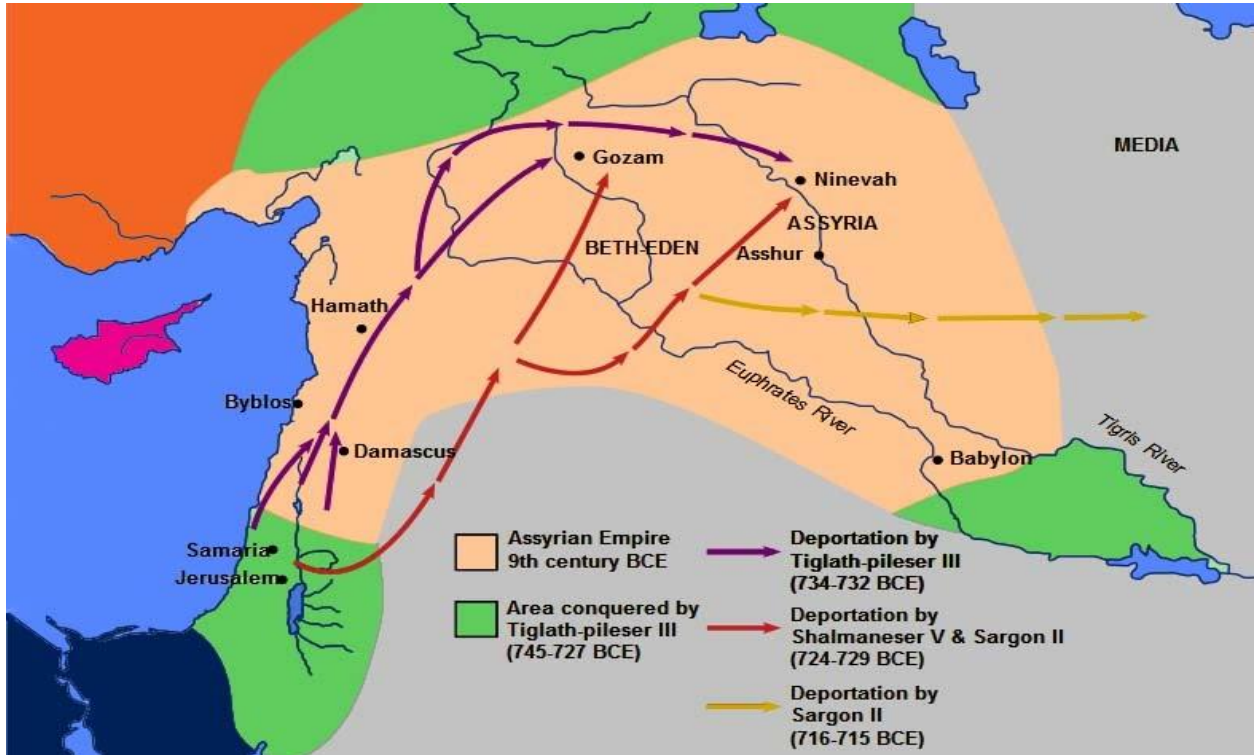
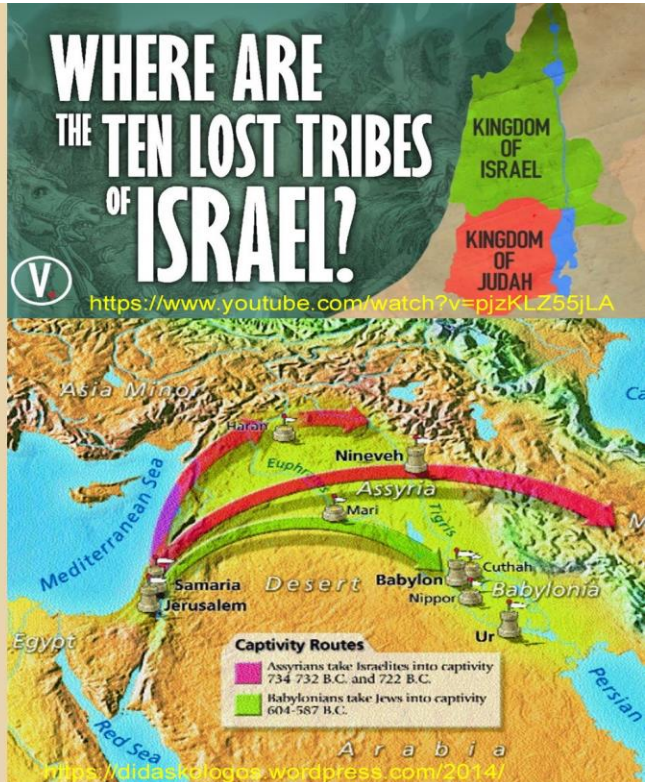


THE NEVER LOST TEN TRIBES

By David Lee Burris



Israel Goes into Captivity—Becomes the “Lost” Ten Tribes

Without exception, every succeeding king of Israel followed in the evil ways of Jeroboam (II Kings 17:21-23). Approximately 175 years from the division of the kingdom, the northern ten tribes fell into widespread political division and unrest. Soon the nation found itself paying an enormous amount of “tribute” money to the Assyrian monarch Tiglath-pileser III (II Kings 15:19-20). A later rebellion by King Pekah around 735 BC led the Assyrians to turn Israel into a vassal state. The prophet Jeremiah wrote concerning Israel’s impending captivity:¹

“ ‘For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very deceitfully [treacherously] against Me,’ says the LORD. ‘They have lied against the LORD and said, *“It is not He [i.e., God is not punishing us]; neither shall evil come on us; nor shall we see sword nor famine. And the prophets [are but] wind, for the word [of God] is not in them; thus [what the prophets have spoken] shall be done to them.”*’

“Therefore, thus says the LORD God of hosts, ‘Because you have [deceptively] spoken this word, behold, I will make My words in your mouth [like] fire, and this people [like] wood, and it shall devour them. Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from afar, O house of Israel,’ says the LORD. ‘It is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language you do not know, nor understand what they say. Their quiver is as an open grave; they are all mighty men [of war]. And they shall eat up your harvest and your bread, your sons and your daughters they shall eat up. They shall eat up your flocks and your herds; they shall eat up your vines and your fig trees. They shall beat down your fortified cities with the sword.

“ ‘But even in those days,’ says the LORD, ‘I will not make a complete end [of] you. And it will be, when they shall ask, *“Why does the LORD our God do all these things to us?”* Then you shall answer them, *“Just as you have forsaken Me and served strange gods in your land, so you shall serve strangers in a land that is not yours”*’ ” (Jer. 5:11-19).

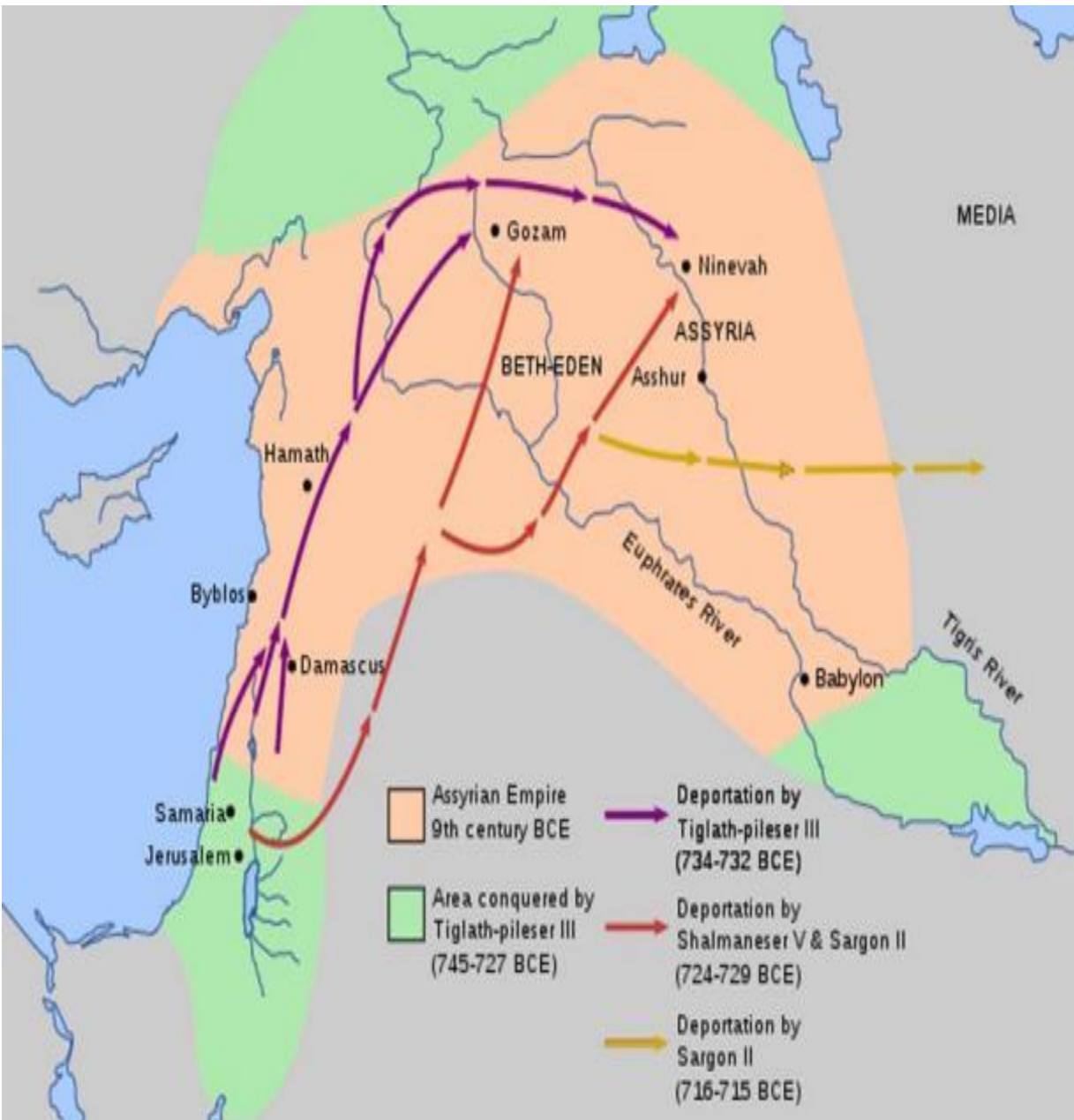
According to the prophet Hosea, **the root cause of Israel’s demise was their rejection of the true knowledge of God.** “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected [true] knowledge, I will also reject you.... **Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children**” (Hosea 4:6).

Like Jeremiah, the prophet Amos warned of God’s intent to **“sift”** the Israelites among the heathen.

“ ‘Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful [northern] kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth; except that I will not completely destroy the house of Jacob,’ says the LORD. ‘For lo, I will command, **and I will shake [sift] the house of Israel among all the nations, as one shakes [grain] with a sieve, yet not a grain shall fall to the earth**’ ” (Amos 9:8-9).

In corrective punishment, the northern ten tribes would be scattered among Gentile nations—yet not completely destroyed. **The phrase “yet not a grain shall fall to the earth” shows that God, in His abundant mercy, would not allow Israel to utterly perish from the earth.**

National Captivity—In Two Stages



Map showing Tiglath's conquests (green) and deportation of Israelites. Tiglath-Pileser III discouraged revolts against Assyrian rule with the use of forced deportations of thousands of people all over the empire. (CC BY SA 3.0)

Tiglath-pileser mentions conquering Naphtali and his conquest of the coast in his inscription: *on the border of the Land of Omri [viz. Israel] ...the wide land of Naphtali in its entirety, I brought within the border of Assyria. My official (tartan) I set over them as governor. Hanno of Gaza fled before my weapons.*



*Illustration of Assyrian relief of Tiglath-Pileser III besieging a town. (**Public Domain**)*

While Tiglath-pileser took many people into captivity, he did not take them all. However, of those taken into captivity, he also mentions taking Israelite forces in his military annuals:

“carried off [to] Assyria the land of Bit-Humria (Israel). [...its] 'auxiliary [army,] [...] all of its people.”

From this small fragment, Tiglath-pileser III not only tells us that he deported a large amount of Israel's people, but he also took the Israelite army & incorporated them into the Assyrian army as its auxiliaries.

As Israel's next-to-last king, Pekah formed an alliance with Syria and attacked Judah (II Kings 16:5-6). (This is the first instance the term Jew is used in the Bible, as the two Israelite kingdoms are at war.) At Judah's request the Assyrians intervened (verses 7-9), adding to the tension that already existed between the northern tribes and Tiglath-pileser. Foolishly, Pekah deepened his alliance with Damascus, a move the Assyrian king interpreted as further rebellion. In response, the Assyrians came against Israel, taking significant numbers into captivity. This deportation took place from 735-732 BC, and is sometimes referred to as the **"Galilean captivity"** as it primarily involved the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and a portion of Manasseh—all east of the Jordan River (I Chron. 5:26). To the north, Naphtali was taken captive (II Kings 15:29). Because of their close proximity to Naphtali, it is likely that Asher, Issachar, and Zebulun were at least partially taken as well. The tribe of Dan was divided into two parts: the northern Danite area adjacent to Naphtali, which included the city of Dan, was almost certainly taken captive, but the Danites living southward along the shores of the Mediterranean were not involved in this first invasion.

With this invasion, Tiglath-pileser now occupied the greater part of Galilee and Gilead—some 75 percent of the territory of the Kingdom of Israel. Only a relatively small state situated around Samaria remained— mostly involving the remains of Manasseh and the tribe of Ephraim.

Circumstances quickly worsened under Pekah's successor, Hoshea, who betrayed Assyrian trust by turning to Egypt for support. The new Assyrian king, Shalmaneser V, reacted decisively, ordering the complete removal of the remaining Israelites from the land. The Assyrian army "went through all the land" (II Kings 17:5), meaning they took captive all who had not fled the region or taken refuge inside Samaria. **As recorded by history, the population of Jerusalem swelled at this time as a number of northern refugees fled captivity.** Finally, after a three-year siege, Samaria fell in 722 BC (under Assyria's Sargon II).³



Illustration of Hoshea, the last king of the Israelite Kingdom of Israel. (Public Domain)



King Shalmaneser invaded what was left of Israel. He sacked and destroyed the city of Shechem and the old Israelite capital of Tirzah. He also hit Hazor, tearing down the walls of the city before he besieged Samaria, the capital of Israel, for three years. Some say he died shortly before or after the fall of Samaria, though Shalmaneser is recorded to have taken Samaria "On the 27th of Tebet Shalmaneser ascended the throne in Assyria and Babylonia. He shattered Samaria."

The first inscription is more about his military campaigns throughout his rule, found on a prism known as MS 2368, in which Sargon mentions conquering Israel, and thus refers to them as "Bit-Humriya" (House of Omri). The second inscription is the one most are familiar with regarding the fall of Samaria:

*I besieged and conquered Samerina.
27,290 people, who lived in its midst, I carried away.
50 chariots I gathered from their midst.
The bereaved I taught proper behavior.
I appointed my commissioner over them.
The levy of the former king
I laid upon them.*

When reading the inscription mentioned above, many fail to notice, or maybe understand, that it took three years to capture the city. That suggests that Samaria was either heavily defended with large numbers of forces or that Assyria only brought a small to medium sized force to besiege the city. After many years, the men inside Samaria grew tired, hungry, and most of all insane to a degree. The psychological impact on these men, living with the dead, decaying for three years, and having to smell it over a cold meal, made them prefer to die than give in. Finally, after three years and a new Assyrian king, the city fell to the besiegers. Instead of slaughtering the defenders, King Sargon II had something better for them.

In short order, the lands formerly occupied by the northern tribes were repopulated with Gentiles. “And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon and from Cuthah and from Ava and from Hamath and from Sepharvaim and placed them in the cities of Samaria [Israel] instead of the children of Israel. And they possessed Samaria [Israel] and lived in its cities” (II Kings 17:24). **These newcomers became known as Samaritans, taking their name from Israel’s capital city.**

Meanwhile, in the southern Kingdom of Judah, the tragic fate of the northern tribes helped to inspire national repentance under King Hezekiah. But the Assyrians, having now entered into the Promised Land, had their eye on Judah as well. In fact, within just a few years of the fall of Samaria, many of Judah’s fortified cities had been temporarily overcome by Assyria (II Kings 18:13-16).

Still, because of God’s great mercy—and because of Hezekiah’s far-reaching reforms (II Kings 18-19; II Chron. 29-32)—the nation of Judah never fell to the Assyrian army. Some 135 years were yet to go by before Judah would face her final captors, the Babylonians.

The Ten Tribes of Israel Become “Lost”

As a political entity, the northern Kingdom of Israel was now extinct. Its people had been scattered across the Euphrates, resettled in such areas as Habor, Hara, Halah, and Gozan—all located along the northern fringes of the Assyrian Empire in what today would roughly be southeastern Turkey. Some were exiled as far east as Media, to the area south of the Caspian Sea, where they were placed in cities the Assyrians had taken from the Medes (II Kings 17:6). It is logical that the Assyrians would resettle the Israelites in several areas in order to prevent them from consolidating their strength for the purpose of a rebellion.



Archaeological finds confirm the presence of Israelite settlers in these areas of exile. Harper's Bible Dictionary, for example, notes that ancient texts discovered at Gozan mention some of the exiles' descendants by name.

From these locations, many of the children of Israel were no doubt further scattered through human trafficking—sold as slaves in faraway lands (Deut. 28:64-66). But God had only begun to “sift” the ten tribes among the nations.

At this time, the northern ten tribes of Israel seemingly disappeared from history. Starting with Jeroboam, Israel had begun adopting the religions of the nations around them, becoming steeped in the worship of foreign gods. Many of the customs Israel carried into captivity were borrowed from the nations around them. Thus, in captivity, the Israelites easily blended in with the pagan cultures they had come to prefer. They no longer possessed outward characteristics that easily distinguished them from the nations among which they had been scattered. - *Internet Search*

The Ten 'Lost' Tribes Of Israel Were Never Actually Lost

What the Bible actually says about the ten northern tribes is quite clear. First, they were dispersed to Egypt, Assyria (see [Zechariah 10:10](#)) and other surrounding nations. Second, *and most importantly*, there was a remnant from the ten northern tribes that had fled the north during the Assyrian invasion and had come to live in the Kingdom of Judah (see [2 Chronicles 34:9](#) and [2 Chronicles 35:17-18](#)). Therefore, the Jews that were later exiled to Babylon and their children and grandchildren who returned from captivity *included those from all twelve tribes*. Third, the New Testament writers wrote to those in the Diaspora with the understanding that those Jewish communities *included members from all twelve tribes* (e.g. [James 1:1](#), [Acts 26:7](#)).



What Happened to the Ten “Lost” Tribes?

By **Wayne Jackson**

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During the days of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, the kingdom of Israel split. The northern section, under the rebellious Jeroboam, retained the name “Israel,” while the southern kingdom became known as “Judah.” The northern faction, with its capital at Samaria, lasted about 210 years. It fell to the Assyrians in 722/21 B.C. According to Assyrian records, 27,290 Hebrews were taken into that captivity. Many of the northern Jews, however, were left in the land — so the expression “ten lost tribes” is not accurate.

The Assyrian empire was conquered by the neo-Babylonian regime in about 612-09 B.C., and the Hebrews who were in that captivity came under the control of the Babylonians.

Beginning around 606 B.C., and continuing through 586 B.C., in a series of three invasions, the Babylonians came against the kingdom of Judah. It has been estimated that some 70,000 Jews were taken to Babylon during these campaigns (and this doubtless included some of those of the northern kingdom who had remained in Canaan). The Babylonian captivity lasted for 70 years (cf. 2 Chronicles 36:21; Jeremiah 25:12).

In about 538 B.C., Cyrus, a Persian king, overthrew the Babylonian regime. Presently, he initiated a policy by which the Hebrews were permitted to return to their homeland in Palestine. In three movements westward, the Jews migrated back to the land. It is estimated that approximately 125,000 people returned (Nehemiah 7:5-73). Some, however, chose to remain in the land of the captivity (see the book of Esther).

Tribal Distinctions

That tribal distinctions had not disappeared is evident from the following facts.

When the Jews settled in their own land, they began to rebuild the temple — which project took about six years. When completed, it was formally dedicated. At the dedication, sacrifices were offered “according to the number of the [twelve] tribes of Israel” (Ezra 6:17). It thus is clear that the ten tribes **were never lost**; some of these either remained in Babylon, or else returned with their kinsmen of the southern kingdom. As with many other Jews, eventually they were scattered far and wide (see: Deuteronomy 28:64ff). When Christ was born, and was brought to Jerusalem to fulfill certain requirements of the law, there was a Hebrew woman, a prophetess of the tribe of **Asher** (one of the supposedly “lost” tribes), who was praising God in the temple. See also James 1:1.

Mormonism

The Mormons teach an absurd doctrine. In Mormon lore it is alleged that in 600 B.C., during the reign of King Zedekiah, a man named Lehi, together with a companion, Ishmael, left Jerusalem and sailed to America. It is argued that Mulek, Zedekiah’s son, joined Lehi, and the two groups combined to form a great nation. Mormons claim these people were ancestors of the American Indians. In Joseph Smith’s “Articles of Faith,” it is stated:

We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built on the American continent; that Christ will reign personally on the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisaical glory (Article 10).

So much error, packed into such a brief sentence!

Armstrongism

In c. A.D. 1649, John Sadler advanced the theory that the Anglo-Saxons of Great Britain were the descendants of the “ten lost tribes.” This theory later was developed by Richard Brothers (1757-1824). In our day it was popularized to some extent by Herbert Armstrong, of the World-Wide Church of God. Armstrong contended that the modern throne of England was an extension of David’s throne, and that the “Stone of Scone,” upon which the queen was crowned, actually was the pillar of Jacob (Genesis 28:11), though the stone appears to have come from Scotland!



Neither of these speculative theories is supported by a shred of historical truth. They originated in the minds of those who, though perhaps sincere, had little understanding of, or regard for, biblical truth. - Apologetics Press

The Ten ‘Lost’ Tribes Weren’t Lost

The phrase *the lost tribes of Israel* emits a ring of mystery that romanticizes the disappearance of the Israelites taken captive by Assyria in 722 B.C. Although the phrase is nowhere in Scripture, it is indispensable to a false teaching known as British-Israelism.

British-Israelism, or Anglo-Israelism, came into existence more than 150 years ago. Richard Brothers (1757–1824), an Englishman, is given the dubious distinction of originating this method of biblical interpretation. It’s a theological anti-Semitism that contends the Anglo-Saxon people are, in fact, Israel and, consequently, the true heirs of all of God’s promises to the Jewish nation.

British-Israelism rests on four erroneous postulates:

The Four Main Falsehoods

1. Not a single Israelite remained in the land after Assyria deported the ten northern tribes of Israel.

It is essential to British-Israelism that this statement be historically true. Furthermore, none of the Israelites thereafter could have mixed with Judah or returned to the southern kingdom. Accordingly, British-Israelism teacher Herbert Armstrong (1892–1986) stated, “When the southern kingdom of Judah was taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the Assyrians had migrated northwest— and the ten-tribed Israelites with them! Utterly lost. They were utterly gone! They were lost from view!” Again, he declared, “The house of Israel did not return to Palestine with the Jews in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, as some erroneously believe.” With the decline of the Assyrian Empire, he said, the tribes began to wander westward across northern Europe and eventually lost their identity. Later they became the Saxe, or Sythians, who subsequently moved through Europe and eventually invaded England as the Saxon people.

2. The British are Israelitish Ephraim, with the fledgling United States later installed under the mantle of Manasseh, thus fulfilling Jacob's prophecy regarding Joseph's two sons in Genesis 48.

In this relocation process, David's throne was supposedly transferred from Jerusalem to England. Armstrong endorsed a concept by Herman L. Hoeh: "Elizabeth II actually sits on the throne of King David of Israel—that she is a direct descendant, continuing David's dynasty—the very throne on which Christ will sit after His return." Other devotees identify biblical Bethel with Glastonbury, England, and Jerusalem with Edinburgh, Scotland.

3. Israel (the ten northern tribes) is forever distinguished from the house of Judah (Jews), which has been left under a permanent curse emanating from the idea that it was Judah and Levi who put Christ to death saying, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Mt. 27:25).

Therefore, say British-Israelism advocates, the terms Israel and Jews or Judah are never used synonymously in the Bible. When Israel is referred to, it always indicates the ten northern tribes; Jews or Judah are exclusively the southern tribes.

4. All of the divine promises to Israel find fruition in God's blessings on England and America, which will prepare the kingdom and deliver it to Jesus Christ. The occupant of the throne of England will relinquish the seat of authority to Christ, thus completing the process of the restoration of Israel.

The Biblical Truth

The Scriptures and corroborating historical records widely confirm that the majority of the northern tribes' population never left Israel at all. Ephraim and Manasseh did not move to England and America, portions of the northern tribes were assimilated by Judah, and Israel and Judah eventually fused as one national entity.

All Israel Was Not Taken Captive

Israel's demise and subsequent deportation are recorded in 2 Kings 17. The chapter, however, lacks specifics concerning who was carried away by Assyria. It is claimed that the statement "the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah only" (v. 18) suggests the nation was removed in its entirety. However, this verse must be applied contextually, like such statements as "all Israel went to battle" and "all Israel appeared before the Lord."

All of Israel did not go to battle; only the military went. Nor did every Israelite appear before the Lord; only those who constituted a proper representation appeared. So, it was in the case of Israel's going into captivity.

Other Scriptures confirm the deportation was partial and restricted to the ruling political and military class. In fact, during the reign of Judean King Hezekiah who came to the throne in 715 B.C., seven years after Sargon II of Assyria conquered Israel, many from the north moved to Judah at **Hezekiah's invitation** (2 Chr. 30).

In 622 B.C., more Israelites came to Jerusalem to help repair the Temple. Even later, Hezekiah issued a Passover invitation from "Beer-sheba even to Dan . . . throughout all Israel and Judah" to the "children of Israel . . . who are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria" (2 Chr. 30:5–6).

In response, many came to Jerusalem, “even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover” (2 Chr. 30:18). Also, “all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation who came out of Israel” (2 Chr. 30:25) participated in the feast.

Eighty years later, Josiah led Judah through a period of religious revival. In the process of repairing the Temple, monies were collected from “the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin” (2 Chr. 34:9). By then many pious Jews from the northern kingdom had moved to Judah to escape contamination from the heathen people the Assyrians had settled in Israel.

Further documentation of this partial deportation comes from Sargon II himself: “I besieged and conquered Samaria, led away as booty 27,290 inhabitants of it.” Estimates of the northern kingdom’s population at that time range from 400,000 to 500,000, meaning **only 5 percent of the population was deported**, primarily the leaders from the area around Samaria.

The captives settled to the northeast, around the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. In 612 B.C. the Babylonians under Nabopolassar destroyed the Assyrian capital of Nineveh. **Thus, the northern exiles joined their Judean brothers under the rule of the Babylonians and later the Persians. Some were among those who returned to Jerusalem in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah.** Cyrus, king of Persia, ruled the territories formerly held by the Assyrians. He decreed that all Jews “throughout all his kingdom” who wished to return and help rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem were free to do so. At the dedication that followed the exiles’ return, Scripture records,

*And the children of Israel, the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy, And offered at the dedication . . . **twelve** he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel (Ezra 6:16–17).*

The New Testament records that individuals in the first century still maintained their tribal identities— some of whom were members of the so-called lost tribes. For example, Anna, who beheld the baby Jesus in the Temple, was “of the tribe of Asher” (Lk. 2:36).

Israel unquestionably remained in the region of its inheritance without a massive and mysterious exodus into Europe.

Synonymous Terms

With the Babylonian Captivity came the dissolution of a dual national identification for Israel. The divided kingdom ceased to exist, and ***Israel*** and ***Judah*** became **synonymous terms** frequently used to identify the entire host of Jewry. British-Israelism heatedly denies this indisputable fact because its entire system of interpretation hinges on its being correct on this point. Walter Martin, in his book *Kingdom of the Cults*, fully exposed this fallacy: “After the Babylonian captivity, from which the Jews returned, Ezra records the remnant were called by the name of Jews eight times, and by the name Israel forty times. Nehemiah records eleven times they are Jews, and proceeds to describe them as Israel, twenty-two times.”

The New Testament is no less emphatic. At Pentecost, Peter addressed himself to “all the house of Israel” (Acts 2:36). In this one chapter alone, “Jews” (v. 5), “men of Judea” (v. 14), and “men of Israel” (v. 22) are mentioned, followed by the reference to “all the house of Israel.” Later, referring to his Jewish brethren, the apostle Paul spoke of a common promise and a common hope, “unto which promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God day and night, hope to come” (Acts 26:7).

James addressed his epistle “to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad” (Jas. 1:1).

Walter Martin observed further, “The New Testament used the word ‘Jew’ one hundred and seventy-four times.” The promoters of British-Israelism are shamefully guilty of attempting to manipulate the Bible in order to make an untenable position appear factual.

Ephraim and Manasseh Are Not England and America

Ephraim and Manasseh are prominent in Scripture. They are repeatedly said to have been in Israel following the captivities—not in London or New York.

In Ezekiel 37, written during the Babylonian Captivity, the prophet looked forward to the official union of Judah and Israel. He was directed to symbolize this event by placing two sticks together “for Judah, and for the children of Israel...and they shall become one in thine hand” (vv. 16-17). When pressed by the people for an explanation, Ezekiel said,

Thus, saith the Lord Goo: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, to which they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land. And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all (vv. 21-22).

The context leaves no doubt that the scattered tribes would return to Israel. Ephraim shall be gathered “from among the nations, to which they are gone, and [I] will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land” (v. 21). The people who had been scattered through the torturous dispersion would be brought back to the land of promise. This is a marked contrast to the British-Israel fantasy that has Ephraim at home in his English “Promised Land,” waiting to deliver the kingdom. – *Elwood McQuaid*

THE TEN TRIBES OF ISRAEL: WERE THEY LOST?

By Will Varnier
Oct 23 2012

Israel
Lost Tribes of Israel



The great Hebrew Christian scholar, David Baron, in his work *The History of the Ten "Lost" Tribes* has provided the most detailed and accurate answer to the question. The following is a summary of his main points. The fallacy inherent in all of the theories is simply this: **the tribes were never lost**, but continued as part of the main body of the Jewish people.

Consider the following four points:

1. **At the time of the disruption of the united kingdom in 930 B.C., faithful Israelites from all the northern tribes joined their brethren in the south and continued their identity as part of the kingdom of Judah.** Two books in Scripture that are strangely ignored by British-Israelites are 1 and 2 Chronicles. These books make it clear that the tribes in the north continued their existence as part of Judah after 930 B.C. Consider **2 Chr 11:14, 16**: "For the Levites left their suburban lands and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem; for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the LORD; And after them, **out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem**, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers." These verses provide irrefutable proof many godly individuals out of "all the tribes of Israel" rejected Jeroboam's idolatry and joined the southern kingdom. During the reign of Asa, others followed from Ephraim and Manasseh (**2 Chr. 15:9**). Thus, it

is evident that the kingdom of Judah absorbed many from the northern kingdom through the years.

- 2. Although it is often assumed that all of the northern kingdom went into the Assyrian captivity, Scripture teaches that Israelites continued to live there after the captivity of 721 B.C.** Again, Chronicles helps us in this regard. **At Hezekiah's invitation, many from the north settled in Judah after the destruction of the northern kingdom (2 Chr. 30).** Even later, in 622 B.C., more godly Israelites came to Jerusalem to help repair the Temple (**2 Chr. 34:9**), and later to celebrate the Passover (**2 Chr. 35:17–18**). If the ten northern tribes had become lost, how could these representatives have joined in worship in Jerusalem over one hundred years after the Assyrian destruction? A reading of the Chronicler's account forces one to the conclusion that not all of the Excavations have revealed that the population of Judah rapidly increased after the fall of the northern kingdom as a result of the many refugees mentioned in **2 Chr. 11:14–16**. In the annals of the Assyrian Sargon, he describes how he he carried away only 27,290 people and 50 chariots. Since estimates of the population of the northern kingdom are around 500,000, **around one-twentieth of the population was deported, primarily the leaders from the area around Samaria. The ten tribes, therefore, were never lost because they were never completely deported!** Their kingdom was destroyed, but most of them stayed, with some around Samaria intermingling with new immigrants to form the *Samaritans* (**2 Kings 17:24–41**).
- 3. When the Jews returned from Babylonian captivity in 536 B.C., the Chronicler viewed the restored community as the remnant of all Israel, both north and south, and not just the tribe of Judah:** "Now the first inhabitants who dwelt in their possessions in their cities were the Israelites, the priests, Levites, and the Nethinim. And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh" (**1 Chr. 9:2–3**). **According to these verses, we should look to find Ephraim and Manasseh, not in England and America, but in Jerusalem following the return from Babylon. Furthermore, the people at that time viewed themselves as part of all Israel, for they offered "twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel" (Ezra 6:17).** Although British-Israelism confidently asserts that Judah and Israel are always separate and distinct, a

concordance shows that in the Book of Ezra the restored community is called “Jews” only eight times and “Israel” fifty times. The writer viewed the terms as interchangeable, both terms applying to the same people after the captivity.

4. **The NT clearly indicates that in the first century “Jews” still maintained their tribal identities—some of whom were members of those supposedly lost tribes.** Consider, for example, the aged Anna who beheld the baby Jesus in the Temple. [Luke 2:36](#) states that she was of the “tribe of Asher.” When Paul spoke of his Jewish brethren, he spoke of a common promise and a common hope: “Unto which promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God day and night, hope to come” ([Acts 26:7](#)). James addressed his epistle “to the 12 tribes which are scattered abroad” ([Jas. 1:1](#)). He made no distinction between Judah and the ten tribes. All Jews were part of a common body, the only difference being that some were in the land of Israel and some in the Diaspora. Evidently, members of all the tribes existed both inside and outside the Promised Land.

The NT uses the term “Jew” 174 times and the term “Israel” 75 times, clearly applying them to the same body of people. Paul referred to himself as both a “Jew” ([Acts 22:3](#)) and an “Israelite” ([Rom. 11:1](#)), and he never distinguished between *Jews* and *Israel*, as British-Israelism does. If the so called lost tribes indeed resurfaced as the British people, and if Jeremiah eventually traveled to Britain to establish David’s throne there, one would expect some trace of these matters to be mentioned in the NT. The silence of the NT writers in this regard, however, is deafening! The NT refers to only one group of people who descended from Jacob: “Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came.” ([Rom. 9:4–5](#)).

Summary. On the basis of Scripture, history and archaeology, there is no such thing as the ten lost tribes. What was lost was the separate existence of the kingdom of Israel in the north. The tribes, however, continued to exist in the body of the southern kingdom. Furthermore, any claim that some ethnic group descended from the ten tribes rests on shaky biblical and historical foundations. British-Israelism, in addition to distorting the Scriptures through its preconceived bias, fosters national pride and fuels the white supremacist, anti-Semitic groups that spread their poisonous propaganda today.

THE TEN TRIBES OF ISRAEL: LOST OR FOUND?

By Will Varner
Oct 17 2012

Judaism
Lost Tribes of Israel



In December, 1984, astounding news leaked to the world press. For over a year, the Israeli government had been secretly flying more than ten thousand Ethiopian Jews out of their refugee camps in the Sudan to their new homes in the modern state of Israel. The *Beta Israel*, as they want to call themselves (*Falashas* in Ethiopian language),

claim that their Judaic faith originated after the Queen of Sheba returned from her famous visit to King Solomon, bringing with her the knowledge of the one true God.

Rabbis in Israel, however, had another explanation — these Ethiopian Jews were descendants of the tribe of Dan, one of the mysterious lost tribes of Israel.

Occasionally an article will describe the Jewish customs of the Pashtu— an Islamic tribe in Afghanistan. They circumcise their sons on the eighth day, wear four-cornered garments, perform levirate marriages and wear traditional sidelocks and beards.

These customs have convinced some researchers that the Pashtu tribe is a remnant of the ten lost tribes of Israel.

A prominent American radio and TV “evangelist” proclaimed for years that the ten lost tribes were not lost but had reappeared as the British and American peoples, whom, he claimed, were the inheritors of the promises to ancient Israel!

These various ideas appearing in the twentieth century have again raised some important questions in the minds of many: what did happen to the ten tribes? Have some of them survived until today? Can we identify these tribes with any of the many ethnic groups living on planet Earth today?

The Meaning of the phrase “Ten Lost Tribes”

In 930 B.C., soon after the death of Solomon, the united kingdom of Israel ruptured into two kingdoms, generally referred to as the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Both separate kingdoms failed in their stand against idolatry, were eventually conquered by foreign powers and ceased to be independent kingdoms. The northern kingdom, consisting of ten tribes, fell to the Assyrians around 721 B.C. “For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them, Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants, the prophets... So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day” (2 Ki. 17:22–23). Their southern brethren, the kingdom of Judah, primarily the tribal allotments of Judah and Benjamin, were conquered by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. Some of these exiles returned under Zerubbabel and reestablished their existence in 536 B.C. Since, however, there never was a formal return of the northern tribes to reestablish their kingdom, they have been popularly referred to as the ten lost tribes.

Ideas about the Identity of the Ten Lost Tribes

The television series “In Search of...” is an indication of how fascinated people are about the unanswered questions surrounding the mysterious, the unknown and the unexplained. The subsequent history of the remnants of the northern kingdom has fueled the imagination of many travelers, writers, romanticists and cultists...

There are three basic ideas that have emerged about their identity.

First, one traditional Jewish explanation is that the ten tribes are forever lost, assimilated among their Assyrian captors, and never again will be found. The great second-century rabbi Akiba expressed this opinion strongly: “The ten tribes shall not return again—they have completely disappeared” (Mishna Sanhedrin 10:3). This, however, seems to be a minority opinion among the rabbis in the Talmud.

Second, another Jewish tradition is that the tribes continued to exist beyond the mysterious river *Sambatyon* whose rapidly flowing waters prevented their crossing it. The Jewish historian Josephus stated at the end of the first century, “The ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates till now and are an immense multitude not to be estimated in numbers” (Antiquities 11:133). Throughout the Middle Ages, various pseudo-messiahs, such as David Reubeni, appeared in Europe and claimed to be from a Jewish kingdom composed of the ten lost tribes. Legends circulated that fired the hope of their soon discovery, but no tangible evidence of their existence was ever produced. It was this tradition that motivated Israel’s rabbis to declare that the Jews of Ethiopia belong to the lost tribe of Dan.

Third, theories abound which identify various ethnic groups today as being the descendants of the ten lost tribes. The Encyclopedia Judaica states, “There is hardly a people, from the Japanese to the British, and from the Red Indians to the Afghans, who have not been suggested & hardly a place, among them Africa, India, China, Persia, Kurdistan, Caucasia, the United States, and Great Britain” (Vol. 15, p. 1006).

The theory attempting to explain the subsequent history of the ten lost tribes that has gained the greatest following is the view known as British-Israelism. First propounded in 19th-century England, the basic idea of British-Israelism is that the ten tribes captured by the Assyrians are, in reality, the Saxae, or Scythians, who surged westward through Northern Europe and eventually became the ancestors of the Saxons who invaded England. The theory maintains that the Anglo-Saxons are thus the Israel of the Bible. Therefore, according to this view, the present-day Jews are from the tribe of Judah, are under a divine curse, and are not to be identified with Israel at all. Furthermore, the Anglo-Saxon peoples, including the British (i.e., Ephraim) & Americans (i.e., Manasseh) are inheritors of the covenants & promises of the Old Testament.

In addition to some misunderstood scriptural arguments based on the **birthright of Joseph (Gen. 49:26) and the promises to his sons Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. 48:20)**, British-Israelism maintains that the lost tribes left landmarks on their trek across Europe. Thus, the Dan and Danube Rivers, as well as the city of Danzig and country of Denmark are clear indications to them of the tribe of Dan! The term “Saxons” is supposedly a contraction of “Isaac’s Sons,” while the term “British” is actually derived from two Hebrew words for “covenant” (*brit*) and “man” (*ish*)! **These linguistic arguments have been rejected by every reputable Hebrew scholar as absolutely groundless.**

What should cause real concern, however, is the way in which this view has been absorbed into the teachings of two groups which are clearly out of line with biblical Christianity.

The first of these is known as the Worldwide Church of God, founded by the late Herbert W. Armstrong, who made British-Israelism a vital part of his doctrinal system.

Another group which has adopted British-Israelism is the “Identity” movement of white supremacy. A number of groups, affirming the Satanic character of Zionism and the so-called worldwide Jewish conspiracy, have adopted British-Israelism to prove the superiority of the white race over all others. These groups have often led demonstrations against the supposed Jewish control of money and the media, as well as engaging in violent actions against so-called Jewish “enemies.”

So, where are those ten tribes?

Where Are These Ten “Lost” Tribes Today?

Ever since the Assyrians exiled the Lost Tribes of Israel in the eighth century B.C., the mystery of what happened to the ten tribes has deepened inexorably with time. Where did they go? Are the claims by contemporary groups who say they are descended from the Lost Tribes legitimate? Here, we present an abbreviated history of the Lost Tribes and modern-day claims of descent.

Benjamin of Tudela



Benjamin, son of Jonah, was determined to see the world. In 1165, in an age when travel meant peril on road and sea, he set out from his native Tudela, Spain on an extended voyage. He spent several years visiting Jewish communities in the East and West. The great medieval Jewish traveler is familiarly known as Benjamin of Tudela. We know little about him other than what emerges in his famous *Book of Travels*. In whichever community he visited, and even in those he didn't, Benjamin recorded his observations, many of which are quite imaginative.

When visiting in Persia and in the Arabian peninsula, Benjamin came across Jewish tribesmen whom he was convinced were descendants of the Lost Israelites. The self-sufficiency and fierceness of these tribesmen deeply impressed him. He writes as follows:

"There are men of Israel in the land of Persia who say that in the mountains dwell four of the tribes of Israel, namely, the tribe of Dan, the tribe of Zevulun, the tribe of Asher, and the tribe of Naphtali. "They are governed by their own prince, Joseph the Levite. Among them are learned scholars. They sow and reap and go forth to war as far as the land of Cush, by way of the desert. They are in league with the Kofar-al-Turak, pagan tribesmen who worship the wind and live in the wilderness."

During his visit to Arabia he came across the largest Jewish settlement in the region, the Jews of Kheibar. "These tribesmen," he writes, "are of the tribes Reuven and Gad, and the half-tribe of Menasseh. Their seat of government is a great city surrounded by the mountains of the North. The Jews of Kheibar have built many large fortified cities. The yoke of the gentiles isn't upon them. They go forth to pillage and to capture booty in conjunction with the Arabs their neighbors." The diary of Benjamin, son of Jonah—translated into so many languages—inspired many in their quest for the independent kingdoms of the Ten Lost Tribes.

New World Part I

Boundless opportunity and fortune awaited Columbus and his crew as they set out on their voyage in 1492. The lands they discovered promised a new and better world. But for one Spanish missionary, the cruel enslavement and exploitation of the native Americans was not the picture of the New World he envisioned.

In the early 16th century, Bartholeme de Las Casas became the champion of the Native American Indians, devoting his lifetime to improving the conditions—in the West Indies, Peru and Guatemala. Las Casas wrote: "These Indians can bring near the redemption. If we treat them humanely in this world and convert them to Christianity, we are preparing for the redemption of the Western world in the messianic era. Their conversion is apt indeed, as I am convinced the Indians originate in Ancient Israel. Indeed, I can bring proofs from the Bible that they are of the Lost Tribes."

The association of the Indians with the Lost Tribes was heard again and again. The report by Portuguese traveler Antonio Montezinos some 120 years later aroused remarkable interest. "It was a thrilling journey I took in South America. Now that I am back in Amsterdam, I must share with you some incredible news. There is a Jewish Indian tribe living beyond the mountain passes of the Andes. Indeed, I myself heard them recite the She'ma (the expression of the Jewish faith) and saw them observe the Jewish rituals." Christian theologians awaiting the Second Coming were thrilled to receive this welcome news. For tradition held that when the Ten Tribes were found, reunited and restored to the Holy Land, the messianic age was close at hand.

New World Part II



Menasseh ben Israel, a Dutch Jewish scholar widely respected in both Christian and Jewish circles, played a central role in strengthening the association of the American Indians with the Lost Tribes. Deeply influenced by his own mystical disposition, Ben Israel gradually fashioned his most important and best-selling book: *The Hope of Israel*.

In 1655 Menasseh ben Israel met with Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England, at Westminster. He dedicated *The Hope of Israel* to Parliament and submitted his petition for the recall of the Jews who had been expelled from England.

Ben Israel's approach was shrewd indeed. He reiterated the belief that the dispersion of Jews to all corners of the Earth was the beginning of the redemption. The first stage had been realized—Israelite tribes had been discovered in the Americas! By completing the dispersion of the Jews, Cromwell himself could hasten the messianic era. He must readmit the Jews to England. Ben Israel associated the Hebrew word for "the end of the Earth" with the medieval term "Angle-Terre" or England. He wrote, "...All which things of necessity must be fulfilled, that so Israel at last being brought back, to his own place, peace which is promised under the Messiah may be restored to the world; and concord, which is the only Mother of all good things."

These words echoed the hopes for a better world, awakened in the second half of the 18th Century during the American and French revolutions. Many abolitionists, for example, claimed that the Messianic Age would be ushered in when the slaves were freed and when the native Americans, descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes, were converted to Christianity. It would have given Menasseh Ben Israel considerable satisfaction to know how deeply his ideas had influenced social theory and the human rights movement.



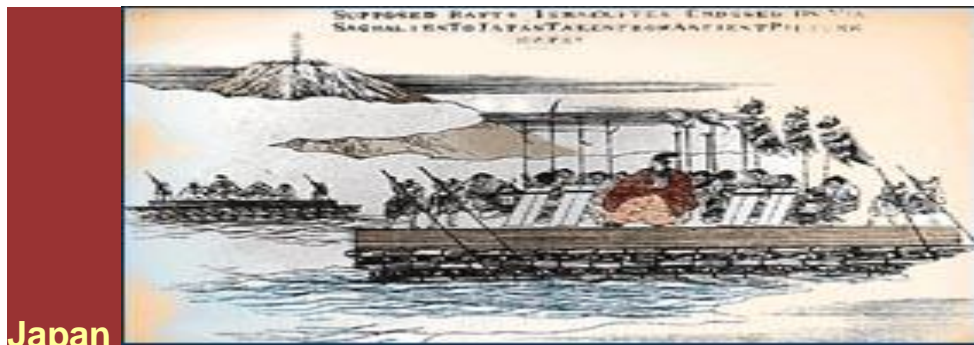
Members of the Lemba tribe.

Tribal Groups

Straddling the boundaries between Afghanistan, Pakistan and Kashmir lives the world's largest tribal grouping—the Pathans. All of the 15 million Pathans, who comprise some 60 tribes, claim descent from Kish, an ancestor of the Biblical King Saul. Many

of them also claim to be their children of the Lost Israelites. The Pathans perform circumcision of the eighth day, wear a fringed garment similar to the Jewish *tzitzit*, light candles on Friday nights and observe food taboos similar to the laws of Kashrut. In South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, tens of thousands of blacks have, in recent years, declared themselves descendants of one of the Lost Tribes.

The Lemba claim to have been cut off from mainstream Judaism hundreds of years ago. They are well-versed in the Old Testament and avoid marriage outside their community. From every imaginable corner of the world theories arise linking different peoples and tribes with the Ten Lost Tribes: the Crimea, the Caucasus, Kenya, Nigeria, Armenia, Persia, Central Asia, North Siberia, West Africa, Peru, South America, Australia, Ireland. While the evidence may at times seem flimsy, the Jewish elements in these tribal cultures continue to fascinate scholar and layman alike.



Japan

Japanese illustration depicting the raft on which the ancient Israelites crossed over to Japan.

Daber: in Hebrew, to speak.

Daberu: Japanese for chatting.

Goi: a non-Hebrew or foreigner.

Gai'Jeen: prefix for a foreigner, a non-Japanese.

Kor: cold in Hebrew.

Koru: to freeze in Japanese.

Knesset: Parliament in Hebrew.

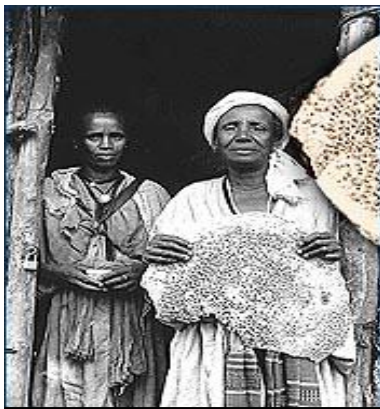
Kensei: Constitutional government in Japanese.

These are among the thousands of words and names of places with no real etymological meaning in Japanese. And they all correspond with Hebrew words. Even the Kings have similar names. The first known king of Japan, who was named Osee, ruled around 730 BC. This king has been identified with the last king of Israel, Hoshea, who died around the same time, at the time of the Assyrian exile of the ten tribes from Israel.

The holy Japanese shinto temple strongly recalls the ancient holy Israelite temple, which housed a holy of holies section and several gates. Several artifacts in Japan have been traced to Assyrian and Jewish sources, among them, a well in Koryugi with the words "well of Israel" inscribed on its side.

It has also been suggested that the carts of Otsu and Kyoto are of ancient biblical origin, as they are different from any others in Japan. Might the ancient Israelites and their wives and children have been conveyed to Japan in these carts? Among the Samurai sect, there is the tradition that their ancestors came to Japan from western Asia around 660 BC. The name 'Samurai' recalls 'Samaria'. And to which tribe do the Japanese belong? There are those who claim that the Mikado, the Japanese emperor, is a descendant of the Hebrew tribe of Gad. 'Mikado' recalls the Hebrew word for 'his majesty the king,' 'Malchuto'.

Beta Israel-Ethiopia



Ethiopian Women with qita, unleavened bread for Passover.

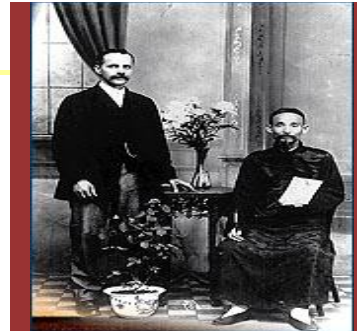
In the latter part of the twelfth century, a legend appeared which persisted for several centuries and reached Egypt, Palestine and Europe. According to this legend, a Christian priest named Prester John ruled as monarch over a vast and wealthy Christian Empire. According to many traditions, Ethiopia was the land of the powerful Prester John's kingdom, as well as the home of the ten lost tribes. Persistent rumor had it that these African Israelite kingdoms were at constant war with Prester John, and that their armies were advancing on Rome.

Who are these African-Jewish tribesmen so central to the Prester John legend? These are the Ethiopian Jews known both as Falashas, the Amharic word for landless, wandering Jews, and as Beta Israel, the house of Israel. In Ethiopia, they engaged primarily in agriculture, but were known also for their exquisite crafts and jewelry. Today, most of the Beta Israel live in the state of Israel. In the 1970's and 80's, the Israeli government airlifted thousands of Ethiopian Jews to Israel, rescuing them from political and economic distress.

According to one tradition, the Ethiopian Jews are the descendants of one of the ten tribes, as their religion is an ancient form of biblical Judaism. Their religious practices are prescribed by the Orit, the Torah translated into their Ge'ez dialect. They possess none of the post-biblical laws. Over the centuries, the Beta Israel have been connected with the tribe of Dan. This association has eased the process of their return to the state of Israel in recent times.

Chiang-Min China

"Behold, These are coming from afar. These from the north and the west and these from the land of Sinim." This prophecy, spoken by Isaiah, promised the return of Lost Israelites from all corners of the Earth and from Sinim. Interestingly, Sinim is the Hebrew word for China. In fort-like villages in the high mountain ranges on the Chinese-Tibetan border live the Chiang-Min of West Szechuan. It has been claimed that the Chiang-Min are descendants of the ancient Israelites who arrived in China several hundred years before Christ.



The Scottish missionary Rev. Thomas Torrance in China, 1920s. Torrance claimed the Chiang-Min of West Szechuan were descendants of the ancient Israelites.

The missionary Torrance, who visited Cheng-du in the early part of this century, insisted that the Chiang-Min strongly resemble the Israelite branch of the Semitic race. He observed that several of their customs were reminiscent of ancient Israelite tradition. Said Torrance: "The plough the Chiang use is similar to the ancient Israelite plough and is drawn by two oxen, never by an ox and an ass. This in accordance with the Biblical stipulation: 'You shall not plough with an ox and ass together.'" The Chiang-Min believe in one God. During "times of calamity or acute distress," writes Torrance, "they issue a moan or cry which sounds like 'Yawei', suggestive of the biblical name of God. The Scottish missionary also claims that the Chinese conception of Sacrifice came from the ancient Israelites.

Finally, Chiang-Min priests, like the ancient Israelite priests, wear girdles to bind their robes, and bear a sacred rod shaped like a serpent, reminiscent of the brass serpent fashioned by Moses in the wilderness.



The Time Was At Hand, “Antichrist Mythology”, Robert Finley

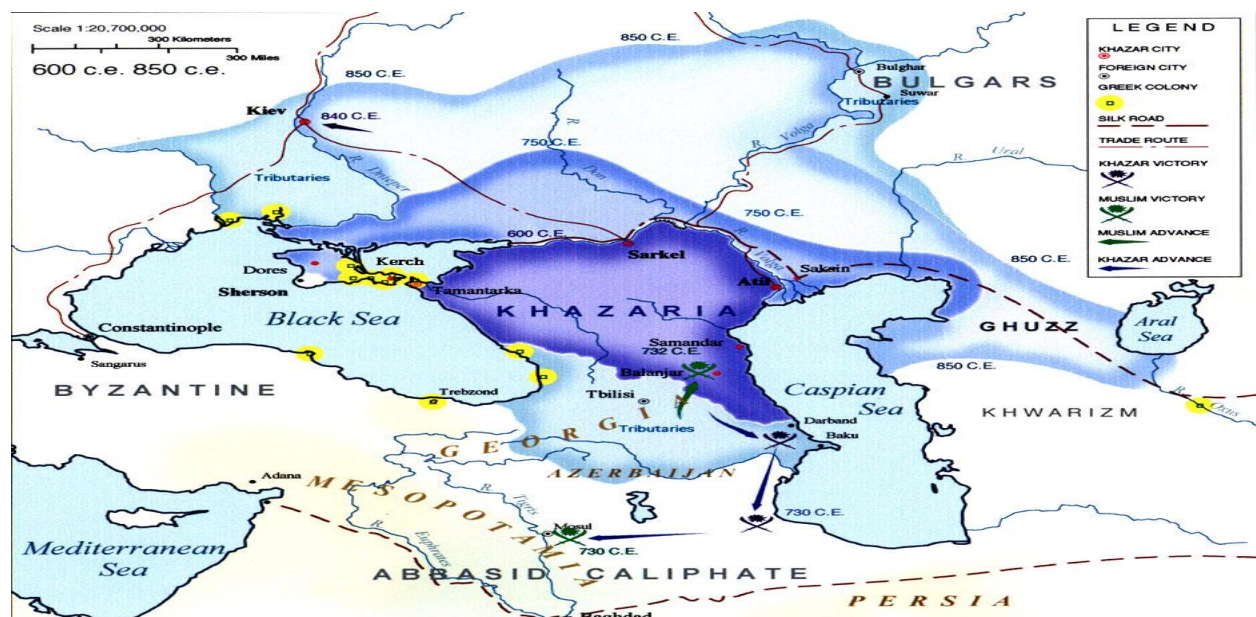
“There are no ten lost tribes. (All but one returned during Hasmonean Period.) Only one tribe, that of Dan, disappeared from the records of the twelve tribes until the time of the New Covenant. It was not until the Seventh Century that the **twelve tribes lost their identity**, and that was because a majority of Hebrews in Palestine converted to Islam. A few who did not convert emigrated to Khazaria, where the whole Ashkenazim nation converted to Judaism* in the 8th Century.”

NOTE: Genetically, modern-day Jews are almost exclusively of Eastern European Khazaria lineage – Ironically they are of Aryan descent – not in the least - the chosen “seed of Abraham” or the people of promise. It’s Israel’s Palestianian neighbors that acquire the ancient genotype.

Modern Jews Not of Promise



From Jewish Author Arthur Koestler: "The large majority of surviving Jews in the world is of Eastern European—thus perhaps mainly of Khazar—origin. If so, this would mean that their (the Jews) ancestors came not from Canaan but from the Caucasus, once believed to be the cradle of the Aryan race, and that genetically they are more closely related to the Hun, Ulgur, and Magyar tribes than to the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob..."



Were the Ten Tribes of Israel Really Lost?

Text: Ezekiel 37:15-28

- I. Hurlbut's Story of the Bible: "As in their own land, the children of Israel had forsaken the Lord and had worshiped idols, so after they were taken to these distant lands, they sought the gods of the people of those lands and ceased to be Israelites; and after a time they lost all knowledge of their own God, who had given them his words and sent them his prophets. So there came an end to the Ten Tribes of Israel, for they never again came back to their own land, and were lost among the peoples of the far east."**
 - A. So many speak of the ten lost tribes of Israel.**
 - 1. When Israel divided after King Solomon's death. Ten tribes to the north followed Jeroboam and became known as the kingdom of Israel. The two southern tribes became known as Judah.**
 - 2. The northern kingdom never faithfully followed God and eventually God sent the Assyrians in 722 B.C. to ransack the land. The people were led away into captivity.**
 - B. Mormonism is founded on the belief that at least a portion of these ten tribes migrated over to America.**

C. Some versions of premillennial theory are based on the ten lost tribes

1. The belief is that these ten tribes were lost among the foreign nations.

2. Since they lost their identity and did not return from captivity, it is believed that some of the Old Testament prophecies concerning them have not been fulfilled.

a. For example, Amos 9:14-15 is claimed to be unfulfilled.

3. Hence it is believed to be fulfilled at some time in our future.

4. The reason for the establishment of the current nation of Israel and the migration of Jews to that nation is supposed to encourage the fulfillment of these prophecies and signal the imminent return of Jesus to begin his millennial reign.

II. When Judah returned from the Babylonian captivity, they did not come alone.

A. I Chronicles 9:1-3 - Notice in the roll taken on the return by Ezra are people of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, two of the ten northern tribes.

B. Ezra 8:24-25 - Twelve priest carried the tribute from *all* Israel.

C. On their arrival in Jerusalem, 12 bulls were offered for all Israel - Ezra 8:35

D. When Ezra rebukes the people for marrying foreign wives

1. Judah and Benjamin were listed as guilty - Ezra 10:9-10

2. The Levites as well are listed among those pledged to put away their wives - Ezra 10:18-19

3. But notice that it also included those of Israel - Ezra 10:25

E. All of this makes sense because God said that both kingdoms would return from captivity together - Jeremiah 3:18

III. Some might object saying that Jeremiah 3:18 is a prophecy about the Christ

A. They might be right, but even if it deals with the time of Christ, notice that it still refers to both halves returning.

B. Many readers of the Bible missed the fact that several Old Testament prophecies had double fulfillment.

1. For example Psalm 22 was written by David. It deals with his anguish as he is surrounded by his enemies.

a. The words have primary meaning to David and his situation.

b. Yet, at the same time they are prophetic of the suffering and death of Christ on the cross.

c. The words had both an immediate and future application.

2. Another example is Ezekiel 34:11-13

a. It talks about God gathering his people out of their captivity.

b. Yet Ezekiel 34:23 is a prophecy about the great Shepherd, Jesus.

c. This is a two-part prophecy. The first speaks of the near-term return and the second part talks of a more distant event.

3. Yet a third example is Ezekiel 37:15-21, which clearly states that God will join the divided nation back into one people.

a. Yet Ezekiel 37:22-24 obviously refers to the kingdom of Christ

C. If there were any doubt, consider Ezekiel 39:21-23

1. Notice that God said he proves His power not only by sending Israel into exile, but also by returning them to their land.

2. If the ten tribes did not return, then God's promise was not kept and nothing was proven.

IV. Further proof in the New Testament

A. Remember Anna, the prophetess? She was from the tribe of Asher - Luke 2:36-38

1. Asher was one of the ten tribes

2. People still traced their lineage to the tribes.

B. Luke 22:30 - Jesus spoke of the apostles judging the twelve tribes.

1. Yes this is symbolic, but notice Jesus said twelve tribes and not two.

2. All twelve were still known

C. Acts 26:7 - Paul said the twelve tribes were serving God night and day

V. The ten tribes are not lost.

A. We are not waiting for God to return the ten tribes.

B. They didn't wander off to the New World.

C. God had kept his word and restored them to their land. - *La Vista Church of Christ*