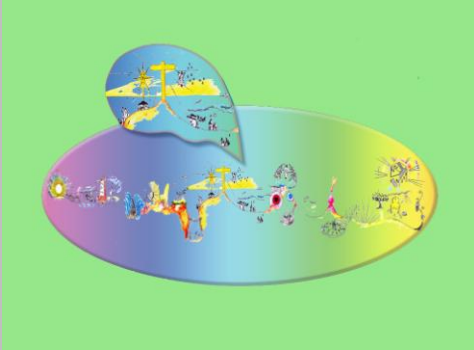


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We believe in one GOD, in three persons; FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT. We regard the Bible (both Hebrew Bible and New Testaments) as the only infallible authoritative WORD OF GOD.

HULDAH MINISTRY aims to return to the Word Of God, founded on Hebrew background and to interpret it from Hebraic perspective, acknowledging that Jesus is a Jew and the Jewish-ness of His teaching as a continuation from the Hebrew Bible. The Ministry also aims to put His teaching into practice, to have a closer relationship with the Lord, Jesus Christ, and to regularly have a Christian fellowship so that this-worldly kingdom of God will materialise in the midst of the followers of Jesus here and now, as well as earnestly seeking Christ's Return to establish the otherworldly Kingdom of God on earth.

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HULDAH MINISTRY

LETTER TO THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST

【THE TEN LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL】

In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea son of Elah became king of Israel in Samaria.....The king of Assyria invaded the entire land.....laid siege of it for three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria and deported the Israelites to Assyria. He settled them in Halah, in Gozan on the Habor River and in the towns of the Medes.

All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them out of Egypt. They worshipped other gods and followed the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced. The Israelites secretly did things against the LORD their God that were not right. From watchtower to fortified city they built themselves high places in all their towns. They set up sacred stones and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree. At every high place they burned incense, as the nations whom the LORD had driven out before them had done. They did wicked things that provoked the LORD to anger.....

They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their fathers and the warnings he had given them. They followed worthless idols and themselves became worthless. They imitated the nations around them although the LORD had ordered them, "Do not do as they do," and they did the things the LORD had forbidden them to do. They forsook all the commands of the LORD their God and made for themselves two idols cast in the shape of calves, and an Asherah pole. They bowed down to all the starry hosts, and they worshipped Baal. They sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire. They practiced divination and sorcery and sold themselves to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger.

So the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence.....even Judah did not keep the commands of the LORD their God. They followed the practices Israel had introduced. Therefore the LORD rejected all the people of Israel; he afflicted them and gave

them into the hands of plunderers, until he thrust them from his presence. When he tore Israel away from the house of David, they made Jeroboam son of Nebat their king. Jeroboam enticed Israel away from following the LORD and caused them to commit a great sin. The Israelites persisted in all the sins of Jeroboam and did not turn away from them until the LORD removed them from his presence, as he had warned through all his servants the prophets. So the people of Israel were taken from their homeland into exile in Assyria, and they are still there. **2KINGS 17:1-23.**

This month I would like to introduce interesting findings and research by an Israeli soldier, engineer, manager and scholar, Joseph Eidelberg over the issue of the Japanese language and the Japanese people. The late Josheph Eidelberg embarked on analysing the similarity of ancient Hebrew and Japanese traditions, religious ceremonies, historical names, and the ten systematised ground rules of exchanging sounds, vowels and letters. He published his original book in England. In 1980 the book was translated to Japanese. Born in 1916, he was brought up in Palestine, studied engineering in England and USA. Later in his engineering carrier, while he was engaged in Israeli overseas engineering operations, he discovered some interesting linguistic and cultural similarities between the Hebrew language and Bambara, spoken by an African tribe in Mali. Fascinated, he began exploring ancient cultures, customs, symbols and words, which seemed for him to explain what were great mysteries in Jewish history, including the so-called “disappearance of the ten tribes of Israel”. He was one of those who believed that after the destruction of Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel by Assyria, the ten tribes of Israel that had consisted of the kingdom were lost and scattered over the world. He published his first book on a story about Hebrew biblical footprints left in ancient African cultures that would uncover the forty year mysterious journey of Israel through African coasts, deserts, mountains and seas on the way from Egypt.

After he retired from an engineering career in 1974, he launched into the exploration of the ten lost tribes. His devotion to intensive research culminated in the publication of his second book entitled “*The Japanese and the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel*”. In it he describes that the ten lost tribes of Israel journeyed through Asian lands to the east along the Silk Road and finally came to the Far East and ancient Japan. His discovery has thrown light on the roots of Japanese people and its mysterious cultural sources. Following the success of his first publication his research continued and he has amazingly brought to light the meaning of many unknown Japanese words, numbers, songs and cultural origins through Hebrew interpretation, all of which was compiled to his last manuscript “*The Hebrew Origin of the Japanese People*”. Without seeing his last publication Josheph Eidelberg died in 1985. In 2004, his work was compiled in the present form of the publication entitled “*The Biblical Hebrew Origin Of The Japanese People*”. This book starts with the following “foreword”, the late Josheph Eidelberg’s words.

“The Japanese are one of the leading industrial nations in the world today, yet their distant past is completely shourouded in mystery. No one knows how they came to their present islands and, up until now, neither historical research, nor linguistic studies, nor archeological explorations have found an answer to the riddle of their past.....The starting point for my inquiry about the origin of the Japanese people was quite fortuitous. While trying to gather some evidence concerning the strange disappearance of the Ten Tribes of Israel exiled by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.E.,I discovered, to my amazement, that the “loss” of the Hebrew tribes occured at about the same time that the ancient Japanese are believed to have come to the islands that are known today as Japan. Could there be a connection, I wondered, between the exile of the Ten Tribes of Israel from the Near East and the appearance of the people of Yamato, as the ancient Japanese are known to have been called, in the Far East? Indeed, there is. Ancient traditions, religious ceremonies, historical names, *haiku* poems, idiomatic Hebrew expressions in the Japanese language, the *kana* writings, and even some Japanese folk songs all point to a strong connection between the ancient Kingdom of Samaria (Israel) and the

existing Kingdom of Sumera (Japan). To the best of my knowledge, this is the first time that several disciplines are combined into a single consistent theory about the origin of the Japanese people.’ (Joseph Eidelberg, 2005, *The Biblical Hebrew Origin Of The Japanese People*, Gefen Publishing House).

The idea of the strange disappearance of the ten tribes of Israel is very popular today. The countries that claim themselves to be one of the ten lost tribes of Israel are not few. The reference; 2Kings 17:7-23, whose context has been quoted at the beginning is one of this theory’s proof texts. However, this idea may have arisen out of an erroneous interpretation of this passage. Although the Scriptures do not fully support such a widely circulated theory that the ten tribes of Israel were lost, and that they wandered off to Europe or Asia, and thus are represented by some of the currently existing nation, there may be some truth to Joseph Eidelberg’s discovery that ancient Japan, its culture and traditions has mysteriously been influenced by ancient Hebrew people who had travelled down to the Far East after the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel some twenty seven centuries ago. Having made it clear that such a theory of the “Ten lost tribe of Israel” that denies the fact that the existing nation of Israel consists of the full set of ancient Israeli tribes is a mere legend, in this letter, I would like to introduce this fascinating theory concerning Japan, first by quoting Eidelberg’s method of research and argument in chapter one of his book. Then, after introducing his unique argument, I will proceed to examine whether biblical evidence supports (or not) such a theory in my next letters.

‘Having decided to search for the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, or at least to learn more about their fate, my first problem was: How should I start looking for ten big tribes, lost twenty-seven centuries ago, without even knowing if they still exist? And if they exist, how would I recognize them? What language do they speak today and what religion do they profess? For as far as we know, the belief of the Ten Tribes was not the same as the modern Jewish religion.....while studying the early history of Japan, as described in a book titled *Nihon-Shoki (Nihongi)*, I discovered in it a strange similarity to the ancient history of the Hebrews; could the Japanese be the descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel? At first sight, the mere thought that the Japanese might be the descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel seemed to be absolutely incredible. With Mongolian features, living on the other side of the globe, and speaking a language that is unrelated to any other language family, could they actually be the descendants of Israel’s lost tribes? Most unlikely. Yet a systematic comparison of the ancient history of the Japanese, as presented in the *Nihon-Shoki*, with the ancient history of the Hebrews, as described in the Bible, leads to the conclusion that some of the narratives in the two books present different versions of the same events. But before presenting some examples of such narratives, a few words about the background of the *Nihon-Shoki* are needed. The origin of the Japanese people is completely lost in the midst of antiquity. No one knows where they came from. It is widely believed that some time between the first and third centuries of the Common Era, people immigrated to the islands of Japan and established a kingdom there called Yamato. The new immigrants, so it seems, were united by common traditions, spoke the same language, and observed the same religious laws of *kami-no-michi*, commonly known as Shinto.’

In these paragraphs above, the author Joseph Eidelberg argues the historical similarity between Japanese people and Hebrew people, by comparing each nation’s historical record: Japanese ‘Nihon-Shoki, 日本書紀’ and Hebrew ‘Bible, 聖書’. Japanese people observed the religious laws of ‘Shinto, 神道’, which literally means ‘God’s way’, as ancient Israel observed the Moses’ law. It is interesting to me that the so-called Japanese religion ‘Shinto’ actually means ‘God’s way’, because it reminds me of the fact that the first century Christianity, that is, the original apostolic Christianity before the birth of the systematised Western Christianity had been

called *'the Way'*, probably, according to Christ's claims: *'I am the way'* (Jn.14:6), which appears several times in Acts.

'For several centuries the people of Yamato continued to adhere to the traditional Shinto religion. Then in 552 C.E., in spite of strong opposition by Shinto leaders, Buddhism was introduced into Japan and adopted by some of the country's most influential families. As a result, a long-standing enmity ensued between the adherents of Shinto and the supporters of Buddhism and this, eventually, led to a civil war in which all the ancient records of Yamato were destroyed by fire, leaving the nation without a written book. The loss of the ancient records was a serious blow to the pride of the imperial court.....Consequently, in 712 C.E., following an imperial decree, the history of Yamato was written anew in a work known as *Kojiki*, literally "Records of Ancient Matters." Eight years later, in 720 C.E., the *Nihon-Shoki*, literally "Chronicles of Japan" was compiled in the same way- from memory and oral tradition. It is quite obvious, therefore, that in trying to evaluate the historical records of the *Nihon-Shoki*, we must take into account the fact that the information contained within its pages could not be more reliable than the memory of those who knew the history of Japan by heart. Hence, in comparing certain narratives of the *Nihon-Shoki* with those of the Bible, we should expect to find some inconsistencies, however, are outweighed by the similarity of the narrative in the two different texts and suggest a common origin of the stories.

Thus, for example, when the *Nihon-Shoki* says that the "children of the Heavenly Deity" set out on a journey to conquer the land which the gods had given to their ancestors, while according to the Bible the "children of the Heavenly God", as the Hebrews are called in the Book of Deuteronomy (14:1), set out on a journey to conquer the land which God had promised to give to their ancestors, it is reasonable to suppose that the similarity between the two events is the result of a coincidence. But when we continue turning the pages of the *Nihon-Shoki* and discover that in the course of their efforts to conquer the land that the gods had given to their ancestors, the people of Yamato had to fight Yebisu tribes, while according to the Bible "Yevusi" was the name of one of the tribes that had inhabited the "promised land" of the Hebrews, we began to suspect that the two stories refer, in effect, to the same land. Our suspicion that the narratives in the *Nihon-Shoki* that depict the early history of Yamato reflect, in fact, the ancient history of the Hebrews, grows much stronger when we compare the reigns of certain Japanese emperors with those of some ancient kings of Israel.....'

In this way the author likens the reign of "Emperor Chiuai, 仲哀天皇" to that of King Shaul (Saul). The Japanese emperor who was very tall, died due to an enemy's arrow and was buried in "Anato", while King Saul who was taller than any of the people was killed by an arrow of the archers and buried in the land of the tribe of Benjamin, whose territory included "Anatot". Likewise, "emperor Sujin, 崇神天皇" is likened to King David. After the death of emperor Sujin, his son, "emperor Suinin, 垂仁天皇" who built the first Shinto shrine at Ise, and who also built more than eight hundred ponds to store water for irrigation is likened to King Solomon who built the first Hebrew temple in the town of Yevus, and who also made the pools of water to water the wood. Having shown these amazing similarities, the author concludes Chapter one in the following way: 'My search for the lost Hebrew tribes had reached a crucial juncture; for if Shinto was in some way related to the ancient Hebrew religion, then the Great God of Yamato must have been identical with the Great God of the Hebrews, and the people of Yamato- Hebrews! To clarify this conjecture and to find out whether there was any relationship between the Japanese "Way of God" and the ancient Hebrew religion, I decided to become a novice at a Shinto shrine.' In the next letter, the exploration of Joseph Eidelberg's discovery will be continued.