

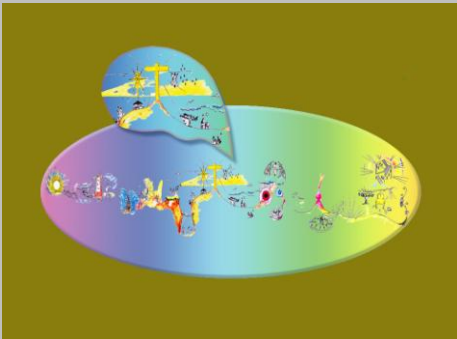
平成20年 10月 月報

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OCTOBER 2008
NO 156



Eternal Fellowship News Bulletin

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.

All activities are free of charge and no obligation whatever. Just enjoy our fellowship!

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HULDAH MINISTRY

LETTER TO THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST

【TRUE STORY OF THE LOST TRIBES】

In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea son of Elah became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned for nine years...The king of Assyria invaded the entire land, marched against Samaria and laid siege to 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 of the nations the LORD had driven out before them, as well as 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 who the LORD had driven out before them had done. They did wicked things that provoked the LORD to anger. They worshipped idols, though the LORD had said, "You shall not do this." The LORD warned Israel and Judah through all evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your fathers to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets."

But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked as their fathers, who did not trust in the LORD their God. They rejected his decrees and the covenants

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 practised 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. Only the tribe of Judah was left, and even Judah did not keep the commands of the LORD their God...Therefore the LORD rejected all the people of Israel; he affected them and gave them into the hands of plunderers, until he thrust them from his presence...as he 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 we continue to trace the findings and research of an Israelite, Joseph Eidelberg over the issue of the origins of the Japanese people, along with his book entitled "*The Biblical Hebrew Origin Of The Japanese People*". Last month we looked through the national history of the Hebrews and what caused the Ten Tribes of Israel, having dwelt in central Asia for more than eight hundred years at least up to the first century of our era, to abandon their towns and villages, and to move to the islands of Japan.

After presenting some scholar's records about the exploration of the deserted areas of central Asia, Eidelberg concludes: 'Now we can try to form a clear picture of the climactic disaster that befell the people of Takla Makan, and consider its consequences. Evidently, the change in climate was not abrupt. It must have begun sometime during the Han Dynasty in China (200B.C.E.-200C.E.), when lakes began to dry up gradually, rivers stopped flowing and orchards withered; and the people, being without water, were eventually forced to flee their homes and to seek refuge in other lands. Many of them, maybe even some Hebrew tribes, went eastwards. A small group of these Hebrews, later known as "Chinese Jews," reached Kaifeng during the Han Dynasty, and remained there. Another group, apparently the main body, continued its journey, and going northeast, reached Korea.

Having reached Korea, where they learned about the "empty islands" in the east, the Hebrew refugees from the desolate Takla Makan might have sent an expedition to examine the place and see whether it was fit for settlement. If the expedition brought back good tidings about the land and the few Ainus who dwelt there, then the leaders of the Hebrews probably decided to occupy the islands and establish their new home there.

However, when large numbers of Hebrews landed on the islands, they must have encountered a strong opposition from the Ainus, resulting, most likely, in armed clashes. To overcome this resistance, the newcomers, while maintaining a strong bridged on the islands, sent envoys to the mainland to bring reinforcements. These reinforcements, naturally were mobilized from among the Hebrew tribes. Thus, within a relatively short time, Hebrews from central Asia began immigrating into the islands of Japan, transforming them into the land of Yamato. In the course of years, the contact of these Hebrews with their brethren in Judah was completely cut off – and they were considered lost forever.' (quoted from ps.40-41).

Eidelberg's research over the issue of the origins of the Japanese people started with the strange coincidence of the time of the disappearance of the Ten Tribes of Israel exiled by the Assyrians in 721BCE with the appearance of the people of Yamato, i.e., the ancient Japanese. Behind this there is a belief in the theory of the 'Ten Lost Tribes of Israel'. If this theory is right, that is, if the ten tribes of Israel have really been lost up to this day, his arguments would be true. However, if the claim of this theory that the ten tribes of Israel have been lost since the northern kingdom of Israel was destroyed by the Assyrians is *not* correct, his conclusion might have been different. His research seems to rightly point out the enormous influence of the ancient Israel over the nation of Yamato, the ancient Japan and indeed, there is abounding evidence of its influence in every area of Japanese culture, language, folk songs, customs and Shinto religion,

past and present. In this regards, Eidelberg's research is epoch-making for the Japanese people; giving us an appreciation of God's hands having been placed upon our godless, materialistic nation through His own people, the ancient Israel from the very beginning of this country's history when none of the Japanese had realised it.

In order to discuss the theory's central claim we need to return to the Word of God itself, the only true source of everything in this world. First, just for your information, there are amazingly many groups that claim descent from both 'specific lost tribes' and 'non specific lost tribes'. 'Bene Ephraim from southern India, Bene Manashe from northeast India, Bene Israel, known as "Falashas", i.e., Ethiopian Jews, Persian Jews, and Igbo Jews of Nigeria' all belong to the first group. 'The Lamba tribe from southern Africa via Yemen, the House of Israel in Ghana, Pashutun people, i.e., ethnic Afghans, Kashmiri people, Chiang Min people from north-western China, British Israelism, or Anglo-Israelism, and the Makuya sect of Japan', which belong to the second group, all claim to be descendants of the Lost tribes of Israel. There are more other groups.

There are controversies about these groups' claims. Among them are the doubts of some critics concerning "British Israelism": 'The Anglo-Israel theory maintains that the English and their ethnic kinfolk throughout the world are descended from the "Lost Tribes" of Israel. This is based on bizarre and linguistic assumptions that the church is somehow the "New Israel." Based on legends such as Joseph of Arimathea establishing an English church predating that of Rome; the belief that British monarchs seated at their coronation on the Stone of Scone, are thus in fact consecrated by the patriarch Jacob's stone of Bethel; and the old Puritan idea that the British have refought Israel's battles against God's enemies...Anglo-Israelism's first manifesto was issued by the Puritan Member...but the movement began to gather force only at the end of the 18th century, when Richard Brothers, a false prophet...began publishing a series of pamphlets. He was later confined...for the criminally insane...A later writer, Edward Hine, published the best selling Forty-Seven Identifications of the British Israel World Federation...claims hundreds of thousands of supporters...the anglo-Saxon Federation of America, exploited anti-Semitism in order to further its claims. Anglo-Israelism has become part of the doctrine of a number of pseudo-Christian sects, including the Mormon Church.'(Chuck Missler, *The Twelve Tribes of Israel* Koinonia House Inc.).

The widely circulated legend of 'the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel' is said to have been birthed based on the passage from 2 Kings, which has been quoted at the beginning of this letter, or from 2 Chronicles 6. When the Assyrians captured Samaria, the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel in 721 BCE, the Israelites were scattered throughout the Assyrian empire and the area repopulated with foreigners brought in from the subjugated countries. Mixed marriages between the Israelites and these foreigners were encouraged as one of the Assyrian's political strategies to keep the captives from rebelling. The descendants were called 'Samaritans' and regarded as half-Jews. This account described in Scripture indicates that not all of the northern kingdom tribes were deported from their land. According to the annals of the Assyrian king Sargon, the exiles numbered 27,290. Thus, less than 1/20th of the population in Samaria are estimated to have been deported on the basis that the population of the northern kingdom at that time would have been in the range of 400,000 to 500,000.

There is ample evidence in the Scripture that far before the destruction of the northern kingdom, substantial numbers of people from the northern kingdom had joined the '*house of David*'. When Solomon died in 930BCE, Israel's monarchy, the dynasty of David was divided into two kingdoms; the southern kingdom ruled by Rehoboam and the northern kingdom ruled by Jeroboam. After the division the northern kingdom was ruled by twenty kings from nine different dynasties for around 210 years until the fall of Samaria, while the southern kingdom was also ruled by twenty kings but by David's descendants alone, for around 345 years until the fall of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586.

Jeroboam was an able official of King Solomon who rebelled against the king, and gained the support of all Israel, i.e., the ten tribes of Israel, when all Israel was disheartened by the ruthless kingship of the Solomon's successor, Rehoboam. Thus, Israel deserted the *'house of David'*. However, 1Kings ch.12 records that in this very beginning stage of the divided kingdom there were already Israelites originally from the northern tribes who had settled in the towns of Judah and remained under the kingship of Rehoboam, no matter what happened to them, and later, these people from the ten tribes of Israel came to be further joined by others from the north who desired to serve the Lord and continually worship at the Jerusalem temple.

In 930, Jeroboam's reign over the ten tribes from the capital in Samaria began. Fearing of the people's reversion to the *'house of David'*, Jeroboam instituted a man made religion of worshipping golden calves as their gods in Bethel and Dan, proclaiming, *'It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt'* (1Kings 12:28). He not only built shrines on high places but also appointed the leaders of worship in the north by making redundant the work of God-ordained Levitical priests, and even altered the date of the 'feast of the LORD', by appointing the 'fifteenth day of the eighth month' instead of the 'feast of Tabernacles' that was to be observed in Jerusalem on the fifteenth to the twenty-first of the seventh month. Not fearing the Lord, his apparent violation of God's first and second commandments came to open the door for apostasy and paganism into Israel.

On the other hand, it was not only Judah and Benjamin but also Levites that followed Rehoboam as written in 2Chronicles 11:13-17: *'The priests and Levites from all their districts throughout Israel sided with him. The Levites even abandoned their pasture-lands, and property, and came to Judah and Jerusalem because Jeroboam and his sons had rejected them as priests of the LORD. And he appointed his own priests for the high places and for the goat and calf idols he had made. Those from every tribe of Israel who set their hearts on seeking the LORD, the God of Israel, followed the Levites to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices to the LORD, the God of their fathers. They strengthened the kingdom of Judah and supported Rehoboam son of Solomon for three years, walking in the ways of David and Solomon during this time.'* This passage is very significant because it clearly tells us that all those who were faithful to the God of Israel voluntarily left Jeroboam's regime and followed the *'house of David'* beyond the tribal difference in the very first stage. Thus, not only the Levites immigrated south but also considerable numbers from the northern tribes who had identified themselves as God's holy people moved south and united with the southern kingdom and kept worshipping the Lord in Jerusalem. In other words, only those who were unfaithful to the Lord of Israel and favoured idolatry and paganism remained in the north to serve Jeroboam, or there may even have been some who wanted to follow the idolatry and pagan customs that migrated north from the southern tribes.

Other such mass immigrations are recorded in 1Kings and 2Chronicles; during the reign of King Asa, during the reign of King Hezekiah with a great celebration of Passover together with all Israel, during the drastic religious revolution throughout all territories of Israel issued by King Josiah and as seen in the subsequent appearance of tribes from Manasseh and Ephraim and all the remnants of the northern kingdom in Jerusalem with offerings after 721BCE.

Accordingly, the fact is that even after the fall of Samaria and deportation of the northern tribes, the ten tribes had already been mingled within the tribes of Judah, and when the Babylonians took the southern kingdom into captivity in 586BCE, all twelve tribes and Levites were involved, to whom the prophet Isaiah referred as the *'house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel'* (Is.48:1). In the end, the remnant from the Babylonian exile became interchangeably known as the *'Jews'* and *'Israelites'*, speaking of *'all Israel'* being back in the promised land as mentioned in the books of Nehemiah and Ezra. The returned remnant of Israel from Babylon to the land from 538BCE onwards has been the very representative of the united nation of Israel up to this day.