# Jeremiah 50:6

<sup>6</sup>My people have been <u>lost sheep</u>; their shepherds have led them astray and caused them to roam on the mountains. They wandered over mountain and hill and forgot their own resting place.

# Ezekiel 34:6

My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. They were scattered over the whole earth, and no one searched or looked for them.

#### Ezekiel 34:11-12

"For this is what the Sovereign (Yahweh) LORD says: "I myself will search for <u>my sheep</u> and look after them. "As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so I will look after *my sheep*. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness."

Here is where we begin seeing an issue that needs to be understood. God says that He will rescue the sheep He scattered. Yet, how can this be?
God said in Jeremiah that He divorced Israel. The northern kingdom.

### Jeremiah 3:8

<sup>8</sup>I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries...

This may seem like a non-issue to many, but let's consider what God's own law says about one who divorces a woman and the command given regarding remarrying her.

#### **Deuteronomy 24:4**

then her first husband, who divorced her, is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled. That would be detestable in the eyes of (Yahweh) the LORD.

The Lord's own Law forbids Him to remarry the one He has divorced. So, are we looking at a "Do as I say, not as I do" type of situation? Surely not.

For we know that the northern kingdom did indeed defile herself... Ezekiel 20:43

<sup>43</sup>There you will remember your conduct and all the actions by which you have defiled yourselves, and you will loathe yourselves for all the evil you have done.

The mere fact that they did not return to Yahweh right away shows that they continued in their rebellious ways of fornication with other gods. Hosea 4:17

<sup>17</sup>Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone!

# Hosea 5:11

Ephraim is oppressed, trampled in judgment, intent on pursuing idols. (Ephraim had no heart of returning but continuing after the idols)

### Hosea 6:10

<sup>10</sup>I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel. There Ephraim is given to prostitution and Israel is *defiled*.

This verse alone shows that Ephraim is defiled and thus cannot return according to **Deuteronomy 24. Remember, Deuteronomy 24:4 says** "is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled"

### Hosea 8:9

<sup>5</sup>For they have gone up to Assyria like a wild donkey wandering alone. Ephraim has sold herself to lovers.

Here we see that Ephraim clearly became a prostitute in the eyes of Yahweh. There is little doubt that this was Ephraim's intent. And it obviously continued as such even after the years of banishment to Assyria...

# Isaiah 7:8

<sup>a</sup> for the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is only Rezin. Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be too shattered to be a people.

There was no repentance to return and they continued in their ways. Another point to consider, why God could not re-marry Ephraim after they were divorced, is this.... We know that a priest could only be a priest if he was a descendant of Aaron.

Speaking of those priests, in Leviticus 21:14, Yahweh says... Leviticus 21:14 He must not marry a widow, a divorced woman, or a woman defiled by prostitution, but only a virgin from his own people,

If this is the case for the priests, how much more is this to be the case for Yahweh Himself. Yahweh is truly the first High Priest as he was the first to offer a blood sacrifice for Adam and Eve to atone for their sin. To further illustrate this point as God being Priest, consider

### Hebrews 5:4-5

<sup>4</sup>No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was. <sup>5</sup>So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."

Meaning what? He was a priest because He was God's son. Just as the priests, through the Levitical priesthood, had to be descendants of Aaron, here we see in verse 5 that Yeshua is established as a priest first... by being the son of God.

### Hebrews 5:5

So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."

Because he was His son, he was a priest; just as the descendants of Aaron were, in the earthly priesthood. Declaring God Himself a priest. And what is said of **US** in regards to being priests?

### 1 Peter 2:4

As you come to him, the living Stone rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

#### **Revelation 20:6**

Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

So why are we going to be considered as priests? Because we will be adopted as sons by God, the first High Priest...

#### Romans 8:23

<sup>23</sup>Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our *adoption as sons*, the redemption of our bodies.

## Romans 9:4

the people of Israel. Theirs is the *adoption as sons*; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises.

#### **Ephesians 1:5**

he predestined us to be *adopted as his sons* through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will

And those who are adopted as sons will truly be a priesthood in Yahweh. So, it is in this that we see God cannot bring Ephraim back. Yahweh Himself, a priest, will not break His own law that he gave regarding the priests.

#### Leviticus 21:14

He must not marry a widow, a *divorced woman*, or a woman *defiled by prostitution*, but only a virgin from his own people,

However, we see elsewhere that bringing Ephraim back is definitely His intent... Ezekiel 34:15

<sup>15</sup>I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign LORD.

### Micah 2:12

<sup>12</sup>I will surely gather all of you, O Jacob; I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel. I will bring them together like sheep in a pen, like a flock in its pasture; the place will throng with people.

This was a great mystery to all the prophets and rabbis. They wondered how He could remarry the very one he divorced and declared to have given herself over to prostitution. God can not break the very righteous laws that define His own righteousness. Breaking the law of God is sin, the law defines sin according to God's own words! God CANNOT sin! How, then, can God remarry the lost sheep of Israel without breaking His own law, without sinning?

You are now understanding the GREAT MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL that Paul wrote about. The way God was going to accomplish this was hidden from His people for so long. So many do not even understand Paul's teachings on this matter today. How could God remarry who He divorced, when God says it was a sin to do so?

For there was only one way He could be released from that particular commandment of the law... <u>Death</u> Paul himself expounds on this, in solving

this mystery of the gospel.

## Romans 7:2

2...for example, by law a married, woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him...
Likewise, Paul goes on to say, that we die in Christ when we come into the faith, releasing both us, and God, from the requirement of the law, as it relates to divorce and remarriage. So Christ, came down and died for the lost sheep in order to bring them back into the fold.

# It is really the **"greatest love story, NEVER told"**

And just as many Egyptians joined the Hebrews in leaving Egypt in the Exodus by way of the Passover lamb, Christ has opened the door that whosoever would call upon him can be saved. He raised up His son as His word to die in our place. The only way the covenant could be annulled was through death of either partner. This was His goal. To die - through the Son of God to restore that which was lost.

## Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

What was lost? His people. Thus the words of Yeshua in John 15. John 15:13

<sup>13</sup>Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

So when you die in Him, you are dead to the sins of our disobedience. If you live in Him, you can be reunited with the Father, but if you are not in Him you are still in the divorced state. Considered dead in your sins and cannot be united to God the first High Priest.

### Hosea 13:1

When Ephraim spoke, men trembled; he was exalted in Israel. But he became guilty of Baal worship and died.

Notice that Ephraim was declared dead by the Baal worship. Spiritually dead. Declared dead before even being divorced. So, would that not be enough to annul the covenant? No. This spiritual death just left them dead in their sins and now out of covenant with the Father because of those sins.

At the point of their rebellion, they were no longer considered God's son anymore.... Hosea 1:9

<sup>5</sup> Then the LORD said, "Call him Lo-ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not your God.

Thus, in the eyes of God, they were dead because they were no longer His.

And this is why we see Paul's writings say...

#### **Colossians 2:13**

<sup>13</sup>When you were *dead in your sins* and in the *uncircumcision of your sinful nature*, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,

"Dead in your sins" and "uncircumcision of your sinful nature" meaning, out of covenant. Circumcision represents covenant here. **Ephesians 2:1** As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,

This is what the story of the prodigal son is all about...

#### Luke 15:24

<sup>24</sup>For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.