Jacob uses a rock for a pillow and dreamed of a ladder from earth to heaven — Genesis 28:18-22 where Jacob sets up the rock for a pillar (witness), anoints it with oil and names the place Bethel — Genesis 31:13 where Yahweh identifies Himself with the angel at Bethel — Genesis 35:9-15 where Jacob’s name is changed to Israel and Yahweh reconfirms His promises and Jacob once again anoints the stone and designates the place as Bethel. They then take Genesis 49:24 completely out of context to prove their unfounded, groundless argument. That passage is speaking of Jacob’s blessing on Joseph and pertains to both the House of Ephraim and the House of Manasseh (not just Ephraim) and reads:

“But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel).”

The motive of the proponents of the Ephraim-Scepter heresy is to deviously precondition the unwary Bible student so he will unguardedly accept the misconception that the “shepherd” and “stone” represent respectively our Redeemer the Messiah, and Jacob’s anointed pillar. These terms don’t even come close to that hypothesis, so their premise is flawed from the start. While you will notice that the last phrase is enclosed in parentheses (a device of English grammar), parentheses in the A.V. are used to mark a digression in the narrative by the writer, and such digression should be kept in its proper context. It simply means that Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) was a prince among his brothers — a shepherd tribe(s) — a rock of refuge — a type of

messiah, but not actually the promised Messiah — and a sustainer of his brethren. In other words, Joseph would be solid, and afterward advanced to a shepherd to feed in time of famine, and a stone or rock in support of all of Jacob-Israel. All one need do is to take a look at Ephraim and Manasseh (England and America) today, and they are feeding much of the world, and their weapons of war, though used in many cases for all the wrong reasons, have no equal among the nations. Anyway, the terms “shepherd” and “stone” in that phrase **DO NOT** represent the Messiah or Jacob’s anointed stone, Bethel. The proponents of the Ephraim-Scepter heresy are reading something into that verse that simply is not there.

As the advocates for the Ephraim-Scepter heresy continue to prop up their untenable position by citing various passages of Scripture, they show their utter disregard for Biblical history in evaluating the circumstances and the time-periods involved. They cite Joshua 24:24-27 where Joshua sets up a stone under an oak as a witness at Shechem where the people pledged to keep the Law. That was not Jacob’s anointed Bethel stone, and was much before Jerusalem became the Capital of the united Kingdom. Before Jerusalem was established as a religious center, Shechem served that purpose, and because it was the place where Jacob set up an altar, it continued to be the place for crowning kings even until Rehoboam who became king of Judah. It’s a blatant attempt to favor Ephraim at Judah’s expense. Then they cite 1 Kings 12:1 showing that Rehoboam went to Shechem to be crowned king at Ephraim. As you can plainly see, citing this passage does not in any way make Rehoboam an Ephraimite as they imply. Then they cite 1 Kings 12:25 in an attempt to claim that Jeroboam, son of Nebat of the Tribe of Ephraim somehow legitimizes their claim that Ephraim was the Scepter tribe.

Then, in another vain attempt to bolster their absurd position, they quote 2 Kings 11:13-14 and 2 Chronicles 23:13 where the eight-year old Joash (Jeoash) was crowned by a “pillar.” Doubtless, it was in fact Jacob’s anointed stone, but that in no way makes him of the Tribe of Ephraim. Further, to hatch their unwarranted point, they cite Judges 9:1-6 where it speaks of a certain Abimelech, a son of Judge Gideon born of his concubine at Shechem. After his father’s death, Abimelech with presumptuous impudence sought to make himself king. Cunningly, he appealed to the landowners of Shechem through his mother’s influential family. After obtaining their support he hired some hoodlums, went to his father’s house at Ophrah, and there annihilated his half brothers upon a single stone. Of the 70 half brothers, only the youngest, Jotham, escaped the slaughter, whereupon Abimelech proclaimed himself king, standing by a pillar at Shechem. Again, all this adds nothing to their faulty supposition about Ephraim being the Scepter tribe. It is overwhelmingly obvious their motive in using these passages is to favor Ephraim and lambaste Judah.

After this, they point to Hosea 3:4 which says: **“For the children [of the northern kingdom] of Israel shall abide many days [years] without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim.”** Evidently somehow, according to the Ephraim-Scepter people, this passage is supposed to prove Ephraim was the Scepter tribe. Actually, this passage along with verse 5 teaches quite the opposite! Verse 4 is designed to show a lengthy period of isolation for northern Israel, and the absence of a **king** and **prince** implies a loss of national sovereignty. The elimination of **sacrifice** and **sacred stones** meant the cessation of formal religious activity. However, with the adoration of Baal, Israel’s sacrifices became contaminated, and her condition was further exacerbated by the people’s failure to obey the more important matters of Law. Without an **image**, literally a pillar (KJV center reference) — no other than Jacob’s anointed stone, Bethel, which Jeremiah took to Ireland. Without an **ephod**; assuredly the ephod of Exodus 28:6-14, of Israel’s royal colors and two onyx

identifying stones with six names each (including Judah)! Without **teraphim**; teraphim meant inheritance in ancient times, and when all Israel was divorced, they lost theirs temporarily until Messiah purchased them back. Hosea 3:5 says: **“Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek Yahweh their El, and David (Messiah, the lion of the Tribe of Judah) their king; and shall fear Yahweh and his goodness in the latter days.”** In no way does this passage in Hosea support an Ephraim-Scepter theory, but upholds the Judah-Scepter fact.

EPHRAIM DELIBERATELY CONFUSED WITH EPHRATH

The next blatant, intentional deception the proponents of the Ephraim-Scepter heresy use is purposely confounding the geographical location of Ephrath with the unrelated biological Tribe of Ephraim! They will start something like this: *“As you shall see, hidden in the flawed Bible text in plain sight of millions of readers is the mystery of the true birthplace of the Savior.”* Then they will ask the sly question: *“In what city was the Promised Messiah born, Bethlehem Judah, or Bethlehem Ephrata?”* (Ephrath also spelled Ephrata) Not only do they confound the geographical Ephrath with the Tribe of Ephraim, but also confuse the location of Ephrath with the city of Ephraim in John 11:54! So where is that so-called “Bethlehem Ephrata” in the territory of Ephraim? It’s not there, and it never was! The only Bethlehem Ephrata was in Judah. The Ephraim of 2 Chronicles 13:19 is **NOT Ephraim**, but rather an error in the A.V. for Ephron (*Strong’s #6085*), and no Old Testament geographical city of “Ephraim” can be found, and the Ephraim mentioned at John 11:54 may not be an actual town at all.

Now in the A.V. there was a second Bethlehem in the northern Kingdom, but it was in the territory of Zebulun (seven miles NW of Nazareth), not Ephraim!, (Joshua 19:10-16, especially verse 15). The LXX has it Baithman (Beth-man). The true location of Bethlehem Ephrata can be resolved at Genesis 35:16, where it says: **“And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour.”** All one need do is find a map of Palestine with a scale-of-miles and locate Bethel along with the Bethlehem in Judah and the Bethlehem or Baithman, seven miles NW of Nazareth, and measure the miles between these three locations very carefully. Upon doing that it will be found that from Bethel south to Bethlehem Judah is 16 miles, whereas from Bethel north to Bethlehem-Zebulun is 62 miles. Surely, the description “a little way” hardly fits the Bethlehem in Zebulun. Moreover, one would hardly think that Jacob would put Rachel on a pack-animal in her sick and dying condition in “hard labor” and force her to travel 62 miles north to the Bethlehem in Zebulun! It is considerably apparent that the Ephraim-Scepter people are talking when they should be listening, and being taught rather than teaching!

Yet in spite of all the evidence to the contrary, the Ephraim-Scepter theorists continue spouting their false dogma. There simply is no Biblical, secular or archaeological record of such a so-called place as “Bethlehem Ephrata” in the area of the Tribe of Ephraim! Another witness, *The Protevangelion of James* 12:1-5 properly identifies the correct Bethlehem:

“1 And it came to pass, that there went forth a decree from the Emperor Augustus, that all the Jews [Judeans] should be taxed, who were of Bethlehem in Judaea: 2 And Joseph said, I will take care that my children be taxed: but what shall I do with this young woman? 3 To have her taxed as my wife I am ashamed; and if I tax her as my daughter, all Israel knows she is not my daughter. 4 When the time of the Lord’s appointment shall come, let him do as seems good to him. 5 And he saddled the ass, and put her upon it, and Joseph and Simon followed after her, and

arrived at Bethlehem within three miles.” Again in 1 Infancy 1:5 we read: **“Joseph therefore arose, and with Mary his spouse he went to Jerusalem, and then came to Bethlehem, that he and his family might be taxed in the city of his fathers.”**

Again, the Ephraim-Scepter advocates are proving to be only surface-readers of the Bible rather than mature students. All one need do is read Matthew 2:21-23 and it is perfectly clear that Messiah-Emmanuel was born in Bethlehem of Judaea rather than anyplace in northern Israel: **“21 And he [Joseph] arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of Yahweh in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: 23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.”**

From this, it should be categorically indisputable that Yahshua was born in Bethlehem of Judah PERIOD! That fact should not even be debated! If Joseph was afraid to return to where he departed, he would of necessity had to have left from somewhere in Judaea which was his ancestral home, and not some nonexistent, mythical so-called “Bethlehem Ephrata” in Ephraim! The Ephraim-Scepter heretics are implying that Joseph left from somewhere in northern Israel to go to Egypt. If that’s the case (and it’s not true), he would have returned to the same place he left, making this passage a total lie. It should be glaringly obvious that when they departed for Egypt, they left from Joseph’s ancestral home in Judaea, and when they left Egypt, they returned to Mary’s birthplace at Nazareth, which evidently at times Joseph used as a temporary residence. It appears from verse 22 that Joseph’s initial intention was to return to Bethlehem in Judaea.

Then, the Ephraim-Scepter people try to make a case of Ephraim receiving all the inheritance of Jacob such as jewelry, ointments, revered relics, Bethel stone, etc., and somehow that is supposed to, in their perverted way of reasoning, give Ephraim the Scepter that rightly belongs to Judah. Continuing, they cite 12 various Scriptures on “rock”, evidently trying once again to prove Yahshua was the “stone” of Genesis 49:24. After that they attempt to add some words to Micah 5:2 which were never implied: *“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among [compared to] the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”* With this little twist, they shift the “ruler” (Scepter) from Judah to Ephraim. They do this by fallaciously claiming that the geographical location of “Ephratah” means the same thing as the Tribe of Ephraim. Further they ask an unskilled, incompetent, illogical double question: “Where is Bethel Ephratah? Is it in Galilee of Ephraim?” Illogical inasmuch as “Bethel” and “Ephratah” are two different unrelated localities — and when combined together as “Bethel Ephratah”, there is no such place. Furthermore, the lot apportioned to the Tribe of Ephraim was not in Galilee nor Galilee in Ephraim’s lot, for they also are two separate entities! (shades of Bozo the clown!)

THE BETHEL-BETHLEHEM HOCUS-POCUS

Not only do the Ephraim-Scepter practitioners deliberately misrepresent the geographic Ephratah as being the same as the Tribe of Ephraim, but they also manipulate Bethel and Bethlehem to be the same place. Let’s observe how they maneuver that subterfuge: *“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah ... The words tingle with excitement and mystery. Why Bethlehem? Where is Bethlehem? What role has it played in history to make God’s choice for the birthright of His Son? Actually Bethlehem is one of several names for the same place in Holy Scripture. The Hittites called it Luz meaning the place of an almond tree.”* This is simply preposterous! But as stated here,

rather than “tingle with excitement”, it gives a pain in one’s posterior, and let’s see why. If one will check any good Bible dictionary, they will find that Luz was Bethel, not Bethlehem! Let’s state that again: Bethel is not Bethlehem!, and Bethlehem is not Bethel! They might sound somewhat alike, but they are two separate, individual entities! (To and two sound alike too!, along with cite, site and sight!) Let’s read Genesis 28:19 to confirm that pregnant fact: **“And he [Jacob] called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.”** Therefore, Bethel only was called Luz, and Bethlehem has nothing to do with it! The only thing these two place-names have in common is the Hebrew word “beth” which means “house.” Bethel therefore means “house of El”, and Bethlehem “house of bread.” I’m sure that El is the bread of life, but that analogy cannot be applied to these two geographical locations. You should now grasp somewhat the underhanded tactics these turkeys are using. If Bethel and Bethlehem are the same place, there is no way Jacob could have journeyed from Bethel to Ephrath (Bethlehem) as stated in Genesis 35:16! That passage is very clear that Jacob and company “journeyed **FROM** Bethel, and their destination was Ephrath (Bethlehem). (absurdity unlimited!) Let’s repeat it again: Bethel is not Bethlehem and Bethlehem is not Bethel!

After attempting to establish that faulty premise, they move on to another flawed supposition, and a quite serious one at that. The Ephraim-Scepter people, in their own words, with several misquotes and typographical errors, start by stating: *“Now let us pickup the trail of deception of the scribes starting in the book of Luke chapter 2.”* Continuing with their muddled typing and inaccurate quoting, they will approach the subject from the backdoor, and this is what they say, which I place in italics: *“1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod The king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 2- saying, ‘Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His Star in the East, and have come to worship him.’ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with Him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the People together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea’: for thus it is written by The prophet ... Now let us examine the text that the scribes was quoting from in the Book of Micah to see if they quote the prophesy correctly. Micah 5 1- But thou Bethlehem Ephrata, which art little to be [compared] among The thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from Everlasting.”* You will notice how they insert the word “compared” in brackets. Their motivation is to make you believe that Bethlehem is in Ephraim, and the prophet is comparing it with all the larger cities of Judaea. No, it is comparing little Bethlehem with all the larger cities of Judah of which Bethlehem was a part. Then they continue with this statement: *“The prophesy reads that Christ would come out of a small region called Bethlehem Ephrata not Bethlehem Judah!”* Continuing they state: *“in ancient times luz better known as bethel, this is the original home place of Jacob in the territory inherited by Joseph. Jacobs prophesy in Gen. 49:24 given to Joseph was the promised seed [Christ] would come through the house of Joseph Ephraim Claiming the birthright! [author’s text copied exactly]”* Garbage piled on top of garbage! — what a disarray of confusion! That passage has nothing to do with “Christ”, nor does Jacob’s Bethel make Joseph the Scepter tribe. By the way, the scribe they are calling a liar is Luke, the physician of Colossians. 4:14, a coworker with Paul, and I hardly believe Luke was a “Talmudic scribe of the Sanhedrin” as the Ephraim-Scepter people claim. (Luke was a Greek from Antioch.) Before they are through, they will call Matthew the Apostle, and John the beloved liars also. If that were true, (and it isn’t), three of the four witnesses to the Gospel are false witnesses. Now that’s serious!

Then this Ephraim-Scepter advocate asked an asinine two-part question: *“Why do most think the birthright was Judah’s?, when Jacob’s prophecy states clearly that the scepter would depart from Judah when the true birthright inheritor Christ the promised seed came?”* “Asinine” inasmuch as such unlearned gibberish proves they can’t even ask a rational, scholarly question. Outside of a few Ephraim-Scepter people, I have never read or heard anyone suggest that Judah received the “birthright.” It should be quite evident from this two-part question, the incompetent proponents of this insane heresy confuse the birthright with the Scepter. Unequivocally, the Scepter is not the birthright, nor is the birthright the Scepter! Judah was the Scepter tribe and Joseph through Ephraim & Manasseh were the birthright tribes. The second part of this two-part question suggests, contrary to Genesis 49:12 that the Scepter would depart from Judah when Messiah comes. To understand their bizarre harebrained premise on that, one must ascertain that they consider Emmanuel’s first coming to be His Shiloh coming. That position simply is not true for at His Shiloh, or Second Coming, there will be “a gathering of the people” which never happened at His First Coming. Where did that adage disappear to that we should rightly divide the Word? All one need do is check 1 Chronicles 5:1-2, for it states clearly that the birthright, after Reuben’s disqualification, went to Joseph and that Judah became “chief ruler” or the Scepter tribe.

To show how inconsistent those who teach this untenable doctrine are, in one breath they strongly claim that David and Jesse were Ephraimites rather than Judahites, and in the next breath will admit that Judah had the Scepter only to have it taken away again. It would seem they really should make up their mind which way they want it to be, because it can’t be both ways!

While there is absolutely no doubt that Ephraim is one of the two birthright tribes, on the other hand, Ephraim has proved by his performance he doesn’t have what it takes for leadership. The entire chapter of Psalm 78 is devoted to that theme, especially verses 9, 11, 57, 60 & 68. Time after time Ephraim failed in that position. Then Psalm 78:67-68 sums up the chapter by saying: **“67 Moreover he (YHWH) refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim; 68 But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.”** Judah was the fighting tribe then as well as now. Judah today is found in Germany, Ireland and Scotland. If your lineage is of these three, then you are of the same tribe that the Almighty chose to come in the flesh. Judah’s hand is to be “in the neck of thine enemies.” In other words, without Judah, which includes Yahshua, we have no salvation from our age-old fight with the seed of the serpent.

Space will not allow all that should be presented on the downright false and misleading bilge manifested by this concept. It is a misconception rather than a concept. Therefore, of necessity, this subject will be continued in further brochures.

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