

THE LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL



SELECTED WRITINGS



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NOT TO BE SOLD

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WERE THE “LOST TRIBES” EVER REALLY LOST?

BY JAMES TABOR

The precise term “Lost Tribes,” which we and others use to refer to the captivity and eventual dispersion of the ten tribes of the *northern* House of Israel by the Assyrians in the 8th century BCE, never occurs in the Scriptures. This raises a valid question as to whether our research and attempts to identify these Israelites might be illegitimate from a Biblical point of view. Indeed, there are those who maintain that the Northern Ten Tribes were *never lost* at all, and are now *part* of the Israelites whom we identify today as the Jewish people. If such be the case, then the entire goal and purpose of United Israel of Jerusalem and this web site is truly a misguided waste of time. So, from our viewpoint, this issue is of vital interest to us and to all our readers.

Actually, from a *prophetic* point of view, there is a sense in which those northern tribes of Israel, known in the prophets as the House of Israel, or by the names Ephraim or Joseph, were never lost—certainly not to God. The LORD (YHVH) declares, about the future great ingathering of all the tribes of Israel that is to *rival* the Exodus from Egypt, “For My eyes are upon all their ways: they are *not hid* from My face...” (Jer 16:14-18; Cf. Jer 3:11-18). The prophet Amos makes the point even more sharply, again recording the very words of the LORD (YHVH):

Behold the eyes of the LORD (YHVH) God are upon the sinful kingdom [northern House of Israel], and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; except that I will *not utterly destroy* the house of Jacob, says the LORD (YHVH). For lo, I will command, and I will sift the House of Israel among all nations, as grain is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the *least grain* fall upon the earth (Amos 9:8-9).

The consistent picture one gets in the Prophets is that at the time of this massive ingathering these Israelites will be scattered worldwide, mixed among the nations so as to be indistinguishable, yet, nonetheless, respond to a specific Divine signal or call in the times of the Messiah (Isa 11:12; 10:20-22).

This article will consider five areas of evidence to justify our contention that those ten northern tribes of ancient Israel were essentially *lost* to history until our time, that they have remained largely separated from the tribe of Judah (the Jewish people today), and that their identification and restoration is an essential part of the Divine plan for the redemption of the world. We will survey the following areas in this order: the Biblical, the historical-literary, the archaeological, the rabbinic, and the prophetic.

THE BIBLICAL RECORD

We begin with the historical books of the Bible itself. 1 Kings 11 records the division of the Twelve Tribes of ancient Israel into two distinct kingdoms or “houses,” following the death of Solomon in the 10th century BCE. Jeroboam, who was from the tribe of Ephraim, and thus not of the royal line of David, is told by Ahijah the prophet that the LORD (YHVH) would *divide* the kingdom, giving him “ten pieces,” or tribes, leaving only one, the tribe of Judah (with portions of Levi) in the south, centered in Jerusalem. This southern kingdom of Judah would continue the monarchy of David, fulfilling the promise God had made that David’s line would never perish and would eventually produce the Messiah (1 Kings 11:26-35; Psalm 89). In the rest of the book of 1 Kings, and throughout 2 Kings, we read the detailed story of the *entirelyseparate* history of what is called the “Divided Kingdom,” that of the House of Israel in the north, and the House of Judah in the south, with their distinctive ruling dynasties. All of the prophets, from Hosea through Ezekiel, consistently maintain this distinction and tailor their messages to either the kingdom of Israel or that of Judah (or sometimes both). The Exiles of these respective kingdoms are approximately 135 years apart, the former by the Assyrians (8th century BCE) and the latter by the Babylonians (6th century BCE). The northern kingdom eventually turned to the worst sort of idolatry, and her kings, such as the infamous Ahab, along with his wicked wife, Jezebel, abandoned completely the service of the LORD (YHVH) and His Torah-based Covenant with the people of Israel (1 Kings 16:30-33). 2 Kings 17 offers a

chilling summary of 200 years of apostasy and declares that the Exile of northern Israel from their land by the Assyrians in the late 8th century BCE was God's punishment for their sins. The writer of Kings puts it most succinctly:

So the LORD (YHVH) was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah was left... (2 Kings 17:18).

The devastation of the northern kingdom of Israel came in a series of military campaigns by the Assyrians, first under Tiglath-Pileser (c. 730 BCE), and subsequently by Shalmaneser V and Sargon II (722 BCE). The Assyrian policy was to actually *deport* the populations of those areas they conquered, resettling the land with non-native peoples (2 Kings 15:29; 17:6, 24). These new residents of northern Israel came to be known as the Samaritans. The writer of Kings records:

In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, and in Habor, by the river Gozan, and in the towns of the Medes (2 Kings 17:6 & 18:11). ⁽¹⁾

Most scholars locate these areas to the region north and west of Nineveh, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. ⁽²⁾ It is noteworthy that both the writer of Kings, as well as the Chronicler, record "they are still there today" (2 Kings 17:23; 1 Chron 5:26). Since the Chronicles were written as late as the 5th century BCE, *after* the return of Judah from Babylonian Exile, it is clear that the writer (traditionally Ezra) knew that these northern ten tribes *remained in Exile* in his day, that is, after the time that Judah and Jerusalem were restored. This is *the last trace* we get of the Northern Ten Tribes in the historical portions of the Hebrew Scriptures.

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah, as well as the Chronicles, record the return of the tribe of Judah (with portions of Benjamin and Levi) from Babylonian Exile between 539-520 BCE. Some have mistakenly understood references in these texts which refer to some of the additional tribes, other than Judah, or to all twelve tribes, as implying that the northern tribes, deported by the Assyrians, also returned to the *Landen masse* during this period in response to the decree of Cyrus. *This is entirely without basis*. We do know that even during the reigns of Hezekiah and

Josiah, kings of Judah, over a hundred years earlier, *portions* of the northern tribes (Ephraim, Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, Issachar) did come to Jerusalem for Passover, even though the bulk of the population had been deported to Assyria (2 Chron 30:1-18; 34:6-9). This indicates that the Assyrians did not carry away the total population, some small numbers of these northern Israelites were left in the land, particularly those who were attached to Judah and Jerusalem. This was especially the case with the small tribe of Benjamin, and many Levites. In the 6th century BCE, under Ezra and Nehemiah, the same was the case. There were *some* northern Israelites who returned with Judah, but the lists of names and families make it clear that the overwhelming majority of the 42,000 returnees were from Judah, Benjamin, and Levi. Detailed lists are given with tribal affiliation (Ezra 2; Nehemiah 7, and esp. chapter 11). Of course, these courageous pioneers were full of faith that the great promises of their Prophets for a full and final Restoration of *all* Israel was at hand. Accordingly, when the Temple was rebuilt, sacrifices were offered, as one would expect, for all twelve tribes of Israel (Ezra 6:13-18). Still, the texts of Scripture are unequivocal. The vast *majority* of northern Israelites were deported by the Assyrians, and “only Judah was left” (2 Kings 17:18), and the writer of Chronicles himself records that they remained in exile in the north even in his own day (1 Chron 5:26).

We should not assume that those who returned to Judea and Jerusalem were unaware of their Israelite brothers and sisters from the northern tribes. There are clear indications in the later prophetic portions of Scripture that the Judeans knew precisely where the other tribes were located. For example, the place names in Isaiah 66:19 (Lydia, Tubal, Greece) clearly show that these tribes had already migrated *northwest* into Asia Minor and Europe. This evidence accords precisely with what we learn from the Assyrian inscriptions, as we will see.

HISTORICAL AND LITERARY REFERENCES

Jewish literature that survives from the Persian, Greek, and Roman periods unanimously testifies that the northern Ten Tribes of Israel remained in Exile far to the north, scattered among the Gentiles. There are many references but a small sample will suffice for this article. First, there are those texts which scholars know as the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha,

most of which were written from 300 BCE into the 1st century of our era. The *Testament of Moses* says:

Then *some* from the tribes will go up and come to their appointed place and once again surround the place with walls [referring to the 539BCE return from Babylon]. And the *two tribes* will continue in the faith appointed for them.... And the *ten tribes* will be fruitful and increase among the Gentiles during the time of their captivity (4:7-9; cf. 2:5).

Here one sees that a clear distinction is made between the *two* (Judah and probably Levi) and the other *ten*. *2 Esdras* is even more explicit, stating that those exiled by the Assyrians were taken first across the Euphrates, but subsequently migrated far beyond:

But they formed this plan for themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the nations and go to a more distant region....a journey of a year and a half; and that country is called Arzareth [meaning, Another Land] (13:39-45).

Texts such as *Ben Sirach* (36:11-15), the *Psalms of Solomon* (17:28-31), and the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* imply a similar dispersion, long after the Babylonian return. Josephus, the first century historian, records much the same:

Wherefore there are but *two tribes* [those known as Jews] in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the *ten tribes* are beyond the Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers (*Antiquities* 11.133).

This testimony of Josephus is of particular value in that he is a direct descendant of a priestly family which returned under Ezra and could trace his genealogy back to that time. In his history of the Jewish nation he made use of all the available sources in his day. Had there been a general understanding that the northern Tribes of Israel had returned to the Land in the 6th century BCE he would have certainly recorded this.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

It is at this point that the archaeological evidence becomes most crucial for following the subsequent history of these migrating Israelite exiles. Over the past century a massive amount of inscription evidence has been literally dug up from the ruins of the cities of Mesopotamia, documenting the history of the Assyrian and Babylonian periods. This includes monuments, reliefs, and literally thousands of clay tablets, many of which have only been published in recent years. Not only do we now have contemporaneous accounts of the destruction and deportation of northern Israel, but we are able for the first time to actually trace the migrations of the Israelite captives into the regions north of the Caucasus and across the Bosphorus strait into southern Europe. In the earliest Assyrian monuments the Israelites are referred to as the “House of Omri (*Bit Khumri*),” after Omri, king of Israel and father of the wicked Ahab, of the 9th century BCE. Actual correspondence from the court of Sennacherib and Sargon has survived, and it is within such materials that one can begin to pick up references to the Israelites, who were referred to as Gamira or Gamera, and finally as *Cimmerians*, living in the very areas where the Israelite deportees were taken.⁽³⁾ The subsequent history of the Cimmerians, their migrations into Asia Minor and southern Europe, and their relationship to the Scythians, is beyond the scope of this article, but has been thoroughly documented. Suffice it to say at this point that this aspect of our evidence, in combination with the Biblical, the literary, and the prophetic, is part of a whole, and forms an impressive demonstration that approaches historical certainty.

THE RABBINIC POSITION

The rabbis have much to say about the “lost” Ten Tribes, and discussions about their whereabouts and their eventual return to the Land of Israel abound in Jewish sources.⁽⁴⁾ It is interesting to note that the main discussion in the Mishnah begins with the assertion that “the Ten Tribes will *not* return” (*b. Sanhedrin* 110b). In other words, the idea that the Ten Tribes had assimilated with Judah, the Jewish people, or had otherwise returned to the Land, is *not even* entertained. The whole discussion, which all the rabbis accept, assumes that these tribes are “lost” or in Exile, the pertinent question was *whether* they would ever return, given their extreme state of apostasy. Rabbi Akiba maintained they would not return, while Rabbi Eleizer held that they would. Both interpretations are based on different interpretations of Biblical prophecy, and whether the promises of

restoration were conditional or unconditional. The *halachah* (authoritative decision) was that the Ten Tribes *would* return (*Tosefta Sanhedrin* 13). Indeed, some rabbinic authorities even held that the return of the Ten Tribes was an essential component of the Redemption. The *Yalkut Shimoni* asserts that even those of the tribes who have lost their identity will come back in the days of the Messiah, when their *origins* and *tribal affiliations* will be revealed.

According to the rabbinic sages, the Ten Tribes migrated from Assyria, beyond the River Sambatyon. They report that this mysterious river flows six days a week but stops on the Sabbath (*Genesis Rabba* 11:5). Most have taken this reference to be legendary, however John Hulley has argued that the tradition actually refers to the Bosphorus strait, between the Black and Aegean Seas, where the current actually does slow down or even reverse itself on the average of once a week.⁽⁵⁾ He presents linguistic evidence that the very term Sambatyon comes from “*yam Bithyon*” or “sea of the Bithynians.”⁽⁶⁾ If this be the case, we have an amazing correlation with the evidence on the migrations of the Cimmerians, indicating that significant portions of the Israelite deportees moved *northwesterly*, into Asia Minor and eventually toward Europe.

THE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY

For those who believe that the words of the Hebrew Prophets are inspired by God, perhaps the *strongest* evidence that the Ten Tribes never returned, that they are not to be found among the Jewish people today, but that they will eventually be identified and restored, lies here—in the Bible itself. The problem is that many, if not most, Bible students, both Christian and Jewish, read over passage after passage that clearly refers to the Ten Tribes as if it were referring to the House of Judah, or those we know today as the Jewish people. As we have seen, the Jewish people today obviously contain *some* mixture from the other tribes, but they are predominately from Judah, Levi, and Benjamin. When the Prophets speak of Joseph, or Ephraim, which they do many times, this is clearly *not* a reference to the Jewish people and often stands in the same context with some explicit contrasting statement about Judah (the Jews). There are two major points which must be emphasized here.

First, the Prophets clearly declare that the ultimate restoration of the Ten Tribes, and their *union* with Judah will come in “the last days,” coinciding with the appearance of the Davidic messianic figure. That time is described in such a way as to make clear that it could *not possibly* refer to the return of Judah from the Babylonian Exile in the 6th century BCE. For example, Jeremiah 30-31, one of the most explicit prophecies in the Bible dealing with the Tribes, is framed with the statement “in the latter days you will understand this” (Jer 30:24). In case one might wonder or dispute the precise meaning of this phrase, “the latter days,” Jeremiah makes it clear that it is the time when the LORD (YHVH) removes the yoke of foreign domination and raises up a Davidic descendant to be king in Israel (30:9). This corresponds to a time when Jerusalem will be rebuilt, *never to be uprooted or demolished again* (Jer 31:37-40). Since Jerusalem was utterly demolished by the Romans in 70 CE, subsequent to the return from Babylonian Exile under Ezra and Nehemiah, this particular union and restoration of all Israel—including that of the Land, the City, and the Temple—must be one yet *in the future*, in the days of the Messianic Kingdom. Amos makes the same point at the end of his prophecy. The Northern Kingdom is to be destroyed, scattered, but not lost (9:8-9)—yet in a latter time the Davidic “tabernacle” will be restored (9:11), and Israel will be planted back in their own land, “*never again to be uprooted*” (9:15). Since Judah *was* uprooted again by the Romans following the return from Babylon, and since the Davidic dynasty was not restored during the time of that Return, this prophecy, like that of Jeremiah 30-31, *must* refer to a subsequent time. Ezekiel 37 speaks of both the valley of dry bones and the union of the two “sticks” (or “trees”/ \$[e]). These two Sticks are clearly identified as that of Joseph (and “his companions,” i.e., the Ten Tribes) and Judah. This important prophecy is obviously set in the same messianic time period, one clearly *yet future* to us, and could not have been fulfilled in 2nd Temple times (5th century BCE through 1st century CE). The latter verses of the chapter make this clear. The *union* of the two sticks comes at a time when the Davidic messianic figure appears and the holy Sanctuary or Temple is restored *permanently* (37:24-28). Further, as the following two chapters show, this is just preceding the wars of Gog and Magog. To apply Ezekiel 37 to any time in the past is to rob it of any sensible meaning. Isaiah 11 is perhaps the clearest single prophecy which absolutely *pinpoints* the time of the union of the Ten Tribes with the House of Judah. It is set at a time when the messianic Branch of David will rule the earth. At that time the LORD (YHVH), through this messianic agent,

extends His hand *a second time* [not the Babylonian Return] to recover the exiles of both Israel and Judah (verses 10-12). These Scriptures: Jeremiah 30-31; Amos 9; Ezekiel 37; and Isaiah 11, are representative of an entire mesh of related texts, all of which correlate perfectly with one another. The Prophets offer us an incredibly vivid picture of the Last Days, and central to their vision is this coming union of the “lost” tribes of Joseph and his companions, with those we know today as the Jewish people.

The second major point which stands out most starkly in the Prophets is the absolutely staggering *scope* of the future Restoration of all the Tribes. It is to rival the Exodus from Egypt, according to Jeremiah:

However, the days are coming declares the LORD (YHVH), when men will no longer say, As the LORD (YHVH) lives who brought the Israelites up out of Egypt, but they will say, As the LORD (YHVH) lives who brought the Israelites up out of the land of the north and out of *all the countries* where he had banished them. For I will restore them to the land I gave their forefathers (Jer 16:14-15).

Lest anyone doubt the context, the passage is repeated in Jeremiah 23:7-8 where it is connected tightly to the Davidic messiah and his reign (verses 5-6). The language could not be plainer. Jeremiah 3:11-18 also adds further details regarding this coming Restoration. At that time, Jerusalem will become the center of a world government, to which all the nations will flock, precisely when “the House of Judah will join the House of Israel and together they will come from a northern land.” This text in turn correlates with Isaiah 2:2-4, which tells of a time of universal peace with all nations coming to Jerusalem to learn the Torah Way of the LORD (YHVH). Clearly then, when the Ten Tribes return, and are joined with the Jewish people, the *entire* world will be transformed. By no stretch of language or imagination can any of these texts be applied to the hopeful but limited return of the Jews from Babylon in 586 BCE.

It has been our experience that those who maintain that the Jewish people today represent the fulfillment of the Biblical prophecies regarding the restoration of ALL Israel have usually not *carefully* read the many portions of Scripture dealing with that Restoration.⁽⁷⁾ These texts make it very plain that a great awakening lies yet ahead of us, one that will usher in the Messianic Era.

THE “LOST TRIBES” AND RACISM

From the very first, this web site has made it clear to our readers that United Israel of Jerusalem rejects any type of *Racist* approach in its attempts to identify the Lost Tribes. We do not maintain that any countries today, such as the United States or Britain, *are* Israelite, or that modern nations are to be identified with certain tribes, such as Manasseh or Ephraim. As we have repeatedly stressed, the research we are beginning to present on the Lost Tribes, will be historically responsible so that it can stand up to the most rigorous academic scrutiny. Too many of the groups who espouse the “Israel Identity” message produce so-called “proof” and “evidence” that is laughable to competent linguists, ethnographers, and historians. And, to make things worse, they often tend to be subtly, or even not so subtly, *racist* in their approach to this question of identifying the Lost Tribes. Clearly the populations of Britain, the United States, and northwestern Europe are very mixed. What we maintain is that significant portions of the ancient Israelites ended up in these areas. Identifying them, at this time, is not *scientifically* possible.

Obviously, we do maintain that the Abrahamic seed, the very *bloodline* through Isaac and Jacob, is significant. The Biblical texts make it clear that it will truly be those descendants of the ancient Israelites who will return to the Land of Israel and usher in the Messianic Age. However, in terms of actual identification, for now at least, *IT IS A MATTER OF THE HEART!* Admittedly, this sounds highly subjective and imprecise. However, the experiences of thousands of Biblically-oriented, mostly Protestant, believers provide convincing testimony in this regard. We have begun, on this web site, to present some striking evidence of the affinity these special people have with the God of Israel, the Bible, and the Jewish people (see “A Coincidental Historical Parallel?”).

There is much more evidence to come, and it will continue to be presented systematically. We have lived to witness in our own day a tremendous *RETURN* on the part of thousands of Christians toward a recovery of the Hebraic roots of their faith. Many find it absolutely *irresistible*. There is a reason for this! It is truly a matter of the heart, but the prophets foretell just such a thing, how one from a city, and two from a family, will be brought back to Zion in the latter days. We are highly privileged to witness not only the birth of the modern State of Israel

in our century, but the identification and the beginnings of a restoration of the Lost Tribes.

(1) The translation of the latter part of this verse is difficult. It might also mean, “He settled them *on the Habor*, the river of Gozan” (see NRSV, NIV). The parallel account in 1 Chronicles 5:26 names “Halah, Habor, Hara, and the *river* Gozan,” indicating that the name of the river is Gozan, *not* the Habor, a tributary that runs into the Euphrates.

(2) Immanuel Velikovsky maintained that the tribes were taken much farther north, even beyond the Caucasus, to the steppes of the Don and Volga rivers, an area he argues the Assyrians reached. He identifies the “Gozan” river with the Volga, and the Khazars with the ancient Israelites (*The Assyrian Conquest*, Vol. II of the *Ages in Chaos* series).

(3) For readers wishing to pursue this area in greater detail, we mention two publications, one popular and the other more scholarly: E. Raymond Capt, *Missing Links Discovered in Assyrian Tablets* (Artisan Sales, P. O. Box 1497, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360) and Anne Kristensen, *Who Were The Cimmerians and Where Did They Come From?* (Copenhagen: Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 1988).

(4) A good published summary is found in Rabbi Rafael Eisenberg, *A Matter of Return* (Jerusalem: Feldheim, 1980). The major rabbinic discussion is found in the Babylonian Talmud, Tractate *Sanhedrin* 110b.

(5) Bosphorus (bòs-per-es), strait, c. 20 mi (30 km) long and c. 2,100 ft (640 m) wide at its narrowest, separating European and Asian Turkey. The fortified strait connects the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmara. As a part (with the DARDANELLES) of a passage linking the BLACK and MEDITERRANEAN seas, it is a critically important shipping lane for Russia and Ukraine. A bridge (3,524 ft/1,074 m long) spans the Bosphorus at Istanbul, near the southern end of the strait.

(6) See the fascinating article “Did Any of the Lost Tribes go North?” in *B’Or Ha’Torah* 6 (1987): 127-33.

(7) See the articles “An Everlasting Love” and “Searching for the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel—Separating Fact from Fantasy,” where many of these key texts are covered.

TRACING THE DISPERSION

BY TERRY M. BLODGETT

[http://library.lds.org/nxt/gateway.dll?f=templates\\$fn=default.htm](http://library.lds.org/nxt/gateway.dll?f=templates$fn=default.htm)

New linguistic studies help tell us about the scattering of Israel.

Terry M. Blodgett, “Tracing the Dispersion,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1994, 64
What befell the tribes of Israel’s northern kingdom many centuries ago? That question has been asked by students of the scriptures for generations. Like any important historical topic, it is one that deserves careful and thoughtful study.

Reconstructing ancient history, even religious history, can be compared to putting together a large, complex puzzle with many of the pieces missing. One must locate and assemble as many pieces as possible, then form as accurate a picture of the past as the facts allow. In tracing Israel’s dispersion, therefore, many pieces may be considered: artifacts, vestiges of ancient customs, archaeology, cultural anthropology, and scriptural and historical accounts. This article explores only one such piece—that of linguistic evidence.¹

EVERY LANGUAGE EVOLVES

Language is a dynamic cultural phenomenon. It changes and grows. In our day, modern technology, the sciences, and the media have accelerated the acquisition of new words but, at the same time, have standardized spelling and pronunciation. In the past, languages acquired new words more slowly, but they were more likely to experience spelling and pronunciation changes. Some of these changes took only decades; others took centuries.

One of the major sources of language change occurs when two groups of people, each speaking a different language, come in contact with one another. Each language influences the other, becoming a catalyst for change and eventually settling into patterns characteristic of the languages prompting the changes. These patterns serve as clues to help a linguist

determine what the language was like before the changes took place and which languages caused the changes.

The basic conclusion of linguistic study into this subject is that as large groups of ancient Israelites left their homeland—first, following the Assyrian captivity of northern Israel (about 700 B.C.) and the Babylonian captivity of Judah in the south (about 600 B.C.), and second, following the Roman conquest of Palestine (about A.D. 70)—their language influenced the languages of some of the countries to which they migrated. This linguistic evidence can help us determine where some of these Israelites went and approximately when. Although ancient Israelites were eventually scattered throughout the entire world (see [Amos 9:9](#)), at least one general geographical area contains significant linguistic evidence to suggest that Israelite migrations did in fact occur there. That area is Europe.

LINGUISTIC EVIDENCE IN EUROPE

From the Old Testament and other historical sources such as the annals of the Assyrian kings, we learn that the northern kingdom, after years of war and deportation, fell to Assyrian invaders in 721 B.C. Jeremiah emphasized the north countries as being these Israelites' eventual destination (see [Jer. 3:12-18](#); [Jer. 16:14-16](#); [Jer. 23:7-8](#)) and implied a western route (see [Jer. 18:17](#); [Hosea 12:1](#)). Thus, a natural place to look for what befell those remnants is to study the countries north and west of the Middle East.

It is of interest, therefore, to learn that in Europe, the centuries following 700 B.C. were marked by tremendous outside influence, and language was profoundly affected. During the period between 700 and 400 B.C., numerous languages in Europe underwent major pronunciation changes and absorbed new vocabulary.² This was particularly true of the Celtic languages, which were originally spoken throughout Europe (700-300 B.C.) but gradually became more concentrated in western Europe and Britain, and of the Germanic languages, which were spoken in central and northern Europe and Scandinavia and eventually in England. The gradual evolving of the sounds that make up words in a language, particularly when two languages merge, is known by linguists as a *sound shift*. The well-known pronunciation changes of the period of time between 700 and 400 B.C. have been called the Germanic Sound Shift, because they were the most pronounced and systematic in the Germanic languages, which include English, Dutch, German, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, and

Icelandic.³ Also during this same time period, the total vocabulary in the Germanic languages increased by as much as one-third.⁴

Linguists have long pondered what caused this sound shift and the increase in vocabulary.⁵ One theory is that the technologically advanced peoples who introduced iron to Europe (seventh century B.C. in Austria; sixth century B.C. in Sweden) also influenced the language changes. Linguistic research supports this idea, as well as the idea that these advanced peoples came from the Middle East, where iron was in use. The research shows that the changes in language resulted from an influx of Hebrew-speaking people into Europe, particularly into the Germanic- and Celtic-speaking areas.

THE GERMANIC SOUND SHIFT

Most of the languages of Europe belong to the Indo-European family of languages; that is, they are part of the linguistically linked group of languages spoken in Europe and spreading as far east as Iran and India. For many years, the peculiarities in the Germanic languages kept linguists from recognizing that the Germanic languages belonged to the Indo-European group. However, early in the nineteenth century, two linguists—Rasmus Rask from Denmark (1818) and Jakob Grimm from Germany (1819-22)—showed that the Germanic languages were indeed part of the Indo-European family but that their differences in pronunciation were caused by a systematic shift in the sound of two groups of consonants—[*p, t, k*] and [*b, d, g*].⁶

At the time of the sound shift, the pronunciation of these six consonants was changed to [*ph, th, kh*] and [*bh, dh, gh*], respectively. These new sounds were usually represented in writing by the letters *f, th, h* (*x* or *ch*) and *b* (*v*), *d* (*th*), *g* (*gh*). For example, by applying the rules of the sound shift to the Indo-European *te puk*—replacing the *t, p,* and *k* with *th, f,* and *x*—we recognize the English words *the fox*. Now the relationship between the Indo-European word *pater* and the English word *father* becomes more recognizable.

Linguists generally agree that these changes began taking place sometime after 700 B.C., and that the influence causing the sound shift continued to affect the Germanic dialects for several centuries, at least until 400 B.C. and possibly as late as the Christian Era.⁷

Unfortunately, scholars have not been able to agree upon what caused these changes or where the original homeland of the peoples may have been. Scholars have traced them to the Black Sea area, and to the Caucasus Mountains, but research did not trace them beyond there, because the scholars did not know whether that had been the people's first homeland or they had come from the east or south of that point. My research took me to the Middle East, and it was there that I found a likely cause for the sound shift—the Hebrew language.

The first thing I noticed was that Hebrew shifted the same six consonants that were shifted in Germanic—[*p, t, k*] and [*b, d, g*]. In ancient Hebrew, these consonants carried a dual pronunciation. Often, they did not shift, but when they began a syllable that was preceded by a long vowel, or ended a syllable, then [*p, t, k*] and [*b, d, g*] shifted to the sounds [*ph, th, kh*] and [*bh, dh, gh*]. Thus, the Hebrew word for “Spain,” *separad*, was pronounced *sepharadh*, and the word for “sign,” spelled ‘*ot*, was pronounced ‘*oth*.

In 700 B.C., this sound shift was still functional in Hebrew and would have been part of any impact that migrating Israelites would have had on other languages. The fact that the same consonants were involved in similar sound shifts in both Hebrew and Germanic dialects at about the same time is significant. Yet even more significant is that the sounds [*ph, th, kh*] and [*bh, dh, gh*], so prevalent in Hebrew, did not exist in Germanic before the sound shift occurred.⁸

A COMPARISON OF HEBREW AND GERMANIC

The case for a Hebrew influence on Germanic is further strengthened by a close comparison of the two languages, and particularly of the changes that developed in Germanic following the Assyrian captivity of Israel. The changes fall generally into three categories: pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary.

1. Pronunciation. In addition to the similar sound shifts just described, there were other sounds common to both Hebrew and Germanic that did not generally appear in the Indo-European languages. For example, when Hebrew and Germanic consonants appeared between vowels, they normally doubled if the preceding vowel was short. This doubling of consonants, referred to as gemination, became a characteristic feature of Germanic but not of other Indo-European languages. In this way, Indo-European *media* became Old English *middel* and modern English *middle*.

Almost half of the Hebrew verb conjugations required doubling the consonant and substituting a shortened vowel preceding the consonant. Compare Hebrew *shabar* (“to break”) and the related Hebrew form *shibber* (“to shatter”). Likewise, almost half of the Germanic verbs doubled the middle consonant and substituted a shortened preceding vowel: Indo-European *sad-* and *bad-* became *settan* (“set”) and *biddan* (“bid”) in Old English.⁹

2. Grammar. At the time of the Germanic Sound Shift, the Germanic dialects experienced a sharp reduction in their number of grammatical cases, making Germanic more like Hebrew. As in English, the case (or form) of a noun, pronoun, or adjective in a Germanic language indicated its grammatical relation to other words in a sentence. At the time of the Germanic Sound Shift, the Germanic dialects immediately reduced the number of possible cases for a word from eight to four (as in modern German) and eventually to three (as in English, Spanish, and French). These were the same three cases (with possible remnants of a fourth) that Hebrew used before the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities—*nominative case* (indicating a word is the subject of a sentence), *accusative case* (indicating a word is the object of a verb or preposition), and *genitive case* (used to indicate a word in the possessive form).¹⁰

Indo-European had six verb tenses. Hebrew, on the other hand, contained only two tenses (or aspects), dealing with actions either completed or not completed. Germanic, likewise, reduced its number of tenses to two—past and present. The other tenses in modern Germanic languages have developed out of combinations of these two original tenses.

Verb forms in the two language groups also contain similarities. The Hebrew verb *kom*, *kam*, *kum*, *yikom* (“to arise, come forth”), for example, compares favorably with modern English *come* and *came*, Old English *cuman*, and German *kommen*, *kam*, *gekommen* (“to come forth, arrive, arise”).¹¹

3. Vocabulary. Perhaps the most convincing similarity between Hebrew and Germanic lies in their shared vocabularies. Linguists recognize that about one-third of all Germanic vocabulary is not Indo-European in origin.¹² These words can be traced back to the Proto-Germanic period of 700-100 B.C., but not beyond. Significantly, these are the words that compare favorably in both *form* and *meaning* with Hebrew vocabulary. Once a formula was developed for comparing Germanic and Hebrew

vocabulary, the number of similar words identifiable in both languages quickly reached into the thousands.

According to this formula, words brought into Germanic after 700 B.C. had a tendency to modify their spelling in three ways:

First, in most Germanic dialects, the words changed in spelling according to the sound shift. Hebrew, on the other hand, changed only in pronunciation; spelling remained the same. For example, Hebrew *parah* (“to bear oneself along swiftly, travel”) remained *parah* when written, but was pronounced [*fara*] if it was preceded by a closely associated long vowel. With that in mind, it is easy to recognize the same word in Old Norse and Old Frisian (a dialect in the Netherlands): *fara* (“to travel, move swiftly”).

Second, the vowels in the initial syllables were frequently dropped in written Germanic forms because Hebrew words usually carried the accent on the last syllable. Compare Hebrew *daraq* and English *drag*. Occasionally, if the initial consonant was weak, the entire syllable dropped out, as in Hebrew *walad* (“male offspring, son”) and English *lad*, and in Hebrew *nafal* (“to fall”) and English *fall*.

Third, Hebrew used a tonal accent (a vocal emphasis featuring a tone or sound in part of a word) rather than a stress accent (a vocal emphasis featuring increased volume in speaking part of a word), but this changed to a stress accent in the Germanic dialects. However, the effects of the Hebrew tonal accent are evident in Germanic. The Hebrew tone, which usually appeared in the final syllable, was often represented in written Germanic by one of four tonal letters—*l*, *m*, *n*, or *r*. Compare Hebrew *satat* (“to place, found, base, begin”) with English *start* (*r* represents the Hebrew tone), and Hebrew *parak* (“to be free, to liberate”) with English *frank* (“free; free speech”—in which *p* was shifted to *f*, the unaccented *a* was deleted, and *n* was added for the Hebrew tone).

Similarities in Hebrew and English words point to their common roots.

SOME HEBREW-ENGLISH COGNATES

SOME HEBREW-ENGLISH COGNATES	
Hebrew	English

KAHAL, “to call”	KAHALAH	CALL	
OBER “to cross over”		OVER	
DOR, “to rotate, turn aside, enter a dwelling”	DUR	DOOR	
GADAR “to surround, enclose, to collect”		GATHER	
HARAP, “to pluck [a harp], to harp at, to scold”	HARAPAH	HARP	
DARAG, “to go by steps, to walk or ascend with difficulty”	DARAGAH	DRAG	
BALAK, “to make (“void (“void (“void (“void of marks”)	BILEK, empty, of vegetation, of	BLIYK void” light”) pale”) color”)	BLACK BLEAK BLEACH BLANK
SHAPAH “to form, carve, shape, create”		SHAPE	

New Germanic Words from Hebrew Word Roots

Biblical Hebrew contained relatively few root words—originally only a few hundred—but from these roots, words were formed in great variety. Most of these formations were made by exchanging vowels, adding prefixes or suffixes, and doubling consonants according to certain rules. Literally thousands of words similar to these roots, and to the multiple

forms that developed out of these roots, appeared in Germanic dialects between 700 and 400 B.C. One example is the Hebrew word *dun* or *don*. The root is *dwn* and is related to the root ‘*adan* (“to rule, to judge, to descend, to be low, area ruled or judged, area of domain”). The proper name *Dan* (“judge”) is related to this root. Out of this root also developed the Hebrew word ‘*adon* (“Lord, Master”). These words remind us of the Anglo-Saxon word *adun*, out of which the English word *down* (the noun form means “hill, upland”) developed and the area ruled was *don*, or its modern counterpart *town*. It is also interesting to note that the Hebrew word ‘*adon* (“Lord”) and its root ‘*adan* (“to rule, judge”) compare well with *Odin* and *Wodan*, two names from different dialects for the highest Germanic god.

THE HIGH GERMAN SOUND SHIFT

The influence of Hebrew on the Germanic languages does not end with the Germanic Sound Shift of 700-400 B.C. About a thousand years after the first sound shift, the Germanic dialects in northern Italy, Switzerland, Austria, and southern Germany began a second phonetic change involving the same six consonants. Beginning in the south about A.D. 450, this second sound shift, referred to as the High German Sound Shift (since it originated in the highlands of the Alps), spread northward into Switzerland and Austria. By A.D. 750, it had spread to the dialects of southern Germany. This High German dialect continued to grow in popularity (in the sixteenth century Martin Luther used it in his translation of the Bible) until it eventually became the standard form of German.

The major difference between the Germanic Sound Shift of 700-400 B.C. and the High German Sound Shift of A.D. 450-750¹³ was that [t], which shifted to [th] in the first sound shift, shifted consistently to [s] in the second one. This caused the word *water*, for example, to be pronounced *wasser*, and *white* to be pronounced *weiss*. This shift of [t] to [s] is an important clue to the source of influence for this second sound shift in southern Germanic territory. It leads us, once again, to the Middle East—but this time to the Aramaic language.

THE ARAMAIC INFLUENCE

When Persia conquered Babylon, Cyrus the Great freed the captive Jews and allowed them to return to their homeland in Palestine. However, not all wanted to leave the beautiful city of Babylon to return to their country,

which had been destroyed. Some stayed. Many from the tribes of both Judah and Benjamin returned. Those who returned to Palestine found themselves surrounded by Aramaic-speaking peoples, and they soon adopted Aramaic as their everyday language.¹⁴

As a consequence, the Jews were speaking Aramaic in A.D. 70 when the Romans overran Jerusalem and sent thousands of Jews fleeing Palestine. During the following years, many of these Aramaic-speaking Jews made their way northward into Europe. The Christianized Jews, especially, sought the refuge of the Italian Alps, and by A.D. 450, they had established a sizable population there. During the following centuries they gradually spread northward into Switzerland, Austria, and Germany.¹⁵

Historians have documented these migrations well, but they have failed to recognize the influence of these people's language on the languages they encountered. Aramaic had originally employed a sound shift identical to the Hebrew sound shift, but by 500 B.C. when the Jews learned it, the language had made a small but significant change in its pronunciation. Aramaic began shifting [t] to [s] rather than to [th], as both Hebrew and Aramaic had done previously.¹⁶

This is also the characteristic difference between the first Germanic Sound Shift of 700-400 B.C. and the High German Sound Shift of A.D. 450-750.¹⁷ For example, in comparing the Hebrew/Aramaic changes with the first and second sound shifts, we note that the Jews at the time of their dispersion pronounced, for example, the Hebrew words *bayit* ("house") as *bayis* and *gerit* (from *gerah* "roughage, grits") as *garis*. By comparison, the German word for *grit* (*griot*, "groats") made a similar change to *grioz*, then to *griess*, during the High German Sound Shift. These changes suggest the influence of Aramaic in the southern Germanic dialects. Additional Hebrew vocabulary was added to the southern German, Austrian, and Swiss dialects during this later period (compare Hebrew *pered*, "beast of burden," with German *Pferd*, "horse").

TWO HEBRAIC SOUND SHIFTS

Thus, what have come to be known as the Germanic Sound Shift and the High German Sound Shift appear to have been a Hebraic sound shift and a closely related Aramaic sound shift that influenced the Germanic dialects at two separate periods of history. Research also shows that the linguistic mark of the sound shifts, supported by other linguistic similarities, particularly the vocabulary, can be used as a means of tracing Israelite

groups throughout the world. So far, the evidence seems to point to Europe as a major destination, particularly to the Germanic- and Celtic-speaking countries of Scandinavia, Britain and the European mainland.

THE GATHERING OF ISRAEL

The role that Abraham's descendants would play in the course of world history was foreshadowed early in the biblical record. To Abraham the Lord said, "I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee." ([Gen. 17:6](#).)

The Lord renewed this promise with Isaac (see [Gen. 26:4](#)) and again with Jacob, saying that his descendants would "spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." ([Gen. 28:14](#).)

This spreading would come as Moses foretold: Israel would someday be scattered "among the nations, and ... be left few in number among the heathen, whither the Lord shall lead [them]." ([Deut. 4:27](#).) This would be a thorough dispersion. As the Lord said in [Amos 9:9](#), he would "sift the house of Israel among all nations." But he also promised that he would not forget Israel. Eventually, the children of Israel would be gathered "out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south." ([Ps. 107:3](#).)

Although Israel would be scattered throughout the world, the countries north of Israel were particularly singled out as lands from which Israel would be gathered. Jeremiah wrote that "the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

"But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them." ([Jer. 16:14-15](#); see also [D&C 110:11](#); [D&C 133:26](#).)

It is no wonder that Jesus sent his Apostles out into all the world to preach the gospel (see [Mark 16:15](#)) or that he said they should go "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." ([Matt. 10:6](#).)

Israel's peoples have been scattered a long time now. As far as we know, only a portion of Judah retained its identity over the centuries. With the restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith, many members who have received their patriarchal blessings have been identified with the

tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh and a sprinkling of other tribes. It is also significant that among the first to accept the gospel in this dispensation were people who lived—or who had ancestors who had lived—in the very countries that received Israelite migrations.

Seeing Their Footsteps

Changes in language provide only one kind of linguistic evidence we can use to identify the dispersion of Israel. Other linguistic evidence can be found in place names and in the names of various ancient peoples who lived north of the Middle East following the captivity of Israel. Many of these people migrated farther north and west into Russia, Scandinavia, Europe, and Britain.

The apocryphal book of 4 Ezra (a continuation of the book of Ezra in the Old Testament) describes how Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, took northern Israel captive. It also indicates, as Isaiah prophesied (see [Isa. 10:27](#)), that at least some of the Israelites escaped their captors and fled north.

According to the account in 4 Ezra (referred to in some editions as 2 Esdras), the fleeing captives “entered into Euphrates by the narrow passages of the river” and traveled a year and a half through a region called “Arsareth.” (4 [Ezra 13:43-45](#).) The narrow passage could refer to the Dariel Pass, also called the Caucasian Pass, which begins near the headwaters of the Euphrates River and leads north through the Caucasus Mountains. At the turn of the century, Russian archaeologist Daniel Chwolson noted that a stone mountain ridge running alongside this narrow passage bears the inscription *Wrate Israila*, which he interpreted to mean “the gates of Israel.”¹⁸

These narrow passages lead through a region called *Ararat* in Hebrew, and *Urartu* in Assyrian. Chwolson writes that *Arsareth*, mentioned in 4 Ezra, was another name for Ararat, a region extending to the northern shores of the Black Sea.¹⁹ A river at the northwest corner of the Black Sea was anciently named *Sereth* (now *Siret*), possibly preserving part of the name *Arsareth*. Since ‘*ar*’ in Hebrew meant “city,” it is probable that *Arsareth* was a city—the city of *Sareth*—located near the *Sereth* River northwest of the Black Sea.

A number of other geographical locations in the area of the Black Sea have names that suggest Hebraic origins. For example, the names of the four

major rivers that empty into the Black Sea seem to have linguistic ties to the tribal name of Dan. They are the Don (and its tributary the Don-jets), the Dan-jester (now Dneestr), the Danube (or Donau), and the Dan-jeper (now Dnieper). North of the Caspian Sea is a city called Samara (Samaria). There is also a city of Ismail (Ishmael) on the Danube, and a little farther upstream is a city called Isak (Isaac).

Chwolson and others of the Russian Archaeological Society found more than seven hundred Hebraic inscriptions in the area north of the Black Sea. According to Chwolson, one of these inscriptions refers to the Black Sea as the “Sea of Israel.”²⁰ On the Crimean Peninsula was a place referred to as the “Valley of Jehoshaphat,” a Hebrew name, and another place was called “Israel’s Fortress.”²¹ According to the Russian archaeologist Vsevolod Mueller, there was an “Israelitish” synagogue at Kerch (a city on the Crimea) long before the Christian era.²²

It is difficult to date these inscriptions, but some of them contain information relating to the fall and captivity of Israel. Others appear to have been written about the time of Christ and even later, indicating that the area north of the Black Sea contained an Israelite population for many centuries. One of these inscriptions mentions three of the tribes of Israel as well as Tiglath-pileser, the first Assyrian king to transport large segments of the population of Israel to Assyria.²³ Another inscription mentions King Hoshea, who reigned in Israel during the years of Israel’s fall.²⁴

The Russian archaeologists also found mounds, or heaps of earth, dotting the landscape.²⁵ These mounds, stretching across the entire region north of the Black Sea where the Hebraic inscriptions were found, turned out to be elaborate burial chambers, often containing a leader of the people with some of his possessions. Although mound building was not a typical type of burial in the Middle East, “high heaps” or “great heaps” are described as a means of burial in several Old Testament passages. (See [Josh. 7:26](#), [Josh. 8:29](#); [2 Sam. 18:17](#).) Furthermore, the people of Ephraim were commanded in the Old Testament specifically to build up “high heaps” as “waymarks” as they traveled. (See [Jer. 31:21](#).)

These Black Sea mounds contain not only inscriptions but also drawings, jewelry, and other artifacts indicative of Hebrew origin. The mounds stretch from the Black Sea northward through Russia to the top of the Scandinavian Peninsula, then southward to southern Sweden—where thousands of mounds are found.²⁶ Similar burial mounds are also found in

Britain and western Europe, indicating other migrations in westerly and northwesterly directions.

Herodotus identified the first of the mound builders in the Black Sea area as *Kimmerioi*;²⁷ the Romans referred to them as *Cimmerii*, from which we have the name *Cimmerians*. They called themselves *Khumri*, which refers to “the Dynasty of King Omri.” Omri was king of northern Israel about 900 B.C. He founded Samaria and established the capital of Israel there. His mode of government made him popular throughout the Middle East, and northern Israel came to be known by his name, politically, from that time on.

There are other peoples throughout Europe and Asia whose origins trace from this area and whose names seem to have a Hebrew root. Among these are the *Galadi* (the root word probably comes from the biblical *Gilead*, the region east of the Jordan River, pronounced *Galaad* in that region and in Assyria and the *Celts* (a Germanic pronunciation of *Galadi*); the *Gallii* (or *Gali*, root word probably from the biblical *Galilee*), also called *Gals*, *Gaels*, and *Gauls*; the *Sacites*, or *Scythians* (the word comes from Assyrian captives, *Esak-ska* and *Saka*, comparable to the Hebrew *Isaac*); the *Goths*, or *Getai* (the root probably from the biblical *Gad*, pronounced *Gath*); the *Jutes* of Jutland (from the tribe of Judah); and the *Parsi* (from Hebrew *Paras*, which means “the dispersed ones”), who settled Paris and whose name in Germanic territory sound-shifted to *Frisians*.

Gospel topics: house of Israel, languages

[illustration] Map by Adair B. Payne

[photos] The Assyrian and Babylonian captivities and the Roman conquest of Palestine helped spread the Israelites’ influence and language to other areas. (Oval photo by Don L. Searle; other photos by Erich Lessing/Art Resource, N.Y.)

[photo] Photo by J. Scott Knudsen

[photo] Foreground photo by J. Scott Knudsen

[illustration] Portrait of Joseph Smith courtesy of Library-Archives, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Auditorium, Independence, Missouri

[photo] Photo of menorah by Don L. Searle

DID ANY OF THE LOST TRIBES GO NORTH?

(IS THE “SAMBATYON” THE BOSPHOROUS?)

JOHN HULLEY

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This article has been updated and retitled:

CROSSING THE BOSPHORUS INTO EUROPE

School children in Israel learn an ancient Jewish tradition about the disappearance of the Lost Tribes across a mysterious river named Sambatyon. But, if they ask where that river may be, their teachers cannot tell them. It is not on any map, for -- until now -- it has not been found. If this mysterious river could be identified, its location might help in the search for Ephraim.

A. JEWISH RELIGIOUS TRADITION

The tradition about the Sambatyon goes back to sacred Jewish texts.^[1] According to these it is a very unusual river. For example Rabbi Akiva^[2] is reported to have said that ". . . the river Sambatyon carries

stones the whole week but allows them to rest on the Sabbath" (Genesis Rabba 11:5).

Rabbi Nachmanides,^[3] commenting on Deuteronomy 32:36, wrote: ". . . it is called Sabbatyon^[4] because of its rest on the Sabbath."

More startling, if less consistent, details are given in classical sources,^[5] as well as in medieval writings.^[6]

Certainly there are rivers which stop when they dry up in summer; but such changes are seasonal, not weekly. At river mouths the incoming tide may block the out-flowing waters; but such interruptions occur roughly twice a day. What sort of a river would stop once a week? It has eluded the efforts of rabbis and other explorers to find a river with anything remotely resembling the peculiarities described in the tradition. Today the quest continues, but still without success.

However there is a body of water with unusual characteristics, which the Cimmerians must have crossed -- the Bosphorus. For it is the only route by which the Lydians could have driven the Cimmerians out of Asia Minor.^[7] The Lydian Empire had reached its maximum dimensions by then. Covering western Asia Minor, its eastern boundary simply led to other countries in Asia Minor, while its other boundaries were all maritime. The only nearby land outside the region was Thrace across the Bosphorus. Further evidence for this point of exit may be seen in the fact that the next stage in Cimmerian history occurred in southeast Europe.^[8]

The Bosphorus does have characteristics, both real and legendary, which are somewhat reminiscent of the Sambatyon

B. HOW THE BOSPHORUS STOPS

The Bosphorus is the strait through which the waters of the Black Sea rush past Istanbul toward the Aegean. About once a week the current slows down drastically, stops or even reverses; the interruption may last for a day or more.^[9] It is a real hazard for sailors, as can be seen in the pilot's handbook put out by the British Admiralty for the area.^[10]

The phenomenon was known to navigators in classical times. Strabo mentioned it: ". . . the strait at Byzantium [the Bosphorus] . . . as Hipparchus reports, even stands still sometimes." (Strabo, Geography 1.3.12)

It must have been on the basis of this knowledge that the Greeks were able to sail into the Black Sea for trade and colonization. Since the current averages about three miles an hour, it would have been close to impossible to navigate up the Bosphorus most days. It is supposed that Greek ships would wait at the southern end -- for days at a time if necessary -- until the current stopped or reversed. They might then sail up it in a few hours.

What makes the Bosphorus stop is the wind. A persistent breeze from the southwest can pile up water at the southern end of the strait (i.e. on the northeastern shore of the Sea of Marmora); and the same wind will simultaneously draw water away from the northern end (i.e. from the southwestern shore of the Black Sea). In such conditions the normal gradient of the water in the Bosphorus can be sharply reduced, eliminated or even reversed. The current will correspondingly slow down, stop or flow backwards.

These effects do not recur on any fixed day of the week, but they do happen about once a week. One series of observations during a period from April through September yielded an average of 4.8 days per month.^[11] In other words during that particular half-year they occurred on average every 6 days and 8 hours. In different periods the average might thus easily be once a week.

These characteristics of the Bosphorus are thus rather similar to those of the legendary Sambatyon, without being exactly the same. In both cases the current stops; but in the first of them it also reverses. In both cases the periodicity is approximately weekly; but in the second one it is exactly so, and occurs always on the same day of the week.

The significance of this partial similarity can best be evaluated in light of another point in the tradition.

C. HOW THE STONES WERE STILLED

According to Jewish tradition^[12] stones come to rest in the "Sambatyon" on the Sabbath. A parallel may be seen in the Greek legend of the Argonauts. In those days such legends were part of every-day conversation. And this one was the best-known tradition about the Bosphorus. Anyone crossing it would be likely to hear the story referred to by boatmen and other local inhabitants.

An important feature of the story is a pair of giant rocks at the entrance to the strait from the Black Sea. Today they are still a peril to shipping; but in times gone by they were still more so. According to the tradition, they were so loosely emplaced that they would on occasion strike each other; hence their name -- Symplegadae (= Clashers). Boats attempting to sail between them might thus be smashed to pieces.

It had been prophesied that the rocks would come to rest only if and when heroes would successfully pass through them. This condition was fortunately fulfilled when Jason and his Argonauts passed through in search of the Golden Fleece. Their ship, the "Argo", sustained only slight damage; and the rocks are said then to have become stationary. According to the legend, the water link between the Black Sea and the Aegean was thereby opened to navigators from that time forth.

In this case a connection appears between the religious tradition about the Sambatyon and the Greek legend about the Bosphorus. What they have in common is the concept of rocks coming to rest. But what is a weekly event in the first case is once and for all in the second. As in the case of the stopping of the current (see previous section), the similarity with respect to the stones is only partial.

D. HOW THE LOCATION WAS FORGOTTEN

If the body of water in question is now known as the Bosphorus, how did it lose the name of Sambatyon? The probable answer is that Bosphorus -- a word with Greek roots -- was applied to the strait by Greek traders and colonists, who began to penetrate the area in the 7th century. Their presence then increased only gradually. The Cimmerians must have

crossed late in the 7th or early in the 6th century.^[13] Accordingly they are likely to have heard from the local inhabitants an older pre-Greek name -- Sambatyon.^[14]

When information about the crossing reached Jerusalem, no one there may have known where it was. Neither Sambatyon nor Bosphorus are mentioned in the Old Testament. After all it is more than 500 miles away to the northwest. But why was its location not found out through inquiry?

One reason could be the state of weakness and confusion then reigning in Jerusalem. The date when the Cimmerians crossed coincided approximately with the deportations to Babylon.^[15] The First Temple was destroyed. In these terrible circumstances information coming from a group of exiles from the northern kingdom, too far away to help Israel, may not have received much attention. The Babylonian exile would have taken priority in the minds of the people of the southern kingdom.

By the time of the return from Babylon, led by Ezra and Nehemiah, Greek influence and, with it, Greek names were spreading throughout the east Mediterranean area. It would have been more difficult to ascertain the whereabouts of a distant river which had once been called Sambatyon.

Meanwhile the Ephraimite escapees too were losing contact with their old home. On the other side of the Bosphorus they were entering a different world of Celtic and other tribes. From there very little news about them reached Israel. Thus the Sambatyon -- wherever it might be -- came to be known in Jerusalem as an unknown place the escapees had last been heard from before contact faded out.

Confirmation of this identification of the Sambatyon can be found in a Christian source a thousand years later. Jerome,^[16] living in Jerusalem ??, recorded a local tradition that the lost tribes were at the Bosphorus.

The Bosphorus can be observed; the Sambatyon at present can only be visualized. What are the chances that they are the same? The similarities, partial as they are, could be just a coincidence. Nevertheless

the exceptional nature of their distinguishing characteristics makes any similarity at all more likely to be significant.

Certainly there is a difference between a river that stops on average about once a week and one that does so exactly on the Sabbath. Nevertheless, so far as the frequency of stopping is concerned, they are much more similar to each other than to any other rivers or straits. After all, how many rivers or straits are there in the world that stop anywhere close to once a week?

Not only can the remarkable behaviour of the current be explained, but also the movement of the stones. And the disappearance of the name can be accounted for too.

Two other factors are worth considering: first, the Cimmerians almost certainly did cross the Bosphorus or nearby waters into Europe, thus putting themselves on the other side of it, in accord with tradition; second, plausible alternatives to this identification of the Sambatyon are lacking.

The identification cannot be absolute; but the Bosphorus emerges as the best candidate so far proposed for the mysterious Sambatyon of Jewish tradition. It thus adds further evidence for the identification of the Cimmerians as the lost tribes of Israel.

[1] Sanhedrin (BT) 65b; Jerusalem Talmud Sanhedrin (JT) 10:6; Lamentations Rabba 2:9; Genesis Rabba 11:5, 73:6; Targum Pseudo-Jonathan on Exodus 34:10; Nachmanides on Deuteronomy 32:36.

[2] 2nd century, A.D.

[3] 13th century.

[4] A variant form of the name.

[5] Pliny, Natural History 31:24; Josephus, Wars of the Jews, 7:96-99.

[6] See Rafael Eisenberg, A Matter of Return, Feldheim, Jerusalem, 1980, pp.135-7; Enc.Jud., s.v. "Sambatyon".

[7] Herodotus, Persian Wars, Book I, Chapter 16. The Cimmerians have been identified as Ephraimites by various authors, and will be thus identified in a book by this author, now in preparation.

- [8] On the date of the Cimmerian appearance in the Crimea see for example M. Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia*, Oxford, 1922, pp.37,44.
- [9] C. G. Gunnerson and E. Ozturgut, "The Bosphorus" in E. T. Degens and D. A. Ross (eds.) *The Black Sea -- Geology, Chemistry and Biology*, American Association of Petroleum Geologists, Tulsa, 1974, p.103.
- [10] See "Currents" in *Black Sea Pilot*, Hydrographic Department, Admiralty, London, 1955 edition (or other editions presumably)
- [11] B. W. Labaree, "How the Greeks sailed into the Black Sea", *American Journal of Archaeology*, vol 61 (1957), pp.29-33.
- [12] Cited at the beginning of this article.
- [13] According to the regnal dates (605-560 B.C.) of King Alyattes of Lydia, who chased them out of Asia Minor.
- [14] The root of the last part of the name Sambatyon could be related to Bithynia, the region on the south shore of the Bosphorus; see my "Did the Lost Tribes go north", *B'Or HaTorah*, Jerusalem, 1987, pp.131-133 (republished in Hebrew by the same magazine in 1992 ???) For other background information on the name see Wilhelm Schulze, "Samstag", *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung*, vol. XXXIII (1895), pp.378-84; Adolphe Reinach, Étude sur le Déluge en Phrygie et le Syncrétisme Judéo-Phrygien, Durlacher, Paris, 1913, pp.4, 5, 68, 72-7.
- [15] Two waves of deportation to Babylon are mentioned in the Bible: one in 597 (II Kings 24:8 ff; Jeremiah 13:18-19; II Chronicles 36:9-10); the other in 586 (II Kings 25:1-21; Jeremiah 39:1-10; 52:1-30; II Chronicles 36:11-21) when the First Temple was destroyed. There was also an earlier one in 605, and a later one in 582 (Enc. Jud. s.v. "History", pp.607, 609).
- [16] Commentary on Zechariah 10:11.
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JEREMIAH IN IRELAND

PROOF FROM THE BIBLE AND THE IRISH ANNALS

BY JOHN E. WALL

One of the most beloved stories of traditional literature written by those who support the modern identity of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel is the story of the coming of the prophet Jeremiah to Ireland. According to this story shortly after c. 586 BCE when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, conquered Jerusalem, Jeremiah the prophet, accompanied by his scribe Baruch, and the daughters of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, fled that country and for a short time resided in Egypt. From there they took ship to Ireland, where one of the daughters married Eochaidh the high king (heremon or *ard ri*) of Ireland. A variation says that the marriage took place in Jerusalem. The royal couple governed the Emerald Isle from their capital at Tara in County Meath. Jeremiah, at that time an old man, was also reputed to have established a sort of ministerial training college at Tara. He became a revered figure in Irish legend.

Over the course of the centuries the royal line established at Tara was transferred from Ireland to Scotland to England where it survives today in the person of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. A wondrous stone, variously called the Stone of Destiny, Stone of Scone, or Coronation Stone, upon which Her Majesty and her predecessors on the thrones of the three kingdoms were crowned, thought to be the stone that the patriarch Jacob slept on at Bethel (Genesis 28:18-22) was also believed to have been brought to Ireland by Jeremiah.

It is claimed that the story of Jeremiah coming to Ireland can be found in the ancient annals, histories and other literature of the Irish, and indeed references to it abound in the works written by traditional Ten Tribes scholars, especially 19th-century writers. Yet rarely, if ever, do these writers point to any specific history in which this tale may be found, vague

references to “Irish annals” usually being made. A few examples will suffice:

One authority states that “Irish historians are unanimous that about 580 B.C. there arrived in Ulster a notable man [Jeremiah], a patriarch or saint, accompanied by an Eastern princess, and a lesser person by the name of Simon Brach or Barech”.(1) Further that, “Irish tradition tells us that Jeremiah married the princess Tamar Tephi to Eochaidh ... king of Ireland”.(2) However, the historians are not named, nor is any particular tradition cited.

Another writer says that “The ancient records of Ireland bear ample testimony to this [Jeremiah’s coming to Ireland] as an historic fact, not only recording the event itself, but also supplying confirmatory evidence by giving the actual date or period of their arrival correctly”.(3) Again, disappointingly, this author does not name the “ancient records” in which the Jeremiah story may be found; rather we read phrases such as, “[the records conclude ...” (4) and “[t]he royal records state ...”.(5) He dates the coming of Jeremiah to Ireland at late in 583 BCE or early 582 BCE.

The closest that any writer comes to naming names is a contemporary author and archaeologist, E. Raymond Capt. In his book, *Jacob’s Pillar: A Biblical Historical Study*, Capt makes reference to *The Chronicles of Eri*, *The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters*, *The Annals of Clonmacnoise*, and *The Chronicles of Scotland*. He quotes briefly from the latter and gives an extensive recounting of the entire Jeremiah legend in his notable book. However, like the learned writers cited above, Capt does not directly cite any passage in any ancient chronicle which explicitly mentions Jeremiah.(6)

This lack of corroboration of the Jeremiah legend has caused some to doubt the validity of the entire story.

But I will show in this article that Jeremiah *is* mentioned in the Irish annals and histories, albeit under another name. His Judahite ancestry and prophetic identity are clearly stated and even a brief physical description is given. His friend and amanuensis Baruch is also mentioned. Furthermore, I will name names and give the reader of this article the references by which he may corroborate the story himself.

First, however, in order to understand the proper chronological context of Jeremiah's coming to Ireland, a brief review of Irish history prior to his arrival is necessary.

HISTORY OF IRELAND PRIOR TO JEREMIAH

Admittedly, the history of this ancient land can at times be confusing. It is said that the Irish like nothing so much as a good story, and their willingness to romanticise and embellish has led to a certain confusion. On the other hand, it is not entirely their fault. Much of the blame can be laid at the feet of Catholic monks who altered the traditional Irish histories, or invented their own, in order to deliberately *hide* the Israelite ancestry of the Irish people. For instance, they attempted to portray the Irish as descendants of Magog, son of Japheth!

Irish history begins, as the history of every civilisation does, after the Flood of Noah's day. For three hundred years after that catastrophic event, Ireland was an uninhabited land. A claim to sovereignty over Ireland was made, according to historian Herman L. Hoeh who refers to Irish annals, by the Assyrian king Ninus, son of Bel, but the land was not colonised permanently.(7)

In *c.* 2069 BCE, again according to Hoeh who uses Geoffrey Keating's *History of Ireland* as his source, a Hebrew named Parthalon with his followers settled the land and established a kingdom, the country being divided into four parts after his death. The date, however, is open to some question. If the *P-r-t* in the name Parthalon can be equated with the *b-r-t* of the Hebrew *brit* (covenant), then it is difficult to see how this would have referred to a descendant of Abraham, who had not yet even been born. Moreover, as one authority states, "[t]he Partholonian [Parthalonian] story is clearly a variant of that of the eponymous ancestor of the British, Brutus [Greek: Peirithoos] the Trojan, with which it has been confused".(8) Brutus arrived in Britain *c.* 1103 BCE, according to one scholar.(9) Others claim an earlier date, *c.* 1149 BCE. If this is so, then the date of 2069 BCE is impossible. The same source quoted above claims that Parthalon was a Milesian (see below).

In any event, the Parthalonians, whoever they may have been, ruled Ireland intermittently until 1709 BCE, when a tragedy befell them at the hands of Phoenician Formorians. The island was then invaded by Nemedians from Scythia who lived in Ireland until 1492 BCE, being ruled by the Formorians for much of this period. A portion of the Nemedians escaped during their sojourn in the land and returned in 1492 BCE as the Fir-Bolgs.

In 1456 BCE, a contingent of the famous Tuatha (pronounced “Too-ah”) de Danaan (“Tribe of Dan”) arrived in Ireland and ruled for 440 years until 1016 BCE. A second contingent came in 1213 BCE during the days of Deborah and Barak (Judges 5:17). Finally, in 1016 BCE, toward the end of the reign of King David of Israel, another Hebrew people, the Milesians, descendants of Eber the Hebrew according to Hoeh, conquered the Danaan (Danites), forcing them to accept their rule. The kingdom of Ireland was then divided between the two sons of Milesius, Ebher and Ghede the Ereamhon (Heremon or Erimionn, or high king) and a capital was established at Tobrad, also known as Tea-mur, Tamhair, Teamhara, and now called Tara.

Throughout all these invasions the Irish have meticulously maintained the record of their kings. Lists of these kings can be found in Geoffrey Keating’s *History of Ireland*, O’Flaherty’s *Ogygia*, and A.-M.-H.-J. Stokvis’s *Manuel d’Histoire*, volume II, pages 234-235.

For our purposes here, however, the royal line that most concerns us is that of Nemedh, reputed ancestor of the Hebrew people who invaded Ireland c. 1709 BCE. His royal descendants are listed in various sources, sometimes differently, yet they are important to our story, because it is in this genealogy, whether always precisely accurate or not, that we find Jeremiah in Irish history, though under another name.

NEMEDIANS AND MILESISANS

Throughout this article, I have tried to pursue my objective, that of identifying Jeremiah in Irish history, in a manner that is easy for the reader to understand. The history of Ireland is confusing enough as it is without bringing in legends, fables, and tales of bravery and romance by the heroes of this “Holy Land” in the Atlantic. For this reason, I will confine myself to

a discussion of Nemedh and his reputed descendants, one in particular whom I will identify with the Biblical Jeremiah.

Historian Geoffrey Keating, writing of the expedition of Nemedh to Ireland in “thirty-four ships, with a crew of thirty in each ship”(10) said that this party of colonisers was led by “Nemedh and his four sons, Starn, Iarbanel the Prophet, Anind and Fergus Leth-derg (Fergus of the Red Side)”.(11) In the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*, the same four sons are named, in a different order (the father is called Neuie McAgamemnon): “with his foure sonn[s] [came] Into Ireland out of Greece, his sonnes names alsoe were Sdarne, Jaruanell [Iarbanel], the prophett, Fergus Leahderg, ... and Anyynn [which] people Ruled Ireland 382 yeares”.(12)

Another historical source, the *Leabhar Gabhala* (Book of Conquests) agrees, adding that Iarbanel the Prophet was a Nemedian chief. (Though Iarbanel is called a “son” of Nemedh, this need not literally be true. It simply means he is a descendant of Nemedh.) The account reads: “Now as for Neimedh [Nemedh], he had four chiefs with him, Starn, Iarbanel the Prophet, Fergus Redside, and Ainnian. They were four sons of Neimedh”.(13)

Still another account names Nemedh the ancestor of the Danaans. Keating writes, “Some antiquarians say, that the nation, of whom we are now treating, were called Tuatha-De-Danaan, from Brian, Iuchar and Iucharba, the three sons of Dana, daughter of Delbaeth, son of Elathan, son of Niadh, son of Indae, son of Allae, son of Tath, son of Tabarn, son of Enda or Enna, son of Beothach, son of Ibaath, son of Bathach, son of Iarbanel, son of Nemedh”.(14)

We find an echo of this in the *Leabhar Gabhala*, naming the same names as above (except that Elathan is called the son of Delbaeth) and also that “Iarbanel the Prophet [is the], son of Neimedh [Nemedh], son of Agnoman”.(15) (Agnoman is an obvious reference to Agamemnon, king of the Greek Mycenae, who led an expedition against the Trojans to recover Helen, wife of Agamemnon’s brother Menelaus, king of Sparta. See also Neuie McAgamemnon, above.)

Two other figures from Irish history, Bres of the Danaan and Nuadh Silver-Arm claim descent from Nemedh.(16) Iarbanel is mentioned in both

genealogies as a son of Nemedh. The Milesians also figure into this tale, but more on that later.

All this need not be as confusing as it looks, as there is a common thread running through all these genealogies. Whether we speak of Nemedians, Fir-Bolgs (a branch of the Nemedians), Danaans, or Milesians, all these peoples were Hebrews. As the Nemedians preceded the other peoples, it is clear that the Irish historians have attempted to trace the lineage of their kings to this island's earliest Hebrew ancestors.

But still we have not identified Jeremiah in Irish history. Or have we? Actually, we have stumbled across his name several times already without recognising it. The next section will positively identify Jeremiah in the annals of ancient Ireland.

WHO WAS IARBANEL?

In all the genealogies of Nemedh's descendants, one name is met with consistently: Iarbanel the Prophet. Who was he? Where did he come from? Do the annals have anything to say about him that might be germane to our argument? Astoundingly, the Irish histories have several important things to say about Iarbanel, enough to answer the above questions. They give us the land of his birth (not Ireland), a brief physical description, and a description of his character. Yet, outside of Irish history, nothing seems to be known about him. I will demonstrate, however, that once we have established the identity of Iarbanel, a great deal is known about him.

Iarbanel is clearly stated to be a descendant ("son of") Nemedh, the Hebrew chieftain. This obviously makes Iarbanel also a Hebrew. Furthermore, Iarbanel is also unique in that he is called a prophet, the only one of Nemedh's descendants so called.

Nor is Iarbanel the only name by which he is known in Irish history. He is also found in the Milesian story as well. Again, Keating, in his account of founders of a sort of school established by Fenius Farsa in Egypt after the Tower of Tahpanhes was abandoned. He writes, "The three sages that held the chief direction of this great school were Fenius Farsa from Scythia; Gaedal, son of Ethor, of the race of Gomer, from Greece; and Caei, the

Eloquent (or the Just), from Judea, or Iar [Iarbanel], son of Nemha [Nemedh], as others call him ...".(17)

Notice that Iarbanel, known here by the name Caei, is called an “eloquent” and a “just” man. Also note that he *comes from Judea*! As for the name Tahpanhes, this should be familiar to Bible students. The name is found in the book of Jeremiah: “So they [a party of rebellious Jews, with faithful Jeremiah, his secretary Baruch, and King Zedekiah’s daughters] came into the land of Egypt: for they [the Jews] obeyed not the voice of the Lord: thus they came even to Tahpanhes” (Jeremiah 43:7). The Jewish refugees lived in Tahpanhes temporarily, and, according to legend, Jeremiah, his scribe, and the king’s daughters left that place to continue their journey to Ireland.

But Irish historians have more to say about Iarbanel. Keating, quoting from the *Leabhar Gabhala*, gives us the following lines from a poem: “The Fair Iarbanel, a prophet true, / Was son of Nemedh, son of Ardnaman— / To this gray hero, mighty in spells / Was born Beothach of wild steeds”.(18)

Here Iarbanel is called “fair” (which may refer to lightness of skin or a mild and pacific temperament or a man of sympathy, deep feeling and justice), a “prophet true” (as opposed to a false prophet); a “gray hero”; and, “mighty of spells”, i.e., a miracle-worker.

What have we learned about Iarbanel so far? Firstly, he was a Hebrew, a true prophet, who came from Judea, during the time of Jeremiah’s stay at Tahpanhes. He was an eloquent and a just man, fair of skin and/or temperament, an old man, considered a hero and a worker of miracles.

What do we know about Jeremiah? Firstly, he was a Hebrew, a true prophet (Jeremiah 1:5) coming from a priestly family (Jeremiah 1:1); he came from Judea (Anathoth in Judah, a town northeast of Jerusalem—Jeremiah 1:1). He spoke the word of the Lord often and eloquently, rising early (Jeremiah 7:13, 25; 25:3; 35:14), speaking of justice (Jeremiah 22:15; 23:5; 31:23; 50:7). His eloquence, given to Jeremiah by God Himself (Jeremiah 1:7, 9) is revealed in his words and in this admission from the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* that, “As far as the form of his poetic utterances is concerned, Jeremiah is of a poetical nature. ... He often speaks in the meter of an elegy”.(19) As for “fair” (in the

temperamental sense) and just, the *ISBE* says that Jeremiah “was, by nature, gentle and tender in his feelings, and sympathetic”.(20)

At the time of his flight from Judea, Jeremiah would have been an old man. The *ISBE* says that “At that time [the time of Jeremiah’s stay at Tahpanhes] Jeremiah must have been from 70 to 80 years old”.(21) After a long life in the Lord’s service, enduring many trials, a “gray hero” indeed.

The evidence brought forth from Irish history and the Bible favours the identification of Iarbanel with Jeremiah. But a nagging question remains: the name Iarbanel itself. What is its derivation and what does it mean?

At the beginning of this article I promised to actually *name* Jeremiah in the Irish annals. I will now do so. The name Jeremiah in Hebrew is Yirmeyahu, abbreviated to Yirmeyah. It means “the Lord establishes”. The beginning letters in the name are *yod* and *resh*. It is possible, in fact, on the basis of the evidence presented here, more than likely that the letters “Iar” in “Iarbanel” are simply an abbreviation for the name Yirmeyahu (*Jeremiah*), a transliteration into the Irish tongue of the *yod* and *resh* of the prophet’s name. But what does the rest of the name Iarbanel mean—“banel”? With an elementary knowledge of Hebrew, the meaning is easy to discover. “Ban” is simply the Hebrew *ben*, meaning “son of”; “el” is the Hebrew *El*, meaning “God”. Remembering that “Iar” is a short form of the name Jeremiah, one can easily see that Iarbanel, translated from Hebrew to English is Iar ben El, or “Jeremiah, the son of God”!

As a true prophet of God, who had God’s Holy Spirit within him, Jeremiah could legitimately be called a son of God. The Lord Himself as much said so, “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations” (Jeremiah 1:5). As a “sanctified one”, i.e., one set apart for holy use and having the Spirit of God, Jeremiah certainly qualified as a saint.

Was Iarbanel also a saint? The Irish annals do not explicitly say so, but it can be assumed that for a “just” man who was a “prophet true” and “mighty of spells”, and whose name meant “son of God”, sainthood was at least a distinct possibility. It is interesting to note that the Irish word for saint is *namh* (pronounced “nav”), and that Iarbanel is said to be a son of

Nemedh, also spelled Nemha. Is there a philological connection between Nemedh/Nemha and *namh*? More light on this question will be shed later, but for now let us note the opinion of Yair Davidy, a respected Israeli Ten Tribes researcher, who points out that, “Nemha [Nemedh] (i.e. in ‘Iar son of Nemha’ above) is from the same root as ‘Nemedian’ and means *sanctified*” (22) (*emphasis mine*). A sanctified person is a saint!

The evidence presented in this article leads to only one conclusion: that Iarbanel was Jeremiah. If one does not believe that Iarbanel was Jeremiah, then one is forced to believe that an amazing thing has happened. It has happened that a Hebrew prophet, a true prophet of the Lord in whom God’s Holy Spirit dwelt and was thus a “son of God”, who was a saint, who lived in Judea, who fled to Tahpanhes in Egypt with his secretary and friend Baruch and others, who was an eloquent speaker and a gentle man who preached justice, who was an old man and a worker of miracles, disappeared from the face of the earth.

At the same time in history there appeared in Ireland, a Hebrew prophet, whose name means “son of God”, a true prophet, who was considered a saint, who lived in Judea, who fled to Tahpanhes in Egypt, who had a “son” named Brec, (23) who was an eloquent and a just man, who was an old man and “mighty in spells”, appeared on the scene, fully formed, literally out of nowhere.

If one does not believe that Iarbanel was Jeremiah, one must believe that this is all a coincidence.

The coincidence is impossible. Iarbanel was Jeremiah. It is a fact of history.

AN HONEST OBJECTION EXAMINED

Before leaving this subject however, it is only fair to mention that an alternative identity for Iarbanel has been proposed. In the third volume of his great trilogy on the identity of the Ten Tribes, *Lost Israelite Identity*, esteemed Israeli researcher Yair Davidy proposes that Iarbanel was Iar (or Yair) of Judah. He writes, “ ‘Iar’ or ‘Yair’ or ‘Jair’ is recorded in the Bible as a descendant of Judah who settled in the land of Gilead of Machir in

Menasseh (*sic*)” (24) and furthermore that, “Yair in the Bible was linked to both Judah and to Gilead of Menasseh (*sic*) east of the Jordan one of whose sons was Peresh (‘Separated’ or ‘Sanctified’) which name is identical with that of ‘Nemha’ in Irish”. (25)

There is no doubt that Iar (or Yair) existed and that he was also a Hebrew, and that he came from Judah or Judea. This he shares in common with Iarbanel, but that is where the similarity ends. Iar-Yair could not have been Iarbanel for the following reasons: Yair is nowhere in the Bible called a prophet as is Iarbanel in the Irish annals or Jeremiah in Scripture; he was not a saint nor was he sanctified; there is no evidence that he was eloquent of speech or particularly just as were Iarbanel and Jeremiah; he did not leave Judah to come to Egypt; he did not work miracles; he did not have a secretary/“son” named Baruch or Brec; he was not venerated in history as were both Iarbanel and Jeremiah.

Some will argue, however, that Davidy’s point concerning Yair being “linked” to both Judah and Gilead of Manasseh one of whose sons had a name meaning “separated” or “sanctified”, indicates the identity of Iar-Yair-Jair with Iarbanel. But I will show that the true link exists, in both a physical and spiritual sense, not between Yair and Judah and/or Manasseh, but between Iarbanel-Jeremiah and Aaron, brother of Moses.

Let us remember that anciently “son of” need not represent a direct father-son relationship, but only a descendancy or even a spiritual relationship of a student to his spiritual teacher. Jeremiah was the “son of [father-son relationship] of Hilkiyah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin” (Jeremiah 1:1). Anathoth was a priestly town.

E. W. Bullinger in a note to Jeremiah 1:1 in his *Companion Bible*, in comparing the priestly lines of Eleazar and Ithamar says that “Anathoth belonged to that [line] of Ithamar”. This is not a common name in Scripture and only one man bears it. Ithamar is the fourth son of Aaron who founded a line of priests (I Chronicles 24:3, 6).

It is obvious that if Jeremiah’s father, Hilkiyah, who lived in Anathoth, was of the line of Ithamar, son of Aaron, then this makes Jeremiah a descendant (“son of”) Aaron as well.

Is there any evidence from the Bible that Iarbabel-Jeremiah was the “son of” a “Nemha” (“sanctified one”) or a *namh* (saint)? Could such a description apply to Aaron? Certainly! The Bible confirms it. Aaron was consecrated as a priest of the Lord, separated, sanctified, and given the Holy Spirit of God. Speaking to Moses, God says that “[thou] shalt anoint them [Aaron and his sons], and consecrate them, and *sanctify* them, that they may minister unto me in the priest’s office” (Exodus 28:41). See also Exodus 40:13, Numbers 3:3; 29:29.

Thus Iarbabel-Jeremiah was also a son of “Nemha”, *namh*, a “sanctified one”. Even more so, since the sanctification is a spiritual as well as a fleshly one; whereas in the case of Peresh (“separated”) only a tribal separation is implied. No spiritual or physical sanctification, both appropriate to a prophet, son of a priest, of a line of priests, can be inferred from the meaning of the name Peresh (who was not a priest in any case). Furthermore, *namh* has an applicability to Iarbabel-Jeremiah entirely lacking for Peresh.

CONCLUSION

The evidence is in. The conclusion is obvious. Iarbabel was Jeremiah. Contrary to the doubting opinions of some, Jeremiah *is* mentioned in the Irish annals, under another name.

This of course is not the total answer to all the mystery surrounding Jeremiah in Ireland. The question of Ollam Fodhla, variously called a prophet and a king in Irish history, needs to be explored. There are also questions that need to be answered concerning King Zedekiah’s daughters allegedly taken to Ireland by Jeremiah, the identity of Eochaidh the Heremon, the whereabouts of the wondrous stone, harp, and ark which were also carried to Ireland by Jeremiah according to legend. But that is for further research and/or revelation.

For now, it needs only to be said that Jeremiah came to Ireland, as proven from Irish and Biblical history. His coming was part of the purpose of God for his people of Israel, a purpose ironically revealed every day, yet seen by few. Let us pray that with further research and revelation that the few will one day become many.

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13. *Leabhar Gabhala or the Book of the Conquests of Ireland*. Michael O’Cleirigh (rec.). Dublin: University College, sec. 44.

14. Keating, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

15. *Leabhar Gabhala*, sec. 100.

16. *Leabhar Gabhala*, secs. 106, 107.

17. Keating, pp. 155, 166. The observant reader may object to my reference to the Tower of Tahpanhes in the story of Fenius Farsa, Gaedal, and Caei the Eloquent (or Caei the Just), as according to Keating the school was established after the Flood on the “plain of Shenaar”. However, it is obvious that the Tower of Babel and the “Tower” of Tahpanhes have been confused in Keating’s account. Neither Scythia nor Judea existed at the time of the Tower of Babel, nor was Caei-Iar yet even born. “Shenaar” may refer to the plain of Shinar mentioned in Genesis. Or could it be an echo of *Goshen*, the location of Tahpanhes

18. Keating, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

19. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Volume III, p. 1590.

20. *ISBE*, III:1589.

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22. Davidy, Yair. *Lost Israelite Identity*. Jerusalem, Israel: Russell-Davis Publishers, n.d., p. 349-350.

23. Keating, *op. cit.*, p. 126. In Keating’s history, Simeon Brec is the son of Starn, son of Nemedh. In the *Leabhar Gabhala*, he is either the son of Erglan, son of Beoan, son of Starn, son of Neimedh [Nemedh] (sec. 67); or he is, significantly, son of Iarbanel, son of Neimedh [Nemedh] (sec. 53).

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MIGRATIONS OF THE LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL

F.M. NITHSDALE

One of the difficulties in introducing British Israel teaching to newcomers is to answer the question, "How did the Israelites get from Palestine to Britain?" - followed by, "What historical proof is there?" We are usually told, that if our contention is correct then, surely professional archaeologists and historians would have discovered and published these things.

We must admit that there are an increasing number of books on archaeology and ancient history available these days. Few if any, make a connection between peoples living in Palestine in Biblical times and peoples living in the British Isles, either before or after the days of Jesus.

Two very important points must be made before we can start our investigation. Firstly, we must bear in mind that it is the will of Almighty God that the ten-tribed House of Israel should be "lost", and should lose their identity until such times as He would reveal their whereabouts. Secondly, we can say that many learned scholars over the last 150 years HAVE researched these things and published many books giving their findings and conclusions - that the "Ten Lost Tribes" now dwell in North West Europe, especially the British Isles. It is to be regretted that some early writers on the "Identity" did rather let their imaginations run away with them - allowing sceptical scholars and critics to dismiss the subject on the grounds that it has no firm foundation in historical fact. Nevertheless, there is a great deal of collated evidence on this subject in British Israel literature such as "The Bible Research Handbook".

However, archaeology and history are on-going disciplines and new insights are being discovered, as witness the increasing number of new books on these subjects. Not that any of these books support our teaching, they do not, except unwittingly! It is left to Identity believers themselves to read the new material and search out any new evidence there may be.

This article is an attempt to present the most up to date evidence on the question posed above - "How did the Israelites get from Palestine to Britain?"

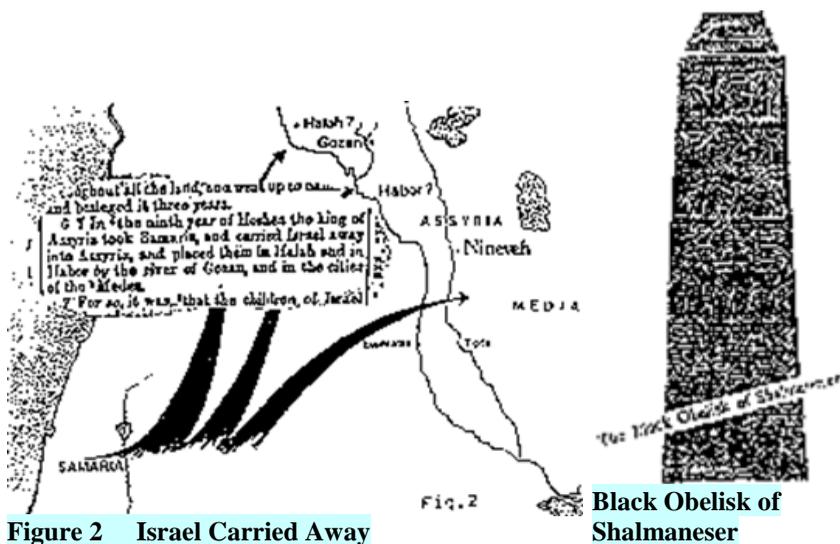
We start, of course, with the Bible, and the most important historical fact is that in 880 BC the Kingdom of David and Solomon was divided into two separate kingdoms (Fig. 1). This fact must be borne in mind because the histories of these two kingdoms are quite separate, both in the Bible and subsequent history. Any attempt to make sense of the Bible or secular historical records without this prime fact will be doomed to failure.

Figure 1 Israel, Division of the Kingdom



The two kingdoms existed side by side for c200 years. The descendants of David continued to reign over the Southern two-tribed Kingdom of Judah with its capital at Jerusalem, while the Northern ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel with a capital at Samaria, had various ruling dynasties.

During this 200-year period, the history of these two kingdoms was recorded in the Bible. Neither kingdom remained faithful to the Lord their God, and in spite of repeated warnings from the prophets, the people, and many of their rulers, became increasingly pagan. The inevitable happened and the preordained sentence of punishment (Lev.26, v18) fell on the Northern Kingdom. This "seven times" punishment took the form of banishment from the Promised Land and the instrument God used was the mighty empire of Assyria (Fig. 2). Three Assyrian kings were involved in the subjugation and deportation of Israel, Tiglath-Pilesar, Shalmaneser and Sargon II. Not only are these deportations detailed in the Bible but the Assyrian records confirm the Biblical account.



For example, there is the Black obelisk of Shalmaneser in the British Museum which reports the "Tribute of Iaua of Bit Humri", that is the

"Tribute of Jehu of the House of Omri". Omri was one of the kings of Northern Israel and he is shown on this Assyrian monument kneeling in submission before the Assyrian king. It is by studying monuments like these and the many thousands of Assyrian letters and documents in the British Museum that British Israel scholars have solved the mystery of exactly what happened to deported Israel.

As we have seen from Shalmaneser's Obelisk, the Assyrians called the Israelites "Humri" or "Khumri" - their way of saying "Omri". However this name soon disappears from the Assyrian records. Within 15 years of the deportations in precisely the identical area into which Israel had been placed, we have the first appearance of a people called "Gimira" in the Assyrian records. This name "Gamira" or "Gamir" is evidently a corruption of the Assyrian "Khumri", formed by reversing some of the letters, in this case IR for RI. Such inversions were common in the writings of the time.

Omri in Hebrew characters would start with the letter AYIN which in old Hebrew was pronounced GHAYIN with a soft sound as in the Scottish "loch". So "Omri" would have been pronounced GHOMRI by the Israelites themselves and written by the Assyrians KHUMRI and then later inverted to KHUMIR or GAMIR.



Figure 3 Israel & Asia Minor

In the year 707 BC an Assyrian frontier port reported that armed forces of Uratu were invading the area into which Israel had been placed 15 years earlier. The attack was halted by the eastern group of GIMIRA who put up a strong resistance. So here we have Israel - in Media - very much alive and well. The report states, "When the king of Uratu came into the land of Gamir (or Gamira) his army was routed."

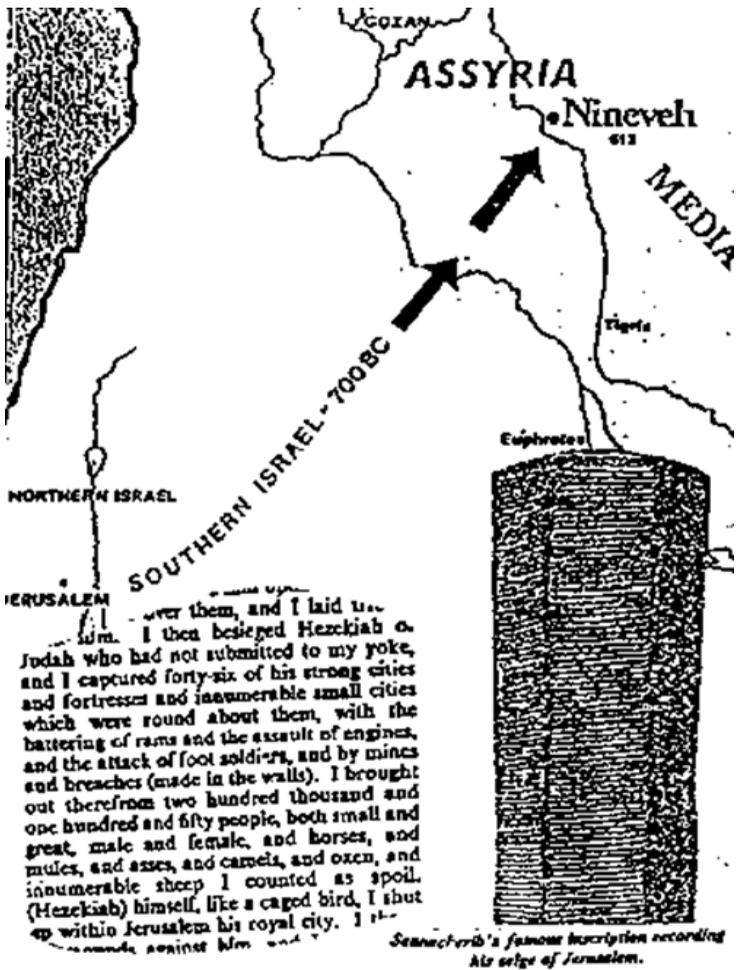


Figure 5 Prism

Still remaining in Palestine were the rest of the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Benjamin and most of the tribe of Levi. They had Jerusalem for their capital and a descendant of David as their king. However, neither the sorry tale of their deported brethren, nor the warnings of the prophets availed to turn them from their wickedness. In fact, we are told that their idolatrous behaviour became worse than that of the Northern Israelites.

About 130 years after the fall of Samaria, punishment fell upon the Kingdom of Judah when Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon attacked Jerusalem. Finally, Jerusalem was destroyed and most of the people of Judah were taken captive to Babylon. The Babylonians destroyed Solomon's Temple and carried all the treasure and artefacts away to their own land. This "Captivity" lasted for 70 years as prophesied by Jeremiah (2 Chron. 36). Many of these Judahites settled happily in Babylon and had no desire to return to a ruined Jerusalem. Others - patriots - longed for their own land. Then Cyrus, the Persian King who had conquered Babylon, gave permission for those who wished to return, to do so.

48,000 Judahites, Benjaminites and Levites returned under Ezra and Nehemiah whose nominal lists of workers includes none from Northern Israel. These, who returned from Babylon, became the ancestors of the Jews of the times of Jesus. We must note that during the 450 years between the return from Babylon and the times of Jesus, many non-Israelites especially Edomites, had become Jews by religion (for example, Herod was an Edomite, called an "Idumean" in the New Testament).

So the situation is now this, the ten-tribed House of Israel plus 200,000 from the two-tribed House of Judah were deported to Assyria and seemingly "lost". Part of the House of Judah returned from their captivity and their descendants, the Jews, continued to live in Judea until New Testament Times.

One clue to the whereabouts of the "lost" Israelites (from a secular source) is given by the Jewish general and author Josephus, who, in his book "Antiquities" (AD.70), said: "There are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the Ten Tribes are beyond Euphrates and are an immense multitude, not to be estimated by numbers".

We must imagine these multitudes of Israelite people, displaced refugees, uprooted from their own land, herded away hundreds of miles into alien territory. Their surroundings change, they hear different language, they appear to lose the art of writing, their very way of life changes and they are called by different names by their captors. Seemingly the Lord's great plan for His chosen servant Nation has dissolved into thin air - but let us see what actually did happen.

In the reign of Sargon II, an Assyrian intelligence report told the King that there were people called GIMIRA (we recognise them as deported Israelites) located just west of the upper Euphrates, north of the Taurus mountains. Others were further east in Media (Fig. 6).

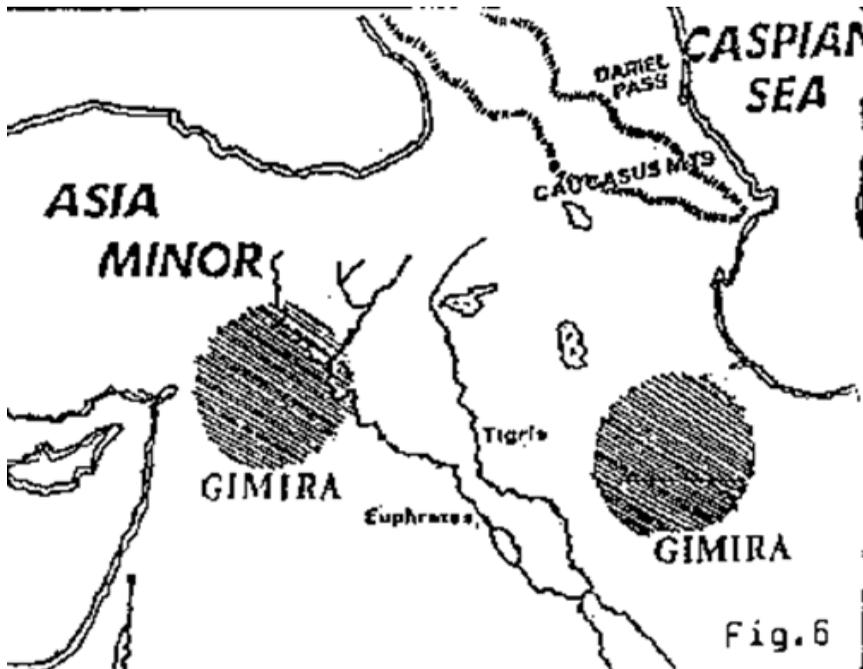


Figure 6 Gimera

In the Apocrypha (2 Esdras 13) we are told how some of the Ten Tribes escaped from Assyrian control via the upper Euphrates valleys. Later they became notorious in Asia Minor when they overthrew King Midas of Phrygia (Fig. 7). These were the western group of GIMERA or CIMMERIANS, called KIMMEROI by the Greeks - another version of the Assyrian KHUMRI.

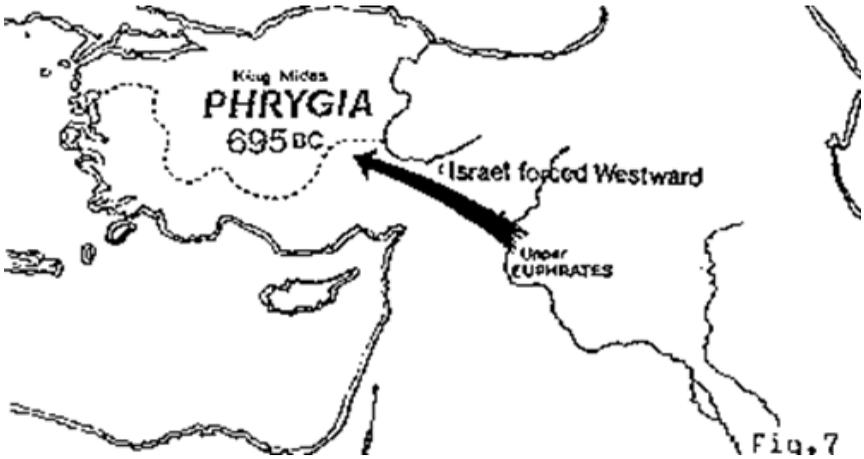


Figure 7 Israel Forced West

In the second year of Esar Haddon of Assyria (679 BC) another group of GIMERA were defeated by his forces and were pursued westward into Asia Minor (Fig. 8).



Figure 8 Gimera Pursued Westward

Some of them settled in the Sinope area on the Black Sea, some migrated across the Sea to settle in the Crimea and in Arsereth (see 2 Esdras 13). On one of their forays they captured the city of Sardis (Fig. 9). Finally about 600 BC, King Alyattes of Lydia drove them out of Asia Minor altogether. Their movements were westward - ever westward.

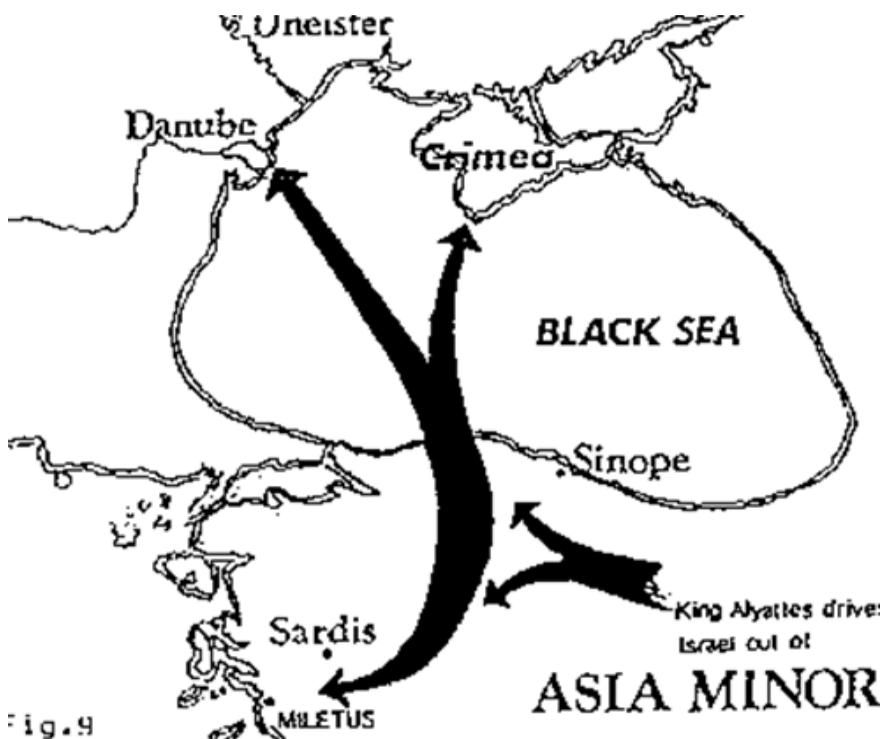


Figure 9 Israel Driven Out of Asia Minor

Most of the western CIMMERIAN group migrated up the Danube valley and settled as CELTS in central Europe between 500 BC and 100 BC (Fig. 10).

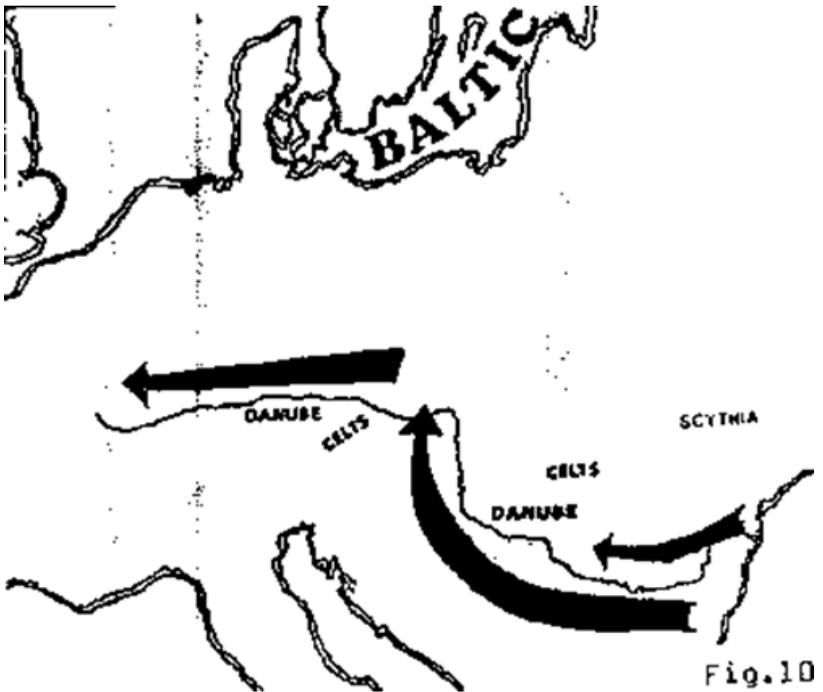


Fig.10

Figure 10 Cimmerians Settled as Celts

Others moved north and west into sparsely inhabited regions of the Baltic, where they were given yet another name by the Romans - CIMBRI, a name probably derived from CIMMERIANS. These people were the ancestors of the Picts and Jutes (Fig. 11).



Figure 11 Ancestors of Picts and Jutes

Small numbers of Israelites followed Phoenician trade routes from the port of Miletus or the South West coast of Asia Minor (Fig. 12). Some settled for a time in Spain then moved on to Ireland.



Figure 12 Some Israelites Followed Phoenician Trade Routes

Now we have seen that most of the Western group of the "lost" Israelites were forced right through Asia Minor into Central Europe and finally to the shores of the North Sea; but the Eastern group were still dominated by Assyrian powers and their successors, being threatened by Babylonians and Medes from the south (Fig. 13).

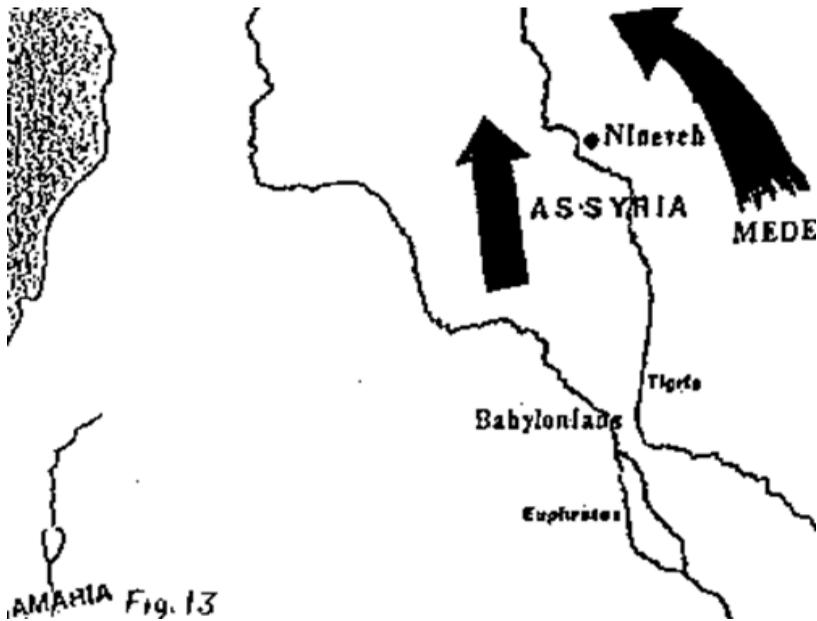
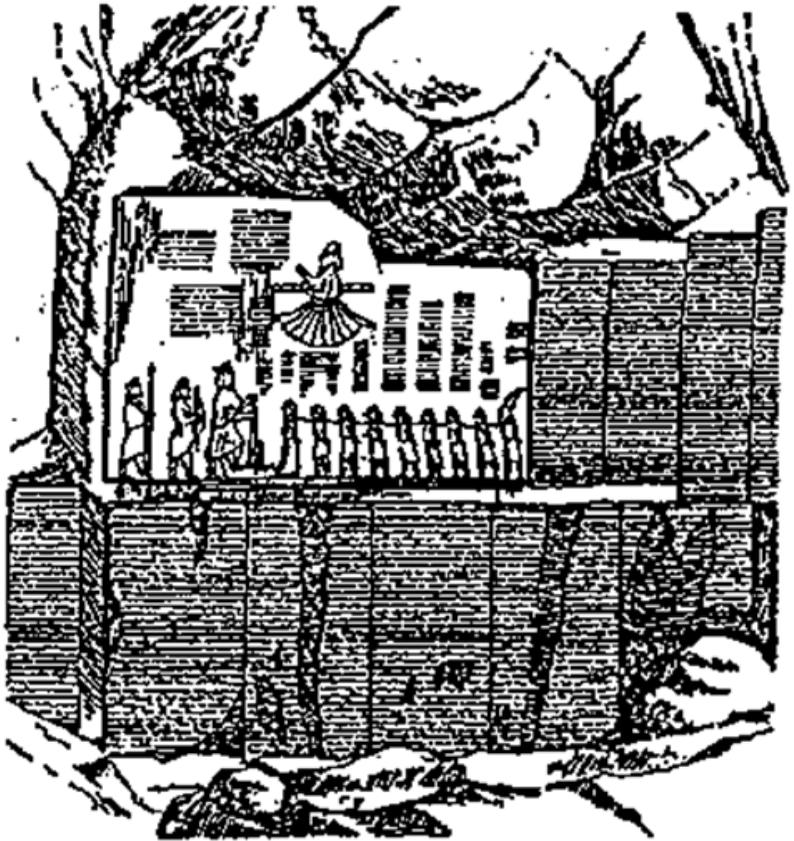


Figure 13 Israelites, Eastern group

This eastern part of Israel although known as GIMIRA was also known to the Assyrians as ISKUZA, a name derived from the name ISAAC - one of the names ancient Israel used to describe themselves, "sons of ISSAC".

In 573 BC, ISKUZA are mentioned for the first time in any historical document, locating them in Media in the very place where some of Israel had been put in captivity. Since the GIMIRA and the ISKUZA appear in the same place at the same time, it is reasonable to infer that they were one are the same people. And of course the Greeks had a word for these ISKUZA - they called them SCUTHAE or SCYTHIAN. The Persian name for the ISKUZA was SAKKA also based on ISAAC wit the emphasis on the last syllable "ISS-SAAK".



'PLACE OF THE GODS'

The great inscription at Behistan, by Darius I, king of Persia, in three kinds of cuneiform writing.

The inscriptions on the great rock carving at Behistan in northern Iran are repeated in three languages, Old Persian, Susian and Babylonian. The people who are called "SAKKA" in Persian are called "GIMIRA" in Babylonian, thus proving the to be one and the same people.

Root SK derivatives

- ISAAC
- SAKKA
- ISKUZA

SKUTHAE SCYTHIANS

The Israelites did call themselves the House of Issac or ISAACA. The basic root of ISAAK, SAKKA, SKUTHAE, ISKUSA and SCYTHIAN is SK in each case.

After the fall of the Assyrian capital Nineveh in 612 BC, the main body of Scythian Israelites came under such pressure from the Medes that they were forced northwards through the Dariel Pass in the Caucasus mountains and into the steppe region of southern Russia (Fig. 14).



Figure 14 Cimmerian Israel

As wave after wave of these people were forced through the Caucasus, the leaders in the west crossed the rivers Don and Dniپر and came into contact with CIMMERIAN Israel groups who had earlier moved across the

Black Sea, thus pushing them westward along the valley of the Danube into Central Europe (Fig. 15).

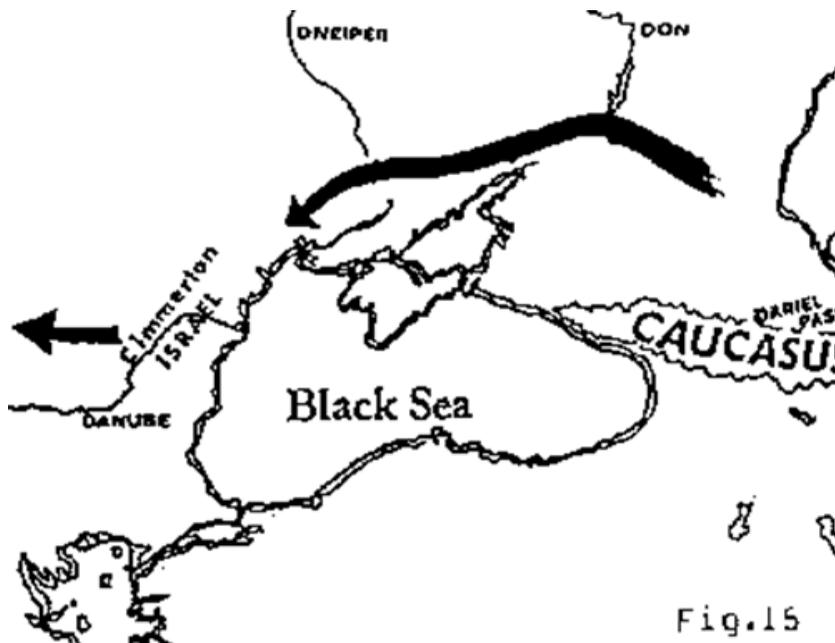


Figure 15 Israelites, Eastern group

Although the Scythians established themselves in the area of southern Russia from the 6th to the 3rd centuries BC, they found themselves squeezed between a people advancing from the east - the Sarmatians - and the CELTS, already occupying Central Europe to the west. Consequently, they were forced northward towards the North Sea and the Baltic (Fig. 16). This group formed the last of the migrating Israelites to arrive in these Islands. The Anglo-Saxon group from the area now called Germany arriving between 400 and 600 AD.

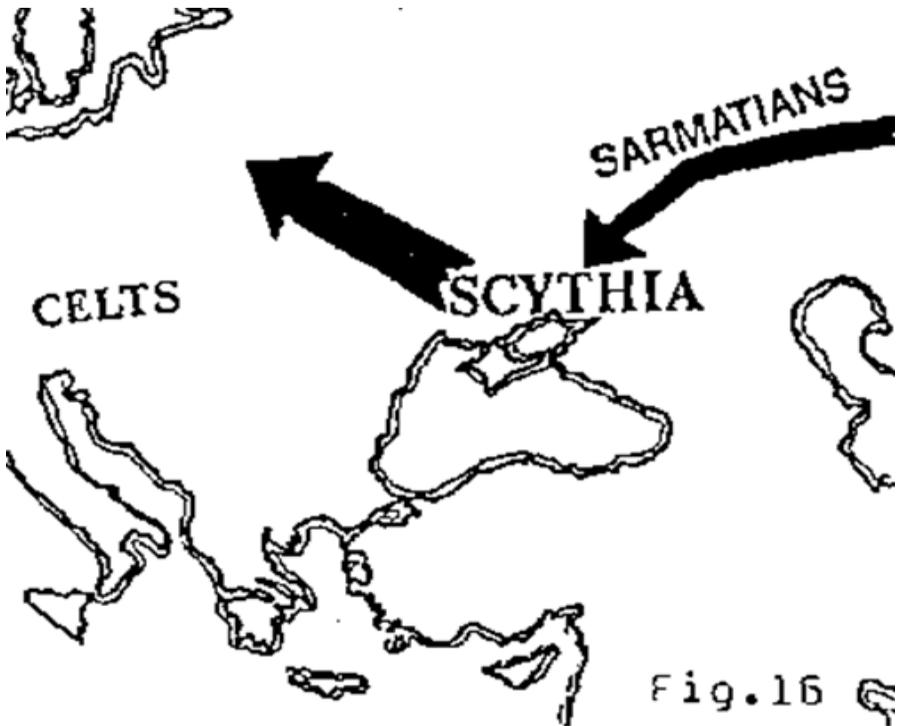


Figure 16 Scythian Israelites Forced Northward

Others moving northwards through Jutland became known as Danes and Vikings. Others settled for a time in northern France and were known as Northmen or Normans. These Normans arrived in the 11th century, the last large group, finally completing the regathering of what Sir Arthur Keith, world-famous ethnologist, described as one family - NOT a racially mixed group.



Figure 17 Anglo-Saxons, Danes, Normans & Vikings

In exile, the Nation of Israel became divided into two main groups, one in the upper Euphrates area and the other in Media. These two groups migrated by different routes and at different times. Thus, they arrived here in comparatively small groups over a long period of time - finally fusing in to one Nation, which we now call the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

CELTIC-ISRAELITE COMMONALITIES

YAACOV LEVI

To many who are interested in the history of the Celtic peoples and their modern descendants in Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Brittany and Cornwall, and from their descendants around the world a subject that is often brought up is possible connections with the ancient Israelites, in particular the “Lost Tribes” of Israel.

The purpose of this article is not to establish ‘connections’ to the Lost Tribes, but to discuss some of the many common characteristics of these modern Celtic peoples and the ancient Israelites. These characteristics I call *Commonalities*. I am not attempting in this short article to establish connections which has been addressed in many other volumes such as *The Tribes* and *Ephraim* by Yair Davidy and *The Lost Tribes of Israel - Found!* by Steven Collins as well as in ancient works. I am simply going to point out and discuss a very few of the great many commonalities between these peoples.

THE LOST TRIBES OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL

The peoples we refer to as the Lost Tribes were part of the Northern Kingdom of Israel which was conquered by the Assyrians around 740-720 BC. and exiled to areas in Assyria and to the north. This is told in the the Bible in 2Kings chapters 17 and 18. About the same time a contingent from the Kingdom of Judah were also exiled to the northern lands. It is these peoples and their immediate descendants that are also variously referred to as the Lost Tribes, and the subject of many works and studies.

Being both Irish and Jewish, I grew up familiar with customs and the cultures of both peoples, only in later years becoming aware that they were

quite different cultures and had greatly varying cultural characteristics. Yet growing up with both cultures, I had noticed similarities even on a casual basis. Over the years I began to see more of this similarity and in recent years I began to collect this data into what I term an Overview which I am still assembling. It is this Overview in differing areas of life that I will discuss here.

There are a number of areas that I have been looking at which includes: language, agriculture, religion and taboos, burial practices, music and folk dancing, the traditions and self-determinations and self-identification of the Celts and other areas as they arise. I will point out a few items in each category and note that these are just a few of a great many commonalities and I mention them as examples.

Language is one of the subjects that led to my overall interest in the topic as early on I had noticed similarities. Considering the long period of time from the expulsion of the Israelites to our time, it would seem unlikely that there would be little, if any, common letters, words or structure, but that is not the case - there is indeed much in common.

Gaelic is a member of the Celtic group of the Indo-European family of languages that includes Russian, English, German, Spanish, French, Hindi and Italian. The Celtic group has been confined to the British Isles and part of the French coast.

LINGUISTIC SIMILARITIES

The Celtic group is divided into two divisions which has three languages in each division. Each division makes up its own unique language. The two branches are:

the **BRYTHONIC** branch which is made up of the Welsh, Breton and Cornish languages; and

the **GOIDELIC** branch with the Irish, Scots and Manx Gaelic languages.

The Breton and Cornish languages are seeing some resurgence after near extinction while the Irish, Scots and Welsh languages are holding their own at this time. Manx is an ancient form of Irish and is considered to be oldest and purest Irish Gaelic in existence. Manx is very close to the extinct dialects of nearby Ulster and Galloway and separated from Old Irish in about the fifth century of our era. It occupies much the same position to Old Irish as Icelandic does to Old Norse. For the purpose of my study I have chose to concentrate on Manx and Scots Gaelic. I am sure though that an indepth study of Welsh or the other Gaelic languages would provide much food for thought on this issue.

The Gaelic alphabet as well as the ordinal numbers show more commonality than could be expected after 2,700 years of divergence; for example we have a Hebrew “S” retained in the modern Gaelic - the Hebrew Sheen, pronounced Shh is found in the Irish “S” as in the name Sean pronounced Shawn. Other letters are similar, the ordinal numbers 6 & 7 are pronounced almost the same as Hebrew and Gaelic. Words with same or similar meanings abound; for instance the Hebrew word for holy in common usage according to Halacha (Jewish law) is *Kasher*. The word in Manx Gaelic for hallowed or holy is *Casherick*. The syntax of Gaelic is entirely different from any other European language, especially English. RL Thompson, in his work *Outline of Manx Literature and Language* says that “in several respects Gaelic syntax has similarities with that of languages like Hebrew and Arabic”.

As in Hebrew, adjectives follow the noun that they describe: for example “ben vie” = “a good woman” in Gaelic and “Rosh ketan” = “small head” or “stupid” in Hebrew. Vie of ketan being the adjectives. The word order also is similar in Hebrew in that the verb is usually first in the sentence unlike English or many other European languages. These are just a very few of the many commonalities that I believe suggest a definite connection between the two languages and their family streams. This alone could constitute a major comparative study.

COMMONALITIES IN ETHNIC CUSTOMS

One of the first areas in which I noticed similarities was in customs, notably folk dancing and later, musical instruments. The Hebrew *Hora* and other old traditional dances are paralleled in many Gaelic folk dances and

especially the wedding dance of the Gaels which is very similar to the traditional Ashkenazic wedding dances of Europe. The musical instruments of the Gaels are

found in the Israelite tradition, notably the harp in both Celtic tales and certainly Hebrew tradition as the favoured instrument of the psalmist David [see the article “The Harp of David and the Harp of Ireland” by John Wheeler in the August-October issue of *Origins of Nations* - ed]. But, one of the most intriguing things to come up was that the Irish and Scots pipes we are all familiar with has its origins in the desert flute played daily throughout the Middle East. The flute of the desert shepherds is identifiable in the “chanter” of the Irish and Scots pipes.

AMAZING RELIGIOUS PARALLELS

The ancient religion of the Celtic peoples prior to Christianity was generally believed to be Druidism, of which we know very little; yet that which we do know has many overtones of the Canaanite religions that the northern tribes turned to after the split of King Solomon’s Kingdom under his son into a Northern and a Southern Kingdom. Like the pagans of Canaan, their sacred places became high hilltops and sacred groves, notably oaks. There is a great deal of similarities from what we know archaeologically in both the Northern Kingdom ritual sites and the Druid sites in the Isles. Additionally, the burial practices of both the peoples of the northern Kingdom and the Celts bear much similarity in the presence of Dolmens - large slabs of stone placed horizontally across upright stones with the graves under them. These are found throughout the area of Europe which Celtic peoples passed and are found also in the areas of present day Jordan and Israel in which the Northern Israelite tribes dwelled.

You can find pictures of these dolmens in Yair Davidy’s book *Ephraim* on pages 137-38. This book is available from History Research Projects. Overseas it may be purchased direct from Yair Davidy in Israel (addresses on inside back cover).

EVEN AGRICULTURAL SIMILARITIES!

Agriculturally there are interesting commonalities - the grain crops are much the same, and even though wheat was known to them in their passage through Europe it was not a major crop in their final homes. In fact oats and barley were their staple grains. As with the Israelites, the cattle were of several colours, but the preferred colour for ritual for both peoples was red. The virgin cow used in the Hebrew ritual for purification was the forerunner of the red cattle used by the Druids in their rituals.

After the invasion of the Romans into the Isles, white cattle were introduced and later used; until that time red was the preferred colour. One of the most famous wars in Irish history was over a Red Bull stolen by a northern Irish tribe. Also, swine were not raised in any of the early Celtic areas until after they were introduced by the Romans; the Celts had a taboo against them, along with scaleless fish as eels and shellfish. The Celts, in similitude to the Israelites, were excellent headsman and developed identifiable breeds of sheep, cattle and horses, that carried on the traditions of the Israelites.

OTHER PROOFS

Perhaps one of the most telling of the commonalities is simply the self-identification as Israelites - the Hibernians - the name of the Irish and the Scots and the Hebrides Islands off the coast of Scotland. The Milesians, one of the early Celtic peoples to come to Ireland from Spain had a tradition that they were of the Lost Tribes. The name Heber, Eber, or H'berian is found

throughout early literature to describe the Celts as they described themselves to be "Of Eber" - the grandfather of Abraham.

What I have presented here in greatly abbreviated form just skims the surface of the commonalities between the Celtic Peoples and the Israelites. There is a tremendous amount of information available for those who would like to look at this closer themselves. A few resources are listed at the end. This is one of those subjects in which at first one can say "oh - that's an interesting coincidence". But the sheer mass of these "coincidences" that build up after one goes from discipline to another becomes totally overwhelming. The fact that so much of the languages are

similar almost three thousand years later, that customs are clearly identifiable as being related, that religious practices are uniquely similar and that the everyday agricultural practices and crops were similar - all along with the many other commonalities bespeak a common origin.

For those interested in pursuing this I wish you well and much enjoyment.

SUGGESTED INFORMATION SOURCES:

Manx Gaelic Society

Yn Cheshaght Ghailckagh

St Judes

Isle of Man IM7 2EW

United Kingdom

Gaelic Books Council

Dept of Celtic

University of Glasgow

Glasgow G12 8QQ

Scotland

Yair Davidy

Brit-Am

PO Box 595

Jerusalem

Israel 91004

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IMMANUEL VELIKOVSKY ON THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE
TEN TRIBES:

BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS OF DARKNESS

This short discourse is not a part of the chronological problem discussed in the work of reconstruction of ancient history; it deals with historical geography—the whereabouts of the places of exile of the Ten Tribes of Israel.

The sentence (II Kings 17:6) which relates how the King of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away into Assyria and “placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes,” caused much deliberation among the historians. The mystery of the Ten Lost Tribes produced also fantastic convictions such as the belief that the Britons are the descendants of the Lost Tribes who, after much wandering, reached Albion.

The sentence in II Kings 17:6 is repeated almost verbatim in 18:11. In I Chronicles 5:26, the exile of the Transjordan tribes—Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe Manasseh—to Halah, and Habor and Hara, and to the river Gozan is ascribed to “Pul king of Assyria” and to “Tilgath-pileser king of Assyria.” Modern scholars consider Pul and Tiglath-pileser to be one and the same king, Pul having been his name in Babylonia.⁽¹⁾

It is generally agreed that the location of Halah (in Hebrew with two letters *kheth*, transcribed as h in scholarly texts), or Khalakh, is not given to identification.⁽²⁾ As to Gozan, the texts of II Kings 17:6 and 18:11 speak of Habor by the river Gozan; also I Chronicles 5:26 speaks of the river Gozan. In Isaiah 37:12 it can be understood as a region or a people of a region. The

correct translation of the two passages in the Second Book of Kings is “to the confluence (*habor*)⁽³⁾ of the river Gozan.”

Biblical scholars who sought for the place of exile of, first, the two and a half tribes of Israel by Tiglath-Pileser and then of all the tribes of Israel by Sargon upon the fall of Samaria, decided that the river’s name was Habor and Gozan was the region. They have therefore identified Gozan with Guzana, modern Tell Halaf in northeastern Syria. But this interpretation is a violation of the texts. Looking for a river Habor, they thought to identify it with the tributary of the river Euphrates mentioned in Ezekiel I:3 “the word of the Lord came . . . unto Ezekiel . . . in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar.” However the spellings in Hebrew of Habor and Chebar are different, the river Khvor (Chebar) is not Habor, and the latter is not a river at all. Furthermore, the co-called river Chebar is actually an irrigation canal.⁽⁴⁾

In explaining why the misfortune of exile befell the population of the Northern Kingdom, the Book of Kings says that the Children of Israel “worshipped all the host of heaven and served Baal,” and “caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments,” and therefore “the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only” (II Kings 17:17, 18).

“Removed them out of his sight” seems to signify that the people of Israel were removed far away, out of every contact with the remnant Judah, not even by a chance messenger.

When one hundred and thirty-eight years later, in the beginning of the sixth century, the people of Judah were also led into exile—by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—they did not find the exiled tribes of Israel in Babylonia, though they dwelt by the river Chebar (Khvor, i.e., Khabur), which flows in the central region of that country.

It appears that the places to which the Ten Tribes were removed by the Assyrian kings must have been far more remote than northeastern Syria.

Assyria, with its capital cities of Nimrud (Calah), Dur Sharrukin (Khorsabad), and Nineveh—all on the Tigris—expanded greatly in the

days of its warrior kings Tiglath-Pileser, Sargon, and Sennacherib. Repeatedly, the Assyrian kings led their troops across the Caucasus northward. Not satisfied with the passage along the coastal road of the Caspian Sea, they also explored the mountainous passes. Sargon, the conqueror of Samaria, wrote in his annals:

I opened up mighty mountains, whose passes were difficult and countless, and I spied out their trails.

Over inaccessible paths in steep and terrifying places I crossed . . . ⁽⁵⁾

The descriptions of Tiglath-pileser and Sargon of their campaigns in the north lead us to recognize that they passed the mountains of the Caucasus and reached the steppes between the Don and the Volga. When the barrier of the mountains was overcome, they could proceed northward in a scarcely populated area barren of natural defenses, where they would have met less resistance than in the foothills of the mountains. It is unknown how far they may have let their armies of conquest march across the steppes, but probably they did not give the order to return homeward until the army brought its insignia to some really remote point: it could be as far as the place of the confluence of the Kama with the Volga, or even of the Oka, still farther north. The middle flow of the Volga would be the furthestmost region of the Assyrian realm.

The roads to the Russian steppes along the Caspian and Black seas were much more readily passable than the narrow path along the river Terek and the Daryal Canyon that cut the Caucasus and wind at the foot of Mount Kazbek, over sixteen thousand feet high.

The fact that the “confluence of the river Gozan” is considered a sufficient designation suggests that it must have been a great stream.

A large river in the plain behind the crest of the Caucasus is the Don, and a still larger river—the largest in Europe—is the Volga. If the Assyrians did not make a halt on the plain that stretches immediately behind the Caucasus and moved along the great rivers without crossing them to conquer the great plain that lies open behind the narrow span where the rivers Don and Volga converge—then the most probable place of exile

might be reckoned to be at the middle Volga. The distance from Dur Sharrukin to this region on the Russian (Scythian) plain is in fact much less than the distance from Nineveh to Thebes in Egypt, a path taken by Assurbanipal several decades later. Under Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal, Assyrian armies repeatedly invaded “Paturi and Kusi” —Upper Egypt and Ethiopia (Sudan). But Assyrian occupation of Scythia is not a mere conjecture: it is confirmed by archaeological evidence. “The earliest objects from Scythia that ! we can date,” writes a student of the region’s antiquities, “referred to the VIIth and VIth centuries B.C., are under overwhelming Assyrian influence. . .” ⁽⁶⁾

The exiles who were removed from Samaria, a city of palaces and temples, no doubt, bewailed the capital they had heroically defended for three years against the army of what was, in its time, the world’s most powerful nation. Accordingly they might have called their new settlement Samaria (in Hebrew Shemer or Shomron; Sumur in the el-Amarna letters).

On the middle flow of the Volga, a city with the name Samara exists and has existed since grey antiquity. It is situated a short distance downstream from the point where the Volga and the Kama join. Russian conquerors of the ninth century found this city in existence. The medieval Arab geographer Yakubi, basing himself on accounts of the ninth-century traveller Ibn Fadlan, speaks of the Khazars who dwelt in Samara.⁽⁷⁾ This people dominated southern and eastern Russia possibly as early as the third,⁽⁸⁾ but especially during the tenth and eleventh centuries. They passed the Caucasus mountains to participate in the wars of the Romans and the Persians, dominated the Ukraine as far as Kiev, concluded treaties with the emperors of Byzantium, and their influence and suzerainty sometimes reached as far west as Sofia.⁽⁹⁾

The ruling class of the Khazars used Hebrew as its language, and the Hebrew faith was the official religion in the realm of the Khazars. There was a system of great tolerance, unique in the Middle Ages, in respect to other religions; the Supreme Court was composed of two persons of Jewish faith, two Moslems, two Christians, and one idolater of the Russian population; but it was not a confusion of creeds as it had been in old Samaria, which tolerated many creeds, the monotheism of Yahweh being a protesting ingredient of the confusion.

Were the Khazars or their ruling aristocracy converted to Judaism in a later age? This position was based on what was said in a letter of the Khazar king Joseph, written about the year 961, to the Jewish grandee, Hasdai ibn-Shaprut, at the court of Cordoba. ‘Abd-al-Rahman al-Nasir, the Moorish ruler of Spain, had asked the King of the Khazars to provide any available information about his people, Hasdai’s brothers in religion. In the letter of reply the Khazar king recited a tradition or a legend; advocates of three religions came to some prior king of the Khazars, and he picked the Jewish faith because the Christian and the Mohammedan alike gave preference to the Jewish religion above that of their respective rival.⁽¹⁰⁾

The story exposes its mythical character. In the seventh or eighth centuries of the present era, the adepts of the Jewish faith were persecuted by the Christians and also by the Moslems, and would hardly be chosen to become the religion of the state. A similar legend of “choosing” a religion is told about Vladimir of Kiev: in this legend the Khazars were the delegates representing the Jewish faith.

Had the Khazars been converted to Judaism, it would be almost incredible that they would call their city by the name Samara. Samaria was a sinful city from the point of view of the nation that survived in Palestine after the fall of Samaria, and out of which eventually grew the rabbinical Judaism of later centuries.

The conversion to the Jewish religion would also not imply the adoption of the Hebrew language. It is remarkable that the state language of the Khazars was Hebrew; the king of the Khazars was quite capable of reading and answering a Hebrew letter.

Long before the correspondence between Joseph and Hasdai of the tenth century, the Khazar monarchs had Hebrew names. The dynasts previous to king Joseph were in the ascending order: Aaron, Benjamin, Menahem, Nisi, Manasseh II, Isaac, Hannukah, Manasseh, Hezekiah, and Obadiah. A conversion to Judaism in the seventh or eighth century of the present era would bring with it names common to Hebrews in the early Middle Ages, like Saadia or Nachman; the Judaism of the early Christian age was rich in names like Hillel, Gamliel, while Hellenistic names like Alexander, or Aristobul were not infrequent. Again, the Biblical names of an early period would give prominence to names like Joab, Gideon, or Iftach, and still an older group of names would be Gad, Issahar, Zwulun or Benjamin.

It is peculiar that some of the king of the Khazars were called by the names used in Israel at the time that Samaria was captured by the Assyrians. Hezekiah is said to have been the king of Jerusalem at that time (II Kings 18:10), and the name of his son and successor was Manasseh. Obadiah was one of the most common names at that time and in the preceding century. It seems not arbitrary to assume that the Khazars absorbed, or even originally were, the remnants of some of the tribes of Israel.

It is most probable that the religious reform among the Khazars, about which some tradition was preserved until the tenth century, is to be interpreted as an act of purification of the half-pagan religion that the exiles from Samaria brought into and developed in their new abodes on the Volga, and as an act of return to the old Hebrew religion of Yahweh. This might have been performed with the help of some Hebrews who perchance left the schools of Sura and Pumbedita, where the Babylonian Talmud was composed. Old Jewish authors⁽¹¹⁾ actually mention the fact that teachers of rabbinical Judaism were invited to the kingdom of the Khazars as early as the eighth century. Possibly, the name “Khazars,” despite a difference in writing, is to be interpreted as “Those Who Return.” A long, probably illiterate period, when Hebrew was used only in speech, may have preceded the period of revival of learning and purification of faith.

I would like to express here the belief that excavation in or around Samara on the Volga may disclose Hebrew signs of the eighth and seventh centuries before the present era. Other sites of old settlements on the Volga, too, may disclose remnants of old Hebrew culture.

The Hebrew (most probably also Assyrian) name for the Volga, Gozan, seems to have survived in the name Kazan. The city Kazan is located to the north of Samara, a very short distance beyond the place of confluence of the Volga and the Kama, two equally large streams. A tributary by the name Kazanka, or “small Kazan,” flows there into the Volga.

In the days of the Khazar realm, the river Volga was called not by its Assyrian, nor by its present name, but by the name Etel (the name is given also as Itil or Atil). This name appears to derive from a Semitic root; it is also used by the medieval Arab geographers.

Many place names in southern Russia seem to be of Hebrew derivation. The name of the river Don may go back to the name of the Israelite temple-city Dan. The Caspian Sea is best explained as “The Silver Sea” from the Hebrew *caspi* (of silver). Rostov means “The Good Harbor” in Hebrew. Orel, read in Hebrew, would mean “uncircumcised”; Saratov may mean “to make an incision.”⁽¹²⁾ With our identification of Gozan—one of the places of exile of the Ten Tribes—as the Volga, we may now investigate the question, what place is Khalakh, the other place of exile mentioned in II Kings 17:6? This place name is generally regarded as unidentifiable.

The eastern coast of the Black Sea was the goal of the Argonaut expedition in its search for the Golden Fleece. This expedition, engineered by Jason, was undertaken on the boat Argo. The land on the eastern coast of the Black Sea was called Colchis in ancient times, and the region is still known by this name. In Russian literature it is called Kolchida.

I consider western Georgia—to which Colchis belongs, to be the Biblical Khalakh. Those of the expatriates of Samaria whose destination was Khalakh arrived there some decades after the Argonaut expedition, which was regarded by the later Greeks as an historical event and chronologically placed two or three generations before the Trojan War.⁽¹³⁾

In the mountainous region of western Georgia, adjacent to the Colchian coast, live the so-called Georgian, or Mountain Jews. They claim to be of the Ten Tribes of Israel, their ancestors having been exiled there upon the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians. Ben Zvi (the second president of the modern state of Israel) tells of these people and their claims.⁽¹⁴⁾ He writes that “there is no reason to doubt the existence of a continuous Jewish settlement in both the north and south of Caucasia, whose roots were laid in very ancient times, perhaps as early as the days of the Second Temple, perhaps even earlier.” Yet he does not express any suspicion that Khalakh may have been Colchis.

The third place of exile of the Ten Tribes according to the Book of Kings were the “cities of the Medes.” Is it possible to locate also this last destination? The Medes first appear in Assyrian annals in the time of Shalmaneser III: it was in his days that they started to penetrate across the mountains of Iran to infringe on the boundaries of the Assyrian kingdom. They appear once again in the annals of Sargon II, who claims to have repelled “the distant Medes on the edge of the Bikni mountain.”⁽¹⁵⁾ Some

scholars maintain that the homeland of the Medes before their occupation of the Iranian plateau in the seventh and sixth centuries was in Turan, that is, West Turkestan. Sargon's reference to "distant Medes" would then designate their homeland in Turan.

In this context it is interesting to note that the Jews of Bukhara, the great trading city and metropolis of West Turkestan, (Turan) claim direct descent from the Ten Tribes.⁽¹⁶⁾ Some writers are even prepared to admit the possible veracity of this claim,⁽¹⁷⁾ though no one so far seems to have attempted to place the "cities of the Medes" in this region. While the greater part of the Jewish community of Bukhara may well be descended from migrants from the time of the Babylonian Exile or the Diaspora of Roman times or even later, it is not excluded that the oldest group among them are remnants of those tribes dispatched by Sargon to the "cities of the Medes."

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3. [Cf. Strong's *Concordance of the Bible*, p. 36 where (Hebrew section) *habor* is translated from the root word meaning "to join."]
4. [See *Atlas of the Bible*, (ed. by J. L. Gardener, 1981), p. 145; also consult W. Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon* (Brown, Driver, Briggs), p. 140, "Kebar" —"a river (or perhaps a canal) of Babylonia, not at present identified . . ." —LMG/WBS]
5. Luckenbill, *Records of Assyria II*, par. 54.
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7. Yakubi, *Kitab al-Buldan*, 262 (in *Bibl. Geogr. Arab*, VII, ed. De Goeje).
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9. For general discussion and sources, see D. M. Dunlop, *The History of the Jewish Khazars*, (Princeton, 1954).
10. Cf. A. Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe*, pp. 63-64.
11. Jehudah bar Levi, *The Khazar*. [Such names were perhaps chosen to describe the inhabitants of the respective areas.—LMG]
- 12.
13. [Herodotus (II. 104) reports that in his time the people of Colchis practiced circumcision and claimed descent from Egypt. Although his

inquiries in Egypt evinced no remembrance of the Colchians from among the Egyptians, Herodotus concluded that they must have been descended from the remnants of the army of the semi-legendary Sesostris. It seems to me that the Colchians may have told Herodotus the Mosaic tradition of the Exodus from Egypt—if they were Jews, they would have had to answer in the affirmative the question posed by Greek historian, as to whether their ancestors had come from Egypt.—JNS]

14. Itzak Ben-Zvi, *The Exiled and the Redeemed* (Philadelphia, 1957), p. 62.
15. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria* II, par. 54. The location of “Bikni mountain” is uncertain.
16. See the eighteenth-century report of Joseph Maman of Tetuan, summarized in A. Ya’ari, “Emissaries of the Land of Israel” (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1951), p. 664.
17. Itzak Ben-Zvi, *The Exiled and the Redeemed*, p. 62.

THE MODERN IDENTITY OF THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

Personal Correspondence Department, The Plain Truth, c. 1980

We are frequently asked for information concerning the identity of the modern-day descendants of the tribes of Israel. We have been able to do this as far as Ephraim, Manasseh, and Judah are concerned in our book, "The United States and Britain in Prophecy".

It is more difficult to prove the identity of the other tribes, however, because the prophecies relating to them are relatively few and couched in terms that are by no means easy to understand at present. Consequently, it becomes a matter of comparing the characteristics of the individual tribes, in conjunction with as much of the prophetic details as are reasonably clear, with the characteristics of the various European nations today. The main characteristics we are to look for are found in Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33.

Let's begin with the tribe of Reuben, Jacob's firstborn son. One notable feature is that, in the latter days (Genesis 49:1), the nation and the people

of Reuben would exhibit an unstable nature - "unstable as water". This is very symptomatic of France and the French Government, although the Government is a little more stable now than it has been in the past. When conditions arise which promote similar circumstances to those of the immediate post-war years, however, then the same instability is going to be exhibited and could be a vital factor in the events that are destined to lead our peoples into captivity.

You will notice in verse 3 that Jacob referred to Reuben as "the excellence of dignity". There is no doubt that France has portrayed this characteristic to the world. In the past, she was called the "queen of culture".

We cannot say that all who call themselves French today are descended from Reuben, any more than we could say that all who live in Britain are Ephraimites and all who live in America are Manassites. It appears that the northern French are of Israelitish stock, but that the darker Mediterranean type are probably of Gentile origin.

Next, consider the people of Holland, or the Netherlands. They could very well be the descendants of Zebulun. Notice, in Genesis 49:13, that Zebulun was to dwell at the haven of the sea. That is where Holland is located today. It truly is a haven of ships, and its excellent harbours at Amsterdam and Rotterdam deal with major shipping lines throughout the world. Zebulun was to be a tribe that would "rejoice" - be blessed - "in thy going out" (Deut. 33:18). In other words, Zebulun would be blessed in commercial enterprises and voyages by sea.

In the Seventeenth Century, Holland was one of the great sea and Colonial powers of Europe. She played an important part in the exploration of the world, and established several colonies as a result. It is interesting to note that, even though a relatively small country, the Netherlands had the ninth largest shipping fleet in the world in 1956.

Now consider a statement in Deuteronomy 33:19, where Zebulun is described as obtaining abundance of wealth from the seas - "for they shall suck the abundance of the seas, and the hidden treasures of the sand." The Netherlands has always been able to do this in several ways. One is through international commerce by the use of her shipping fleet. Another way has been through the reclamation of land from the sea. The Dutch are

well-known for building dykes and reclaiming land for the use of farming. The tulip industry of Holland is dependant on these lands which have been reclaimed, or "sucked from the sea".

The prophecy relating to Gad in Genesis 49:19 is not too well understood, but there is one particular nation - a European democracy - which is characterized by a statement made in Deuteronomy 33:21. Although the exact wording of this verse is not clear, Gad is spoken of in the context of a lawgiver, and as one who is closely associated with the leaders of nations. Which nation today acts as host to world conferences where world statesmen meet together to try to resolve some of the world's problems and to execute justice? It's Switzerland. The name "Geneva" and world peace conferences have almost become synonymous.

The ancient tribe of Asher was characterized by qualities which are very evident in Belgium today. Jacob prophesied of Asher, "his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties." Belgium has long been recognized for her cakes and pastries, as well as for her lace and tapestries. These have all been coveted by the courts of Europe in the past, and are now world renowned.

We believe that the tribes of Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali and Dan settled in the countries of Scandinavia. Comparisons could be made between the characteristics of Issachar and Finland, Benjamin and Norway, Naphtali and Sweden, Dan and Denmark, but we cannot reach definite conclusions.

The tribe of Dan has certainly left its mark on Europe today. As the members of the tribe journeyed throughout Europe they named many places after their father Dan. It was their custom from the very beginning (Joshua 19:47 and Judges 18:11-12, 29). Just before his death, Moses prophesied, "Dan is a lion's whelp; he shall leap from Bashan" (Deut. 33:22). Dan was to be a seafaring and colonising group of people. When the northern Danites left Bashan, they set up waymarks along the trail of their migrations by which they may be traced today.

Those Danites who lived on the seacoast in Palestine were primarily seamen who travelled by ship (Judges 5:17). Did they name the

DarDANelles and the rivers in Europe such as the Don, Donets, Dnieper, Dniester and Danube?

Keating's History of Ireland traces the Tuatha de Danaan (Tribe of Dan") from Greece to Scandinavia ("Dansmark" and "Sve-DAN"). From there they went to Scotland and later across to Ireland. Another branch went from Greece to Spain then on to Ireland. According to Keating, the Tuatha de Danaan migrated to Ireland in 1456 B.C. This was during the time of the wandering in the wilderness under Moses. The total length of Danite dominion in Ireland was 440 years -- 1456 to 1016 B.C. (Keating, p. 158), after which the royal house of the Milesians began to rule. The Tuatha de Danaan brought with them a remarkable stone called the Lia-Fail or Stone of Destiny on which the kings sat while being crowned. It is now in the Coronation Chair at Westminster Abbey.

The only two tribes which remain to be mentioned are Simeon and Levi. These were not intended to settle and become individual nations. Because of the cruelty exhibited by the two patriarchs, their descendants were to be scattered throughout the territories of their brethren (Gen. 59:5-7).

These, then, could be the modern identities of the various tribes of Israel as far as we understand at present. As we approach the close of this age, the individual prophecies relating to them will probably become much clearer. As God opens our understanding to this knowledge, we will make it known through the pages of The PLAIN TRUTH and our other literature.

WHERE MAY TRUE ISRAELITES BE FOUND IN THE YEAR 2000?

(SOME FACTS FROM HISTORY)

Alfred the Great, in the 9th century, created the basis of what is our common law, which is the foundation of jurisprudence in Aryan civilization. The 33rd Law of Alfred reads: “*Vex thou not comers from afar and strangers, for remember, ye were once strangers in Egypt.*” (See Exodus 22:21)

- The *Scottish Declaration of Independence* of April 6, 1320 states regarding the ancestors of its creators: “. . . and coming thence one-thousand two-hundred years after the outgoing of the people of Israel, they by many victories . . .”
- Alexander Cruden, author of the well-known Cruden’s Complete Concordance, addressed his preface to King George III, saying, “. . . *May the great God be the guide of your life, and direct and prosper you, that it may be said by present and future ages, that King George III hath been sent an Hezekiah to our British Israel . . .*”
- Sir Walter Scott, in his novel Woodstock, has Oliver Cromwell use these words in Chapter 30: “*How as my soul liveth, and as He liveth who hath made me ruler in Israel . . .*”
- William Tyndale, the great English religious reformer, who translated the Bible into English, announced in 1530 his discovery of the likeness between the Hebrew and English languages, which made English the most suitable of any language into which to translate the Bible.

- In 1590 the French Magistrate Counsellor LeMoyer wrote a large volume entitled The Lost Ten Tribes Found, stating that they formed the then English peoples. (Petite Parisien)
- Sir Francis Drake (1540-1596), while on the ship “Bonaventure,” wrote John Fox and besought the prayers of Fox that “. . . *God may be glorified, His church, our Queen and Country preserved, the enemies of truth vanquished, that we might have continual peace in Israel. Our enemies are many but our Protector commandeth the whole earth. . .*”
- Isaac Watts, composer of over 500 hymns, revealed his knowledge of true Israel in his poem entitled “*Israel’s Poem.*”
- Queen Elizabeth I was known as the “*Light of Israel.*”
- Vincenzo Galilei, father of the famous astronomer, writing in 1581 about the origin of the harp in Ireland, mentions the native Irish tradition that they had descended from the royal Prophet David.
- In 1502, Columbus wrote of his voyages to King Ferdinand of Spain, “. . . *Fully accomplished were the words of Isaiah . . .*” (See Isaiah 49:1-12)
- The famed English author, John Lily, in his Euphes and his England, gives evidence of his knowledge and agreement with the Israelitish origins of the people of the British Isles.
- King James VI of Scotland (James I of England) claimed that the Lord had made him king over Israel, and upon the gold coin of his day, called the “Jacobus,” he had inscribed in Latin the prophecy of Ezekiel 37:22– “*I will make of them one nation.*”
- In the time of Cromwell (circa 1647) a political reform movement called the “Levellers” sought reforms which threatened the dictator’s power. Both Everard and Winstanley, prominent Levellers, are mentioned in connection with the belief in the Israelitish origin of the Saxon, Cletic and kindred peoples.

- In 1671, a pamphlet issued in Nether Dutch stated that the English-speaking people were Israel.
- John Dryden (1681), in one of his poems, referred to England by the name Israel fourteen times.
- In 1723 Dr. Abbadie published, in Amsterdam, Le Triomphe de al Providence et de la Religion, expressing the view that the Northern European Tribes, from which the English derive, are the Ten “Lost Tribes” of Israel: “. . . *Unless the Ten Trbes of Israel are flown into the air, or sunk into the earth, they must be those ten Gothic tribes that entered Europe in the 5th century, overthrew the Roman Empire and founded the ten nations of modern Europe. . .*”
- In the early 1800's Thomas Jefferson, recalling the death of George Washington, stated: “*I felt on his death with my countrymen, that verily a great man hath fallen this day in Israel.*”
- Dr. Moses Margouliouth, a 19th century Jewish scholar, in his History of the Jews, said, “. . . *It may not be out of place to state that the Isles afar off mentioned in the 31st chapter of Jeremiah were supposed by the ancients to be Brittainia, Scotia and Hibernia (Ireland).*”
- “*Hibernia*” (Ireland) translates to “Land of the Hebrews.” Likewise, “*Iberia*” (Spain) translates to “Land of the Hebrews.”
- Former New York City Mayor Ed Koch, during the 1987 St. Patrick’s Day parade, told a UPI reporter, “. . . *The ten lost tribes of Israel, we believe, ended up in Ireland.*”
- Sir Oliver J. Lodge, noted English scientist (1851-1940), stated: “*We, too, are a chosen people. It were blasphemy to deny our birthright and responsibility. Our destiny in the world is no small one. We are peopling great tracts of the earth and carrying thither our language and customs. The migrating of that primitive tribe from Ur of the Chaldees, under the leadership of that splendid old chief, Abram, into the land of promise, was an event fraught with stupendous results for the human race.*”

- The famed Baptist evangelist Charles H. Spurgeon, who died in 1892, showed in Volume 2, page 154 of his book The Treasury of the Old Testament that England and America were Israel.
- The U.S. Supreme Court case #6914, known as the “Huntress” case of November 5, 1840, in reference to the neglect of the (U.S.) Constitution for seven years said: “. . . *We may well ask, with some feelings of surprise, where, during these seven years, were slumbering the watchmen of our American Israel?*” (12 Fed. Case page 993)
- From the declaration of principles given in the *United Israel Bulletin* of April, 1951, (a non-Christian, Jewish publication): “*We believe that the Ten Tribes of Israel exist within the Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, Scandinavian, American people, and that they in fact constitute them and that they are Hebrews. . .*”
- Regarding contemporary Jews, the 1980 Jewish Almanac states on page 3: “*Strictly speaking, it is incorrect to call a contemporary Jew an ‘Israelite’ or a ‘Hebrew’.*”
- An amazing insight into these facts can be had by dovetailing John 8:1-59 with Revelation 2:9 and 3:9. A more clear understanding may be had by using the King James translation of the Bible along with Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. The Greek Dictionary contained in Strong’s makes clear the meaning sometimes obscured by the King James translators.
- On January 1, 1773, the men of Marlborough, Massachusetts proclaimed unanimously: “*Death is more eligible than slavery. A free-born people are not required by the religion of Jesus Christ to submit to tyranny, but make use of such power as GOD has given them to recover and support their laws and liberties . . . (we) implore the Ruler above the skies, that He would make bare His arm in defense of His Church and people, and let Israel go . . .*”

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LOCATION OF THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

HERMAN L HOEH (C1957)

We are often asked this question: "If the British Commonwealth is Ephraim and the U.S.A. is Manasseh, where are the other tribes of Israel"?

There has never given a satisfactory answer. In fact, they have contended at times that the half-tribe of Manasseh, which lived east of the Jordan, is Japan, and that Dan is Germany. All their attempted historical research neglects the Bible as the only guide to INTERPRETATION of historical evidence.

We already understand the undeniable identity of Ephraim and Manasseh. By a process of elimination, the other tribes appear quickly--knowing first of all that the Scandinavian peoples and those of Western Europe are Israel. In these nations we have all the required characteristics which we find in no other group. To prove which tribe each is today, we need to prove which country has the identifying signs of each tribe AND prove that no other country has such signs.

Here is the Biblical and historical evidence placing the tribal boundaries today:

In Genesis 49 we have a prophecy concerning the state of each of the tribes in the "Latter days" and also in Deuteronomy 33, a chapter dealing with the blessings. With these two main chapters as guides, we can rightly INTERPRET obscure historical evidence that no history book yet clarifies.

1 and 2: Ephraim and Manasseh are already designated.

3: Judah constituted mainly the House of Judah, to be scattered among all nations, becoming a taunt and a byword. We are not to expect them as a separate nation among Israel today, defying all who would come against them. A small part of Judah was carried captive with Israel (II Kings 18:13), as found in the records of the Assyrian kings. Thus, among Israel we should find a small remnant of Judah. We locate the name as Jutes, and living in Jutland, Denmark. Some migrated to England.

4: Levi, the priestly tribe, was to be scattered in Israel (Gen. 49:5-7). God never gave them land to inherit as the other tribes. Therefore, we should not expect them to be given territory today. Nothing is said in Deut. 33 about inheriting land. Among the Jews today we find many bearing the names: Levi, Levy, Levine. Others bear the name "Cohen" and its variations. The Hebrew word "Kohen" means priest and is so translated 725 times in the King James version. Here then, we have the great bulk of Levi--scattered among Judah because they left their priestly functions in Israel almost totally (I Kings 12:31).

5: Simeon received no blessing from Moses. In fact, he does not even mention the tribe! Jacob said God would scatter them throughout Israel. How? Take a map of Palestine for the time of the division of the land. Notice that Simeon did have an inheritance SOUTH of Judah. When Judah separated from Israel, Judah occupied that territory, yet Simeon went with Israel! The only explanation is that Simeon migrated into Israel generally, but no new territory was assigned to Simeon. This tribe became scattered. It is possible that the small scattered tribes in Western Europe, variously called the Senones or Semaones or Sennones, represented the fragments of the tribe of Simeon.

6: Reuben, unstable as water and having the excellency of greatness, we have recognized as France. Southern France, settled by the descendants of Javan (the Greeks), is gentile. The only democratic country, that is unstable, yet sets the styles for the world, has the form of real excellency, and has the same sex weakness as Reuben, is France. When rightly translated, Moses says: "Let Reuben live, and not die in that his men become few" (Deut. 33:6). Of all the western nations, France has the lowest birthrate, although at one time France was the most populous

country in all Europe, outnumbering England nearly 6 to 1. No other country in all the world fits all these qualifications. And is it not significant that the very country at war with England around 1800 should be France (Reuben), who would lose the birthright in the Napoleonic war? (Napoleon was Italian.)

7: Dan was originally divided into two parts, one about Joppa, a seaport, and the other in the north of Palestine. Dan refused to fight along side the other tribes against the Gentiles (Judges 5:17). Dan would judge, or stand up to rule, his own people as one of the separate tribes of Israel--indicating he would gain self-government in the following manner: "Dan shall be a serpent in the way, a horned snake in the part, that biteth the horse's heels, so that his rider falleth, backward." Ireland has done just that to England. In fact, the symbol of the illegal Irish Republican Army was the coiled snake!

Dan would also be like a young lion leaping forth, an apt description of Denmark which acquired the Virgin Islands, Greenland, Iceland and other islands in her heyday. Especially unique is the fact that of all the tribes Northern Dan still preserves their father's name--the Danes!

8: Benjamin constitutes Norway and Iceland. The Icelandic people in reality a colony of Norwegians. Benjamin was given to David because Jerusalem, David's capital, was in the tribe of Benjamin, not Judah. God said He would give David light in Jerusalem (I Kings 11:36). This verse could not refer to Judah which did not have to be given to the Jewish House of David. Benjamin was told to flee the destruction of Jerusalem (Jer. 6:1) which many of them did.

Benjamin is compared to "a wolf that raveth; in the morning he devoureth the prey, and at even he divideth the spoil" (Gen. 49:27). This is certainly an apt description of the Vikings who pillaged Northern Europe, and even Mediterranean regions. Almost all Viking raids came from Norway. It is also significant that Benjamin, the smallest tribe, still is the smallest today. There are fewer Norwegians (plus 148 thousand from Iceland) than any other Israelite nation. (Moses' blessing in Deut. 33 has particular reference to this fact that Jerusalem was in the tribe of Benjamin.)

9: Issachar is compared to a "large-boned ass," Jacob continues: "For he saw a resting-place that it was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and he BOWED HIS SHOULDER TO BEAR, and became a SERVANT UNDER "ASSWORK." (Gen. 49:14-15.) An ass is not the most intelligent of animals, but it is a willing worker. Such is Finland. Finland is the ONLY nation that has voluntarily taken the full responsibility of her debts. She is today paying off a huge indemnity to Russia. Her land is pleasant and good, not extraordinarily rich. According to Deuteronomy 33:19 she derives wealth from fishing and from hidden treasures of the sand--gigantic peat bogs and the finest sand for glass-making. Issachar is not a colonizing people--they dwell pastorally "in tents," said Moses.

10: Nepthali represents Sweden--"satisfied with favor, full with the blessings of the Lord." She is compared to a prancing hind or deer and "giveth goodly words" (Gen. 49:21). From Sweden, with a well-balanced economy, come the Nobel prizes in token to great world accomplishments. Sweden, during two world wars and the recent trouble in Palestine, sent her emissaries to speak words of conciliation and peace. The promise by Moses to possess "the sea and the south" is applicable both to ancient Nepthali and modern Sweden: notice the position of the Sea of Galilee and Baltic relative to the position of this tribe.

11: Zebulun settled in Holland (The Netherlands). Zebulun dwell at the "shore of the sea, and he shall be a shore for ships, and his flank shall be upon Zidon"--a Gentile country. Moses said: "rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out." She takes also treasures from the sea and the sand, Zebulun, then, is a colonizing people. She is not a pillaging people as Benjamin.

12: Gad, which means "the troop" certainly designates Switzerland--the only Israelite nation in which every man is mobilized for defence. Against Gad would come the foreign troops, said Jacob, but he will "trod upon their heel." Moses declared that Gad does NOT "leap," a characteristic of the colonizing or pillaging tribes. Gad "teareth the arm, yea, the crown of the head"--of the Holy Roman Empire, in whose territory "he chose a first part for himself, and there a portion of a ruler was reserved." To Gad come "the heads of the people"--as they do today to Geneva. No other nation on earth so perfectly fits this description of a nation of troops.

13: Asher--"his bread shall be fat and he shall yield royal dainties" (Gen. 49:20). This peculiar expression could have reference alone to Belgium and the kindred state Luxembourg. From Belgium have come the finest Flemish paintings, the royal tapestries which graced the halls of kings, fine cut diamonds, porcelain and Belgian lace. Belgium and Luxembourg are blessed above many another son of Jacob--"Blessed be Asher above sons; let him be the favoured of his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil"--prosperity. Iron and brass shall be thy bars; and as thy days, so shall they riches increase. Because of uranium, Belgium's prosperity will continue to grow. (The above rendering of Deut. 33:25 is the correct--it is highly obscure.)

SUMMARY: Here we have a recapitulation of Jacob's prophecy for the latter days, and of Moses' blessings (some of which apply to the millennium). **IN ALL THE WORLD THERE IS NO GROUP OF NATIONS SO PERFECTLY CORRESPONDING TO THE PROPHECIES.** And within this extraordinary group of nations each nation has its own characteristics. To alter the placement of these tribes would obscure the marvelous proof that each of these nations does represent a tribe of Israel. True, Gentiles are found in almost every one (the Negro, the Indian, the Lapp, the descendants of Javan and Phoenicians), but so was it in ancient Israel. True, in some of these tribes there are to be found descendants of the other tribes--but there are less variations in these continental nations than in Ephraim (Great Britain). Notice, too, that **GERMANY** does not belong among Israel, although there may be some Israelites still dwelling within her borders.

In choosing Manasseh as the tribe through whom He does His work, God is using the same pattern as He used for the Levites. God originally gave the priests 13 cities to dwell in, and He added 35 more for the Levites. Totaling 48. So Manasseh began with 13 primary states which were added 35 others, making 48. Is it any wonder God's work developed in Manasseh--the only tribe that can finance it?

A REBUTTAL TO THE “WORLDWIDE NEWS”
ARTICLE

BY MR. RALPH ORR ENTITLED

“UNITED STATES AND
BRITAIN IN PROPHECY”

STEVEN M. COLLINS

The December 19, 1995, issue of *The Worldwide News* contained an article by Mr. Ralph Orr on the subject of the “United States and Britain in Prophecy.” That article rejected a long-standing belief of the Worldwide Church of God that the people of the United States of America and Great Britain are primarily descended from the Israelite Tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim. The errors in that article demand a scholarly response.

Mr. Orr’s article raises some legitimate issues which deserve detailed answers; however, it also contains arguments which are misleading and/or inaccurate. Mr. Orr’s article opens with a “red herring”: an attempt to equate Anglo-Israelism with racism. He states: “The scriptures proclaim a grace-based, not a race-based message.” I quite agree. However, the “old” WCG, and its major offshoots, never included “Anglo-Israelism” in any race-based message of salvation. I can recall no instance in which the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), or its offshoots, proclaimed that “you had to be an Israelite to be saved,” which is what Mr. Orr’s statement implies.

The “old” WCG had large international ministries to reach people in nations which were regarded as non-Israelite. There were extensive efforts to preach God’s Word to Spanish-speaking nations in Latin America, the Philippines, etc., and many black brethren were welcomed into the Churches of God (non-Israelite racial origin was no barrier to Church membership). Furthermore, the WCG (and its major offshoots) have never been criticized as “anti-Semitic” (i.e., anti-Jewish). Indeed, we have identified Jews as the modern “House of Judah,” and have sought positive relationships with members of the Jewish faith.

Mr. Orr’s article mistakenly implies that any attempt to understand the Biblical origins of modern nations is racist. The whole purpose of the WCG’s effort to identify the origins of modern nations, was for purposes of understanding Biblical prophecies! Since the Bible identifies nations by their Biblical names (i.e., “Israel,” “Judah,” “Assyria,” etc.), one must first identify which modern nations are descended from these ancient nations, in order to apply ancient prophecies to the modern world. There was (and is) nothing “racist” about this effort.

Mr. Orr also states that “some came to believe our message was race-based, not grace-based,” and that “some found the Anglo-Israel belief in *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy* as excuse enough, not to repent of racism.” He cites no specific examples to support these statements, and (based on the WCG’s inclusion of all races into its membership) it is apparent that anyone reacting in the manner ascribed by Mr. Orr was simply not paying careful attention to the Church’s message. Let’s examine some facts about Anglo-Israelism.

In the late nineteenth century, many in Great Britain recognized that the prophecies about Ephraim had come to pass in the blessings given to the British Empire. This belief (“British-Israelism”) was even held by influential people. Col. J. C. Gawler, Queen Victoria’s Keeper of the Crown Jewels, wrote two “British-Israel” publications entitled, “Our Scythian Ancestors Identified with Israel,” and, “Dan, the Pioneer of Israel.”¹ However, was British-Israelism “racist” as Mr. Orr implies? Consider this quote from one of their nineteenth century booklets entitled: “Jeshurun . . . An Elementary Paper on our British Israelite Origin,” which stated:

“Opponents accuse us of vaunting our Israelitish origin as a precious gift of salvation by inheritance. A great error! The fact is, the study is only valuable to those who receive and acknowledge the gift of Christ as the **only** Mediator through whom we obtain salvation.”² (Emphasis not

added.)

That British-Israelite writer shared Mr. Orr's rejection of "race-based" messages of salvation. As this quote indicates, the British-Israelites were horrified by the allegation that they taught a "salvation by race" concept. It is easy to misunderstand a message. Even the Apostle Paul's teachings had been so woefully misunderstood by some, that he issued a strong denial that his message included a rejection of God's Old Testament laws, **Romans 3:31**.

Anglo-Israelism was also present in nineteenth century America. In 1857, a pastor named F. E. Pitts gave a two-day presentation advocating Anglo-Israelism to a joint session of the U.S. Congress! Can you imagine such an event occurring in modern, nihilistic America? Ironically, Pastor Pitts was an antimonarchist who was hostile to Britain's royal family (as his messages make plain).³

Anglo-Israelism should be evaluated strictly on its merits. In any discussion of whether the ten tribes of Israel both exist and are identifiable in the modern world, we must first objectively determine what the Bible (God's Word) teaches on the subject. Many modern Christians believe that we are living in the Biblical "latter days" which will immediately precede the return of Jesus Christ. The "old" WCG (and its main offshoots) shared this belief with many Protestant, evangelical denominations.

In **Genesis 49**, Jacob (Israel) was inspired to prophesy that all the tribes of Israel would be present among the nations on earth during the "latter days." This prophecy offers many clues to assist people in identifying Israelite nations in the latter days (this infers God knew that by the time the latter days arrived, the tribes of Israel would be "hidden" from world awareness, and such clues would be needed). Based on very divergent prophecies about the traits and locations of the latter-day tribes of Israel, it is clear the Bible is speaking of separate nations (or ethnic groups). This is consistent with the prophecy in **Ezekiel 37:15-28**, that the "house of Judah" and the "house of Israel" (the so-called "lost ten tribes") would not be reunited until after the Messianic kingdom is established (i.e., David is prophesied to be their joint king when the dead are resurrected). These "latter day" prophecies make it clear that while modern Jews can be the "house of Judah," they cannot possibly include the "house of Israel" during the latter days. **Therefore, if we are guided by a literal interpretation of the Bible, we must look for the ten tribes of Israel among the non-Jewish nations of the world.**

Many modern Christian denominations unknowingly call God "a liar"

when they teach that the “lost ten tribes” have “died out,” or “can’t be identified,” because the Bible’s inspired prophecies say otherwise! Also, the New Testament affirmed the inspired nature of Old Testament prophecies. Jesus Christ’s statement in **Matthew 5:17**, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets,” affirms not only the Old Testament laws of God, but its prophecies as well! Some regard Paul as a “liberal,” but he wrote in **II Timothy 3:16**: “**All scripture** [including prophecies!] is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine. . . .” The Apostle Peter added:

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed . . . no **prophecy of the scripture** is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but **holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit,**” **II Peter 1:19-21.**

It is vital to notice Paul and Peter’s words: “all scripture” and “of the scripture.” They were speaking about (and validating) the canonized Hebrew Scriptures with which they were familiar (i.e., the “Old Testament”). Peter specifically affirmed that the early Church accepted Old Testament prophecies as divinely inspired! Therefore, we have established that in any discussion of the ten tribes of Israel, the early New Testament Church accepted the Old Testament prophecies about them as inspired and binding.

Mr. Orr’s article indicates that the “new” WCG has “lost its faith” in the literal interpretation of the Bible. This is a common view in many secular churches. If the WCG no longer accepts the Bible as the infallible word of God, it should openly say so instead of “picking and choosing” which parts of the Bible it accepts and which parts it rejects.

Mr. Orr asserts “the New Testament takes a strikingly different approach than that of Anglo-Israelism.” Really? We have seen that Jesus Christ, Paul, and Peter, all affirmed the divinely inspired content of **all** Old Testament prophecies (including those about the tribes of Israel). There is no “strikingly different approach” in the New Testament approach of Jesus Christ, Peter, or Paul, regarding prophecies about the ten tribes, so Mr. Orr’s statement is either misleading or factually incorrect. Is Mr. Orr repudiating Biblical prophecy, or is he still attacking the false notion that “Anglo-Israelism is Racist”?

Mr. Orr does make a valid point when he states: “when reading Anglo-Israelite literature, one notices that it generally depends on folklore, legends, quasi-historical genealogies and dubious etymologies.” I, too,

have read Anglo-Israelite literature based on this kind of weak evidence. Folklore and legends may actually come to a right conclusion, but such evidence is admittedly too weak to convince either scholars or skeptics on the subject. However, it must be realized that in the nineteenth century, British-Israelite writers were governed by very different literary conventions. Prior to the general acceptance of evolutionary mythology, the Bible was held in such high esteem that if writers could find support for their conclusions in the Bible, they felt no need for the support of documented secular sources. Today, the situation is reversed: scholars do not accept anything in the Bible unless it is supported by secular evidence.

Mr. Orr continues: "Rarely . . . are the disciplines of archeology, sociology, anthropology, linguistics, or historiography applied to Anglo-Israelism." His point, while not completely applicable to Anglo-Israelite literature, is true in some cases. However, historical evidence for Anglo-Israelism does exist! British-Israelite publications in the nineteenth century contained considerable hard evidence which was never included in the WCG literature on the subject. Additionally, the modern scientific community has discovered much new evidence concerning Israelite history, which was not available to the nineteenth century writers. However, one has to search diligently through secular sources to find this evidence, because it is not discussed in a Biblical context.

Let us now examine a supposed "conflict" in the Bible which Mr. Orr's article discussed. He notes that **II Kings 17:18** states (regarding the removal of the ten tribes from Israel when Samaria fell): "only the tribe of Judah was left." The fall of Samaria was approximately 721 B.C.⁴ Mr. Orr correctly notes that "at face value, the verse appears to say that only the tribe of Judah escaped captivity." Yet he does not take this scripture literally because during the reign of King Josiah of Judah (circa 639-608 B.C.⁵), **II Chronicles 34:9** states Josiah collected donations to repair the Temple "from the people of Manasseh, Ephraim, and the entire remnant of Israel." Indeed, **verse 6** adds that Naphtalites and Simeonites were also then present in Palestine!

Faced with this apparent contradiction, Mr. Orr resorts to the typical rationalizations used by "minimalists" and "apologists" in various Christian denominations. While the specifics vary, their responses always have the "bottom line" conclusion that "you can't take the Bible literally." Jesus Christ himself might say to such people: "O ye of little faith. . . ." Let us examine a combination of Biblical and secular evidence to demonstrate that **there is no conflict here, and that both sections of the Bible are**

historically true and can be taken literally.

The supposed conflict is this: How can the Bible say all the tribes of Israel (except Judah) were removed from Palestine in 721 B.C., but also assert that significant numbers of the ten tribes were again present in Palestine by Josiah's reign a century later? Notice first that **II Kings 17:18** does not prophesy: "no Israelites will ever return to Palestine." It only asserts that none of the ten tribes were present in Israel **in the year 721 B.C.**, just after the Israelite capital of Samaria fell.

The answer to the supposed conflict is partially found in Mr. Orr's own article. He observes: "Fundamental to the Anglo-Israel argument is the belief that all significant parts of the house of Israel went into captivity. Biblical and archeological scholars harbor serious doubts about the accuracy of this view." This statement reveals Mr. Orr has not widely read available Anglo-Israel literature. For example, Col. Gawler's nineteenth century publication (mentioned earlier) conclusively makes the case that many Israelites did **not** go into captivity! To assert that it is "fundamental to the Anglo-Israel argument" that "all significant parts of the house of Israel went into captivity" is simply not true. Indeed, the solution to our apparent "contradiction" lies in the fact that they did not!

Col. Gawler's writings also belie another myth that the detractors of Anglo-Israelism like to spread: that all Anglo-Israel adherents are "anti-Jewish." Col. Gawler wrote that Jews attended the meetings of the nineteenth century British-Israelites and credits a "Jewish gentleman of great learning"⁶ for directing him to Jewish historical sources which confirmed that many Israelites escaped the Assyrians and settled independently in a new location.

Col. Gawler noted that the medieval geographer, Abraham Ortelius, recorded that, when the kingdom of Israel fell, many of the ten tribes migrated to Tartary and "took the name **Gauthai** because they were very jealous of the glory of God."⁷ Gawler also cited Armenian historians who noted that a large mass of Israelites migrated (through Armenia) into Tartary. Tartary was a region near the Black Sea (which later became a springboard for the huge migrations of the **Goths** into Europe in the third to sixth centuries A.D.). Another medieval Jewish writer is quoted as asserting these migrating Israelites "evaded the calamity [of an Assyrian captivity], going off with their flocks and turning nomads, and that the chief or prince whom they appointed could muster 120,000 horse and 100,000 foot."⁸ With a military escort of almost a quarter-million men, it is clear the escaping Israelites could easily have numbered well over one

million people.

In **II Esdras 13:39-46**, there is an account that a large group from the ten tribes of Israel escaped the Assyrians and journeyed for one- and-one-half years to a place called Arzareth. This passage (in an apocryphal book) records that these Israelites were determined to “keep their statutes which they had not kept in their own country,” and adds the Most High held back the waters of the Euphrates River so they could escape the Assyrians. Here again we see an account that the Israelites who escaped captivity were in a repentant state of mind. Does the Bible support this view? Yes!

In **II Chronicles 28:5-8**, we read of a war between Israel and Judah just decades before the fall of Samaria, in which God gave the victory to the Israelites who killed 120,000 Jewish soldiers, and were leading 200,000 Jews into captivity in Israel. Clearly, the house of Israel still had a very sizeable population at that time. Loaded with much spoil, the victorious Israelites were met by a prophet (Obed) who gave them a warning from God not to carry their Jewish brethren into captivity. The house of Israel had long spurned God’s prophets, but **verses 13-15** record the elders of Ephraim heeded this prophet. Indeed, they gave back all the spoil to the captive Jews, fed and clothed them, and gently assisted the “feeble” to make the journey back to Judah. Interestingly, this account indicates the elders of Israel made this decision to “bend over backwards in obeying God” without any input from their king.

A few years later when Samaria fell, **II Kings 17:24-31** records the Assyrians had to repopulate the land of Israel with foreigners because the land was abandoned. **Verse 25** (“the Lord sent lions among them”) implies the land had been depopulated for so long that it had “reverted to the wild.” The cuneiform texts of the Assyrian kings claim that when Samaria fell, only 27,290 people were taken captive⁹ (a very paltry total considering that only a few years previously the Israelites had slain and taken captive hundreds of thousands of Jews). The Assyrians made no claim of taking the rest of the Israelite nation captive at that time.

As discussed above, historical sources indicate the escaping Israelites migrated north of Armenia into the Black Sea region. Many ancient historians note that the Black Sea region thereafter acquired the names of “Iberia” and “Scythia” (the “**Sacae**”). **Genesis 21:12** prophesied that Abraham’s seed would be known by the name of Isaac, and since ancient Hebrew deleted vowels, Isaac’s name is present in the root consonants of “Sac” or “Saac.” The Sacae Scythians kept the name of Isaac in their tribal name, fulfilling the prophecy of **Genesis 21:12**. Iberia preserved the name

of the Hebrews' namesake "Eber," and, importantly, Iberian kings bore the name of "Phares." The Roman historian Tacitus mentions Iberia and their kings named "Pharesmanes,"¹⁰ as does the famous British historian George Rawlinson.¹¹

King David had been promised by God that his seed would "never lack a man sitting on the throne of the **house of Israel**," **Jeremiah 33:17**. Some Israelites who migrated to the Black Sea had kings named "**Pharesmanes**," and "Phares" was the lineage from which King David was born, **Matthew 1:3-6**. This strongly argues that the Israelites who migrated to the Black Sea abandoned their old king to the Assyrians and selected a prince from the house of David to be their new king. Why else would they proclaim the name "Phares" in their dynastic name? There is much more evidence that Davidic kings ruled over other Asian Israelites as well, but the above will suffice for this article.

Greek historians indicate that the Black Sea Israelites (now called "Sacae" Scythians) were obedient to prominent Old Testament laws. Herodotus notes they avoided swine's flesh¹², and scrupulously avoided foreign idols and religious customs.¹³ Herodotus recorded that a Scythian king (with the Israelite name: "Saulius") executed a prominent Scythian for participating in a Greek festival honoring "the mother goddess," and a Scythian king was even executed for participating in an idolatrous religious celebration.¹⁴ By no means did all Scythians exhibit Israelite customs. The "Turanian" Scythians, for example, were not related to the Sacae Scythians, and their tribes exhibited some bizarre customs. When discussing "Scythians," one must be careful to determine which Scythians tribes are being discussed, because not all of them were Israelite.

The Bible supports the thesis that many of the ten tribes resettled in the Caucasus/Black Sea region. In the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah (soon after Samaria fell), **II Kings 19:37** states that Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, was assassinated by his sons who sought safety by fleeing to "the land of Ararat." When fleeing for their lives, these assassins would go to an area which was so anti-Assyrian that they would be certain to receive asylum. They fled to the region of Ararat (the Caucasus/Black Sea region) where refugees of the ten tribes had established a new homeland. The anti-Assyrian Israelites would surely give refuge to assassins of an Assyrian king, and the fact these assassins fled to Ararat is consistent with historical records that Israelites had migrated to that region.

The Bible also confirms that the Israelites who fled to the Black Sea experienced at least a limited revival in serving the God of Israel.

In **Jeremiah 3:11-12**, God sent a message to the ten tribes of Israel via Jeremiah in about 620 B.C. (100 years **after** Israel had been removed from Palestine). God's message was:

“. . . backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah. Go and proclaim these words **toward the north**, and say, **Return** thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord”

Did God's use of the word “return” mean “return to God,” “return to Palestine,” or both? Whatever the intent, history records the Israelites did “return” to Palestine at that time! While the above quote was not a glowing tribute to the ten tribes' spiritual condition, God nevertheless acknowledged that they were clearly more obedient to God at that time than the tribe of Judah. Also, He directs Jeremiah to address his message to the ten tribes: “**to the north**.” If He was addressing Israelites carried captive to Assyria, God would have said “to the east.” Draw a line straight north of Jerusalem (where Jeremiah was) and you will come **exactly** to the Black Sea region of the Sacae Scythians.

Were the ten tribes of Israel “lost” a century after the fall of Samaria? Obviously not! God himself sent a message at that time via the prophet Jeremiah to the “free Israelites” near the Black Sea.

What does this have to do with the supposed conflict raised in Mr. Orr's article? That will now be answered, but it was first necessary to establish the Israelite origin of the Sacae Scythians before any sense could be made of what follows.

Secular historians record that (circa 625-605 B.C.) the Scythians poured out of the Black Sea/Caucasus region to invade the regions to the south. Their armies marched in the direction of Assyria and Palestine. The Scythian armies who marched to Assyria devastated Assyria's homeland. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states simply: “Nineveh was captured and destroyed by the Scythian army . . . and the Assyrian empire was at an end.”¹⁵ However, the Scythian army that marched into Palestine was peaceful as they continued to Egypt (which avoided an invasion by paying tribute to the Scythians). Herodotus notes that while the Scythians also conquered Media and “took possession of all Asia,” they marched into Palestine, “doing no harm to anyone.”¹⁶

Harper's Bible Dictionary records that this massive Scythian presence in Palestine occurred in the reign of King Josiah (639-608 B.C.),¹⁷ and during the ministry of the prophet Jeremiah (who had sent God's message to the ten tribes which said “return”). The Scythian invasions clearly exhibit motives that confirm their Israelite origin. By conquering Media,

they liberated the Israelites held captive in “the cities of the Medes,” and by destroying the Assyrian Empire, they exacted revenge for the Assyrian destruction of the old kingdom of Israel. [Interestingly, while the Assyrians drove the ten tribes out of Palestine, we can now know that the ten tribes of Israel ultimately destroyed Assyria and its empire.]

If the Scythians had been marauding nomads from the steppes (a common assumption of history books), they would have looted Palestine and Judah as well. However, Herodotus’ account of their presence in Palestine indicates a friendly/protective occupation. This makes sense when we understand the Sacae Scythians recognized the Jews as a brother tribe. Even the Bible acknowledges the Scythian presence in Palestine during Josiah’s reign, in the very passage to which Mr. Orr points as a Bible contradiction! The Greeks called the Black Sea Israelites “Sacae” or “Scythians,” however, the Bible called them by their Israelite tribal names because the Jews still recognized the Scythians as Israelite tribes! That is why **II Chronicles 34-35** records King Josiah issuing donations and Passover invitations to people of Manasseh, Ephraim, Naphtali, Simeon, and “Israel.” King Josiah was, in fact, interacting with the Sacae Scythians who had just recently reoccupied their old tribal lands! These passages are powerful Biblical proof that the Sacae Scythians were the ten tribes of Israel! Precisely when Greek history records that the Sacae Scythians had poured into Palestine, the Bible states many of the ten tribes of Israel were again present in the land.

II Chronicles 34:6 records that the ten tribes of Israel had reoccupied their old homelands “with mattocks.” While the Scythians attacked Assyria with swords, they occupied Palestine with agricultural tools! The ten tribes apparently intended to reclaim and resettle the old kingdom of Israel. However, history records they decided to return to their new Black Sea homelands within a few decades. Werner Keller states the Scythians returned to the Black Sea region within ten years¹⁸, while Herodotus records they remained in the Mideast 28 years before returning.¹⁹

The events of King Josiah’s reign take on new meaning when it is realized that the more devout ten tribes of Israel had reoccupied Palestine during his reign! King Josiah’s spiritual reform of Judah began in the eighth year of his reign, **II Chronicles 34:1-3**. What motivated him to do this? The eighth year of his reign was 623 B.C., about when the Sacae Scythians (the ten tribes of Israel) reoccupied Palestine. He began to destroy pagan idols and images even though he did not recover the “book of the law” until at least ten years later (verses 3-15). Who taught him how

to please the God of Israel? The Scythian Israelites! Jeremiah records the Israelites were closer to God at that time, and Herodotus wrote the Scythians avoided unclean meat and forbid the use of idolatrous images.²⁰

After 10-28 years, the Israelites mostly returned to “the north” after discovering that Palestine was no more a “land of milk and honey.” It had been occupied by foreigners (brought in by Assyrians) for a century, and was now undesirable compared to the Israelites’ Black Sea region. However, a few Israelites likely stayed in Palestine, accounting for limited contingents of Israelites being present in future generations. After the Scythian Israelites left Palestine, a city in the old tribal territory of Manasseh (Beth-Shan) was renamed “Scythopolis”²¹ in honor of the Scythians who had liberated Palestine from Assyrian domination. The city was still named Scythopolis when it was one of the cities of the Decapolis²² in which Jesus walked, **Mark 7:31**.

The above is an example of how a careful reconciliation of secular history and Biblical historical accounts mutually verify the accuracy of the Bible! What Mr. Orr regards as a conflict is, in fact, no conflict at all. Since the accounts are factually and literally true, the many rationalizations utilized by Mr. Orr to put new meanings on the terms “Judah” and “Israel” are moot.

Mr. Orr is correct in stating: “The Bible records that Jews and Israelites were still living side by side in the days of the early Church,” but he errs in asserting that it was because Israelites were joined to the house of Judah. Mr. Orr’s assumption is contradicted by Josephus, a contemporary of the early Church. Josephus states that during the time of the early Church:

“There are **but two tribes** in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while **the ten tribes are beyond Euphrates till now**, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers.”²³ (Emphasis added.)

Josephus makes it quite clear that the “two tribes . . . subject to the Romans” were Judah and Benjamin, and that the “ten tribes” of Israel were still in Asia during the days of the early Church. **Ezra 1** and **Nehemiah 11** also confirm that only Judah and Benjamin had returned to Judea and (with Levi) became the ancestors of the Jews of Roman Judea. Note also that Josephus did not regard the ten tribes as “lost” during the 1st century A.D. He even names the Euphrates River as one of their borders. It is important that Josephus recorded that the ten tribes’ population had grown very immensely in Asia; it confirms the Israelites had not “disappeared” or “died out.” Indeed, it confirms the Biblical prophecy of **Hosea 1:6-10** that God would make the ten tribes of Israel “too numerous to count” **after He**

removed them from Palestine.

At the time of Josephus, the Euphrates River had long been the recognized border between the Roman and Parthian Empires. Josephus' euphemism, "beyond Euphrates," was tantamount to saying the ten tribes were "in Parthia." Parthia was an immense Asian Empire, which stretched from the Euphrates River to India. Historians have long recognized that the Parthians (who fought many wars with Rome) were fellow tribesmen of the Sacae Scythians.²⁴ There is an immense volume of evidence that the Parthian Empire was ruled by the ten tribes of Israel, but there simply is not space enough to examine that evidence in this article.

During the time of Jesus Christ and the early Church, there was a long period of "detente" between the Roman and Parthian Empires during which extensive travel and trade between the two empires took place. The "Wise Men from the east," **Matthew 2:1**, who brought gold, frankincense and myrrh to the young Jesus were Parthians ("Magi" and "Wise Men" were the official titles of Parthia's priests and nobility).²⁵ **Acts 2:9** states that "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia . . . and Asia," were present in Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Weeks. All the above named regions were part of Parthia's Empire. **Verse 10** states these devout people were "Jews and proselytes (i.e., non-Jews)." The "non-Jews" were Israelites from the Parthian Empire, and Peter openly called them "men of Israel" when he addressed them, **Acts 2:22**. Mr. Orr mistakenly puts a different meaning on Peter's comment, but Peter (like Josephus) knew the many Parthians in his audience were Israelites, and addressed them as such.

Because Parthian merchants, pilgrims, and diplomats could travel freely in Roman Palestine at the time of Christ, there were many Israelites present in Judea throughout the time of Christ, especially (as **Acts 2** confirms) during the Annual Holy Days.

Sadly, the arguments in Mr. Orr's article are consistent with those of Biblical "minimalists" and "apologists," people who have lost their faith in a literal interpretation of the Bible, and therefore "apologize" for it. As we can see, no apologies for the Bible are needed; its historical accounts can be taken literally!

There is a valid challenge which needs to be made to those who oppose "Anglo-Israelism." If they claim to be Christians who believe the Bible is the inspired word of God, then they should accept **Hosea 1** and **Genesis 49**, which prophesy that the ten tribes of Israel would have huge populations after their captivity and will be present and identifiable among the nations

during the “latter days.” If they do not agree with the “Anglo-Israel” identifications of which modern nations are Israelite, they should offer their own alternative identifications for the modern ten tribes of Israel. If a person really believes the Bible is God’s literal word, they will offer such alternatives. Those who cannot (or will not) offer alternatives, reveal that they don’t really believe in a literally-true Bible. They are simply wasting our time.

In conclusion, there is abundant evidence that Biblical historical accounts are literally true, and that the United States of America and Britain are the modern descendants of the Israelite tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim (space did not permit a discussion of that subject in this article). There is also much historical evidence that the ten tribes of Israel can be traced in all parts of their history from the fall of Samaria till the present.

The author of this article has spent many years researching evidence about the tribes of Israel, and this information has been published in 1996 in a major book, *The “Lost” Ten Tribes of Israel. . . Found!* It is 440 pages long. This book contains the information offered in this article and much, much more. It examines the subject of the ten tribes of Israel from a historical, linguistic, archeological, and anthropological basis. It traces the empires, migrations, and histories of the ten tribes from the time of King David until the present. It not only documents the whereabouts of the tribes of Israel in the modern world, but also documents that the Israelites ruled major empires at several stages of their history. After reading *The Lost Ten Tribes of Israel...Found!* you can believe in “Anglo-Israelism” (and the veracity of the Bible) not in spite of the scientific evidence, but rather because of it! This book is based on hard evidence, not folklore and legend.

If you are interested in a scientific documentation of the history and modern locations of the ten tribes of Israel, you may order a copy of this excellent book. See ordering information below.

(Steve Collins plans additional books documenting further evidence of the identity of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel.)

ENDNOTES

1. “Our Scythian Ancestors Identified with Israel,” and “Dan...the Pioneer of Israel,” Col. J.C. Gawler, were published by W.H. Guest of London, England in

1875 and 1880, respectively.

2. "Jeshurun...", Mrs. E.C. Daubenay, published by W.H. Guest, London, p. 7.

3. "The U.S.A. in Bible Prophecy," F.E. Pitts, originally published in 1862, now printed by Hoffman Printing Co., Muskogee, OK.

4. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, "Samaria," p. 895.

5. *Ibid*, "Josiah," p. 510.

6. Gawler, *Our Scythian Ancestors Identified with Israel*, p. 9.

7. *Ibid*, p. 9.

8. *Ibid*, p. 9.

9. *The Bible as History*, Werner Keller, p. 246.

10. *The Annals of Imperial Rome*, Tacitus, Books VI, XI-XIV.

11. *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, George Rawlinson, pp. 231-270, 320-321.

12. *The History*, Herodotus, 4.63.

13. *Ibid*, 4.76.

14. *Ibid*, 4.76-80.

15. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1943 Ed., Vol. 2, "Babylonia and Assyria", p. 857.

16. *The History*, Herodotus, 1.104-105.

17. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, "Josiah," p. 510.

18. *The Bible as History*, Werner Keller, p. 273.

19. *The History*, Herodotus, 1.106.

20. *Ibid*, 4.76-80.

21. *The Bible as History*, Werner Keller, p. 273.

22. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, "Beth-shan," p. 109, and "Decapolis," p. 215.

23. *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus, XI, 2.

24. *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, George Rawlinson, p. 19, and *The Scythians*, Tamara Rice, p. 45.

25. *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, George Rawlinson, p. 85.
