

Jeremiah 23:1-12: Shepherds will be raised for the remnants returning to Israel.
The remnant has appeared but also their shepherds, affirming the fulfillment of prophecy.

Summaries of relevant background information from related passages.

Many passages prophesy the emergence of the Jewish remnant but Jeremiah also predicts that shepherds will concomitantly emerge to care for them. This is first mentioned in **Jer. 3:14-15** when Jeremiah is rebuking the Jews for their widespread idolatries (**Jer. 3:2-3**). God in **Jer. 3:12-13** ardently calls for their return for He will be gracious to them and His specific actions in this regard are spelt out in **Jer. 3:14-15**. God will take them selectively from different cities and families to return to Zion. It sounds like a drawn-out process, precisely the way the Jews return to Israel since 1948. Then comes the prediction of shepherds in **v15** who will be feeding them with knowledge and understanding, obviously through some kind of formal education or perhaps a disciple making process. After this, **Jer. 3:16-18** refers to a specific period stated as “in those days”. It must be a later period for by then the remnant has multiplied and increased. Christ will be on the throne, which is why the ark will not be remembered or missed. Hence, it must be in the Millennium when He will rule. Judah and Israel will be reunited and they will come together en masse into the land. This is in the future as all believing Jews with the resurrected OT saints (**Eze. 37:12**) will enter the land at His second advent to start the Millennium. In fact it affirms that the selective return in **v14** is before His second advent and is now in process. The next relevant passage is **Jer. 16:14-15** which again predicts the Jews returning from many countries after His firm rebuke that they will be hurled out of their homeland (**Jer. 16:13**). But this return will be greater than the Exodus from Egypt (v14) and so it cannot be the return of the Babylon Exile for Jerusalem is again destroyed and exiled in 70 AD. They are again returning to Israel now, but is this the one predicted in v15? (See below)

Explaining the Passage – Jeremiah 23:1-12

The context is in Jer. 21-23, **three chapters** in which Jeremiah rebuke their leaders. In Jer. 21-22 the rebuke is for their evil kings and chapter 23 it is their religious leaders, namely the prophets and priests (**Jer. 23:11-12**). Amazingly in **Jer. 23:1-2**, he charges them as bad shepherds responsible for the scattering of the Jews. Thus in **Jer. 23:3**, He will gather them from all the countries back to Israel and again this is certainly the present return for it is similar to **Jer. 16:15**. Also the next key event after their return is the rule of the “righteous Branch” in **Jer. 23:5-6**, who is obviously Christ. The Jews will be saved and in Hebrew it is “yasha” meaning salvation, to dwell under Him in security, a clear reference to the Millennium. So in contrast, **Jer. 23:4** predicts the provision of good shepherds to care for the remnant. It is not just in knowledge and understanding (**Jer. 3:15**) but more, for it is to make them unafraid. Thus it is caring for their entire spiritual state, such that none will be missing. There is also ample hint on spiritual growth for in v3, they are to multiply and be fruitful. It harmonizes so well with the present leadership of the Messianic Jews who see themselves as spiritual shepherds (not prophets or priests) striving to make disciples among the remnant. In **Jer. 23:7-8**, it repeats **Jer. 16:15** that it will eventually be greater than the Exodus confirming that it is the same return. But how can it be greater than the Exodus? Well if these remnants are the ones entering into the Tribulation and then have that dramatic victory over the antichrist, indeed it will be.

耶利米書 23:1-2：牧羊人將被興起照顧回歸以色列的餘民

餘民以及他們的牧羊人都出現了，確證了這預言的應驗。

相關經文及有關背境摘要

許多經文都預言猶太餘民的出現，只有耶利米的預言還涉及牧羊人會附隨興起照顧他們。當耶利米在耶利米書 3:2-3 譴責猶太人肆意拜偶像之時，同章 14-15 節 是首次提及牧羊人的出現。神在耶利米書 3:12-13 熱切的呼喚他們回歸，因為祂將恩待他們，而祂為此所作的具體行動在耶利米書 3:14-15 列了下來。神會從不同的城市和家庭揀選他們回到錫安。這聽起來像個會持續很久的過程，而這恰恰就是猶太人自 1948 年開始返回以色列的方式。然後在 15 節 是有關牧羊人的預言，他們會以知識和智慧牧養他們，這當是通過多種正規教育渠道或是門徒訓練的形式。接下來耶利米書 3:16-18 提到一特別時段——“當那些日子”。這應是指向較後的時間，因為到其時，餘民數目已加倍增長。基督將坐在寶座上，這是為甚麼不需要追想和記念神的約櫃的原因。因此，那日子該是千禧年主統治的時候。猶大和以色列會重新統一，一同進入這片土地。這些都是將來的事，所有信主的猶太人和復活的舊約聖徒（以西結書 37:12），在主再來及千禧年開始時進入這土地。事實上這確證了 14 節 那些選擇性回歸是發生在祂再來之前，這行動當下正在進行中。第二處相關的經文在耶利米書 16:14-15，這裏再次預言猶太人會從許多國家回來，在這之前是神對他們嚴厲的責備，他們將被逐出自己的國土（耶利米書 16: 13）。但這次回歸會比出埃及那時還來得大規模（14 節），故此不可能是指從巴比倫被擄之地返回一事，因為耶路撒冷之後再遭毀滅，在主後 70 年他們又再被擄。他們如今重返以色列，但這是否就是 15 節 所預言的？（見下面解釋）

經文釋義—耶利米書 23:1-2

耶利米書 21-23 章是相連的，耶利米在這三章中譴責那些首領們。21-22 章譴責的對象是那些邪惡的王，而 23 章則是那些宗教領袖，包括先知和祭司們（耶利米書 23:11-12）。令人詫異的是，在耶利米書 23:1-2 他控訴他們是劣等牧羊人，要為猶太人被分散列國負責任。然後在耶利米書 23:3，神會從各國把他們召集歸回以色列，再次可以肯定這是現世紀的回歸，因為這裏和耶利米書 16:15 是非常的相似。還有的是，當他們回歸之後，按耶利米書 23:5-6，接著的重要大事是“公義的苗裔”的掌權，而那位顯然是耶穌基督。猶太人會得救，在希伯來文那是“yasha”，意即救恩。在祂之下他們會安然居住，這清楚是指向千禧年之時。而相比之下，耶利米書 23:4 預言將有好牧羊人興起來照顧餘民，這不單是在知識和智慧方面（耶利米書 3:15），更是要讓他們不再懼怕。故此這是對他們屬靈狀況的全然看顧，諸如不會有掉隊的人。有關他們靈性的成長還有許多的線索，因為第 3 節說他們會生養眾多。這些形容甚為符合現今的彌賽亞猶太信徒的帶領者，他們看自己是靈性的牧者（非先知或祭司），努力在餘民中培訓門徒。耶利米書 23:7-8 是耶利米書 16:15 的重提，這些事的發生最終會比從埃及出來還要規模厲害，因此所指應是同一次的回歸。但這怎麼會比出埃及還大規模？如果這些餘民都是進入大災難的人，而當他們令人吃驚地完勝敵基督之時，事實就會這麼樣。

關於牧人的三段重要經文

1. 耶利米書 3:14-15—牧人會以智慧和知識牧養餘民。
2. 耶利米書 23:1-6—牧人會讓他們不再害怕，也不致流失—他們的屬靈生命得到全然照顧。〔1 及 2 都是發生在千禧年之前，並且是指向開始聚集之時。因此這是在進行中。〕
3. 彌迦書 5 章是關於千禧年之時這些牧羊人對他們的照顧，因此他們並不單是牧羊人，他們是那些拿起刀劍的首領。這將在另一頁詳述。

令人驚異的細節：

1. 3:14 明顯預言到將有選擇性回歸的過程。取 (laqah) 和帶 (bo) 都是 wav con 完成式語態，尤如未完成的行動在進行中，只不過是將來發生的，也意味這是個拉長的過程。這肯定是在 3:16-18 所講的千禧年之前。留意 23:3 的招聚 (qabats) 一詞，那也是未完成式，並且是在進行中。
2. 一同回歸表示了 14 節那是選擇性的回歸，並且現今在進行著。這兩個細節表明 23:3-4 是 3 章的重述，而這回歸是連同牧羊人的出現，並且將發生在千禧年之前。重覆的預言，加上內容一致，讓這預言的力度大為加強。
3. 16:14-15 提到比出埃及的經歷還要大規模，從世界各國的回歸，然後在 23:7 再作出同樣的預言，並特別重覆“各國”這一詞。