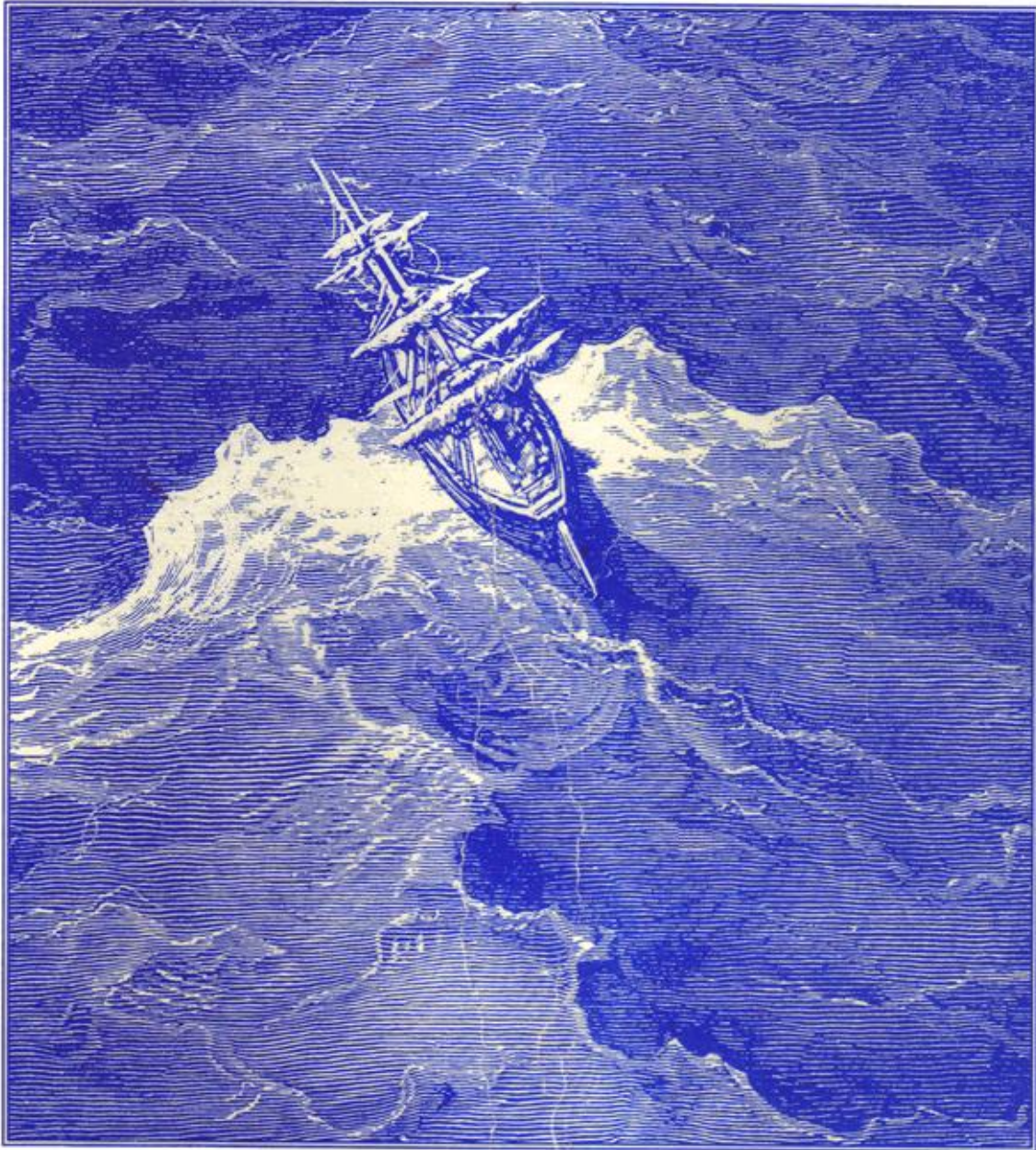


# The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel...Found!



By:

Steven M. Collins

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**Steven M. Collins**

*This book is dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ,  
who will literally reign over the nations after he returns.*

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At the conclusion of this e-book additional information is offered about the 4-book series available in printed form. Those four books are "derivative" works based on this book and are recommended for those who wish to examine this subject in greater depth. May you enjoy and be blessed by what you are about to read!

## **About The Author**

The author is a former National Merit Scholar, and a graduate of the University of Minnesota with a B.S. in Public and Personnel Management.

The author, while employed in the Office of the Mayor of St. Paul Minnesota (1973-1974), researched the fields of air transportation and radiation safety as well as applicable government regulations while drafting the nation's first airport ordinance (at Minneapolis-St Paul International airport) monitoring the air transportation of radioactive materials. This ordinance was examined by CBS Television on a national telecast entitled "Magazine" in 1974.

The author was employed by the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Airports Commission in a number of capacities from 1974 to 1983, the most recent position being that of Personnel Manager. While so employed, the author performed many research and writing projects, and also prepared formal exhibits for air route hearings of the Civil Aeronautics Board. These projects involved research and analysis of a wide variety of economic, demographic and air transportation data, and in an International Route Case, the author also served as an oral witness as part of the proceedings.

After a career-ending injury, the author directed his research skills to a comparison of secular historical records with the historical accounts of the Bible. This major research effort has resulted in this first of a series of two books. The author is a former Board Member of the Association for Christian Development (ACD), Auburn, WA, and a member of the National Epigraphic Society. However, this book represents the analysis and judgments of the author, and does not claim to represent the views of either organization.

## **Acknowledgments**

This book is the result of years of research, writing and ongoing review. During this time, I have been aided by the assistance and encouragement of others, to whom gratitude must be expressed. During my research for this book, many rare and out-of-print books and literary works critical to this book's success were found at the Wilson Research Library of the University of Minnesota. I spend much time at this library, and wish to express my appreciation for its excellent resources in the field of ancient history. A number of rare, important books were also obtained through the special purchasing services of Hatchards Booksellers of London, England.

The stalwart encouragement and enthusiasm for this book shown by Cliff Tannas, a Canadian friend, has been greatly appreciated. Also, his suggestions as I was obtaining computer hardware and software for my word processing efforts were quite timely, and certainly facilitated my writing efforts. Special appreciation and acknowledgment is offered to Ken Ryland, whose professional editing skills, editorial suggestions and personal support for my efforts have made a singular contribution to the cohesiveness of this book and its readiness for publication.

It is also necessary and appropriate to recognize the pioneering work of the late Dr. Barry Fell, Founder and President of the National Epigraphic Society, San Diego, CA in deciphering and publishing many ancient inscriptions which demonstrate that many Old World civilizations were present in the ancient Americas. The works of Dr. Fell and other contributors to the publications of the Epigraphic Society have been most helpful in providing source material for historical facts and observations cited in this book. Whenever I contacted Dr. Fell to seek his assistance in directing me to past publications of the National Epigraphic Society dealing with specific research topics, he was

always most helpful and cordial. While I am a member of the Epigraphic Society, I wish to state that the conclusions of this book are mine alone and not those of the Epigraphic Society.

I am especially grateful to Dr. Charles V. Dorothy (a graduate of Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, CA, and Director of Biblical Research for the Association for Christian Development Auburn, WA), for invaluable help in checking my transliterations from ancient languages into English. Dr. Dorothy studied Hebrew Greek, Aramaic, Syriac, Akkadian and Ugaritic at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA, and is currently an Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies at Faith Lutheran Seminary in Tacoma, WA. Dr. Dorothy's assistance is highly appreciated; however, the conclusions of this book which are based on linguistic information are my own.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the patience and support of my wife, Becky, and my two daughters, Jennifer and Amy, while this book was being prepared.



## Introduction

It has become fashionable to doubt and deride the accuracy and reliability of the Holy Bible. Even some “Christian” churches and pastors, cowed by evolutionary theories, have become apologists for God. Consequently, much of the world thinks that the Holy Bible is an unscientific book; and Christians struggle to maintain their faith in spite of the Bible’s supposed scientific shortcomings.

This two-book series sets forth, in a non-denominational manner, new evidence that the Holy Bible is exactly what it says it is: the self-proclaimed word of a Creator God. After reading them, instead of “having faith” in spite of the scientific and historical record, you will be able to believe in a Creator God because of the scientific and historical record.

This first book specifically addresses the subject of the “lost ten tribes of Israel,” a subject widely ignored by modern Christianity. While the Jews (descendants of the ancient Hebrew kingdom of Judah) are well known in history and modern society, most assume the non-Jewish (and far more numerous) ten tribes of Israel became “lost,” unable to be traced in history or identified today. On the contrary, the ten tribes of Israel were never “lost” after their removal from the “Promised Land” into Asia. In the Bible, God sent a message to the ten tribes via the prophet Jeremiah **a century after Samaria fell**, Hosea records a prophecy that God would bless the ten tribes of Israel with unprecedented population growth **after** their expulsion from Palestine, and an entire chapter of the book of Genesis is devoted to prophecies about the characteristics of each of the ten tribes of Israel during “the latter days” (a time regarded by many Christian denominations to indicate our modern era). Many other “latter day” prophecies also declare that the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel will have major roles in the geopolitical events of the “latter days.” Since the Bible nowhere teaches (or

even implies) that the ten tribes of Israel would “die out” or be “lost,” the question becomes: “Where were they during history, and where are they today?”

Josephus, a prominent Jewish historian of the first century A.D. commented on the immense population of the ten tribes of Israel in their new Asian homeland and even mentioned one of their national borders. So, eight centuries after their removal from Palestine, a Jewish historian did not regard the ten tribes as being “lost.” The ten tribes of Israel can easily be identified in the first century A.D., and their subsequent migrations can be traced in the records of secular history from that time into the modern era.

This book will document the fascinating (and largely unknown) history of the ten tribes of Israel from the reign of King David until modern times, and will propose identifications for each of the ten tribes in the modern world. The migrations, empires, victories and defeats of the ten tribes of Israel through history are verifiable both in secular history and in biblical prophecies about the post-exilic future of the ten tribes of Israel. This book will also address some aspects of Jewish history in conjunction with the narrative about their “forgotten” brother tribes, but it will primarily discuss the history of the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel.

While some of this book’s material is derived from recently-discovered information, the reader will be surprised to learn that portions of the material were known on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean during the last century. Indeed, a joint session of the U.S. Congress was even given some of this information in 1857! As the reader will also see, North America had a prominent role in the explorations and colonizations of the ten tribes of Israel during several periods of world history! In addition to verifying biblical accounts of world history, this book will shred the

“politically correct” notion that Old World civilizations never colonized the New World prior to the time of Columbus. This book offers a brand-new, biblical view of world history, discussing nations, empires and events which (though well-known to the Greeks and Romans) are ignored by today’s educational system.

Since the Bible is adamant that the ten tribes of Israel would survive, be multiplied and be identifiable nations in the latter days, those Christians who assert that the ten tribes of Israel “died out” or “cannot be located in the modern world” unwittingly call God a liar. Since God promised in the Bible that he would vastly multiply the ten tribes’ population **after** their exile from Palestine, and that they would have major roles in the latter days, if it can be proven that these things did not occur, then it can be shown that the Bible is a hoax. Nothing less is at stake. Those who deny the modern existence (and identifiability) of the ten tribes of Israel are actually attacking the foundation of the Christian religion: the credibility and infallibility of the Bible!

As the reader will see, however, the Bible’s credibility and infallibility can be proven via God’s implementing his prophecies about the ten tribes of Israel throughout history. That God is implementing biblical prophecies in our modern world further demonstrates that God is still actively in control of world events in our time as well.

This book will also examine the life of Jesus Christ in light of new perspectives on world politics during his lifetime. As the reader will see, Jesus Christ (because he was of the royal seed of David) was actually a potential heir to the throne of a great empire in Asia which was primarily composed of the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. The Magi (who paid homage to Jesus, and knew that he had been born “a king”) were members of the nobility of that empire, and were well aware of Jesus Christ’s royal blood.

This ancient Israelite empire and Rome were mortal enemies, but Jesus was born during a time of “detente” between these rivals. The Romans and Greeks preserved volumes of information about this great Asian empire, but its history has strangely been deleted from modern history textbooks. This book also offers intriguing answers for the mysterious eighteen-year gap in the Bible’s account of Jesus’ life; where did he go and what did he do between ages twelve and thirty? The answers will surprise you!

This book has been written in a manner intended to be both informative and interesting for the general public. However, scholars are also likely to review the material, and they are accustomed to seeing technical historical material presented in formats which the general public might regard as esoteric and hard to read. Therefore, in an attempt to satisfy both audiences, this book presents, discusses and documents the technical historical material, but it does so in “layman’s language” to appeal to a mass audience. Biblical quotations appear in the book’s narrative while secular historical sources are cited in an extensive set of endnotes accompanying each chapter. Since the conclusions of this book are rather revolutionary, care has been taken to buttress its conclusions with multiple sources of evidence. Therefore, in the event future scientific review alters the context or dating of a particular piece of evidence cited in this book, the book’s conclusions will not fail due to changed future conclusions about any single piece of evidence.

The reader will benefit most from this book if the chapters are read in numerical order because information and concepts needed to understand later chapters are presented in earlier chapters. This book begins at a time when God’s blessings of the combined tribes of Israel reached an apex in the ancient world: during the reigns of Kings David and Solomon. This book documents that the power and scope of the ancient United

Kingdom of Israel was far greater than is generally acknowledged. You will likely marvel at how much information is available about the ten tribes of Israel in all historical periods. You may also come to wonder why such information (even though it is readily available) has been deleted from modern history textbooks.

The second book in the series will document that the Bible's accounts of the earth's prehistory and mankind's presence on the earth are entirely compatible with the discoveries of modern science. It will also debunk the unscientific dogma of evolution, conclusively document that we are living in the biblical "latter days," and even expose certain unbiblical Christian dogmas which have given the Bible its undeserved reputation as an unscientific book. It will also continue the theme of this first book, examining numerous prophecies about the role of the ten tribes of Israel in our modern world, offering possible scenarios for their fulfillment. The second book will conclude with an examination of how life on earth will change after the return of Jesus Christ, based on specific biblical prophecies and precedents. Both books will offer the reader a number of major surprises.

After reading these books, your views of the Bible, world history and the future will never again be the same.

## **1. King David and Israel's Rise to Greatness**

This chapter will not simply restate what is already known about King David. Interesting new information and new perspectives about his life and reign will be presented.

As the second millennium B.C. drew to a close, the great power politics of that day involved nations and empires in what we now call the Mideast. Many readers have heard of the Fertile Crescent, and that knowledge will assist them in locating the key nations of that age. On the eastern arc of the Fertile Crescent (in the area of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers), were the established Mesopotamian powers of Assyria and Babylon. On the western arc of the Fertile Crescent were found such nations as Israel and Egypt. Let us first examine the geopolitical situation from the perspective of one looking at these nations as the first millennium B.C. was about to begin.

At that time, the eastern Mediterranean coast was home to several distinct groups of people. Tyre and Sidon were the chief representatives of a mercantile, maritime confederacy of city-states which are known to modern man as the Phoenicians (the term "Phoenician" has been generally misunderstood, but there will be more on that subject later). Further south on the coast were the Philistines, centered around several city-states of their own, such as Gaza and Ekron. Additionally, the Israelites were spread throughout the regions known to us today as Palestine, southern Lebanon, and western Jordan. The Israelites were composed of twelve tribal units which had only recently been brought under the jurisdiction of a single monarch. Their first monarch, King Saul, had been defeated and killed in battle by the Philistines. David, the exiled son-in-law of King Saul, became king over the Israelite tribe of Judah while the House of Saul continued to rule over the remaining Israelite tribes for several years. Finally, David became king over all the tribes of Israel,

and began molding them into a unified kingdom with a powerful military force. The year is approximately 1000 B.C.

King David of Israel was a warlike monarch who dramatically expanded Israel's borders and influence. His territory of direct reign reached from the border of Egypt's domain on the west to the Euphrates River on the East (I Chronicles 18:3). King David's campaign to expand Israel's borders was an exceedingly bloody one. The Bible reveals that he slaughtered many thousands in the process of conquering the kingdoms of the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites and the Syrians (the Aramaeans). According to II Samuel 8:2, he actually lined up the defeated Moabites (most likely the adult males) and executed two-thirds of them, leaving only one-third of them alive! In a series of battles with Syrian kings, almost 60,000 Syrians died (II Samuel 8:3-13 and 10:16-19). While David was punished by God for attempting to number Israel's military manpower (such an act was a step toward relying on man's might rather than God's), the Bible nevertheless recorded the size of Israel's army for our information. **With the tribes of Levi and Benjamin uncounted, David commanded an army of 1,570,000 soldiers (I Chronicles 21:1-6)!** How much of David's army consisted of standing army contingents, and what portion was essentially a trained ready reserve, we do not know. For comparison purposes, however, an army of that size would compare with the great armies of major nations in the modern world. This total should not be understood to imply that ancient Israel's population rivaled that of a modern large nation, but it does reflect the military manpower available in a different age when virtually all adult males were trained in military arts and available for mobilization.

There is an important historical fact in the Bible's discussion of this military census. The above passage states:

*"And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of **Israel** were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and **Judah** was four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword."*

After the death of King Saul, David became King over Judah while a rival ruled the nation of Israel (II Samuel 2:3-10). After a period of seven and one-half years in which the two Hebrew kingdoms were periodically at war with each other (II Samuel 2:13-31, 3:1), they were finally united under King David (II Samuel 5:1-5). The above military census shows that even during the unified period, Israel and Judah constituted separate administrative districts within the nation. Since their armies were still totaled as separate units within the overall army, it indicates that the amalgamation of Israel (the northern ten tribes) and Judah (a southern tribe with contingents of the other tribes) was a tenuous one.

By any standard, this was a very potent military force in the ancient world. David's willingness (indeed, eagerness) to use this vast military resource to accomplish his ends struck fear into the other nations of that time. As we shall see later, this military force did not go untested by the established kingdoms of Mesopotamia such as Assyria and Babylon.

While David had his share of human faults, he did have an attitude of submission and worship toward the Creator God. The Book of Psalms testifies of his worshipful attitude toward God. This attitude resulted in God's favor on David's actions. In discussing David's conquests, I Chronicles 18:6 states: "Thus the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went." While David was a very skilled warrior and leader, the greatness of his kingdom was a result of God's favor on his actions, as David himself realized



(II Samuel 7:18-29).

Let us now examine the historical context of that time to gauge the reaction of the Phoenician city-states (located immediately to the north of Israel) to David's ascendancy. The Phoenician city-states, principally Tyre and Sidon, were in control of a far-flung trading and commercial empire held together by an extensive merchant fleet and navy. Products from around the world flowed into their city-states, which acted as focal points between maritime and overland trade routes.<sup>1</sup>

It has long been known that the Phoenician ships traded throughout the Mediterranean, the western shores of Europe and Africa, and the British Isles. Phoenician artifacts and many historical writings confirm their presence in these areas.

However, the Phoenicians had little hinterland to support the population of their city-states, and consequently needed to import foodstuffs. Phoenicia's main trading partner for food, its "breadbasket," was the area inhabited by Israel.<sup>2</sup> The Bible also confirms that Israel's primary trading commodity with Phoenicia was foodstuffs (Ezekiel 27:17).

Besides a very close trading relationship, three other factors worked toward a natural affinity between Phoenicia and Israel. These factors were a common language, a common race and a common enemy.

Language specialists have long known that Phoenicia and Israel possessed closely related, Semitic languages. They are both classified as being in the "Canaanite" branch of the "North-West Semitic" family of languages.<sup>3</sup> To illustrate to all readers how similar these languages were, the comments of two historians will be cited. The first notes:

*"the words most commonly in use, the particles, the pronouns, the forms of the verb,*

*the principal inflexions (and we may add, the numerals) in Phoenician are identical, or nearly identical, with the pure Hebrew.”<sup>4</sup>*

The Bible confirms the close relationship between the two languages by recording that when the Israelite prophet Elijah stayed with a Phoenician widow in Zarephath, a Sidonian suburb, they had no difficulty whatsoever in communicating (I Kings 17:9-16). The alphabets of the two languages were strikingly similar as well. The nineteenth century British historian, George Rawlinson, explained the similarities between Hebrew and Phoenician as follows:

*“...the Phoenicians spoke a Semitic tongue, very closely allied to the Hebrew. Among the ancients, Jerome, Augustine and Priscian, state the fact in the clearest terms. The inscriptions which exist confirm it...A good Hebrew scholar has no difficulty in understanding any legible Phoenician inscription, as soon as he knows the letters. The letters are identical with those which the Hebrews used anciently...A uniform alphabetic system, with slight modifications, appears to have been employed by the Phoenicians, the Jews, the Samaritans and the Moabites...This alphabet is that which has commonly been called Phoenician, because the Greeks ascribed its invention to that people. It is, like the Hebrew, an alphabet of twenty-two letters.”<sup>5</sup>*

While there were dialectal differences, it is clear that the Israelites and the Phoenicians shared a common language.

Racially, the Israelites and the Phoenicians were both Semitic people, and shared a common racial origin.<sup>6</sup> This factor also contributed to the close compatibility of both nations.

Additionally, both nations had a common enemy: the Philistines. The Israelites had a long history of battles with the Philistines as many biblical narratives show, and the Phoenicians were hostile to the Philistines as well.<sup>7</sup> Israel and Phoenicia were joined together by the principle of the adage: "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

The king of Tyre at this time was named Hiram,<sup>8</sup> and he was surely aware of the immense military power of Israel being flexed to his south. With so much in common between Israel and Phoenicia, Hiram had no desire to be an enemy of King David. Since the Phoenician city-states were also dependent on Israel and Judah for their primary foodstuffs, he initiated a peaceful approach toward the Israelite monarch (II Samuel 5:11). Hiram sent materials and craftsmen to build David a royal home as a token of his friendship.

This gift of an elegant home may have been the inspiration for David's eventual desire to build a great temple for God (II Samuel 7:1-3). In taking this action, Hiram was taking the classic action of a lesser power seeking to build goodwill with a greater power. This point will be of great importance when we later examine secular historical records on the real extent of Israelite-Phoenician influence in the ancient world. The Phoenician city-states did not have the resources to challenge Israel on land, and David could easily have cut off all Phoenician overland trade routes if angered. While Hiram's ingratiating action was likely an act of good politics to preserve his mercantile positions, his action led to a strong alliance between Israel and Phoenicia. In fact, a close personal friendship developed between Kings David and Hiram (I Kings 5:1).

King Hiram was the leader of the Phoenician city-states,<sup>9</sup> so it is logical that all of the Phoenician city-states were allied to Israel at that time. Any Phoenician city-state that would have opposed the alliance would have been committing military and economic suicide. King Hiram was well known throughout the ancient world due to his extensive trading contacts, and King David was also well-known due to Israel's military prowess and territorial expansionism (II Samuel 7:9).

The Phoenician-Israelite alliance united the world's greatest commercial and naval power with the immense land power of David's army, making this alliance one of the strongest military powers in the world at that time.

An indication of just how powerful this alliance became is in the fact that Assyria's warlike empire had no success in westward expansion during the time of the united kingdom of Israel and its alliance with the Phoenician city-states.<sup>10</sup> Other sources show that Assyria entered a period of decline during Israel's rise to power. *Collier's Encyclopedia* refers to the time between 1100 B.C. and 900 B.C. as a period of Assyrian "confusion" between two warlike and expansionary phases.<sup>11</sup> This time period coincides with the reigns of Kings David and Solomon over the united tribes of Israel and their vassal states. *Halley's Bible Handbook* also comments on Israel's supremacy in the ancient world at that time, and the relative weakness of Assyria, Babylon and Egypt.<sup>12</sup> It must be remembered that David's one and one-half million man army was not the only military force at his disposal. Phoenicia's navy was allied to him, and the vassal states of Syria, Edom, Moab, Ammon, etc. could be called upon to commit their forces in service to David (although the vassal states' forces were likely suspect in their loyalties).

Assyria's recorded quiescence was due to the fact that it had challenged and had been defeated by King David's Israelite

forces. While this statement will surprise many people, there is ample Biblical and secular evidence to support such a conclusion. Indeed, the Bible gives an account of a major armed conflict between Israel and the Mesopotamian powers (i.e. Assyria) in which the Mesopotamian powers were soundly defeated.

The Bible states in I Chronicles 19:1-7 that the Ammonites (a subject people of Israel) provoked a war with King David and hired a very large number of soldiers from Mesopotamian nations and Syria to fight King David's army. This biblical passage states the Ammonites hired a vast army of 32,000 chariots (the number of foot soldiers is unspecified) for this war against King David's Israelite army. Some may find a total of "32,000 chariots" hard to believe as that is an incredible number of chariots in any ancient context. Does this represent a total of "chariots" filled with fighting men, or does it represent a more general description of all horse-drawn vehicles transporting soldiers? This author recognizes that reasonable people can disagree about what the original writer of Chronicles meant by the word "chariot."

However, the Israelites did face an army of very powerful enemies who could field a very large combined military force. The term "Mesopotamia" is broad enough to include Assyria, Babylon and their allied vassal states. Their numbers were further swelled by the armies of Aramaean (Syrian) kings (I Chronicles 19:6 lists "Syria-Maachah" and "Zobah" as two examples). We will also soon examine the likelihood that Psalm 83:1-8 discusses this very war, listing other nations which joined this alliance against King David. Therefore, it must be realized that the Bible does not attribute "32,000 chariots" to one national army, but rather states that was the total number of chariots "hired" out of many nations to oppose King David's army.

The Israelite power prevailed, and the Mesopotamian armies returned to their home nations beaten and bloodied, but there is much more here than first meets the eye. Assyria and the other Mesopotamian powers were aware of the meteoric rise of Israel's power and David's expansionism, and undoubtedly looked upon King David as a potential rival for preeminence over the ancient world. As established military powers, they probably wanted to challenge David's power before it grew even stronger. When David's armies reached the Euphrates River, the Assyrian Empire could ignore them no longer.

The Ammonites were a small tributary nation subject to David and were no doubt aware that David had executed two-thirds of the Moabites who had rebelled against him. Why then would they dare to take the apparently suicidal action of humiliating David's ambassadors and provoking David into a warlike response (I Chronicles 19:1-5)? The only logical explanation is that the Ammonites were acting as agents for someone else who wanted to challenge David, and that the Ammonites knew they would be backed by powerful friends who supported their hostile action. The rest of the account supports that conclusion.

I Chronicles 19:6-9 states the Ammonites "hired" a force of 32,000 chariots and an uncounted number of Syrian and Mesopotamian warriors to fight King David's army on their behalf. As a comparison of how vast this force was, King Solomon is listed as having no more than 1,400 chariots during the zenith of his power (I Kings 10:24-26). Since Ammon was paying gold and silver as tribute to Israel already (I Chronicles 18:11), it hardly had the resources to hire virtually the entire national armies of the nations in Mesopotamia. Indeed, verse 6 indicates the Ammonites had no gold left with which to "hire" mercenaries and could pay only in silver. Apparently, the other nations wanted to challenge Israel in considerable force, and

Ammon's revolt was the pretext to arrange such a conflict. The Ammonites knew it was highly dangerous to provoke David's wrath, and they would not have dared to take such an action without prior knowledge that the mighty Mesopotamian powers (principally Assyria) would support them. That this huge Mesopotamian army would allow itself to be "hired" without receiving any gold at all indicates that their presence was a national policy of Assyria's king! A force of 32,000 chariots could only have been mustered with the approval of the Assyrian Empire, the dominant power of Mesopotamia.

The Bible's use of the term "Mesopotamia" to describe the homeland of this vast force of foreign troops indicates that it was a joint expeditionary force of many Mesopotamian nations (Assyria, Babylon, etc.). Verses 6-7 state that many Syrian troops were also "hired" by the Ammonites to join the Mesopotamian armies in fighting King David. Since David had already conquered portions of Syria, the Syrians were eager to join a large alliance to fight against David. This battle then was an effort by the king of Assyria to defeat the growing power of King David. He arranged for virtually his entire army, along with other Mesopotamian allies and various Syrian kings to be "hired" (for a pittance) by one of David's subject nations (Ammon) to get rid of the threat posed by King David's power.

Interestingly, these Mesopotamian nations and Syria had enough respect for King David and Israel that they did not declare war openly, but allowed their national armies to fight as "mercenaries" of a small nation. In this manner, if things went badly, they could go home and say that they were not technically at war with Israel on a national level. However, as evidence that these nations were actually arranging a war with King David, **the Bible states that "the kings" of the mercenary armies (the Mesopotamian nations and Syrians) came with their**

**armies to personally watch the battle** (I Chronicles. 19:9).

With 32,000 chariots and an unspecified number of foot soldiers, this force actually consisted of the national armies of Assyria and its allies warring upon Israel without the benefit of an open declaration of war. The presence of these nations' kings at the battle makes this point obvious. This battle for supremacy of the ancient world was fought in two stages. The initial stage of the battle is described in I Chronicles 19:8-15. Israel's army met the combined forces of Ammon, Syria, and the Mesopotamian nations, and defeated them in a two-front battle. The fact that Israel had to split its forces and fight in two separate directions indicates that Israel's army was not expecting to fight so large a force and found itself surrounded by a numerically superior army. Israel's army likely expected to fight only the upstart Ammonites, and was surprised by the presence of so many enemies. Nevertheless, Israel's army won the battle, and the Mesopotamian army (i.e. the Assyrian army) apparently retreated to its own territory, as they are not mentioned in the second stage of the battle.

David quickly realized that this conflict involved far more than a revolt by the little nation of Ammon. It was actually an attempt to destroy Israel's army and national power, and to prevent it from supplanting Assyria as the preeminent nation in the ancient world.

David's thoughts on this war are recorded in Psalm 83. David's psalms were frequently inspired by the events of his life, and the context of this chapter directly parallels the events of I Chronicles 19. Psalms 83:3-4 refers to a "crafty counsel" of many nations which were assembled to destroy the Israelite nation. Psalm 83:8 shows that these nations had conspired to "help the children of Lot." Ammon was one of Lot's children (Genesis 19:36-38), and I Chronicles 19 states that an alliance



of many nations was fighting Israel under the guise of coming to assist the Ammonites (Lot's children). This strongly indicates that Psalm 83 and I Chronicles 19 are describing the same event. To further cement these two biblical accounts together, Psalm 83:8 specifically states that Assyria ("Assur" was the forefather of the Assyrians) was a member of the alliance attacking Israel. This parallels the reference to "Mesopotamians" in I Chronicles 19, as Assyria was the dominant Mesopotamian nation of that time.

A number of the nations referred to in Psalm 83 were, like Ammon, subject people of Israel who were likely eager to throw off Israel's domination. The Philistines, Edom, Moab, and Amalek were all subject to King David of Israel (I Chronicles 18:11), and joined Ammon's revolt against King David. Psalm 83:7 also lists Gebal and "the inhabitants of Tyre" (both Phoenician cities) as being part of the enemy alliance. This indicates the conspiracy against Israel included some Phoenicians, who likely thought they were "siding with a winner" by opposing Israel and backing Assyria. King Hiram of Tyre, David's ally, apparently experienced a rebellion of Assyrian sympathizers among his own people. However, the wording of verse 7 (it states that some "inhabitants of Tyre," not the leadership or whole city of Tyre, were part of the enemy alliances) indicates that Hiram, the king of Tyre, and part of his people remained loyal to David. Sidon, another major Phoenician city, apparently stayed loyal to David, as they are not included in the list of Israel's enemies in Psalm 83. Since King Hiram remained a close friend of King David and Israel after this battle, it is apparent that the leadership of Tyre remained loyal to King David. While the account in I Chronicles utilizes the general name of "Mesopotamians" to describe David's foes, David's own account in Psalm 83 is more specific in naming the Assyrians as his military opponents. While *the King James Version* of the Bible uses the term "Assur," in Psalm 83:8, many other versions of the Bible (the *Revised Standard Version*, *The*

*New Jerusalem Bible, The New Scofield Study Bible*) plainly translate this word as "Assyria." The *Revised Standard Version* is especially clear in stating: "Assyria also joined them; they are the strong arm of the children of Lot." Given the fact that "Assyria" was the leader of the Mesopotamian nations, and that the Ammonites were the "children of Lot," there can be little doubt that I Chronicles 19 and Psalm 83 refer to the same war.

In the second stage of the battle recorded in I Chronicles 19:16-19, the Israelites and the Syrians mobilized their entire national military resources and clashed anew. This time there was no more pretense that the Syrians were Ammonite mercenaries. Also, the Assyrians were apparently no longer engaged, but had retreated after being soundly defeated by the Israelite army. The account states that David "gathered all Israel" and Syria "drew forth the Syrians that were beyond the river" (meaning reinforcements from east of the Euphrates River). The second battle of this war involved King David and his fully mobilized army marching eastward from the Jordan River to fight everyone the Syrians could muster. After suffering 47,000 dead, including their commander, the Syrians yielded to King David and "became his servants," meaning they became vassal nations of Israel who paid tribute to King David.

To put the intensity of this battle into perspective for modern readers, the Syrians did not yield until they had lost approximately as many soldiers in one battle as the United States lost in the entire Vietnam War! This serves as an indicator to modern readers of how incredibly violent and gory ancient wars could be. It also indicates that the numbers of men engaged could easily have been in the hundreds of thousands, as the Syrians hardly fought to the last men. The death of their commander, combined with a likely awareness that the battle was going against them (I Chronicles 19:17-19), caused the

Syrians to surrender.

What began as an effort on the part of Assyria and its Mesopotamian allies to crush Israel's military power resulted in Israel becoming sovereign over all the engaged Syrians, and the Mesopotamian powers being put to flight. The Assyrians and their allies learned firsthand that they could not successfully stand against Israel's power. This battle occurred in approximately 990 B.C., and was one of the most crucial battles of that era. Strangely, this epic battle between Israel and Assyria during King David's reign (so clearly recorded in the Bible) is not included in historical accounts. Its absence in Assyrian historical records should surprise no one. While the historical records of ancient nations waxed eloquent in self-praise about their victories, they were loathe to record their defeats. While this battle is not recorded in secular historical accounts, its aftermath, the sudden decline of the Assyrian Empire during King David's reign over Israel, is very evident in the secular accounts (as we shall see).

Considering what we know of King David's militaristic nature, it is inconceivable that King David would have had a "live and let live" attitude toward the Assyrians after they perpetrated a conspiracy to destroy King David and his nation. His attitude (and that of the whole Israelite nation) likely paralleled the American attitude of rage after the Japanese launched a sneak attack on Pearl Harbor! David's predictable action would be to launch a war of retribution against Assyria. While the Bible does not record such an attack, secular records argue that it did occur. Historical accounts relate that although Assyria was very powerful under King Tiglath-Pileser in the century prior to King David's rule, Assyrian power was broken and Assyria became very weak during the reigns of Kings David and Solomon. It is this book's contention that the main impetus for Assyria's decline came from

its defeat at the hand of King David. Let us examine evidence supporting this conclusion.

Assyria possessed a large empire during the reign of Tiglath-Pileser I around 1100 B.C. Assyria's military conquests included Mesopotamia, Syrian territory along the northern portions of the Euphrates River, and even into Armenia.<sup>13</sup> Assyrian accounts of Tiglath-Pileser I's reign state that his power extended to the Mediterranean Sea in the region of Arvad (a Phoenician city-state).<sup>14</sup> It is recorded that, under Tiglath-Pileser I's "long reign (about 1116-1078), the Middle Assyrian Empire reached the height of its power."<sup>15</sup> Yet the great Assyrian Empire quickly became weak and powerless during the reigns of Kings David and Solomon of Israel; was this only a coincidence? This period of Assyrian weakness is described as follows:

*"After the death of the great king [Tiglath-Pileser I], his successors steadily lost ground before the advancing Aramaeans. Under Ashur-rabi II (about 1012-972), the Aramaeans drove the Assyrians from their ancient Euphrates frontier, and under his grandson, Tiglath-Pileser II (about 966-935), they advanced as far as the Tigris, confining Assyria to its narrowest recorded limits. Assyria was reduced to dire straits, and the poverty of its people is vividly described in the inscriptions of Ashur-dan II (934-912), under whom the Assyrian Empire began its long climb back to its former power."*<sup>16</sup>

The above dates are very significant, as they illustrate that Assyrian fortunes are inversely proportional to events occurring simultaneously in the ancient Kingdom of Israel. The above account shows that the Assyrians were driven from the

Euphrates River during the reign of King David (circa 1010-970 B.C.). This is the same period of time that the Bible records that David's army reached the Euphrates River, and defeated a large Assyrian-Mesopotamian army. Assyria is in "dire straits" and "poverty" during the reigns of King David and King Solomon (ca. 970-930 B.C.), when Israel's empire and power was at its zenith. Assyria could not reassert itself until after Israel's civil war which caused it to subdivide into the separate (and often, warring) nations of Israel and Judah. It was during Ashur-dan II's reign that Israel and Judah fought a horrendously-bloody civil war in which over a half million Israelite and Jewish soldiers were killed (II Chronicles 13). The wars between the Israelite and Jewish kingdoms so depleted their mutual strengths that nations (Assyria, Syria, etc.) which David had defeated were able to throw off Israelite domination and reassert themselves.

The above historical account cites "Aramaeans" as the force which subjugated the Assyrian Empire during the reigns of David and Solomon. The "Aramaeans" are called "Syrians" in the Bible. The Bible, however, asserts that King David had then defeated the Syrians and made them his "servants." How can the two accounts be reconciled? There are two possible answers. One must realize that the ancient Syrians/Aramaeans were Semitic people like the Israelites. Their nations had descended from Arphaxad and Aram, two of the sons of Shem (Genesis 10:21-25). Since they were racially related people, it is possible that the Israelites (who defeated the Aramaeans), came to be known by the name of the territory through which they attacked Assyria. Since the Aramaeans were servants of David after their surrender to the Israelite army, they may have served as Israelite vassals in wars against Assyria.

The Bible confirms the close racial link between the Israelites and the Aramaeans in Deuteronomy 26:1-5 in which Israelites

making a particular offering were to confess, "a wandering Aramaean was my father (RSV)." The racial bond between Israelites and Aramaeans is further confirmed in Genesis 24-25 in which Abraham sends his servant "to...my kindred (Genesis 24:4)" to obtain a wife for his son, Isaac. The servant is led by God to "the house of my master's kinsmen (Genesis 24:27)", leading to Isaac's marriage to an Aramaean girl named Rebekah (Genesis 25:20).

Indeed, one Aramaean ruler, King Tou (or Toi) of Hamath, was already a willing ally of King David prior to the I Chronicles 19 war of many nations against Israel (II Samuel 8:3-11 and I Chronicles 18:3-10). Since the Aramaeans became David's "servants" after their defeat at the hands of Israel, secular records about an "Aramaean" power from the west overwhelming a strong Assyrian Empire during King David's reign have missed the likelihood that much of the "Aramaean" power resulted from Israelite invasions of Assyria via Aramaean territory. Given the racial links between the Israelites and Aramaeans, the Israelite role could easily be missed by historians living millennia after the events occurred.

There is a second reason why the Aramaeans had a motive to attack Assyria after their defeat at the hand of David. Assyria had been allied with the Aramaeans in the first battle against King David's forces, but apparently retreated to Assyria before the second battle, leaving the Aramaeans to fight David by themselves. The Aramaeans could easily have felt "double-crossed" by the Assyrians, and subsequently became willing allies of King David's efforts against the Assyrians. Since I Chronicles 19:16 records that King David had defeated (and presumably made "servants" of) Aramaeans living east of the Euphrates River, the role of King David and Israel in Assyria's subjugation was likely quite substantial. The Aramaean role,

however large, must still be seen in the context that they were acting as subordinate vassals of King David.

Another account gives us additional insight into the events of the time. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* states:

*"An Assyrian revival culminated in the successful campaigns of Tiglathpileser I about 1090-1060 B.C.; this king was, however, actively engaged in repelling Aramaean tribes, and from about 1050-950 B.C. the invasion of Syria and northern Babylonia by this people exhausted Babylonia and Assyria."*<sup>17</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Before examining this account, it must be stressed that the biblical Syrians were the Aramaeans of this account. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* acknowledges that the territory of the Aramaeans was called "Syria" in the Septuagint and Vulgate Bibles.<sup>18</sup> *Harper's Bible Dictionary* also notes that the "Syrians" of the Bible were the people referred to as "Aramaeans" in secular accounts.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, it makes little sense to say that "Aramaeans" invaded "Syria." The fact that this invasion of Syria and exhaustion of Mesopotamian nations occurs precisely during the reign of King David over Israel strongly supports the Bible's accounts that King David's Israelites conquered both the Aramaeans and the Assyrian/ Mesopotamian armies. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* account also notes that while Tiglath-Pileser I had no apparent difficulty in defeating "Aramaeans" **prior** to the reign of King David, the "Aramaeans" attacking from the west had sufficient power to "exhaust" Assyria and Babylon **during** David's reign. It seems readily apparent that the "Aramaeans" who invaded and exhausted Assyria and Mesopotamia were King David's Israelites allied to Aramaeans who had become David's "servants" during that time.

Besides being racially related, there is another reason why the Israelite role in the "Aramaeans" invasion of Assyria can be missed. The Hebrew and Aramaic languages were closely related at the beginning of the first millennium B.C. Moscati's *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages* categorizes Hebrew and Aramaic as related "North-West Semitic" languages, and adds concerning Aramaic: "[Its] earliest manifestation goes back to the beginning of the first millennium B.C." <sup>20</sup> *Harper's Bible Dictionary* is a bit more specific in stating that Aramaic (the language of the Aramaeans) was:

*"a Semitic language closely related to Hebrew. It has been spoken in the **Levant from the ninth century B.C. until the present...**It originated among the Aramaeans of northern Syria, said to be among the ancestors of Abraham (Gen. 28:2-5; Deut. 26:5)...Several passages in the OT are written in Official Aramaic... Jesus probably spoke a dialect of Western Aramaic and some words in the NT come from Aramaic..."<sup>21</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

Note that Hebrew and Aramaic were so closely linked that it would have been difficult (if not impossible) to distinguish between Israelite and Aramaean troops among the armies who invaded Mesopotamia during the reign of King David. Indeed, the above account states that the Aramaic language was spoken in the region "from **the ninth century B.C.**" This is quite significant as the "Aramaeans" who defeated Assyria and Babylon did so in **the tenth century B.C.** (the century before "Aramaic" can be classified as a language distinct from Hebrew). Therefore, the Israelite and Aramaean nations spoke very closely



related Semitic languages at the time Assyria was defeated by Semitic armies invading from the west. [Indeed, the Bible repeatedly records that Israelites and Aramaeans were able to easily converse whenever they came into contact.] Since the Israelites and Aramaeans were so racially and linguistically similar during the tenth century B.C., and since the Aramaeans had become “the servants” of King David, the “Aramaean” armies invading Assyria in the tenth century B.C. were most likely Israelite armies accompanied by the armies of David’s Aramaean allies and vassals.

This conclusion is supported by other facts as well. Secular records reveal that Assyria remained weak as long as the twelve tribes of Israel were united in one kingdom under Kings David and Solomon. The fact that Assyrian resurgence did not occur until after Israel’s tribes divided into two, often-warring nations supports the conclusion that it was Israel’s power which had kept them weak. As Israel’s military power was depleted by wars with the Jewish nation of Judah, Assyria was free to reassert itself.

Another overlooked factor in this balance of power between Israel and Assyria is the role of God himself. When David and Solomon (and the united tribes of Israel) served God faithfully, their power and empire was greatly expanded (see I Chronicles 18:6). One facet of Israel’s covenant with God was that God would bless them with military victories when they were obedient and would cause them to suffer military reverses if they disobeyed him (Deuteronomy 28:1-7 and 15-25). King Solomon, who started out so well, forsook God’s laws, and the unity of the twelve tribes disintegrated soon after he died.

Since God’s promises were conditional on Israel’s obedience, they lost God’s favor after they forsook God’s laws. For this reason, the period of Israel’s domination of Assyria was relatively brief.

When King David's army was in the process of conquering the Syrians, II Samuel 8:4 records (in the RSV) that the Israelites "hamstrung all the chariot horses, but left enough for a hundred chariots." When Israel defeated the Assyrians, it is logical to assume that they took the same action against Assyrian horses. This Israelite practice would likely be continued for as long as they controlled subject nations to prevent successful rebellions. Earlier, it was noted the Assyrian king Asshur-dan II led the Assyrian resurgence after Israel was split into the rival kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Note what history has recorded was one of the first obstacles for this Assyrian king to overcome.

*"Asshur-dan II and his son Adad-nirari II (911-891) were chiefly concerned with the restoration of Assyrian strength by procuring cavalry horses...Again and again they struck back at the ring of Aramaean tribes and states that had become established around the western and southern borders of Assyria proper."<sup>22</sup>*

Assyria's severe shortage of horses suitable for military service supports the conclusion that Israel had subdued Assyria because the Bible records that it was an Israelite custom to maim an enemy's horses to render them useless for military applications. Note also that as Assyria reasserted itself, it struck against the "Aramaean tribes" along its western and southern border.

The "Aramaean tribes" to the west of Assyria had been ruled by Kings David and Solomon so the Assyrians were striking against territory that had been subject to Israel. Also, as Israel and Judah weakened each other, the Syrians/Aramaean also reasserted their independence from Israel, later becoming major enemies of Israel. What is clear is that after Israel was weakened by a severe civil war, the Assyrians were able to reassert

themselves against the western "Aramaeans." This argues that "Aramaean" victories over the Assyrian Empire were never a result of strictly Aramaean action. Indeed, if the Aramaeans had prevailed against Assyria without any help from Israel, Israel's civil war and division should have strengthened the Aramaeans against Assyria (a weakened Israel on their western flank would mean that they could direct even more power against Assyria). However, history records that once Israel's power collapsed, the power of the "Aramaeans" who had subjugated Assyria also collapsed. This argues that the "Aramaeans" who subjugated Assyria were Israelites, not Syrians.

In an Israelite Civil War in approximately 913 B.C., the Israelite army lost 500,000 soldiers in one battle against the army of Judah (we are not given the number of Jewish battle deaths). Assuming Judah's losses were relatively small (because II Chronicles 13:17-18 states God was on Judah's side, not Israel's), this battle effectively wiped out the modern equivalent of about 25 divisions from Israel's reserves! With such a major loss of power, Israel had dramatically reduced power, and Assyria reasserted itself in the void that was created when Israel's forces were no longer a threat. Note that the Assyrian kings named above acted to restore Assyrian forces in the aftermath of the Israelite-Jewish battle. Assyria's sudden freedom to restore its strength indicates the existence of a major power-void which would have occurred after Israel's sudden withdrawal from conquered nations.

That Assyria attacked Israel and Judah so frequently in the time frame from 900 B.C. until the fall of Samaria in 721 B.C. argues that Assyria was seeking vengeance upon the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah for what the Israelites had done to Assyria under King David. Assyria finally ended Israel's independence (when Samaria fell), and would have done the same to Judah if it had

not been for God's divine action to rescue Jerusalem from the Assyrians during Hezekiah's reign (II Kings 18-20). The Assyrian determination to destroy Israel is consistent with the conclusion presented in this chapter: that Israel had first conquered and humbled Assyria!

After Assyria began to reassert itself, it again began to write about its triumphs. Historian Zenaide Ragozin notes that when Assyria's "long spell of inactivity and obscurity"<sup>23</sup> ended, they recorded detailed accounts of their victories in the time frame of 900-666 B.C. Speaking of this period of time, she also notes that:

*"the history of Assyria and that of the Jews are in constant collision. Almost every event connected with Assyria mentioned in the Bible is faithfully recorded in the historical inscriptions of the Assyrian kings."*<sup>24</sup>

Consider an interesting contrast in the Assyrian records and the Israelite chronicles in the Bible. While Assyrian inscriptions are accurate during their time of military ascendancy over Israel and Judah, they are silent about what happened during the time of Israelite domination. However, the Israelite and Jewish chronicles are quite accurate (according to the Assyrian accounts of the same events) in recording their nations' defeats and deterioration. Since the Bible's accounts are brutally accurate about Israel's period of national defeat and decline (when the natural tendency is to gloss over or not include such accounts), it is likely that its accounts of Israel's victories and ascendancy reflect the same accuracy. Yet Israel's and Judah's kings during their mutual national declines could be profoundly wicked and deceitful men. We cannot credit them for such remarkable truthfulness about their wickedness and defeats. The fact that the biblical accounts have such accuracy (even about the times

when human nature would ordinarily not want to be honest) indicates that it was God's divine inspiration which accounts for the accuracy of the biblical accounts.

As the reader can see, secular history supports the biblical accounts of David's defeat of Assyria and Mesopotamia. The Bible has contained this record in I Chronicles 19 and Psalm 83 all along, but it has been overlooked or ignored. The close racial and linguistic affinities between Israelites and Aramaeans may account for the widespread lack of awareness of Israel's role in destroying Assyria's power during the reign of King David. However, human nature has a natural "enmity" against God (Romans 8:7), and obscuring the true role of Israel in ancient history makes it easier for mankind to ignore God's reality and the Bible's veracity. Also, the permeation of modern academia by the atheistic dogma of evolution has created an environment which is openly hostile to the Bible, and the adherents of evolution are disinclined to "find" anything substantiating the Bible.

II Samuel 7:9 (see also I Chronicles 17:8) quotes God as telling David the following through the prophet Nathan:

*"I have been with you wherever you went,  
and have cut off all your enemies from before  
you; and I will make for you a great name,  
like the name of the great ones of the earth."  
(RSV)*

God states that **all** (not just "some") of David's enemies were "cut off," and that David would become one of the most prominent and famous men on earth! While David's name is remembered prominently to this day, modern mankind has not realized the full extent of God's fulfillment of this promise. God's promise was made prior to David's wars against the Aramaeans and Assyrians (both of which he won). After David made the

Aramaeans his vassals and (probably in concert with those vassals) subjugated Assyria and Mesopotamia, David was not just king of Israel and Judah, he was an emperor over nations. He was the dominant ruler of the known world, and Israel had become an ancient "superpower."

It is worth noting that the commanders of Israel's army at that time were two brothers (Joab and Abishai) who were the ancient world's equivalent of a modern General Patton. As bloody as David was, he said his commanders were "too hard" even for him (II Samuel 3:30-39). They were very skilled in warfare, and while this was appropriate for a military expansionist time, they were to become anachronistic in Solomon's reign of peace. David, in fact, advised his son Solomon to kill Joab when Solomon was about to become king (I Kings 2:5-6). An observation can be made that it was easy to see where Joab and Abishai received their combative genes: Joab and Abishai were David's own nephews (I Chronicles 2:13-16).

David also had contingents of foreign troops who fought in his service. He had a version of Rome's Praetorian Guard in that his personal bodyguards consisted of 600 non-Israelites who were fiercely loyal to him. They followed him through both good and bad times and were called the "Cherethites and the Pelethites" in the Bible. II Samuel 15:18 adds that David's bodyguards included "Gittites from Gath." These armed bodyguards of David did not report to regular army commanders, but had their own commander who was responsible to King David himself. *Harper's Bible Dictionary* observes that the Cherethites and Pelethites were likely descended from Cretans and Anatolians who had previously settled in the vicinity of the Philistines.<sup>25</sup> Given the historic hostility between the Israelites and the Philistines, it is quite remarkable that David's bodyguards included "Gittites from Gath." Goliath, the giant whom David slew as a youth, had come

from Gath (I Samuel 17:23). It indicates that David was a man who commanded great respect and loyalty from other men, and it also indicates that non-Israelites of the time could also be men of great character and loyalty. We do not know how these non-Israelites came to be so fiercely loyal to David, but it was a lifelong commitment on their part. Even when things looked very bleak for David during the revolt led by David's own son, Absalom, and David gave them permission to leave his service, this foreign bodyguard remained absolutely loyal to David (II Samuel 15:13-22).

King David had at least one prominent foreigner commanding part of his army, that being Uriah the Hittite. He had to be a very prominent Hittite in order not only to hold high rank in Israel's army, but also to have the honor of a residence located next to King David himself (II Samuel 11:2-4). The Hittites had been a major power of the ancient world which had also fought the Assyrians, and may have welcomed Israel's rise to power as a force against Assyria.

Uriah was also the husband of Bathsheba, with whom David committed adultery. After Bathsheba became pregnant as a result of this "affair," David arranged to have Uriah killed in combat to cover his own sinful deed (II Samuel 11:1-17). This event shows that David's heart had strayed far from God and his laws at this time. However, when confronted about this sin by a prophet of God, David deeply repented of his deed (II Samuel 12, Psalm 51). The Bible's inclusion of this account is a typical example of its even-handedness toward its heroes as it records their sins and failings as well as their great deeds and accomplishments.

Let us return to Israel's military situation after the battle with the Syrians, the Mesopotamians, and their allies. Many of the Phoenicians must have been watching the battle between Israel

and the Assyrian/Syrian alliance with great trepidation as an Israelite defeat would have meant military domination of their city-states as well. Since David's Psalm about this battle (Psalm 83) mentions that Phoenicians such as "Geba" and at least some of the "inhabitants of Tyre" were cooperating with the Assyrian/Syrian group, it is clear that there were Assyrian sympathizers even among the Phoenicians. After the defeat of the rival alliance, however, **the Israelite-Phoenician alliance became the world's dominant military power of that time.** Israel's military might, combined with the naval and commercial power of the Phoenician city-states created an alliance which was both militarily and economically superior to the remainder of the world.

Some readers may have some skepticism about the Bible's assertion that Israel had an army of over one and one-half million men, and that Israel was involved in the great power struggles of the ancient world. To counter that skepticism, a very common misconception must be corrected. Most people assume that ancient Israel was comprised strictly of Jews, and; therefore, could not have been so populous. Most people make the common mistake of assuming the terms "Israelite" and "Jew" are synonymous, when they are not! While King David was of the tribe of Judah (a Jew), only a minority of his nation and army was Jewish.

The truth is that the nation of Israel was comprised of twelve tribes with each tribe being composed of the descendants of one of the twelve sons of Jacob. Judah (from which the term "Jew" is derived) was only one of twelve tribal units. In fact, the chief tribe of Israel was Joseph, and it was so blessed by God in numbers that it was subdivided into two tribes: Ephraim and Manasseh (who were the sons of Joseph). This actually resulted in thirteen tribal units. Over the centuries, the populations of



these tribes had grown so large that by the time of King David that they constituted a nation of considerable size.

The nation of Israel under David was composed of thirteen distinct districts, one for each tribe. The tribe of Levi acted as a priestly tribe, and their geographical area consisted of 48 cities (Joshua 21) spread throughout the districts of the remaining tribes. Israel was therefore a constitutional monarchy (God's laws being their constitution) as they rose to international prominence. However, the unity of these thirteen tribes under David was an exception in their history, not the rule. The book of Judges catalogues the many tribal squabbles and wars which they fought among themselves. The unity of the tribes brought about by King David lasted only a short time. Soon after the death of David's son, King Solomon, Israel split into two nations characterized by fractious relations with one another.

After Solomon's death, the northern ten tribes, led by Ephraim and Manasseh "seceded from the union," and formed a new nation which retained the majority of the population and the name of **Israel** as its national name (I Kings 11:28-36, 12:16-24). The southern two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, joined by the priestly tribe of Levi (II Chronicles 11:12-14), retained the old capital city of Jerusalem, but adopted the new national name of **Judah**. The nation of Judah (the Jews) was never again known by the national name of "Israel." Both were Hebrew nations, but while Judah was "Jewish," Israel was "non-Jewish." Israel and Judah were henceforth separate nations and fought many wars with each other.

Israel adopted idolatrous Baalism, while Judah had periodic revivals in which they worshipped the true God. By 721 B.C., the Israelites were no longer in the land of Palestine, having been driven from their land by Assyrian invasions. The kingdom of Judah (the Jews) continued in Palestine until approximately 576

B.C., when they were also removed from the land. The descendants of Judah, because they retained the Sabbath day and many traditions of God's laws, retained their identity, and have been known throughout history as "Jews." Israel became known as the "lost ten tribes of Israel" partly because they abandoned their ties to Palestine. They also lost their Hebrew/Israelite identity because many of them abandoned customs which would have identified them as Hebrews and Israelites. As the reader of this book will see in later chapters, they were never "lost" at all. Their identity in the past was well known at times, particularly to some of the Jewish scholars.

When the modern nation of Israel was formed by the Jewish people in 1948, it was settled by the descendants of the nation of **Judah**. The national name of "**Israel**" was, technically, a biblical misnomer. If biblical precedent had been followed, the Jewish state in Palestine would have been named "Judah." However, the Jewish state named itself after the **land of Israel** which they had reclaimed. Zephaniah 2:7 contains a prophecy that descendants of the ancient nation of **Judah (not Israel)** would someday reestablish a nation in Palestine and that was fulfilled in 1948. Zechariah 14:9-14 shows that at the time of Jesus Christ's return, descendants of the tribe of **Judah (not Israel)** will be physically living in the Jerusalem area.

Most people do not realize that the Jews are not the only modern descendants of the ancient nation ruled by King David. After the division of the united, twelve-tribed kingdom under David and Solomon, **the Jews ceased to be a part of the kingdom named Israel**. From that point in time, the Jews of Judah and the Israelites of Israel had separate national histories. To locate all the modern descendants of the ancient nation ruled by King David, one would have to locate all the modern descendants of the ten tribes of Israel! When the modern descendants of the

ancient ten tribes of Israel are identified later in this book, the reader will see that King David ruled over the forefathers of many modern nations!

All modern descendants of the ancient tribes of Israel are Israelites in a **racial sense** as all have descended from the man Israel, whose original name was Jacob (Genesis 32:28).

However, in a **national and prophetic sense**, the term "Israel" does not apply to Jews from the time of the divided kingdom forward. After that time, the Bible refers to Jews with the terms "Judah" or "the House of Judah." The Bible uses the terms "Israel" or "the House of Israel" to refer to descendants of the non-Jewish, northern ten tribes of Israel.

The above digression was lengthy, but very important. The biblically correct distinction between the terms "Israel" and "Judah (Jew)" is an essential one to make early in this book, not only to understand the size of Israel in David's time, but also to understand the rest of the subject material which will be presented in this book. Now back to our narrative.

At the conclusion of Israel's momentous victory over the combined powers of Ammon, Syria, Assyria and other allied nations, King David was in a position of hegemony over the ancient mideastern world. Israel's military supremacy on land was united with Phoenicia's maritime supremacy. David was at the height of his glory, and there was no nation left with the power to challenge him. His attention now turned to his personal "pet" project: building a grand temple to honor the God of Israel. While God did not allow David to actually build the Temple (II Samuel 7:1-13), he was allowed to make preparations for its construction during the reign of his son, Solomon. These preparations were prodigious, indeed. With vast war booty, tribute payments pouring in from vassal nations, and access to raw materials throughout the world via the maritime routes of

his Phoenician allies, David amassed everything imaginable for the Temple of God. Just how widespread these Phoenician contacts were will now be made apparent.

David's prodigious temple preparations and his instructions to Solomon to implement the construction are recorded in I Chronicles 22:1-16. David accumulated "**great stores of iron for nails and clamps**" (RSV), showing that what secular historians have called the "iron age" was well under way by the beginning of the first millennium B.C. He also accumulated "**bronze in quantities beyond weighing,**" (RSV) so David also accumulated massive stockpiles of copper ores and refined copper products for Solomon to utilize in his reign. He also amassed much cedar wood through his alliance with the city-states of Tyre and Sidon. In the course of his wars, David had collected large amounts of gold and silver from tributary nations, and verse 14 quotes David as summing up his temple preparations with these words:

*"With great pains I have provided for the house of the Lord a hundred thousand talents of gold and a million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond weighing, for there is so much of it; timber and stone too have I provided." (RSV)*

The total of 100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000 talents of silver was the amount dedicated just for temple use! One can only imagine how much gold and silver were available in the national treasury after David's many successful wars!

Disagreement exists concerning the exact weight of the talent at David's time, but by any definition of a talent, the amount of gold and silver dedicated by David for temple use was worth billions of dollars (in modern valuations). I Chronicles 29:2 also adds that David accumulated "wood...onyx...and all manner of

precious stones, and marble stones in abundance” for use in the temple project as well.

There is one obvious question that needs to be asked. Where did the massive amounts of copper ore originate from which David’s artisans made brass (or bronze) products so numerous that they were “beyond weighing?” Since David’s workmen did weigh the gold and silver stockpiles (the latter being one million talents), the copper and iron stockpiles obviously had to far exceed the precious metals stockpiles to be considered “beyond weighing.” How many millions of talents of iron and copper ores were needed to reach an amount “beyond weighing?” The vast amounts of gold and silver were obviously imported from elsewhere as a result of war booty, tribute payments and foreign trade. Surely, a vast amount of copper and iron ores could not all come from sources indigenous to the Mideast. Since David was closely allied with the Phoenician city-states, he could import anything he wanted from anywhere the Phoenician trading ships sailed. It is well known that Phoenician ships dominated the commerce of the Mediterranean Sea and that they sailed into the Atlantic Ocean to reach ports in Western Africa and Northwest Europe. Just how far into the Atlantic did they sail?

Now let us examine some historical evidence of particular interest to modern American readers. The book, *Bronze Age America*, by the late Dr. Barry Fell, Professor Emeritus of Harvard University, documents that copper trading between North America and the Old World existed prior to and during the reign of King David. His book cites evidence from ancient inscriptions that Norse kings carried on a copper trade with the New World in the St. Lawrence River area as early as 1700 B.C., seven centuries prior to the reign of King David over Israel!<sup>26</sup> Citing “inscriptions cut in the ancient Tifinag and ogam consaine alphabets, using an early form of the Norse tongue...”<sup>27</sup> which

were found in Ontario, Canada, Dr. Fell confirms the presence of Old World traders in the St. Lawrence River/Great Lakes Region long before the nation of Israel ever existed! Tifinag and Ogam are both Old World alphabets. If ancient Old World civilizations traded with the inhabitants of North America, could the mercantile Phoenicians have been far behind?

Dr. Fell documents the existence of ancient Phoenician inscriptions at a site known as "Mystery Hill" in New Hampshire. He observes that "carbon analyses point to periods of occupation of the Mystery Hill site extending back to the second millennium B.C." <sup>28</sup> One of the chambers at Mystery Hill "was dedicated to the Phoenician god Baal," <sup>29</sup> and ancient inscriptions at this site indicate that it was inhabited and/or frequented by ancient Celts, Iberians and Phoenicians from the Old World over many centuries. <sup>30</sup> There is a great deal more material about both this site and the Phoenician presence in the Old World, but they will be more appropriately addressed in chapters two and three. In the present context of David's massive accumulation of copper ores for the Jerusalem Temple project, suffice it to say that it is clearly evident that the Old World traded with the New World in the American/Canadian Great Lakes region during (and long before) the reign of King David, and that David's allies, the Phoenicians, were included in that region's international commerce. There is evidence that some of David's copper ore stockpiles came from the Phoenicians' North American trading routes. The following is cited from Dr. Fell's book, *Bronze Age America*:

*"There are also quite independent...reasons for thinking that ancient European voyagers came to America. They concern the mining of metals. For the past twenty years leading mining engineers and university metallurgists*

have been seeking from archaeologists an explanation of a most baffling mystery in the history of mining technology. So far no answer has been found. Around the northern shore of Lake Superior, and on the adjacent Isle Royale, there are approximately 5,000 ancient copper mine workings. In 1953 and 1956 Professor Roy Drier led two Michigan Mining and Technology expeditions to the sites. Charcoal found at the bases of the ancient mining pits yielded radiocarbon dates indicating that the mines had been operated between 2000 B.C. and 1000 B.C....**The most conservative estimates by mining engineers show that at least 500 million pounds of metallic copper were removed over that time span, and there is no evidence as to what became of it.**"<sup>31</sup>  
(Emphasis added.)

The date of 1000 B.C. is most significant. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* states, concerning King David's reign, that "it used to be reckoned from 1055-1015 B.C., but it is now generally fixed at about 1010-970 B.C."<sup>32</sup> *Harper's Bible Dictionary* cites David's reign as being "from ca. 1010 to 970 B.C."<sup>33</sup> Since the date 1000 B.C. coincides with David's reign over Israel, it is very likely that part of this Lake Superior copper was used to satisfy David's voracious appetite for raw materials to be dedicated for temple purposes. King David and Israel were likely the biggest customers in the world for copper and many other raw materials at that time. Solomon's building projects eventually went far beyond anything David himself envisioned, so the demand upon available world sources of raw materials in their reigns must

have been immense indeed! With this in mind, it is significant that **these ancient Lake Superior copper mines were apparently worked to exhaustion during the reign of King David, precisely the time frame in which David was stockpiling copper ores “beyond calculation” for the construction of the Temple for God!** Since the North American copper mines had been known to the Old World for centuries before David lived, and since there is evidence that Phoenician ships called at ancient North American ports, the means to transport Lake Superior copper ores to King David of Israel did exist.

The observation that “there is no evidence as to what became of it” (meaning there is no evidence that this ancient North American copper was used in ancient North America) can now be answered from the Bible. The Bible declares that ancient Israel, under King David, was massively stockpiling copper ores around 1000 B.C. Secular sources have confirmed the North American copper mines ran out of ore around 1000 B.C. The connection between the two is obvious: much of the ancient North American copper was shipped to ancient Israel and used in the construction of the Temple for God in Israel. Consider the following quotation about these ancient North American copper mines, also from Dr. Fell’s book, *Bronze Age America*:

*“Archaeologists have maintained that there was no Bronze Age in Northern America and that no contacts with the outside world occurred. On the other hand the mineralogists find themselves obliged to take a different view: it is impossible, they argue, for so large a quantity of metal to have vanished through wear and tear. And since no large numbers of copper artifacts have been recovered from*



*American archaeological sites, they conclude that the missing metal may have been shipped overseas.”<sup>34</sup>*

It must be remembered that the Phoenicians had the primary maritime shipping fleet at the time, and King David was closely allied to the Phoenicians. Given these facts, King David and the Israelites would have received preferential allocation of whatever was being shipped in Phoenician ships.

Corroborating evidence is found in the fact that ancient Israel was a major user of copper ores at the time. Such evidence is found in the remains of the smelting facilities at Ezion-Geber (in southern Israel), termed:

*“the biggest smelting installations in the ancient East...consisting of a regular ultramodern furnace with a system of air channels, chimney flues, and openings for specific purposes.”<sup>35</sup>*

Concerning the excavation of these same smelting facilities in ancient Israel, Werner Keller, in his book *The Bible as History*, states the following:

*“...remains of an extensive settlement were excavated. The most interesting things were casting-moulds and a vast quantity of copper slag...In the middle of a square walled enclosure an extensive building came into view. The green discolouration on the walls left no doubt as to the purpose of the building: it was a blast furnace. The mud-brick walls had two rows of openings. They were flues: a skillful system of air passages was included in the construction. **The whole***

***thing was a proper up-to-date blast furnace, built in accordance with a principle that celebrated its resurrection in modern industry a century ago as the Bessemer system. Flues and chimneys both lay along a north to south axis. For the incessant winds and storms from the Wadi el-Arabah had to take over the role of bellows.***<sup>36</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Werner Keller also notes the following:

*"Nowhere else in the Fertile Crescent, neither in Babylonia or Egypt, was such a great furnace to be found... Ezion-Geber was the Pittsburgh of old Palestine."*<sup>37</sup>

Werner Keller dates this great ancient blast furnace to "within the period of Solomon's reign, after 1000 B.C."<sup>38</sup> While Solomon (whose building projects dwarfed those of David) surely utilized this blast furnace complex to a greater extent than David, the reign of David includes the period of 1000-970 B.C. This blast furnace was probably begun in the reign of King David to smelt and process the iron and copper ores into instruments for Solomon's use in building the Temple of God.

Due to ancient Israel's mastery of the Bessemer system, it was likely one of the most industrially advanced civilizations of the ancient world. Since Israel had a massive smelting facility (around 1000 B.C.) to process the copper ore which could easily be brought by the Phoenicians from the New World, the evidence is strong that it was Israel's demand for raw materials which exhausted the ancient copper mines (around 1000 B.C.) in the Lake Superior region of North America. Indeed, the symmetry between biblical records and secular archeological discoveries is

profound, conveying great credibility on the Bible's overall accuracy!

Most people have mistakenly assumed that ancient Israel was a weak, agrarian kingdom. While it was a key agricultural power, it has not been generally realized that, under Kings David and Solomon, it became the most advanced industrial power of that time. Archaeological evidence that ancient Israel had the largest ore smelting facility in the Fertile Crescent further confirms the conclusion of this book that King David's kingdom of Israel was the dominant ancient "superpower" of the time. When one considers the national strengths of the Israelites, it is hard to imagine their being anything else!

To begin with, they were self-sufficient in food, and were a major food exporter. They had a huge land force which had defeated the Assyrian Empire, as indicated in the Bible and attested to by historical records that the Assyrian Empire was, indeed, defeated and weak during the reigns of King David and Solomon. Israel was allied to the world's most powerful naval and maritime power, the Phoenicians. Israel was also in control of the important surface commerce routes between Africa, Asia and Europe which intersected in the Mideast. Their possession of the largest smelting facility of the time also indicates their commercial and military dominance. With the largest ore smelting capacity, they could make more trade goods and weaponry than anyone else.

Near the end of David's reign, David's sons began to conspire and compete for the right to succeed David as King of Israel, and the nation's leadership and the armed forces were divided on the issue. In fact, Solomon was crowned king even as his half-brother Adonijah was plotting to have himself crowned king with the cooperation of Joab, the army commander, and Abiathar the priest. Nathan the prophet, Zadok the priest, and Benaiah, the

head of David's personal bodyguards, remained loyal to Solomon (I Kings 1:5-46).

Soon after Solomon came to power, he had Adonijah and Joab executed and Abiathar the priest banished from his office (I Kings 2:13-34). In both cases, the executioner was Benaiah, the captain of David's bodyguards. King David died soon after Solomon's coronation. A significant commentary is made in I Kings 1:35 about the events that gave the crown to Solomon. At the end of David's reign, he said of Solomon: "I have appointed him to be ruler over **Israel** and **Judah**." (Emphasis added.)

This comment indicates that even though the united tribes of Israel rose to national greatness under King David, Israel (the northern ten tribes) and Judah (Judah and the tribe of Benjamin) were still regarded as separate entities who had consented to follow one king. This comment reveals that the union of Israel and Judah remained tenuous, held together only by (A) their loyalty to Kings David and Solomon and (B) their mutual fear of God. Their union lasted only as long as these kings led the nation in obeying God and his laws. The cohesion of Israel and Judah ceased soon after Solomon died.

There is a clear lesson for all nations, ancient and modern, in the history of Israel and Judah. While national greatness is a direct result of obedience to God and his laws, national decline is a direct result of disobedience to God. The decline may be gradual, but it is also inexorable.

Let us now return to the transition from the rule of King David to the rule of King Solomon. As Solomon became king, other nations saw David's son killing his own half-brother and his father's army commander as part of his initial acts. Seeing this, they had reason to believe that Solomon was going to be like his militaristic father, even though Solomon proved to be a peaceful ruler.

While other nations likely anticipated that Solomon would try to make a name for himself through conquest as his father did, Solomon emerged as a builder and a scientist. However, it did not hurt the security of his position that he came to power cloaked in David's bloody mantle and feared reputation.

This brings to an end the 40 year rule of King David (I Kings 2:11). David united Israel into a cohesive unit, and (with God's favor) transformed it into an ancient "superpower." This initial chapter sets the stage for the remaining chapters of this book, and clearly shows that the ancient Israelites were not an obscure people in the ancient world, as many have assumed. At the time of David's death, they were the dominant power on earth, with huge military resources, lordship over many vassal nations, an advanced industrial technology, control of both overland and maritime trade routes, and a close alliance with the dominant maritime power of that time. These facts had to be established early in this book so the reader could realize that the historical narratives of the Bible describe the interactions of the great powers of the ancient world, not insignificant events which impacted only a few people in ancient Palestine.

Let us now examine the truly spectacular reign of King Solomon.

## Endnotes: Chapter One

1. George Rawlinson, *Phoenicia*, pp. 155-164
2. *Ibid*, pp. 95, 154
3. Moscati, *An Introduction To The Comparative Grammar Of The Semitic Languages*, pp. 7-10
4. Rawlinson, *Phoenicia*, p. 24 (citing Renan, *Histoire des Langues Semitiques*, pp. 189-190)
5. *Ibid*, pp. 327-328
6. *Ibid*, p. 23
7. *Ibid*, pp. 56, 89
8. *Ibid*, p. 91
9. *Ibid*, p. 91
10. Hitti, *Short History of the Near East*, p. 28
11. *Collier's Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2, "Babylonia and Assyria," p. 637
12. Halley, *Halley's Bible Handbook*, p. 134
13. Ragozin, *Assyria*, pp. 46-56
14. *Ibid*, p. 60
15. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 2 "Assyria," p. 536
16. *Ibid*, p. 537
17. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 2, "Babylonia and Assyria," p. 849
18. *Ibid*, Vol. 2, "Arameans," p. 213
19. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, see "Aram," p. 43
20. Moscati, *An Introduction To The Comparative Grammar Of The Semitic Languages*, pp. 7, 10
21. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, see "Aramaic," p. 43
22. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 2, "Assyria," p. 537
23. Ragozin, *Assyria*, p. 147
24. *Ibid*, p. 147
25. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, "Cherethites" and "Pelethites," pp. 161 and 768
26. Fell, *Bronze Age America*, pp. 36-49
27. *Ibid*, p. 37

28. Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 85
29. *Ibid*, p. 90
30. *Ibid*, pp. 81-92
31. Fell, *Bronze Age America*, p. 261
32. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 7, "David," p. 75
33. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, "David," p. 208
34. Fell, *Bronze Age America*, p. 261
35. von Daniken, *Chariots of the Gods*, pp. 61-62
36. Keller, *The Bible As History*, pp. 199-202
37. *Ibid*, pp. 202-203
38. *Ibid*, p. 203

## 2. King Solomon and the “Golden Age” of Israel

As Solomon became king, he could scarcely have come to the throne under more favorable circumstances. The military security of the nation was unchallenged, and the nation was peaceful and prosperous. I Kings 4:20-26 describes it as follows:

*Judah and Israel were as many as the sand by the sea; they ate and drank and were happy. Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt; they brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life...For he had dominion over all the region west of the Euphrates From Tiphseh to Gaza; and he had peace on all sides round about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt in safety, from Dan even to Beersheba... Solomon also had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.” (RSV)*

This account pictures the tribes of Israel as numerous, prosperous and secure from military threats. However, its listing of “Judah and Israel” as distinct entities within the kingdom confirms that the tribes of Israel were still divided into these two groupings, even though they both acknowledged Solomon as their king.

The area directly ruled by Solomon extended from the Euphrates River to Egypt. *Harper’s Bible Dictionary* comments that “Tiphseh...is probably modern Dibseh on the west bank of the Euphrates river”<sup>1</sup> This would place Solomon’s northern border (on a modern map) in the region where Northern Syria borders Southern Turkey. The statement that Solomon ruled “all the region west of the Euphrates” confirms that the Syrian/Aramaean kings (conquered by King David) in that region



remained subordinate vassals to King Solomon. Since David had also conquered Syrian (Aramaeans) who lived "east of the Euphrates" (I Chronicles 19:16-19), it is possible that King Solomon also had Aramaean vassals east of the Euphrates River as well.

In chapter one, the likely Israelite role in the subjugation of Assyria during the reigns of Kings David and Solomon was noted. Secular history records that "Aramaeans" from the west invaded Mesopotamia at that time; however, the Aramaeans were vassals of Kings David and Solomon. Much of Mesopotamia would have been under Israelite hegemony under Solomon's rule as Assyria was eclipsed by Israelite power during the reigns of King David and Solomon. Assyria emerged from obscurity only after the Israelite Civil War which split Israel and Judah into warring nations and sapped their power. The fact that Assyria was unable to reassert itself until after the Israelite Civil War further attests that it was Israelite power which kept Assyria weak during the reign of Solomon.

The Bible also adds, "he had peace on all sides round about him." This further confirms Assyria's weakness during Solomon's reign, and that it was in no condition to challenge Solomon militarily. Also, there was likely an economic reason why Assyria was then under Israelite dominance. King Solomon's Israel controlled the critical overland trade routes between Africa, Asia and Europe which met in the Mideast. Solomon was also closely allied with the Phoenicians, who had a virtual monopoly over many of maritime trade routes. If Assyria (or any other nation) became hostile to Israel, they would have quickly been frozen out of much of the mercantile traffic of the ancient world. Therefore, Israel's peaceful prosperity during the reign of Solomon resulted from economic advantages as well as sheer military strength.

The above passage recorded that Solomon's military strength included "40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots and 12,000 horsemen." The Bible indicates neither how many horses were allocated for each chariot nor how many horses were accommodated in each stall. Therefore, it is impossible to calculate the number of Solomon's chariots. However, it is clear that his chariot force numbered in the thousands or tens of thousands. The "12,000 horsemen" is hardly the number of soldiers available to Solomon as his father King David could muster 1,370,000 warriors (II Samuel 24:1-9) when all reserves were mobilized. The 12,000 horsemen were either a standing army force or a detachment of cavalry which was assigned to the chariot forces.

I Kings 3:5-14 indicates that Solomon began his reign with a humble heart, and a childlike desire to obey and please God. God himself appeared to him "in a dream" and said, "ask what I shall give you." Most people would request wealth or power. Since Solomon was a king, he could conceivably have asked to "rule the world" through great conquests. It is indicative of Solomon's excellent attitude that he asked the following:

*"Thou hast shown great and steadfast love to thy servant David my father, because he walked before thee in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward thee...And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people whom thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered or counted for multitude. Give thy servant therefore an understanding*

*heart to govern thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to govern this thy great people?"*

What a beautiful attitude! Conquests, wealth and personal greatness were not priorities for him. God was so pleased that Solomon had put the welfare of his subjects before personal aggrandizement that he pronounced the following blessing on Solomon in verses 11-13:

*"And God said to him, 'Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, behold I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, **so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you.** I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that **no other king shall compare with you, all your days.**'"*

As we shall see, God kept these promises to King Solomon, in ways our modern world has not appreciated or grasped! It is important, at the outset of this chapter, to point out that God essentially promised to make Solomon the wisest, most brilliant human being to ever walk the earth and to be the greatest king on the planet during his lifetime! It is even more important to understand that Solomon received this awesome promise because of his excellent attitude toward God. Solomon's legendary wisdom was a direct gift from God, not a result of favorable genetics. God's reaction to Solomon's request was consistent with God's New Testament instruction in Matthew 6:33 that people should "seek first the kingdom of God and his

righteousness; and all these things [material blessings] shall be added unto you.” Solomon made righteousness his top priority, and God added material blessings as a direct result. This illustration is an example of the continuity of God’s responses to mankind in both the Old and New Testaments.

With this introduction, let us examine how God fulfilled this promise to Solomon, and what happened to Solomon after he received these gifts.

Faced with no serious military threats, Solomon could turn the boundless wealth of the nation into financing peacetime pursuits. His principal project was the construction of the Temple for God, for which David had stockpiled immense wealth and material. This was such a vast project that it took seven years to complete (I Kings 6:37-38).

As soon as King Hiram of Tyre heard that David was dead, he hastened to send ambassadors to Solomon to ensure that he stayed in the good graces of Israel’s new monarch (I Kings 5:1). Solomon was eager to continue the close relationship between Israel and the city-states of Phoenicia. The fact that Hiram initiated this action to stay in favorable relations with Israel confirms that Israel’s power was superior to that of Phoenicia, as a lesser power will typically seek favor with a greater power to protect its interests.

Kings Solomon and Hiram pooled their national resources on the Temple construction project for which David had stockpiled so many materials. In fact, the Temple construction project led to intimate cooperation between Israel and the Phoenician city-states as armies of workmen from each country worked in the other’s territory. The account of the Israelite-Phoenician labors on the project is found in I Kings 5:2-18.

This project was so large that Solomon instituted a peacetime draft to generate sufficient manpower to do the necessary work.

This draft resulted in 30,000 Israelites (divided into three monthly shifts) working in Phoenicia's territory on a regular basis. Solomon also had 150,000 conscripts who worked for 3,300 Israelite officers. That these laborers are numbered separately from the 30,000 Israelite workers and the 3,600 Israelite officers indicates that these laborers were non-Israelites. II Chronicles 8:7-9 confirms this conclusion as it lists non-Israelite nations which were required to contribute laborers for Solomon's projects, and verse 9 adds that Solomon did not conscript Israelites as involuntary workers for his projects. It is apparent that Israelites performed work in Phoenicia, but that non-Israelites were conscripted to serve in an even larger labor force.

The above arrangement indicates that the small Phoenician city-states had no ready reserves of manpower to devote to such a large project as the building of the Temple of God. Solomon had to export Israelite workers to Phoenicia in order to have sufficient workers in Phoenicia to cut the timbers required for the Temple. The small population of the Phoenician city-states and the much larger population of Israel will become an important factor when we later examine the scope and nature of the "Phoenician" empire.

Since the Temple project took 7 years to complete, and the period of conscript labor lasted only three months, it seems apparent that many thousands of Israelites had a chance to work on this project as they took turns rotating through the three months of required national service on the Temple project. In instituting a short period of conscript labor for Israelite citizens, Solomon made certain that all the tribes of Israel equally shared the burdens of this gargantuan public works project.

The Temple project served as a unifying force to cement the alliance between Israel's tribes and the Phoenician city-states. I

Kings 5:6 and 18 record that Israelites routinely worked in Phoenician territory, and that Phoenicians from Tyre (King Hiram's servants), Sidon and Gebal (see RSV) worked side by side with the Israelites. Massive rafts were built to float the cedar timbers to Israel via the Mediterranean Sea, and artisans of Phoenicia worked side-by-side with Israelites at the Temple site in Jerusalem. This extraordinarily close working relationship was greatly facilitated by the two nations sharing both a common racial and linguistic heritage (as was documented in chapter one). This ability to quickly integrate the labor forces of both nations confirms that there were minimal linguistic differences between the Israelites and the Phoenicians.

While the Temple itself was the focal point of this mutual construction effort, many auxiliary buildings (treasure buildings, granaries for the Levites, livestock holding pens for sacrificial offerings, residential areas for the priests, etc.) were undoubtedly built to support the Temple activities. After the Temple complex was finished, this joint Israelite-Phoenician labor force worked another thirteen years to complete Solomon's personal palace (I Kings 7:1, II Chronicles 8:1). II Chronicles 8:2 records that Hiram ceded a number of Phoenician cities to King Solomon, and that Solomon settled Israelites in them. The permanent settlement of Israelites in Phoenician cities further accomplished the intermingling of the Israelites and Phoenicians.

Also built were storage cities, military cities, fortifications and other projects throughout Israel, Lebanon and the other lands ruled by Israel, and even a separate palace for Solomon's first wife, a daughter of Egypt's Pharaoh (I Kings 7:1-12, II Chronicles 8:1-6).

Since all the tribes of Israel and the various Phoenician city-states worked together for decades on Solomon's immense building projects, these projects would have united the Israelites

and Phoenicians, for all intents and purposes, into a single entity. Cultural and linguistic differences would become less noticeable as they lived and worked in such close association with one another for twenty years. While certain differences in culture and dialect would remain, members of other nations would have had increased difficulty in distinguishing between the two peoples. This will become an important factor when we examine the secular records about the "Phoenicians."

Solomon had other concurrent interests besides building projects. I Kings 4:29-33 records:

*"God gave Solomon great wisdom and understanding, and a mind with broad interests. In fact, his wisdom excelled that of any of the wise men of the East, including those of Egypt. He was wiser than...[other versions add "all men"]...and he was famous among all the surrounding nations. He was the author of 3000 proverbs and wrote 1,005 songs. He was a great naturalist, with interest in animals, birds, snakes, fish, and trees - from the great cedars of Lebanon to the tiny hyssop which grows in cracks in the wall. And kings from many lands sent their ambassadors to him for his advice."*

[The Living Bible]

Solomon, as a result of God's divine gift of wisdom, excelled in many fields! He was a ruler, a builder, an author and songwriter, and a naturalist who wanted to study all forms of flora and fauna. The arts flourished under Solomon, who built gardens, had all manner of gold and silver treasures from many nations, and acted as a patron for the best singers and musicians he could find (Ecclesiastes 2:4-10). He was so rich, and had so

much free time, that he literally could “afford to do it all.” His insatiable scientific curiosity led him to collect treasures, art works, singers, musicians, plants, animals, etc. The zoos, museums and cultural activities of his reign must have been incredible. It was truly the “golden age” of the Israelites.

The Living Bible account captures, in modern terms, the fact that Solomon became a scientific naturalist with an interest in studying (examining, collecting, cataloguing) all forms of animal and plant life. However, it has two shortcomings. *The King James* and *Revised Standard Versions* of the Bible state that Solomon was wiser than “all men” and “all other men,” respectively. They also state that Solomon was visited by representatives of “all” kings of the earth. *The Living Bible* is limited in its description of Solomon’s preeminent wisdom and worldwide fame, perhaps a reflection of a modern “apologist” approach toward the Bible’s claims. When we examine evidence from secular accounts, we shall see that the Bible did not resort to exaggeration, but was writing the literal facts about Solomon’s reign.

Projects as vast in scope as Solomon’s could not go unnoticed in either the Mideast or the more distant nations of the earth. Small wonder his fame spread rapidly. He was in close alliance with the Phoenician city-states whose maritime fleets carried news of Solomon’s projects and activities wherever they sailed. Even as the Israelite and Phoenician populations were melded on land due to the vast building projects of Solomon, they also coalesced into one unit at sea. I Kings 9:26-27 states:

*“King Solomon built a fleet of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent with the fleet his servants, seamen who were familiar with the sea, together with the servants of Solomon.”*



Solomon was not content to be a land power alone; he wanted to make Israel a major maritime force in the world as well. Note that this fleet was based on the Red Sea near Ezion-geber, at the precise location of the large ore smelting facility described in chapter one. Naturally, in order to import the ores in sufficient quantity to keep the blast furnaces operating, it made sense to base a large fleet at the site of the industrial activity. It is possible that Solomon's fleet sailed around Africa's Cape of Good Hope to reach the Atlantic Ocean (and the copper mines of North America described in chapter one); however, there is a more likely alternative.

Modern mankind hailed the construction of the Suez Canal as a major engineering achievement, and so it was. However, ancient civilizations had also linked the Mediterranean and Red Seas via a water route on several occasions. Sesostris III, of ancient Egypt, is credited with connecting the Nile River Sea, creating a sea route between the Mediterranean and Red Seas.<sup>2</sup> The Persian Emperor, Darius the Great, in the years 521-486 B.C., is credited with building "a Nile-Red Sea waterway anticipating the Suez Canal."<sup>3</sup> Regarding the ancient Egyptian waterway, it has been dated to approximately 1380 B.C.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, *the Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that "the channel of this canal is still traceable in parts of the Wadi Tumilat, and its direction was frequently followed by the engineers of the fresh-water canal"<sup>5</sup> (i.e. the modern canal). Indeed, efforts to reopen or maintain this ancient waterway are attributed to the Ptolemy Dynasty of Egypt in the third century B.C., the Roman Emperor Trajan (ca. 100 A.D.), and the Moslem rulers of Egypt in the seventh century A.D.<sup>6</sup> Since the Egyptians had established a waterway link from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea before the rule of King Solomon, it is likely that Solomon's Israelite fleet utilized the Egyptian waterway to link Ezion-geber with the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.

Since King Hiram's Phoenicians sailed with the Israelites and taught them maritime navigational skills, the Israelite navy would quickly have gained the skills of the Phoenician navy. Since the Bible records the Phoenicians and Israelites jointly crewed the Israelite ships, it is also likely that Israelites served on the Phoenician ships as well (II Chronicles 9:21 indicates the navies of the nations had commingled crews). Solomon's Red Sea fleet could, of course, easily trade with Africa and Asia via the Indian Ocean. As the Israelites and Phoenicians continued to join forces on both land and sea, they became, for all intents and purposes, a virtual confederation under Solomon's leadership.

Before examining where the joint Phoenician/Israelite navy sailed, one important event of that time must be mentioned. The Pharaoh of Egypt joined the Israelite/Phoenician alliance, making this alliance even more of a "superpower" in the ancient world. I Kings 3:1 notes that Solomon's first wife was a daughter of the Egyptian Pharaoh. Marriage among the royalty of ancient nations was a standard means of cementing an alliance. I Kings 9:16 adds that Pharaoh sent his army to conquer a city and present it to Solomon as a gift (probably a dowry for his daughter's marriage to Solomon). Solomon, the tireless builder, rebuilt the city all over again (I Kings 9:17). With Solomon in a close alliance with King Hiram of Tyre, and with Egypt's Pharaoh now Solomon's father-in-law, Israel, Phoenicia and Egypt became a tripartite alliance under Solomon's leadership.

This alliance is made all the more understandable by secular histories which record that the Egyptians were regular rivals of the Mesopotamian powers which Israel had defeated. Egypt's attitude was basically: "any enemy of the Assyrians is a friend of ours." This, plus the fact that the Egyptians and the Phoenicians were historically on friendly terms,<sup>7</sup> made for a natural alliance among the three powers. Egypt also had a significant maritime

capacity, using descendants of the light-skinned, ancient “sea-peoples” who settled in ancient Libya as their navy’s sailors.<sup>8</sup>

Having established that Israel, Phoenicia and Egypt comprised a joint alliance under Solomon’s direction, we can now examine where the fleets of these three nations sailed, explored and colonized during Solomon’s peaceful reign. As we shall see, Solomon’s rule likely constituted the greatest golden age in the ancient world!

While it is well-known that the Phoenicians traded throughout the Mediterranean as well as into the Atlantic Ocean to western Spain and the tin mines of the ancient British Isles,<sup>9</sup> it has only recently been confirmed that Phoenician contacts and colonization efforts extended to the New World as well. The remarkable discoveries of the extensive Phoenician contacts in the New World are detailed by the late Dr. Barry Fell in his book *America B.C.* While this work will cite pertinent portions of that book, the entire book is recommended to readers with additional interest in this subject matter. Dr. Fell was a professor emeritus of Harvard University, an internationally renowned expert on ancient languages, and the founder of the National Epigraphic Society.

Dr. Fell cited evidence that the Phoenicians had a regular port-of-call off the coast of Maine where an ancient inscription was found which was “coeval [contemporaneous] with Phoenician inscriptions.” He translated this inscription as “Ships of Phoenicia, Cargo Platform,”<sup>10</sup> and added:

*“it is obvious that the flat-topped rocky islet would not have been set aside for the loading and unloading of Phoenician ships were they not regular visitors to America with a predictable timetable of ports of arrival and departure at expected dates.”<sup>11</sup>*

He further added:

*"these inscriptions, therefore, suggest that organized international maritime commerce was well established in the late Bronze Age, that North American ports were listed on the sailing timetables of the overseas vessels of the principal Phoenician shipping companies, and that the same information was circulated to customers in America."*<sup>12</sup>

A substantial colony of Semitic people was planted in America by the Phoenicians as remains of their presence have been found in New England and other parts of America, with a large temple observatory site located at what has been known as Mystery Hill in North Salem, New Hampshire.<sup>13</sup> This site covered approximately twenty acres,<sup>14</sup> and included shrines dedicated to the Phoenician/Canaanite god Baal.<sup>15</sup> A temple site of twenty acres gives us a clear indication that the Phoenicians had a major presence in the New World. Dr. Fell dated inscriptions at this temple of Baal to approximately 800-600 B.C.<sup>16</sup>, although radiocarbon dating of charcoal samples from this site show it to have been inhabited "back to the second millennium B.C."<sup>17</sup>

Such dates are entirely consistent with biblical accounts of the Israelite/Phoenicians. Since Kings David and Solomon were worshippers of God when they dominated the Phoenicians during the tenth century B.C., one would not expect to see pagan temples develop on the site until well after their reign. A dating of 800-600 B.C. includes the time when the Bible states Baal worship was widespread in both Israel and the Phoenician city-states. It is logical that the same pagan religion would be dominant in their contemporary colonies.

Unfortunately, much physical damage was done to this ancient temple site in New England before it was realized to be a

priceless archeological site confirming the presence of Old World civilizations in the New World. This ancient site was composed of "stone-slab chambers and associated henge stones"<sup>18</sup> for determining the times of spring and winter solstices. These stone structures were substantially dismantled during the 1800's, and the stones were reused to build walls, dams and bridges in New England. Indeed, during the years 1823-1848 alone, "about 40 of the stone structures were destroyed or damaged severely by building contractors."<sup>19</sup> Dr. Fell observed, concerning walls built with stones from this ancient site, that their original use as an ancient temple site was "abundantly attested by the number of temple dedications we have since found in [these] stone walls."<sup>20</sup> That ancient Old World Semitic civilizations built a large temple observatory complex in ancient America indicates that they were colonizing, not merely exploring, ancient America. Radiocarbon dating tests showing this facility was in use during the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium B.C. confirms that this Semitic colony was present in North America at the time King David was importing prodigious amounts of copper ore for the building of God's Temple. The presence of a large Semitic settlement in North America during King David's reign confirms the likelihood that King David's Israel (with its huge copper smelting facility at Ezion-geber) was the consignee for the many millions of pounds of copper ores which "vanished" from the ancient Lake Superior copper mines.

The ships of Tarshish (referred to in Ezekiel 27:25 and Jonah 1:3) were also regular callers in the New World, and inscriptions and tablets of their involvement in colonizing ancient America was preserved in Rhode Island, Ohio, and West Virginia.<sup>21</sup> This identification is dependent on "Tarshish" being the same as ancient "Tartessus" on the Iberian Peninsula of ancient Europe. Fell notes that the Tartessian inscriptions in ancient America are a "dialectal variant of Phoenician,"<sup>22</sup> confirming that these early

American visitors were also Semites from the Mediterranean area.

The reader might justifiably be wondering at this point, given the extensive evidence of Old World civilizations in ancient America, why America's history books haven't been updated with this new information. The reason is, unfortunately, that the modern academic establishment is in a state of denial regarding these discoveries because they are uncomfortable with these facts.

Dr. Fell noted that some archaeologists have tried to dismiss clearly readable ancient American inscriptions as "accidental markings made by plowshares and roots of trees... (and)... colonial stonecutting drills."<sup>23</sup> Ancient American dolmens (megalithic monuments consisting of a large slab stone positioned atop smaller supporting stones) which parallel Old World dolmens have been labeled as glacial "erratics"<sup>24</sup> to avoid facing the obvious evidence of Old World ties to ancient America. It is most unfortunate that members of modern academia have gone to such fanciful extremes to maintain their state of denial regarding the evidence of Old World civilizations in ancient America. The truly exciting story of ancient America's history has been withheld from the American public.

Unfortunately, the concept that "Columbus discovered America in 1492" has become such a cherished dogma that it appears to demand an almost superstitious devotion by modern academics. Columbus was a very brave mariner, but he was clearly preceded by other discoverers and colonists from the Old World who arrived and settled thousands of years prior his arrival.

Columbus' voyage was a courageous effort which reestablished links to the New World after the Dark Ages, but it is now known that such links commonly existed prior to his voyage.

So far, we have discussed only the Phoenician inscriptions and presence in the New World. As noted earlier, the ancient

Egyptians were also allies of King Solomon during his reign. Their navies were also skilled in oceanic navigation, utilizing the Semitic inhabitants of ancient Libya as their mariners. The ancient Egyptian/Libyan fleets sailed across the Indian Ocean and sent exploration and mining expeditions into the Pacific Ocean. The Egyptians mined gold in Sumatra,<sup>25</sup> and records of their Pacific explorations are found as far as the Hawaiian Islands.<sup>26</sup> It is also noted that "the Egyptians roamed the Indian and Pacific Oceans for **gold about 1000 B.C.**"<sup>27</sup> The date "about 1000 B.C." is significant as that is the timeframe when the united kingdom of Israel, under Kings David and Solomon, moved to world prominence, with the Phoenicians and Egyptians serving as Solomon's allies. That the Egyptian fleet would be searching a large portion of the world for gold during a time which included the reign of King Solomon will become most significant when we examine (later in this chapter) King Solomon's virtually insatiable appetite for gold!

So far, we have only scratched the surface of the subject of ancient civilizations being present in North America. Let us examine another aspect of their presence in the ancient New World.

Consider the languages of the tripartite alliance spoken of by the historical writers of the Bible. Their languages included the Semitic language shared by the Israelites and Phoenicians (with dialectal differences), Egyptian, and the language of the North African/Libyan sailors of the Egyptian navy. Let us now examine evidence that North America was both widely explored and colonized by people speaking Phoenician/Hebrew, Egyptian, and ancient Libyan.

Dr. Fell's book *America B.C.* includes much evidence of the exploration of American soil by ancient people with the above language groups. We have already examined evidence from his

book that the Phoenicians had a significant presence in North America, and that the Phoenician god Baal was worshipped at an ancient temple site in New Hampshire. Rawlinson cited the habit of the Phoenicians in bringing their religion wherever they went, and building temples in their colonies to honor their deities,<sup>28</sup> so the existence of a temple dedicated to Baal at the ancient New England temple site is consistent with their habits.

Apparently, ancient explorations and settlements were concentrated on the major inland waterways of America, as much of the evidence of their presence has been found in such locales. A major archeological find, a stele inscribed with ancient Old World languages, was found in 1874 near Davenport, Iowa. Unfortunately, this New World equivalent of the Rosetta Stone was largely ignored because no one could read it. Also, the false dogma that no Old World explorers prior to Columbus could have been on our continent affected people's perceptions. If it had been discovered in Europe, it would surely have been recognized for what it was: a trilingual archeological stele of ancient cultures. Since it was found in Iowa of the United States, it had to wait approximately a century to be understood. Interestingly, one of the reasons the stele was initially rejected was that it contained "some signs resembling Hebrew and others resembling Phoenician."<sup>29</sup>

This ancient stele contains joint inscriptions in three ancient Languages: Iberian-Punic (a language related to and descended from Phoenician and Hebrew), Egyptian, and ancient Libyan.<sup>30</sup>

**These are the language groups of the tripartite alliance which the Bible reveals began in the reign of Solomon! Since the ancient Iowan stele shows these groups were traveling and working together as far from the Mideast as the interior of North America indicates that this alliance clearly did have the international power and impact the**



## **Bible attributes to it.**

Indeed, Dr. Fell described this stele as "one of the most important steles ever discovered."<sup>31</sup> Why then, is this priceless evidence of ancient explorations in North America not proclaimed in textbooks everywhere? Again, we are confronted by the fact that modern academia has an almost superstitious attachment to the false dogma that nobody could have discovered America before Columbus. This dogma has been believed so long that all evidence of Old World explorations and colonizations prior to Columbus is conveniently "lost" in the denial mechanisms of the modern educational system.

The stele found in Iowa demonstrates that the language groups of King Solomon's alliance were, indeed, working together in the New World, and that their explorations reached deep into ancient American territory. Unless it was a well-established practice for the nations with these language groups to be working together, there would have been no need for parallel inscriptions on the same stone carving. Dr. Fell dates this stele as follows:

*"The date is unlikely to be earlier than about 800 B.C., for we do not know of Iberian or Libyan inscriptions earlier than that date. The Egyptian text...may merely be a local American copy of some original. That original could be as old as about 1400 B.C., to judge by the writing style...it seems clear that Iberian and Punic speakers were living in Iowa in the 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C...."*<sup>32</sup>

This broad dating is consistent with biblical information, and confirms biblical accounts of the period. That these language groups were acting in such close concert with each other that they left a trilingual inscription in approximately 800-900 B.C. indicates that they had been cooperating together for a

considerable period of time. As the Bible reveals, an alliance of these linguistic groups was established under King Solomon during the tenth century B.C. The terms "Iberian" and "Punic" indicate languages which are closely related to and descended from the Phoenician/Hebrew language of King Hiram's and King Solomon's navies. Indeed, the term "Iberian" comes from the name "Eber," the forefather of the Hebrews. The term "Iberian" proclaims Hebrew roots. Dr. Fell specifically noted the "Phoenician character" of the Iberian inscriptions.<sup>33</sup> If the Egyptian text on the stele was a copy from an earlier Egyptian original dating as early as 1400 B.C., we are well within the period of time when the Bible states that Egypt joined itself to the Israelite/Phoenician alliance (the tenth century B.C.).

It must also be realized that in 800 B.C., the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were both still in existence. As we will note in the next chapter, the Phoenician/Israelites had extensive settlements in the Iberian Peninsula (modern Spain and Portugal), and this New World stele may have been made by explorer/colonists who set forth from these Iberian settlements. Indeed, a date of 800 B.C. for this stele indicates the ancient tripartite alliance of Israel, Phoenicia and Egypt lasted well beyond the lifetime of King Solomon. The Bible reveals that Israel forsook worshipping the Creator God after Solomon's death and adopted the religious customs of other nations, particularly the Phoenicians and Egyptians. I Kings 16:29-31 shows Israel and Phoenicia were closely allied during the reign of King Ahab of Israel (circa 850 B.C.), and there is no evidence that their alliance suffered a breach until approximately 721 B.C. when Israel ceased to be a nation in the Mideast. Also, after Israel and Judah split into two separate Hebrew kingdoms, Egypt did fight periodic wars with Judah, but there is no mention that Egypt and Israel fought any wars during that time. Therefore, the Iowa stele that these ancient nations were still working together around 800 B.C. in

the New World is consistent with biblical accounts.

This ancient lowan stele does not reflect any worship of the true God but rather depicts and describes a pagan sun-worship ceremony involving human sacrifice. This supports the contention that the stele does not date from the reign of King Solomon (when God was honored), but dates from a more recent period (such as 850 B.C.) when these nations were all united in pagan practices. As the Bible makes clear, the Israelites of 850 B.C. were steeped in the worship of Baal and pagan practices.

Dr. Fell also wrote that this ancient stele, along with other "associated artifacts," was found in an lowan "mound burial"<sup>34</sup> That this "mound burial" from the ninth century B.C. confirms the presence of Semites in ancient America, begs the following question: How many other burial mounds in ancient North America were placed there by Old World cultures?

Another stele exhibiting an ancient Egypto-Libyan script was found on Long Island, New York. This inscription, according to Dr. Fell, "probably dates from about the ninth century B.C."<sup>35</sup> In his discussion of the inscriptions found on the Davenport and Long Island steles, Dr. Fell notes clear similarities between the written script of the Micmac/Algonquin Indians and that of ancient Egypt."<sup>36</sup> Some of his analysis indicates that the Egyptians continued trading with ancient American inhabitants long after the kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians.

Additionally, another stele was unearthed in Oklahoma with reference to the Phoenician and Egyptian gods of Baal and Ra, with an inscription described as "an extract from the *Hymn to the Aton* by Pharaoh Akhnaton [which]...dates from the thirteenth century B.C."<sup>37</sup> This stele is written in Iberian-Punic (related to Hebrew/Phoenician), and is dated by Fell as "scarcely older than 800 B.C."<sup>38</sup> This stele also supports the Biblical account of Israelite/Phoenician/Egyptian cooperation, and further indicates

that this cooperation survived long after the death of Solomon. Further evidence of ancient international commercial contacts is found in the discovery of copper ingots in ancient burial mounds in Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana and Kentucky.<sup>39</sup> The same type of copper ingots (shaped like four-limbed animal hides) are also found in Old World archeological sites as well, indicating that they served as a acceptable form of ancient currency on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

So far, we have seen clear evidence that Baal-worshipping Hebrew/Phoenicians were in ancient America, but what about worshippers of the true God of Israel? One major barrier to finding relics of worshippers of God (Yahweh) is that such worshippers were forbidden by God to build elaborate altars. In Exodus 20:24-26, God commanded the Israelites to make plain altars of earth or natural stones which had not been shaped by any tools, and added that altars not be placed at the head of staircases. These instructions effectively eliminated the kind of manmade religious structures which the pagans built (and which can be unearthed by archeologists today). There could have been many worshippers of Yahweh in ancient America at the time that Israel served God under King Solomon, and there would be no record of them if they followed God's instructions on altar building. Also, Exodus 20:23 records that God forbade the making of "gods of gold and silver," and the second of the Ten Commandments forbids the manufacture of any "graven image" as part of religious worship. This further eliminates the types of artifacts (idols) which pagan worshippers commonly manufactured. God likely gave these instructions so people would keep their minds focused on God and his laws, and not on physical structures.

However, there is evidence that worshippers of Yahweh, the God of Israel, were present in ancient America. Near Albuquerque,

New Mexico there are ancient Hebrew inscriptions (called the Los Lunas inscriptions) which record on stone the Exodus 20 version of the Ten Commandments. Dr. Fell noted that "the inscription, written in ancient Hebrew letters of the style of the Moab Stone, about 1000 B.C., was not translated until 1949."<sup>40</sup> A dating of 1000 B.C. would place this inscription during the reigns of Kings David and Solomon of the united kingdom of Israel, when Israel was, indeed, serving the God of the Bible. The famous "Moabite Stone", referred to above, was found in the Mideast and refers to wars between Israel and Moab in the ninth century B.C., during the time of the separate kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

Additionally, George Morehouse, a geologist who studied this ancient Hebrew Decalogue inscription estimated the inscription to be 500-2000 years old, based on the weathered patina of the rock.<sup>41</sup> However, accurately dating the inscription on the basis of weatherization was made very difficult by the fact that the inscriptions were apparently receiving annual scrubblings by a troop of well-meaning Boy Scouts, and it could be determined that a tool such as a wire brush had also been used in the scrubblings of the inscriptions.<sup>42</sup>

To complicate further the dating of this ancient Hebrew inscription is the statement that "the punctuation [of the inscription] matched that of ancient Greek manuscripts, such as the *Codex Sinaiticus* of the fourth century A.D."<sup>43</sup> There are several obvious questions which impede dating this ancient Hebrew inscription: (A) While the inscription has received recent scrubblings wiping away evidence of aging, it is also possible that other such scrubblings occurred during its ancient history (since it was an important site to worshippers of God, they would seek to maintain the inscriptions in a cleansed condition for as long as they were aware of it), and (B) the inscription has the writing style of Hebrew which dates back to the reign of Solomon, but has punctuation which indicates a date in the early Christian era.

Dr. Fell's discussion of the punctuation states that separation points like those in this inscription date as early as 1200 B.C., but that the oldest known record of some punctuation marks (carets to denote an insertion to correct an omission) date to the *Codex Sinaiticus* of the fourth century A.D.<sup>44</sup> This does not date the Hebrew inscription to the fourth century A.D., per se, but is rather an example of the oldest **known** occurrence of a similar punctuation mark. How long such punctuation was used prior to the fourth century A.D. is not known.

In view of the above, an exact dating of this ancient American stele cannot be stated with certainty, but it pre-dates the arrival of Columbus by at least a thousand years, and may well be as old as the reign of Solomon. One factor supporting a dating of this Hebrew inscription to the approximate time of Solomon is a consideration of economic and logistic realities in the ancient world. Transoceanic expeditions and colonization efforts in the ancient world required a very large commitment of monetary and human resources. The source of authorization for such an expenditure of money and resources would generally have to be the king of a wealthy nation. A model for this fact is the European colonization efforts which began when Columbus "rediscovered" America in 1492. The European colonization efforts required the backing and approval of national monarchs in order to occur at all. Even those large companies which had a presence in the New World (for example, the Hudson's Bay Company) conducted their efforts only with the support and approval of a reigning monarch. Those who would argue for a more recent date for the Los Lunas inscriptions are confronted with this major problem: What Old World nation in the fourth century A.D. would support and fund exploration and/or colonization efforts in the New World which would leave behind classical Hebrew inscriptions? Since there were no Hebrew nations in the Old World in the fourth century A.D., such a

proposal lacks the support of any logical historical context for its occurrence.

It seems apparent that the Los Lunas Hebrew inscription could have occurred only with the backing and support of a wealthy Hebrew speaking nation such as ancient Israel of the Bible (dating the inscription to 1000-720 B.C.) However, since the Los Lunas inscription indicates the makers were devoted to the God of the Ten Commandments, we are limited to those kings of Israel who could have funded international expeditions during the nation's period of loyalty to God. This requirement limits the prospective dating of the Los Lunas inscription to the reigns of Kings David and Solomon. The kings of Israel which followed David and Solomon were, almost without exception, apostates who served Baal and other idolatrous "gods." Under such kings, any sailing fleets would have left inscriptions confirming their devotion to idolatrous "gods" (as in the inscriptions on the trilingual, Davenport artifact). The kings of Judah (which survived until about 576 B.C.) had several righteous kings whose followers served God, but Judah was a small nation with few resources to fund and mount such expeditions. Judah had a few interludes of national power and greatness, but there is no record that Judah was ever a naval power. I Kings 22:48-49 and II Chronicles 20:36-37 record that righteous King Jehoshaphat tried to build a fleet for Judah, but God himself intervened to stop Judah from becoming a naval power. Therefore, the only logical historical context for the making of the Los Lunas inscriptions would seem to be during the reigns of either Kings David or Solomon.

Since King David was a warrior with little time for (and no apparent interest in) scientific endeavors, the reign of King Solomon is the only logical milieu for any expeditions or colonization efforts which would have had sailors or colonists

carving inscriptions proclaiming a loyalty to the God of the Bible. Also, King Solomon's insatiable scientific curiosity, which included the desire to learn about the flora and fauna of foreign lands (see I Kings 4:29-33, 10:22), would have caused him to be willing and eager to fund such international expeditions. I Kings 10:22 records that Solomon had a fleet which returned to Israel only after voyages lasting three years. A voyage of three years virtually mandates that this was a fleet devoted to world exploration. That it returned with samples of wildlife such as "apes and peacocks" argues that this fleet made stops in (at least) the continents of Africa and Asia during its extended voyages. Although the time of King Solomon is the most logical historical context for the making of the Los Lunas inscriptions, there is one other (less likely) option. It is possible that the Los Lunas inscriptions were made by Israelite, Hebrew-speaking followers of the God of Israel who were refugees from the persecution of the various Baal-worshipping kings of either Israel or Judah. While this possibility would allow for a more recent dating of the New Mexico inscriptions, this possibility would still require a dating no more recent than the sixth century B.C. The salient conclusion about the Los Lunas inscriptions is that whatever their age, they confirm the presence in ancient America of Hebrew-speaking Israelites who worshipped the true God approximately two millennia prior to the voyage of Columbus. This conclusion apparently bothers some people so much that they will resort to unsavory measures to discredit this scientific conclusion. In what was an apparent attempt to discredit the validity of the ancient Hebrew translation of the Los Lunas inscriptions, a series of artifacts were "discovered" in the region of the Los Lunas inscriptions and certain individuals asserted that these new "artifacts" indicated that the Los Lunas inscriptions were Greek (not Hebrew) and made by a Greek exile who was present in the New World around 500 B.C. In a 1986 court trial,



it was conclusively demonstrated by expert epigraphers/linguists that these other "artifacts" were hoaxes which were shown "to have actually been made since 1979."<sup>45</sup>

It seems evident that someone was so alarmed about evidence that Israelites were in ancient America that a hoax was concocted to try to discredit the evidence. It is sad that some people are so afraid of the truth about the ancient world that they will resort to such measures to obscure it. Paradoxically, while the hoaxers attempted to discredit the evidence that Israelites were present in ancient America, the end result of the attempted hoax was that the court trial actually affirmed the evidence that Israelites were present in ancient America by demonstrating conclusively that the Los Lunas inscriptions are a record of the Ten Commandments in ancient Hebrew.

Additional evidence of ancient worshippers of the true God in America has been noted on a "Decalogue Tablet" (a stone tablet having an ancient Hebrew inscription of the Ten Commandments) which was unearthed in Ohio in 1860. Besides having an inscription of the Ten Commandments on it, the tablet includes the depiction of "an individual meant to represent Moses [which] has been carved in considerable detail on the 'front' of the tablet...[and] a 'handle' at the bottom of the tablet, which may have been constructed to accommodate a strap."<sup>46</sup> The presence of a handle on this tablet indicates that it served as a portable object which could accompany worshippers of God as they were traveling in ancient America.

This "Decalogue Tablet" was found as grave goods buried with a body in an earthen mound. That a portable tablet with the Ten Commandments in ancient Hebrew was found in a grave indicates that the person buried in the mound may have been an ancient levitical priest who was present with Israelite explorers or colonists in ancient America. It has been noted that the

Hebrew inscription also has some characteristics of “the old Phoenician alphabets.”<sup>47</sup> While one analyst of this tablet notes, “the question of the tablet’s actual age is impossible to accurately ascertain at this time,”<sup>48</sup> he also adds that the discovery of this tablet (and many other ancient artifacts found on American soil) means: “The time frame of continental exploration is suddenly retreating **to 1000 B.C. or earlier.**”<sup>49</sup> (Emphasis added.)

A time frame of 1000 B.C. again coincides with the age of Israelite greatness under Kings David and Solomon, and since Solomon’s reign was a period of general peace, it is more likely that such explorations took place under King Solomon. Since the tablet’s inscriptions are of the Ten Commandments (indicating a fealty to the God of Israel by whoever made the mound), it argues that this burial likely took place in King Solomon’s reign, as the Israelites quickly forsook the worship of God after Solomon’s death. Furthermore, the inscription’s inclusion of characteristics of “the old Phoenician alphabets” argues for an earlier date for its inscription rather than a more recent dating when few Israelites served the God of Israel. However, the possibility exists that some Israelites in the New World retained their loyalty to God long after the Israelites in the Old World abandoned the laws of God. New World Israelites could have retained linguistic traits from earlier periods for a greater length of time since they were remote from their Old World motherland and would have been less affected by linguistic changes occurring in the Old World.

Additional evidence of a Hebrew presence in ancient New England (in the area of the 20-acre “temple site” discussed earlier) is seen in the residual presence of hundreds of Semitic/Hebrew root words in the languages of the Eastern Algonquin Indians.<sup>50</sup>

Whatever the dating of the above artifacts, such discoveries provide solid archaeological support to the Bible's assertion that the ancient Israelites sponsored wide-ranging fleets and were one the major nations of the ancient world. Since the Ten Commandments in ancient Hebrew have been found in both Ohio and New Mexico (locations quite distant from one another), it indicates that ancient Israelite explorations and/or colonizations of the New World were widespread. This conclusion is disconcerting to "establishment" spokespersons who cling to their dogma that "Columbus discovered America in 1492" no matter how voluminous the evidence becomes that not only the Israelites but many other Old World nations sent explorers or colonists to the New World. As this book progresses, the evidence of ancient artifacts in North America will become both more voluminous and convincing.

Hundreds of inscribed Phoenician, Celtiberian, and Basque stone grave markers, dated to 800-600 B.C., have been found in the Susquehanna Valley of Pennsylvania.<sup>51</sup> These artifacts had been identified as Phoenician decades prior to Dr. Fell's research,<sup>52</sup> but such assertions were generally disregarded by a skeptical and close-minded archaeological and historical community. A Phoenician figurine, also dated to 800-600 B.C., was unearthed in one of the ancient American burial mounds.<sup>53</sup>

The Egyptian presence in the New World has been found in the writing system of the Wabanaki/Micmac Indians (an Algonquin tribe) of Maine<sup>54</sup>, in an ancient tablet found on Long Island in New York<sup>55</sup>, and on the Iowa stele mentioned earlier in this chapter. Also, the reader is urged to recall the information presented earlier in this chapter that the ancient Egyptians explored Hawaii and the Pacific regions of the earth as they "roamed the Indian and Pacific Oceans for gold **about 1000 B.C.**"<sup>56</sup> (Emphasis added.) The date of "about 1000 B.C."

parallels the golden age of the Israelite's Empire days under Kings David and Solomon when the Bible states that Egypt was allied to King Solomon's Israelites.

An inscription in ancient Ogam and Libyan (the language of Egyptian sailors) was found along the Rio Grande River of Texas which indicates an Egyptian/Libyan king named Shishonq visited North America in ancient times.<sup>57</sup> The ancient inscription is rendered as "A crew of Shishonq the King took shelter in this place of concealment," and Dr. Fell's commentary on the inscription states:

*"several kings of this name ruled Libya and Egypt between 1000-800 B.C., an era when North African voyagers began to explore the New World."*<sup>58</sup>

The exploration of North America in 1000-800 B.C. by explorers from the Mediterranean coasts of North Africa is quite significant. That is the period of Israel's dominance in the Mediterranean, which began under Kings David and King Solomon around 1000 B.C. Whether this inscription dates to the reign of King Solomon or not, it further confirms that nautical travel between the Mediterranean Sea and North America did take place in ancient times. The phrase "Crew of Shishonq the King" may indicate that the king himself was on the voyage. Obviously, monarchs would not likely have come to the New World unless it was considered safe to leave their home kingdom. A period of peaceful stability, as during King Solomon's reign, would have been an ideal time for such journeys. Also, the Bible records that many monarchs undertook international visits during the reign of Solomon (II Chronicles 9:23-24).

Dr. Fell cited the work of another epigrapher, Gloria Farley, who "made notable finds of ancient inscriptions left by Libyans, Celts and Phoenicians who ascended the Mississippi, Arkansas and

Cimarron Rivers.”<sup>59</sup> The evidence already presented in this chapter is convincing that the Mediterranean civilizations, beginning in the time of King Solomon (and afterwards), were present not only in ancient North America but also in the lands of the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

When Solomon built a fleet at Ezion-geber on the Red Sea (I Kings 9:26-27), he was able to send his fleets eastward toward the Indian Ocean as well as westward toward the Atlantic Ocean and North America through Egypt’s “canal” to the Mediterranean Sea. In doing so, he was building on the previous nautical experience not only of his Phoenician allies, but also that of his new ally Egypt. However, such mutual explorations probably reached their zenith during the reign of Solomon due to one obvious circumstance. Under Solomon, all the Mediterranean powers of any consequence were allied together and their natural enemy (Assyria) had been “taken out” by King David in his military confrontation with Assyria and the Mesopotamian powers. With great joint power and no formidable enemies to challenge them, Israel/Phoenicia and Egypt could devote their resources to peaceful pursuits such as worldwide exploration and colonization. As we have seen, this is precisely what occurred.

It is also significant that Dr. Fell noted the time period of “1000-800 B.C.” as marking the onset of significant Old World exploration of the New World. This time frame parallels the period wherein the Bible states there was a great deal of international travel and commerce with even monarchs coming from around the world to visit Solomon in Jerusalem! This time frame exactly parallels the beginning of the golden age of the Israelites, and includes much of the time when the kingdom of Israel was a major power. The conclusion is inescapable: The record of ancient history **verifies** the biblical accounts. The Bible is not a detailed history of all that happened in the ancient world,

but it does parallel what archaeology and epigraphy have now shown about the real state of activities in the ancient world.

Many historical accounts confirm that the beginning of the first millennium B.C. marked a golden age for Phoenicia. One source states:

*"Phoenician trade on an international scale in textiles, metalwork, pottery, glass, timber, wheat and wine gave the country three centuries – **beginning around 1000 B.C. – of prosperity unmatched in its history.**"*<sup>60</sup>  
(Emphasis added.)

Historical evidence that Phoenicia's greatness began around 1000 B.C. is critically important since it coincides precisely with the period during which King Hiram of Tyre allied his people to Israel's rising power under King David. Since the Israelites were of a common race, language and religion (for much of the time) with the Phoenicians, the Israelite role in "Phoenicia's golden age" has not been recognized! **In fact, it was Israel's golden age rubbing off on the Phoenician city-states. Israel was the dominant partner in their alliance, and the Phoenicians served as junior partners of Israel!** This conclusion is supported by the facts that Phoenicia's "golden age" did not start until it allied itself to Israel, and that Phoenicia reverted to minor power status as soon as the Israelite nation waned and fell. Israel was the driving force behind the "Phoenician golden age," not the small city-states of Phoenicia that were unable either to create or sustain any "golden age" of international power apart from their alliance to Israel.

At this juncture, several observations must be made about the term "Phoenicia." This book has so far referred to the inhabitants of the city-states of Tyre, Sidon, etc. as "Phoenicians," and to the inhabitants of Israel as "Israelites." **However, the term**

**"Phoenicia," when applied to the ancient world in the time frame 1000-700 B.C., designates the combined alliance of the Israelites and the city-states led by Tyre and Sidon.** It must also be realized that the people known to us as "Phoenicians" did not give themselves that name. The term "Phoenicia" is derived from a Greek word which the Greek historians used to describe many people living on the Eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. George Rawlinson wrote:

*"At first, the term [Phoenicia] was used [by the Greeks] with a good deal of vagueness, of the Syrian coast **generally between Asia Minor and Egypt.**"*<sup>61</sup> (Emphasis added.)

The *Encyclopedia Judaica* states that "the Greek name Phoinike is first mentioned by Homer,"<sup>62</sup> and it adds:

*"though the exact extent of the region called Phoenicia cannot be determined, the name is clearly the Greek equivalent of Canaan."*<sup>63</sup>

The Greek age of Homer is identified by Henry Halley as being contemporary with Israel's golden age under Kings David and Solomon.<sup>64</sup> *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* lists many estimated dates for Homer's birth, including 1159 B.C., 1102 B.C., 1044 B.C., and 830 B.C.<sup>65</sup> The *Encyclopedia Americana* states:

*"Ancient tradition...plac[ed] Homer in the 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C....These [poetic sources] suggest a date, now widely accepted, in the last half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C."*<sup>66</sup>

While no one knows the dates of Homer's lifetime, all of the above-suggested dates precede or coincide with the period of Israel's long alliance with Tyre and Sidon. This is important because if Homer originated the term "Phoenicia," he did so at a

time when the city-states of Tyre, Sidon, etc. were so closely linked to the Kingdom of Israel that they were virtually one entity in world affairs.

The word "Phoenicia" is, therefore, derived from an initial Greek description of the area known to us as the land of Canaan, with Asia Minor and Egypt marking the northern and southern limits of the area in reference. The term "Phoenicia" was applied to this area at a time when Israel was the dominant power in the region; therefore, the original application of the term "Phoenicia" included Israel's territory as well. *The Encyclopedia Americana* succinctly comments on this issue as follows:

*"The name 'Phoenicians' was given by the Greeks to the inhabitants of the coastal region of present-day Lebanon **and the adjacent shores of Israel** and Syria in the first millennium B.C. **No evidence exists that they called themselves by any such name.**"<sup>67</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

That also explains why the term "Phoenician" is absent from the Bible. Unlike modern history texts which preserve a Greek perspective, the Bible was written from a Hebrew perspective, and it records the names by which the "Phoenicians" referred to themselves. Such names included "Israel," "Sidonians," "inhabitants of Tyre," and even the specific names of Israel's large tribal units.

When Israel fell, the term "Phoenicia" was applied to a more limited area around the city-states of Tyre, Sidon, etc., the non-Israelite remnant of the alliance begun in the reigns of Kings David and Solomon. The term "Phoenicia" remained on them, and was used by the Greeks and Romans to designate the people of those city-states for many centuries. The modern world has used the term "Phoenicia" to describe the original Israelite



alliance with Tyre, Sidon, etc. because our historical perspective is based on Greco-Roman perceptions.

However, during the period of 1000-800 B.C., the term "Phoenicia" was applied to the alliance of Israel with the city-states of Tyre, Sidon, etc. During that time, it is not technically correct to say the Israelites were merely "allied to the Phoenicians" because Israel itself **was** the dominant member of the alliance of Semitic peoples living on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea who were called "Phoenicians" by the Greeks. That explains why international power and influence characterized the "Phoenicians" from approximately 1000-700 B.C. (the time of its alliance with the kingdom of Israel), and why the term "Phoenician" describes a people with severely reduced numbers and influence after 700 B.C. (the time when the Israelites left the area and the city-states were left alone).

To prevent confusion, this book will continue to refer to the inhabitants of the city-states as Phoenicians, and to the inhabitants of Israel as Israelites. The reader should realize, however, that in its original Greek usage, the term Phoenicia meant both groups of people.

According to secular history,

*"around 1100 B.C., Egyptian wisdom writing reached its highest ethical point...[as it]... counsels against arrogance, snobbery, ill-temper, and oppressing the poor. [It]... stresses courtesy, deference, contentment, tolerance and kindness...it served as a source for certain Hebrew Proverbs."*<sup>68</sup>

The proverbs referred to are, of course, those attributed to Solomon at the beginning of the first millennium B.C., and found in the book of Proverbs in the Bible. Whether Solomon borrowed

these from the Egyptians or whether it was in fact the other way around is a valid question. The time dating of "around 1100 B.C." is so close to the reign of Solomon that the case can easily be made that the unusual "wisdom" of the Egyptians was learned from Solomon. The above virtues are all regularly found in the Bible as elements of how God expects us to deal with other people. It is significant that Egyptian wisdom "reached its highest ethical point" at the general time that Egypt was allied to King Solomon, the wisest king who ever lived! The fact that Egypt's Pharaoh became Solomon's father-in-law (I Kings 9:16) also offered an easy pathway for Solomon's wisdom to flow to Egypt's elites.

From the above accounts we find international power attributed to the Phoenicians and wisdom characterizing the Egyptians at a time the Bible states both had allied themselves with King Solomon of Israel, who was exceedingly powerful and wise.

Other remarkable developments occurred in the Eastern Mediterranean "around 1000 B.C." The *Encyclopedia Americana* notes the following:

**"about 1000 B.C.... coastal Lebanon**  
["Phoenicia"] **suddenly developed** new  
types of pottery-bichrome, trichrome and red-  
polished ware that had no prototypes in the  
Late Bronze Age. Clearly, about the beginning  
of the first millennium, **the culture of the**  
**area underwent a change and**  
**acceleration...**" <sup>69</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Interesting! At the approximate time of King Solomon's reign, the technical skills of the "Phoenicians" took a great leap forward. Who was it that caused this "sudden" advance in technical skills? The Bible tells us that God gave Solomon a gift of unprecedented wisdom and understanding (I Kings 3:12)! I

Kings 10:24 adds "all the earth consulted Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart." It is apparent that Solomon's wisdom was not limited to ethical and sociological applications. Remember the Israelite invention of the Bessemer process in a large blast furnace complex (discussed earlier) which also "suddenly developed" during the time of Israel's Golden Age? God apparently made him a genius in all fields, and his inventions and insights not only caused him to be held in awe by other nations, but also revolutionized the culture and commerce of the day! That the above technologies "suddenly developed" within Israel and Phoenicia "around 1000 B.C." indicates the presence of a genius who "accelerated" their culture. The Bible openly tells us the genius was Solomon.

We are not yet finished examining Solomon's impact on the ancient world. Another likely achievement of his is still affecting us today. That is the invention, by the "Phoenicians," of the alphabet used by most languages of the western world from then until now. Consider the following observation of George Rawlinson:

*"the enterprise of the Phoenicians in the early ages ...carried with them everywhere civilizing influences. Letters if not their actual invention, received at their hands modifications and improvements...and are traceable in the alphabets of all civilized nations at the present day. They carried with them over the Mediterranean, wherever they went their idea of alphabetic writing, and their peculiar alphabetic forms. In Cyprus and in Lycia they were met by conflicting systems; but these systems gave way to theirs. Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, accepted their analysis*

*of human speech, and the signs by which they expressed its final elements. An enormous advance must everywhere have followed the introduction of writing, and this advance was due to the Phoenicians.”<sup>70</sup>*

Before the invention of a phonetic alphabet by someone in the Phoenician Empire, mankind used a variety of symbols to express concepts in written form. The adoption of the Phoenician symbols by much of the known world illustrates two points: (A) that the new phonetic alphabet was more efficient and easier to use, and (B) that the Phoenician dominance of the known world was so great that it had the power to enforce its invention as the “lingua franca” of the ancient world. As the reader now knows, the real power behind the Phoenician golden age was Israel’s strength under Kings David and Solomon. Consider also the following comment from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*:

*“The history of our own alphabet, which has survived as an alphabet with... surprisingly little change **for nearly 3000 years...** demonstrates its suitability to the needs of the many languages it has served.... Two questions have hitherto remained unanswered. How did the Greeks obtain it from the Semites? And what was its pro-Semite history? The most important fact ignored by any theory that would derive the Greek and Phoenician alphabets independently... is that the names of the letters, as far as they have a known etymology or meaning, are Semitic. **Hebrew ‘aleph, both, gimel, daleth, etc.’ correspond unmistakably with Greek***

**'alpha, beta, gamma, delta.'** "71 (Emphasis added.)

The Greek alphabet is derived from the alphabet of the Hebrew/Phoenicians, a Semitic language. That it originated "nearly 3,000 years" ago dates the origin of this alphabet to "around 1000 B.C.," the time of King Solomon's reign. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* adds:

*"the Phoenicians rendered one great service to literature; they took a large share in the development and diffusion of the alphabet which forms the foundation of Greek...and of all European writing. The Phoenician letters in their earlier forms are practically identical with those used by the Hebrews, the Moabites, and the Aramaeans of North Syria..."*72

It is most significant that "in their earlier forms," the Phoenician, Hebrew, Moabite, and North Aramaean [Syrian] alphabets are "practically identical." When the phonetic alphabet was invented in this region around 1000 B.C., King Solomon **directly** ruled the Hebrews, Moabites and North Aramaeans, and King Hiram of Tyre was his loyal vassal. It would be logical that at the time of its implementation, the alphabet would be virtually identical in the territories directly ruled by the Israelite kings. The phonetic alphabet "was developed and diffused" by the Phoenicians (the Israelite alliance with Tyre, Sidon, etc.) due to their dominant military, economic and political position in the world at that time. After the Israelites divided and dissipated their strength in civil wars and national sins, other nations (such as the Greeks) were no longer under Israelite dominance, and adapted the original Semitic alphabet into their own national styles.

*Collier's Encyclopedia* states, concerning the alphabet's invention:

*"Whereas...other systems of writing are supposed to have sprung from several centers in different parts of the world, **the alphabet seems to have originated in a single region and to have spread from there.** It appears in perfect form in inscriptions from Phoenicia of the end of the second or the beginning of the first millennium B.C., and therefore, **the alphabet is usually regarded as a Phoenician invention.**"*<sup>73</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Again, it is confirmed that the alphabet was invented by someone in the "Phoenician" empire about the time of King Solomon's reign. Who was the most inventive person of that era? Solomon! His invention of an easy-to-use, phonetically based alphabet would have spread the use of this alphabet wherever the "Phoenician" fleets sailed and traded. The Bible does not address whether Solomon invented the Phonetic alphabet which became the lingua franca of the ancient world. However, the Biblical claim that Solomon was internationally famous for his unprecedented wisdom (I Kings 4:29-31,) and that "all the earth" sought to benefit from Solomon's wisdom (I Kings 10:24), would seem to eliminate the possibility that anyone else but Solomon could have been the inventor of this alphabet. Indeed, it could have been his invention of a utilitarian alphabet which caused much of his international fame.

*Collier's Encyclopedia* also adds that:

*"the oldest of the well-known texts in the Phoenician alphabet, dating probably from **the early tenth century,** is the funerary*

*inscription of King Ahiram."*<sup>74</sup> (Emphasis added.)

King "Ahiram" was a Phoenician King: could he be the very King "Hiram" who is mentioned prominently in the Bible? A date of "the early tenth century," dates this inscription to the time of Kings Solomon and Hiram. *Collier's* account states that this inscription was found in Byblos (not Tyre, where Hiram was king); however, since the biblical records show that King Hiram could bind the activities of other city-states (such as Sidon, I Kings 5:1-6), he was likely dominant over them all at that time. Since he was a dominant king from the most prominent Phoenician city-state of the time, his death could have been commemorated in all the city-states. The *Encyclopedia Americana* also records that Phoenician alphabetic writing dates to "about 1000 B.C."<sup>75</sup>

*Collier's Encyclopedia* states that:

*"In the West, the Greeks received the alphabetical signs directly from the Phoenicians, and, e.g., Herodotus' mention of...('Phoenician letters') indicates that they were aware of their indebtedness."*<sup>76</sup>

This further confirms that other alphabets owed their origin to the Israelite-led alliance which was called "Phoenicia" by the Greeks.

One historian, Stuart Piggott, notes that "writing, in the form of the adaptation of the Phoenician alphabet into a Greek script, may go back to the 9<sup>th</sup> or even 10<sup>th</sup> century (B.C.)"<sup>77</sup> Another historian, Donald Harden, states concerning the Phoenicians:

*"their highest and most enduring memorial, [was] the alphabet. This is where they impinge most strongly on all subsequent*

*civilizations of Old World origin. All Indo-European and Semitic tongues—indeed all subsequent alphabetic scripts—have employed the medium invented by the Phoenicians and rapidly adapted by many other nations...including the Greeks.”<sup>78</sup>*

The Bible records God’s promise to Abraham that “in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:3). During the reign of Solomon all nations were, literally, blessed through Abraham’s seed (Solomon and the Israelites) by receiving a time of world peace, the development of scientific knowledge, the expansion of international commerce, and the invention of the alphabet! God kept his promise. Many races and nations have been blessed throughout history by the greatly facilitated communication system which was likely invented by Solomon, king over Israel and its vassal nations at the beginning of the first millennium B.C. The above comment that “Indo-European” alphabets have descended from the Phoenician needs elaboration. The term “Indo-European” includes Latin and such modern European languages as English, German, French, etc. All those who speak these languages owe a debt to King Solomon, who invented the alphabetic system on which their languages are based. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* includes a chart showing that the modern European alphabets are descended from the early Phoenician alphabet.<sup>79</sup>

Apparently, not all of Solomon’s inventions were intended for civilian use. It appears at least one invention was for military purposes (which preserved the peace via greater deterrence). Martland A. Edey, in his book, *The Sea Traders*, states:

*“some authorities give credit to the Phoenicians for developing the ram, which apparently; **was invented around 1000***



*B.C., just about the time the eastern ports [of the Mediterranean] were emerging as trading powers in their own right and building up their war fleets.”<sup>80</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

For those not familiar with military history, the “ram” refers to a “battering ram” which extended from the prow of a warship for purposes of causing damage to opposing ships when one’s own ship was propelled into an enemy. (Readers who have seen the movie “Ben Hur” saw how this invention was still being utilized by ancient navies at the time of Christ.)

This book concludes that the inventor of the Phoenician phonetic alphabet was King Solomon, who ruled the Phoenician alliance of Israel and the city-states of Tyre, Sidon, etc. around 1000 B.C. Solomon’s unprecedented wisdom resulted in not only a new alphabet, but also new advances in pottery, the Bessemer blast furnace method of smelting ores, the naval ram and many proverbs concerning wise living. He was wealthy and powerful beyond imagination, possessing the means to implement his ideas and inventions. The tremendous convergence of new inventions in the “Phoenician” alliance around the time of King Solomon attests that it was Solomon who was the source of these inventions. The peaceful adoption by other nations of the alphabet invented within the Phoenician alliance is a testimony to Israel’s strength and Solomon’s force of personality. Solomon was likely so skilled in so many fields that the nations stood in awe of him during his lifetime. No wonder the Bible states that all nations sought his counsel.

Having established the credibility of biblical accounts of an Israelite-Phoenician-Egyptian alliance during Solomon’s reign and that the fleets of that alliance were actively involved in exploring, mining and colonizing the world during and after the reign of Solomon, let us examine the biblical accounts of Solomon’s reign

in light of their greatly heightened credibility. We will discover that King Solomon ruled over an empire which was international in scope!

It is clear that worldwide maritime contacts were common during his reign. Since the major international fleets of the time belonged to the tripartite alliance of Israel, Phoenicia, and Egypt, it is easy to see how word of Solomon's projects and Israel's opulence spread around the world. There was probably no small amount of braggadocio on the part of the Phoenician, Israelite, and Egyptian sailors about the accomplishments, wisdom and wealth of King Solomon, who headed "their alliance." As word of the scope of Solomon's projects, the unprecedented elegance of his Temple of God in Jerusalem, and Israel's greatness spread, the leaders of the earth wanted to see for themselves whether these incredible reports were actually true. Some came out of skepticism, certain the reports could not be true. The Queen of Sheba was one such visitor. Her visit is recorded in II Chronicles 9:1-12.

She came to test Solomon's wisdom with "hard questions," and brought gifts including **120 talents of gold**, spices and precious stones. While biblical commentaries vary on the estimated weight of a biblical talent, one conservative estimate is that a talent could equal about 75 pounds. Such an estimate would mean the queen of Sheba gave Solomon a gift of "about 9,000 pounds"<sup>81</sup> of gold (worth about 57 million dollars at a modern price of \$400 per ounce of gold)! Since the queen of Sheba was giving this amount of gold as a gift, it is clear the gold reserves of Sheba were quite large. When Sheba's queen had seen Solomon's palace, the Temple for God, and the superlative quality and opulence of Israel, she was overwhelmed! She went so far as to say that the reports about Israel's glory (which she had thought too incredible to believe) were actually

understatements of the real grandeur of Israel at the time of Solomon (verses 5-6). When she returned to her native land, she undoubtedly spread the news of Solomon's reign to all the nations with whom she had contacts.

The biblical account of the queen of Sheba's visit is offered as one specific example of a visit by foreign royalty to King Solomon. II Chronicles 9:23 states that such royal visits were common events. As Solomon's fame spread throughout the maritime routes of the alliance's fleets, and as foreign royalty made their way to Jerusalem, they brought a steady stream of gold to Jerusalem for King Solomon (either as tribute money or gifts). So much gold flowed into Jerusalem that II Chronicles 9:13 **states 666 talents of gold were brought to Solomon in one year!** This does not even include the amount of gold which traders and merchants brought (see verse 14). One can only imagine the quantities of silver, rare goods, precious stones and other commodities which were brought to Israel either as gifts or as part of trading contracts. II Chronicles 9:20 states that silver was so commonplace and abundant that it essentially lost its value during Solomon's reign.

II Chronicles 9:23-24 states that "all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon," and that each of them brought varied gifts from their respective nations "year by year"! Undoubtedly, biblical skeptics have thought that such statements were sheer fantasies on the part of some ancient Hebrew writer. However, now that we have evidence that the entire ancient world was tied together in maritime trade routes, and that Solomon was closely allied to the Phoenician and Egyptian fleets who developed those trade routes, this statement no longer sounds far-fetched. Indeed, the only reason why such biblical statements ever sounded far-fetched was because of modern man's abysmal ignorance concerning the ancient world's true

state of development!

In light of the Bible's accounts of the prodigious amount of gold that was flowing into King Solomon's coffers, it is no wonder that the Egyptian fleets were searching all over the Indian and Pacific Oceans for gold "about 1000 B.C." (as noted earlier in the chapter). Even as copper ores from ancient America were imported during the reign of King David to stockpile items for the Temple, gold from all over the world was flowing into Israel during the reign of King Solomon.

Alan Millard, in an article for *Biblical Archaeology Review*, makes the case that the biblical amounts of/uses for Solomon's gold are credible in light of other ancient records about how ancient royalty accumulated and displayed gold. He points out that the gift of 120 talents of gold by the queen of Sheba was exceeded by three other royal gifts of gold recorded in the ancient world: (A) a tribute of 150 talents of gold received from Tyre by Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria in 730 B.C. (B) a gift of 154 talents of gold by Assyrian King Sargon II to the Babylonian gods, and (C) a massive gift of 13.5 tons of gold by Thutmose III of Egypt to the temple of an Egyptian god.<sup>82</sup> He also cites ancient records of non-Israelite kings using gold to make thrones, shrines, shields, goblets, etc.<sup>83</sup> The information contained in Millard's article confirms that it was the custom of ancient kings to display their gold on objects as a means of displaying the wealth of their kingdoms. The biblical accounts of Solomon's use of his gold are consistent with what other ancient kings did with their gold.

Earlier we noted that Solomon had an intense scientific interest in studying the flora and fauna of the world (I Kings 4:29-33). With the world in a state of relative peace, Solomon had the opportunity to devote much attention to this interest. The kings of other nations were only too happy to accommodate Solomon's peaceable, scientific interests. Since the other nations knew that

the massive military resources of Israel, Egypt and Phoenicia were all at the disposal of Solomon, they were likely very relieved that Solomon's passion was not "conquering the world," but rather "learning all there was to know." While Solomon had the opportunity to be an Alexander the Great, his heart was more in harmony with those of Da Vinci, Marco Polo, and Audubon.

The Bible states that "all the kings of the earth" brought annual presents to King Solomon. While gold was the primary gift, these kings also brought samples of their national wildlife as a gift for Solomon. I Kings 10:22 mentions "apes and peacocks" as samples of exotic species that were shipped to King Solomon's capital, and verse 25 adds that horses and mules were also brought to him. I Kings 4:33 tells us, concerning his interest in flora, that Solomon was interested in studying everything from a huge "cedar tree" to "the hyssop that springeth out of the wall." It is logical that his passion for fauna would be equally expansive. As nations learned of Solomon's interests in all types of flora and fauna, samples of each nation's flora and fauna were shipped to Jerusalem to accommodate Solomon's scientific interests. That common animals (horses and mules) were included along with exotic ones such as apes and peacocks indicates that Solomon was interested in studying both new species and variations within a species.

Solomon's insatiable scientific curiosity must have resulted in extraordinary zoological and botanical gardens being present in Jerusalem. Ecclesiastes 2:4-5 records that Solomon constructed "great works," including orchards and gardens with many trees, vineyards and fruits. When Solomon did something, he did it on a grand scale! His resources were such that there was no meaningful financial limitation on how expansive his gardens could become.

Solomon became a great patron of the arts as well. He collected all types of musical instruments, and combined them with the best singers he could find (Ecclesiastes 2:8). Can you imagine the majestic music which resulted from combining the world's best musicians with the world's best singers? The same passage also cites Solomon as saying: "I gathered...the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces." These "peculiar treasures" must have included many examples of rare and beautiful art works. I Chronicles 9:23-24 states:

*"all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon...and they brought every man his present...a rate year by year."*

With royal gifts accumulating in Jerusalem on an annual basis, Solomon had to have places to store or exhibit these "peculiar treasures." Solomon must have had the best art and treasure museums then present on the earth, and Jerusalem must have become the tourist attraction of the ancient world! No wonder many kings traveled annually to Jerusalem. They not only wanted to "seek the presence of Solomon," but also sample some of Solomon's lifestyle.

One reason why so much wealth flowed into Israel was that the kings of the earth likely tried to outdo each other in impressing Solomon with their nation's gifts. Since Solomon already "had everything," the various kings must have been quite creative to find something new to give to Solomon. Before the reader thinks that all these ancient kings were being altruistic in their gifts, remember the geopolitics of the time. Solomon was the leader of a tripartite alliance of Israel, Egypt and Phoenicia, which constituted the greatest military alliance at that time. This alliance had a lock-hold on maritime trading routes and controlled many critical overland trade routes. Everyone had a compelling self-interest to "get along" with Solomon. Many

nations undoubtedly gave their gifts to Solomon out of a sense of political self-interest rather than altruism. However, many of the national leaders, such as King Hiram of Tyre (Phoenicia) and the queen of Sheba genuinely liked Solomon, and were enthusiastically allied to him. Also, Solomon was hardly greedy; he also gave huge reciprocal gifts to monarchs that came to visit him (I Kings 10:13).

Did all these other kings come occasionally throughout the year, or was there a fixed schedule for coordinating these visits (after all, one couldn't simply call "long distance" in that time, such visits needed considerable preparation). It is this book's opinion that such visits likely occurred during the Holy Days of God, which Israel observed as scheduled times of national rejoicing. I Kings 8:65-66 states one of Solomon's great national "feasts" (Israel's Holy Days were called "feast" days) lasted fourteen days, and that Solomon dismissed the happy crowds "on the eighth day." This "feast" had to be the Feast of Tabernacles, which consisted of seven days of feasting climaxed by an eighth day (Leviticus 23:34-43). The reference to "fourteen days" indicates that Solomon added an extra week of rejoicing prior to the first seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles followed by the climactic "eighth day." Why the extra week for rejoicing? It was because that particular Feast of Tabernacles was like none other in history.

That particular Feast of Tabernacles was unprecedented as it included the dedication of the Temple of God, which had taken years to build. I Kings 8 describes the placing of the Ark of the Covenant (the very "ark" depicted in the popular movie "Raiders of the Lost Ark") in the Temple's Holy of Holies, and verses 10-11 state:

*"And when the priests came out of the holy place, a cloud filled the house of the Lord, so*

*that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord."*

That a huge assembly witnessed a supernatural (perhaps glowing) cloud fill the Temple just after the priests placed the Ark in the "Holy Place" powerfully attested to God's divine arrival in the Temple itself! This "cloud" was so intense that no human being could stay in the Temple! Can you imagine the sense of awe that must have been present in the viewers? This one event undoubtedly did much to secure Solomon's position in the ancient world as all foreign ambassadors who witnessed this event no doubt spread the news of it far and wide! It also illustrates that other nations were not only in awe of Solomon, they were in awe of Solomon's God! The God of Israel was not some dumb idol who was carved and then worshipped by the people who made it; the God of Israel was real!

I Kings 9:22-61 records that Solomon, while the glowing cloud of God was present in the Temple, "stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven" as he offered his prayer to dedicate the Temple. Solomon showed his humble, worshipful attitude toward God in these words (verses 22-30):

*"O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to thy servants...Who hast kept with thy servant David my father what thou didst declare to him...But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built! Yet have regard to the prayer of thy servant and to his*



*supplication, O Lord my God...And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant and of thy people Israel, when they pray toward this place; and when thou hearest, forgive.” (RSV)*

After asking God to cut short droughts, wars, and pestilences which might occur due to the nation’s future disobedience, he asked God to listen also to non-Israelites who would come to serve him. His dedication proved prophetic as he even asked God to forgive future generations of Israelites if they repented after they were carried into captivity as a result of their sins. It is an indication of Solomon’s unimaginable wealth that he offered a burnt offering of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep to climax the Temple dedication.

Since Solomon was faithful to God for many years, it is likely that Solomon invited the kings of the earth to visit Jerusalem, with their retainers and tribute gifts, at the time of Israel’s Feast of Tabernacles, an appointed time for annual convocations. I Kings 10:24-25 states these royal gifts happened “year by year,” implying these events were on an annual, predictable schedule.

Based on the assumption that these royal visits coincided with the Feast of Tabernacles, let us try to visualize what occurred. Surely, the excitement mounted as the Feast neared, and the annual visits of the world’s kings (and/or their representatives) to Jerusalem were about to begin. As the date arrived, many kings would arrive via caravan routes. Also, the worldwide fleets of the tripartite alliance (Israel, Phoenicia and Egypt) could easily bring royalty from other continents. Given the evidence presented earlier that these fleets were present in the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans and in the New World, some of Solomon’s royal visitors could have come from the New World. These national delegations would each be bringing gifts of gold, animals and botanical specimens for Solomon’s gardens,

treasured artworks, etc. Visualize the spectacle as royalty from all over the earth proceeded with their entourages through the streets of Jerusalem, with baggage trains of precious metals, unusual animals, etc.!

In such an event, we can see ways in which the reign of Solomon typifies the prophesied reign of Jesus Christ on earth (Jewish readers could visualize the reign of the promised Messiah).

Solomon presided over a period of general peace (I Kings 4:21-25), and reigned from his capital in Jerusalem. Like Solomon, Christ will preside over an era of world peace (Isaiah 2:2-4) as he reigns from Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:16-17). Solomon was a *de facto* "king of kings," dominating all other contemporary kings. Jesus Christ will be a literal "King of Kings," serving as a world ruler with his saints serving as subordinate kings over the nations (Daniel 7:18, Revelation 5:8-10, 19:16, 20:4). Even as Solomon's reign of peace was preceded by violent wars, Jesus Christ's reign will be preceded by violent wars (Zechariah 14:1-14, Matthew 24:3-6, Revelation 19:11-21). Even as the world's wealth flowed to King Solomon at Jerusalem, the wealth of the nations will flow to Christ at Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:14). Even as the kings of the earth likely journeyed to Jerusalem at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles, all nations will send delegations to Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles when Jesus Christ rules (Zechariah 14:16). In fact, he will require all nations to observe the Feast of Tabernacles at that time (Zechariah 14:17-19). However, there will be one major difference. Unlike Solomon's reign, which degenerated into corruptions, the reign of Christ will never degenerate.

In Solomon's golden age, a great deal of scientific knowledge was being accumulated. Solomon's comments in Ecclesiastes 1:6-7 confirm that the worldwide pattern of circular trade winds (knowledge gained by the transoceanic voyages of the

Phoenicians), and the entire water cycle (that the water of rivers flowing to oceans would evaporate, condense into water droplets and furnish rain to replenish the inland rivers) was known at that time.

It is clear that the ancient world was far more advanced and interconnected than has generally been acknowledged. In fact, during the time of King Solomon, the ancients knew far more than did more modern mankind during "The Dark Ages." During the Dark Ages of the early Medieval period, turmoil, superstition and ignorance dominated society. In the Dark Ages, the Old World even lost its knowledge of the New World which ancient civilizations had explored, mined and colonized. As we will see in a later chapter, ancient civilizations were far more advanced than were the more recent Medieval civilizations.

It must be pointed out that there is no evidence that any other nation on earth actually converted to the worship of the True God of Israel during Solomon's reign. The nations undoubtedly stood in awe of Israel's God, but there is every indication that they continued to serve their pagan gods. Indeed, this golden age of peaceful international relations and worldwide scientific pursuits began to unravel during Solomon's reign. The Bible shows that the worship of pagan gods began to permeate Israel through the acts of Solomon himself. In addition to collecting precious metals, world treasures, art works, flora and fauna, orchestras and singers, etc., Solomon also began a large collection of women.

He collected a harem of 1000 women, and I Kings 11:1-9 makes the following observation about King Solomon:

*"When Solomon was old **his wives turned away his heart after other gods.** For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the*

*abomination of the Ammonites...Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites...And so he did for **all** his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.” (RSV)*

Since Solomon reigned forty years (I Kings 11:42), his golden age (which paralleled his obedience to God) apparently lasted for most of that time, and his period of degeneracy occurred in the waning years of his life. It is significant that one of the Phoenician deities worshipped by Solomon was Ashtoreth of Sidon, a “mother-goddess” associated with fertility worship. This mother-goddess cult, whose worship included fertility celebrations, phallic monuments, etc., was also found to be pervasive in the Phoenician settlements of ancient America<sup>84</sup>. From that point on, the northern ten tribes (known as “Israel”) became inextricably linked with pagan gods such as Baal and Ashteroth. The “mother-goddess” was worshipped in many civilizations and was known by a variety of names; Ashteroth being her Sidonian name.

It is incredible that Solomon went from personally speaking with God himself (I Kings 11:9) to worshipping pagan gods associated with human sacrifice and sensual abandonment. It is highly unlikely that Solomon woke up one morning and decided he had the world’s most voracious *Ibido* and needed 1000 wives and concubines. More likely it started innocently enough. Remember that Pharaoh had given Solomon a royal daughter as a wife? As the nations of the world brought Solomon gifts of gold, art treasures, animals for his zoos, etc., it is highly likely that many other kings also gave Solomon royal-born women as wives to cement the political ties of those nations with Solomon. I Kings 11:3 indicates this was the case as it lists “princesses” among his

many wives.

Since such women were royal-bom, they would have traveled with retainers and the paraphernalia of their native culture. As these foreign princesses began to settle in Israel, they and their servants would continue to worship their particular pagan gods. Very likely, Jerusalem's "embassy row" had many idols present, and perhaps even foreign priests were present to attend the idols. As this trend continued, it is easy to see that each foreign addition to Solomon's harem resulted in a microcosm of each foreign nation's pagan culture being present in Israel.

Solomon's character and personality deteriorated as his idolatries grew, and his charisma and aura of leadership also deteriorated. Nations and subjects began to lose their respect for him, and problems began to beset the nation (a testimony that when national leaders are sinful, their nations will suffer as well). I Kings 11:14-40 records that an Edomite prince and an Aramaean named Rezon became adversaries of Solomon, and notes that a high Israelite official named Jeroboam (who was governor of the chief tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh) was told by God through a prophet that he would be king over the northern ten tribes of Israel after Solomon's death. When Solomon learned this, he tried to kill Jeroboam (even as the degenerate King Saul had tried to kill young David when God chose David to replace Saul). This account affords insights into how fast Solomon's domination of the world around him was fading away.

The Pharaoh of Egypt, who formerly had given his daughter to Solomon as a wife and conquered a city to present to Solomon as a gift, gave sanctuary to Jeroboam, the king-in-waiting over most of Solomon's kingdom. As we shall see in the next chapter, the fact that Pharaoh sheltered Solomon's dissidents was soon to bear bitter fruit for Solomon's successor over Judah and Benjamin, and Jeroboam's period of exile in Egypt was to bear

bitter fruit for Israel (the northern ten tribes). We see in this account a harbinger of a rearrangement of the tripartite alliance that existed under King Solomon. Undoubtedly, resentment grew between Solomon and Pharaoh, and Pharaoh drew closer to Jeroboam, who was destined to rule the northern ten tribes after Solomon's death. This would soon result in Jeroboam retaining close alliances with Egypt and the city-states of Tyre, Sidon, etc., while Judah (ruled by Solomon's son) would become the "odd man out."

At this juncture, this chapter on Solomon's rule draws to an end. What began so impressively ended ignominiously. Solomon actually exhibited a suicidal attitude in his final years (Ecclesiastes 2:17, 4:2). One reason that Israel's golden age is largely missed by historians is that it lasted for so short a time. While Israel and Judah still would have major roles in the ancient world, their "golden age" was over. The remaining history (which includes surprising information) of the separate kingdoms of Israel and Judah will be presented in the next chapter.

## Endnotes: Chapter Two

1. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, "Tiphseh," p. 1076
2. Hitti, *Short History of the Near East*, p. 20
3. *Ibid*, pp. 30-31
4. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 21, "Suez Canal," p. 516
5. *Ibid*, p.516
6. *Ibid*, p. 516
7. Rawhanson, *Phoenicia*, p. 26 and 56-57
8. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 176 and 179, and *Bronze Age America*, pp. 278-282
9. Rawhanson, *Phoenicia*, pp. 56-71 and 164; Waddell, *Phoenician Origin of the Britons, Scots, & Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 159-160
10. Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 58
11. *Ibid*, pp. 100-101
12. *Ibid*, p. 101
13. *Ibid*, pp. 81-92
14. *Ibid*, p. 83
15. *Ibid*, pp. 90-91
16. *Ibid*, p. 92
17. *Ibid*, p. 85
18. *Ibid*, p. 83
19. *Ibid*, p. 84
20. *Ibid*, p. 84
21. *Ibid*, pp. 93-99, 157, 163
22. *Ibid*, p. 93 (see also p. 163)
23. *Ibid*, pp. 50 and 61
24. *Ibid*, pp. 130-131
25. *Ibid*, p. 176
26. Knudsen, "Egyptian Signs in the Hawaiian Islands," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 13, 1985, pp. 67-95
27. *Ibid*, p. 90

28. Rawhnson, *Phoenicia*, p. 29
29. Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 263
30. *Ibid*, p. 261
31. *Ibid*, p. 261
32. *Ibid*, p. 268
33. *Ibid*, p. 163
34. *Ibid*, pp. 263 and 268
35. *Ibid*, p. 270
36. *Ibid*, p. 270-275
37. *Ibid*, p. 159
38. *Ibid*, p. 159
39. *Ibid*, p. 164-165
40. Fell, *America B.C.* (1989 Revised Edition), p. 310
41. *Ibid*, p. 310; and Morehouse, "The Los Lunas Inscriptions: A Geological Study," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 13, 1985, p. 49
42. Morehouse, (cited above), p. 48
43. Fell, *America B.C.* (1989 Revised Edition), p. 310
44. Fell, "Ancient Punctuation and the Los Lunas Text," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 13, 1985, p. 35
45. Leonard and McGlone, "An Epigraphic Hoax on Trial in New Mexico," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 17, 1988, p. 206 (see also whole article, pp. 206-219)
46. "Translation of the 'Decalogue Tablet' from Ohio," Bloom and Polansky, *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 8, Part One, 1980, p. 15
47. Savage, "The Decalogue Tablet, Newark, Ohio," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 7, Part 2, 1979, p. 194
48. *Ibid*, p. 196
49. *Ibid*, p. 196
50. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 282-283
51. Fell, *Ibid*, p. 170



52. Boland, *They All Discovered America*, pp. 40-47  
and plates 7-9 following p. 126
53. Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 168
54. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 253-260
55. *Ibid*, pp. 270-272
56. Knudsen, "Egyptian Signs in the Hawaiian Islands,"  
*Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 13, 1985, p.  
906
57. Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 185
58. *Ibid*, p. 185
59. *Ibid*, p. 186
60. Hitti, *Short History of the Near East*, p. 47
61. Rawlinson, *Phoenicia*, p. 1
62. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. 13, p. 473
63. *Ibid*, p. 473
64. Halley, *Halley's Bible Handbook*, p. 134
65. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 11, "Homer," p. 689
66. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 14, "Homer," p. 326
67. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 21, "Phoenicians," p. 947
68. Hitti, *Short History of the Near East*, p.40
69. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 21, "Phoenicians," p. 948
70. Rawlinson, *Phoenicia*, pp. 87-88
71. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 1, "Alphabet," pp. 679-681
72. *Ibid*, Vol. 17, "Phoenicia," p. 766
73. *Collier's Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, "Alphabet," p. 408
74. *Ibid*, pp. 408-409
75. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 21, "Phoenicians," p. 948
76. *Collier's Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, "Alphabet," p. 409
77. Piggott, *Ancient Europe*, p. 189
78. Harden, *The Phoenicians*, p. 20
79. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 1, "Alphabet," p. 684
80. Edey, *The Sea Traders*, p. 46
81. Millard, "Does the Bible Exaggerate King Solomon's Golden

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83. *Ibid*, p. 21-31

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### 3. Israel—The Forgotten World Empire

Most readers have heard of the Greco-Macedonian Empire of Alexander the Great, the Roman Empire of the Caesars, and other ancient empires which are discussed in history lessons. However, there are very few who realize that centuries before the empires of Greece and Rome, there existed an empire whose domain, colonies and influence included both the Old and the New World. Its great antiquity is one reason for our ignorance of it. There are ancient historical references to it, but it is only recently that archaeological discoveries have made it possible to determine the scope of this empire. The forgotten world empire was that of Israel, begun under Kings David and Solomon and which lasted until the eighth century B.C. when it broke into separate remnants.

The reader of the first two chapters already has some knowledge of this empire and why its history was so obscured. In the last chapter, we saw evidence from secular historians that the "Phoenicians" established an international empire in the approximate time frame of 1000-700 B.C. We also learned that the Greeks gave the name "Phoenicia" to the whole region on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea in that same era. In doing so, they applied the name "Phoenicia" to the alliance of people in that region which was then headed by the Israelites. Another historian comments concerning the Phoenicians:

*"the very word 'Phoenician' was unknown to them; the label was pasted on them by the Greeks and preserved by the accident that the Greek language and its literature, and not the Phoenician, have been passed down to us."*<sup>1</sup>

What the "Phoenicians" called themselves will be examined later in this chapter. For now, it is enough to realize that the Israelite alliance with Tyre and Sidon was called "Phoenicia" by the

Greeks, and that the term "Phoenicia" initially designated a whole region, not merely a few city-states on the shores of ancient Lebanon. Chapter two noted that, under Kings Solomon of Israel and Hiram of Tyre, the Israelites and the city-states under King Hiram became virtually one people, with mingled work forces laboring together on huge building projects and with their navies crewed by sailors from both nations.

The city-states of Tyre, Sidon, etc., were junior partners to the Israelites in that time of worldwide influence. Since the Israelites and the inhabitants of the city-states shared a common language, common customs and a common race, the differences between them amount to mere nuances when viewed from a perspective almost three thousand years after their existence. The Israelite dominance in that empire was forgotten because the Israelites left the region. Since the inhabitants of the non-Israelite city-states did stay in that area of the earth, the name "Phoenicia" rested on non-Israelites after 700 B.C. However, when historians refer to the Phoenician Empire and its international power and influence around 1000-700 B.C., they are actually identifying the empire of Israel to which Tyre and Sidon were allied.

Historians acknowledge that the "Phoenicians" (i.e. Israelites) planted many colonies throughout the Mediterranean world which were tied to the "mother country" on the eastern Mediterranean. It is likely that many of these colonies started as coastal trading posts founded by the city-states of Tyre and Sidon before their alliance with Israel. Their trading contacts were spread throughout the shores of the Mediterranean, the west coasts of Africa and Europe, and the British Isles. When Tyre and Sidon allied themselves to the rapidly-growing power of Israel during the reigns of David and Solomon, the Israelites (with a much larger population base) turned many of these trading stations

into full-fledged colonies, and founded colonies of their own as well. We shall see the evidence of many Hebrew and Israelite names in colonies which have traditionally been called "Phoenician."

Before examining the colonial empire of the Israelites, let us first review their area of direct physical rule in the Mideast. The Bible tells us that King David subdued the Philistines, the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, the Amalekites and sufficient Syrian territory to reach the Euphrates River (I Chronicles 18:1-17). This area would roughly correspond to the modern nations of Israel and Lebanon together with much of Jordan, a sizable portion of Syria and perhaps part of western Iraq. Israel's army, at its peak only when fully mobilized, numbered 1,500,000 men (I Chronicles 21:5-6)! As described in the first chapter, I Chronicles 19:1-19 shows that the Mesopotamian powers, led by Assyria, engaged Israel in combat by the subterfuge of allowing their national armies to be "hired" as mercenaries by the small nation of Ammon (which wanted to rebel against David's rule). Those Syrians which were not yet under David's rule were allied to the Mesopotamians fighting against Israel. David speaks of that war in Psalm 83:1-8 when he names the nations which had come to aid the Ammonites (children of Lot) in their rebellion. He specifically names the Assyrians (verse 8) as being part of the enemies arrayed against him. This war resulted in the defeat of all the nations which were allied against Israel, and greatly expanded David's rule (and the empire of Israel). Since the kings of the defeated nations had personally witnessed their armies being crushed by the Israelite forces (I Chronicles 19:9), they had neither the stomach nor the military resources to challenge Israel further. This major Israelite victory over Assyria accounts for the eclipse of Assyrian power at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium B.C.<sup>2</sup>

At that time, the kingdoms of Mesopotamia became subordinate to the kingdom of Israel. It is interesting that the world's historians have not linked Assyria's period of severe decline with the ascent of King David, whose army routed the Assyrians in a major war (I Chronicles 19:6-15 and Psalm 83:1-8). Unlike many great conquerors who wished only to exalt themselves, it should be noted that David, in his wars and conquests, desired to exalt the name of the God of Israel over all nations (Psalm 83:9-18). Consequently, the writings of David in the Psalms dwell on glorifying the God of Israel, and the self-praise so characteristic of other triumphant ancient monarchs is lacking. If David's ego had been paramount, his writings would have dwelt far more on his conquests, and he would have built great monuments to commemorate his victories. Indeed, the lack of self-glorifying monuments to David's victories was likely a result of divine decision. I Chronicles 21 records that God was so angry at David for even doing a military census of the tribes of Israel that he slew 70,000 Israelites in a plague! Since David was thus punished for "numbering Israel" (his own nation), he would not have risked additional divine wrath by doing a census of all the conquered nations as well.

God wanted Israel and her rulers to be humble and God-centered, not vain and self-centered. The lack of great monuments to their triumphs makes it easier for historians to miss the accomplishments of Israel, because they naturally assume Israel would have constructed great monuments to boast about major triumphs as did the other ancient empires. They take this paucity of monuments to mean such triumphs did not occur, when, in fact, it is evidence of God's involvement in Israel's affairs to keep the kings of his people from getting inflated egos.

The Israelites did construct great edifices, however. Indeed,

under King Solomon, the Israelites and their subject people labored for decades to finish Solomon's immense building projects. Their greatest monument, the Temple of God in Jerusalem, was constructed to honor God and was one of the wonders of the ancient world (it was later destroyed in warfare, as were the other great projects of King Solomon).

Upon concluding his war with the Assyrians and their allies, King David's Israel ruled (either directly or via its influence over vassal kings) the entire mideastern world from Egypt and Asia Minor to the region of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. I Chronicles 19:16-19 records that David's vassal kings included Syrians (Aramaeans) who lived east of the Euphrates River. Since secular historians note that Assyria was invaded and subjugated by Aramaeans from the west during this time (see chapter one), either the Israelite role in this "Aramaean" force was missed or the Aramaeans turned on the Assyrians and attacked them as vassals of King David.

Since the Arabians were part of those defeated in the Israelite-Assyrian war (Psalm 83:6 refers to the ancient Arabians as "Ishmaelites"), Israel's hegemony also extended an unknown distance into the Arabian Peninsula. This description generally sets the bounds of Israel's mideastern territory ruled by King David (either directly or through vassal kings). However, this was only the beginning of Israel's empire!

The city-states of Tyre and Sidon had allied themselves to Israel during David's reign, and ingratiated themselves to King David by building David's palace as a gift (I Chronicles 14:1-2). During King Solomon's reign, the Phoenicians shared with the Israelites the skills of long-range ocean travel (II Chronicles 8:18), and the Israelites, Tyrians and Sidonians operated an allied fleet with international destinations (I Kings 9:26-28, 10:11, 22). Artifacts and inscriptions left around the world by this alliance are called

“Phoenician,” after the Greek custom. The *King James Version* of the Bible records in I Kings 10:22 that King Solomon “had at sea a navy of Tharshish” (other versions simply say “Tarshish”). What was this “navy of Tharshish,” and where did they come from? Let us examine two possible explanations for the origin of this term.

One possibility is that Solomon had a fleet of ships based in Spain because Tartessus (in ancient Spain) is often identified as “Tarshish.” It was noted in chapter two that “ships of Tarshish” were recorded as having made voyages to the New World, and that these fleets of Tarshish were Semitic/Phoenician in nature. It is also significant to note that I Kings 10:22 is the Bible’s first mention of “ships of Tarshish.” I Kings 10:22 may be a reference to a Phoenician/ Israelite colony in Spain which became the homeport of a major Phoenician/Israelite fleet during Solomon’s reign. If so, Tartessus (or Tarshish) was a jumping-off point for voyages throughout the Atlantic. We must realize that when the author of I Kings wrote these words, he was not writing for a readership in the twentieth century A.D. He was writing for a more contemporaneous audience which would have realized that a reference to “ships of Tarshish” identified the fleet that Israel (together with Tyre and Sidon) had based in ancient Spain.

The fact that the prophet Jonah sailed “to Tarshish” from Joppa to sail away from the direction of Nineveh (Jonah 1:3) supports the conclusion that Tarshish lay in the western Mediterranean, as noted in *Harper’s Bible Dictionary*.<sup>3</sup>

The second explanation considers the possibility that the extra “h” in the word Tharshish identifies this navy with one of the clans of the Israelite tribe of Benjamin, which was named “Tharshish” (I Chronicles 7:10). Since “Tharshish” is an Israelite name, the Bible’s reference to “ships of Tharshish” could mean that this navy was primarily crewed by members of this branch



of the tribe of Benjamin. It is also possible that the term "ships of Tarshish" later came to describe a particular class of sea-going vessels used by the Phoenicians. This possibility is supported by the reference in I Kings 22:48 that over a century later Judah's King Jehoshaphat tried to "make" a fleet composed of "ships of Tarshish" for basing in the Red Sea port of Ezion-geber.

Dr. Barry Fell observed that the language of Tartessus/Tarshish in ancient Spain was "no more than a dialectal variant of Phoenician."<sup>4</sup> The fact that Tarshish spoke a dialect of the Phoenician language clearly shows that it was a Semitic colony of the Phoenician empire. The language of this Phoenician colony in ancient Spain eventually came to be known as "Iberian-Punic." The Israelite nature of the Tartessus/Tarshish colony is apparent in the fact that it may have been named after a clan of the Israelite tribe of Benjamin. Since Tyre, Sidon and the tribes of Israel were all called "Phoenicia" by the Greeks, the naming of this Phoenician city/colony in ancient Spain after an Israelite tribal name confirms that the Israelite role in Phoenicia's navy (and colonies) was far larger than hitherto realized. We shall see more evidence to support this conclusion later in this chapter.

I Kings 10:22 also states "once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes and peacocks." That it returned, laden with trade goods and exotic animals, after a voyage of three years indicates that its mission was that of a commercial fleet on a very prolonged voyage. The three-year time period is significant as Ferdinand Magellan's historic voyage which circumnavigated the globe in 1519-1522 also took three years.<sup>5</sup> A span of three years allows sufficient time for sailing ships to circumnavigate the globe while making trading stops as well as exploring new places. Magellan's voyage involved a large loss of life (including Magellan's) due to its nature as a path finding expedition in hostile lands. However,

Solomon's fleet could take advantage of the already established trading routes of the Phoenicians and Egyptians in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans (see chapter two), and likely had a more tranquil voyage. The above does not "prove" that Solomon's fleet sailed around the world, but the length of its voyage does parallel the length of Magellan's voyage in a sailing ship, and its cargo of exotic animals from other continents also supports such a conclusion.

Some readers might wonder whether the "ships of Tarshish" belonged to the Japhethic tribe of Tarshish mentioned in Genesis 10:4. While that would seem to be a possibility at first, the fact that the Tartessian "Tarshish" was located in the direction that Jonah sailed to Tarshish, and the fact that the Iberian "Tarshish" spoke a dialect of Phoenician (a Semitic language) argues for a Semitic origin for Solomon's "ships of Tharshish" and the Iberian "Tarshish." Further-more, there is no biblical evidence of any close cooperation between King Solomon's Israelites and the Japhethic nation of Tarshish. Since Barry Fell's book, *America B.C.* gives evidence of "the ships of Tarshish" being involved in ancient explorations of North America,<sup>6</sup> this also argues that the biblical "Tarshish" was located proximate to the Atlantic Ocean (such as in ancient Spain).

The Phoenicians planted many colonies wherever their navies sailed. Many Phoenician colonies were located in "Mediterranean Africa, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Spain [and] the coast of Morocco."<sup>7</sup> George Rawlinson adds that "in the space of about three hundred years, from B.C. 1100 to B.C. 800, Phoenician colonists occupied all the most eligible of the mid-African sites from Leptus Magna...to Hippo Regina...(400 miles) further westward."<sup>8</sup> This period of heavy Phoenician colonization directly coincided with the period of Israel's dominant role in the "Phoenician" alliance. This strongly indicates that most of the

“Phoenician” colonists were Israelites.

The planting of many “Phoenician” colonies throughout the Mediterranean Sea and their dominance of the region’s maritime commerce makes it clear that during Phoenicia’s empire period (which precisely parallels the period of Israelite dominance in the “Phoenician” alliance), the Mediterranean Sea was a “Phoenician Sea” much as it was a “Roman Sea” during the time of the Caesars. Israel had a large population that extended inland for a considerable distance while the city-states of Tyre, Sidon, etc. occupied relatively small coastal areas around their respective city-states. Therefore, the population base to support the founding of many “Phoenician” colonies had to come from the population of Israel, not that of Tyre or Sidon.

Also, God had promised Abraham that his progeny (the Israelites) would have a population so large that it would become too large to number (Genesis 13:16, 22:17). When the Israelites occupied the Promised Land under Joshua, it was described as a “land of milk and honey” which could easily support a growing population. That the Israelites numbered in the millions is obvious from the fact that David’s army could muster 1,500,000 men when all reserves were mobilized, and that total would exclude all females, all children, the elderly and maimed males. However, the physical territory of the twelve tribes in Palestine remained relatively static. The obvious question is “where did their expanding population go?” We now know the answer; their expanding population furnished the settlers for the Phoenician colonies all over the Mediterranean region. Let us examine those colonies for evidence of specific Hebrew/Israelite involvement.

The settlements of the Phoenicians in Spain were originally named after several Hebrew names. One principal settlement was named Gades, Gadir or Gadeira, and today this city is known as Cadiz. Located on the Atlantic Ocean, it surely served as a

major port for Phoenician expeditions to Briton and North America. The prominent historian, George Rawlinson, cites the Phoenician word for "enclosure" or "fortified place" as the source for the name of this ancient port city<sup>9</sup>. He could just as easily have credited ancient Hebrew as the source of its name as the Hebrew word "gadar" means "enclose," "fence up" or "make (a wall)." <sup>10</sup> Since the Hebrew word "gadar" would have been written without vowels at that ancient time, its consonants G-D-R serve precisely as the root word for the names Gadir or Gadeira.

Another historian, L.A. Waddell, states Gades could be rendered "House of the Gads." <sup>11</sup> **Gad** was the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel, and could easily have given its name to the colony of **Gades**. The tribe of Gad was prophesied by Moses in Deuteronomy 33:20 to "be enlarged" (i.e. "have a large population"). As their population expanded over the centuries, it is consistent with this biblical prophecy that Gad would have been one of the tribes most needing to export part of its population to some of Israel's colonies.

Another historian, Philip Hitti, cites that Gades was founded as a colony of the Phoenicians around 1000 B.C.<sup>12</sup>, while the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that Cadiz was founded "as early as 1100 B.C." <sup>13</sup> This time frame for Cadiz's founding is in the era of Israel's rise to empire status under Kings David and Solomon, when we would expect to see Israel's dominance in what is traditionally called the "Phoenician" Empire. That "Gades" bore the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel (Gad) strongly indicates that it was given that name by Israelites rather than by inhabitants of Tyre or Sidon.

George Rawlinson cited the Hebrew word "malakh" as the root word for the original Phoenician settlement which is now called Malaga in Spain.<sup>14</sup> The *Encyclopedia Americana* states: "Malaga,

the Malakka of the Phoenicians, was founded in the eleventh century B.C.”<sup>15</sup> Both Gades/Gadir and Malakka were founded around 1000 B.C., or a little prior to that date. In chapter one we learned that King David was importing vast amounts of copper ores for eventual use in the Temple to be built by Solomon, and that the ancient copper mines on Lake Superior’s shores were worked to exhaustion around 1000 B.C. In chapter two, we learned that the Israelites constructed a massive smelting facility in Ezion-geber around this same time. For King David to import copper ores from ancient Lake Superior for use in the Temple, the Israelites and their allies from Tyre and Sidon would have needed several ports of call between North America and Israel to service and maintain its fleet. All such shipments would have to pass through the Strait of Gibraltar, and Cadiz and Malaga (to use their modern names) would give them twin ports on both the Atlantic and Mediterranean sides of Gibraltar. It is likely that these ports were built in the eleventh century B.C. to serve David’s import needs, and were expanded into full-fledged colonies during the tenth century B.C. by skilled mariners from Tyre or Sidon. Locating a port on either side of the Strait of Gibraltar would ensure the choice of either a windward or leeward port for all ships transiting the strait, whether they were heading toward the Atlantic Ocean or the Mediterranean Sea.

The Phoenicians also mined tin and other ores in Britain, and exported them to other nations in the Mideast. George Rawlinson states:

*"The Phoenicians had one more colony towards the west...Phoenician ships from Gadeira...crossed the mouth of the English Channel...to the Scilly Isles and conveyed thither a body of colonists who established an emporium. The attraction which drew them*

*was the mineral wealth of the islands and of the neighboring Cornish coast...It is reasonable to suppose that the Phoenicians both worked the mines and smelted the ores."*<sup>16</sup>

Historical evidence points to the Israelite tribe of Asher as being directly involved with the mining of tin in early Britain. William Camden, a British historian who lived from 1551 to 1623, states in his historical work, *Britannia*, that:

*"The merchants of Asher worked the tin mines of Cornwall, not as slaves, but as masters and exporters."*<sup>17</sup>

A British historian of the nineteenth century, Sir Edmund Creasy, also noted that:

*"The British mines mainly supplied the glorious adornment of Solomon's Temple."*<sup>18</sup>

There has been an awareness of a substantial Israelite presence in ancient Britain for a long time. In fact, it appears to have been common knowledge among earlier British historians.

Unfortunately, modern histories, steeped in evolutionary myths, now ignore evidence from ancient history which verifies the accuracy of the Bible. Romans 1:28 appropriately comments that some people do "not like to retain God in their knowledge." Modern students are now taught history courses which do not "retain" critical historical truths verifying the Bible and God's reality.

Since the early British histories specifically mention the Israelite tribe of Asher and the role of Solomon's Temple in early British mining efforts, it further supports the conclusion that many early "Phoenician" explorations and colonizations were mainly Israelite

efforts. Tyre and Sidon simply did not have the manpower to conduct worldwide explorations and furnish the population for numerous colonies on several continents. Israel had an expanding population which readily supplied the manpower for these efforts.

As the reader now knows, Israelite/Phoenician explorations and colonizations were not limited to the eastern shores of the Atlantic Ocean. Their presence in North America is clear from the evidence presented in the first two chapters. While ancient evidence of worshippers of the God of Israel has been discovered in Ohio and New Mexico,<sup>19</sup> most Israelites in North America would have been followers of Baal and the "mother-goddess" as Israel served these pagan gods almost exclusively from the death of Solomon to the fall of Samaria (ca. 930-721 B.C.).

How large and viable was the early Hebrew/Phoenician civilization in the New World? Evidence now exists that it was both expansive and long-lived. The following passage is taken from "The Adena Tablets," written by Robert Lenhart, and published in the *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Volume 13, 1985.

*"When the first settlers moved westward from the American colonies on the Atlantic Seaboard they discovered the great burial mounds and earthworks of the Ohio Valley. The mounds were obviously the work of man, but just as obviously, not within the capacity or tribal memories of the tribes who inhabited the valley at that time. Presidents Thomas Jefferson and William Henry Harrison, scientists, many eminent clergymen and others speculated that the mounds and earthworks were built either by Egyptians,*

*Norsemen or the lost tribes of Israel.*"<sup>20</sup>

Lenhart also states concerning this early North American civilization that:

*"they reached a very high cultural level over 1500 years and then disappeared about 500 A.D." ...[and]... "the Adena People dominated the Ohio Valley from about 1000 B.C."*<sup>21</sup>

The Adena People are also known as the first of the North American "Mound Builders" as they constructed impressive burial mounds which have survived to the present. The *Encyclopedia Americana* also traces the earliest Mound Builders in ancient America to **1000 B.C.**<sup>22</sup> It also describes these earthwork mounds as follows:

*"The Adena people buried their dead in large conical mounds of earth, together with rich grave goods of copper, mica and stone. They left many ornaments and pieces of jewelry, as well as stone tablets covered with curvilinear designs."*<sup>23</sup>

The term "curvilinear designs" is actually a euphemism for inscriptions in ancient Old World languages. Any kind of alphabetic writing involves "curved lines" written in a "linear" (straight-line) manner. Therefore, "stone tablets covered with curvilinear designs" could more accurately have been written "stone tablets with ancient inscriptions." Dr. Barry Fell, in his book *Saga America*, stated:

*"The so-called Curvilinear is in fact writing—ancient Punic, Greek, and Libyan Arabic of North Africa—using alphabets that are proper to those tongues. Similar texts, including also*



*Celtic, Iberian and Hebrew, were inscribed in other parts of America...”<sup>24</sup>*

Dr. Fell has pointed out that some “curvilinear” markings found in ancient America were actually ancient Arabic Kufi inscriptions dating to as recent as the seventh century A.D., a conclusion supported by both American and foreign experts in ancient languages.<sup>25</sup> This indicates that Old World civilizations continued to send expeditions to North America for centuries after the birth of Christ.

The Adena People flourished in the American Midwest, generally the Ohio River Valley, beginning **around 1000 B.C.** Their arrival in ancient America parallels the expansionary phase of ancient Israel under Kings David and Solomon **around 1000 B.C.** as the “Phoenician” empire grew more powerful. Let us examine what languages have been found on artifacts in ancient American burial mounds.

In 1838 a tablet (found with a skeleton and copper arm rings) was excavated in Grave Creek, West Virginia, from a burial mound of the ancient North American Adena People.<sup>26</sup>

Concerning this tablet, Barry Fell states:

*“It was at once recognized by Professor Rafn of Copenhagen as being Iberian, though that script had not at that time been deciphered. Recent studies show the language of the tablet is Punic (Phoenician), written in the form of alphabet used in Spain during the first millennium B.C. It may be translated as follows (the writing reading from right to left): ‘The mound raised-on-high for Tasach this tile (His) queen caused-to-be-made.’ The alphabet of the tablet was deciphered by Spanish scholars, and published by the*

*English epigrapher D. Diringer in 1968. The language is basic Semitic, and all words occur in standard literary Semitic dictionaries.”<sup>27</sup>*

Another tablet, from a separate Adena mound was:

*“inscribed in Iberian script and employing the Punic language, shares some of its vocabulary and all of its basic style characters with the historic tablet of Tasach excavated in 1838 [in] West Virginia...Its vocabulary is found in standard Semitic dictionaries, and yields the following translation: “The memorial of Teth this tile (His) brother caused-to-be-made.”<sup>28</sup>*

The presence of Iberian Punic inscriptions on these tablets indicates that they are of a “Western Phoenician” origin. “Western Phoenician,” “Carthaginian,” “Punic,” “Iberian Punic,” and “Iberian” are all terms used to describe the languages of the colonies originally established by the “Phoenicians” of Israel, Tyre and Sidon during the beginning centuries of the first millennium B.C. These are “Semitic” languages as all the people in the Phoenician alliance were Semites. That the Adena people buried their dead with Semitic inscriptions of the Western Phoenician language groups indicates that the Adena People were a large colony of Semitic settlers from the Old World. Given the proximity of these finds to the “Decalogue Tablet” (found in Ohio) inscribed with the Ten Commandments in ancient Hebrew, it seems evident that this Semitic civilization began mostly as an Israelite colony. Only Israelites who were followers of the God of Israel would inscribe and preserve the Ten Commandments (of Israel’s God) on a tablet. Though Israel ceased to be a nation in the eighth B.C., their ancient American colonies outlived their parent nation for many centuries, linked to their sister “Phoenician” colonies in North Africa and Iberia.

It is noteworthy that the Adena Civilization began around 1000 B.C. Chapter one discussed the fact that the Lake Superior copper mines were apparently worked to exhaustion around 1000 B.C. when King David was importing massive amounts of copper ores for temple purposes. It is likely that the Israelites, together with their Tyrian and Sidonian allies, founded the Adena colonies to further exploit the natural resources of ancient North America.

The above tablets date to approximately 300-200 B.C.,<sup>29</sup> a time when the North American Semites were linked to the Punic civilization of Carthage. Since it is apparent that the late Adena civilization was a Semitic culture like those in Iberia and North Africa (they shared a common culture and language), it is logical that all these groups shared a common origin. That common origin could only have been the Phoenician alliance of Israel, Tyre, and Sidon.

The fact that one of the ancient Adena royalty was named "Tasach" is also significant. In Genesis 21:12, God promised Abraham that "through Isaac shall your descendants be named." (RSV) God was promising that the name of "Isaac" would be a perennial, identifying "marker" for locating the descendants of Abraham. The name "Ta-sach" found in ancient America, is a derivative of the name "Isaac." Vowels were generally not written in ancient Semitic languages, so the consonants "S-C" of Isaac are preserved in the second syllable of "Ta-sach" a prominent member of the Adena culture in ancient North America. Tasach must have been an Israelite who had descended from the original colonists of the Hebrew/Phoenician alliance. The presence of an Israelite leader in the Adena civilization further indicates that the Israelites were in a position of dominance in the Adena colonies.

The Phoenician alliance of Israel, Tyre and Sidon founded

numerous colonies in the European and North African regions of the Mediterranean Sea as well as the British Isles and North America during the reigns of Kings David and Solomon, beginning "around 1000 B.C." Under Kings David and Solomon, the Israelite (Phoenician) Empire became a maritime superpower, and began to export Phoenician Hebrew culture and colonies around the world. The evidence that the ancient Israelites founded a large empire has been in the Bible's historical accounts for thousands of years, but only recently has there been archeological evidence which proves the biblical accounts were correct all along. At its zenith, the empire of Israel ruled or held primary influence over portions of four continents (Asia, Africa, Europe and North America)!

While we have seen that the Greeks used the term "Phoenicia" to describe the alliance of Israel, Tyre and Sidon, it is time to address the question: **What did the ancient Israelite empire call itself?**

What is surprising is that the answer to this question is not difficult to ascertain. The Israelites were the descendants of Abraham, with whom God made a solemn covenant (Genesis 12:1-3, 15:18, 17:1-21, and 22:15-18) to make "many nations" and "kings" out of Abraham's descendants. Note that in the above scriptures the word "covenant" appears many times. This covenant, with its many blessings, was passed on through Abraham's son Isaac (Genesis 26:24-25) to Isaac's son Jacob (Genesis 35:9-12). Jacob's name was changed to Israel (Genesis 35:10), and the covenant promises of God were next given to Israel's twelve sons who were the progenitors of the "twelve tribes of Israel." However, the name "Israel" was specifically placed on the individual Israelite tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 48:8-16). Note especially Israel's statement in verses 14-16:

*"Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head...and his left hand upon Manasseh's, guiding his hands wittingly...And he blessed Joseph, and said...bless the lads; and **let my name be named on them...**and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."*  
(Emphasis added.)

**Consequently, from that point on, any entity called "Israel" in the Bible must include the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh because they inherited the Abrahamic covenant, and the name of "Israel."**

Ephraim and Manasseh received the "birthright" blessings of the Abrahamic covenant such as a large population, many independent nations, abundant natural resources, etc. (Genesis 49:16-20). The other tribes shared in these covenant promises, but the "lion's share" of the best blessings was inherited by the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh!

However, the tribe of Judah inherited one major blessing/promise of the Abrahamic covenant. Abraham was promised in Genesis 17:6 that his descendants would include kings. Before he died, Israel (Jacob) prophesied in Genesis 49:10 that:

*"The sceptre [kings and dynasties] shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."*

The word "Shiloh" is defined by *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible* as "a description of Messiah, as the Prince of Peace."<sup>30</sup> The word "gathering" literally means "obedience, expectation, hope."<sup>31</sup> The Messiah was (and is) the hope of

Israel and Judah, and he will ultimately be obeyed by all nations (Zechariah 14:9-16). Genesis 49:10 prophesied that the Messiah would have to come from the tribe of Judah. The fact that Jesus Christ was a member of the tribe of Judah, is one of his credentials as the Messiah.

**After the kingdom of Israel divided into northern and southern kingdoms, Ephraim and Manasseh became the chief tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel, and Judah became the chief tribe of the southern kingdom of Judah.**

This will become critically important in later chapters as we trace their descendants through history up to (and including) the modern era. The Bible consistently refers to the Jews and their related tribes by the name "Judah" (both in history and prophecy), while Ephraim and Manasseh and their related tribes are referred to as "Israel." It is critically important to realize that, after the division of the tribes which followed soon after the death of King Solomon, the terms "Israel" and "Judah" are not synonymous.

The entire purpose of the above discussion was to show the importance of the word "**covenant**" as part of the heritage of Israel. They were well aware that they were the "people of the covenant," indeed, it was the central theme of their entire heritage. The Hebrew word for covenant is "**Berith.**"<sup>32</sup> With vowels being absent in ancient Hebrew/Phoenician, this word would be represented by the consonants **B-R-T** or **B-R-TH** (generally written as "brt" or "brth," but this book will present ancient root words with capital letters and hyphens for the purpose of emphasis). A modern form of this Hebrew word is contained in the name of a well-known Jewish organization: B'nai **B'rith.**

Before continuing, the reader should know that the final symbol of **B-R-T** or **B-R-TH**, although written as "T" or "TH," is based on

the same Hebrew consonant. That consonant's pronunciation could vary (resulting in the above different representations), but it is still the same consonant. I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Charles V. Dorothy, a graduate of Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, CA, who comments as follows on the different forms of this Hebrew consonant:

*"It is no stretch at all of linguistic patterns for a spirant (especially hard to pronounce in the case of 'th') to elide into a stop: 't'."*

Also, I wish to thank Dr. Dorothy (in his discussion of the language possibilities involving B-R-T/B-R-TH) for mentioning that those consonants can also designate a Hebrew word for "soap/alkali." Since some individuals, determined to minimize the role of the Israelites and the God of Israel in world history, may grasp at this straw to oppose this book's conclusions, we will briefly discuss this possibility in order to give it the swift dismissal it deserves. According to *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, the Old Testament translates the word "B-R-T/B-R-TH" as "covenant" in 260 instances (and as related words like "league" or "confederacy" another 19 times).<sup>33</sup> However, those consonants appear in a separate Hebrew word ("borith") translated "soap" only twice.<sup>34</sup>

Anyone familiar with the Bible or Israelite history knows that the Israelites were known, both racially and nationally, as the "Covenant People," not the "Soap People." In terms of relative importance to the Israelites as a national symbol or motto, the word "covenant" merits unique and special importance to them as an identifying term. In this, Dr. Dorothy agrees, commenting: "...in your favor, and you may want to mention [this] whenever possible, is the much greater importance of 'covenant' or 'bond' [in Israelite history] against... 'soap'." It is beyond the scope of this book to analyze every possible nuance of the Hebrew

language, but the reader may rest assured that either **B-R-T** or **B-R-TH**, when applied in a national sense, represent the Hebrew word for "covenant."

A book, *Phoenician Origin of Britons, Scots and Anglo-Saxons*, by L. A. Waddell, documents the prominent usage of the word "B-R-T" (which Waddell generally renders "Barat") in the nation and colonies of the early Phoenicians, but a cautionary comment must be made about this book. While it contains much evidence about the prominence of the word "B-R-T" in Phoenicia's sphere of influence, Waddell's book (first published in 1924) contains Aryan racial supremacy theories. [In contrast, the book which you are now reading rejects and disavows any racial supremacy theories and all forms of anti-Semitism.]

Waddell's book also made a critical error in not understanding that there were two very separate Hebrew kingdoms in the ancient Mideast: Judah in the south and Israel in the north. He also mistakenly refers to the Israelite/Phoenicians to the north of Judah as the "Hitto-Phoenicians." Waddell's lack of awareness that the terms "Israelite" and "Jew" are not synonymous is clear from his notation on a chart that the "Israelites [were] carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, 587 B.C."<sup>35</sup> It was actually the "Jews" (of the kingdom of Judah) who were taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar in 587 B.C. The "Israelites" (of the kingdom of Israel) had not resided in Palestine since the fall of Samaria in 721 B.C. Due to this mistake, Waddell failed to recognize the Israelite character of the "Phoenician" Empire. While Waddell documents the prominence of the word "B-R-T" in the Phoenician sphere of influence, he failed to realize that the prominent presence of the Hebrew word for covenant ("B-R-T") on the Phoenician Empire argues powerfully for Israelite dominance in the "Phoenician" empire. While Tyre and Sidon had nothing in their heritage to place the word "covenant" on themselves, **the**



**ten tribes of Israel (especially the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh) were the covenant people**, and their use of the word "B-R-T" proclaimed their identity to the world! Besides calling themselves "Israel," "Judah," or their individual tribal names, the Israelites called themselves "the covenant people."

The early British chroniclers record that a King Brutus came from the Eastern Mediterranean with hundreds of ships to colonize the large island on the northwest of the European land mass, and gave it the name "Briton" or "Brittania." The approximate date for this event is 1103 B.C., a time just prior to the beginning of the first millennium B.C. Although Brutus is attributed a Trojan ancestry in the ancient accounts, he bore the Hebrew word **B-R-T** in his name (Brutus), and applied the same Hebrew word (**B-R-T**) to their new homeland (Briton).<sup>36</sup> In other words, King Brutus' name identified him as a member of the "Covenant People," and in naming his new land "Briton," he was claiming it as a territory for the "Covenant People." That a Trojan leader bore an important Hebrew root word in his name argues that Israelites were present among the inhabitants of ancient Troy.

While it cannot be demonstrated that Brutus' colonists arriving in Briton were all Israelites, the fact that the Hebrew word "B-R-T" was placed on the leader of the expedition and their new homeland does argue for a dominant Israelite role in this early colonization of Briton. Even though the formal alliance of Israel and Tyre was not created until the reigns of Kings David and Hiram (approximately a century later), Brutus' voyage indicates that Israelites were involved in colonial expeditions and maritime journeys even before the reign of King David. Indeed, the Bible supports such a conclusion. Judges 5:17 attributes a nautical presence in the Mediterranean Sea to the Israelite tribe of Dan (circa 1200 B.C.), indicating a seafaring tradition among the Israelites a century before Brutus' time.

Israel, the covenant nation, had been present in the Eastern Mediterranean for centuries before King David ruled, so the arrival of King Brutus and a fleet of "Covenant People" (i.e. Israelites) from the Eastern Mediterranean in Briton in 1103 B.C. was historically possible. Indeed, who else but the Israelites (who had entered into a "covenant" relationship with God at Mt. Sinai) would so prominently affix the Hebrew word for "covenant" to themselves and their territories? Also, unless Brutus' fleet of colonists were predominately Israelite, why would they allow him to name their new homeland with a word so closely linked with the tribes of Israel?

A need by Israel to export its growing population via colonizing expeditions is consistent with the biblical promise of God to Abraham to so increase the population of the Israelites that they would be like "as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore (Gen. 22:15-17)." Any people so blessed would regularly need to locate additional territories for an expanding population. The colonizing expedition of Brutus and the Hebrew word "B-R-T" being placed on ancient Briton indicates that is precisely what was happening.

The above does not deny that the city-states of Tyre and Sidon also had major concurrent seafaring capacities. Since the Israelites, the Tyrians and Sidonians had long shared a common race, language and trading relationships, it is possible that when Kings Hiram and David sealed a formal alliance between their peoples, navies, etc.; they simply formalized the "status quo" rather than established something radically new. This creates the possibility (indeed, the likelihood) that Israel, Tyre and Sidon had been cooperating for some time in their overseas endeavors. The fact that the Greeks did not limit the term "Phoenicia" to the small city-states like Tyre and Sidon, but included the land of Israel in the region they called "Phoenicia" supports this

conclusion.<sup>37</sup>

At any rate, the arrival of Israelite settlers in Briton paved the way for its inclusion among the lands of the Israelite/Phoenician maritime empire which followed shortly thereafter. Unique among the lands inhabited by the Israelite/Phoenicians, the island of Briton has retained a name based on the Hebrew word for "covenant" continuously into the modern era.

The B-R-T root word was also found on Phoenician coins, further indicating that they identified themselves as "the covenant people."<sup>38</sup>

The Phoenician colony of Carthage also printed the word B-R-T on its coins.<sup>39</sup> A later chapter will present considerable evidence that the Israelites were the prime founders of the Phoenician colony of Carthage. Therefore, it is not surprising that this significant Hebrew root word (B-R-T) also appears on Carthaginian coins (proclaiming to the world that they were part of "the Covenant People"). The Israelites were proud of being "the Covenant People," as demonstrated by that word being used as a legend on their coins. Whether the vowel sounds of their day resulted in a word like "Barat," "Berith," or "Brit" is not important; what is critical is the understanding that Phoenician people chose to refer to themselves as the Covenant (B-R-T) People. When we find the root word containing the consonants B-R-T (or its variations) attached to a group of people in the ancient "Phoenician" world, we can generally assume we have located some of the "covenant" tribes of Israel unless there is overriding evidence to the contrary.

The word "Hebrew" comes from one of the ancestors of the Israelites whose name was "Eber" (Genesis 11:14-26 traces the ancestry of Abraham to Eber). Several variations of the word "Hebrew" also appear within the ancient "Phoenician" Empire.

We have already seen that the ancient name of Spain (which was

the site of the major Phoenician/Israelite colony of Gades/Gadeira), was **Iberia**. Also, an ancient name of Ireland was **Ibheriu** or Iberiu, and ancient Gaelic histories record that the ancestors of the Gaelic settlers of Ireland **came from Iberia** ("Phoenician" Spain).<sup>40</sup> Ancient Ireland was also called **Hibernia**, a name which also preserved the Hebrew root word "Eber." Note how closely the words **Ibheriu** and **Iberiu** coincide phonetically with the pronunciation of the word Hebrew.

Waddell also notes some of the above, and includes the **Hebrides** as a related word, representative "of the 'Iberia'... stock, which first peopled the British Isles."<sup>41</sup> The placement of the name of a Hebrew patriarch on Ireland, Spain and early Briton further confirms that their early settlers were Israelites, colonizing these areas during the centuries of the "Phoenician Golden Age."

One other possibility exists for these early names in the British Isles. It was noted earlier that early histories of Briton record that the tribe of Asher operated the ancient mines in Cornwall. One of the clans of Asher was named the **Heberites** (Numbers 26:44-45), and this Hebrew name also serves as a precise root word for such names as **Hibernia** and the **Hebrides**. Either way, the Israelite dominance in the old Phoenician Empire is further shown. Would the pagans of the ancient city-states of Tyre and Sidon have called their colonies, coins and kings by Israelite names based on the Hebrew word "covenant," and the names of either Abraham's ancestor or a clan of the tribe of Asher? Of course not! **These Israelite names clearly indicate that the old Phoenician Empire at the beginning of the first millennium B.C. was the international Israelite empire spoken of in the Bible.** The common usage of the Hebrew word B-R-T indicates they referred to themselves as the "covenant" kingdom.

Let us examine still more evidence that the Phoenician Empire was actually the empire of Israel. Remember that the consonants of ancient languages were written while the vowels were frequently omitted. The consonants of the word "Phoenicia" are P(h)-N-C. These consonants were preserved by the Romans when they called the Carthaginians the "Punic" empire (According to secular accounts, Carthage was founded by the Phoenicians in the ninth century B.C.) In doing so, the Romans simply preserving the Greek designation for the Phoenicians (the founders of Carthage).

The Romans were not the only ancient nation that retained the "P-N-C" name for the ancient Israelite empire. The ancient records of Vedic India also record the existence of an international empire with those consonants in their title. The ancient writings of Vedic India include the following statement: "*The able Panch setting out to invade the Earth, brought the whole World under their sway.*"<sup>42</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Also, a Rig Veda Hymn includes this statement: "*The Panch leaders of the Earth.*"<sup>43</sup> (Emphasis added.)

The consonants for these "Panch" world leaders in the Vedic records are P-N-C(h). This could conceivably be written off by skeptics as a coincidence except for the fact that this "Panch" empire is also linked with the **B-R-T** Hebrew root word for "Covenant." The first quote about the "Panch" is from the "Maha-Baraṭa Indian Epic of the Great Baraṭs" (Emphasis added.), and the second quote is from a Rig Veda hymn stating:

*"The Brihat singers belaud Indra...Indra hath raised the Sun on high in heaven... Indra leads us with single sway-The Panch leaders of the Earth."*<sup>44</sup>

The references to Indra and sun worship are hardly surprising.

The Bible records that Israel became devotees of Baal, the Sun-god of Tyre and Sidon, during their golden age. This idolatry had permeated Israel even before the death of Solomon as he himself worshipped "Ashtoreth (or Astarte)," a Phoenician name for the "mother-goddess" who was worshipped in many other cultures by other names. Israel's devotion to foreign gods lasted from Solomon until the fall of Israel in about 721 B.C., so the fact that the B-R-T (Covenant) People of "Panch" (Phoenician) fame were associated with the mother-goddess worship is consistent with biblical accounts. It is clear, nonetheless, that ancient Indian histories referred to the Israelite empire by the same root words by which they were known to the Mediterranean world. The Greeks knew the Israelites by the term Phoenicia, and the Israelites named themselves the "B-R-T" ("Covenant") People. Ancient India preserved both root words in the terms Panch, and the Barats (or Brihats). Further linking these root words together is a phrase in an ancient Indian epic (the Vishnu Purana) which states: "The principal nations of the Barats are the Kurus and the able Panch." <sup>45</sup> (Emphasis added.)

That the Israelite/Phoenician Empire made a lasting impression in Asia as well as the Mediterranean world indicates that Israel's empire and influence was truly international in scope. The record in ancient Indian annals that the Barat/Panch (B-R-T/Phoenicians) "brought the whole World under their sway" gives added weight to the statement of the Bible that **"all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon—and they brought every man his present—year by year"** (II Chronicles 9:23-24).

It is evident that the great empire known to the Mediterranean/Atlantic world as the Phoenicians (and by the Hebrew word B-R-T), and the great empire known to the Asians as the Panch (and by the Hebrew word B-R-T) were one and the same. This empire

was the Israelite empire under Kings David and Solomon: the “**covenant**” or “**B-R-T**” kingdom.

The Bible quotes God giving King David the following message through the prophet Nathan:

*“I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like unto the name of the great ones of the earth.”* (II Sam. 7:9)

This passage is important for two reasons: It not only claims that the fame of King David (the founder of the Israelite empire) would equal the fame of any other world leaders known to him at that time, but it also claims a divine role in David’s and Israel’s ascendancy. God was reminding David that his kingship and Israel’s success resulted from divine intervention in the affairs of nations. This message was to keep David humble by reminding him that he also had a king (the God of Israel) to obey.

One additional piece of evidence of the substantial role of the Israelite tribes in the ancient world will be examined. Ezekiel 27 lists many ancient nations which traded in Tyre’s marketplace, and verses 17-19 (KJV) **list the tribe of Dan as having an identity separate and distinct from Israel and Judah**. This fact was hinted at earlier in the reference to Judges 5:17 that “Dan remain[ed] in ships.” This passage indicates that the tribe of Dan (whose territory included a strip of land on the Mediterranean shore) had a nautical identity. If a portion of the Danites had an identity separate from Israel and Judah, secular records should bear witness to that fact...and they do!

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* records that the Greeks listed the “Danaans,” or “Danuana” as a distinct, seafaring people who were present in the eastern Mediterranean Sea as early as 1230-

1190 B.C.<sup>46</sup> This is the same time frame that Judges 5:17 ascribes a nautical identity to the Danites. Bibles which affix dates to chapter headings typically show a date around 1200 B.C. for Judges 5:17. Therefore, the biblical and secular accounts agree on the dating of the tribe of Dan's separate, maritime identity.

These "Danaans" were part of a seafaring alliance of peoples known as the Sea Peoples who raided and settled Mediterranean coastlands at that time. The connection between the tribe of Dan and the Sea Peoples has also been noted in *Biblical Archaeology Review*, in an article which cites the work of Israeli archaeologist, Yigael Yadin, in the following comment:

*"...The Danites were originally not members of the Israelite confederation...They seem, rather, to have been connected with a group of the Sea Peoples called Danuna or Denyen in Egyptian sources, and known to the Greeks as the Danaoi."*<sup>47</sup>

Dan's apparent independence from the other tribes occurred at a time when the Israelite tribes were loosely ruled by a series of Judges who predated the Israelite monarchical period. During that time, the Israelite tribes had no strong central government, and the tribes were free to pursue more independent paths. The fact that the "Danaans" were located in the eastern Mediterranean region also supports their being the tribe of Dan as that is precisely where one would expect the tribe of Dan to be present. It is also recorded that the "Danaans" furnished some of the earliest settlers of ancient Ireland.<sup>48</sup> This account not only further supports a strong nautical tradition for the ancient tribe of Dan, but their presence in ancient Ireland also indicates that several of the Israelite tribes had roles in the early colonization of the British Isles.



If Dan, one of the lesser tribes of Israel, was itself sufficiently numerous that the Greeks preserved its prominent, independent identity approximately two centuries prior to the reigns of Kings David and Solomon, it is easier to understand how great the entire Israelite nation could become when all twelve tribes were finally united under a strong ruler.

In conclusion, we can now see that the Israelite empire under Kings David and Solomon at the beginning of the first millennium B.C. was truly an international empire that spanned several continents. Besides its Mideast homeland, it extended its influence to the European and African shores of the Mediterranean, the British Isles, and North America. For a time, it exercised dominance over the nations which had either been conquered by King David or had voluntarily offered tribute payments to Israel under King Solomon. Also, their sphere of influence extended far beyond their actual areas of settlement. When King David routed the Assyrian army and its allies, the fame of Israel spread far and wide. Solomon's wealth, wisdom and power would have further expanded the world's awareness of Israel's greatness. King Solomon's alliance with Sidon, Tyre and Egypt would have made this grouping the most powerful land and maritime force on earth at that time. The biblical assertions that the Israelite empire under King Solomon had worldwide influence is neither fantastic nor exaggerated.

That even the Vedic histories of India state that the Panch (same consonants as Phoenicia), who were known as the Barats (same consonants as the Hebrew word for "covenant"), brought "the whole World under their sway" confirms their international dominance. Archeological evidence shows that the Phoenician (Israelite) Empire was worldwide in its influence, including a substantial presence in ancient North America. History also shows that the "Phoenician" Empire was characterized by

Israelite names such as "Iberia" (named for the Hebrew ancestor "Eber"), tribal names from the Israelite tribes of Asher, Gad and Dan, and the Hebrew word for covenant (B-R-T) which would designate the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, the primary inheritors of Abraham's "Covenant" blessings.

It has been clearly shown that the "Phoenician empire" was, in fact, **the Israelite empire**. For a very long time, secular historians have been unaware of the real scope of Israel's ancient empire. One reason for this omission is the great antiquity of Israel's empire. We must realize that the Israelite Empire's Golden Age was already "ancient history" at the time of Alexander the Great, and occurred almost a millennium prior to the time of the Caesars of Rome. Because its existence was well before the empires commonly discussed in history texts, and because its Golden Age of world power was mostly limited to the reigns of just two kings (David and Solomon), the story of the Israelite Empire has not been included in our knowledge of world history. However, some world histories have recorded the existence of the Phoenician Empire, but even those accounts which discuss the Phoenician Empire have not noticed its Israelite character.

However, even though modern man has been ignorant of the real state of affairs of the ancient Israelites, the Bible recorded both the existence of Israel's empire and the fact that international trade and commerce thrived in the ancient world. Even though these biblical records have been ignored and discounted for some time, recent archeological evidence shows that the Bible's historical accounts were (and always have been) accurate!

Another reason why historians may have overlooked the greatness of the Israelite empire is the lack of ancient monuments, steles, etc. in the Mideast. We have already

discussed one reason for the lack of monuments to Israel's glory: God himself punished King David and the Israelites for even so much as conducting a census of their military reserves. God was attempting to keep Israel's monarchs humble (for the good of the nation), and self-glorifying monuments and steles, etc. would have countered God's policy far more than a military census. So, Kings David and Solomon, who were faithful to God at the time of Israel's greatest glory, would have been disinclined to leave memorials and monuments to "their" conquests and accomplishments. Since they did not build self-praising monuments, modern archeologists have nothing to find.

But what about later monarchs, when they ceased fearing God, some might ask? It is likely that later Israelite monarchs did, indeed, make records of their accomplishments on stone and papyrus in later years, but there are several reasons why these artifacts would not have been preserved. The territory of Israel was the location for many savage and brutal wars after the reigns of Kings David and Solomon. As Israel's enemies conquered Palestine, destroying whole cities in the process, vast numbers of monuments and records were destroyed as well. Indeed, as Assyria and Babylon conquered the Israelite homelands, Solomon's Temple, the royal palaces of David and Solomon, etc. were all razed. It is likely that Assyria and Babylon destroyed every vestige of Israelite civilization that they could find when they burnt Israel's and Judah's cities, and carried the remaining Israelites captive out of Palestine. Also, since other populations were subsequently placed in the land of Palestine, these other groups had no use for anything "Israelite and likely scavenged whatever physical materials were left for use as building materials for themselves. Palestine is a key nexus where the routes to three continents (Africa, Asia and Europe) converge. For this reason, the small territory of Palestine has been fought over and successively destroyed many times. Each

of the many wars in Palestine further destroyed any physical evidence of the very ancient Israelite Empire.

There is another reason why little or nothing would have remained of the Israelite empire based in Palestine: the weathering forces of the elements. Martland Edey writes concerning the weathering forces of the damp, ocean climate of the eastern Mediterranean:

*"Anything written on papyrus quickly disappears; wood rots; clay tablets, unless safely buried in the ground, crumble. Even stone monuments or inscriptions, if exposed long enough to the weathering of wind, rain and frost, become blurred and eventually indecipherable."*<sup>49</sup>

While the ancient tablets and monuments of Assyria, Babylon and Persia were preserved in dry desert conditions or buried under the sands of time (and subsequently undisturbed for centuries) in desert areas which were comparatively undisturbed, Israel's monuments and records would have deteriorated in the eastern Mediterranean area. Also since many conquerors and civilizations came and went in Palestine after the Israelites flourished there, virtually nothing was left undisturbed. However, enough artifacts and records about the Israelite empire (called "Phoenicia" by the Greeks) have survived to document their true worldwide influence.

The Israelite empire was at its zenith during the reigns of kings David and Solomon, but after their deaths, it was rent by a great civil war which permanently divided the tribes of Israel into the separate, and often hostile, kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Their former glory and power was never recaptured. The story of Israel's decline and their subsequent migrations out of Palestine will be examined in the next chapter.



## Endnotes: Chapter Three

1. Edey, *The Sea Traders*, p. 9
2. Hitti, *Short History of the Near East*, p. 28; Collier's Encyclopedia, Vol. 2, "Babylonia and Assyria," p. 637, and Halley, *Halley's Bible Handbook*, p. 134
3. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, see "Tarshish," p. 1018
4. Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 93
5. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 18, "Magellan, Ferdinand," pp. 80-81
6. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 93-101
7. Edey, p. 14
8. Rawlinson, *Phoenicia*, p. 63
9. *Ibid*, p. 68
10. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, Old Testament Hebrew Lexicon, see "Gadar," p. 16
11. Waddell, *Phoenician Origin of the Britons, Scots and Anglo-Saxons*, p. 74
12. Hitti, p. 259
13. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 513, "Cadiz," p. 513
14. Rawlinson, *Phoenicia*, p. 68
15. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 18, "Malaga," p. 152
16. Rawlinson, *Phoenicia*, pp. 69-70
17. Capt, *The Traditions of Glastonbury*, p. 28 (citing William Camden's, *Britannia*)
18. *Ibid*, p. 28 (citing Sir Edward Creasy's, *History of England*)
19. Fell, *Saga America*, p. 167; Bloom and Polansky, "Translation of the 'Decalogue Tablet' from Ohio," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 8, Part One, 1980, pp. 15-20; and a series of articles on the "Los Lunas Inscriptions," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 13, 1985, pp. 32-50
20. Lenhart, "The Adena Tablets," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 13, 1985, p.206

21. *Ibid*, p. 206
22. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 19, "Mound Builders," p. 565
23. *Ibid*, Vol. 19, "Mound," p. 565
24. Fell, *Saga America*, p. 248
25. *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 7, Part 2, 1979, "An Interview with Barry Fell," pp. 160-166
26. Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 21
27. *Ibid*, p. 21
28. *Ibid*, p. 158
29. Lenhart, p. 208
30. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see first Heading entitled "Shiloh," p. 879
31. *Ibid*, see Heading "Gathering," subhead one, p. 385
32. Rawlinson, *Phoenicia*, pp. 69-70
33. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, Hebrew Lexicon Section, see word "berith," p. 8
34. *Ibid*, Hebrew Lexicon Section, see word "borith," p. 9
35. Waddell, *The Phoenician Origin of Britons, Scots and Anglo-Saxons*, Appendix 1, p. 387
36. *Ibid*, p. vii of Preface and pp. 142-167
37. Rawlinson, *Phoenicia*, p. 1
38. Waddell, pp. 54-56
39. *Ibid*, p. 9
40. Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 43
41. Waddell, p. 137
42. *Ibid*, p. 1
43. *Ibid*, p. 1
44. *Ibid*, p. 1
45. *Ibid*, p. 18821
46. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 22, Troy," p. 504
47. Raban and Stieglitz, "The Sea Peoples," *Biblical Archaeology Review* (BAR), November-December 1991, p. 41 (citing Yadin, "Danaans and Danites," BAR, June 1976)

48. Lawless, *Ireland*, pp. 6-9

49. Edey, p. 17



## 4. Israelite and Jewish Migrations from Palestine

The Israelite empire, which once dominated the nations of the earth, was progressively debilitated by foreign and civil wars, internal strife, and even by calamities in the weather. The Bible reveals that their decline was a result of their refusal to abide by the laws of the Creator God who had made Israel great. This eventually resulted in successive waves of migration exiting the Israelite homeland in Palestine as the land became increasingly untenable.

While many are familiar with the fall of Samaria (Israel's capital) in approximately 721 B.C., most do not realize that by the time of Samaria's fall, the vast majority of Israelites had already migrated out of the land, many of them voluntarily. Additionally, many Jews had been taken from the nation of Judah by 700 B.C. as Assyrian captives. Judah (and its capital city of Jerusalem) survived until approximately 586 B.C., when the Babylonians carried the remainder of the Jews into an Asian captivity.

This chapter will not attempt to provide a comprehensive history of the two Hebrew kingdoms of Israel and Judah, but will examine some of the lesser-known aspects of their history and their migrations from Palestine. A thorough history of the two separate Hebrew kingdoms can be obtained by reading the biblical books of I & II Kings and I & II Chronicles.

After the death of Solomon, the united Hebrew kingdom was divided into two nations: **Judah**, ruled by Solomon's son Rehoboam, and **Israel**, ruled by Jeroboam, one of Solomon's former appointees over the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (I Kings 11:28). The events which led to this separation resemble a modern soap opera.

The Israelites had come to greatly resent the labors and taxes which Solomon had forced on them because of his massive building projects, and they wanted relief! In one of the world's

worst decisions ever, the son of Solomon (Rehoboam) alienated most of the nation when he said he would be even “tougher” on them than Solomon had been (I Kings 12:1-21). This was profoundly foolish as all of Israel’s tribes, led by his rival Jeroboam, had offered their loyalty if only he would lighten the burdens which Solomon had placed upon them. Having had their offer of conditional submission spurned by Rehoboam, all the tribes of Israel except Judah (Rehoboam’s own tribe) and Benjamin spurned Rehoboam, and made Jeroboam their king. This event left both factions feeling “rejected” by the other one.

After Rehoboam made his terrible mistake, Jeroboam of Israel also made a very foolish decision. Having been promised the same favor God gave David if only he would be obedient (I Kings 11:29-38), Jeroboam spurned God’s offer. He quickly forced calf-worship on Israel, and abolished God’s Holy Days in favor of new celebrations he devised for them (I Kings 12:25-33). His adoption of calf worship (an Egyptian religion) likely resulted from his being sheltered in Egypt when Pharaoh gave him political asylum from Solomon’s wrath.

This defiance of Solomon by Egypt’s pharaoh (i.e. sheltering Solomon’s adversary) makes one ask the question: what was becoming of the Israelite-Phoenician-Egyptian alliance which began under Solomon? It was still intact, but showing considerable (and understandable) stress. When Solomon degenerated in his later years, God hand-picked Jeroboam, the governor of Ephraim and Manasseh (the tribe of Joseph) to succeed Solomon over the northern ten tribes of Israel. Solomon learned of this, and sought to execute Jeroboam. Jeroboam was given political asylum by Egypt’s pharaoh from Solomon’s wrath, indicating that enmities must have been growing between King Solomon and the pharaoh even before Solomon’s death. It is possible that there was a personal reason for Pharaoh’s

distancing himself from Solomon. Solomon's first wife was an Egyptian princess, daughter of pharaoh (I Kings 9:16). As Solomon began collecting an immense harem, he apparently lost interest in his first wife. Pharaoh, and all Egypt could easily have felt slighted by Solomon's conduct, giving them a motive to retaliate against Solomon by sheltering Jeroboam. During the time that Pharaoh sheltered Jeroboam, they must have forged a personal friendship and alliance that made them immediate national allies when Jeroboam became king over the largest portion of Solomon's old kingdom. Therefore, while Egypt was drifting away from Solomon, it was growing closer to the one who would succeed Solomon over most of Israel. This prolonged Egyptian sojourn led to Jeroboam's familiarity with Egypt's religion. Therefore, his adoption of Egyptian idols was a move to cement political ties with Egypt.

Jeroboam also disenfranchised God's levitical priesthood (I Kings 12:31), which soon resulted in the whole tribe of Levi migrating to the kingdom of Judah (II Chronicles 11:13-16). Since the worship of God was being "kicked out" of Israel, those who wished to serve God from Israel's northern ten tribes had little choice but to follow the levitical priests into Judah (since only the Levites could perform God's services). This resulted in infusions of contingents from other tribes into Judah's kingdom as well (verse 16). The division of Israel's tribes was fully accomplished: the northern ten tribes followed Jeroboam of Israel, and three tribes (Judah, Benjamin and Levi) followed Rehoboam of Judah. However, the contingents of the other tribes who left Israel for Judah initially resulted in a roughly two-to-one superiority of Israel over Judah (II Chronicles 13:3.)

Rehoboam served God faithfully for three years (II Chronicles 11:17). Then he made another foolish decision by abandoning the laws of God (II Chronicles 12:1-2). He did not have to wait

long for God's punishment.

Just five years after Solomon died (and two years after Rehoboam forsook God), Egypt attacked Judah. Since there was no love lost between Israel and Solomon's family, the Egyptians attacked Judah knowing their old friend, King Jeroboam of Israel, would render no aid to Judah (II Chronicles 12:2-12). When Egypt defeated Judah and looted Jerusalem of its gold treasures (verse 9), Pharaoh likely felt he was only "taking what should have been his anyway." Solomon's appetite for building projects and gold had been insatiable, and secular history records that Egypt's fleet was scouring the Pacific for even more gold (see previous chapter) during the time of Solomon's rule. When relations went sour between Solomon and Pharaoh, Pharaoh likely resented the fact that Solomon had accumulated so much gold, leaving little for anyone else in the alliance. So, as soon as it was clear that the breach between Israel and Judah would not be reversed, Egypt acted to take Solomon's cache of gold for itself. Rehoboam's abandonment of God's laws resulted in Judah being stripped of the golden wealth which Solomon had amassed in Jerusalem. While Israel was likely glad to see Egypt "teach Judah a lesson," Judah surely felt "stabbed in the back" by Israel's refusal to aid it against Egypt's attack. Though they were brother nations, the kingdoms of Israel and Judah became bitter enemies.

The Bible records that there was constant fighting between Israel and Judah during the reigns of Jeroboam and Rehoboam (I Kings 14:30). This internal fighting among the tribes of Israel greatly weakened the Israelite Empire which had developed under Kings David and Solomon.

When Rehoboam died, he was succeeded on the throne of Judah by Abijah. The hatred between Israel and Judah continued as II Chronicles 13:2 states: "And there was war between Abijah and

Jeroboam.” Israel and Judah, mere decades after they were united in ruling over a world empire, were now so full of hatred that they routinely warred against each other. Judah had been stripped of its gold and wealth, and had no empire. Israel was soon to be stripped of much of its remaining power as well.

Israel and the Jews fought a major war against each other that engaged 1.2 million combatants (II Chronicles 13:3). Note the consistency of the Bible’s account regarding the armed forces available to the Hebrew people. Under King David, Israel (with all reserves mobilized) could muster 1,510,000 soldiers (I Chronicles 21:2-6). Several decades and internecine wars later, 1,200,000 soldiers were mustered for a war pitting Israel against Judah. Due to the need of both warring nations to maintain garrisons in various cities and conquered lands, their combined total military reserves would have been close to the number of reserves cited under King David.

Although the Israelites outnumbered the Jews approximately two to one; God gave the victory to the Jews. (II Chronicles 13 shows the Jews were again serving God faithfully.) **The deaths in this single conflict numbered almost one-half of the 1.2 million combatants!** Israel alone suffered 500,000 battle deaths (II Chronicles 13:17), and we are not told the amount of Jewish casualties. The hatred between Israel and Judah must have been immense to cause such unimaginable bloodletting! Considering that such ancient battles were essentially hand-to-hand contests, this means that heads, limbs and chunks of flesh and viscera must have been flying in all directions as hundreds of thousands of swords were being flailed like scythes.

Those who wish that they “lived in Bible days” may change their minds after considering the realities of those days. Visualize what it must have been like to identify and bury the dead after such a battle! This presents a grisly picture, but it is the reality of how

ancient wars were fought.

This brutal war (occurring approximately 913 B.C.) between Israel and the Jews had vast international repercussions. II Chronicles 13:20 tersely states concerning the aftermath of this horrendous loss of life: "neither did Jeroboam recover strength again..."

With Israel's military being greatly depleted as a result of this battle, it could no longer control or defend its empire. Israel's area of direct rule had to shrink to a smaller territory which the weakened army could defend. Many nations which had been dominated by Israel now became independent by default.

It was in this time period that secular history records Assyria suddenly began to recover its military strength virtually unhindered by anyone (see chapter one). Assyria's freedom to rearm itself attests to the power vacuum which was created when Israel lost a half-million soldiers in a single battle! Assyrian resurgence, made possible by Israel's crushing defeat at the hands of Judah, would eventually lead to the end of Israel's nationhood almost two centuries later.

Soon after Judah crushed the army of Israel on its northern border, it was attacked from the south. Judah apparently mobilized its full reserves as it mustered 580,000 soldiers to face an Ethiopian army of 1,000,000 men. The king of Judah (Asa) humbly asked for God's help in the battle, and God responded. The Jews crushed the Ethiopian army, and gained a considerable amount of war booty (II Chronicles 14:1-15).

With terrible wars raging between the factions which once had formed a great worldwide alliance, pity the smaller nations which had been vassals of either Israel, Judah or Egypt. They now were torn between large combatants jostling for power. They likely allied themselves with whoever appeared to be the winner, and suffered retribution if they guessed wrong. II Chronicles 15:5-6

says of those times:

*"In those times there was no peace...but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries. And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city..."*

This regional chaos was created when the old established order in the region (the empire led by the united tribes of Israel) suddenly disintegrated. It was a stark commentary on what happens when God's laws are ignored. When God, and his laws, were preeminent in the glory days of King Solomon, there was peace, international harmony, and time for scientific and artistic pursuits. Soon after God's laws were forgotten throughout Israel and Judah, chaos, death and destruction followed on a scale we can scarcely imagine. Following the victory of Judah over Egypt, God sent a prophet to Asa and his people promising God's favor if Asa and Judah would truly obey God (II Chronicles 15:1-7). This time a king heeded the message.

King Asa of Judah restored the worship of God, and removed the idols of foreign gods out of all lands under his jurisdiction. II Chronicles 15:9 records that:

*"...he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and those from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who were sojourning with them, for great numbers had deserted to him from Israel when they saw that the Lord his God was with him." (RSV)*

The above account records that many people from the northern ten tribes of Israel joined themselves to the king of Judah in order to follow a king who was willing to serve and obey God. After King Asa's death, his son, Jehoshaphat became king over Judah. He also served God enthusiastically, and had the Levites

teach all his subjects the laws of God (II Chronicles 17:1-9). God gave him favor, power and tranquility reminiscent of the glory years of King Solomon. Judah received tribute payments from the Philistines and Arabians, and King Jehoshaphat and his nation became very wealthy (II Chronicles 17:5, 11-13). As in the days of King Solomon, King Jehoshaphat launched a construction program, building “fortresses and store cities” throughout the nation.

He was so feared and respected by the surrounding nations that none of them dared fight him. Indeed, his army numbered 1,120,000 men, divided into five administrative groups. II Chronicles 17:14-18 describes his army as follows:

300,000 soldiers under Adnah

280,000 soldiers under Jehohanan

200,000 soldiers under Amasiah

200,000 soldiers under Eliada

180,000 soldiers under Jehozabad

1,160,000 soldiers in five armies

The above roster of King Jehoshaphat’s military is revealing. While his military forces numbered 1,160,000 men, the combined forces of Judah and Benjamin had never previously exceeded a total of 580,000 men (II Chronicles 14:8). Clearly, Jehoshaphat’s army was being swelled by hundreds of thousands of men from the northern ten tribes of Israel who had migrated to Judah from Israel. Why did so many people move from Israel to Judah at that time? To answer that question, we need to understand what was occurring in the northern Hebrew kingdom of Israel.

During much of King Jehoshaphat’s reign, the king of Israel was named Ahab, a man described by the Bible’s writer as one who “did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him” (I Kings 16:30). Ahab had been preceded by a series of wicked



kings who created terrible instability in Israel. I Kings 15:25-16:30 records that this instability included royal assassinations, and internal warfare to determine accession to the throne. With wicked rulers, civil instability and national violence prevailing in Israel, is it any wonder that hundreds of thousands of members of the northern ten tribes migrated toward the peace, stability and prosperity of Judah?

Ahab's wife was a Phoenician princess named Jezebel, daughter of the king of Sidon (I Kings 16:31). King Ahab and his wicked wife completely abandoned the ways of the God of Israel as they led the nation in worshipping the Phoenician god, Baal. Verse 32 states that Ahab built an "altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria." He built a "grove" which was apparently a place for church-sponsored prostitution. An alternate translation for the word "grove" is a "pagan shrine for pleasure."<sup>1</sup> *Harper's Bible Dictionary* describes "groves" as "places of worship of the pagan gods Baal and Astarte."<sup>2</sup> The Hebrew word translated as "grove" is "asherah,"<sup>3</sup> indicating the grove was dedicated to Astarte (or Ashteroth), the pagan mother-goddess. The worship of Astarte was brutal and degenerate, with orgiastic sex rites, large phallic symbols, and human sacrifices (mostly of children).<sup>4</sup>

The "religion" of Baal featured sacrificing little children as part of the "worship" services.<sup>5</sup> Another malignant religion, the worship of Moloch, was also present in Israel. Moloch was a Canaanite deity of the inhabitants of Palestine whom the Israelites displaced under Joshua. God warned the Israelites not to practice the human sacrifice rites of Moloch-worship which the Canaanites used as part of their religion (Leviticus 18:21, 20:2-5). Some may think that the God of Israel was being cruel when he ordered the Israelites to kill or drive out all the Canaanites and remove every vestige of their religion when they entered the

land under Joshua (Numbers 33:51-53). When one understands that the Canaanites were people who murdered their own children as part of religious services, one can see why God ordered the Israelites to utterly destroy both the adherents and the symbols of this degenerate religion. However, Moloch was again being worshipped in Israel during the latter years of Solomon (I Kings 11:7), and the rites of human sacrifice blended with the contagion of Baal worship in hastening Israel's degeneracy.

In the modern world, there is a myth that "all religions are equal," but reality shows that some religions are terribly destructive to their adherents, others reduce the "faithful" to poverty and starvation, and some do uplift their practitioners to a higher standard of conduct and morals (benefiting the societies that embrace such religions). In ancient times, the worship of the God of Israel was one which greatly benefited its adherents (witness the peace, wealth and prosperity of Solomon's reign in his faithful years), while Baalism was one of the most malignant religions ever devised.

God warned the Israelites that if they did not destroy this religion and its practitioners when they came into Canaan, they would be corrupted by its practices, and then God would "do unto you [Israel] what I thought to do unto them [Canaanites]" (Numbers 33:53-56). This came to pass in the reign of Ahab. Just as God was determined to drive the Canaanites out of the land for their gross sins, he began to drive out the Israelites also.

Whereas the army of Judah under Jehoshaphat numbered over a million men at this time, king Ahab of Israel could barely muster 7,000 soldiers (I Kings 20:15). It was noted above that many Israelites from the ten tribes of Israel had moved to Judah, and that as many as 600,000 Israelites served in Jehoshaphat's army

of Judah instead of continuing in Israel's service. Given the grievous corruption in Israel's top echelons, virtually all the decent people forsook Israel to serve Judah's king instead. Anyone who wanted to avoid raising their children in an environment where they and their playmates could be murdered by the state religion moved! The fact that so many moved to Judah is a testimony that many of the common folk among the ten tribes of Israel were still decent people even though the leadership of Israel had become hopelessly rotten.

A by-product of this mass migration from Israel to Judah is that Judah and Israel temporarily enjoyed cordial relations (II Chronicles 18:1). Ahab was so weak he had no choice, and Jehoshaphat likely felt it was wise to be on good terms with Israel to ensure that the many Israelites in his own army remained loyal to him. Since Israel was still allied to the Phoenician city-states and likely to Egypt as well (the calf-worship of Egypt was still officially sanctioned in Israel), the old tri-partite alliance of Israel (now just the northern kingdom), Egypt and Phoenicia apparently survived in a weakened condition. We will soon examine historical evidence of this fact.

Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel became worse and worse. One episode particularly indicates that Ahab appears to be a weak-willed leader who was dominated by a strong-willed, ruthless wife. Ahab wanted a particular field which belonged to a private citizen, but the private citizen didn't want to sell. Ahab sulked about the situation, but seemed willing to respect the rights of the citizen not to sell his land to the king. However, when Jezebel heard of it, she simply had the citizen murdered and gave the land to Ahab (I Kings 21).

The situation cried out for God's action, and he sent a prophet named Elijah who became the nemesis of Ahab and Jezebel. Elijah declared that Israel would be punished for its sins by a

national drought, and I Kings 18:1 and James 5:17 record that this drought lasted for three and one-half years!

Before examining the effects of this drought, let us consider the evidence that Israel, though weakened, still was the titular head of a considerable empire. We saw in the previous chapter that Israel's empire and influence (built with the cooperation of Egypt, Tyre and Sidon), had explored and colonized parts of Europe, Africa, and North America. Israel's adoption of the pagan gods of Phoenicia (Tyre and Sidon) and Egypt cemented Israel's alliance with them. Israel had inherited the foreign Hebrew dominions (which were colonized mostly with people from the northern ten tribes), while Judah was "shut out" of their old alliance.

Since Israel adopted both the Baal worship of the Phoenicians, and the calf-worship of the Egyptians, the religious bonds would have acted to keep the three nations united. The presence in North America (ancient Iowa) of a trilingual ancient stele depicting a pagan religious ceremony from approximately 800-700 B.C. supports this contention.<sup>6</sup> Dr. Barry Fell, in his book, *America B.C.*, commented that the languages on this stele are Egyptian, Libyan (the sailors of the Egyptians) and "Iberian-Punic." Iberian-Punic is a Hebrew/Phoenician language, and its presence in the New World indicates explorers from the Israelite/Tyrian/Sidonian alliance (and/or the Punic colonies of Israel) were still closely allied to the Egyptians during the time of the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The Hebrew-Phoenician origin of this Iberian-Punic language was noted by Dr. Fell, as he states that the stele had "some signs resembling Hebrew and others resembling Phoenician."<sup>7</sup> On the same subject, *Collier's Encyclopedia* states:

*"The Iberian language is extant in about one hundred inscriptions in a national alphabet generally believed to be of Phoenician*

*origin.*"<sup>8</sup>

**There would have been no need for such tri-lingual inscriptions so far from the mideastern homelands of these nations unless Israel, Egypt, Tyre and Sidon (and their colonies) were still allied together throughout the world!** Since their sailors ventured deep into the American Midwest during the period of the divided Hebrew kingdoms, it indicates the worldwide impact of this alliance was still very great. Although Israel had suffered major reverses on land, the allied navies of Israel, Tyre, Sidon and Egypt still ruled the oceans.

Dr. Fell noted that this ancient Iowan stele depicts a pagan religious ceremony honoring the Egyptian deities Osiris and Ra which involved human sacrifices. The fact that one of the stele languages is associated with the Iberian-Punic variant of the Hebrew/Phoenician tongue shows that the Israelite/Phoenician colonies in Europe and North Africa may have assumed greater autonomy over their own activities in the Atlantic region. This is consistent with the decline and fall of the kingdom of Israel. Interestingly, Dr. Fell wrote that this ancient stele was mistakenly branded a "forgery" by a scientific establishment which at the time of its discovery could neither comprehend nor translate the ancient languages contained on the stele.<sup>9</sup>

A critical (but unappreciated) fact needs to be reiterated at this point to understand why the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel is generally unrecognized in ancient historical accounts. It cannot be over emphasized that from the time that Israel and Judah became separate, Hebrew kingdoms, they became intensely estranged from one another. Although they experienced interludes of cordial relations, they generally remained enemies. At the very time they separated, the first Israelite king (Jeroboam) sought to sever cultural and religious ties between

the Israelite and Jewish kingdoms by replacing God's Holy Days with pagan festivals (which would keep the Israelites of the northern kingdom from traveling to Jerusalem, the Jewish capital). As time went by, Israel became ever more intertwined with the Phoenicians of Tyre and Sidon, adopting their worship of Baal and Astarte. The Israelite and Phoenician royal houses intermarried, and their economies had long been closely linked with one another. During this time, Judah had several good kings who perpetuated the worship of God, causing Judah to have less and less in common with Israel.

Therefore, the kingdoms of Israel and Judah not only became politically separate from one another, but also drifted apart from each other religiously, economically, and culturally. **Since the economic, religious and cultural life of Israel was, for centuries, linked to Tyre and Sidon (not Judah), the ten tribes of Israel in the northern kingdom would have also become progressively more like the Phoenicians linguistically as well!** Therefore, the language of the ten tribes of Israel would have become increasingly more like that of the Phoenicians, with whom they had constant, close interaction. Their language would have been increasingly less like that of Judah, with whom they had generally hostile relations. Indeed, the languages of those tribes of Israel whose homelands directly bordered Phoenician territory would have become linguistically so like the Phoenicians that they would have become virtually indistinguishable from the Phoenicians. **By the time the kingdom of Israel fell, Judah's language would still be "Hebrew," but the language of the ten tribes of Israel would be more like (and in the case of some tribes, exactly like) the Phoenician/Punic language!** For this reason, after their separation from Judah, the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel would increasingly be found in those places where the language was labeled "Phoenician," "Punic," or

“Iberian-Punic.” For this reason, the ancient stele found in Iowa which included an inscription in “Iberian-Punic... [with] some signs resembling Hebrew and others resembling Phoenician” is a testimony to the fact that the Israelites had so intermingled with the people of Sidon and Tyre that their language exhibited traits of both tongues.

The tri-lingual stele found in Iowa offers strong evidence in support of the Bible’s records that the ten tribes of Israel, after their split with Judah, remained closely linked to Phoenicia and Egypt in a powerful ancient alliance. The “Phoenician Empire” lasted only during the centuries that the little city-states of Tyre, Sidon, etc. were allied to the Israelites (who provided the population base to build an empire). As soon as the ten tribes of Israel left Palestine, “Phoenicia” ceased to be an empire because most of its population base was gone.

Another ancient stele was found in Oklahoma (perhaps as old as 800 B.C.) which included an Iberian-Punic inscription, and mentioned both the Israelite/Phoenician god Baal and the Egyptian god Ra.<sup>10</sup> This further indicates that the Egyptians were cooperating with the Semitic alliance of Israel and Phoenicia in the New World during the centuries that followed King Solomon’s reign. Also, the Israelite/Phoenician sex worship associated with the “mother-goddess” was well established on ancient American soil. Phallic symbols, relics and inscriptions of the “mother-goddess” religion (the religion of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel of Israel) have been found, photographed and detailed in the former Phoenician colony in the New England region of ancient America.<sup>11</sup> The fact that one of the representations of the ancient American mother-goddess is Tanith, the Carthaginian mother-goddess who was worshipped as the spouse of Baal,<sup>12</sup> will become significant in the next chapter. Carthage, like Gades, was a Semitic colony of the Israelite/Phoenician alliance, but it

was not founded until the century when King Ahab ruled Israel. One of the fertility sites in ancient America is described by Dr. Fell as "an open-air fertility precinct." In other words, it was what the Bible called a "grove," an outdoor "pagan shrine for pleasure."<sup>13</sup>

Fell also observes concerning an ancient phallus-stone found in Vermont:

*"The Celtic festival of Beltane, held on May Day, originally in pagan times included revels danced around an erect phallus. In Europe, after Christianity was introduced, the phallus was replaced by a maypole."*<sup>14</sup>

This is remarkably similar to the ceremony which is depicted on the artifact with the ancient trilingual inscription found in Iowa. The photograph of this stele depicts people dancing around a central erect column (a phallic symbol), with a sundisc (a symbol of Baal, the sun god) overhead, and the prone bodies of human sacrifices on the ground (a principal feature of Baal worship).<sup>15</sup> The Celts were Semitic (Celtiberians, Britons, etc.)<sup>16</sup> people from Israel/Phoenicia's colonial areas in Europe, and they cooperated with their kinsmen, the Carthaginians (Punic, Iberian-Punic, etc.), in frequenting the pagan temples in the New World as Israel declined into oblivion in the eastern Mediterranean. In the Celtic name, "**Beltane**," we see the root word of the ancient Phoenician/Israelite sun god: **Baal**. In other words, we see in these ancient American archeological records that Baal worship, which was deeply rooted in Israel/Phoenicia, had also permeated the ancient European and American colonies founded by Israel/Phoenicia. The above evidence confirms the idolatrous degeneracy of the Israelites as recorded in the Bible. [As an aside, modern readers may be justifiably disquieted by the realization that the "maypole" of May Day festivities preserves



the imagery of an erect phallus from ancient sex-worship rites.]

We now resume the narrative of Israel's decline in the middle of the ninth century B.C. during the reign of King Ahab of Israel. Ahab was a particularly bad king in an unbroken progression of evil kings who ruled Israel, and his wife Jezebel (a Phoenician princess) was worse yet!

God intervened by sending Elijah to Israel when the degeneration of Israel reached intolerable levels. It was by Elijah's word that the three and one-half year drought occurred in Israel (I Kings 17:1, James 5:17). During this period of time the water sources dried up, there was scarcely any vegetation left, and severe starvation gripped both Israel and the Phoenician city-states (I Kings 17:7-12, 18:5).

Since Israel was generally a food exporter (Ezekiel 27:17), this drought must have caused unprecedented hardship upon a nation used to an abundance of food. Tyre and Sidon had relatively small populations,<sup>17</sup> and therefore had fewer people to feed than the larger kingdom of Israel. Nevertheless, I Kings 17:8-12 shows that even Tyre and Sidon were in desperate straits as starvation was occurring in the suburbs of Sidon. The situation would have been absolutely catastrophic for Israel with its much larger population. Much of Israel's population faced a brutally simple choice: either stay in Israel and die, or migrate elsewhere and live. People's desire for self preservation being what it is, much of the population simply had to leave to begin life over somewhere else. We have already seen that those who "feared God" and wanted no part of Baal worship had migrated to Judah where King Jehoshaphat ruled according to God's laws. The fact that little Judah could support a population that included military reserves of over one million men provides ample evidence that the drought did not affect Judah! This was a stark contrast between the two Hebrew nations, and daily proof of

God's role in the drought. He gave rain to Judah (which obeyed God) while he denied rain to Israel (with its Baal worship), even though Israel and Judah directly bordered each other.

As was demonstrated in previous chapters, international commerce and travel in the ancient world was far more developed than modern man has generally realized. We now know that transoceanic travel between the Old World and the New World was well established by the time of Elijah and Ahab. Indeed, during this time of drought, King Ahab made an intense search to locate the prophet Elijah who had gone into hiding. I Kings 18:10 states that when Elijah came out of hiding, an aide to King Ahab told Elijah that:

*"As the Lord your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom whither my lord has not sent to seek you; and when they say, 'he is not here', he would take an oath of the kingdom or nation, that they had not found you."* (RSV)

That King Ahab would send messengers to "all nations" to look for Elijah is reasonable when we realize that the missing prophet could have easily booked passage to distant lands via the commercial maritime routes of that time. Since it would be logical to assume that Elijah had journeyed far from Israel to hide from King Ahab, the above biblical statement includes the possibility that Ahab sent messengers to the Israelite/Phoenician colonies in Europe, Africa and North America to look for Elijah. In fact, the elusive Elijah had hidden in a place that Ahab would least expect to find him: in a suburb of Jezebel's home town of Sidon, the very heart of the pagan religion that was destroying Israel (I Kings 17:9).

Nevertheless, since we have seen evidence of ancient Hebrews, Phoenicians and Egyptians in widespread areas of North America, an assumption by Ahab that Elijah had fled to a completely

different continent would have been understandable. Since the navies of Israel, Tyre and Sidon sailed throughout the Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean, and since the ancient Egyptians sailed into the Indian and Pacific Oceans, a statement that king Ahab (who was one of the co-rulers of the alliance that commanded these navies) searched "in all nations of the earth" for Elijah can not be dismissed as an exaggeration.

The fact that King Ahab of Israel was able to exact an oath from the nations of the earth indicates that the king of Israel still had some "clout" among the nations. If he had been an impotent little potentate, he would have been ignored. While Israel's homeland could only support a "skeleton crew" during the drought, the remainder of its population (much of it still loyal to Ahab and Baal-worship) could easily have relocated to Israel's colonies. While those Israelites who served God sought refuge in the Jewish kingdom of Judah, those Israelites "who served Baal" likely sought refuge from the drought in Israel's far-flung "Phoenician" colonies where Baal was worshipped.

Undoubtedly, some of Israel's refugees found new homes in Israel's colonies in Spain, Briton, Ireland, and even North America. Since most Israelites had abandoned their distinctly Hebrew religious practices, they would have been indistinguishable from the "Phoenician" colonists in their new lands. With the culture, religion and even the dialect of Tyre and Sidon, migrating Israelites would have quickly lost their Israelite identity, and would be known to us today simply as "Phoenicians", "Iberians," "Celts," "Celtiberians," etc. However, these colonies could only accommodate so many new arrivals, and the majority of refugees (the elderly, those with small children, etc.) surely did not wish to travel any further than was necessary. Many would have sought refuge in the numerous (and relatively close) North African colonies of the "Phoenician"

Empire, which had been founded during the time of Israelite power “from B.C. 1100 to B.C. 800.”<sup>18</sup> However, so many Israelites (and Tyrians and Sidonians) needed to emigrate from their parched homelands that a large new colony was needed. During the same century as the great drought of Elijah, a large exodus of Israelites (accompanied by people from the smaller city states of Tyre and Sidon) sailed along the North African coast and founded the new Hebrew colony of **Kirjath-Hadeschath** (the Romans later called it **Carthage**). Carthage’s origin as a colony of Israelite refugees from the catastrophic drought in Israel has not been appreciated. Why did the “Phoenicians” establish a large, new colony in the ninth century B.C. when they already had many established colonies and trading posts in the Mediterranean region? Clearly, they had a compelling reason to remove a large number of people out of their homeland and resettle them elsewhere. The devastating drought of Elijah’s time would make such a massive resettlement effort necessary.

While a mythological account of Carthage’s founding (the “legend of Dido” which attributes roles to deities of the Pagan pantheon) exists, the fact remains that Carthage was founded with Hebrew names, Hebrew customs and the Hebrew language. These facts (extensively documented in chapter five) confirm the primarily Hebrew nature of Carthage at the time of its founding.

While it is recorded that the original Hebrew name of Carthage was Kirjath-Hadeschath,<sup>19</sup> it eventually came to be known to the Greeks as “Karchedon,” and to the Romans as “Carthago.”<sup>20</sup> Since ancient history is taught in the modern, western world from a Greco-Roman viewpoint, we today know Israel’s colony by its Roman name instead of its original Hebrew name. Therefore, scarcely anyone realizes that Carthage originally had a Hebrew name.

Since it is known that Carthage was founded by people with a Hebrew culture in the ninth century B.C.,<sup>21</sup> and since the Bible states that there were many starving Hebrews in the kingdom of Israel in the ninth century B.C. with a dire need for a new homeland due to the drought of Elijah, the likely connection between the two events becomes clear.

It is important to realize that the Hebrews who founded Carthage were Israelites from the northern kingdom of Israel; they were not Jews from the southern kingdom of Judah. As discussed above, Judah's population (and its Israelite immigrants) had no need to migrate as Judah's King Jehoshaphat was loyal to God, and God was not punishing Judah at that time (I Kings 22:41-43). The biblical accounts speak of the drought affecting Israel's and Sidon's territory, but not the territory of Judah.

Finally, the drought ended after Elijah's famous confrontation with the priests of Baal. I Kings 18:20-46 records the episode in which Elijah challenged the priests of Baal to see whether God or Baal was more powerful. In this test, Baal and God were both asked to send fire to consume a sacrifice of oxen. The priests of Baal made frenzied appeals to Baal, and even cut themselves till they were bloody. This practice of cutting themselves was common among the worshippers of Baal and Astarte.<sup>22</sup> After they failed to accomplish anything, Elijah called on God to consume the offering with heavenly fire, and he did so. When God did consume the offering with fire, the crowd was shocked into an acknowledgment that the God of Israel was greater than Baal, and their loyalty to Baal was shaken. In an atmosphere where the people were likely afraid that God might also consume them for their Baal-worshipping past, they cooperated with Elijah in executing 450 priests of Baal. This execution of 450 priests was appropriate given the fact that these priests of Baal had probably murdered thousands of innocent children in their rituals of

human sacrifice.

It is doubtful that the kingdom of Israel ever truly recovered from the extreme drought in Elijah's time. The exodus of so many Israelites from their native land greatly reduced the population and military resources of the kingdom of Israel in its homeland. While some Israelites surely returned to Israel when the drought was over, many would have remained in Israel's colonies to pursue their new lives. Israel's new weakness was quite obvious to Israel's enemies. The Bible details a number of wars between Israel and the Syrians. I Kings 20 relates that an outnumbered Israelite army of 7,232 men crushed an alliance of thirty-two Aramaean kings and killed 100,000 enemy soldiers in a single battle during the latter portion of Ahab's reign. Verse 13 shows that God intervened to help the Israelite nation win this battle in spite of Ahab's personal wickedness.

During this time, Judah was periodically allied with Israel in wars against the Syrians (I Kings 22:1-4). Why did righteous King Jehoshaphat of Judah ally himself to wicked King Ahab of Israel? To reiterate, the answer was likely political. There were about 600,000 armed Israelites living in Judah, and Jehoshaphat may have feared a revolt if he asked them to war against their native Israel. Also, although Judah was dominant on the land, Israel (a leading member of the maritime "Phoenician" alliance) and its colonies were dominant on the seas. Judah, therefore, needed goodwill with King Ahab to ensure its access to the world's maritime commercial routes. King Jehoshaphat even allied himself to Ahab's wicked successor, Ahaziah of Israel, in an attempt to reconstruct a major fleet at Ezion-geber. This was probably an effort by Jehoshaphat to rebuild the glory and power that Judah experienced under King Solomon, who also based a large fleet at Ezion-geber. I Kings 22:48-49 and II Chronicles 20:35-37 record that this fleet was destroyed by God himself,

who withheld his blessing from the effort because Jehoshaphat was too willing to ally himself to Israel's wicked kings.

The Assyrians also waged war upon Israel and its surrounding nations during the latter portion of Ahab's reign. An alliance of King Ahab's Israelites, various Aramaean kings and Ammonites stopped an Assyrian invasion under Shalmaneser III at the battle of Karkar (or "Qarqar") in about 854 B.C.<sup>23</sup> Those who do not understand Israel's previously dominant position in the ancient world may assume that Ahab was at Karkar merely as an ally of the Syrians. Actually, according to the Assyrian accounts of the battle, Ahab contributed 2000 chariots, the largest force of chariots in the anti-Assyrian alliance.<sup>24</sup> This shows that Israel, Syria, and the other nations in the region were able temporarily to put aside their rivalries to face Assyria, the greater threat from the East. It is remarkable that this alliance was still able to fight Assyria to a draw, despite Israel's depletions.

*The Encyclopaedia Britannica* records that the Assyrian annals of the period confirm that many of the personalities mentioned by the Bible (Kings Omri, Ahab and Jehu of Israel, and Kings Benhadad and Hazael of Syria) were, indeed, real people.<sup>25</sup>

The Bible has much good to say about Judah's King Jehoshaphat, one of the nation's best kings. I Kings 22:46 and II Chronicles 19 record that he restored the worship of God, rooted out Baalism, appointed impartial judges, and extradited sodomites from the nation. As a direct consequence of taking such actions, Jehoshaphat and Judah were blessed with wealth, peace and God's protection. However, Jehoshaphat's alliances with Israel's wicked kings began to weaken Judah after Jehoshaphat's death. The royal houses of Israel and Judah intermarried under King Jehoshaphat as Jehoshaphat's son, Jehoram, the next King of Judah, married a daughter of king Ahab of Israel (II Kings 8:16-18). Jehoram departed from God and embraced Baalism. He died

eight years later, unmourned and in great agony as his "bowels fell out by reason of his sickness" which God had sent upon him (II Chronicles 21:19-20). The mother of Ahaziah, the next wicked king of Judah, was Athaliah, a princess of the kingdom of Israel (II Kings 8:25-26).

King Ahab and Jezebel eventually both died violent deaths. Ahab died in combat, and Jezebel died after being thrown out a window by her servants (II Kings 9:30-37). Jehu, who instigated Jezebel's death, became King of Israel, and led a brief and bloody return to the God of Israel. Besides ordering the death of Jezebel, he killed both the wicked king of Israel and Ahaziah, the wicked king of Judah. He further arranged the beheading of 70 sons of Ahab and the execution of all of Ahab's relatives. He also ordered the execution of Israel's priests of Baal, turned the temple of Baal into a public toilet house, and expunged Baalism from the kingdom of Israel (II Kings 9-10). Jehu's revival was half-hearted, however, as he permitted the calf-worship of Egypt to continue. It was not long before Israel degenerated further.

There is a sober lesson for national rulers here. God does periodically deal personally with national rulers: to bless them for good actions and punish them for evil actions. God killed King Jehoram via a ghastly illness, and prophesied both the destruction of King Ahab's dynasty (II Kings 10:10-11), and Jezebel's assassination (II Kings 9:30-36). God is patient, but his patience eventually does run out on evil rulers and evil nations.

The brief alliance of Israel and Judah, formed in the reigns of Kings Ahab and Jehoshaphat, fell apart as the two Hebrew nations again became enemies. II Kings 14:23-29 records that Israel did enjoy a resurgence of power, including a restoration of Israel's rule over the Aramaean cities of Damascus and Hamath, during the 41-year reign of King Jeroboam II.

The two Hebrew kingdoms fought another gruesome war near



the end of Israel's existence as an independent nation in which the Israelites, under King Pekah, killed 120,000 Jews in one day (II Chronicles 28:5-6). This war occurred at a time when Judah was sinking deeply into the depravities of Baal worship during the reign of King Ahaz. The Israelites were in the process of carrying 200,000 Jews captive into Israel when God intervened and, through a prophet, caused the Israelites to release the Jewish captives (II Chronicles 28:9-15). What is remarkable is that the Israelites heeded the prophet, and did what God directed them to do. After this time, Judah had a few good kings and several very degenerate kings. Israel, however, was nearing its end.

After being weakened by a series of Assyrian invasions, the kingdom of Israel ended when the Assyrians captured Samaria (Israel's capital) in approximately 721 B.C. It is a common misconception that "all Israel" was carried into captivity when Samaria fell in 721 B.C. As we will see, the Bible and Assyrian records agree that only a small number of Israelites went into captivity when Samaria fell. In fact, most of the Israelites that were carried captive were taken away during the reign of King Pekah when an Assyrian invasion made captives of a large portion of Israel's population (dates on this event vary, but it was approximately 735 B.C.).

II Kings 15:29 states that King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria invaded Israel in an unspecified year of King Pekah's reign, and took captive the entire tribe of Naphtali, and those Israelites who lived in Galilee, Gilead, etc. Gilead was the term for Israelite homelands east of the Jordan River, and it was inhabited by the tribes of Reuben, Gad and one-half the tribe of Manasseh (Numbers 32:1-33). I Chronicles 5:26 confirms that Gad, Reuben and half of Manasseh went captive to King Tiglath-pileser.

Besides the above tribes, other Israelites near Galilee were also carried captive at this time. The tribes of Zebulun and Issachar lived in that region, and contingents of these tribes were likely carried into captivity. Perhaps a third or more of Israel's population was carried captive at this time. I Chronicles 5:26 records that this large number of Israelites were resettled in "Halah, Habor, and Hara and to the river Gozan." When Samaria fell in 721 B.C., II Kings 17:6 states that its defenders were also carried captive to the same locations as well as to "the cities of the Medes." Since Samaria was built in the area of the tribe of Ephraim, those Israelites going into captivity when Samaria fell were most likely Ephraimites.

Halah, Habor and Gozan were in the Mesopotamian region of the Assyrian Empire, but "the cities of the Medes" were located southwest of the Caspian Sea (in modern Iran). It is likely that the Assyrians resettled the Israelite captives in several areas of their empire in order to prevent them from consolidating their strength for purposes of a rebellion. According to *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, archaeological finds in ancient Gozan confirm the arrival of captive Israelites in that city as "texts [were found which] mention some of the exiles' descendants."<sup>26</sup>

Many of Israel's and Judah's rulers are specifically named in Assyrian annals as real historical kings. Halley's *Bible Handbook* notes that:

*"In these [Assyrian] annals names of ten Hebrew kings occur: Omri, Ahab, Jehu, Menahem, Pekah, Hoshea, Uzziah, Ahaz, Hezekiah and Manasseh..."<sup>27</sup>*

Of the above kings, the first six were kings of the northern ten-tribed kingdom of Israel, and the last four were kings of the Jewish kingdom of Judah. Assyrian cuneiform records also confirm the statement of II Kings 15:29 that the entire tribe of

Naphtali was taken captive in the Assyrian invasion of Tiglath-pileser over a decade prior to Samaria's fall.<sup>28</sup> The fact that Assyrian accounts mention by name ten of the kings of Israel and Judah and also record that the whole tribe of Naphtali went into captivity en masse demonstrate that the historical accounts of the Bible are, indeed, accurate.

While perhaps a third or more of Israel's population had been taken captive by Tiglath-pileser in approximately 734 B.C., relatively few people were taken captive when Samaria later fell. II Kings 17:5 states the king of Assyria:

*"went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years."* (KJV)

Although the Bible declares the Assyrians "went throughout all the land," the only mention of any resistance to them was at the city of Samaria. This indicates that while the Assyrians went throughout the whole land of Israel, they found Israelites only in the capital city of Samaria. The cuneiform records of the Assyrians claim only 27,290 captives in this final campaign, all of whom came from Samaria.<sup>29</sup> The Assyrians claimed no captives other than the residents of Samaria. Since the Assyrian kings were not at all modest in their victory statements, we can be sure that they would not have failed to record additional Israelite captives if there had been any!

We know that a third or more of the Israelites were taken captive by Tiglath-pileser, and that another 29,290 Israelites were taken captive when Samaria fell over a decade later. A total of barely 29,000 captives from the fall of one city is a rather puny amount of captives. The obvious question is: What happened to the rest of the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel? Where did they go?

Only a few years previously, the Israelites had still been numerous enough to kill 120,000 Jews in a war, and would have

brought 200,000 captive Jews to Israel had not God intervened to stop it. The Assyrian “catch” of 27,290 Israelites in Samaria was a paltry sum in light of the above numbers. Obviously, the whole remaining nation of Israel could not fit within the walls of the city of Samaria, so what happened to the rest of Israel’s inhabitants?

The Bible’s account lists the tribes of Naphtali, Gad, Reuben, half of Manasseh, elements of other tribes, and the residents of the capital city of Samaria as having “gone into captivity.” The Assyrians mention the Napthalites and the Samaritans by name as captives in their annals. **But neither the Bible nor the Assyrian records make any claims that the remainder of the Israelite nation went into captivity!** In fact, II Kings 17:5 shows that the Assyrians “went throughout all the land,” but found resistance (and captives) in only the city of Samaria. II Kings 17:25 states that lions had become numerous in the former territory of the kingdom of Israel (indicating that the numbers of wild prey species had to be even more numerous) when Assyria settled people from foreign lands to inhabit Israel’s abandoned cities. A large increase in wild animals is typical of a land abandoned by its human population.

What apparently happened was that the remainder of the war-weary Israelites finally abandoned their land and cities just prior to Assyria’s last invasion. Let us review the list of tribes unaccounted for in the Bible’s accounts of who went into captivity. The missing tribes include Asher, Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Simeon, Ephraim and half the tribe of Manasseh. Only a tiny fraction of these Israelites could have sought refuge in the walled city of Samaria to oppose the Assyrians. The obvious conclusion is that the remaining tribes of Israel fled the land voluntarily, not as captives.

Put yourself in their place. If you knew another large Assyrian

invasion was coming, and you were painfully aware that your homeland of Israel was becoming untenable, what would you choose to do? Would you stay and oppose the Assyrians in a last-ditch effort knowing that you would become either a corpse or a captive? Or would you rather migrate with your families to new homelands where you could remain free and start over again? Obviously, the latter option is what most of them chose. Only a few thousand die-hards stayed to withstand a siege in the capital city. Either they were stubborn Israelites who refused to abandon their land, or they were a heroic rear-guard who engaged the Assyrian army for three years (allowing their countrymen time to flee without pursuit).

Those who chose to leave the doomed kingdom of Israel had many potential destinations as options for new homelands. We have already seen that the "Phoenician" alliance of Israel, Tyre and Sidon had established many colonies in North Africa, Spain, other Mediterranean locations, the British Isles and even as far as North America. Any of these could have served as new homelands. In the ninth century B.C. so many Israelites voluntarily left Israel during the drought of Elijah to settle in these colonies that it was necessary to found a completely new colony (Carthage) to host all the refugees. Many people likely had relatives in these mostly Israelite colonies, and could start afresh with very little "culture-shock" as the language, customs, and religion of those colonies were essentially the same as those of Israel. Carthage (now approximately a century old) probably received the majority of Israelites fleeing to Israel's colonies due to its relative closeness. The fact that Carthage rose to great power in the centuries after the fall of Israel also indicates it received a major infusion of people when Israel fell.

Some might conclude that many Israelites would flee to Judah. After all, Judah had 620,000 Israelites in its army who had fled

Israel during King Ahab's wicked rule. However, at that earlier time Judah was ruled by good kings and Israel and Judah were allied nations. At the time of Israel's demise Judah also had wicked kings, and Israel and Judah were again enemies. Flight to Judah was not an option for another reason. Judah was contiguous to the very area that Assyria's troops were going to invade, so it offered no real security. What was needed were places of refuges **far away** from Assyrian armies.

Historical evidence has long existed concerning the voluntary migrations of the rest of the Israelites at this time, but such evidence has largely been ignored or forgotten. Let us reexamine some of that historical evidence.

Judges 5:17 records that the tribe of Dan had a strong sea-faring heritage, and their main homeland was on the Mediterranean seacoast. In the previous chapter, we saw evidence that the seafaring tribe of Dan was known to the Greeks as the **Danaans** of the Eastern Mediterranean. As a maritime tribe, it would be especially easy for many Danites to sail away from Israel in their ships. Much of the tribe of Dan apparently sailed as far as **Hibernia** (modern Ireland) in their effort to quit the area. Their arrival in considerable force in Hibernia as the **Tuatha De Danaans** is recorded in the early histories of Ireland.<sup>30</sup>

The battles of the Danaans to establish a new homeland in Ireland have even been recorded in the annals of ancient Irish history. In her book, *Ireland*, Emily Lawless cited these ancient historical records that the Danaans fought a three-day battle against the Firboigs which centered around a hill called **Ben-levi**, after which they built many stone forts.<sup>31</sup> "Ben-levi" is of obvious Hebrew origin as it includes the name of the Israelite tribe of Levi. J.H. Allen's, *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright*, records that "the greatest influx of the Tuatha de Danaan to Ireland" occurred around 720 B.C., just after the fall of

Samaria.<sup>32</sup>

The Irish islands called the Arans still have remains of old forts bearing the name of the tribe of Dan. Two forts on the Arans are called **Dun Aonghasa** and **Dun Chonchuir**. Ancient Hebrew did not write vowels so the vowels "u" in these words was added later. It is the consonants **D-N** which preserve the name of "Dan." These forts have an antiquity "certainly predating Christ," and "had been crumbling for long centuries before the Arans entered recorded history."<sup>33</sup> They have been attributed to the Firboigs at the time of "the legendary early invasions of Ireland,"<sup>34</sup> although the name **D-N** attached to the castles indicates they may have been constructed (or conquered) by the **Danaans**, the tribe of Dan. Since the tribe of Dan had a habit of renaming existing geographic features after their tribal name when they came into an area (Judges 19:47), it is possible these forts were, indeed, built by the Firboigs, and renamed after the Danites conquered them. History has no record that the Danaans ever moved again after their arrival in Ireland.

As an interesting digression, it is clear that the Irish have not forgotten their Danaan roots as a 1980s Irish band in Minneapolis named itself "**De Danaan**."<sup>35</sup> There was also an intriguing account in *U.S. News and World Report Magazine* which, noting the presence of then New York Mayor Ed Koch (a prominent American Jew) in the 1987 St. Patrick's Day parade, added that Mayor Koch:

*"explained his presence at the head of the grand parade thusly: 'It's part of my roots. The 10 lost tribes of Israel we believe ended up in Ireland.' "*<sup>36</sup>

Ancient records indicate that only the tribe of Dan arrived in Ireland at the time of the fall of Samaria, however. Also, at that same time, a large portion of the Israelite tribe of Simeon chose

a maritime escape from the Assyrians. Coinciding with the arrival of the Tuatha de Danaan in Ireland, the **Simonii** landed in Wales and Southern England in 720 B.C.<sup>37</sup> This date is also just after the fall of Samaria, and it is likely that the simultaneous arrival of the **Danaan** and the **Simonii** indicates that the tribes of Dan and Simeon sailed together for the British Isles. Since Briton had long been a Phoenician colony and port-of-call, and had been settled by and named for the "Covenant" (**B-R-T**) people centuries before the fall of Israel, it is logical that some Israelites would seek refuge there in a time of crisis.

J. H. Allen also notes that:

*"...the people of Waels call themselves, in ancient Welsh, 'Bryth y Brithan,' or 'Briths of Briton,' which means 'The Covenanters' of the 'land of the Covenant.' The first form of this phrase is almost vernacular Hebrew."*<sup>38</sup>

The fact that these "Brythonic Celts" who migrated to the British Isles bore the Hebrew **B-R-T** root word for "covenant" confirmed their Israelite origin. These Israelite immigrants furnished much of the racial stock of early Celtic Briton. The Danaan and the Simonii were only part of the waves of Celtic immigrants which arrived in Briton over several centuries. Celtic tribes had settled throughout Europe for centuries, and some of these tribes continued to migrate to Briton.

Concerning the Celts in ancient Iberia (modern Spain and Portugal), the *Encyclopedia Americana* states:

*"The Celtic migrations occurred **as early as 1000 B.C. and as late as 600 B.C.**"*<sup>39</sup>  
(Emphasis added.)

This period of Celtic migration begins precisely with the Israelite golden age of Kings David and Solomon (when Israel began



many colonies), includes the time of the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah and the fall of Samaria, and ends just prior to the fall of Jerusalem. The striking parallels between the timing of Celtic migrations and the rise and fall of the Israelite kingdoms of Israel and Judah argues that these parallels are not coincidental. Many of these Celtic waves of immigration involved Israelites seeking new homelands (initially as colonists of the united kingdom of Israel and later as masses of refugees from Assyrian invasions). Gerhard Herm's book, *The Celts*, observes:

*"...the first Celtic-speaking tribes came to Ireland as far back as the Hallstatt period. After the beginning of the La Tene era these were followed, via Britain, by other wandering hordes, who spoke a Brythonic, that is a P-Celtic, dialect."*<sup>40</sup>

The *Encyclopedia Americana* defines the Hallstatt period of Central Europe as being "about 1000 to 500 B.C....[and adds]...The people of the area were early Celts..."<sup>41</sup> Again, the timing of the Celtic migrations begins with the golden age of Israel under kings David and Solomon and ends after the fall of Jerusalem. If the waves of Celtic migrations into Europe were entirely (or predominantly) Israelite, it follows that the Israelites fleeing Assyrian captivity in 720 B.C. would be well aware of the location of Israelite colonies in Europe or Briton to which they could flee.

These Celtic migrations took place over several centuries. Some were slow, overland migrations instead of the swift maritime migrations of the Danaan and Simonii. It is not the contention of this book that all ancient Celts were descended from Israel's tribes, but the evidence indicates that many of the migrating Celts were, indeed, Israelites. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* records:

*"The Celts moved westwards...and two divisions of them reached the British Isles, namely the Brythons and the Goidels. The Brythons crossed the channel and established themselves in England and Wales but the Goidels, probably in the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., passed directly from the mouth of the Loire...to Ireland."*<sup>42</sup>

It is significant that large masses of Celtic people still bore in their name the Hebrew word for "Covenant" (the **B-R-T** or **B-R-TH** root word of Briton and Brythonic) even after the fall of Samaria. It is also significant that Briton (the land to which they were migrating) had borne the same Hebrew name for centuries prior to their arrival. It was likely no coincidence that the Brythonic Celts migrated toward a land that shared their tribal heritage. As refugees, they would logically migrate toward a land bearing their tribal name in the hopes of finding a hospitable homeland.

To sum up, this book concludes that large contingents of the Israelite tribes of Dan and Simeon (the **Danaan** and the **Simonii**) sought refuge in Ireland and Briton after abandoning their old homelands to the Assyrians. It further concludes that many of the succeeding waves of Celtic immigrants to Briton (particularly those named with the Hebrew root word for the "covenant" people) were also Israelites in search of a permanent homeland. This infusion of Israelites into early Briton ensured that the Hebrew word for "covenant" (**B-R-T**) would remain the name by which that Island was known to the rest of the world.

While sizeable contingents of the tribes of Dan and Simeon fled by sea to the British Isles, and other Israelites became Celtic migrants after the fall of Samaria, there is historical evidence that the main body of Israelites fleeing the kingdom of Israel

took an overland route to their new homeland. They could not go east because of the Assyrian menace, there were not enough vessels to take everyone to new homelands via maritime routes to the west, and Egyptian forces were dominant to the south. This left the north as the only realistic land route out of Palestine, and that is exactly where historical evidence says they went.

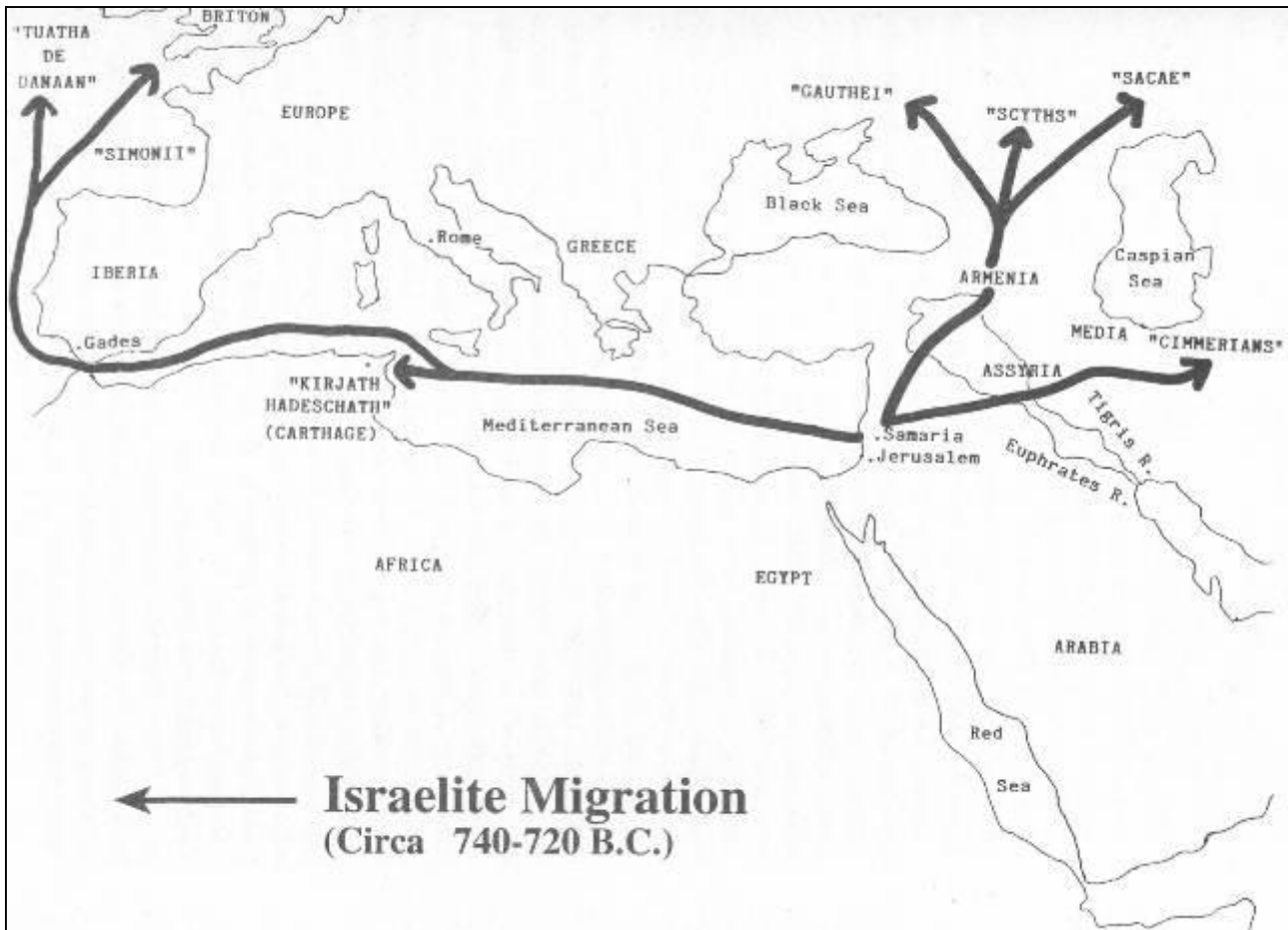
Colonel J. C. Gawler, a British government official during Queen Victoria's reign in the nineteenth century (he was Keeper of the Crown Jewels), researched the fate of the northern ten tribes of Israel after the fall of Israel, and he cites both Jewish and Armenian historical sources who recorded that a mass of refugees from the ten tribes of Israelites migrated through Armenia into the region north of the Black Sea (then known by the general term "Tartary").<sup>43</sup> Gawler also cited the following observation about Tartary by Abraham Ortelius, the famous sixteenth century geographer:

*"In his description of Tartary, notes the kingdom of **Arsareth**, where the ten tribes retiring...took the name of **Gauthei**, because, he says, they were very jealous of the glory of God."<sup>44</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

Gawler also called attention to a passage in the apocryphal book of II Esdras which asserts that refugees of the ten tribes did, indeed, migrate to a new place called "**Arzareth**" (note the similarity to the place-name "**Arsareth**"). This passage (II Esdras 13:40-45) states:

*"...these are the ten tribes that in the days of King Hoshea were carried away from their own land into captivity, whom **Shalmaneser, king of Assyria**, made captives, and carried beyond the river...But*

they formed this plan among themselves, to leave the heathen population, and go to a more distant region...**so that there perhaps they might keep their statutes, which they had not kept in their own country.** And they went in by the narrow passages of the Euphrates River. For the Most High then did wonders for them, for he held back the sources of the river until they had passed over. But it was a long journey of a year and a half to that country...called **Arzareth.**"<sup>45</sup>  
 (Emphasis added.)



This account of the Israelite migration parallels that of II Kings 17:1-6. The account of II Esdras indicates there was a mass of Israelites who escaped an impending Assyrian captivity and fled

to "Arzareth" (a Black Sea region). Also noteworthy is the contention of II Esdras that this group of Israelites had repented of their sins, and was determined to obey God in their new homeland. Such a repentant attitude on the part of the ten tribes was foreshadowed in II Chronicles 28:5-15. During the reign of King Pekah of Israel (a few years prior to the fall of Samaria and the flight of all Israelites from Palestine), the ten tribes heeded a warning from a prophet of God to release 200,000 Jewish captives taken in a war with Judah. Verses 12-13 record that the leaders of the tribe of Ephraim (the chief tribe of Israel) directed that the people obey God's directive via the prophet. After centuries of disregarding any direction from God it is remarkable that the Israelite people were again responding to God's direction just before Samaria fell.

Also noteworthy is the fact that the king of Israel, Pekah, had no role in the decision of the Israelites to obey God's prophet. II Chronicles 28:8-10 records the prophet, Obed, persuaded the Israelites to release their Jewish captives and return a prodigious amount of war booty to the Jews just as this army was arriving at Samaria, the home of King Pekah. King Pekah, an evil king (II Kings 15:27-28), was likely quite furious at the people's surrender of all this war booty (which Pekah thought was "his").

The willingness of Israel's tribal leaders and the people to act without any apparent input from the king reveals that the people of the kingdom of Israel felt little or no allegiance to their corrupt kings just prior to their exit from Palestine. The fact that many people of the ten tribes exhibited a wholesale disregard for their king's authority just prior to their flight from Palestine offers a possible explanation for the general disappearance of the Israelites during the last Assyrian invasion. Perhaps the king and his reduced band of loyalists stayed in Samaria to resist the Assyrians while most of the war-weary Israelites made a

complete break with the king and followed their tribal leaders northward to seek a new homeland.

II Esdras attributes their escape from Assyria to divine help in crossing the Euphrates River, and adds that their journey took a year and a half. Since their escape route was mountainous, and since they had women, children and elderly along, such a journey would be both arduous and time-consuming. The account of II Esdras is consistent with the account of Ortelius that this body of the ten tribes was "very jealous of God," and that of II Chronicles 28 showing the Israelites were then responsive to a prophet of God. Indeed, if God miraculously assisted their escape, it would explain why these migrating Israelites were "very jealous of God" in their new homeland. It would also explain the complete silence in Assyrian annals concerning the unexplained disappearance of most Israelites during their final invasion of Israel. Assyria would have been loathe to record that the God of Israel supernaturally delivered the migrating Israelites, so they limited their bragging to the small band of Israelites captured in Samaria.

The role attributed to God is also consistent with his past actions in blessing Israelite migrations. When the tribes of Israel fled Egyptian captivity to embark on a journey to Palestine, God parted the waters of the Red Sea so they could escape their pursuers (Exodus 14:21-22). When they were about to enter Palestine, God parted the waters of the River Jordan (Joshua 3:11-17). If God parted the Euphrates River to rescue the Israelites from pursuing Assyrians and open the way for their northward migration to a new homeland, it would be consistent with God's past actions in behalf of Israelites who were migrating in obedience to his will. Because II Chronicles 28 records that the last generation of Israelites in Palestine obeyed God's directive through a prophet, it begs the following question. Was this

Israelite migration out of Palestine also prompted by a message from a prophet a few years later? If the Israelites were migrating in obedience to a message from God, it would explain God's willingness to perform a miracle to assist them because they were once again submitting to his leadership.

As we shall see in chapter six, this group of Israelites came to be known as "Scythians" by the Greeks and they were not characterized by the degenerate practices of Baal worship. In fact, we shall see that they were known for their wise laws and the avoidance of swine's flesh. The above indicates that this mass of refugees from the ten tribes did repent of their Baal worship, and genuinely returned to God. Gawler also cited the testimony of a medieval Jewish historian named Eldad, "a Jewish writer who sent to the Spanish Jews his memoirs of the ten tribes."<sup>46</sup> Eldad stated that these Israelites who migrated via an overland route did so in considerable force. He wrote:

*"that many of the people did not go into captivity, but evaded the calamity, going off with their flocks, and turning nomads, and that the chief or prince whom they appointed could muster 120,000 horse and 100,000 foot."*<sup>47</sup>

This account further documents the escape of a large body of the ten tribes of Israel when they abandoned Palestine to the Assyrians. Since the Israelites in this migration had 220,000 armed soldiers, one can conservatively estimate the number of Israelites in this body to be around a million people when the number of women, children and elderly are included. Based on the biblical and secular historical records of what happened to the other tribes, this body of Israelites likely included the half-tribe of Manasseh which lived on the west side of the Jordan River, most of the tribes of Ephraim, Asher, Zebulun, and

Issachar, and a small portion of the tribe of Dan which lived in the northern part of Palestine.

As this large group of Israelites resettled in the Black Sea region, they assumed new identities, but many key factors made them readily identifiable as Hebrews. The region to the east of the Black Sea (and north of Armenia) came to be known as **Iberia**,<sup>48</sup> confirming the presence of Hebrews from the ten tribes in that region. The Hebrews had given the old Phoenician/Israelite colony in Spain the name **Iberia** (after **Eber**, the namesake of the Hebrews), and it has long been called the **Iberian** Peninsula. The name of a modern Spanish river (the Ebro) still preserves the name of Eber, and is a reminder of the Hebrew ("Phoenician") presence in the ancient Iberian Peninsula.

**The appearance of the same Hebrew name (Iberia) in the region north of Armenia verifies that this region became an area of Israelite resettlement for those who escaped Assyrian captivity by voluntary flight.** While information about the kingdom of Iberia in the Asian Caucasus region rarely appears in modern histories, it is shown on a map on Armenian history in the *Encyclopedia Americana*.<sup>49</sup> That map represents the dimensions of Iberia's size several centuries after the arrival of the Israelites, and at a time when most Israelites had migrated out of that area into South Russia (chapter six will examine those later migrations).

Combining the above historical accounts with the fact that Hebrew place names subsequently became attached to Black Sea areas, we have a positive identification of where the escaped Israelites relocated circa 724-720 B.C. Israel's new homeland was well-chosen as it was in a mountainous region where the terrain greatly favored the defenders. The migration of the Israelites to a defensible region indicates that they purposefully fled to an area where Assyria would be reluctant to pursue them.



As a reminder, the Hebrews who resettled in the Black Sea region were Israelites of the ten tribes of Israel; they were not Jews. The Bible records that there was considerable warfare and hostility between the Israelites and the Jews just prior to this Israelite migration. Indeed, since the Jewish kingdom at that time was allied with Assyria **against** the Israelites (II Kings 16:7), the Jews at that time had no need to flee. Also, the Bible records that the Jews (Judah) did not leave Palestine at that time, but remained in the land after the rest of the tribes of Israel were gone (II Kings 17:18).

While Judah remained in the land after Israel departed, their presence in the land was far from secure. During the reign of an honorable king named Hezekiah, the Assyrians invaded Judah, intending to do to Judah what they had done to Samaria (II Kings 18). Their initial efforts were successful as II Kings 18:13 records that the Assyrians “came up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them.” Based on Assyrian custom, this likely resulted in much of the tribe of Judah going into captivity at this time. II Kings 18:13-17 and 19:8 mention only three fortified Jewish cities (Jerusalem, Lachish, and Libnah) resisted the Assyrians.

The Assyrians mocked the God of Hezekiah, asserting that he would be as impotent as the “gods of Hamath, Arpad, Sepharvaim, Hena, Ivah, and Samaria (II Kings 18:33-35).” II Kings 18:14 records that Hezekiah gave Assyria’s king tribute of “300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold” in an effort to “buy off” the Assyrians. Significantly, the Assyrian records agree with the biblical account of Hezekiah’s tribute, mentioning his 30 gold talents.<sup>50</sup> Hezekiah, a good king, then appealed to God for divine assistance. An examination of the cuneiform Assyrian records of this invasion shows why Hezekiah and his people were desperate for help.

An Assyrian stone carving depicting the Assyrian siege of Lachish is on display in the British Museum. The relief is described by Werner Keller, in his book, *The Bible as History*, as follows:

*"On the turrets and breastwork of the stronghold of Lachish...the Judahite defenders...showered a hail of arrows on the attackers, hurled stones down upon them, threw burning torches...among the enemy...At the foot of the wall the Assyrians are attacking with the utmost violence...Sennacherib had deployed the whole range of approved assault tactics. Every Assyrian is armed to the teeth...Their engineers have built sloping ramps of earth, stones and felled trees. Siege engines, the first tanks in history, push forward up the ramps against the walls. They are equipped with a battering ram which sticks out like the barrel of a cannon...tunnels are being driven into the rock beneath the foundation of the walls...The first captives, men and women, are being led off. Lifeless bodies are hanging on pointed sticks impaled."*<sup>51</sup>

One can imagine the horror of the siege faced by Jerusalem's inhabitants as the defenders were terrorized by Assyrian tactics which included impaling their countrymen on stakes! As extreme as his position was, Hezekiah's prayer did not simply ask God "to save their skins." He laid out before God an Assyrian letter which openly mocked the ability of God to help them. Hezekiah asked God to intervene for his name's sake, portraying the battle as one in which the honor of God was at issue. God responded by sending a death angel to kill 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one

night (II Kings 19:14-35)! Those skeptical of this divine intervention need to consider that Assyrian records of this siege of Jerusalem claim only the tribute money they gained from Hezekiah. An Assyrian retreat and an absence of any victorious claims about Jerusalem indicate that it was an unexpected Assyrian defeat.<sup>52</sup>

The divine intervention on behalf of Jerusalem must have so terrified the remaining Assyrians that they quickly withdrew from Judah. If Jerusalem had been spared by human efforts, it could be expected that Assyria would have simply come back with a big enough army to finish the job. The fact that Assyria suddenly abandoned their invasion, in spite of their overwhelming superiority and desire to conquer Jerusalem, indicates that while they feared no man, they did fear Hezekiah's God.

Those Jews who had been captured in the early stages of the invasion (II Kings 18:13) were likely already on their way to captivity to Assyrian territory, so a large portion of the tribe of Judah was also taken into captivity at that time.

Assyria's King Sennacherib, who had defied God at Jerusalem, was killed by his own sons at a later date. Significantly, after murdering their father, these Assyrian princes "escaped into the land of Armenia" (II Kings 19:37). While the *King James Version* of the Bible uses the term "Armenia" for their place of refuge, the *Revised Standard Version* translates it as "the land of Ararat." **Iberia**, the region to which a large portion of the Israelites had recently migrated, was to the north of Mt. Ararat and Armenia.

After killing the king of Assyria, these fugitives wanted to be absolutely sure that they were fleeing to a nation which would grant them asylum. Their confidence that people living in the area around Ararat would grant them asylum supports the conclusion that a sizeable portion of Israel's ten tribes was in the

area (Israel's population, recently displaced by Assyrian onslaughts, could be counted on to welcome anyone who killed the king of Assyria). II Kings 19:37 therefore offers indirect confirmation that Israelites had migrated to the area of Armenia (or Ararat).

After Hezekiah's death, his son Manasseh became the king of the depleted kingdom of Judah. He was a vile king who caused the Jews to worship Baal. Under Manasseh, the Jews practiced astrology, infant sacrifice, contacted demons via those who had familiar spirits (i.e. "channelers," in modern terms), etc. Judah became so degenerate that II Kings 21:1-16 and II Chronicles 33:3-10 record that they became **worse** than the depraved Canaanites whom the Israelites had displaced in the time of Joshua. Jeremiah 3:6-11 confirms that Judah's sins exceeded those of Israel.

Because of Manasseh's degenerate sins, God allowed him to become an Assyrian captive in Babylon. Surprisingly, Manasseh repented! In a testimony to how merciful God can be when one repents, II Chronicles 33:11-20 shows that God caused him to be reinstated as King of Judah where he subsequently "commanded Judah to serve the God of Israel" (verse 16).

As an example of how far Judah drifted from God, II Chronicles 34 records that later in the reign of Josiah (a good king), the scrolls containing God's Laws were found as part of a project to repair God's Temple. Imagine! Judah had abandoned the worship of God for so long that by the time Josiah was king (circa 639-608 B.C.) no one even knew what the laws of God were! When this copy of God's laws was dusted off and read, it was the first time that King Josiah and his people had ever heard the Law of God. During Josiah's reign, a very important prophecy by Jeremiah was given which offers biblical confirmation that much of the ten tribes of Israel was then located north of Armenia in

the land of "Iberia."

Jeremiah 3:6-12 contains a divine warning to Judah through the prophet Jeremiah. After reviewing the sins of Israel which caused them to be removed from Palestine, God warned Judah that its sins were greater than those which caused the ten tribes to be removed from their land. Verses 11-12 then state:

*"And the Lord said unto me. The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah. Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say. Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful... and I will not keep anger for ever."*

Note that when God inspired a prophet to direct a message to the ten tribes of Israel, he was told to "proclaim it toward the north." This message was given in Jerusalem about a century after Samaria fell. If all the Israelites had been taken captive into Assyria, God would have said to proclaim the message "to the east." However, the Black Sea is directly north of Jerusalem, and we have examined several sources which traced a large body of the ten tribes of Israel to Iberia, along the Black Sea. The Bible's statement (circa 620 B.C.) that the ten tribes were living **toward the north** of Jerusalem confirms those historical accounts. Also, God's words "...Israel hath justified herself..." gives credence to the historical accounts of Ortellius and II Esdras that the resettled Israelites were trying to serve the God of Israel.

Approximately 45 years later, the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem and carried the rest of the Jews captive in two separate invasions. In the first invasion (circa 600 B.C.), Nebuchadnezzar took King Jehoiachin, most of his royal family, and much of the leadership of Judah into captivity. This first

invasion netted over 10,000 captives (II Kings 24:8-16). Nebuchadnezzar made one member of the royal family (Zedekiah) a puppet king over Judah, but eleven years later, Zedekiah's revolt triggered the final Babylonian invasion which ended the existence of the kingdom of Judah. King Zedekiah's sons were killed (II Kings 25:6-7), but this did not terminate the Davidic dynasty. After spending 37 years in captivity, the former king of Judah, Jehoiachin, was given great favor by a subsequent Babylonian king (II Kings 25:27-30). I Chronicles 3:17-24 shows that Jehoiachin ("Jeconiah the prisoner" or "Jeconiah the captive" in some translations of the Bible) had seven sons, and that these sons produced many descendants who preserved the royal blood of King David. That the royal Davidic line flourished even through the captivity of Judah will become an important aspect of a later chapter.

There is one footnote to the fall of the kingdom of Judah which bears our attention. The book of Jeremiah contains many of the warnings which God directed him to give to Judah. When Judah fell, the Babylonians allowed Jeremiah to go free (Jeremiah 39:11-12). A small Jewish remnant fled westward into Egypt, taking Jeremiah, his scribe Baruch, and the king's daughters from the royal house of David with them (Jeremiah 43:1-7). II Kings 25:7 records that the sons of the puppet-king Zedekiah were slain, but no harm was apparently done to his daughters. The "king's daughters" traveling with Jeremiah would have been the daughters of King Zedekiah.

While the Bible does not say what became of Jeremiah, Baruch, and the royal princesses, secular history does give us an indication of their final place of refuge. J. H. Allen, in his book, *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright*, cites ancient Irish histories in a reconstruction of what happened to Jeremiah and his band of Jewish refugees. He states: "About 585 B.C. a

'notable man'... 'a patriarch'... came to Ulster, the northernmost province of Ireland, accompanied by a princess, the daughter of an eastern king, and... Simon Brach (also spelled Barech and Berach)." <sup>53</sup> Allen's narrative also states that the princess, Tea-Tephi, married a native Irish king who forsook his old religion and changed the name of his capital to Tara (a Hebrew/Semitic name).

Numbers 33:27-28 states "Tarah" was the name of one of the encampments of the Hebrew people during their wandering in the wilderness after the exodus from Egypt (Numbers 33:27-28), and "Terah" was also the name of Abraham's father (Genesis 11:31). J. H. Allen's narrative contends that the "patriarch, Simon Brach, and the eastern princess" were Jeremiah, his scribe Baruch, and one of the daughters of King Zedekiah of Judah. The Hebrew name "Tara" and the time of their arrival in Ireland, 585 B.C. (near the fall of Jerusalem) support that conclusion.

J. H. Allen further comments that the royal arms of Ireland have long been represented by the "harp of David" (which was said to have accompanied Jeremiah, Baruch and Princess Tea-Tephi to Ireland), supporting the idea that the royal daughter from the east was a descendant of David from Judah's royal family. <sup>54</sup>

The consonants of Jeremiah's scribe were **B-R-CH**, as were the consonants of the man who accompanied the ancient eastern patriarch to Ireland. This further supports the contention that the ancient arrivals in Ireland were a band of Jewish refugees escorted by Jeremiah. Jeremiah had been told by God that it would not be safe to stay in Egypt (Jeremiah 42:13-22), so we can be sure he did not remain there. Since Jeremiah likely was aware of where the ten tribes of Israel had fled during the fall of Samaria, he and his small party of Jews apparently set sail for Hibernia (Ireland), one of the old colonies of Israel, and started

life anew.

This concludes the narrative about the many ways in which the Hebrews of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah left the land of ancient Palestine. While the subsequent movements of the tribe of Judah (the Jews) are well-known to historians, what happened to the descendants of the much more numerous ten tribes of Israel? They did not disappear from the face of earth. Indeed, Hosea 1:6-10 prophesied that **after** the ten tribes of Israel were removed from Palestine, they would so multiply their population that their descendants would be too numerous to count. In the following chapters we shall trace the history of the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel **after** they left Palestine. We shall see that God abundantly fulfilled his promise to multiply their numbers.

The final fact worth noting is that there was a major cultural and religious separation between the Israelites who left Palestine. We have seen evidence that the Israelites who migrated northward to the Black Sea region tried to again serve Yahweh, the God of Israel. They forsook the idolatry and evil customs of Baal worship. Those Israelites who migrated by sea to the Phoenician colonies of Israel, Tyre and Sidon remained in the Baal and mother-goddess worship which permeated Carthage and the other Phoenician colonies.

Those Israelites who migrated to the Black Sea region had plenty of available room for expansion on the steppes of southern Russia. When these descendants of the ten tribes of Israel reappear in history, they burst forth as a conquering horde! However, that story must wait for chapter six. Chapter five will first examine the history of the largest Mediterranean refuge of the ten tribes of Israel... Carthage!



## Endnotes: Chapter Four

1. *The Open Bible, King James Version*, I Kings 16:33, marginal note, p. 350
2. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, "Grove," p. 361
3. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, "Grove," subhead two, p. 439
4. Rawlinson, George, *Phoenicia*, p. 107-117
5. *Ibid*, pp. 112-114
6. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 261-268
7. *Ibid*, p. 263
8. *Collier's Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10, "Iberian," pp. 323-324
9. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 262-263
10. *Ibid*, p. 159
11. *Ibid*, pp. 219-245
12. *Ibid*, pp. 236-243
13. *Ibid*, p. 240
14. *Ibid*, p. 226
15. *Ibid*, pp. 261-267
16. *Ibid*, pp. 236-243
17. Rawlinson, George, *Phoenicia*, p. 3
18. *Ibid*, p. 63
19. Church, *Carthage*, p. 11
20. *Ibid*, p. 11
21. *Ibid*, pp. 11-12
22. Rawlinson, George, *Phoenicia*, p. 116
23. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 20, "Shalmaneser," p. 454
24. Keller, *The Bible As History*, p. 212
25. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 13, "Jews," subhead "The dynasty of Omri," pp. 45-46
26. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, "Gozan," p. 357
27. *Halley's Bible Handbook*, p. 151
28. Keller, *The Bible As History*, p. 244

29. *Ibid*, p. 246
30. Allen, *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright*, pp. 266-268
31. Lawless, *Ireland*, pp. 8-9
32. Allen, p. 275
33. O'Faolain, "Skim the High Water: A Song For The Arans," *British Heritage*, August/September, 1985 Issue, pp. 14-15
34. *Ibid*, p. 14
35. Coleman, "De Danaan blends new and old for great Irish sound," *Minneapolis Star & Tribune*, March 3, 1986, page 2C
36. *U.S. News and World Report*, March 30, 1987, p. 7
37. Allen, p. 275
38. *Ibid*, p. 275
39. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 6, "Celtiberia," p. 143
40. Herm, *The Celts*, pp. 251-252
41. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 13, "Hallstatt Culture," p. 726
42. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 5, "Celt," pp. 102-103
43. Gawler, *Our Scythian Ancestors Identified With Israel*, p. 9
44. *Ibid*, p. 9, quoting M. Sailman's 1818 book, *Researches in the East: an important account of the Ten Tribes*
45. Goodspeed, *The Apocrypha*, (II Esdras), p. 93
46. Gawler, p. 9
47. *Ibid*, p. 9
48. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, map between pages 78 and 79
49. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 2, "Armenia," p. 331
50. Keller, p. 260
51. *Ibid*, p. 259
52. *Ibid*, pp. 260-262
53. Allen, p. 228
54. *Ibid*, pp. 228-229, 249-251

## **5. Carthage—The Colony that Became an Empire**

The previous chapter asserted that Carthage was a colony of the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel, founded in the ninth century B.C. as a result of the extreme drought caused by the prayer of Elijah. In this chapter, much evidence will be presented to support that assertion. This chapter will also examine some of the history of Carthage: its rise to empire status, its presence in ancient America, and its eventual decay and dissolution. Its maritime empire came to include portions of three continents: Africa, Europe and North America. Additionally, it almost destroyed Rome, its arch rival.

In the ninth century B.C., the kingdom of Israel was devastated by a prolonged drought which had its people literally starving to death. The drought, a result of Elijah's prayer, came upon them because of their degeneration into the libertine and brutal practices of Baal worship. The drought was a punishment from God for Israel's disobedience and idolatry, but it also affected the Baal-worshipping city-states of Tyre and Sidon, which had been allied to Israel since the reign of King David over the united kingdom of Israel. Their alliance was particularly close during this drought as Israel's King Ahab was married to a royal daughter of Sidon's king. The Sidonian princess who became the queen of Israel was named Jezebel, and her name still serves as synonym for evil. The Bible describes this period of Israel's history in I Kings 16:29 to 22:40.

God did not bring this drought upon Israel in a fit of divine pique. God intervenes personally to punish nations at times in an effort to wake them up spiritually, and to motivate them to forsake their self destructive activities. In Israel's case they were sinking deeper into Baalism, a religion which eventually destroys its adherents by its own excesses. In adopting Baalism's sexual hedonism, Israel was destroying its own family units on which

the strength of any nation is built. Baalism also included the grisly rites of human sacrifices (particularly of infants). By using the drought to focus Israel's attention on the national cancer of Baal worship, God was doing Israel a favor.

It is indicative of the stubbornness of King Ahab (and Israel) that they endured the ravages of the drought for years rather than forsake their hideous religious practices. As noted in the previous chapter, many Israelites did forsake their sins and relocated to the kingdom of Judah where King Jehoshaphat led the Jewish nation in obeying God. In order to avoid starvation for much of its remaining population during the drought, Israel had to export sizeable contingents of its population elsewhere. While Israel could relocate its citizens anywhere in its empire (which included colonies in Spain, the British Isles, and North America), it would have been a great physical hardship to relocate whole families and communities to such distant locations. For this reason it was logical to find a reasonably close piece of real estate that was unaffected by the drought to resettle a large portion of Israel's refugees. Israel and its Tyrian and Sidonian allies had colonies and trading posts along the North African coast, but none apparently had the potential to accommodate so large an influx of people.

Israel needed to build a new and closer colony, suitable for accommodating a large portion of its hungry population. It needed to be distant enough to be unaffected by the drought, yet close enough to avoid the hardships and risks of long voyages. Since the colony would receive many sea-borne immigrants, it had to include extensive harbor facilities which would accommodate many ships simultaneously. This new colony was planted on the north coast of Africa, and given the Hebrew name Kirjath-Hadeschath, which one historian of Carthage translates as "New Town."<sup>1</sup> The name "Kirjath" is a Hebrew word

for "city,"<sup>2</sup> and it appears frequently in the Bible. Israelite cities in the Bible included Kirjathaim, Kirjath-arba, Kirjath-jearim, Kirjath-sepher and Kirjath-sannah (Numbers 32:37, Joshua 15:15, 15:49, 20:7 and I Samuel 7:1). That this new Israelite colony would be named the "New City" or "New Town" was very appropriate. Since the city-states of Tyre, Sidon, etc. were closely allied to Israel and were also affected by the drought (I Kings 17:8-16), there were undoubtedly non-Israelite refugees among the initial colonizers of Kirjath-Hadeschath as well.

The Israelites who settled "Kirjath" (Carthage) came from the kingdom of Israel, the ten-tribed Israelite nation to the north of the Jewish kingdom of Judah. As discussed in the previous chapter, Judah was ruled at that time by King Jehoshaphat who outlawed Baalism in Judah. Since the drought was on Baal worshippers, and Judah supported a huge influx of Israelites during the drought, it is clear that Judah was not affected by the drought which plagued Israel and the city-states to its north. Since Judah was not afflicted by the drought, it had no need to join Israel in founding this new colony. Therefore, Kirjath-Hadeschath was primarily an Israelite settlement. Since both Israel and Judah spoke Hebrew, it is easy for a modern reader to misunderstand the origins of Kirjath unless it is realized that its founders were Hebrews from the northern kingdom of Israel, not the southern kingdom of Judah.

While the Hebrew word "Kirjath" was the name given to this new city by its inhabitants, the Greeks called it "Karchedon," and the Romans called it "Carthago."<sup>3</sup> Both Greece and Rome were perennial enemies of Carthage. Since our history of the ancient world comes mostly from Greco-Roman sources, we today refer to this ancient Hebrew city as "Carthage," the name given it by its enemies.

Many historians (Alfred Church, Gilbert and Colette Charles

Picard, and B. H. Warmington) who have written books about Carthaginian history have commented that the chief magistrates of Carthage were called the “shophetim,” a Hebrew word for “Judges.”<sup>4</sup> Gilbert and Colette Charles-Picard make this observation:

*“...the executive power was shared by two shofetim. This title, which the Romans translated as suffetes, means ‘judges.’ **It was the title borne by the elders of the people of Israel** before institution of the monarchy.”<sup>5</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

[The above word “Shophetim” is also spelled “shofetim,” depending on the preference of individual writers.] R. Bosworth Smith, adds the following:

*“...two supreme magistrates called by the Romans Suffetes. **Their name is the same as the Hebrew Shofetim...**The Hamilcars and Hannos of Carthage were, like their prototypes, the Gideons and the Samsons of the Book of Judges, not so much their judges, as the protectors and the rulers of their respective states.”<sup>6</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

Why would Carthaginian leaders have Israelite titles unless they were relocated Israelites? It is also interesting that the Carthaginian leaders assumed the title of “judges” instead of the more regal title of “kings.” This is understandable when one realizes that Carthage began as a “crown colony” of Israel, hence its true king for at least the first century of its existence was the reigning king of Israel. While Carthaginian leaders were called “kings” after Israel fell, its leaders continued to use the Hebrew title of “judges.”

A few Carthaginian rulers did call themselves “kings” in the years after the fall of Israel. One Carthaginian leader with the title “king” was named Malchus.<sup>7</sup> **Malchus is another Hebrew name**, and was still being used by the Hebrews at the time of Christ (John 18:10). A prominent member of the Hamilcars, a ruling family of Carthage, bore a famous Hebrew name. The historian Alfred Church noted:

*“One of the Hamilcars...bore the surname of **Barca**, and Barca is the same as the Hebrew **Barak**...”<sup>8</sup>*

One observation by Church illustrates how deep is the misconception that all Hebrew-speaking people of that time were Jews. He notes:

*“these resemblances of Carthaginian and Hebrew names are very interesting, and show us how close was the kindred between the Jews and the...Phoenician tribes, enemies to each other though they mostly were.”<sup>9</sup>*

When it is realized that the “Phoenician tribes” who settled Carthage (but used Hebrew names and titles) were primarily Israelites of the northern ten-tribed kingdom of Israel, one can see why there is a common Hebrew heritage for both the Jews and the “Carthaginians.” Since the Bible confirms that Israel and Judah (the Jews) were enemies during much of their separate histories, it is easy to understand why there was enmity between the Jews and the “Phoenician tribes.” However, as documented in previous chapters, the northern kingdom of Israel was a perennial ally of Tyre and Sidon in a “Phoenician” confederation. Therefore, the “close kindred” noted above between Carthaginians and Hebrews was actually between the Carthaginians and Israelites of the ten tribes.

Another evidence of the Israelite origins of Carthage is in the name of Carthage's priests. Carthage's priests were called the "**Kohanim**," and the High Priest was called the "**Rab Kohanim**" (the terms are rendered "cohen" and "rab cohenim" by Warmington).<sup>10</sup> We can clearly see the Hebrew root words for the term **Rabbi** and such modern Jewish names as **Kahn, Cohen, and Kahane**. The Hebrew Carthaginian word **Kohanim** simply means "priests," and the word **Rab** means "great," "mighty" or "elder."<sup>11</sup>

Gilbert and Colette Charles-Picard note that the sacred priestly law of the Carthaginian Kohanim with its instructions on animal sacrifices, libations, and other priestly rites bear "**a very significant resemblance to the Book of Leviticus.**"<sup>12</sup> They further note that "the Great God **El** was invoked exclusively under the name of Baal Hammon, which means 'the Lord of the altars where incense burns'...[and there were categories of offerings and sacrifices which]...**correspond exactly to those of the Hebrews**"<sup>13</sup> The divine name "El" is one of the Hebrew names of the God of Israel,<sup>14</sup> further documenting the Hebrew origins of Carthage. B. H. Warmington included photographs of Carthaginian artifacts in his book Carthage which show "Baal Hammon" (El) sitting astride a cherub, and sitting between two cherubim.<sup>15</sup> It is El, the God of Israel, who is described as the one who "dwells between the cherubim" (I Samuel 4:4 and Psalm 80:1), demonstrating further that the God of Israel was important to the Carthaginians. Warmington also includes a photograph of a statue taken from a Carthaginian sanctuary at "Monte Sirai,"<sup>16</sup> which preserves for us the Hebrew name "Sarai" or "Sarah," the wife of Abraham and mother of Isaac. The Carthaginians were keenly aware of their Israelite heritage, and preserved Israelite customs and names as well as their native Hebrew language.



That the Carthaginians included the God of Israel in their pantheon is significant. Since the early settlers of Carthage were keenly aware of the divine origin of the drought upon their homeland of Israel, they likely would have tried to appease a God who had such power. El eventually became just another name in their pantheon of gods, but it does appear, however, that for a time, the early inhabitants of Carthage paid at least some homage to the God of Israel. Unfortunately, their roots in Baalism were so deep that the laws of God were eventually subordinated to the customs of Baalism. Additionally, their sacrificial offerings came to include human, as well as animal, sacrifices due to the contagion of Baalism.

The historian, George Rawlinson, made the following observations on the unity of the Hebrew and Punic (Carthaginian) languages:

*"It is now generally allowed that the Phoenicians spoke a Semitic tongue, very closely allied to the Hebrew. Among the ancients, Jerome, Augustine, and Priscian, state the fact in the clearest terms. The inscriptions which exist confirm it. The... inscriptions are, for the most part, readily explicable, if Hebrew be assumed as the key to them, but not otherwise. **The same may be said of the long Punic passage in Plautus. A good Hebrew scholar has no difficulty in understanding any legible Phoenician inscription...**The inscription of Marseilles, and the passage in the Poenulus of Plautus, **commonly called Phoenician, belong rather to the literature of Carthage.**"<sup>17</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

At times, the Carthaginian (Punic) civilization is referred to as "Western Phoenician," because they were "Phoenicians" who settled in the western part of the Mediterranean Sea. For this reason, Carthaginian inscriptions are at times called "Phoenician," as Rawlinson noted above. Clearly, there was so little difference between Hebrew and Carthaginian/Punic that they began as, essentially, the same language, with the latter being a derivative of the former.

It has been noted that "the first two centuries of Carthage are veiled in obscurity."<sup>18</sup> While two centuries is not a lot of time in an historical perspective, that is only a little less than the life of the United States of America as an independent nation. For much of that time, Carthage (or Kirjath) lived in the shadow of its mother country, Israel. While Carthage was a colony of Israel, it did not enjoy a sovereignty of its own. The observation that Carthage's initial history was "obscure" supports the conclusion that it existed under the dominance of Israel. It is only after the end of the kingdom of Israel in Palestine that Carthage began to develop its own sovereign identity in world affairs.

The above evidence clearly establishes the Hebrew/Israelite origin of the ancient people we today call the Carthaginians. This is not to say that they were righteous people as the ugly sin of Baal worship eventually became just as dominant in Carthage as it had been in Israel. There is a reference in the *Encyclopedia Judaica* to a Hebrew role in the founding of Carthage,<sup>19</sup> although this reference makes no differentiation between the two separate Hebrew kingdoms that existed at that time. The *Encyclopedia Judaica* confirms this in stating that "there is no evidence of Jews in Carthage during the Punic period (before 146 B.C.E.)"<sup>20</sup> Given the fact that Carthage's early history is permeated with Hebrew names and terms, the avowed absence of any Jewish role at that time can only mean that the Hebrew nature of Carthage resulted

from the actions of the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel (which was Hebrew, but not Jewish).

When the northern kingdom of Israel fell, it is significant that a dispute arose between Judah and Carthage over rights to Israel's former territory. Of that time, the *Encyclopedia Judaica* records that "Africans (Carthaginians) are also described as disputing with Israelites the title to the ownership of Erez [the land of] Israel."<sup>21</sup> In this quote, the *Encyclopedia Judaica* apparently refers to the Jewish residents of Judah as the "Israelites" who disputed with Carthage over rights to the land of Israel. The Jews were Israelites in a racial sense as they were one of the many tribes who descended from "Israel" (whose original name was "Jacob"), but in a national sense, the Jews of Judah had not been known by the term "Israelite" for centuries (that term was applied to the northern ten tribes of Israel).

Judah's claim to the land of Israel was understandable; after Israel left the area, they claimed ownership due to the fact their Davidic dynasty ruled over that territory before Israel and Judah became separate nations. Carthage's claim to Israel's old territory was also understandable since they were the blood-descendants of the Israelites who had abandoned the land to Assyria's army. Undoubtedly, many Carthaginians were related to the owners of Israel's estates at the time they were abandoned. Judah's claim was based on historical precedent while Carthage's claims were based on the rights afforded to kinsmen. Both claims were moot, however. Neither Carthage nor Judah had the power to challenge Assyria in the matter, and Assyria decided to populate Israel's abandoned land as they saw fit (II Kings 17:24-31).

After the fall of their mother country, Israel, the Carthaginians had to fend for themselves in the world. As the largest Israelite ("Phoenician") colony in the Mediterranean area, Carthage

logically assumed a leadership position among the various "Phoenician" settlements in the Mediterranean. In fact, with Israel's power absent from the Mediterranean, many Israelite/Phoenician settlements soon became untenable and were absorbed by a new power.

The new force which stepped into the power vacuum in the Eastern Mediterranean was Greece. One historian states:

*"The Greeks took advantage of this eclipse [in Phoenician power] and from 750 to 500 B.C., against little opposition, they drove out the Phoenicians and poured thousands of their own emigrants into Eastern Sicily, into the South of Italy, into Southern Provence and even into Andalusia and Cyrenaica, thus completely encircling the Carthaginian territory."*<sup>22</sup>

The "eclipse" of Phoenician power after 750 B.C. coincides perfectly with the decline and fall of the kingdom of Israel, which was in its death throes from 750-721 B.C. Further attesting to Carthage's Israelite origins is one historian's statement that "at the beginning of the seventh century [B.C.]... Carthage received a fresh contingent of colonists fleeing from the Assyrian tyranny."<sup>23</sup> This time period was just after the Fall of Samaria.

Many of the "Phoenicians" who were pushed out of Mediterranean locations were Israelite colonists and traders. The areas cited above as being vacated by "Phoenicians" also gives us an indication of how widespread was the Israelite dominance of the Mediterranean prior to Israel's demise. Carthage grew in strength as it became the redoubt to which displaced "Phoenicians" fled. This infusion of refugees into Carthage is described as follows:

*"The Carthaginians...had already been reinforced, on several occasions by refugees from the besieged metropolis of Tyre and now rallied all the colonists driven from Lixus and Gades, beyond the Pillars of Hercules, to Malta, by way of Sardinia and Western Sicily, in organized resistance to the common enemy."*<sup>24</sup>

Since Carthage received refugees from Tyre "on several occasions," it is logical that Carthage also received waves of Israelite refugees from the kingdom of Israel (Tyre's ally) during the invasions by Assyria. This strengthened the Hebrew/Israelite nature of Kirjath Hadeschath (Carthage).

Due to the influx of numerous refugees, Carthage became independently strong soon after the fall of Israel. Herodotus, a Greek historian of the fifth century B.C., confirmed that Carthage had attained by 650 B.C. a "rich and powerful...adult status."<sup>25</sup> In other words. Carthage became an independent power within one lifetime of the fall of Samaria. Smarting from their expulsions from former homelands, the Mediterranean Israelites (with allied refugees from Tyre and Sidon) fought back. Carthaginian counterattacks against the Greeks reasserted Carthaginian rule over Corsica, North Africa and other Western Mediterranean areas.<sup>26</sup> Carthage became so dominant in the Western Mediterranean that they effectively barred any Greek passage through the Pillars of Hercules (Gibraltar), making Carthage "the Queen of the Western Seas."<sup>27</sup> We shall later see that Carthage's ability to deny Greece any access to the Atlantic Ocean will prove to be a very significant development, which even today has a major effect on educational curriculum in the western world.

The old Israelite colony at Gades in Iberia (Spain) became allied

to Carthage when the latter came to the rescue of Gades in a local war. One historical account states: "Gades...felt obliged to appeal to Carthage and to place themselves henceforth under Punic protection."<sup>28</sup> Why would the threatened inhabitants of Gades appeal to Carthage unless they shared a common heritage (as colonies of Israel)? It is also recorded that a new wave of refugees migrated to Carthage from Tyre when that city fell to King Nebuchadnezzar in 574 B.C.<sup>29</sup> Again, we see Carthage serving as a primary refuge for Semitic people when fleeing Palestine to avoid Assyrian or Babylonian captivity. Since "Phoenicia" was an alliance of Israel, Tyre and Sidon, and since Israel had the largest population and territory of any of the alliance partners, it seems apparent that most of those refugees were Israelites. That Carthage exhibited many Hebrew customs, names, and terms confirms it.

The Greco-Carthaginian conflicts divided the Mediterranean Sea into separate spheres of influence, with Carthage dominant in the West and Greece dominant in the East. As the centuries passed, the Romans waxed more powerful than the Greeks, and they became the new arch-enemy of the Carthaginians. In the early centuries of their rivalry, Carthage had the upper hand. Early treaties between the two show the stronger Carthaginians arrogantly dictating terms to the weaker Romans. In a treaty dated 348 B.C., Carthage forbade the Romans even to trade with certain Western Mediterranean areas, and ordered the Romans not to land in Sardinia, Eastern Tunisia, and Tripolitania unless it was to take on provisions or repair their ships.<sup>30</sup> Carthage could be haughty and dictatorial even with its allies and mercantile partners. This Carthaginian propensity for arrogance would prove to be one factor in their undoing. Rome had a long memory, and her turn would come later.

Carthage continued to blockade the Pillars of Hercules with its

powerful navy, permitting neither the Greeks nor the Romans to sail into the Atlantic Ocean. In fact, when one Greek mariner named Pytheas finally did sail into the Atlantic around 300 B.C., it was an extraordinary event! It has been suggested that the Carthaginians permitted Pytheas to make his voyage out of respect for Alexander the Great's Macedonians,<sup>31</sup> while another explanation is that the Carthaginian fleet had been diverted from Gibraltar due to impending military action elsewhere.<sup>32</sup> At any rate, Pytheas visited the coastlands of western and northern Europe which were previously unexplored by the Greeks. Pytheas marveled that the reference points of the constellations changed in the sky as he traveled north, giving evidence to the Greeks that the world was a sphere. As Dr. Barry Fell noted: "Never before had any [Greek] navigator been able to sail so far north; Carthaginian commercial interests would not permit it."<sup>33</sup>

At this point some vital observations need to be made. In the ancient world, the Carthaginian navy was so powerful that when a Greek mariner actually gained access to the Atlantic, it was a truly historic event! What was remarkable new knowledge to the Greeks (that the earth was spherical) had been common knowledge to the Carthaginians (and their forebears, the Phoenicians) for many centuries! After the voyage of Pytheas, the Greeks were apparently not allowed into the Atlantic for another two centuries, and later Greek cartographers came to regard the observations of Pytheas as fictional.<sup>34</sup>

Because Carthage's military might long denied the Greeks any experience in sailing on the world's oceans, the Greeks had a very limited, ethnocentric view of the world. Since Rome was also denied access to the Atlantic Ocean until Carthage waned in power, the perspectives of both Greece and Rome were essentially limited to the Mediterranean Sea, and those parts of Asia and Europe within marching distance. This has immense

implications for those of us who learn our history in the twentieth century.

**Our modern versions of ancient history are taught almost exclusively from a Greco-Roman perspective. Therefore, we are taught to assume that no one in the ancient world could know anything until someone in the Greco-Roman world learned it for the first time.** This assumption has given the modern world woeful misunderstandings about the ancient world. Since Greece and Rome were mostly land empires rather than maritime empires like Israel and Carthage, the Greeks and Romans were profoundly ignorant of some scientific knowledge that maritime powers had possessed for many centuries. Since Greece and Rome were long unaware of the existence of North America, South America, the northern European region and other places reachable only by long-range ocean travel, we tend to think nobody in the ancient world knew about these places until the Greeks or Romans finally learned about them! **In fact, Carthage (and Israel/Phoenicia) knew vastly more about the geography of the spherical earth than the ancient Greeks and Romans ever knew! Israel/Phoenicia and Carthage discovered, explored, colonized and exploited the New World long before Greek or Roman eyes ever saw territory beyond the Mediterranean Sea!**

Modern academics, because they are taught history from the ethnocentric Greco-Roman viewpoint, are limited in their understanding of the ancient world. They have mistakenly believed the ancient Greco-Roman propaganda that Greece and Rome were the most advanced cultures of the ancient world. Greece and Rome were advanced in many aspects of civilization, but they were ignoramuses compared to the Carthaginians in the field of oceanic navigation and the awareness of world geography that results from trans-oceanic voyages. The Carthaginians did



not want the Greeks or Romans to learn about the wealth of North America and other places accessible only to a maritime power. That is why they went to great pains to keep the Greeks and Romans "shut out" of the Atlantic Ocean. They wanted to keep the wealth of the rest of the earth's territories to themselves, and retain the obvious commercial advantage that a monopoly over the Atlantic coastlands gave them. If the ancient Carthaginians could have known that over two millennia into the future, nations would be teaching their schoolchildren that no one in the ancient "Old World" could have known about the New World because the Greeks and Romans didn't know about it, the Carthaginians would have roared with laughter! Indeed, if Carthage had defeated Rome (instead of vice versa), later European civilizations would never have inherited the idea that the world was flat!

This does not imply that the Greeks and Romans were ignorant or unskilled people. They simply lacked the access to such knowledge! Modern academia mistakenly thinks that the whole ancient world was incapable of learning anything until the Greeks or Romans learned it first; therefore, modern assumptions about the ancient world are based on the ancient propaganda of Greece and Rome rather than on the actual physical evidence of the ancient world. Let us now examine the real extent of the Carthaginian empire.

We already know that Carthage was dominant in the Western Mediterranean areas of Spain and North Africa. Sardinia, Western Sicily, and other coastal areas of the Western Mediterranean were frequently under their control. However, the maritime commercial empire of Carthage extended far beyond Gibraltar. Carthage had long been involved with the tin and copper trade of Briton, and the amber trade of the Baltic Sea area.<sup>35</sup> This would place the Carthaginian traders as far north as Poland and the

Baltic states. While this was not a direct part of their empire, it shows Carthaginian maritime power and influence extended to the northern and western coastlands of Europe. Carthage did have direct dominion in an area which few modern readers would ever have guessed: ancient America! Ancient historical records support this assertion. In his book, *Atlantic Crossings Before Columbus*, Frederick Pohl cites two ancient Greek accounts of a land beyond Gibraltar which can only be ancient America. The first account is from the writings of Aristotle, and reads as follows:

*"In the sea outside the Pillars of Hercules they say that an island was found by the Carthaginians, a wilderness having wood of all kinds and **navigable** rivers, remarkable for various kinds of fruits, and **many days' sailing distance away**. When the Carthaginians, **who were masters of the Western Ocean**, observed that many traders and other men, attracted by **the fertility of the soil and the pleasant climate**, frequented it because of its richness, and some resided there, **they feared that knowledge of the land would reach other nations**, and a great concourse to it of men from various lands of the earth would follow. Therefore, lest the Carthaginian Empire itself should suffer injury, and the dominion of the sea be wrested from their hands, the Senate of Carthage issued a decree that no one, under penalty of death, should thereafter sail thither, and they massacred all who resided there."*<sup>36</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Aristotle's reference to a wealthy Carthaginian land "many days sailing distance" across the "western ocean" could only indicate ancient North America! Aristotle lived in the fourth century B.C., a time when Greek knowledge of the world beyond Gibraltar was limited to whatever the Carthaginians wanted them to know or whatever Greek spies could ascertain from Carthaginian sources (perhaps drunken Carthaginian sailors on shore leave). The only land many days sailing time west of Gibraltar (the Pillars of Hercules) large enough to have navigable rivers, fertile soil, forests, and a pleasant climate was ancient America. To safeguard their monopoly on such a rich territory, Carthage used every means at its disposal to keep others from sharing its resources. This makes it all the clearer why Carthage was determined to keep the Greeks and Romans out of the Atlantic; they did not want those nations to tap the riches of North America. The second account is from Diodorus, a Greek historian of the first century B.C. It is as follows:

*"Over against Africa lies a very great island in the vast ocean, many days sail from Lybia westward. The soil there is very fruitful, a great part whereof is mountainous, but much likewise is a plain, which is the most sweet and pleasant part, for it is watered with several navigable rivers...the mountainous part of the country is clothed with very large woods, and all manner of fruit trees and springs of fresh water... there you may have game enough in hunting all sorts of wild beasts..."<sup>37</sup>*

Obviously, the "very great island" westward in the same latitude as Lybia was ancient North America, with its forests, mountains and vast inner fertile plain watered by navigable rivers. When

one follows the latitude of the sailing ports of ancient Libya westward, one comes to the area of the southern portion of the modern United States of America. Notice the specificity of the above account; it was written after Carthage had fallen to the Romans, a time when Greco-Roman navigators finally gained access to the Atlantic Ocean. A Roman writer of the second century A.D, Claudius Aeliannus, also commented that the existence of a marvelous land to the west was "a definite tradition of the Carthaginians or Phoenicians of Gades."<sup>38</sup>

The presence of Carthaginian coins and artifacts in North America verifies that the rich Carthaginian territory across the Atlantic was, indeed, ancient North America. Dr. Barry Fell's book, *Saga America*, documents the finding of Carthaginian coins, artifacts and inscriptions in the American states of Alabama, Connecticut, New York, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Nevada.<sup>39</sup> Dr. Fell, the founder of The Epigraphic Society, notes that Carthaginian coins found in America date primarily to the period of the fourth and third centuries B.C.<sup>40</sup> He postulates that (during the above period) Carthage's gold and much of the timber for the construction of its naval vessels came from ancient North and South America.<sup>41</sup>

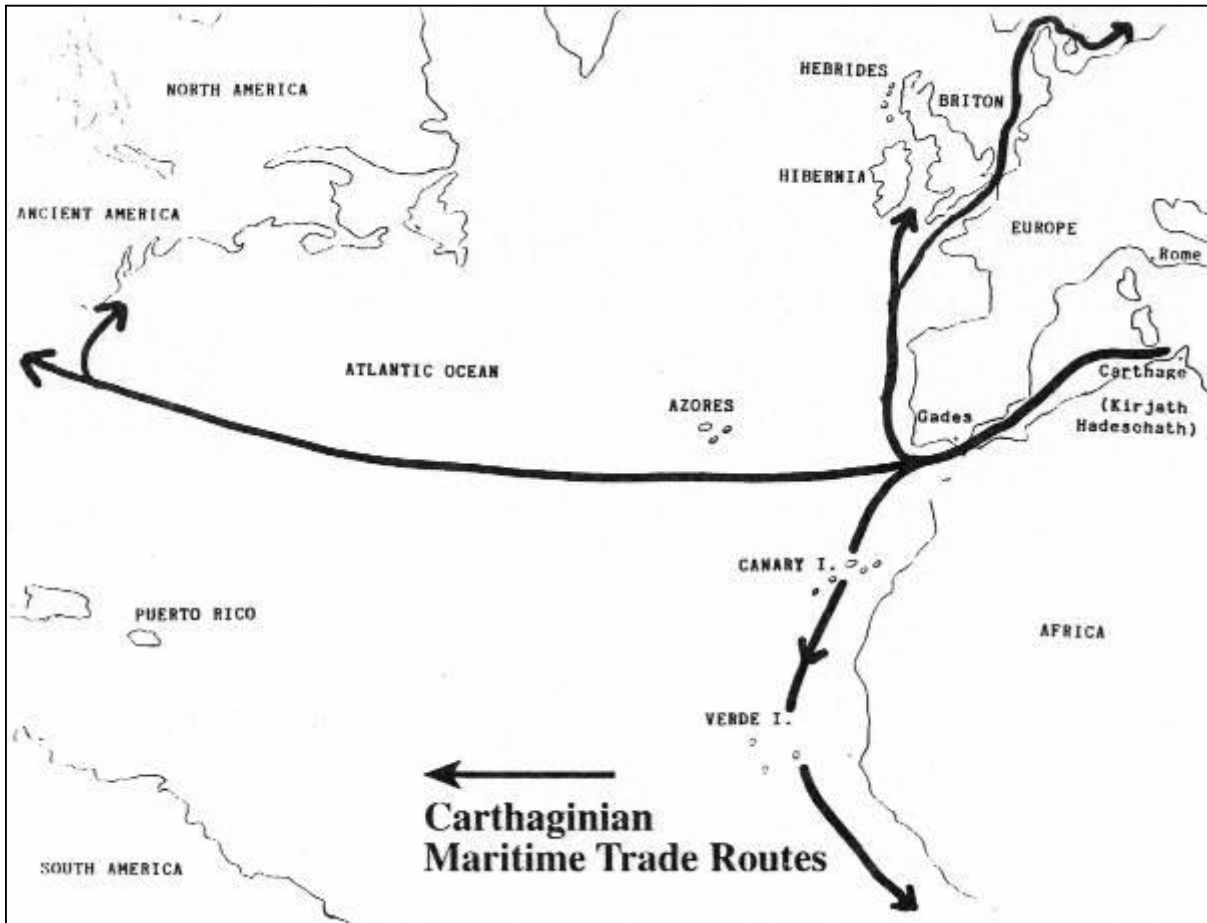
During the Punic Wars, ancient America likely became the refuge for an unknown number of Carthaginians fleeing from Roman conquerors. The discovery in Georgia of an atlatl stone (a spear hurling device) with a Punic (Carthaginian) inscription from the second century B.C. supports such a conclusion. Dr. Fell confirms the continued Hebraic content of the Carthaginian language by stating that he "deduced the [meaning] from corresponding words in Biblical Hebrew."<sup>42</sup> The translation of this Punic inscription by Dr. Fell is supported by the analysis of a Semitic languages scholar, Michael Skupin.<sup>43</sup> Dr. Fell further observed in *Saga America* that:

*"The Punic language can be read without difficulty, as it is similar to ancient Hebrew."*<sup>44</sup>

Carthage was famous in the ancient world for its wealth! One source states that "Carthage was, beyond doubt, the richest city of antiquity."<sup>45</sup> No wonder! They exploited the resources of the New World while shutting out all rivals. For a time, Carthage had a monopoly on the wealth of the New World!

As an interesting digression, the ancient legends that the oceans were full of terrifying creatures and mystical threats may have resulted from Carthaginian disinformation campaigns to make potential rivals afraid of sailing the world's oceans (foisting such beliefs on rivals would strengthen Carthage's monopoly on the Atlantic trade routes). These maritime myths could have been perpetrated on the Greeks and Romans, and, through them, passed on to later European civilizations. At any rate, it is clear that the Phoenicians and Carthaginians harbored no mythological fears about sailing on the world's oceans.

We cannot know the exact extent of the Carthaginian presence on American territory. It was certainly wide-ranging, given the locations of Carthaginian artifacts found on American soil. They thoroughly explored ancient America as the Greek accounts of North America (which accurately lists such features as mountain ranges, plains, forests, and navigable rivers) were based on Carthaginian accounts. In fact, another Greek source provides an insight into the size of Carthage's presence in ancient North America.



Nigel Davies, in his book, *Voyagers to the New World*, cites an account by the ancient Greek historian/geographer Herodotus that the Carthaginians mounted an expedition of 30,000 men and women in 60 ships in 500-480 B.C., and sent them westward into the Atlantic toward an unknown destination. Mr. Davies observes aptly that this “resembles a migration more than a mere expedition.”<sup>46</sup> Assuming the Greek account to be accurate, the Carthaginian expedition averaged 500 persons per ship! The presence of Carthaginian coins, artifacts and inscriptions in ancient North America reveal where ancient Carthaginian colonial expeditions such as this one headed! Mr. Davies further notes:

*"In Roman times the capabilities of Carthaginian ships were greatly increased; some exceeded 1000 tons and were,*

***therefore, much larger than the English boats that crossed the Atlantic in the seventeenth century; the Mayflower weighed 180 tons.***<sup>47</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Paradoxically, after confirming that the Carthaginian ships were far larger than seventeenth century ships which crossed the Atlantic Ocean, Mr. Davies then asserts that the Phoenicians and Carthaginians could not have crossed the Atlantic with their huge ships. He specifically attacks Dr. Barry Fell for daring to conclude (in his book, *America B.C.*) that the presence of Phoenician and Carthaginian inscriptions, artifacts and coins in North America resulted from Phoenician and Carthaginian ships crossing the Atlantic in ancient times.<sup>48</sup> Yet in the same book, Mr. Davies has no problem proposing that ancient Polynesians sailed across the Pacific Ocean and reached North America in outrigger or double-canoes holding only forty to one hundred men.<sup>49</sup>

This begs the following question. If one can accept that Polynesians could have crossed the Pacific to North America in large canoes, why is it so hard to accept that the Carthaginians (with much larger vessels holding 500 people) crossed the Atlantic Ocean to North America? Since ancient Carthaginian coins, artifacts and inscriptions have been found in North America, their arrival in Carthaginian vessels seems obvious. Unfortunately, modern academia generally chooses to ignore all pre-Columbian Old World artifacts and inscriptions in the Americas. Rather than applying the scientific method to these discoveries (which would cause them to discard old dogmas about the ancient world), much of academia is in a regrettable state of denial concerning the voluminous evidence of what really occurred in the ancient world.

Clearly, if Polynesians could cross the Pacific in large canoes, the Carthaginians could easily cross the Atlantic in vessels so huge

that the Polynesian canoes would have seemed like mere lifeboats in comparison. Common sense also dictates "that if the English on the *Mayflower* could make trans-oceanic voyages with a ship of 180 tons, the Carthaginians (whose skills were based on centuries of Phoenician maritime experience) could easily have done so with ships six times larger than the *Mayflower*! Mr. Davies' conclusions typify the dogma of modern academia that may be paraphrased as: "We cannot admit that anyone could have crossed the Atlantic before Columbus no matter what evidence exists to the contrary." Given the immense weight of evidence that pre-Colombian crossings of the Atlantic were done over millennia by many different nations and cultures, one wonders where such a prejudicially unscientific approach originated? A likely answer is provided by Roberta Smith in an article published in the *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*:

*"When the early settlers of Plymouth Colony and the first French missionaries arrived in this country they found curious stone structures and the native Americans using scripts. These facts were duly reported to their superiors, but...the reports remained in the mother countries and the burgeoning new nation quickly forgot about them. **In the late 1800's the Smithsonian issued a pronouncement that Columbus had been the first to discover America, and archaeologists and historians who disagreed with that view were politely asked to resign their positions in the universities.** Thus, for several generations American archaeologists... have been so*



*thoroughly conditioned to the idea that no pre-Colombian contact was possible that now they find it exceedingly difficult to recognize significant data when it is encountered.”<sup>50</sup>*  
(Emphasis added.)

Modern academics and scholars have been trained in an atmosphere which perpetuates the unscientific dogma that no one discovered America before Columbus. It is insightful that this conclusion was imposed on the American educational community not by scientific argument, but rather by intellectual intimidation. To this day, academic arguments opposing the overwhelming evidence of pre-Colombian voyagers and settlers in America are based on condescension, intimidation and personal insults rather than on evidence and logic. It is unfortunate that Dr. Barry Fell and those who have scientifically documented substantial pre-Colombian presences in ancient America have been given the same treatment that Medieval Europe’s “establishment” gave to Copernicus and Galileo when they confronted the unscientific dogmas of their day.

Since the Carthaginians inherited the maritime routes and skills of the old Israelite/Phoenician alliance, this also gives us an indication of the size of ships used by their forerunners as well. The above-cited account of Herodotus may have preserved a record of one of Carthage’s colonizing expeditions to America. It is noteworthy that the Carthaginians, in the first millennium B.C., could launch expeditions to the New World which were far larger than the colonial efforts of the European powers after Columbus rediscovered America some two thousand years later.

In the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., the Phoenicians sailed large ocean-going vessels called “hippos” which could remain at sea for a year.<sup>51</sup> These “hippos” may give us an indication of the size of the Israelite/Phoenician ships in the days of Kings Hiram

and Solomon whose fleets in the tenth century B.C. undertook three-year voyages (I Kings 10:22).

Given the considerable evidence that the Carthaginians were a colony of the old Hebrew kingdom of Israel, it can be concluded that Israelites were present in ancient America through most, if not all, of the first millennium B.C. (initially under the auspices of Israel's "Phoenician" Empire, and subsequently that of Carthage). Indeed, one reason why Carthage dominated the Atlantic Ocean for centuries is that they inherited Phoenician sea charts and navigational knowledge.

Earlier, it was seen that the people of Israel referred to themselves as the "covenant" people, and used the Hebrew word **berith** or **barat** (the consonants **B-R-T**) to name themselves. The Carthaginians were also known to place the same Hebrew word (**B-R-T**) on their coins.<sup>52</sup> This indicates an awareness on the part of the Carthaginians that they were descendants of the "covenant" people of old Israel.

While Carthage eventually did degenerate, their culture was previously at a higher level. We have already seen the evidence of Levitical priestly customs in the customs of Carthage, and also that Carthage at first honored **EI**, a common name for Israel's God. The Carthaginians initially continued the Hebrew custom of forbidding graven images, and made "small monuments which were at first just plain stones."<sup>53</sup> In so doing, the Carthaginians initially adhered to the second of the Ten Commandments given to Moses, and the God-ordained method of building an altar (Exodus 20:4, 25). It is also apparent that the Carthaginians were not always degenerate. Gilbert and Colette Charles-Picard note the following about them:

*"...little indulgence was shown to the weaknesses of the flesh. The religious reform of the fifth century...had purified religion of*

*most of its sexual practices, which had their origins in fertility rites...the structure of the family and the status of women did little to encourage masculine licence. Monogamy was generally, if not universally, practiced, and many tombs contain the skeletons of married couples. There is no evidence of a harem or eunuchs. The women of the aristocracy... received an extensive education [and] were able to exercise considerable political influence...There appears to have been little homosexuality in Carthage.”<sup>54</sup>*

This account portrays a very different Carthage than the Carthage of the later Punic Wars which practiced human sacrifice. It seems clear that the earlier centuries of Carthage had strong family values and good moral standards. It is not coincidental that the earlier centuries of Carthage, when its social fabric was strong, were characterized by growing strength and power. However, when Carthage later sank into depraved conduct (i.e. “disobeyed God’s laws”), it waned and died.

The Carthaginians used the same Hebrew word for a place where dead bodies of human (usually infant) sacrifices were placed.<sup>55</sup> This word was “**tophet**” or “**topheth**,”<sup>56</sup> and it is found five times in Jeremiah 19 in a discourse against human sacrifices in the kingdom of Judah. Jeremiah 7:31-32 also decries Judah’s custom of infant sacrifice during the lifetime of the prophet Jeremiah. King Josiah of Judah did stop human sacrifice for a time (II Kings 23:10), but the grisly custom of Baal-worship accompanied the declines of Judah and Israel as well as Carthage. There is an account that the Carthaginians once sacrificed 500 children in an effort to appease the “gods” during a military crisis.<sup>57</sup>

After the fall of Carthage, Punic cities (and the Punic language) survived in North Africa for another half-millennium. Their inscriptions were written "in a language very like Hebrew,"<sup>58</sup> and the Hebrew nature of their language was still clearly evident as late as the fourth century A.D. when it was noticed by St. Augustine and St. Jerome.<sup>59</sup>

One of the groups of people identified as living in the region of Carthage were the "Massaesyli."<sup>60</sup> Might their original Carthaginian name have been "Manasseh," one of the "birthright" tribes of Israel which led the kingdom of Israel which founded Kirjath (Carthage)?

After the fall of Judah, it appears that at least one large group of Jews settled in the domain of their Carthaginian/Israelite relatives. A band of people known as the "Pharusians" lived in North Africa.<sup>61</sup> Since the Carthaginians were fellow Semites whose language was closely-related to Hebrew, it is not surprising that Jewish refugees would seek refuge in Carthaginian domains. The Pharusians bore the name of that branch of the tribe of Judah which descended from Phares (or "Pharez"), the same bloodline which produced King David, the kings of Judah, and Jesus Christ.

We will now examine some aspects of the Carthaginian civilization which will give us a greater understanding of their national characteristics. Carthage, like their parent nation of Israel, was a food exporter. Carthage was one of the wheat kings of the ancient world, controlling 9 million bushels of wheat per year.<sup>62</sup> Interestingly, a large portion of Carthaginian wheat exports went to Greece and Rome. Carthage was willing to feed her enemies if there was money to be made in the process. Since modern readers know that North Africa is now mostly desert, it is a sobering commentary on what can happen to fertile land when it is misused and overworked for a prolonged period of time.

Since the wheat regions of North Africa were still very productive when Carthage fell, the Carthaginians must have been good custodians of the soil. North Africa supplied the Roman Empire with much of its wheat long after Carthage fell,<sup>63</sup> so the responsibility for turning North African wheat regions into deserts lies either with the Romans or later people.

The Carthaginians were inventive people as they harvested their wheat fields with "a fairly advanced threshing-machine—a kind of sledge fitted with small toothed wheels which the Romans called the 'Punic cart.'" <sup>64</sup> Carthaginian agricultural interests were varied as they were also bee-keepers and methodical cattle-breeders.<sup>65</sup> Livestock breeding is a classic Israelite trait which was present in their ancestor Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel (Genesis 30:37-43). It is no surprise that his descendants also possessed that skill.

Concerning the size of Carthage, the Roman historian Strabo "maintained that the town alone had a population of 700,000."<sup>66</sup> During Carthaginian rule, it has been estimated that only 100,000 could live within the city walls of Carthage and that another 100,000 lived in its suburbs.<sup>67</sup> Since the area within the city walls constituted a defensive redoubt, it is not certain how many lived outside the city walls during times of peace. One ancient account records that the circumference of Carthage and its related suburbs was 23 miles!<sup>68</sup> Since Carthage's agricultural land was very productive, it could easily have supported a large number of people. It was discussed earlier that Herodotus recorded that the Carthaginians sent colonizing expeditions of 30,000 men and women westward into the Atlantic. If Carthage was large enough to mount colonizing expeditions of that size, it is reasonable to assume that Carthage itself had hundreds of thousands in its population, and that the entire Punic culture numbered in the millions.

Given all these natural strengths, what caused Carthage to become one more in a long line of fallen world empires? There are several reasons. One obvious factor is the series of debilitating wars which Carthage fought with Rome. Another is the fact that Carthage came to increasingly rely on foreign mercenaries to fight its battles, and the influx of foreigners surely contributed to mixed loyalties and internal tensions. There is also a deeper cause. Since Carthage was infected with the plague of Baalism and its socially-destructive practices, Carthage also rotted from within. Her rule over the other Punic cities became so arrogant and unbearable that when Rome finally destroyed the city of Carthage, many of Carthage's fellow Punic cities allied themselves with Rome to assist in Carthage's destruction.<sup>69</sup>

One major campaign of the Punic Wars will be recounted as significant for purposes of this book. In the Second Punic War, the famous Carthaginian general, Hannibal, almost succeeded in destroying Rome. Hannibal (whose name included a derivative of the god Baal: Hanni-baal) led a famous march over the Alps, and warred against the Romans on their home soil of Italy for approximately 12 years. He destroyed entire Roman armies, and pillaged Italy almost at will. Hannibal's high point came in 216 B.C. when his army slew 70,000 Romans in a single battle at Cannae.<sup>70</sup> Inexplicably, Hannibal did not press home his advantage and attack Rome at that time. If he had done so, the course of history might have been altered with Rome becoming a conquered province of the Carthaginian Empire. However, that opportunity slipped away, and Rome recovered to win the Second Punic War.

When Hannibal later had to flee for his own life, he sought refuge for a time in Armenia.<sup>71</sup> It is interesting that Hannibal felt Armenia would offer him a refuge. Since Hannibal had descended

from the Hebrew/Israelite stock which founded Carthage, and since the environs of the Black Sea and Armenia had been inhabited by a large portion of Israelites since the eighth century B.C., was Hannibal aware that many in that region shared the Hebrew roots of the Carthaginians, and would be likely to offer him sanctuary?

As mentioned above, the Punic culture and language survived until 400 A.D., when its Hebrew roots were still recognizable by early Christian writers. This is significant as it means that there were still many Punic Israelites in North Africa at the time of Christ. The statement in Acts 2:10 that people from North Africa (Libya) were present among the devout who were attending the Feast of Weeks (which Christians later called Pentecost) takes on new meaning. These North Africans may have been scattered Jews, but they could also have been Punic Israelites who still worshipped the God of Israel. During the life of Jesus Christ, Simon of Cyrene (an area of Libya), was made to carry the cross of Christ on his way to Golgotha (Mark 15:21). Simon was apparently making a pilgrimage from Cyrenaica (a Punic region) to Jerusalem to attend the Passover that coincided with Jesus' crucifixion. Acts 11:20 and 13:1 also indicate that some early Christians were from Punic regions.

Where did most of the Carthaginians go when Carthage fell to the Romans? It is highly unlikely that all the Carthaginians stayed in Carthage for the last futile battle against the Romans. Since Carthage had a network of colonies and trading posts, many likely fled from the Romans in the same way the Israelites earlier fled from Assyria. Many Carthaginians with the means to do so undoubtedly chose to evade the Roman conquerors by relocating elsewhere. Some may have sailed Carthage's old maritime routes to America. Historical facts support this conclusion.

We have already seen that Carthaginian coins, artifacts and inscriptions have been found in a wide area of North America. Evidence has also been found that Tanith, the Punic/Carthaginian "mother-goddess," was worshipped in Colorado, Oklahoma, and North Carolina.<sup>72</sup> Dr. Fell was earlier cited as noting that the Carthaginian coins in ancient America date to the "fourth and third centuries B.C.,"<sup>73</sup> a time prior to the First and Second Punic Wars between Rome and Carthage.

There is an ancient American stone inscription in Massachusetts which claims the area in the name of Hanno, a Punic ruler. Dr. Fell translates the Punic inscription as:

*"A PROCLAMATION of annexation. Do not deface. By this Hanno takes possession."*<sup>74</sup>

Hanno was a common Carthaginian name, but there was a famous Carthaginian explorer (circa 520 B.C.) named Hanno who led large expedition fleets into the Atlantic through the Pillars of Hercules. Nineteenth century historian, Alfred Church wrote of this expedition (which was preserved in the Greek language):

*"It was decreed by the Carthaginians that Hanno should sail beyond the Pillars of Hercules and found cities... Accordingly he sailed with sixty ships of fifty oars each, and a multitude of men and women to the number of thirty thousand, and provisions and other equipment."*<sup>75</sup>

A voyage of 60 ships and 30,000 men and women sounds very much like the voyage cited above by Nigel Davies. Davies dates the voyage to 500-480 B.C. while Church assigns it to 520 B.C. Church suggests that the "sixty ships" were military vessels and that the 30,000 colonists were embarked on an unknown number of transport vessels. What is known is that the Carthaginians did



send huge fleets of colonists westward into the Atlantic Ocean. Perhaps the "Hanno" who annexed America was the very "Hanno" who led this ancient Carthaginian fleet into the Atlantic Ocean, but it cannot be known for certain. At any rate, a Carthaginian named Hanno claimed North America for Carthage in the middle of the first millennium B.C. It is also logical that the Carthaginians would not send whole families into the Atlantic toward a new location unless they had already explored and secured the site which was to be their destination.

In chapter three it was shown that the Israelite/Phoenicians had established the "Adena" culture in the Ohio River region of the American Midwest. Carthage and the Adena colony were both descended from Israel/Phoenicia, so it logical that the latter could serve as a refuge for the former's refugees. There is evidence that the Adena colony in North America received a major infusion of new immigrants known as the Hopewell People in 300-200 B.C.<sup>76</sup> This infusion of new people into the Adena colony coincides with the First and Second Punic Wars (264-241 B.C. and 218-201 B.C.) between Carthage and Rome, and follows the period of time in which Carthaginian coins were infused into North America (as cited by Dr. Fell). It is quite possible that the infusion of people into the Adena Colony in North America during the First and Second Punic Wars were Carthaginians seeking refuge from their wars with Rome. Fittingly, even as Carthage (Kirjath) was founded by Israelites seeking refuge from successive Assyrian wars, Carthage was depleted by refugees fleeing to distant sites (including America) to avoid the Roman wars. As seen in chapter three, the Adena/Hopewell people were mound builders, and a tablet found in one of them (the Grave Creek Mound of West Virginia) was inscribed in:

***"Punic written in the form of an alphabet***

***used in Iberia in the first millennium B.C.***  
*The Grave Creek Mound is believed to be the largest of the Adena [mounds] and according to Don W. Dragoo in Mounds for the Dead, was of the late Adena **period coincident with the arrival of the Hopewell People, 300 to 200 B.C.**"<sup>77</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

That a large burial mound in West Virginia, dating to the period of the First and Second Punic Wars, included a Punic (i.e. Carthaginian) tablet supports the view that the Hopewell infusion into the Adena Culture of North America was comprised of Punic refugees.

Also, numerous grave stones have been found in Pennsylvania with Carthaginian inscriptions. One grave marker "written in Carthaginian script of about the first or second century A.D. [which refers to "the rites of the church"] makes it clear that he was also an early Christian."<sup>78</sup> This indicates that Punic settlers continued to dwell in the North American "Hopewell" civilization, which lasted from approximately 200 B.C. until 400 A.D.<sup>79</sup> That a Punic gravestone from the first or second century A.D. was found in Pennsylvania bearing a Christian inscription is quite remarkable. Christianity originated as an Old World religion in the first century A.D., so this ancient grave marker indicates that Christianity spread to North America soon after it originated! This confirms that the sailing routes between the Old and New Worlds were still active in the first few centuries after the time of Christ. Evidence that Carthaginians had sought refuge in the New World also exists in the Mayan ruins of Mexico. Neil Steede, President of the Mexican Epigraphic Society, notes that many inscribed bricks found at the Mayan site of Comalcaico indicate that speakers of Old World languages were present at the ancient site. He writes:

*"The truly 'inscribed' bricks... fall into several classes. Inscriptions make up some 77 of the inscribed bricks while drawings are only 20. Some 58 of the inscribed bricks are in Maya hieroglyphs while...18 are in what appear to be Old World languages."*<sup>80</sup>

Some very interesting information has been deciphered from the inscribed bricks of Comalcaico. One brick, excavated in 1977-78 under the auspices of the El Institute Nacional de Antropologia e Historia de Mexico has on it an inscribed Semitic calendar! Dr. Barry Fell describes it as follows:

*"...they [the letters] can be recognized as belonging to the extremely degenerate Neopunic...in use at Carthage after the first century A.D. Study of the letters shows that they form in sequence, from right to left, the initial letters of the names of the Phoenician and Hebrew months, taken in the order of the Civic Year...The manner in which the Calendar is set out, showing the astronomical basis of the succession of months, suggests that it was made for the purpose of explaining a concept of a year of 50 weeks (a Semitic notion) to a person unfamiliar with the notion, such as a Mayan...Both the degenerate Neopunic script, therefore, and the use of weeks, with an evident need for an intercalary 13th [month] every 3 or 4 years, indicate that this calendar belongs to the first to third centuries A.D."*<sup>81</sup>

Another inscribed brick excavated from Comalcaico contains evidence that the Christian religion had also reached the Mayan

region of the New World. Dr. Fell writes:

*"Some [of the inscriptions on the inscribed bricks]... are decidedly foreign, and their presence, incorporated into the structure of Mayan temples and mounds implies contact between the Mayan builders and foreign nations... Tablet AP 480 is of North African origin or, at least, is the work of a North African... [and it contains] letters of the Libyan (Numidian) alphabet... the letters are understood as spelling the name Y-S-W that is to say, Yoswa=Hebrew Joshua... that is Jesus. The next letters... evidently spell the Berber-Arabic word H-M-N, Hamin, meaning 'Protector.' The crude figure of a robed man... apparently represents Jesus the Protector, and the tablet was made for, or by, a North African of the Christian faith."<sup>82</sup>*

The above inscribed bricks date to the early Christian era, several centuries after the fall of Carthage in 146 B.C. The presence of inscriptions showing Punic and North African speakers were present when structures in Comalcaico were built offers strong evidence that Carthaginian refugees were present in the New World and were interacting with the Mayan civilization. The presence of a Christian inscription again confirms that transatlantic voyages were still occurring in the early centuries of the Christian era. Since Christian inscriptions dating to the first to third centuries A.D. have been found in both Pennsylvania and the Mayan city of Comalcaico, it is clear that Christianity was widely diffused in the New World at that time. There is additional evidence that colonists from the Carthaginian Empire settled in the New World. Iberian Punic gravestones were

found in Michigan,<sup>83</sup> and Iberian Punic inscriptions also appear in Massachusetts.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, striking parallels between the currency (copper ingots), pottery and adornments of the mound builders of ancient America and the Iberian-Punic civilization of the Old World have been found.<sup>85</sup>

Also, a "Creation Chant" of the Pima Indians was first transliterated into Roman letters by an ethnologist from the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology in 1901-02.<sup>86</sup> Attempted translations resulted in gibberish until Dr. Barry Fell published a coherent, and even poetic translation in his book, *America B.C.*<sup>86</sup> The ancient Pima chant was properly translated after its Semitic origin was recognized. Dr. Fell writes:

*"...other investigators failed to recognize the Creation Chant as an ancient Semitic hymn. The language is Punic and most of the words in it are no longer used by the Pima...It is evident that in the course of time the Pima language diverged so much from the original Punic that the latter could no longer be understood by modern speakers in the same way that a modern English speaker can scarcely comprehend a word of the old Anglo-Saxon gospels unless he has training in the archaic forms of the Old English language."*<sup>87</sup>

Based on the above, it seems apparent that immigrants (many were pagan and some were Christian) from Carthage's Punic culture likely exerted considerable influence on the development of early civilizations in the New World. The Mayan Civilization lasted for over a millennia, from approximately 400 B.C. until its demise at the hands of the Spaniards in the sixteenth century A.D.<sup>88</sup> Mayan beginnings coincided with Carthage's presence in the New World, and continued through the period of Carthaginian

flights from the Punic Wars. It is possible, given the cultural contact between the two civilizations over centuries, that the Mayans learned the practice of human sacrifice from the Carthaginians. Also, it is impossible to escape the similarity between the pyramids of the Mayans and those of Egypt. That similarity alone implies that regular contact existed between North Africa and the Mayan region. During the early centuries of Mayan development, the North African Carthaginians controlled the maritime routes to the New World, and they could easily have brought the knowledge of the Egyptian pyramids of North Africa to the Mayans.

Carthage's demise came at the end of the Third Punic War, which concluded in 146 B.C. with the destruction of Carthage. It is recorded that the fortified walls of Carthage were "eighteen miles in circumference... forty-six feet high, and thirty-four feet thick,"<sup>89</sup> yet they were not enough to save Carthage. As an indication of Carthaginian wealth, the pillaging Romans were said to have stripped 1000 talents of gold from Carthage's temple of Apollo alone.<sup>90</sup> Rome took 50,000 Carthaginians captive,<sup>91</sup> a paltry total compared to earlier accounts of Carthage's population. The large reduction in Carthage's population from her glory days to the time of its fall coincides with the arrival of large numbers of new colonists in North America's Hopewell/Adena civilization. It is hardly surprising that many Carthaginians would choose the rigors of a migration to a new land rather than death or captivity at the hands of the Romans.

After the fall of Carthage, Roman access to the New World was no longer blocked. Roman coins and artifacts (from the period after the fall of Carthage) and Latin inscriptions have been widely found in the New World. Coins minted under four Roman emperors were found in Massachusetts, a large cache of Roman coins "from the reigns of all the emperors of the first three

centuries after Christ" was found in Venezuela, and individual Roman coins have been unearthed in Tennessee, Georgia, Texas, and North Carolina<sup>92</sup> Roman oil lamps have been found in Alabama and Connecticut,<sup>93</sup> and Dr. Fell makes the case that the Romans had a fur-trading post in Wyoming, where petroglyphs depict Roman coin designs from 50 B.C. to about 20 A.D.<sup>94</sup>

How did the Romans learn the routes to the New World? There is a simple answer. Some Punic cities were Rome's allies when Carthage fell, and the Romans learned about the maritime routes to the New World from them. As we would expect, Roman coins found in North America date to the times of Roman emperors who ruled after the fall of Carthage. This raises the question of whether Rome came to North America for economic gain, to pursue fleeing Carthaginians, or for both purposes.

Earlier, it was mentioned that Punic inscriptions can be deciphered by consulting the Hebrew language. To illustrate this point, we will examine Dr. Fell's translation of a Carthaginian inscription from Massacre Lake, Nevada, as reading "may the clouds spew forth rain."<sup>95</sup> The inscription reads from right to left and Dr. Fell stated the inscription consisted of the letters "Q, M-T-R, I-B." Any reader can readily confirm that these Carthaginian words are Hebrew root words by consulting a Hebrew lexicon. The Hebrew words involved are "QO" (or "QI"), "MATAR", and "AB" (consonants have been underlined). The Hebrew words "QI" or "QO" mean "spew," or "vomit out;" "MATAR" means "rain," and "AB" means "cloud."<sup>96</sup> Clearly, Carthaginian vocabulary is based directly on the words of the Hebrew language.

When the Romans sacked Carthage, whatever priceless knowledge existed in Carthage's libraries was destroyed. Apparently, only one literary work survived: a 28 volume treatise by a Carthaginian ruler on the "breeding and management of

cattle, the care of poultry and bees, the planting of forest trees and the treatment of the vine and olive.”<sup>97</sup> If the Romans had heeded the agricultural knowledge in these volumes, North Africa might still have wheat fields where there is now only desert.

There is one other unusual, but fascinating, piece of evidence supporting a conclusion that Carthaginians were present in ancient America. This evidence involves the likelihood that elephants were introduced into the Americas during the Carthaginian period, and that they were present in the New World until colonial times. George Carter, Professor Emeritus of Texas A & M University, has written in the *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications* that a number of American Indian tribes preserved legends of elephants living in North America. He wrote: “The most striking ones [elephant legends] were told to Cotton Mather in New England and to Thomas Jefferson in Washington...the Indians told Jefferson that elephants could still be seen in the Great Lakes region.”<sup>98</sup> Carter also notes that there is ample evidence of elephant motifs in ancient America. He writes:

*“...America, is liberally sprinkled with pictures of elephants. Painted on a cave in Washington State, in the rock art of the West, in Mayan glyphs where elephant heads appear as affixes at least 14 times, in a Mexican codex [it]...was noted that a priest sacrificing a man wore an elephant headdress.”<sup>99</sup>*

Dr. Barry Fell’s book, *America B.C.*, also notes elephant motifs in both North and South America. His book shows an Ecuadorian artifact depicting an elephant with an accompanying North African (Libyan) script from the “latter half of the third century before Christ,” and also depicts an image of an African elephant on an ancient artifact unearthed near Davenport, Iowa.<sup>100</sup>



Ancient rock carvings depicting elephants have also been documented in New Mexico and Oklahoma, confirming that inhabitants of ancient America were obviously familiar with elephants.<sup>101</sup>

Additionally, the bones of elephants that lived in ancient America have been found and dated. Carter records that:

*"In Florida one set of extinct animals that included the elephant tribe, carbon dated to 2000 years"...[and] "a mammoth skeleton in the Mississippi River valley was once dated at about 2000 years."*<sup>102</sup>

These dates (2000 years ago) place elephants in ancient North America at the approximate time of Christ. The articles cited above discuss the question of whether the elephants in ancient North America were African or Asian elephants or surviving mammoths from ice-age times. The artifacts shown in Fell's book indicate African elephants were present as they are associated with North African scripts and artifacts. However, Carter notes evidence that an Asian elephant headed god was worshipped in the ancient Americas, and Dr. Fell added that: "California tablets...employ the ancient Sanskrit word Gaja, used in India even today for the Asiatic elephant."<sup>103</sup> This indicates that ancient Americans were aware of both African and Asian elephants.

There is even one eye-witness report from the American colonial period. An English sailor named David Ingram was marooned in Mexico after a naval battle with the Spanish but walked through much of North America before returning to Europe from New England with the help of French fishermen. The late American novelist, Louis Lamour, was familiar with this episode and wrote concerning Ingram's findings on his walk through North America: "He said he saw elephants and I have his account right before me."<sup>104</sup>

The above accounts indicate that there were elephants in ancient (and not-so-ancient) America. The North American elephant bones carbon-dated to the time of Christ are particularly persuasive. Where did these elephants originate? Were they surviving mammoths or modern elephants imported from the Old World? To this author, the latter option seems the most likely. We know that the Carthaginians specialized in the use of battle elephants, and it is known that elephants accompanied Carthaginian troops even under the most challenging circumstances. Hannibal's army brought African elephants into Europe and across the frigid Alps into Italy during the Punic Wars. Since the Carthaginians could transport elephants across the hostile Alps, they could also have transported them to the New World across the Atlantic aboard their large transport ships. The ancient American elephant motifs reproduced in Fell's book depict modern elephants, arguing that America's ancient elephants were not surviving mammoths. The presence of elephants in North America can be traced to the third century B.C., during the time of Carthage. Descendants of the original Carthaginian elephants survived in the New World through the time of Christ, and apparently until the early colonial period in America. The presence of African elephants in ancient America is consistent with the evidence that the Carthaginians were present in ancient America. Who but the Carthaginians, with their large maritime fleets, could have transported African elephants to America?

This concludes the narrative on Carthage ("Kirjath"), Israel's colony which became an empire. The record of history indicates that when Carthage possessed at least some respect for the God of Israel in her early years, it was blessed with expanding power and influence. When Carthage grew great, it became arrogant and deeply infected with the self-destructive practices of Baal

worship. The same evils that destroyed ancient Israel and Judah also brought down Carthage.

God promised that Abraham's and Israel's descendants would (when obedient to God's laws) inhabit the fatness (or best places) of the earth, possess the gates of their enemies, have agricultural abundance and be militarily victorious (Genesis 22:17, 27:28-29, Leviticus 26:4-8). Like Israel, Carthage received these blessings in its early centuries. They possessed the wheatlands of Africa, the wealth of North America, the critical sea-gate of Gibraltar, agricultural abundance, and military power. Carthage's possession of many of "covenant" blessings of Abraham upon Israel confirms their Israelite heritage.

Fleeing Carthaginians who migrated to North America apparently founded a civilization (the Hopewell Civilization) which "disappeared about 500 A.D."<sup>105</sup> We do not know what caused their demise. It is possible that warfare depleted their numbers. Epigrapher Gloria Farley documented an inscription in North African letters which preserves the record of an ancient battle in Oklahoma. While the dating of the battle is uncertain, the nature of the inscription "suggests that the battle...may have occurred after the time of Christ."<sup>106</sup>

The Ancient American Punic civilization may even have been destroyed as a result of venereal disease. The Baal-worship that Carthage brought to America included promiscuous sex-rites which provided an ideal environment for spreading fatal venereal diseases. Our modern world is experiencing a venereal disease (AIDS) which has killed (and will kill) millions of people in many nations. Since modern man has been unable to stop the spread of AIDS despite all our modern technology, it can easily be seen how a more primitive culture could be wiped out by a similar venereal disease. Dr. Fell broached one other possibility. He noted that one artifact found in a burial mound in Ohio depicts a

Nubian head, indicating that the Hopewell culture was multiracial. This would be consistent with the known fact that Carthage's army included many mercenaries of other races. Dr. Fell postulated that the literate aristocracy of the Hopewell civilization may have been eliminated by a "slave revolt" (of non-Punic people).<sup>107</sup> It is also possible that the Punic colonists gradually lost any distinctive identity via intermarriage with native inhabitants. Most likely, several of the above factors gradually destroyed the last remnants of Carthaginian civilization in North America.

If Carthage, a mere colony of ancient Israel, grew to become an empire which came very close to crushing Rome, what became of the larger mass of Israelites who migrated into Asia (either voluntarily or as captives) in 740-720 B.C.? As the reader will see in chapters six through eight, they also grew to be powerful nations and even built an ancient "superpower" empire which also rivaled the empire of Rome.

## Endnotes: Chapter Five

1. Church, *Carthage*, p. 11
2. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see "Kirjath," p. 574
3. Church, p. 11
4. Warmington, *Carthage*, p. 140; Charles-Picard, *Daily Life in Carthage*, p. 98, and Church, *Carthage*, pp. 11, 103
5. Charles-Picard, *Daily Life in Carthage*, p. 98
6. Smith, *Rome and Carthage: The Punic Wars*, pp. 11-12
7. Charles-Picard, p. 71; and Church, p. 12
8. Church, p. 11
9. *Ibid*, p. 11
10. Charles-Picard, p. 71; and Church, p. 12
11. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see "Priest," p. 772, and "Rabbi," p. 791
12. Charles-Picard, p. 76-77
13. *Ibid*, p. 77
14. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see "God," subhead 2, p. 411
15. Warmington, plates following p. 88
16. *Ibid*, plates following pp. 88 and 96.
17. Rawlinson, George, *Phoenicia*, pp. 327 and 332
18. Charles-Picard, p. 18
19. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. 5, "Carthage," p. 214
20. *Ibid*, p. 214
21. *Ibid*, p.215
22. Charles-Picard, p. 18
23. *Ibid*, p. 173
24. *Ibid*, p. 18
25. *Ibid*, p. 19
26. *Ibid*, p. 19-20
27. *Ibid*, p. 19

28. *Ibid*, p. 173
29. *Ibid*, p. 173
30. *Ibid*, p. 178
31. *Ibid*, p. 179
32. Fell, *Saga America*, p. 53
33. *Ibid*, p. 60
34. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 18, "Pytheas," p. 804
35. Church, p. 122
36. Pohl, *Atlantic Crossings before Columbus*, p. 20
37. *Ibid*, p. 21
38. *Ibid*, p. 22
39. Fell, *Saga America*, pp. 55-59, 65-67, 84
40. *Ibid*, p. 56
41. *Ibid*, pp. 77, 85-87
42. Fell, "A Punic Inscription on an Atlatl-Weight from Georgia," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 18, 1989, pp. 321-325
43. *Ibid*, pp. 324-325
44. Fell, *Saga America*, p. 237
45. Smith, R. Bosworth, *Carthage and the Carthaginians*, p. 28
46. Davies, *Voyagers to the New World*, p. 151
47. *Ibid*, p. 151
48. *Ibid*, pp. 152-156
49. *Ibid*, p. 208
50. Smith, Roberta, "Ancient Celtiberian and Mediterranean Peoples in the New World," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 7, Part 2, 1979, p. 190
51. Capt, *The Traditions of Glastonbury*, p. 23
52. Waddell, *The Phoenician Origin of Britons, Scots & Anglo-Saxons*, p. 9, and Church, *Carthage*, p. 116
53. Charles-Picard, p. 67
54. *Ibid*, p. 153
55. Warmington, p. 147

56. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see "Tophet" and "Topheth," p. 995
57. Charles-Picard, p. 67
58. *Ibid*, p. 64
59. Warmington, p. 239; and Charles-Picard, p. 64
60. Smith, R. Bosworth, *Carthage and the Carthaginians*, see map following p. 14
61. Charles-Picard, map on p. 16
62. *Ibid*, p. 183
63. *Ibid*, p. 183
64. *Ibid*, p. 89
65. *Ibid*, pp. 91-93
66. *Ibid*, p. 61
67. *Ibid*, p. 61
68. Smith, R. Bosworth, *Carthage and the Carthaginians*, p. 10
69. Charles-Picard, p. 125
70. Church, pp. 218-224
71. Smith, R. Bosworth, p. 374, and Church, p. 269
72. Fell, *Saga America*, pp. 58 and 67; and article "Tanith in North Carolina," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 18, 1989, p. 259
73. Fell, *Saga America*, p. 56
74. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 95 and 160
75. Church, pp. 95-96
76. Lenhart, "The Adena Tablets," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 13, 1985, pp. 206-208
77. *Ibid*, p. 208
78. "Interview with Barry Fell," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 7, Part 2, 1979, pp. 162-163
79. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 14, "Hopewell Culture," p. 370
80. Steede, "Inscribed Bricks from Comalcaico," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 17, 1988, p. 278
81. Fell, "A Punic Calendar from Comalcaico," *Epigraphic Society*

- Occasional Publications*, Vol.,17, 1988, pp. 284-286
82. Fell, "A Christian North African Inscription from Comalcaico," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 17, 1988, pp. 283-284
  83. Moore, E. R., "Inscribed Stones from Kent County, Michigan," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 7, Part 2, 1979, pp. 182-185
  84. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 81 and 89
  85. *Ibid*, pp. 164-167
  86. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 169-173
  87. *Ibid*, pp. 169-171
  88. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 18, "Maya," p. 539
  89. Church, p. 280
  90. *Ibid*, pp. 296
  91. *Ibid*, pp. 297
  92. Fell, *Saga America*, pp. 31-32, 54, 124-132, 153
  93. *Ibid*, pp. 124-128, 132
  94. *Ibid*, pp. 35 and 148-152
  95. Fell, *Saga America*, p. 65
  96. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, Hebrew Lexicon Section, see "Ab, Matar, Qi, and Qo," pp. 1, 25, and 37
  97. Smith, pp. 33-35
  98. Carter, "A Note on the Elephant in America," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 18, 1989, p. 90
  99. Carter, "The Mammoth in American Epigraphy," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 18, 1989, p. 213
  100. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 184, 188
  101. *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, "An Elephant Petroglyph," Vol. 17, 1988,p.195
  102. Carter, "A Note on the Elephant in America," and "The Mammoth in American Epigraphy," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 18, 1989, pp. 90, 213
  103. Carter, "A Note on the Elephant in America," *Epigraphic*



- Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 18, 1989, pp. 90; and  
Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 184
104. Carter, "The Mammoth in American Epigraphy," *Epigraphic  
Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 18, 1989, p. 214
105. Lenhart, p. 206
106. Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 181
107. *Ibid*, p. 189

## 6. The Scythian “Sacae”—The Asian Sons Of Isaac

There is a common misconception that when the ten tribes of Israel migrated into Asia, they simply disappeared and nothing more was heard from them. Nothing could be further from the truth! In fact, for a significant period of time, ancient historians knew both who the Israelites were, and where they went. They were not “lost” at all.

We shall open this chapter with one such example. Flavius Josephus was a Jewish military commander, a Pharisee, and an historian of the first century A.D. Concerning the ten tribes of Israel in Asia during his day, he wrote:

*“wherefore there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the ten tribes are beyond Euphrates **till now**, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers.”*<sup>1</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Eight centuries after the Israelites went into Asia, Josephus records that they were still known to their Jewish kinsmen, their population had become too numerous to estimate, and the Euphrates River served as a western border to their area of habitation.

Josephus’ account that only the tribes of the old kingdom of Judah formed the population of Judea, the Roman province of the first century A.D., is quite important because it refutes the false notion that the ten tribes migrated back to Palestine and were included with the Jews at the time of Christ. The Bible supports Josephus’ record that only two tribes of Israel lived in Judea during his lifetime. Ezra 4:1 states that only portions of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin returned to Palestine from their Asian captivity. Ezra 1:5 adds that portions of the priestly tribe of Levi accompanied them to Palestine as well.

Josephus clearly asserts **that the ten tribes of Israel were still in Asia, and that they were not living in Judea in the first century A.D.** Also, his comment that they constituted an exceedingly numerous population in Asia shows that we should expect to find large masses of Israelites in Asia in the first century A.D. instead of isolated little remnants. An inevitable result of nations having very large populations in the ancient world was the achievement of political and military power, and we will see that the Israelites had attained such power long before the time of Christ. The comment that the Israelites were "beyond Euphrates" is also significant since it shows that the Asian Israelites were then located north and east of the Euphrates River.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the Jewish historian Josephus, as his writings debunk the assumption that the ten tribes of Israel simply "disappeared." As the reader will see, it is not difficult to determine the identities of the Israelites in Asia.

The Bible contains promises concerning the Israelites which must be reviewed as background information before the historical evidence is examined. A prophecy in Hosea 1:6-10, states that although God would "utterly take away Israel [from Palestine]," he would (after their removal from Palestine) make their population "as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered." This promise of an exploding population for the Israelites had been fulfilled by the time of Christ, as Josephus observed they were too numerous to number in his generation. There is an important lesson here: God always keeps his promises and fulfill his prophecies.

Also, the Bible promised that the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Israel) would bear a particular name. Genesis 21:12 records a key promise of God to Abraham that: **"through Isaac shall your descendants be named."** (RSV)

God's "covenant" blessings upon Abraham were inherited by Isaac and Jacob (whose name was later changed to "Israel"). Genesis 48:14-20 shows that Jacob/Israel passed on this patriarchal blessing to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. Therefore, while the name of "Isaac" might generally be found on any of the Israelite tribes which sprang from Jacob/Israel, the term would most specifically identify the descendants of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. If God's promise was fulfilled, we should look for the Israelites in Asia to be known by various forms of the word "Isaac." As we shall see, secular history records that many large population groups in Asia, indeed, did come to be known by variations of the name "Isaac."

Many of the inhabitants of Israel's capital city, Samaria, were taken to the cities of the Medes (II Kings 17:6), and we will begin our search by looking for a group of people who were not physically present in Media before the fall of Samaria. An historical account of the Medes records that the Assyrian King Esarhaddon in 674 B.C. was confronted by an alliance of "Mannaeans, Median, and **newly-arrived Cimmerian forces.**"<sup>2</sup> (Emphasis added.) These newly-arrived Cimmerians were likely the Israelite Samaritans who had been relocated among the Medes only a few decades earlier. Notice the striking phonetic similarity between "Samaritan" and "Cimmerian" (dictionaries confirm the "c" should be pronounced like an "s"). That these "Cimmerians" were recent arrivals in Media adds weight to their identification as Israelite captives from the city of Samaria. The transplanted Samaritans of Israel would be anti-Assyrian, and would logically join an anti-Assyrian alliance.

Those Israelites who migrated to the Black Sea area became known as "Scythians." The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* records the Scythians as being present in Eurasian locations from the seventh century B.C., as this is the earliest date to which their

tombs can be assigned.<sup>3</sup> The *Encyclopedia Americana* adds:

*"The Scythians...are those tribes that occupied this territory [the region north of the Black Sea] from **about 700 B.C.** and formed a single cohesive political entity until the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., when the nation was splintered into several groups."*<sup>4</sup> (Emphasis added.)

A third account of the Scythian arrival in the Black Sea region is found in *The Scythians*, by Tamara Talbot Rice, which states:

*"The Scythians did not become a recognizable national entity much before **the eighth century B.C.**...By the seventh century B.C. they had established themselves firmly in southern Russia... and analogous tribes, possibly even related clans, though politically entirely distinct and independent, were also centered on the Altai... [and]...Assyrian documents place their appearance [there] in the time of King Sargon (722-705 B.C.) a date which closely corresponds with that of the establishment of the first group of Scythians in southern Russia."*<sup>5</sup> (Emphasis added.)

These accounts are consistent with the historical records cited in chapter four that the Israelites migrated to the Black Sea area in the final decades of the eighth century B.C. It is also consistent with the biblical and Assyrian records that the kingdom of Israel ceased to exist in the latter portion of the eighth century B.C. when its population left Palestine. That the Scythians had "related clans" living far to the east of the Black Sea Scythians is consistent with the fact that Israel was composed of many

related tribes. Tamara Rice's book includes a map showing that "related clans" of the Scythians lived eastward far into Asia.<sup>6</sup> Their burial sites have been found as far east as the Pazirik/Altai region of Russia where the Russian border meets the western edges of China and Mongolia. **The appearance of the Scythians in Asia occurs in the reign of King Sargon of Assyria (722-705 B.C.). This is precisely the time period of the fall of the kingdom of Israel and the flight of Israelites out of Palestine into Asia.**

The opening of a burial mound in the territory of the eastern Scythians was the subject of an article in the October, 1994 issue of *National Geographic* magazine. It stated:

*"The Pazyryks thrived in these steppes...in the sixth through the second centuries B.C. They were horsemen...and shepherds...Dozens of such tribes rose on the steppes of Eurasia in this era, creating a deceptively uniform culture labeled Scytho-Siberian...The Greek historian Herodotus faithfully detailed much of the life of the Scythians, a powerful, seminomadic people who lived north of the Black Sea between 800 B.C. and 100 B.C."*<sup>7</sup>

A female found mummified in the burial vault must have been a prominent person as she was buried with several horses and grave goods with gold ornamentation. An earlier excavation in the area had yielded "two skeletons with European features"<sup>8</sup> buried with weapons and ten horses. As this article confirms, these eastern Scythians were one of many clans on the steppes related to the Scythians of the Black Sea region. The fact that some of their burial mounds yield skeletons "with European features" will become increasingly important later in this chapter

(and in this book).

The Scythians were also frequently called the "**Saka**," or "**Sacae**." The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that the terms "Saka (Sacae)...and Scyths...were regarded as synonymous. It is difficult always to judge whether given information applies to the Sacae (Saka) or the Scyths."<sup>9</sup> It is also significant that "Cimmerii" were recorded as being one of the first settlers in the Black Sea region of Scythia.<sup>10</sup> That "Cimmerians" were present in both Media and near the Black Sea soon after the fall of Samaria indicates that these two groups of people were related Israelites who were in separate locations after the demise of Israel.

It is very significant that the Scythians were also known as Sacae or Saka. Genesis 21:12 contains the promise that Abraham's descendants would, in the future, be known by the name of Isaac. The ancient Hebrew language did not list vowel sounds; therefore, the name Isaac would then be represented by the consonants S-C or S-K (reflecting the fact that the "c" in Isaac is pronounced like a "k"). The word Sacae represents the word Isaac with the Latin plural "ae" attached. That these "Sacae" are recorded as being near the Black Sea soon after the Israelites migrated to Asia supports the contention that they were relocated Israelites. Historians unfamiliar with (or hostile toward) the Bible speculate that the Scythians came from the Asian interior. However, their name (a form of the Hebrew name, Isaac) and their arrival in Asia soon after the Israelites relocated from Palestine into Asia indicates that they were Israelites.

The speculation that the Scythians originated from deep in the interior of Asia is further refuted by the images found on Scythian artifacts. The Scythian faces depicted on their gold artifacts have Semitic features, not Mongoloid features.<sup>11</sup> This is not to say that all ancient people bearing the name "Scythian" who lived on the Russian steppes were descended from the ten

tribes of Israel. The term "Scythian" became a general term describing any tribe in the region with a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle. Some Scythians were called "Turanian" instead of "Sacae." The Turanian Scyths may well have been of the Mongoloid (yellow) race of the steppes; with the term "Turanian" perhaps based on Tiras, one of the sons of Japheth (Genesis 10:2). There is a great deal of confusion in historical accounts between "Sacae Scythians" and "Turanian Scythians." George Rawlinson notes the following:

*"The term 'Scythic' is not, strictly speaking, ethnical. It designates a life rather than a descent, habits rather than blood. It is applied by the Greeks and Romans to Indo-European and Turanian races indifferently, provided they are nomads, dwelling in tents...living on the produce of their flocks and herds..."*<sup>12</sup>

There were two races called Scythians: the Indo-Europeans (the Sacae) and the Turanian (who were not Sacae). So, the term "Sacae (or Saka)" does represent an Israelite ethnicity, but the term "Scythian" can sometimes include non-Israelites as well.

In 653 B.C., the Medes and Cimmerians joined in an alliance with the Scythians (under a leader named "Phraortes") against the Assyrians. This alliance lost its battle against the Assyrians (and Phraortes died),<sup>13</sup> but it is significant that the Scythians were anti-Assyrian. Once it is understood that these Scythians were Israelites, the motive for Scythian antipathy toward Assyria is apparent. **The Scythians and Cimmerians were kinsmen**, as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* calls the Cimmerians a "Scythian tribe."<sup>14</sup> Here we see Israelite tribes joining together (along with the Medes) to again fight the Assyrians just decades after they left Palestine.

Their leader's name, "Phraortes," is also significant as it is a



Hellenized form of the Jewish clan which descended from "Phares." God promised that kings (rulers) would come from Judah (the "sceptre" promise of Genesis 49:10), and that descendants of King David (also of the Phares line) would become numerous and would perpetually rule over descendants of "the house of Israel" (Jeremiah 33:17-22). Jeremiah's prophecy was made long **after** the House of Israel (the northern ten tribes) relocated to Asia. The above indication that descendants of King David (the line of Phares) were leading Asian Israelites a century after the fall of Samaria shows that God had not forgotten his promise concerning David's progeny. This promise about David's progeny was first made in David's lifetime around 1000 B.C. (II Samuel 7:8-17).

What happened to the Israelites (at least three and one-half tribes) who were carried captive by the Assyrians about twenty years before Samaria fell? It is recorded that "Scythians" were not only located in the Black Sea region and westward into the Russian steppes, but were also located further south, just east of Assyria. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that: "A Scythian power had grown up in the old kingdom of Ellip, to the east of Assyria."<sup>15</sup> So, history records that Israelite Scythian powers developed both to the north of Assyria in the Caucasus, and to the east of Assyria as well.

This body of Scythians just east of Assyria (in modern Iran) were descended from the Israelites taken captive in about 740 B.C., and the Sacae Scythians located in the Russian steppes were descended from the Israelites who fled toward the Black Sea to avoid Assyrian captivity. That Assyria would have moved captive Israelites to the eastern edge of their empire is logical. By locating them far from their old homeland, Assyria was trying to prevent the Israelites from reuniting against Assyria.

Since God had promised to greatly increase the population of the

Israelites in their lands of dispersal, this large body of Israelites soon displaced the nation of Ellip in which they had been placed. This begs a further question: What nation had been displaced by the Israelites who migrated to the Black Sea? History shows that Urartu had formerly been there, but that it was "enfeebled by Scythian incursions."<sup>16</sup> It is also recorded that:

*"the kingdom of Urartu had crumbled. The Scythians... firmly established themselves in northern Persia, occupying Urartu itself, where they set up their capital at **Sakiz**..."<sup>17</sup>*  
(Emphasis added.)

Significantly, a capital of Scythians was named "**Sakiz**," again preserving the name of the Hebrew patriarch, **Isaac**. Who else but the migrating ten tribes of Israel would name a capital city in honor of Isaac? Also, it indicates that the Scythians had entered the region with a very large population base as they soon controlled territory from the Caucasus region into "northern Persia." Another term for "northern Persia" would be "the cities of the Medes," where the Bible says many Israelites were taken by the Assyrians. This may indicate that the "free" Israelites from the Black Sea had liberated and linked up with the captive Israelites who were in the cities of the Medes. Historians tell us the Scythians were agriculturalists who both planted crops and followed their herds (hence the word "nomads"). The old Israelite lifestyle from the days of Abraham revolved around agriculture, and they both planted crops and were herdsman. Ezekiel 27:17 records the Israelites had been food exporters in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The Jewish source cited by Col. Gawler in chapter four stated that the Israelites fled through Armenia from the Assyrians, and went "with their flocks, and turned nomads."<sup>18</sup> The Scythians carried on the old Israelite traditions of being agriculturalists, food exporters and "nomads" who

dwelled in portable dwellings as they followed their flocks and herds. Zenaide Ragozin, in her book *Media*, records:

*"Some seventy years after the time of Herodotus we find from contemporary evidence that 600,000 bushels of Scythian corn went to Athens alone each year."*<sup>19</sup>

If 600,000 bushels of grain went to one Greek city in a single year, one can only wonder how much the Scythians exported to the world as a whole. Herodotus also recorded that the Scythians were food-exporters.<sup>20</sup>

However, the Scythian agriculturalists were not uncivilized. William Culican, in *The Medes and the Persians*, states:

*"It was to the Scythians that Achaemenid objects had greatest appeal. The dinner services, upholstered beds and thrones designed for the mess tents of Persian officers on field duty admirably suited the task of the...nomadic Scythian leaders. Scythian tombs were elaborately furnished and...the Scythians not only had a close relationship with the Medes and Persians but supplied from their Ural territories much of the gold on which Persia depended."*<sup>21</sup>

Tamara Rice also wrote concerning the Scythians:

*"...their wealth and love of finery won them the good will of the great Hellenic merchants established along the shores of the Black Sea...the Scythians...displayed an extraordinary ability to appreciate and assimilate the best in the art of their day."*<sup>22</sup>

There is much that is significant about the above accounts. A nation that enjoys fine dinner tableware and eating utensils as well as upholstered beds and artworks is one which prizes the material comforts of a civilized society. Also, the fact that they maintained a gold mining industry indicates that not all the Scythians were agriculturalists. Their gold mines indicate that some Scythians were involved in industrial pursuits, and their success in the gold trade confirms that they possessed the technological expertise to mine and refine gold ores into a finished product. Indeed, the Scythians manufactured some of the ancient world's most beautiful works of gold art.<sup>23</sup> Their involvement in commercial trading relationships with the Medes, Persians and Greeks also demonstrates that the Scythians were skilled in the ways of international commerce (both in manufactured products and agricultural commodities).

Is there a conflict between the above accounts and others which paint some nomads in the Russian steppes as being ignorant and uncivilized? No. It was mentioned earlier that the Scythians included nomads who were called Sacae and others who were called Turanian. In addition to the civilized Scythians, there were ignorant and uncouth nations on the steppes. Herodotus, a Greek historian of the fifth century B.C., notes that the Scythians were interspersed with less civilized people. He describes the non-civilized nations of the steppes thusly:

*"the Man-Eaters, a tribe that is entirely peculiar and not Scythian at all...[and] the Black Cloaks, another tribe which is not Scythian at all."*<sup>24</sup>

Herodotus confirms the civilized qualities of the Scythians and the backwardness of the non-Scythian tribes in the following words.

*"The Euxine Pontus [the Black Sea]...contains*

**- except for the Scythians - the stupidest nations in the world.**"<sup>25</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Col. Gawler cites Epiphanius as stating "the laws, customs, and manner of the Scythians were received by other nations as the standards of policy, civility, and polite learning."<sup>26</sup> He also cites the following from book viii, iii, 7 of Strabo's *Geography*:

*"... 'but the Scythians governed by good laws...' And this is still the opinion entertained of them by the Greeks; for we esteem them the most sincere, the least deceitful of any people, and much more frugal and self-relying than ourselves."*<sup>27</sup>

Strabo was a Greek writer of the first century B.C. Modern students are educated to think the Greeks were the most civilized people of the ancient world, yet Strabo's account offers an opinion that the laws, frugality and self-reliance of the Scythians excelled that of the Greeks! Strabo even declares that the Scythians excelled all nations in their sincerity and honesty.

While there were backward, uncouth nations in the steppes above the Black Sea, the Scythians were a civilized nation with refined tastes. This makes no sense if the Scythians were a horde of wild horsemen who rode out of Siberia from somewhere so far away from the civilized world that no one had heard of them prior to their arrival. However, it is entirely consistent with the Scythians being the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, who had long interacted with the other civilized nations of the world as the main component of the Phoenician alliance.

There is an additional record that the Scythians of South Russia had their origins among the Semitic nations of the Mideast. Zenaide Ragozin's, *Media*, states:

*"...Scythians was not a race name at all, but*

*one promiscuously used, for all remote, little known, especially nomadic peoples of the north and northeast, denoting tribes...of Turanian as of Indo-European stock: to the latter the Scythians of Russia are now universally admitted to have belonged.”<sup>28</sup>*

The term “Scythian” came to represent a lifestyle more than a racial group. However, the civilized Scythians of South Russia were known to be “Indo-European” in origin, not “Turanian.” This confirms their origin was among the Indo-European nations to the south of the Black Sea, not among the uncivilized nomads in the interior of Asia.

If the Scythians truly were arrivals from the interior of Asia, they would have shared the uncultured, uncivilized ways of the wild nomads of the steppes. However, they were very civilized people with much more in common with the Greeks and Persians than the coarse nomads of the north. Scythian tastes for fine Persian dinner services and upholstered beds, their appreciation of Greek art, their own artistic excellence in gold workmanship, and their stable trade relationships with the Greeks and the Persians all confirm that the Scythians’ originated not in the wild steppes of Asia, but in the civilized regions of the Mideast and Mesopotamia.

The “Sacaе” Scythians had nothing in common with the wild, uncouth nomads of the northern steppes, but, had very much in common with the civilized cultures to their south. The answer is simple: these Scythians moved into South Russia from the south, not from the north! The entire spectrum of their culture argues for this conclusion. All cultural factors support the ancient historical sources cited by Col. Gawler that a very large body of Israelites moved from Palestine to south Russia at the approximate time of Samaria’s fall. Even as the Israelites were herdsmen and exporters of grain, so were the Scythians. Even as

the Israelites had been skilled in metallurgy (from the time of Solomon), so were the Scythians. Even as the Israelites had civilized tastes, so did the Scythians. The "Israelites" fled into the Black Sea regions in about 724 B.C., and the Scythians were first noted in the Black Sea regions just after this date. The Israelites were descendants of Isaac, and the Scythians were known as "Sac-ae" or "Sak-a." There can be little doubt on the origin of the Scythians: They were displaced Israelites building a new homeland in the Black Sea region and in parts of the Russian steppe.

The fact that other bodies of Scythians are noted "growing up" in the region of Ellip in eastern Assyria, and in the region of the Medes (the Cimmerians) without any invasion from the north placing them there also indicates that the Scythians in those areas were descendants of captive settlers (the Israelites who were settled in Assyria's empire and in the "cities of the Medes").

As the Israelite Scythians became more numerous, Herodotus records that the Persians generally referred to all the Scythian tribes as Sacae,<sup>29</sup> and there is an account that Ptolemy referred to the Scythian/Sacae as the "Saxones."<sup>30</sup> Substantiating the conclusion that the Sacae/Saka Scythians were Israelites is evidence that the Israelites were known by those names even before their departure from Palestine!

Assyrian records recall the rebellion of a people known as the Esakska, who called themselves "Beth Isaac" or "House of Isaac" in their own country.<sup>31</sup> Here we have an Assyrian confirmation that the Israelites **were known** as the descendants of Isaac (with their name represented by the root word "**Sak**") prior to their migrations into Asia. The word "beth" is a Hebrew word meaning "house" and is also rendered as "bayith."<sup>32</sup> The Israelites continued to bear the Hebrew racial names "**Saka**" or "**Sacae**" after their migration into Asia. The Bible itself preserves

the fact that the pre-captivity Israelites were known as "Beth Isaac" (or "House of Isaac"). Amos 7:16 records that the prophet Amos used the term "House of Isaac" to describe the ten-tribed northern kingdom of Israel a few decades prior to the fall of Samaria.

The book of Jeremiah supports the conclusion that the ten tribes of Israel migrated to the Black Sea region. Jeremiah's prophecy in Jeremiah 3:6 addresses both the Jews (Judah) and the ten tribes of Israel (Israel). This prophecy was given a hundred years **after** the fall of Samaria and the migration of the ten tribes of Israel out of Palestine. In verses 6-10, he warns Judah that she is repeating the sins which caused the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel to fall. In verse 11, Jeremiah, speaking in approximately 620 B.C., states: "Backsliding **Israel** hath justified herself more than treacherous **Judah**." Jeremiah here confirms that the Jews and the northern ten tribes were still reckoned as separate entities, and that the ten tribes were in a better standing with God than were the Jews at the time of his prophecy! That is consistent with accounts presented in chapter four that the members of the ten tribes which migrated to the area around the Black Sea were "jealous of the glory of God." In verse 12, Jeremiah directed this statement to the ten tribes of Israel:

*"Go and **proclaim these words toward the north**, and say, Return, thou backsliding **Israel**, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful..."* (Emphasis added.)

If all ten tribes of Israel were taken captive to Assyria, Jeremiah should have addressed his prophecy about the Israelites "to the east" since Assyria was located east of Jerusalem. However, Jeremiah acknowledges that most of the ten tribes of Israel were then located not to the east but to the north of Jerusalem. The



Black Sea region, where earlier accounts place most of the ten tribes, is located due north of Jerusalem.

Many people have the mistaken impression that God utterly forsook the ten tribes of Israel when they were displaced from Palestine. Not at all! Here we see Jeremiah directing a favorable message from God to them approximately a century after Samaria fell. In another prophecy of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 51:5), it is stated:

*"For **Israel hath not been forsaken...**of his God, of the Lord of hosts..."* (Emphasis added.)

God inspired messages through Jeremiah to the ten tribes a century after Samaria fell! Also, the quote from Josephus which opened this chapter confirmed that by the first century A.D., God had fulfilled the prophetic promise in Hosea 1 to make the descendants of the ten tribes "too numerous to count." In doing so, God confirmed that the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh were still the primary inheritors of the Abrahamic covenant blessings which included having too many descendants to number (Genesis 13:16 and 48:14-16)!

Let us review the Abrahamic Covenant blessings. Abraham was promised that his seed would have huge populations, would comprise many nations, would found royal dynasties and would possess the "gates of their enemies" (Genesis 13:16, 17:2-7, 22:15-17). These promises were passed on to Isaac (Genesis 17:21) and to Jacob (Genesis 27:19-33). Jacob (whose name was changed to "Israel," Genesis 35:10) next passed on these blessings to Ephraim and Manasseh (the sons of Joseph) and their descendants (Genesis 48:14-20). In verse 16, Jacob (Israel) said:

*"...let my name be named on them, and **the***

***name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac...***

This prophecy promised that the name of Isaac would remain on the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh as God fulfilled these birthright promises throughout history. Therefore, the fact that the Scythians bore the name of Isaac (Sacae or Saka) confirms that many of the Scythians were from the tribes of Ephraim or Manasseh.

The great "birthright" blessings of the Abrahamic covenant were not given to the tribe of Judah (the Jews), as many people seem to assume. The birthright blessings have remained with the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh ever since Jacob/Israel assigned them to those tribes in Genesis 48. Jacob further promised that the descendants of Manasseh would someday become a single great nation, and that the descendants of Ephraim would become a company (or multitude) of nations. The one Abrahamic blessing received by the tribe of Judah was the promise that kings and dynasties would emerge from them (Genesis 49:10). This was fulfilled when the descendants of King David founded several dynasties of kings, as we will examine more extensively in the next chapter. While all of the tribes of Israel were "the chosen people," the best blessings were given (by God's will) to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

As this book progresses, we will see that God remembered to give the great Abrahamic blessings to the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, the dominant tribes of the ten tribes of Israel. Now we will return to the "Saka" in the ancient world.

There are very ancient records of correspondence from Canaanite rulers to the Egyptian Pharaohs desperately calling for help against the powerful invasions of a people called the "Haberi," "Khaberi," "Aberi" or "Saga." These ancient letters were preserved on the famous "Amarna Tablets," and they apparently record the invasion of Canaan by the Israelites under Joshua!

The "Haber," "Khaberi," or "Aberi" are the **Hebrews**, and the "Saga" are the **Saka** (the people of Isaac), albeit expressed in Canaanite terms. Mrs. Sydney Bristowe, in *Oldest Letters in the World*, wrote in 1923 concerning the Amarna Tablets:

*"The great importance of the Amarna Tablets has not been recognized because apparently, the translations have been unwilling to admit that the Israelites are mentioned upon them and that they tell of the conquest of Palestine by Joshua! The translations shown with the tablets now in the British Museum, give little idea of the interest of the letters, the name Haber, Khaberi or Aberi is hardly seen in these translations, yet that name, appears frequently in the tablets and leading philologists certify that it stands for the Hebrews (Israelites). See Enc. Brit., Ed. 11, Vol. 10., p. 78. Another name mentioned upon the tablets is Saga which is said to be identical with Haber (Knudtzon, Die El-Amarna Tafeln, p. 51), and is proved to be so by the fact that it occurs upon the Behistan Rock in Persia where, according to Sir Henry Rawlinson, it represents the Israelites (the Sakai or 'House of Isaac'). Dr. Hall (of the British Museum) admits the fact that the tablets tell of the Israelite's conquest of Palestine, for he writes: 'We may definitely, if we accept the identification of the Khabiru as the Hebrews, say that in the Tel-el-Amarna letters, we have Joshua's conquest seen from the Egyptian and Canaanite point of view' (Ancient History of the Near East, p. 409)."*<sup>33</sup>

Mrs. Bristowe's book cites an early edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, a German book, and the famous historian, Sir Henry Rawlinson, as all supporting the conclusion that the Amarna Tablets identify the Israelites. Dr. H. R. Hall, whose book, *The Ancient History of the Near East* was cited above, was formerly the Keeper of the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities at the British Museum. Dr. Hall further states in his book that:

*"It seems very probable that the 'SA-GAZ'... and...the Khabiru who devastated Canaan in Akhenaton's time are no other than the invading Hebrews and other desert tribes allied with them...[and after presenting a philological analysis supporting this conclusion, he adds]...In my own, view, the probabilities are all in favour of the identification."*<sup>34</sup>

It is noteworthy that these letters show both that the Canaanites pleaded for help from Egypt and that the Egyptians refused to assist them against the Khabiru/Hebrews. Given that the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that the time-frame of the Amarna tablets "is approximately that of Moses,"<sup>35</sup> it is obvious why the Egyptians did not oppose the "Saga" and Khabiru. Egypt had been devastated by the God of Israel via the plagues administered through Moses just decades before this time (the Israelites wandered for 40 years between leaving Egypt and conquering Canaan), and it was too weak to intervene. Whatever was left of Egypt clearly had no will to fight the Habiru, whose God they feared!

Mrs. Bristowe's account references the "Behistan Rock." This is also noteworthy because it further links the Scythians to the Israelite/Phoenician Empire. The Persian ruler, Darius, celebrated

a victory (circa 516 B.C.) via a huge inscription on a mountain near Behistun (or "Behistan"). It depicts Darius receiving various captive nations whose leaders are being led before him tied with a rope around their necks.<sup>36</sup> The last one in line is "a Scythian wearing a tall, pointed cap."<sup>37</sup> Herodotus is cited above as stating that the Persians called all Scythians "Sacaе (or Saka)," which is the equivalent of the Hebrew/Israelite "Saga" in the much older Amarna Tablets. It appears that the Canaanites knew the Israelite invaders were the "seed of Isaac," but rendered this name as "Saga" instead of "Saka," as did the Persians. [The letters "g" and "k" are closely-related guttural phonetic sounds.]

The above evidence that Canaanite and Assyrian sources indicate that the Israelites were known by the name of Isaac **prior** to their departure from Palestine confirms that it is their descendants who bore the name of Isaac in Scythia after their arrival in Asia.

The sources identifying the Israelites as the invaders of Canaan on the Amarna tablets, and linking the Hebrew-Israelite "Saga" with the Scythian "Saka" pre-date the permeation of modern academia by evolutionary theory. Even though evolution cannot be confirmed by the scientific method and is refuted by the laws of the universe, it has nevertheless become the "politically correct" foundation of modern academic thought. Because the Bible's creation account contradicts evolutionary fables, the Bible is impugned by many modern academics. Information supporting biblical historical accounts is, therefore, often ignored or suppressed. Since modern academics could jeopardize their careers by contradicting evolutionary dogma, one is not likely to find modern sources who will differ with the "politically-correct," anti-biblical bias of the modern scholastic world. For this reason, many modern sources are not likely to acknowledge information which was openly admitted by earlier sources.

That the Scythians are depicted as wearing a "tall, pointed cap" by the Persians is also significant. One cultural trait of the Israelite/Phoenicians was their use of a tall, pointed cap. Evidence of this Phoenician trait has been found in both the Old World and in ancient America. In the Old World, an example of Phoenicians wearing such caps from a relief in Persepolis is shown in the *Encyclopedia Americana*.<sup>38</sup> Dr. Barry Fell's *America B.C.* depicts a similar tall Phoenician cap (found in a North American burial mound) as a "characteristic high-crowned hat, the hennin, worn on formal occasions."<sup>39</sup> Since the Phoenician Empire was primarily the Israelite empire, we can expect this wearing of a tall hat on formal occasions to be an Israelite trait as well. Israelite high priests wore miters (tall hats) as part of their official dress (Exodus 28:37-29:6). Descriptions of this miter show that it had a "forefront" (Exodus 28:37), and a blue decoration "high upon the miter" (Exodus 39:31), verifying that the miter was a tall hat. Apparently, this type of headgear later was adopted by Israelite leaders as a tall, pointed hat is shown in *Harper's Bible Dictionary* as being an example of "Hebrew royal attire."<sup>40</sup>

The Behistan rock depicts a Scythian leader being brought before Darius wearing a tall, pointed hat: a traditional headgear of Israelite leaders. That this hat was worn only by the Scythian identifies it as a uniquely Scythian trait. Herodotus confirmed this headgear was uniquely Scythian:

*"The Sacae, who are Scythians, have high caps tapering to a point and stiffly upright, which they wear on their heads."*<sup>41</sup>

It was, specifically, the "Sacae" Scythians who wore headgear which was traditional among the Israelite/Phoenician people. This offers further cultural evidence that the Scythians descended from the Israelites of the old Phoenician Empire in the Mideast,

not from wild tribes in the Asian interior.

Further evidence of the Israelite origins of the Scythians is found in this comment of Herodotus about the Scythians:

*"They make no offerings of pigs, nor will they keep them at all in their country."*<sup>42</sup>

Such a prohibition is very consistent with the long-standing Hebrew custom of forbidding the use of swine for either consumption or sacrifice because it was an "unclean" animal (Deuteronomy 14:7-8). Another interesting point is that Herodotus records that one of the Scythian kings was named "**Saulius**."<sup>43</sup> Given the Hebrew/Israelite background of the Scythians, it would appear that the namesake of this Scythian king was Saul, the first Hebrew king (I Samuel 9).

Herodotus also records that "The Scythians themselves say that their nation is the youngest of all the nations... [and]...from their first king...to the crossing of Darius into Scythia was, in all, one thousand years-no more, but just so many."<sup>44</sup> Col. Gawler analyzes Herodotus-record as follows:

*"Now Darius' expedition against the Scythians was about 500 B.C., and 1000 years before that brings us to the time of Moses."*<sup>45</sup>

Significantly, the Scythians traced their origin as a nation to the approximate time of Moses. It was after the Exodus, under Moses that the Hebrews truly became a nation with their own distinct culture and laws.

An additional evidence that Scythia was the new Israelite homeland is the frequent use of the name of the Israelite tribe of Dan in the Black Sea area. The tribe of Dan was known for giving its tribal name to geographic locations (Joshua 19:47). The rivers emptying into the Black Sea were formerly known by such names

as the Ister, Tyras, Borysthenes, and Tanais, but, after the Scythians migrated into the region, their names were changed to the **Danube, Dniester, Dnieper, and Don** Rivers. *Collier's Encyclopedia* states:

*"The names of the...rivers Danube, Dnestr, Dnepr and Don are Scythian..."*<sup>46</sup>

The tribe of Dan was split into two homelands in Palestine: one on the seacoast, and one in a land-locked area in the north of Israel. In chapter four, we saw evidence that many Danites migrated to Ireland when Israel fell, but the prominence of the name **Dan** in Scythian areas indicates other Danites joined the migration into the Black Sea regions. A major Scythian tribe was named the Dahai or Dahae, which may also indicate the tribe of Dan.

We will now reconstruct the mostly ignored history of the Scythians. We have seen that the Cimmerians and Scythians were allied against the Assyrians in 653 B.C., but were defeated. There is evidence that the Assyrians tried to placate the Scythians, going so far as to marry the daughter of an Assyrian king to a Scythian prince,<sup>47</sup> but it did not long stem the tide of growing Scythian power.

In approximately 624 B.C., the Scythians launched a massive invasion to the south, and occupied Asia Minor, Syria, Media, Palestine and much of Assyria. They conquered as far south as Egypt, but spared that nation when the Egyptians offered them tribute money.<sup>48</sup> In the words of Werner Keller, the Scythians "inundated the Assyrian Empire."<sup>49</sup> The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states:

*"The Scythians penetrated into Assyria and made their way as far as the borders of Egypt. Calah was burned, though the strong*



*walls of Nineveh protected the relics of the Assyrian army which had taken refuge behind them...*"<sup>50</sup>

The Scythian attack upon the Assyrian city of Calah (Kalakh) was noteworthy. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* notes that Calah "was the headquarters of the army in Assyria."<sup>51</sup> By directly attacking the headquarters city of the Assyrian army, the Scythians were clearly "going for the jugular" of Assyria. Though Assyria struggled on for a few years, the Scythian invasion dealt Assyria a mortal blow. Babylonia revolted against Assyria, and the eastern Scythians joined this revolt. As the reader will recall, there were "northern Scythians" from the Black Sea region and "eastern Scythians" who had displaced the kingdom of Ellip (located east of Assyria). It was the northern Scythians who conquered most of the Assyrian Empire and burnt Calah, but it was (apparently) the eastern Scythians who joined Babylon to administer a "coup de grace" to Assyria. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* notes that "the Scythian king of Ecbatana (a city east of Assyria)" intervened to assist the Babylonians, and adds that "Nineveh was captured and destroyed by the Scythian army."<sup>52</sup> Some historical accounts credit "the Medes and Babylonians" with the destruction of Nineveh, but the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that it was the Babylonians and Scythians who conquered Nineveh. It explains that the Babylonians referred to Scythians as "Manda," and maintains that the Greek writers missed the Scythian role "through a confusion of Mada or 'Medes' with Manda."<sup>53</sup> The Babylonian term **Man-da** may have been derived from **Man-asseh**, one of Israel's largest tribes.

The northern Scythians from the Black Sea held Western Asia and the Mideast under their dominion for only a short time, twenty-eight years according to Herodotus,<sup>54</sup> and just ten years according to Werner Keller.<sup>55</sup> Why did Scythia attack the whole

territory of the Assyrian Empire, and then leave after so short a time? Both answers come clearly into focus when one understands that the Scythians were the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel.

The motive for the Scythian invasion was likely two-fold. The primary motive was the desire for revenge against the Assyrians who had forced them off their land and destroyed the old kingdom of Israel. It was poetic justice that after Assyria invaded and destroyed the kingdom of Israel; Assyria was invaded and given its death-blow by Scythia (the offspring of the Israelites that had originally fled from Assyria). Indeed, the desire to liberate those Israelites who were still captives of the Assyrians may have served as a further strong motive for the Scythian invasion.

A second reason for Scythia's invasion was apparently the reoccupation of the old Israelite homeland of Palestine. The fact that some Scythians charged straight south through Asia Minor and Syria into Palestine gives weight to this conclusion. In the century that had passed since the ten tribes were forced out of Palestine, it had probably been referred to as "the land of milk and honey" by old-timers who reminisced about their homeland. The Scythian Israelites may have originally intended to reoccupy Palestine permanently when they reconquered it.

Scythian victories were so widespread that Herodotus observed:

*The Scythians took control of all Asia.*"<sup>56</sup>

While the Scythians waged a total war against the Assyrians in Mesopotamia, Herodotus records that on their march through Palestine and Syria:

*"...the majority of the Scythians marched by, doing no harm to anyone."*<sup>57</sup>

It is significant that while marching through Palestine, the Scythians took no action to attack or harm the Jewish capital of Jerusalem. If the Scythian motive was simple conquest, why did they spare the Jewish capital? Since the entire Assyrian army could not stand before the Scythian onslaught, Jerusalem had no might to resist them. The obvious conclusion is that the Scythians **chose** to spare Jerusalem. This makes sense only if the Scythians were the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, who knew the Jews were one of their related tribes. This indicates that while the Scythians were intent on destroying Assyria, their purpose was to “liberate” Palestine. One city in Palestine (Beth-Shan) was renamed “Scythopolis” in honor of the Scythians, and the local population retained that name even after the Scythians left the area. Werner Keller notes that there is no evidence that the Scythians ever occupied or garrisoned Beth-Shan,<sup>58</sup> so the reason for changing the name of Beth-Shan to Scythopolis is a mystery. There is a logical answer for this “mystery.” When a city is renamed after a person or a nation, it is done so to honor the memory of that person or nation. Since the Scythian presence among the Jews was a gentle one, and liberated them from the Assyrian Empire, Beth-Shan was likely renamed Scythopolis to honor the Scythian liberation of the region.

That the Scythians completely ravaged Assyrian territory while sparing Jewish cities clearly indicates that the Scythians looked upon the Jews more favorably than the other nations invaded. **This would make no sense whatsoever if the Scythians were wild nomads from northern Asia who were in Palestine for the first time. However, it is completely logical when one realizes that, as descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, the Scythians were blood relatives of the Jews!** It was noted earlier that the Scythians’ artwork depicted Scythians as having bearded, Semitic faces, clearly indicating

that they originated in the Fertile Crescent (the traditional Semitic homeland), not in the Asian interior. To assert that these Scythians had a Mongoloid origin from northern or eastern Asia, one must ignore the facts.

Herodotus also records that the Scythians were very zealous in forbidding idolatry and the worship of "foreign gods." In one instance, King Saulius of Scythia executed his own brother for participating in the rites of a Greek "mother-goddess" festival and wearing "images" associated with the mother-goddess.<sup>59</sup> In another instance, a Scythian king (Scyles) participated in forbidden, pagan ritual of the Greeks in which devotees allowed "Bacchus" to possess them in frenzied rites. As testimony to the strict Scythian laws against such rites, King Scyles tried to prevent any Scythian from learning about his "secret life." His actions were discovered; however, and the Scythians rejected him as king, selecting his brother, Octamasades, as the new king. With an army, Octamasades pursued his paganized brother, and beheaded him in Thrace (the modern Balkan region of Europe), where Scyles had sought refuge.<sup>60</sup>

The fact that the Scythians executed, without mercy, even their own rulers and royalty who worshipped the mother-goddess or other pagan gods (or who kept "images" of such gods and goddesses) shows there was a very strict law among the Scythians against idolatry. Combining the fact that idolatry was a capital offense with the Scythian custom of avoiding swine flesh, it is clear that the Scythians were faithfully practicing two key features of the laws of God given to the Israelites under Moses. This further confirms that many of the Israelites of the ten tribes had experienced a "revival" in their new homeland near the Black Sea.

The fall of Nineveh has been dated as follows:

*"...the Assyrian capital [Nineveh] fell after a*

*long war conducted by the Medes,  
Babylonians and Scythians in 612 B.C....”<sup>61</sup>*

The presence of “a long war” between Scythia and Assyria prior to Assyria’s defeat in 612 B.C. supports Herodotus’ record that the Scythians ruled “Asia” (Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and Palestine) for almost three decades. Specifically, Herodotus wrote:

*“For twenty-eight years, then, the Scythians  
were masters of Asia...”<sup>62</sup>*

This Scythian occupation, which included Palestine, occurred during the reign of King Josiah (circa 639-608 B.C.). The Bible does not mention “Scythians” in Palestine at that time because “Scythian” was a Greek term. However, the Bible refers to them as Israelites. There is an interesting account in the reign of Josiah that can only involve the Scythians. II Kings 22:3 states that Josiah issued a decree to restore the Temple of God “in the eighteenth year” of his reign (circa 621 B.C.).

During the reigns of previous evil kings, the Jews had lost the knowledge of God. When a copy of God’s laws was found in this Temple restoration project, the nation again learned about God’s laws (II Chronicles 34:8-33). When he learned what God’s laws were, Josiah was aghast at his nation’s degenerate condition. II Kings 23:4-20 records that King Josiah’s reforms included the destruction of sun-god and mother-goddess images, forbidding human sacrifices, tearing down brothels of homosexual prostitutes (“houses of Sodomites”), slaying pagan priests and even destroying the altars for pagan gods which King Solomon had built for his foreign wives. Josiah also reestablished the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread (II Chronicles 35:17-18). However, notice the curious record of who kept these festivals along with Josiah and his nation. Verses 17-18 add:

*"And the **children of Israel that were present** kept the Passover...and the Days of Unleavened Bread...there was no Passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel...as Josiah kept...and all Judah and **Israel that were present...**" (Emphasis added.)*

This records that "all Judah" and the Israelites "that were present" kept these Holy Days of God. It is clear that this account means that descendants of the ten tribes of Israel kept these festivals as it makes a distinction between "Judah" and "Israel." This seems to be an impossibility as II Kings 17:18 states that when the Israelites were deported from Palestine that God had "removed them" and that "none was left but the tribe of Judah only." Since all the tribes of Israel were earlier removed from Palestine, how was it possible that not only were portions of the ten tribes again in Palestine at the time of Josiah, but that they were also devout enough to participate in God's Holy Days?

**The answer is simple. The "Israelites" from the ten tribes "who were present" in Palestine at the time of king Josiah's revival were the Scythians who were then occupying everything from Palestine to Mesopotamia!** We have seen that Herodotus recorded that the Scythians were known for good laws, avoided idols and pagan religious rites and even avoided swine flesh. That they were already practicing key aspects of the biblical laws of God makes it easier to understand how the Scythian Israelites could join Josiah and Judah in celebrating God's Holy Days. Indeed, if the Greeks had written II Chronicles 35:17-18, it probably would have read "all the Jews and Scythians that were present..."

Now consider II Chronicles 34:3-9 for even more evidence. Verse 3 records that Josiah began to serve God in the eighth year of

his reign and began some religious reforms. Verse 6-7 adds:

*"And so did he in the cities **of Manasseh, and Ephraim and Simeon, even unto Naphtali...** And when he had... cut down all the idols **throughout the land of Israel**, he returned to Jerusalem."*

Ten years later, Josiah took up a collection for the restoration of the Temple, and verse 9 states:

*"...they delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites...**had gathered of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and all the remnant of Israel,** and of all Judah and Benjamin and they returned to Jerusalem. (Emphasis added.)"*

For at least ten years, contingents of the ten tribes were present in Palestine and living in their former tribal homelands. **This account makes clear that these members of the ten tribes of Israel were separate and distinct from the tribes of "Judah and Benjamin"** (who constituted the nation of Judah). What is profound is that these members of the ten tribes of Israel were both willing and able to donate money to restore God's Temple! In fact, the Israelites were probably able to donate far more for the Temple than the Jews. They (the Israelite Scythians) had conquered "all Asia" and were flush with war booty out of which to make donations.

Now, remember the prophecy of Jeremiah 3:8-12 that stated that the ten tribes of Israel were "more justified" than the Jews at that time, and that their new homeland was located "to the north" of Judah. Some versions of the Bible include dates for chapters in the Old Testament. The *King James Version* states that Jeremiah 3 occurred in "620 B.C." Josiah kept this great

Passover in the "eighteenth year of his reign" (II Kings 21-23), which would date this Passover to 621 B.C. While the Bible does not expressly say so, the proximity of these dates indicates that the Prophet Jeremiah was present at this joint-Passover between Judah and portions of the ten tribes of Israel "who were present." This also makes clear that an historical context was, indeed, present for God to address a message via Jeremiah to the ten tribes of Israel. After all, portions of the ten tribes (probably soldiers and settlers) were present in Palestine and keeping the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread with Jeremiah present among them.

There is no conflict between I Kings 17:18 (which states God removed all the ten tribes from Palestine in around 721 B.C.) and II Chronicles 34 which records significant numbers of Ephraimites, Manassehites, Simeonites and Naphtalites living in their old tribal homelands of Palestine. These Israelite tribesmen were in Palestine during Josiah's reign because they were the "Scythians" (or "Sacaе") who were present in Palestine at that time. Secular history calls them "Scythians," but the Bible instead refers to them by their traditional Israelite names.

Indeed, this brings up the question: what prompted king Josiah to restore the Temple of God in the first place? Perhaps it was the presence of the Scythians which prompted such an action. The Scythians were known to kill their own royalty for indulging in pagan practices, and Judah's people were (prior to Josiah's reforms) heavily engaged in pagan practices. Did the comparative righteousness of the Scythians and their liberation of Judah from Assyrian rule inspire King Josiah of Judah to restore God's Temple?

II Kings 23:25 records that while Josiah implemented his reforms with a genuine heart, Jeremiah 3:10 comments that most of Judah "feigned" agreement with the reforms, and the Bible



records that Judah quickly forsook the laws of God after the death of Josiah.

Why did the seemingly invincible Scythians, the northern sons of Isaac (i.e. Sacae), abandon the Mideast so soon after thoroughly subduing it? There are two possible answers. When the kingdom of Israel fell, the Assyrians brought in foreigners who had no affinity for the land (II Kings 17:24-34). When the Scythian Israelites returned to Palestine, they were likely disappointed in what they found. The "land of milk and honey" about which their grandparents had reminisced was now a "land of weeds and foreigners," not suitable for the Israelite/Scythian lifestyle of growing crops and tending herds.

After a number of years, they likely decided that Palestine was simply not worth the effort, and withdrew into Scythia where the terrain provided the fertile expansiveness suitable for their chosen lifestyle. Also, the population of the Scythians was now far too large to seriously consider cramped little Palestine as anything but a remote colony. Besides, the other purpose for their invasion (crushing Assyria) had been completed, so there was no pressing reason to stay in Mesopotamia. The Scythians apparently preferred living contently with their flocks and herds in the wide-open spaces of South Russia to governing a fractious empire of competing, conquered nations. **The voluntary Scythian withdrawal from conquered territory is evidence that the motives for their initial invasion did not include imperial expansionism.** Indeed, Herodotus records that the Scythians had an "isolationist" attitude toward other nations. He recorded that the Scythians:

*"...dreadfully avoid the use of foreign customs, and especially those of the Greeks...So careful are the Scythians to guard their own customs, and such are the penalties*

*[Herodotus refers to the death penalty for pagan religious activity] that they impose on those who take to foreign customs over and above their own.”<sup>63</sup>*

The voluntary withdrawal of the Scythians from a large conquered territory is consistent with the isolationism of the Scythians. They wanted to live in their own “wide open spaces,” and did not want the burden of ruling over nations of foreigners with unwanted customs and lifestyles.

When the Scythians returned to the steppes, the Babylonians became the masters of Mesopotamia, and it is during this time that Jerusalem fell and the remainder of Judah went into captivity. The Medo-Persian Empire then replaced the Babylonians, and it was in their rule that King Cyrus allowed a contingent of Jews to return to Palestine under Ezra and Nehemiah. The Jews flourished under Persian rule, and occupied high positions of governmental authority. Daniel served as the king’s Prime Minister under Darius (Daniel 6:1-3), Esther was a queen of Persia (Esther 2:15-18), Nehemiah was cupbearer to a Persian king (Nehemiah 2:1), and Mordechai was high in authority under a Persian king (Esther 9:3-4).

However, in the power vacuum created after the northern Scythians devastated Assyria, the eastern Scythians (descendants of Israelites taken captive by Assyria) were given an opportunity to migrate out of the region. Apparently, many did so, and migrated northward and eastward out of Mesopotamia. Tamara Rice comments on the incredible expansion of Scythian territory after they withdrew from Assyria and Palestine:

*“The Scythians had ruled a large portion of western Asia for twenty-eight years. They were now back in Urartu...at this date...some*

*turned eastward again, to occupy the tract of steppe lying between the Caspian and the Sea of Aral, blending there with Dahai kinsmen to form an ethnic group from which the Parthians were to spring some three hundred years later. Others may have pushed on as far as India...whilst others remained in Armenia.”<sup>64</sup>*

The Persians launched a massive military expedition against the Scythians in the Black Sea area in an attempt to make them subjects of the Persian Empire. Herodotus claims that one motive for the Medo-Persian invasion of Scythia was to seek vengeance for the Scythian occupation of Media at the time the Scythians invaded Assyria.<sup>65</sup>

Needless to say, the Scythians had no desire to be conquered, and put up an effective defense. Their defense was so successful, in fact, that the Persians came close to losing their whole army. With an army of 700,000 men, King Darius passed through modern Turkey, crossed the Bosphorus on a bridge of ships, and attacked the Scythian/Israelite homeland north of the Black Sea by marching through modern Bulgaria and Romania.<sup>66</sup> The year was approximately 512 B.C. The Scythians drew the Persian army ever deeper into their homeland while harassing the Persians, but declining a pitched battle. As the Persians pursued the elusive Scythians, their supply lines became stretched and vulnerable. The Scythian custom of living in portable dwellings became invaluable to them as they remained ahead of the Persians. As they drew the Persians after them, they adopted a “scorched earth” policy, ruining and burning the vegetation.<sup>67</sup>

After much skirmishing, Herodotus records that the Scythians sent a herald to Darius with a mysterious gift of a bird, a mouse, a frog, and five arrows. The Persians were told to ascertain the

meaning of the message themselves, and they eventually determined it to be: "If you do not become birds and fly away into the sky or become mice and burrow into the earth or become frogs and leap into the lakes, there will be no homecoming for you, for we will shoot you down with our arrows."<sup>68</sup> The Persians did not know that the Scythians had attempted to cut off the Persian line of retreat by persuading the Greeks to destroy a bridge of ships across the Ister (Danube) River which was in their care. It nearly worked, but the Greeks refused to destroy the bridge. The Persians then fled from Scythia in haste, abandoning the weak and the wounded as they fled. The Black Sea Scythians retained their independence, without having to fight a full-scale battle.

Besides the above invasion of the western Scythians by Darius, the Persians had also launched another major invasion against the eastern Scythians under Cyrus the Great. In approximately 530 B.C., King Cyrus of Persia had invaded the eastern Scythians who were then located east of the Caspian Sea.<sup>69</sup> The Scythian tribes which were attacked were the **Massagetae** and the **Dahae**, with the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* noting that some accounts called the Dahae the **Dana** or **Dahans**.<sup>70</sup> The names of these Scythian tribes indicate that they were descendants of the Israelite tribes of **Manasseh** and either **Dan** or **Ephraimites from the clan of Tahanites** (Numbers 26:35). The Massagetae were then ruled by a queen named Tomyris. Although the English form of her name has come to us via a Greek translation of her name, the Hebrew name **Tamar** appears to be the root word of the name "**Tomyr**-is." The name Tamar was twice used in the Bible for females in the royal family of King David (II Samuel 13:1 and 14:27). Herodotus noted that "The Massagetae wear the same kind of clothes as the Scythians and live much the same."<sup>71</sup>

This was a much bloodier war than the one which Darius fought against the Black Sea Scyths, and it resulted in the death of King Cyrus in approximately 528 B.C.<sup>72</sup> Herodotus records that this Persian-Scythian war resulted from Persian aggression, writing that Cyrus “set his heart on subduing the Massagetae.”<sup>73</sup> The Massagetae were living in peace at the time, and Cyrus launched a war of aggression on them to force them to be his subjects. When Persia’s invasion was imminent, Queen Tomyris sent the following message to Cyrus: “King of the Medes, cease to be so eager to do what you are doing...rule over your own people, and endure to look upon us governing ours.”<sup>74</sup> It is noteworthy that the Scythians were willing to “live and let live,” but Persia persisted in its aggression. After some initial fighting, Queen Tomyris of the Massagetae offered Cyrus a second chance to cease hostilities and go back to his own land, but warned that “If you do not so, I swear by the sun, the lord of the Massagetae, that, for all your insatiability of blood, I will give you your fill of it.”<sup>75</sup>

As a digression, the above comment shows that the eastern Scyths were sun-worshippers. Those Israelites who had gone eastward into Assyrian captivity left Palestine while the Israelites were worshippers of Baal (the sun-god). When Assyria fell, they migrated into the region east of the Caspian Sea, but retained their sun-worship customs. This group of Scythians likely descended from the three and one-half tribes of Israel who went into captivity prior to the final Assyrian invasion of Palestine. That group included one-half of the tribe of Manasseh, and it would be fitting for the Manassehites (the “Massagetae”) to be their leading tribe.

History tends to look upon the Persians as “civilized” and the Scythians as “fierce barbarians.” Yet, here we see the Persians launching a war of unprovoked aggression, and the Scythians

living in peace, minding their own business, and twice urging a peaceful solution upon the Persians as they fought in self-defense. Who were the real “barbarians?”

Cyrus persisted in his aggression, and Herodotus described the ensuing battle.

*"Tomyris, since Cyrus would not listen to her, gathered all her host together and fought him. Of all the battles that were fought among the barbarians, I judge this to have been the severest, and indeed my information is that it is so. Long they remained fighting in close combat, and neither side would flee. But finally the Massagetae got the upper hand. The most of the Persian army died on the spot and, among them, Cyrus himself...Tomyris sought out his corpse among the Persian dead, and...she filled a skin with human blood and fixed his head in the skin, and, insulting over the dead, she said: 'I am alive and conqueror, but you have...rob [bed] me of my son [Tomyris' son died in the war]...Now...I will give you your fill of blood, even as I threatened.' There are many stories of the death of Cyrus, but this...seems to me the most convincing."*<sup>76</sup>

The invading Persian army was virtually “wiped out” as the Scythians defended their homeland. Persia’s emperor, Cyrus, was not only killed, but had his corpse humiliated. We do not know the total casualties in this war, but they must have been immense. Persia ruled a vast area and could assemble armies of over a million men. The army which Xerxes assembled against the Greeks was 1,700,000 men, and the army of Darius against

the Black Sea Scythians was 700,000 men.<sup>77</sup> Since the expedition against the Massagetae was led by King Cyrus himself, one would expect his army to have numbered in the hundreds of thousands. Yet the Massagetae utterly crushed the Persian army. It is strange that modern history stresses the histories of the Assyrian and Persian Empires, but in the three great wars fought between their empires and the Scythians, the Scythians decisively won all three. History teaches much about the losers of these wars, but rarely mentions the victorious Scythians.

There is further evidence that the Massagetae were descended from the ten tribes of Israel. Like the Scythians in the Black Sea region, the Massagetae were also called "Sacae" or "Saccae,"<sup>78</sup> indicating that they also bore the name of "Isaac."

Tamara Rice writes in *The Scythians*, that:

*"all the mounted nomads of the Scythian age **spoke the same Iranian tongue**, whether they came from the Dniester or the banks of the Oxus, there seems reason to think that.... **the majority were linked by some sort of racial tie**. A definite affinity is indeed suggested by the nature of their art, which shows well-nigh identical features over so wide an area."<sup>79</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

The reference to the Scyths of the "Dniester" and the "Oxus" Rivers denotes both the Black Sea Scyths who defeated Darius, and the Scyths (Massagetae) who lived east of the Caspian Sea and slaughtered the army of Cyrus. Scythian numbers and influence became so widespread that evidence of their culture has been found from central and eastern Europe to Manchuria.<sup>80</sup>

The Scythians, therefore, were a group of racially-related tribes

with a common language, a common attire, and a common lifestyle. Clearly, they shared a common heritage. As we have seen in this chapter, those Scythian tribes who bore the common name "Sacae" or "Saka" (i.e. those named after Isaac) had their common heritage in the old ten-tribed kingdom of Israel.

Virtually all historical accounts speculate that the Scythians originated in northern Asia and migrated southward to South Russia. However, the evidence strongly points to an opposite conclusion. Their linguistic traits (they all spoke "the same **Iranian** tongue") indicate that they originated in the Mesopotamian/Fertile Crescent region, and that they had migrated northward into South Russia. If they had originated in the dim recesses of northern Asia, their common language would be in the Mongolian family of languages, not the "Iranian" family of ancient languages. Also, their own artwork depicts the Sacae/Scythians as a bearded, Semitic race, further confirming their origin was in the Middle East. The only Semitic nation which "disappeared" from the Fertile Crescent just prior to the arrival of the Scythians in the Black Sea region were "the ten tribes of Israel." As soon as the ten tribes of Israel "disappeared" from their old territory, the Scythians (bearing the name of Isaac) "appeared" near the Black Sea and spread throughout the Russian steppes. The connection between the Israelites and Sacae/Scythians is not hard to understand.

Additionally, Greek historians noted that the Sacae/ Scythians were a civilized, cultured, just people. They killed their own royalty for possessing idols of the "mother-goddess" and refused to eat or sacrifice swine. (Both of these traits indicate a heritage which was based on the Hebrew Old Testament Law.) Their metallurgical skills, exquisite craftsmanship in gold artwork, and tastes for civilized possessions also argue for an origin in civilized Mesopotamia, not the illiterate and uncultured areas beyond the



steppes. The fact that the Scythians were composed of tribal groupings of racially related people also supports their identification as Israelites. The Israelites were all racially related, but preserved distinct tribal identities throughout their history. These tribal identities were so strong that even their enemies noted the tribal differences. For example, the Assyrian annals specifically identifies "Naphtali" as one of the Israelite tribes taken into captivity by the Assyrians.<sup>81</sup>

Although the Scythian tribes were racially related, they were by no means a united "empire." Tribal loyalties were paramount, and Scythian tribes even fought among themselves at times as they jostled each other for living space. Intertribal warfare was typical of the Israelite tribes. From the Bible's accounts, we know that Judah (the tribes of Judah and Benjamin) and Israel (the ten tribes) frequently fought very bloody wars. The tribe of Benjamin was almost wiped out in a civil war it fought with the other tribes in the pre-dynastic period (Judges 20-21). The tribe of Ephraim also fought a losing war against the tribes of Manasseh, Gad and Reuben (Judges 12:1-6). Ephraim and Manasseh were brother tribes, yet even they could come to blows. The fact that the Scythians put tribal loyalties above their common racial relationship was consistent with their Israelite history.

While the twelve Israelite tribes were all fathered by Jacob, they originated from four different mothers. As the twelve sons of Jacob took wives, the tribes became even more diverse. For example, Joseph married an Egyptian (Genesis 41:50-52), making Ephraim and Manasseh half-Egyptian. On the other hand, Judah married a Canaanite woman (Genesis 38). We do not know the ethnic background of all the wives of Jacob's sons, but as they married wives of different backgrounds, their bloodlines and progeny became even more divergent. As a result, the tribes did not all look and act alike. Indeed, some tribes did not get

along well with certain other tribes. Their natural state was to subdivide into tribal units; being united was the **exception**, not the **rule** in their history. Their times of unity were only made possible by divine action working through strong personalities (Moses, Joshua, or Kings David and Solomon).

This chapter began with a quote from the Jewish historian, Josephus, who recorded that the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel were exceedingly numerous and living in Asia during his lifetime. This fact was likely known to many educated Jews of his time. One contemporary of Josephus was the Apostle Paul, who was a highly educated Jew. Paul was a member of the Pharisees, a Jewish sect (Acts 26:5), and a student of Gamaliel, a venerated Jewish teacher (Acts 22:3). Did Paul know the Scythians were members of the ten tribes of Israel? A careful reading of Colossians 3:11 indicates the answer is "yes." Paul wrote:

*"Where there is neither Greek nor Jew,  
circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian  
[nor] Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all  
and in all."*

Paul here draws four sets of dichotomies to illustrate that all are free to become Christians, regardless of one's lineage or personal condition. "Greek nor Jew" is easy to understand, but consider the dichotomy between "Barbarian" and "Scythian." The Greek word translated "barbarian" means "foreigner" or "alien."<sup>82</sup> Paul grew up in Tarsus in Asia Minor and was likely more familiar with the Black Sea Scythians than the Jews from Judea. Paul had to battle the xenophobia of the Judean Christian Jews who did not want to have personal dealings with gentiles (i.e. "foreigners" or "aliens"). In Acts 10, it took divine action to induce the Apostle Peter and other Jews to even interact with gentiles. In Galatians 2:11-13, Paul had to oppose Peter's tendency to "backslide" into

avoiding gentiles. Therefore, in Colossians 3:11, Paul was drawing a dichotomy between “foreigners” and “Scythians.” How did the Scythians differ from “foreigners” in Paul’s mind? The obvious answer is that the Scythians were not racial “foreigners” to the Jews because they were fellow Israelites from the ten tribes of Israel.

The Greek word used by Paul for “Scythians” is significant. A concordance will confirm that the Greek word translated “Scythian” begins with the Greek character for “S” with the next consonant being a “k.”<sup>83</sup> In other words, Paul referenced the Scythians with a word beginning with “**S-k**,” the consonants of the root word for “**Saka**,” which designated the seed of Isaac. Paul was a brilliant Hebrew scholar, and surely knew about the promise of Genesis 21:12 that Israel’s seed would be known by the name of “Isaac.” It is doubtful that Paul would have referred to the Scythians by such a name unless he knew they were, indeed, the seed of Isaac.

Paul also wrote in II Timothy 1:11 that his primary mission was to be “a teacher of the gentiles [non-Israelites].” Given Paul’s avowed mission to evangelize gentiles, it is significant that he never went to Scythian territory. Apparently, Paul did not go to Scythia because he knew that the Scythians were not gentiles!

The various Scythian tribes lived for centuries in the Russian steppes. However, the eastern Scythians were eventually pushed into (and absorbed by) the Parthian Empire. The Parthians were also Sacae Scythians, and their empire will be discussed in the next two chapters. The Black Sea Scythians remained in their area for a longer period of time, but history records that they eventually “vanished.” As we shall see in chapter ten, they did not “vanish.” They were simply known by new names as they migrated elsewhere.

This concludes our chapter on the Scythians and their Israelite

heritage. Given the substantial role and power of the Scythians in the ancient world, modern ignorance about them is remarkable. The Scythian invasion and defeat of the Assyrian Empire was one of the major events of the ancient world. The Scythians also crushed the Persian Empire in two major wars. Indeed, they wiped out an entire Persian army and killed the famous Persian emperor, Cyrus the Great. At one time, Scythians inhabited territory from Eastern Europe to China. With such an impressive history, it is remarkable that modern texts on ancient history contain little or nothing about them. In contrast, the ancient Greek historian, Herodotus, regarded the Scythians as being one of the more important nations of the ancient world. If Scythia were to receive coverage commensurate with its role in history, it would be very hard to miss its origins in the ten tribes of Israel, which begs the question: Why have history texts ignored the Scythians to such a degree?

Scythian history has probably been ignored because mankind, in general, does not want to be reminded of the reality of God's preeminent and ongoing role in human history. The Apostle Paul observed that man's natural state of mind is one of "enmity" against God (Romans 8:7), and that mankind frequently does "not like to retain God in their knowledge" (Romans 1:28). If historical texts included all the knowledge contained in this chapter, they would have to acknowledge that God did keep his promise to vastly multiply the Israelites' population (verifying Bible prophecy), and that the ten tribes of Israel remained a major power in world events even after their migration out of Palestine. So, history texts are more comfortable in deemphasizing all nations and empires of Israelite origin, often labeling them as "barbarians."

As we have seen, the Carthaginians and "Sacae" Scythians were both descended from the ten tribes of Israel. However, their

Israelite origins and their major roles in ancient history are widely downplayed. However, this book has not yet examined the greatest ancient empire ruled by descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. That empire was Parthia! In fact, Parthia and Rome were two of the largest and most powerful empires that ever existed on the earth. Since they were concurrent empires, they became rivals in an ancient “superpower” struggle which lasted for centuries. The fascinating history of the Parthians and their great rivalry with the Roman Empire will be discussed in the next two chapters.

## Endnotes: Chapter Six

1. Josephus, *Antiquities*, XI, V, 2
2. Culican, *The Medes and the Persians*, p. 46
3. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 20, "Scythia," p. 237
4. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 24, "Scythians," p. 471
5. Tamara Talbot Rice, *The Scythians*, pp. 19-20 and p. 44
6. *Ibid*, pp. 104-105
7. Polosmak, "Siberian Mummy Unearthed," *National Geographic*, October, 1994, pp. 87-88
8. *Ibid*, p. 95
9. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 20, "Scythia," p. 238
10. *Ibid*, p. 238
11. Boris Piotrovsky, Liudmila Galanina and Nonna Grach, *Scythian Art*, plates 49-50, 120-121, 127-129, 134, 158, 166-173, 184-187, 202
12. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, p. 20
13. Culican, p. 50
14. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 2, Heading entitled "Babylonia and Assyria," Subhead: "Second Assyrian Empire," p. 857
15. *Ibid*, p. 857
16. Culican, p. 51
17. Rice, *The Scythians*, p. 45
18. Gawler, p. 9
19. Ragozin, *Media*, p. 414
20. Herodotus, *The History*, 4.17
21. Culican, p. 136
22. Rice, p. 22
23. Piotrovsky, Galanina and Grach, *Scythian Art*, see the extensive series of photographs following p. 21
24. Herodotus, *The History*, 4.17-4.20
25. Herodotus, *The History*, 4.46
26. Gawler, p. 5
27. *Ibid*, p. 5

28. Ragozin, *Media*, p. 418
29. Herodotus, *The History*, 7.64
30. Gawler, p. 6 (citing Sharon Turner, *Anglo-Saxons*, Vol. 1, p. 100)
31. *Ibid*, p. 6
32. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, Hebrew Lexicon Section, see words "Bayith" and "Beth," pp. 7-8
33. Bristowe, *Oldest Letters in the World*, pp. 8-9
34. Hall, H. R., *The Ancient History of the Near East*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. pp. 406-407
35. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 11, "Hebrew Religion," subhead: "The Religious Significance of the Amarna Age," p. 364
36. Benjamin, *Persia*, p. 79
37. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Persia," (subhead: Archaeology), p. 563
38. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 21, "Phoenicians," p. 950
39. Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 168
40. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, see "Dress," example no. 9, p. 227
41. Herodotus, *The History*, 7.64
42. *Ibid*, 4.63
43. *Ibid*, 4.76
44. *Ibid*, 4.5 and 4.7
45. Gawler, p. 5
46. *Collier's Encyclopedia*, Vol. 17, "Scythian," p. 434
47. Culican, p. 41
48. *The Bible as History*, pp. 272-273; and Ragozin, *Assyria*, p. 423
49. Keller, p. 272
50. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 2, "Babylonia and Assyria," Subhead: "Scythian Influence," p. 857
51. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 13, "Kalakh (Calah)," p. 241
52. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 2, "Babylonia and Assyria,"

Subhead: "Scythian Influence," p. 857

53. *Ibid*, p. 857
54. Herodotus, *The History*, 1.106
55. Keller, p. 273
56. Herodotus, *The History*, 1.104
57. *Ibid*, 1.105
58. Keller, p. 273
59. Herodotus, *The History*, 4.76
60. Herodotus, *The History*, 4.78-80
61. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 2, "Babylonia and Assyria", p. 851
62. Herodotus, *The History*, 1.106
63. *Ibid*, 4.76 and 4.80
64. Rice, *The Scythians*, p. 45
65. Herodotus, *The History*, 4.1 and 4.118
66. Herodotus, *The History*, 4.87-97
67. Herodotus, *The History*, 4.122
68. *Ibid*, 4.131-132
69. *Ibid*, 1.201-204
70. *Ibid*, 1.201; and *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Persia," p. 566
71. Herodotus, *The History*, 1.215
72. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Persia," Subhead: "The Empire of the Achaemenids," p. 567
73. Herodotus, *The History*, 1.201
74. *Ibid*, 1.206
75. *Ibid*, 1.212
76. *Ibid*, 1.214
77. *Ibid*, 4.87 and 7.60
78. Benjamin, *Persia*, p. 96
79. Rice, *The Scythians*, p. 42
80. *Ibid*, maps on pp. 40-41 and 104-105
81. Keller, p. 244



82. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see "Barbarian,"  
p. 70
83. *Ibid*, see word "Scythian," p. 844

## 7. Parthia—An Israelite Empire Rises in Asia

Many readers may wonder, upon seeing the title of this chapter, “Who or what was Parthia?” It is a testimony to the woeful lack of historical knowledge in the modern world that such a question could be asked. Parthia was a vast ancient empire which ruled over Asian territory at the same time that the Roman Empire ruled over the Mediterranean region. Although Rome launched many wars of aggression against Parthia, none succeeded in their aims of subjugating the Parthians. In fact, Parthia administered many crushing defeats to Roman armies as these two ancient “superpowers” opposed each other for centuries. In spite of the fact that much is known about Parthia’s history, it is almost totally ignored in history texts. How accurate a picture of ancient history would we have if textbooks neglected to mention the Roman Empire? It would yield a very distorted view of ancient history, wouldn’t it? Yet we now have an equally distorted view of world history as a result of Parthia’s omission from texts on ancient history.

A famous nineteenth century historian, George Rawlinson, wrote two books extensively documenting the history of the Parthian Empire. They were entitled *Parthia* and *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*. The Greco-Roman classical writers recorded a voluminous amount of information about Parthia, and Rawlinson extensively cites the classical writers in his histories of the Parthians. He introduces *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy* with these words:

*“...the picture of the world during the Roman period...put before students in ‘Histories of Rome,’ was defective, not to say false, in its omission to recognise the real position of Parthia... as a counterpoise to the power of Rome, a second figure in the picture not much*

*inferior to the first, a rival state dividing with Rome the attention of mankind and the sovereignty of the known earth. Writers of Roman history have been too much in the habit of representing [Rome] as...a Universal Monarchy, a Power unchecked...having no other limits than those of the civilised world...the truth seems to be that...from the first to the last...there was always in the world a Second Power, civilised or semi-civilised, which in a true sense balanced Rome, acted as a counterpoise and a check...This power for nearly three centuries (B.C. 64 – A.D. 225) was Parthia.”<sup>1</sup>*

The concept that Rome had equal rivals in the ancient world will come as a surprise to most readers. This chapter (and chapter eight) will attempt to restore a balanced perspective to our view of ancient history by a thorough discussion of the origins and history of Parthia. Chapter nine will include previously unknown information on the considerable role played by Parthian-Roman geopolitics in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

The lack of information on Parthia likely results from the fact that history has been taught almost exclusively from a Greco-Roman perspective. This preoccupation with Greco-Roman history has led to major misunderstandings about the reality of the ancient world. In earlier chapters we learned that ignorance of Phoenician and Carthaginian history has led to modern man's unawareness of the role of North America in ancient history. This was due to the Phoenician/ Carthaginian monopoly of Gibraltar which, for centuries, denied the Greco-Romans any maritime access to lands beyond the Mediterranean Sea. As a result, Greece and Rome were far less advanced than the Phoenicians

and Carthaginians in understanding world geography. Also, we learned in chapter six that Scythians (the Sacae Scythians) were civilized people, and that their power was so great that they devastated the Assyrian Empire and twice defeated the Persian Empire. Yet we read or hear almost nothing about them.

This chapter's title indicates that the Parthians were Israelites who descended from the ten tribes of Israel after their relocation to Asia. This chapter will present evidence supporting this assertion, and chapter eight will discuss the fascinating (and ignored) history of the Parthian Empire.

Who then were the Parthians? There is no record of their presence in Asia at all until the Persians refer to them in the sixth century B.C., and "there is no mention of them in the Old Testament, or in the Assyrian inscriptions, or in the Zendavesta."<sup>2</sup> This indicates they were not present in Asia until somewhat prior to the middle of the first millennium B.C. The Persians called them the "Parthva," and named them as a subject people involved in a revolt.<sup>3</sup> While they are acknowledged as not being Aryan in origin,<sup>4</sup> they are clearly identified as having a common origin with the Scythians. Rawlinson states, "there was a strong conviction on the part of those who came in contact with the Parthians, that they were Scyths,"<sup>5</sup> and adds "that the Scythic character of the Parthians is asserted in the strongest terms by the ancient writers."<sup>6</sup> Rawlinson cites the classical historians Strabo, Justin and Arrian in stating:

*"The manners of the Parthians had, they tell us, much that was Scythic in them. Their language was half-Scythic, half-Median. They armed themselves in the Scythic fashion. They were, in fact, Scyths in descent, in habits, in character."*<sup>7</sup>

This Scythian origin of the Parthians is further confirmed by the fact that many times in their history, ousted Parthian kings sought refuge among the Sacae tribes of the Scythians or replenished their armies with soldiers from Scythian tribes. This recurrent Parthian reliance on the Sacae tribes of Scythia in times of trouble indicates that the Parthians and Scythians were natural allies.

There is a record from Diodorus, a Greek historian of the first century B.C., that the Parthians had "passed from the dominion of the Assyrians to that of the Medes...to a similar position under the Persians."<sup>8</sup> Rawlinson also notes that early historians regarded the Parthians to be "exiles."<sup>9</sup> These statements are very significant. We know from previous chapters that two waves of Israelite captives were exiled into Asia by the Assyrians, and that some of them were located in the cities of the Medes. After the fall of Assyria's empire, it is logical that the Asian Israelites would come under the dominion of the Medes and Persians. Since the Parthians were related to the Sacae Scythians (who bore the name of Isaac), and since there is no record of any Parthians being in Asia until after the Israelites were brought there, it seems evident that the Parthians were exiled members of the ten tribes of Israel. Supporting this view is the fact that the Parthians were regarded as "exiles," an apt description for the displaced Israelites.

Apparently, the Parthians were not happy to be other nations' subjects. Rawlinson cites an account of Diodorus that they "revolted from the Medes and placed themselves under Scythian protection."<sup>10</sup> While Rawlinson offers this information, he states that Diodorus based it on a source which Rawlinson does not trust. Nevertheless, it is cited because it indicates that the Parthians looked to the Scythians as their protectors and liberators. This further supports the assertion that the Parthians

and Scythians were fellow tribesmen.

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* records that:

*"The alphabets in use in Persia, at least from the time of the Arsacid dynasty onwards, **are based upon the Aramaic**...The earliest records of Aramaic go back to about 800 B.C. and were found...in northern Syria... **Other developments of Aramaic are modern square Hebrew**..."*<sup>11</sup> (Emphasis added.)

The "Arsacid dynasty" was, as we shall see, the dynasty of the Parthians. That the Parthians utilized an Aramaic alphabet (and imposed it within their empire) powerfully indicates that the Parthians originated in the region of Syria and Palestine where the Aramaic language originated. The fact that the Parthians used a Semitic alphabet clearly indicates that their native language and racial origin were Semitic! Also, since early historians strongly maintain that the Parthians were a Scythic people, the Semitic nature of Parthia's language further argues for a Semitic origin for the Scythians. That the Parthian language was related to the Hebrew language also indicates that the Parthians were among the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, a large mass of Semites who were transplanted into Media and other Asian regions.

What little is preserved of the Parthian language also indicates a Semitic origin for the Parthians. Rawlinson states the Parthian word for "city" was "karta" or "kerta."<sup>12</sup> In chapter five, the Semitic/Israelite origin of Carthage was examined, and it was noted that the original Semitic name of Carthage was "Kirjath Hadeschath." The original Semitic name of Carthage is also rendered as "Kart Hadasht," meaning "new city."<sup>13</sup> The Semitic origin of Carthage is well-established, and they used the word "kirjath" or "kart (a shortened version of **kirjath**)" for "city." The

Parthians used the same word ("karta") for "city," indicating that the Carthaginians and the Parthians had a common Semitic origin. We shall also later examine the role of the Parthian "Magi," an influential portion of Parthia's ruling classes. An early Carthaginian ruler was named "Mago,"<sup>14</sup> again indicating a common linguistic heritage with the Parthians.

A prominent family of Parthians was called the "Suren" family,<sup>15</sup> and one of their hereditary rights was to crown each newly-elected king.<sup>16</sup> The word "Suren" (it also appears as "surena" or "surenas") is a Hebrew composite word. The Hebrew word "sur" includes the meaning "**reign**" or "**make princes.**"<sup>17</sup> The Hebrew word "en" (or "ayin") includes the meaning "face," "eye," "sight" or "presence."<sup>18</sup> The Parthian name "suren" is Hebrew for a person whose "presence makes princes" or "reign in his (eye)sight." The Parthian Suren did exactly what the Hebrew words signify, showing a parallel between the Hebrew and the Parthian languages. What little is preserved about the Parthian language indicates that it originated in the Semitic/Hebrew family of languages. We shall also see that many of the personal and place names of the Parthians were not just Semitic, but were specifically, Israelite in nature.

After the Persian Empire's fall, Parthian territory fell into the hands of the Greeks under Alexander the Great. In the division of Alexander's kingdom at his death, Parthia was ruled by the Seleucid Greek Empire. In approximately 256 B.C., the provinces of Parthia and Bactria revolted against Seleucid Greek rule, and declared their independence. There is some difference of opinion whether they revolted in the same year or in proximate years,<sup>19</sup> but there is a consensus that the development and independence of Parthia and Bactria were intertwined.<sup>20</sup> Some historians record that Arsaces, the first king of the Parthians, was a Bactrian, but most accounts agree that he was the chieftain of a Scythian tribe

(the Dahanites) who slew the Greek satrap and liberated his Parthian kinsmen.<sup>21</sup> It should also be noted that "Arsaces," the Scythian founder of Parthia's dynasty, included the name of "Isaac" and the "Sacae" Scythians in his personal name ("Ar-sac-es").

Hosea 1:6-10 recorded a promise from God that he would make the Israelites too numerous to count after he sent them into captivity. The Jewish historian Josephus confirmed that this had happened by the first century A.D. Given their huge population, it is logical **that the Israelites would also have become known by the names of their sub-tribes in addition to the names of their principal tribes.** Many are aware that some parts of the Bible record genealogies of the tribes of Israel, and many people regard them as the most boring parts of the Bible. However, for historical research, these sections can be invaluable. Among other things, they indicate the names of the individual clans of the tribes of Israel, and some of these names can be located in geographic and proper names in the postexilic period.

For example, Numbers 26:35-36 records that sub-tribes (or clans) of the Israelite tribe of Ephraim were named the **Bachrites**, the **Eranites**, and the **Tahanites**. The old Seleucid province of **Bactria**, which grew up in conjunction with Parthia, bears the name of one of the sub-tribes of Ephraim in a Hellenized form. An Israelite origin for Bactria is supported by the indication that the Bactrian language "...was related to Saka, or at least underwent strong influences from Saka tongues."<sup>22</sup> The record that the Bactrians welcomed a Scythian ruler who freed them from a Greek satrap, and the further indication that the Bactrians shared a linguistic heritage with the Parthians argues that the Bactrians were also Sacae (or Saka) who had descended from the ten tribes of Israel. Henry Rawlinson, in his



book *Bactria*, states: "there seems to be very little doubt that the population of Bactria was largely Scythian"...(and cites Justin, a classical author, who wrote)... "The Bactrian Empire was founded by the Scythians." <sup>23</sup>

Numbers 26:36 also notes that another clan of the tribe of Ephraim descended from **Eran** and was known as the "**Eranites**." A group of people known as **the Eranians** were present in the region of ancient Persia and Parthia.<sup>24</sup> It is significant that Assyria transplanted the defenders of Samaria (an Ephraimite city) into "the cities of the Medes." Therefore, we would expect thereafter to notice some Ephraimite names in the Medo-Persian region. The "**Eranians**" bore the exact Hebrew name of one of the clans of Ephraim in the area of Persia/Parthia. This name survives today in the modern name for the territory of ancient Persia: **Iran**. Indeed, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in referencing "Eran" in its Index section, simply states "Eran: see Iran."<sup>25</sup> The modern capital of Iran is named **Teheran**, also preserving the name of this Ephraimite clan, **This book in no way maintains or implies that the modern Iranians are Israelites as it is very clear from subsequent history that the modern Iranians are principally Medo-Persian in racial origins.** However, the name "Iran" apparently does come from the name of one of the clans of Ephraim, which was placed in Medo-Persian territory by the Assyrians and lived there for many centuries.

There is evidence of considerable Semitic influence in ancient Persia. In commenting on the ancient Pehlevi (Pahlavi) Persian language, Zenaide Ragozin states:

*"Pehlevi...does not seem to be Persian at all, but rather Semitic. That is, an enormous proportion of the words - nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions -*

*are Semitic, while the grammar and construction...are Eranian... [and questions how this could have happened]...if not by constant contact with old Semitic nations.”*<sup>26</sup>

The obvious reason why Pehlevi, an old Persian tongue, had such a strong Semitic character is that a large portion of the ten tribes of Israel (a Semitic nation) was forcibly resettled in Medo-Persian areas by the Assyrians. Additionally, large numbers of Jews were settled in Mesopotamia when Judah fell to the Babylonians. The descendants of all those captive Israelites were later absorbed into the Persian Empire. Indeed, many Jews (Daniel, Esther, Mordechai, Nehemiah, Ezra, etc. had very high governmental positions in the Persian Empire). Since the Jews were Semites, they also influenced the language of Persia in a Semitic direction. Later, when the Parthians (descendants of the ten tribes of Israel) ruled the whole region for centuries, their Semitic language would have greatly impacted the language of Persia. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* also notes the Semitic nature of the Persian Pahlavi language:

*“The name [Pahlavi or Pehlevi], which means Parthian, can be traced back for many centuries...The great peculiarity of the language is that though it is Iranian, it is full of Semitic (Aramaic) words...”*<sup>27</sup>

Given the information contained in this book, it is not at all peculiar that this Persian language should have such a strong Semitic background. Various officials of the Achaemenid Persian Empire were from the Israelite tribe of Judah, and the Parthians were themselves descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. The term “Iran” comes from the Ephraimite clan named after “Eran,” and even the term “Pahlavi” or “Pehlevi” contains the name of the Israelite tribe of Levi!

As mentioned above, the Scythian clan of the **Dahanites** had a major role in the origins of Parthia's independence. It is possible that they were from a third major branch of the Ephraimites mentioned in Numbers 26:35...the "**Tahanites**." If the Dahanites were the Tahanites of Ephraim ("d" and "t" are linguistically-similar consonants), it would mean that Parthian independence began as a result of three separate clans of the tribe of Ephraim acting in concert. The Bactrians, Eranians and Dahanites were most likely the Ephraimite clans of the Bachrites, the Eranites, and the Tahanites, and their mutual cooperation would have been the backbone of Parthia's strength. The subsequent stability of Parthia argues that its component clans were closely related and had much in common. This stability is understandable if the above clans were all part of the tribe of Ephraim. While the name "Dahanites" also seems similar to the tribe of Dan, it is doubtful they were Danites. The tribe of Dan traditionally did not act in concert with (or consult) the other tribes about its actions. Joshua 19:47 records the Danites undertook a war without advise or cooperation from the other tribes, and Ezekiel 27:17-19 shows the Danites had developed an identity completely apart from the other tribes. Since the Danites were historically "loners" among the tribes of Israel, it is likely the Scythian "Dahanites" were the "Tahanites" of Ephraim. Since Ephraimite names predominate in Parthia's origin, and since the Massagetae were one of the foremost tribes of their Scythian kinsmen, it indicates that Ephraim and Manasseh (the major tribes of the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel, and inheritors of the "birthright" promise of Genesis 48 that included national greatness) were the dominant tribes of the Parthians and Scythians, respectively. No wonder that history records a very close relationship between the Scythians and the Parthians. However, even though the Parthians were kinsmen to (and frequently allied to) the Scythians, they were not always

peaceable with one another (as we shall see in the next chapter). As further evidence of the Israelite origins of the Parthians, some Parthian cities were given Hebrew names. An early capital of the Parthians was named **Dara**,<sup>28</sup> which is the **exact** name of one of the early forebears of the tribe of Judah (I Chronicles 2:3-6).

God had promised that the tribe of Judah would produce kings and rulers (the "sceptre" promise of Genesis 49:10), and King David was promised that he would always have descendants ruling over the **House of Israel** (Jeremiah 33:17). Jeremiah's prophecy was made after the relocation of the House of Israel (the northern ten tribes) into Asia. Therefore, because of the timing of Jeremiah's prophecy, we should expect to find descendants of King David ruling over the ten tribes of Israel after they moved to Asia.

However, the Jewish forebear named "Dara" was of the subtribe of Zerah, not the Phares branch of the Jews which produced both King David and Jesus Christ. This reference to the Zerah branch of Judah is rare in Parthian annals, but there are many Parthian kings with names containing the root word "Phares" (indicating David's royal bloodline). From the eastern edge of Parthian rule and influence to the western edge, Parthian kings regularly included the "Phares" name. A Parthian king who ruled in the area of West India was named **Gondophares**,<sup>29</sup> and several kings ruling over the Caucasus mountain kingdom of **Iberia** were named **Pharasmanes**.<sup>30</sup>

Chapter four noted that the term "Iberia" is a name derived from the root word "Eber," the father of the Hebrews. Strabo records that the Iberians were the **kinsmen** of the Scythians,<sup>31</sup> whose Israelite origin has already been demonstrated. The above examples alone show that David's descendants of the House of **Phares** were ruling over separate groups of the ten tribes of Israel from the Caucasus Mountains to the territory of modern

India. Also, many kings of Parthia itself had names indicating that they were also royal members of the Davidic line of Judah. Such names include the key consonants of PH-R-S in Hellenized forms of their Parthian names (such Parthian royal names as Phraates, Phraortes, and Phraataces are examples). Over the centuries God kept his promise to David by causing David's descendants to rule over many Israelite nations in Asia.

How did David's descendants (from the defunct kingdom of Judah) ever come to rule over the descendants of the ten tribes in Asia? While God can easily intervene in world affairs to keep his promises, the Bible suggests how this might have happened. In II Kings 24:8-15, we read that one of the last kings of Judah, Jehoiachin, was carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Was this the end of him? Hardly! II Kings 25:27-30 shows that after 37 years of captivity, a later king of Babylon:

*"...did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; and he spake kindly to him, **and set his throne above the thrones of the kings that were with him in Babylon...**" (KJV)*

The king of Babylon was supreme over the Babylonian Empire, but he was served by many subordinate rulers, who were vassal kings over assigned areas. That a Babylonian king gave Jehoiachin a **throne** indicates that Jehoiachin was made a vassal ruler over part of the Babylonian Empire. Indeed, the account states that he was set "above" the other vassal kings! Since there were many descendants of the ten tribes of Israel who were subordinate to the Babylonian Empire (which inherited them when it conquered Assyria), it is most likely that Jehoiachin was made a ruler over the Israelites in Babylon's Empire. Since Jehoiachin was a descendant of King David (of the Phares line), his descendants apparently established a dynasty which

continued to rule over descendants of the ten tribes when they regained their independence. I Chronicles 3:16-24 records that the royal family of Judah did not die out, but produced many descendants during the generations after the fall of Jerusalem. There was no shortage of royal princes of David's House to place on thrones over the descendants of the ten tribes. Since the Babylonian king made Jehoiachin a favored vassal king, he may have set some of Jehoiachin's relatives in positions of power as well. Perhaps the Babylonians felt that the captive nations of the Assyrians (whom they inherited as subjects) would exhibit less rebelliousness if they were given their own hereditary rulers as vassal kings. A search would have found Jehoiachin, a hereditary Israelite ruler, alive in a dungeon. The years in prison likely made Jehoiachin a very grateful vassal king, indeed!

**Royal Line of King David**

Israel/Judah:	Judah	➔	<u>Pha<u>r</u>e<u>s</u></u>	➔	David
Iberia/Scythia:	King <u>Pha<u>r</u>e<u>s</u>menes</u>				
Parthian/Saka: (India)	King <u>Gondopha<u>r</u>e<u>s</u></u>				
Parthia/Sacae:	Kings <u>Phra<u>a</u>tes</u> , <u>Phra<u>a</u>ortes</u> , <u>Phra<u>a</u>ta<u>c</u>e<u>s</u></u>				
Christ's Lineage:	<u>Pha<u>r</u>e<u>s</u></u>	➔	David	➔	Jesus Christ

However, this is not the only source of Davidic rulers over the ten tribes of Israel. The kings of Iberia (named Pharasmanes) in the Caucasus region near the Black Sea were not captives of Assyria or Babylon. How did David's descendants come to rule in that region? In chapter four an account was cited that a large portion of the ten tribes who escaped Assyrian captivity by

migrating northward into the Caucasus were led by a “chief or prince whom they appointed.”<sup>32</sup> This indicates that they made a clean break with whatever dynasty was ruling Israel in its last days, and that a new leader was “appointed” by the escaping Israelites. The subsequent evidence that their rulers included the name of “Phares” argues that this group of the ten tribes picked a “prince” of David’s royal line as their new leader. They migrated in approximately 724-721 B.C., and by 653 B.C. a leader of a Scythian-Cimmerian-Median alliance against Assyria was led by a person named “Phraortes.”<sup>33</sup> The name “Phraortes” includes the root word **PH-R-S (Phraortes)**, indicating a likely link to the Davidic royal line of Phares. Phraortes is often regarded as a “Mede,” but his name is similar to the names of later Parthian kings (“**Phraates**” or “**Phraataces**”). This indicates that Phraortes was a Scythian bearing a “Parthian” royal name even though “Parthia” would not exist for another 400 years! It is apparent that Davidic rulers of the line of Phares were ruling in Scythic Iberia a century before Jehoiachin was made a vassal king of the Babylonians in approximately 563 B.C.

While David’s descendants were ruling, literally, all over Asia among the scattered descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, the reader should not assume that their reigns were all enlightened or cooperative. David was given the blessing that his seed would always be rulers over the ten tribes of Israel; however, David’s descendants were also under a curse. After David committed adultery with Bathsheba and also arranged the death of her husband, Uriah, Nathan the prophet was sent by God to deliver a curse (II Samuel 12:10) that “the sword shall never depart from thine house.” The “sword” symbolizes that death by violence and murder would be common among David’s descendants. This happened in David’s lifetime as Amnon, David’s eldest son, was killed by Absalom, David’s favorite son; Absalom was then killed during a rebellion against David, and another of David’s sons

(Adonijah) was killed by King Solomon (David's son via Bathsheba). This curse also clung to the ruling house of Parthia. As we shall see in chapter eight, Parthia's Arsacids regularly fought among themselves over the throne of Parthia, and the more brutal rulers killed many of their own relatives in order to eliminate rivals to the throne. Yet, no matter how brutal or vicious the Arsacids were among themselves, the Parthians always insisted that their rulers had to be blood members of the Arsacid family.

Another prominent city of Parthia was named **Asaak**,<sup>34</sup> where Arsaces was crowned king, which clearly represents a form of the name "Isaac." The name of Isaac had also been attached to geographical areas in Asia long before Parthia ever became independent. Strabo records that Alexander the Great noted a region named **Asaacanus** which was traversed in Alexander's expedition to India.<sup>35</sup>

The Parthian province of Media Atropatene was located southwest of the Caspian Sea. The noted historian, George Rawlinson, records that (in Parthian times) "Its chief city was Gaza."<sup>36</sup> This city was apparently named after the famous old Palestinian city of the same name, arguing its inhabitants had come from Palestine. Given the fact that II Kings 17:6 records that the Assyrian conquerors of old Israel had transported Israelite captives to the "cities of the Medes," it is not surprising that we later find a city of the Medes bearing a Palestinian name.

In the Parthian province of Hyrcania (located on the southeast shores of the Caspian Sea), we find that two of its chief cities were named "Samariane" and "Carta."<sup>37</sup> These names are clear evidence of the presence of Israelites from the former ten-tribed kingdom of Israel. Israel's capital city was named Samaria, and II Kings 17:6-7 records that its inhabitants, after a three-year siege, were transplanted by the Assyrians into Asia after the city



fell. Centuries later, we find a Parthian city, Samariane, bearing the name of the capital city of the old Kingdom of Israel. It is logical that Israelite captives would later move to a place of their choosing (after the Assyrian Empire disintegrated), and name one of their new cities in honor of their ancestral capital. The city named "Carta" bears the same Semitic root word which is present in the name "Carthage" (as was discussed earlier in this chapter).

There is additional evidence to support the Israelite origins of the Parthians. While initial Parthian coins were inscribed in Greek, later Parthian coins bear Semitic inscriptions.<sup>38</sup> The Parthian monarchs, whose faces are shown on their coins, clearly exhibit facial features of the white race, supporting a Semitic origin for the Parthian nation.<sup>39</sup> Whether we look at their language, their names or their faces, all hard evidence indicates a Semitic origin for the Parthians, debunking speculation that the Parthians were a Mongoloid (Oriental) race from the interior of Asia.

During Jesus Christ's ministry, Matthew 10:6 states that he sent his twelve apostles "to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." Biblical references to the House of Israel identify the ten tribes of Israel, not the Jews (who were called the House of Judah). **Since Jesus Christ commissioned his apostles to go to the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, it is clear that Jesus knew that the Israelites could be found in specific homelands at that time.** Also, the apostles expressed no surprise at this commission as not one of them said: "No one knows where the ten tribes are!" or "They were all 'lost' long ago!"

Josephus and Jesus Christ did not consider the ten tribes to be "lost" at all, but rather living in known geographical locations. It is significant that the Apostle Peter wrote the book of I Peter from the city of Babylon (I Peter 5:13). Since Babylon was a city

of the Parthian Empire at that time, it indicates that Peter had heeded Jesus Christ's instructions by traveling to territory ruled by the ten tribes. Historical accounts also assert that the Apostle Thomas traveled within Parthia. Indeed, the early church historian Eusebius identified Thomas as the apostle sent to the Parthians.<sup>40</sup> There are historical records which link the Apostle Thomas to the Parthian king Gondophares (mentioned earlier), who reigned in ancient India.<sup>41</sup> The presence of the apostles of Jesus Christ in Parthian territory shows their recognition that the Parthians were Israelites.

It is also significant that there were Parthian believers in the God of Israel who made pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the annual Holy Days of God. Acts 2:1-10 states that Parthians were present at the Pentecost Day when the Holy Spirit was poured out to the Apostles. The Medes, Elamites and "dwellers in Mesopotamia" mentioned in Acts 2:9 had all come from Parthian provinces. Since part of the ten tribes had been settled in Media (II Kings 17:6), it is likely that the "Medes" who made a religious pilgrimage to Jerusalem were Israelites from the ten tribes. Some of these pilgrims were certainly Jews living in Parthia, but many were not Jews. Verse 10 indicates that these pilgrims were "Jews and proselytes (non-Jews)." Since Israelites from the ten tribes were non-Jews, the term "proselytes" could apply to them as well as gentiles. The Holy Day which the apostles and devout pilgrims were keeping (later called Pentecost) was the Feast of Weeks (Leviticus 23:15-21).

In the preceding chapter, it was shown that the old Phoenician/ Hebrew trait of wearing a pointed hat (or miter) was continued in the Scythian tribes. Parthian coins show that the wearing of a pointed hat or miter was also a custom of the Parthian kings.<sup>42</sup>

One more item of evidence concerning the Israelite nature of the Parthian Empire will be presented, and then chapter eight will

examine its fascinating, albeit obscure, history. The final piece of evidence concerns the name "Parthia" itself. In chapter three it was pointed out that the Hebrew word for "covenant," (B-R-T or B-R-TH) was commonly used wherever the empire of Israel was dominant. This Hebrew word formed the basis for regions colonized by Israel ("Briton and "Brittany") or for migrating groups of Israelites ("Brythonic Celts") We have seen that the Phoenician/Hebrew Empire and Carthage placed the Hebrew word "B-R-T" on their coins. How does this all pertain to the Parthians?

In the ancient world, the letters "B" and "P" were interchangeable (both are phonetic "labial" sounds). In his book, *Phoenician Origin of Britons, Scots and Anglo-Saxons*, L.A. Waddell points out that the "Phoenicians" interchanged the B's and P's in various forms of the word B-R-T. He lists many ancient forms in which the root word B-R-T was expressed. Words such as "Barat," "Prat," "Britannia," and "Piritum" are just a few samples of words based on the Hebrew word for "covenant."<sup>43</sup> The Ancient British Chronicles record that the first king of Briton was named Brutus, whose name was also formed by the B-R-T consonants of the Hebrew word for "covenant."<sup>44</sup> Waddell notes that the Phoenicians interchanged the B's and P's in the Mediterranean world, and adds that the Phoenicians of Cilicia called the city of Tarsus "Parthenia"<sup>45</sup> (Emphasis added.) The Greeks also interchanged P's and B's, as the Greek explorer Pytheas referred to the British Isles by the term "Pretanic" (using a P) while Aristotle refers to them by the word "Britannic" (using a B).<sup>46</sup>

Since the Greeks interchanged P's and B's and they wrote of the Parthians, the word "Parthia" could just as easily have been written as "Barthia" or "Brithia." In these forms the Hebrew word for covenant- "B-R-T" or "B-R-TH," is clearly evident. In fact, if

the reader will consult a biblical concordance, the Hebrew word for covenant will likely be "Berith" (with the consonants B-R-TH).<sup>47</sup> Representing the "B" as a "P" the consonants become P-R-TH, the exact consonants of the word "Parthia!" The identity of the Parthians is no longer a mystery. They were the "covenant" people of the ten tribes of Israel who were then living in Asia; their very name declared to the world that they were the "covenant" people. Indeed, an early king of their Scythian kinsmen named Partatua (circa 626 B.C.) included the P-R-T root word which foreshadowed the later name: "Parthia."<sup>48</sup>

The interchangeability of the P's and B's in the ancient world has also been noted by a modern epigrapher, Dr. Barry Fell. He gives the name "P-Celts" to a group of Celts who used "P" and "B" interchangeably. These "P" Celts were the "Brythonic" Celts, and they gave birth to the Breton, Welsh and Cornish languages as well as the ancient "Gaulish languages of central and eastern Europe."<sup>49</sup> The "P-Celts" were Israelites who, retaining the designation as the "covenant" people, migrated westward toward the British Isles and Europe rather than northward and eastward into Asia as did the Israelites who became the Iberians, the Sacae Scythians and the Parthians.

The arrival of the "P-Celts" in Briton represented another infusion of Israelite people into a population which was already largely a product of Israelite colonization. In fact, the dominant Israelite presence in Britain is confirmed in the fact that the British Isles have been known by variants of the Hebrew word for "covenant" (B-R-T) ever since the reigns of Kings David and Solomon.

## ISRAELITES: THE "COVENANT" PEOPLE

The Bible records that the tribes of Israel, under Moses, made a "covenant" with God. The Israelites retained the unique awareness that they were the "covenant" people as an enduring part of their culture. The Hebrew word for "covenant" ("B-R-T" or "B-R-TH") was placed on people, places and Phoenician/Carthaginian coins. The presence of the Hebrew word for "covenant" on ancient peoples or places is a strong identifier for locating where the ten tribes of Israel migrated after leaving Palestine. Listed below are important examples.

### HEBREW WORD FOR "COVENANT"

Without Vowels: B-R-T, B-R-TH

With Vowels: BERITH, BARAT, BRYTH, BRIT, B'RITH, etc.

### TRIBAL/PLACE NAMES ASSOCIATED WITH MIGRATING ISRAELITES:

BRITON, BRETON, BRITTANY, BRYTHONIC CELTS, etc.

Some ancient cultures interchanged the letters "P" and "B" (both are labial consonants with similar sounds). The Brythonic Celts, who settled in ancient Britain, were known as P-Celts because of this trait. The ancient Greeks also manifested this trait, using the term "Pretanic Islands" for "Brittanic Islands." Since the term Parthia has also come to us from early Greek writers, substituting a "B" for the initial "P" of this word results in BARTHIA or B'RTHIA, a clear proclamation by the Parthians that they were descended from the "covenant" people of the ten tribes of Israel.

<u>Place Name</u>		<u>Greek Name</u>
<u>BRITANNIC ISLANDS</u>	=	<u>PRETANIC ISLANDS</u>
<u>BRITHIA</u> or <u>B'RITHIA</u>	=	<u>PARTHIA</u>

In conclusion, let us briefly review the overwhelming evidence that the Parthians were Israelites of the ten tribes of Israel who had migrated to Asia. The Parthians were never recorded as being in Asia until after the ten tribes of Israel relocated to Asia. The Bible records that these tribes were placed in the "cities of the Medes," and Parthia's homeland adjoined the territory of the Medes. History records the Parthians were first under the dominion of the Assyrians, and that was also the fate of those Israelites taken captive by the Assyrians. We can see the names of sub-tribes of Ephraim in the Parthian homelands, and history is clear that the Parthians were the kinsmen of the Scythian Saka/Sacae (showing that the Parthians were also known as descendants of Isaac).

The Parthians and Scythians are the people written about by Josephus as the extremely numerous descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. Josephus, who lived in the first century A.D., wrote the following about the ten tribes of Israel:

*"...**the ten tribes are beyond Euphrates** till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers."<sup>50</sup>*  
(Emphasis added.)

At the time that Josephus wrote, the Euphrates River had long been the recognized border between the Roman and Parthian Empires. For Josephus to write (from his perspective within the Roman Empire) that the ten tribes were "beyond the Euphrates River" was another way of saying the ten tribes were "in Parthia," even as many Americans would recognize the phrase "beyond the Rio Grande" as a euphemism for "in Mexico."

The Parthian cities of Asaak, Dara and Samariane were given Hebrew names. Many groups from the Parthian Empire were among the worshippers of the God of Israel who were in

Jerusalem for a Holy Day of God (the first Pentecost). The Parthians had Hebrew/Semitic words in their language, and placed Semitic inscriptions on their coins. The Parthian Arsacid dynasty included the name of Isaac and many individual kings had names which included the term "Phares," fulfilling God's promise to David that his descendants would continue to have rulers over the **House of Israel**. The very name "Parthia" preserves the Hebrew word "B-R-TH" (with the "B" shown as a "P"), proclaiming that they were "the covenant people." The facts are clear. The Parthian Empire was an empire of Israelites who, having thrown off the dominion of their captors, were now ruling over their previous masters.

While Rome dominated the Mediterranean region and much of Europe, the Parthian Empire dominated the territory between the Euphrates and Indus Rivers and between the Persian Gulf to the Russian steppes of the Scythian tribes. The Parthian Empire stretched approximately 1900 miles from east to west and 1000 miles from north to south.<sup>51</sup>

Parthia and Rome interacted on equal terms, yet few in the modern world have ever heard about Parthia. Rome and Parthia had major wars (the result of Roman aggression), major summit conferences and even a period of detente. Parthia was a monarchy with the beginnings of a bicameral government and its own "Independence Day." It offered "home rule" to many of its cities, and ruled its subjects in a far more benevolent manner than did Rome.

The rarely discussed, but true story of this ancient, Israelite empire will now be revealed in chapter eight.

## **Endnotes: Chapter Seven**

1. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, Preface, pp. v-vi
2. Rawlinson, *Parthia*, p. 27
3. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, p. 15
4. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, p. 22
5. *Ibid*, p. 19
6. *Ibid*, p. 20
7. *Ibid*, p. 19
8. *Ibid*, p. 26
9. *Ibid*, p. 19
10. *Ibid*, see footnote 1, p. 15
11. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 1, "Alphabet," pp. 683-684
12. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, p. 23
13. Charles-Picard, *Daily Life in Carthage*, p. 27
14. Church, *Carthage*, p. 13
15. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, pp. 58, 213, 220, and 238
16. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, p. 159
17. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, Hebrew Lexicon, word "Sur," p. 48
18. *Ibid*, word "Ayin (=En)", third meaning, p. 6
19. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, p. 44
20. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, p. 208;  
and Rawlinson, *Parthia*, p. 10
21. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 42-44;  
and *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Parthia," p. 344
22. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, p. 198-199
23. Rawlinson, Henry, *Bactria*, p. 12
24. Ragozin, *Media*, pp. 15-21
25. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 24, Index Section,  
see "Eran," p. 580
26. Ragozin, *Media*, p. 20-22
27. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Pahlavi or Pehlevi," p. 30



28. Frye, p. 210; and *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Parthia," p. 345
29. Frye, p. 201; and *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Persia," p. 577
30. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 231-233, 263, 320-321
31. Strabo, *Geography*, 11, 3, 3
32. Gawler, p. 9
33. Culican, *The Medes and Persians*, p. 50
34. Frye, p. 211; and *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Parthia," pp. 344-345
35. Strabo, *Geography*, 15, 1, 27
36. Rawlinson, *Ancient History*, p. 474
37. *Ibid*, p. 475
38. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 297 and 318
39. *Ibid*, pp. 63, 69, 91, 220, 228, 250, 269, 294, 296 and 320
40. Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, III, 1
41. Frye, p. 201; and *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17 "Persia," p. 577
42. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 68 and 91
43. Waddell, pp. 52-59
44. *Ibid*, pp. 150-159
45. *Ibid*, p. 54
46. *Ibid*, pp. 54 and 146
47. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, Hebrew Lexicon, word "Berith," p. 8
48. Rice, *The Scythians*, p. 45
49. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 41-42
50. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XI, V, 2
51. Rawlinson, *Ancient History*, p. 472

## **8. Parthia—The Forgotten Ancient “Superpower”**

This chapter will offer readers a narrative of the history of the Parthian Empire, an ancient “superpower” about which little is known in the modern world. In the nineteenth century British historian, George Rawlinson, lamented the widespread lack of awareness concerning Parthia’s greatness A.D. This chapter will begin by repeating his quote which began chapter seven:

*“the picture of the world during the Roman period...put before students in ‘Histories of Rome,’ was defective, not to say false, in its omission to recognize the real position of Parthia...as a counterpoise to the power of Rome, a second figure in the picture not much inferior to the first, a rival state dividing with Rome the attention of mankind and the sovereignty of the known earth. Writers of Roman history have been too much in the habit of representing [Rome]...as a Universal Monarchy...having no other limits than those of the civilised world...To the present writer the truth seems to be that...from first to last...there was always in the world a Second Power...which in a true sense balanced Rome, acted as a counterpoise and a check...This power for nearly three centuries (B.C. 64 – A.D. 225) was Parthia...In the hope of gradually vindicating to Parthia her true place in the world’s history, the Author has...put forth [the history of Parthia].”<sup>1</sup>*

In neglecting the history of the Parthian Empire, modern historians are committing an omission similar to what future historians would be doing if they discussed the histories of the

twentieth century entirely from the standpoint of Russia, and mentioned the United States only as a footnote. While a great deal is known about Parthia, very little about Parthia is ever taught. Rawlinson's books about Parthia are based on the histories of the Greco-Roman classical writers (such as Justin, Dio Cassius, Strabo, Pliny and Herodian), who wrote extensively about the history of Parthia. It is very odd, indeed, that although the classical writers deemed Parthia worthy of much attention, modern history texts virtually ignore this ancient world empire.

Rawlinson begins Parthia's period as "Rome's equal" in 64 B.C. In fact, Parthia was a great empire long before that date, but had little contact with Rome in its early period. Parthia's first great opponent was the Seleucid Greek Empire, which was heir to much of the conquests of Alexander the Great, including the land of the Parthians.

Parthia, a province of the Seleucid Empire, was located southeast of the Caspian Sea and declared its independence from the Seleucid Greek Empire in 256-250 B.C. To help modern readers relate to their action, the Parthian action was similar to that of the American colonies in 1776 who declared their independence from the British Empire. Just as the American colonies had been ruled by the large and powerful British Empire, the Parthians were ruled by the large and powerful Seleucid Greek Empire. Like the Americans, the Parthians had to fight for their independence before it became a reality.

While the Parthians had been a distinct, Semitic people ever since their ancestors were transplanted from ancient Israel to Asia, they had been subjects of the Assyrians, the Medo-Persians, and then the Seleucid Greeks. The first independent king of Parthia was known as Arsaces, and history records that he came to Parthia from Scythia or Bactria. Since the Bactrians were very likely the Bachrites of the tribe of Ephraim (Numbers

26:35), and were, therefore, relatives of the Scythian "Sacaе," Arsaces came to Parthia from the territory of other descendants of the ten tribes of Israel.

Rawlinson comments that "the Parthian kingdom was thoroughly anti-Hellenic,"<sup>2</sup> and revolted from the Seleucids at a time when the Seleucids were weakened by warfare with the Egyptian Ptolemies.

Let us examine the region's political situation at the time of Parthia's effort to become independent. After the death of Alexander the Great, his empire had been divided into four separate kingdoms, the strongest of which became the Seleucid Empire of Asia and the Ptolemaic Empire of Egypt. The four way division of Alexander's Empire was a fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy in Daniel 11:1-4 about a mighty Grecian king who would supplant the Persian Empire, die in his prime and have his kingdom divided into four sections. According to Josephus, Alexander the Great was shown (by the Jewish High Priest) Daniel's prophecy concerning himself when Alexander was in Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> Daniel's prophecy was given in the sixth century B.C., and Alexander the Great fulfilled it in the fourth century B.C. indicating that the God of the Bible can control world events to fulfill his prophecies.

The Greek Seleucids and the Egyptian Ptolemies then fought a series of wars, one of which made it possible for Parthia to revolt in approximately 250 B.C. without an immediate response from the Seleucids. With the Seleucids weakened by warfare, the Parthians were emboldened to annex another Seleucid province. The Seleucid king then attacked and defeated the upstart Parthians, causing Arsaces to flee to his kinsmen (the Scythians) to seek refuge and reinforcements. Parthian kings (throughout Parthia's history) sought refuge or military support from the Sacaе Scythian tribes during times of crisis, underscoring their

common heritage with the Sacae. The Sacae gave the Parthian king military support, as did the Bactrians. This alliance defeated the army of the Seleucid Empire in a critical battle which made the independence of the Parthians a reality. It was an historic turning point, and Rawlinson records that the Parthians long observed the anniversary of this battle as "a solemn festival."<sup>4</sup>

American readers can relate to the beginning of the Parthian nation. The traditional Parthian celebration of an "independence day" to commemorate their freedom from Seleucid rule is comparable to Americans celebrating their "Independence Day" on July 4<sup>th</sup> to commemorate their freedom from the British. Also, just as the Parthians needed outside help from the Scythians to obtain their independence, the Americans needed outside help from the French in order to realize their independence. There are a number of parallels between the Parthians of the ancient world and the Americans of the modern world. Since they do exist, they will be noted periodically in this chapter.

Parthia's rise to power coincided with the wane of Carthage in the second and third Punic Wars. It is noteworthy that while Rome was gradually defeating Carthage (an Israelite power in the Mediterranean), Parthia (another Israelite power in Asia) was gradually rising to empire status. By the time Carthage fell, Parthia had already become a great power and was destined to become one of Rome's greatest enemies.

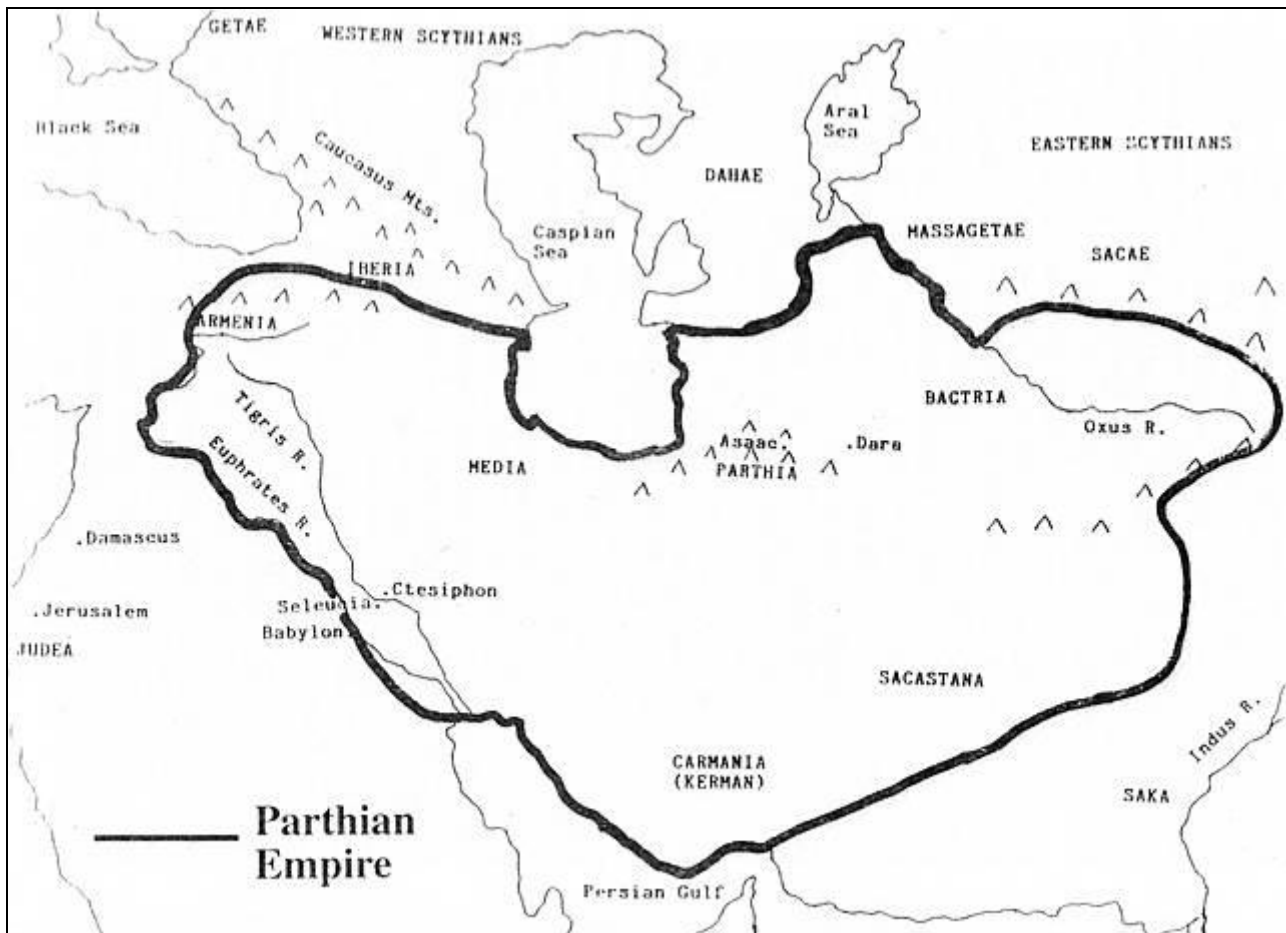
When Arsaces died, he was replaced by his brother Tiridates, who led the Parthians in their great victory over the Seleucids. He also built a mountain fortress city named Dara. Dara is a Hebrew name (I Chronicles 2:6), as discussed earlier. Because Dara was the name of a patriarch of the tribe of Judah, King Tiridates' naming a city in honor of Dara supports the conclusion that the Arsacid dynasty was Jewish. Since the early Parthian city of Asaak (named after Isaac) also bears a Hebrew name, the

Israelite nature of the Parthian Empire was apparent from its inception. It needs to be stressed, however, that although the ruling dynasty of the Parthians were descendants of Judah's King David, the Parthians themselves were descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. This perfectly fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah 33:17 that the descendants of King David would rule over the non-Jewish descendants of the ten tribes (the "House of Israel"). Another war with the Seleucids occurred almost forty years after Parthia's original "declaration of independence." Although the more-powerful Seleucids temporarily captured the Parthian capital city, the war ended with a peace treaty calling for the Seleucids' withdrawal in 206 B.C. and Parthia remaining independent.<sup>5</sup> This results in another striking parallel to the early American nation. Having won its freedom from Britain, America had to again fight the British in the war of 1812. In it, the British temporarily captured Washington, D.C., the American capital, but had to withdraw as the Americans maintained their independence. The War of 1812 ended with a peace treaty and occurred almost forty years after America's original declaration of Independence.

Just as America's War of 1812 was soon followed by a period of "manifest destiny" in which the American state spread across North America to the Pacific Ocean, Parthia's second war with the Seleucids was followed by a period of great expansion which extended its rule over much of south central Asia. After Phraates I captured the Caspian Gates for Parthia,<sup>6</sup> the next Parthian monarch, Mithridates I, expanded Parthian power to true empire status. Rawlinson describes Mithridates:

*"...one of those rare individuals to whom it has been given to unite the powers which form the conqueror with those which constitute the successful organizer of a state.*

*Brave and enterprising in war...yet...mild, clement, philanthropic, he conciliated those whom he subdued almost more easily than he subdued them, and by the efforts of a few years succeeded in welding together a dominion which lasted without suffering serious mutilation for nearly four centuries.”<sup>7</sup>*



By the time of his death, Mithridates I had placed Bactria, Media, Babylonia, Persia, and other territories under Parthian dominion, ruling “from the Hindu Kush to the Euphrates...a distance of 1500 miles from east to west.”<sup>8</sup> On modern maps, this territory is generally equivalent to the territory from eastern Syria and Turkey to western Pakistan. The Euphrates River, in the second century B.C., thus became the traditional western border of Parthia. Virtually all of Parthia’s expansion came at the expense

of the Seleucid Greeks. Mithridates I died in 136 B.C. leaving a large empire in the hands of his son, Phraates II. Although Mithridates I of Parthia was one of the world's most remarkable conquerors and empire-builders, modern history texts rarely mention him.

In 129 B.C. the Seleucids attacked the new Parthian Empire with a host numbering approximately 400,000 while the Parthian army numbered only 120,000. [Scythian troops reinforced the Parthians, but arrived too late to be decisive.<sup>9</sup> It is worth noting, however, that the Scythians were the willing allies of the Parthians whenever the latter power was in need of help.] The recently conquered provinces of the Parthians revolted to the side of their old rulers, the Seleucids. Three pitched battles were fought in which the outnumbered Parthians were defeated each time. The Parthians exhibited a dogged determination, however, and refused to capitulate. Winter set in, and the Seleucid army conducted itself so arrogantly in the conquered cities that their occupants privately sent word to the Parthians that they would assist in restoring Parthian rule over them if Parthia would liberate them from the oppressive Seleucids.

Even though the Seleucids were now in grave danger, they spurned a merciful offer of peace from Phraates with unacceptable demands of their own. The people of the captive provinces attacked the unsuspecting Seleucid troops within their garrison towns, and the Parthian regulars crushed the Seleucid monarch and his remaining troops in a final battle. History records that the Seleucid monarch, Antiochus, perished along with 300,000 of his host.<sup>10</sup> This battle was another historic turning point in world history, because it broke the back of the Seleucid Empire, which gradually withered away to nothing, trapped between the two growing powers of Rome on the west and Parthia on the east.



One result of Parthia's historic victory was that the Jewish Maccabees were now able to assert their independence from the now mortally-wounded Seleucids.<sup>11</sup> The Jews even conquered the Idumeans (Edomites), who submitted to circumcision and Jewish laws. Josephus records that the Judean Jews and the conquered Edomites became virtually one people.<sup>12</sup> However, Judea (the House of Judah) was able to assert its independence from the Seleucids only because Parthia (the House of Israel) had crushed the Seleucids.

Concerning the conquered Seleucids, the Parthians treated them mercifully and their royal households intermarried.

Herein lies another uncanny parallel between Parthia and modern America. Even as America has been a merciful conqueror (building up Japan and Germany after World War II, rescuing the German capital from a Russian blockade via the Berlin Airlift, etc.) Parthia was also a merciful ruler of the people it defeated in warfare. It is a clear commentary on the enlightened character of Parthian rule that the people in the contested provinces (after tasting both Parthian and Seleucid rule) actively fought the Seleucids in order to again be placed under Parthian rule!

At this juncture, the Parthians should have enjoyed their time of triumph. However, a bizarre event occurred when a Scythian army allied to the Parthians arrived too late to assist in the war. The Scythians arrived just after Parthia had crushed the Seleucid army, and a battle ensued after the Parthians refused to share any war booty with the Scythians. The Scythians were likely suspicious that the Parthians had "jumped the gun" on the war in order to deprive the Scythians of their share of the expected booty. The Parthians may have felt that since the Scythians did no fighting, they should not be paid. The Parthian king, Phraates I, reneged on promised payments to the Scythians, and the Scythian army was victorious in a battle which killed the

Parthian king. Just after crushing the Seleucid Empire, the Parthians were defeated by their Scythian allies who had marched out of the north to help Parthia.

The whole event is strikingly similar to one described in the Bible (Judges 11-12). After winning a great victory over the Ammonites, Jephthah and an army of Gileadites (the tribes of Manasseh, Reuben and Gad) were confronted by an army of Ephraimites which was upset that it had not been able to participate in the battle (and missed out on the booty). The usually allied brother tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh then fought each other in a needless battle over war booty. The dominance of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh in the Parthian and Scythian empires has been discussed earlier, making this Parthian-Scythian battle a rerun of the war in Judges 12.

After the warfare the Scythians (satisfied by their possession of war booty and the death of the Parthian king who "cheated" them) retired into their own land. This confirms the Scythians had no territorial designs against their Parthian kinsmen and were content simply "to teach the Parthians a lesson."

Nevertheless, Parthia had now replaced the Seleucids as the dominant power in south-central Asia, and it was only a matter of time before Rome and Parthia came in contact with each other. Before we discuss the epic struggles between Parthia and Rome, we will examine the governmental structure and policies of the Parthians to see why their dominion was so preferable to that of the Seleucid Greeks.

While Parthia was ruled by a dynasty, there was no custom of primogeniture (whereby the throne was inherited by the oldest son). Any relative of the king could serve as the new monarch. The Parthians actually had the beginnings of a system of checks and balances upon the authority of the king which predated the Magna Carta by more than a millennium. Strabo, a Roman who

lived just prior to the time of Christ, wrote:

*"That the Council of the Parthians...consists of two groups, one that of the kinsmen, and the other that of the wise men and magi, from both of which groups the kings were appointed."*<sup>13</sup>

Rawlinson refers to these two bodies as the "Royal House" and the "Senate." The Royal House contained the male relatives of the king, and the Senate consisted of the "Wise Men" (prominent secular leaders) and the "Magi" (the priestly caste of Parthia). These two houses jointly constituted: "the Megistanes, the nobles...the privileged class which to a considerable extent checked and controlled the monarchy."<sup>14</sup> He adds:

*"The King was permanently advised by [these] two councils...The monarchy was elective, but only in the house of the Arsacidae; and the concurrent vote of both councils was necessary in the appointment of a new king."*<sup>15</sup>

This means that while kings were elected by a concurrent vote of the two houses, a new king had to be a member of the Royal House (male relatives of the king). The fact that the Parthians elected their kings via a bicameral vote may be one of the best-kept secrets of the ancient world. While only the members of the two houses of the Megistanes voted in royal elections, there are precious few ancient examples of any kind of deliberative or elective processes involved in the selection of monarchs. The fact that the Megistanes were standing deliberative bodies also acted as a further check upon the power of a king. Even though Parthian monarchs could exercise autocratic powers once elected, the existence of this bicameral council could provide

some restraint upon them. Kings could even be “recalled” if they sufficiently offended the nobility, the wealthy citizens and the priesthood of the empire. In their governmental structure, the Parthians manifested the beginnings of a “Parliament,” and foreshadowed the Magna Carta of Medieval England which enabled the nobility to check the power of English kings.

The Magi (the subject of Christmas stories as the givers of “gold frankincense, and myrrh” to Jesus) were a very influential part of Parthian society. Rawlinson states that the Magi:

*“were a powerful body, consisting of **an organized hierarchy which had come down from ancient times**, and was feared and venerated by all classes of people. Their numbers at the close of the Empire, counting males only are reckoned at 80,000; they possessed considerable tracts of fertile land, and **were the sole inhabitants of many large towns or villages, which they were permitted to govern as they pleased.**”<sup>16</sup>*

(Emphasis added.)

The Magi paralleled the priesthood structure of ancient Israel. The tribe of Levi was the priestly tribe of the Israelites, and the Law of Moses (Numbers 35:1-5) required that the Levites dwell in independent cities. Joshua 21 records that the priestly Levites were given 48 independent cities to inhabit. In doing the same thing the Parthians were carrying on the tradition of the Law of Moses. That the Parthian Magi were a hierarchy of priests which had descended “from ancient times” confirms that **the Magi were a hereditary body: an actual tribe of priests**. Since the Israelite nature of the Parthians has already been shown, the Parthian Magi were likely the Levites, Israel’s hereditary tribe of priests. A priest of the Parthian Magi is depicted on a bas-relief

wearing a conical hat,<sup>17</sup> reminiscent of the miter worn by Hebrew priests and the tall, pointed caps of Scythian leaders.

While the image of Rome's legions brutally enforcing obedience in Rome's conquered provinces is a common theme in history, what was Parthia's rule like? To begin with, Parthia's Arsacid king was the overall monarch of Parthia's empire, but provincial vassal kings or rulers were given considerable autonomy.

Concerning the vassal kings, Rawlinson states:

*"so long as they paid their tribute regularly to the Parthian monarchs, and aided them in their wars..., [they] were allowed to govern the people beneath their sway at their pleasure."*<sup>18</sup>

This indicates that while the Parthian kings retained sovereignty over their subject provinces on such matters as taxes and national defense, Parthian provinces were basically self-governing when it came to local matters. Parthia's system of vassal kings and nobles who were subject to an overall king will remind some readers of the feudal system utilized by the Europeans in the Middle Ages. Edward Gibbon, the prominent historian who authored *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*, also noted the parallels between the feudal systems of the Parthians and Medieval Europe. Gibbon is quoted by Rawlinson in the following manner:

*"The remark has been made by...Gibbon, that the [Parthian] system thus established 'exhibited under other names, a lively image of the feudal system, which has since prevailed in Europe the points of resemblance being very main points, not few in number, and striking.'" <sup>19</sup>*  
(Emphasis added.)

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, also notes the feudal nature of Parthia's empire:

*"these nomads [the Scythian origin of the Parthians is here noted] were the main pillar of the empire, and from them were obviously derived the great magnates, with their huge estates and hosts of serfs, who composed the imperial council, led the armies, governed the provinces and made and unmade the kings."*<sup>20</sup>

As we will see in chapter ten, the "striking" similarities between Parthia and Medieval Europe were no coincidence. It is also recorded that the Parthians pioneered the concept of municipal "home-rule" privileges for some of its cities. For example:

*"The Greek towns...in large numbers throughout the [Parthian] Empire, enjoyed a municipal government of their own, and in some cases were almost independent communities ...Seleucia...its population was estimated in the first century after Christ at six hundred thousand...had its own senate, or municipal council...elected by the people to rule them."*<sup>21</sup>

Rawlinson's sources for the above information were the Roman writers: Pliny and Tacitus. The astounding fact that Parthia's Empire included large "home-rule" cities which held democratic elections to elect city councils should be taught in every classroom in the modern western world! Cities in the western world have for centuries copied this ancient Parthian practice, and it is remarkable that an ancient empire allowed its citizens such freedoms. Most ancient empires (fearing revolts) ruled their

subject people with an iron hand.

There was also a substantial Jewish population in Parthia's empire, and their policy toward the Jews was very magnanimous. Rawlinson records that: "there were also a certain number of places the inhabitants of which were wholly Jews, and these enjoyed similar privileges with the 'free towns' of the Greeks."<sup>22</sup>

The fact that Parthia had a large Jewish population merits additional comment. Josephus wrote that the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel were very numerous, were beyond Rome's rule and were located "beyond Euphrates." By referencing the Euphrates River (the common border between the Roman and Parthian Empires), Josephus was indicating that Parthia was "Israelite territory." Since Josephus knew about the Israelite nature of the Parthians and Sacae, it is quite likely that many other Jews possessed this knowledge as well. Perhaps some Jews, tired of the Roman yoke in Palestine, chose to emigrate to Parthia, which was dominated by the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel and allowed much personal liberty. However the main reason for a substantial Jewish population in Asia is that many Jews never did return to Palestine from their Babylonian captivity, and their descendants stayed in Asia, where they flourished under Parthian rule. This is hardly surprising since the Arsacids who ruled Parthia were themselves Jewish, descendants of Phares and King David.

While Rome imposed a "rule of iron" within its empire, Parthia permitted vastly greater individual freedoms. This fact has strong parallels in the modern world, a discussion of which will enable the reader to relate to the struggles between Rome and Parthia.

Parthia and Rome were the two great powers of their day. Parthia had the beginnings of a bicameral body with some checks and balances upon the power of the monarchy. It gave provinces

and cities considerable local autonomy while maintaining federal control of foreign and military matters, was tolerant of subject people and allowed the Jews broad rights and local freedoms. Rome, however ruled its subject peoples in a totalitarian, oppressive manner with Roman troops supporting Rome's appointed rulers over conquered nations.

Clearly in any comparison between (A) the ancient superpowers of Rome and Parthia and (B) the modern superpowers of America and the former Soviet Union, Parthia's freedoms would compare it to America while Rome's oppressiveness would make it an ancient counterpart of the Soviet Union. Yet the western world is taught the history of Rome while Parthia's remarkable power and structure are widely ignored. We will see more parallels to the modern era before this chapter is concluded. While these parallels may seem revolutionary to some, they are necessary to help undo the modern myth that Rome was "civilized" while the rest of the world consisted of "barbarians." In the remainder of this chapter (and in chapter ten), we will see that the governmental systems of the modern western world are actually based on the Parthian system, not the Roman system.

There is one important event in Parthian history which must be discussed before we examine its historic rivalry with Rome. After the Seleucid Greek Empire had been defeated by the Parthians, the eastern portion of Parthia's empire was "invaded" by a number of nomadic "Sacae" from central Asia. In fact, this "invasion" gave the Parthians a major infusion of related Sacae (Scythian) people. These Sacae entered the eastern regions of the Parthian Empire in the first century B.C. after migrating southward out of the Caspian Sea region. Besides bearing the name of Isaac, these Scythian tribes had tribal names which can be linked to the names of various Israelite tribes or clans. The principal Scythian tribe which resettled into the Parthian Empire



was the Massagetae (the same Scythian tribe which crushed an invading Persian army under King Cyrus several centuries earlier), and they were accompanied by the Dahae, the Tochari, the Asii, the Sacaruli, and various clans such as the Parni, Aparni Chorasmii, etc.<sup>23</sup> Rawlinson opined that this invasion was a major "barbaric peril" from Asia; however, the facts do not support such a view. For example, the Parni and Aparni are frequently cited as being the original tribe of Arsaces, the first Parthian king.<sup>24</sup> Another Scythian tribe was the Dahae, who periodically aided the Parthians in various wars. These "invaders" were the Scythian kinsmen of the Parthians. History records that after some fighting over territories, the Scythian tribes settled down and became a part of the Parthian Empire, with their new homeland being named "Sacastane (land of the Saka or Scyths)." <sup>25</sup> These Scythian newcomers, who named their new territory in honor of Isaac (an Israelite patriarch), had a common racial and cultural heritage with the Parthians. There is some disagreement about whether these Scythians were part of the Parthian Empire or lived adjacent to it, but in a map of Parthia's empire, Rawlinson shows "Sacastana" as part of the Parthian Empire.<sup>26</sup>

The fact that Israelite tribes should fight among themselves is not surprising, given that they had to find territory to contain their large populations. It has been proposed that these migrating Scythians were themselves pushed into Parthia by tribes of Huns who were expanding within central Asia.<sup>27</sup>

The Scythian names do not exactly reflect the names of Israelites tribes as they are the names which Greco-Roman historians gave to them centuries after these tribes left Palestine. Even so, several names (in addition to their overall name as "Sacaе") are recognizable as Israelite. The Massagetae, as explained in chapter six, were the Israelite tribe of Manasseh.

The Dahae may have been part of the tribe of Dan. The Tochari likely descended from the Israelite tribe of Issachar as Tola was one of the clans of Issachar (Numbers 26:23). Combining syllables from the names "**Tola**" and "**Issachar**" results in the term "**To-chari**." The **Chorasmii** may have been a clan of the tribe of Reuben (descended from the **Carmites** of Numbers 26:6). On this specific case of ancient root words, I wish to acknowledge the help of Dr. Charles Dorothy, a graduate of the Claremont Graduate School for pointing out that such a relationship is possible "since 'Carmite' of Numbers 26 uses the Hebrew caph, sometimes transliterated 'c,' 'ch,' 'k,' or 'kh'." On the other hand, since Rawlinson records that the **Chorasmii** were a subdivision of the Massagetae,<sup>28</sup> they may have been named after the **Machirites**, a clan of the tribe of Manasseh (Numbers 26:29).

While this infusion of Scythians into Parthia's empire greatly increased Parthia's strength, it needs to be understood that Parthia was not a monolithic Israelite empire joining all the Parthians and Scythian/Sacae tribes. There were still many Scythians near the Black and Caspian Seas who were not part of Parthia's empire, and there were many subject people in Parthia's provinces who were not Israelites (Medes, Persians, Babylonians, Elamites, Assyrians, etc.).

Another large mass of people, the Yue-chi, was being pushed out of inner Asia toward Scythia and Parthia. Early Chinese chronicles record that the "Ephthalites" were one of the tribes of the Yue-chi.<sup>29</sup> The Ephthalites were also called "White Huns" because they were "fair-skinned" (indicating a Semitic origin).<sup>30</sup> Other names for the Ephthalites include the "Hephthalites" or "Nephthalites," although the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* adds that "the initial N...is believed to be a clerical error."<sup>31</sup> It should be easy for anyone with a knowledge of biblical history to identify

this tribe as the Israelite tribe of Naphtali! The consonants of Ephthali (or Nephthali) precisely match Naphtali, one of the ten tribes of Israel.

It is interesting that the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* observed that the ancient historians who recorded that this tribe's name began with an "N" are "believed... [to have made] a clerical error." No evidence is offered to support a claim that it was a clerical error, but it is "believed" to be one. Why? The reader must realize that "establishment" histories have a strong bias against "finding" any of the "lost" ten tribes of Israel [doing so would draw interest toward the Bible]. While many Israelite tribal names can be found in Asia, **this similarity between the "Nephthalites" and an Israelite tribe (the Naphtalites) is glaringly obvious.** The presence of a tribe in Asia bearing a Hebrew name unchanged from biblical times is an academic "hot potato"! A "belief" that the "N" is an ancient "clerical error" helps to obscure the Israelite nature of this tribe. Indeed, if establishment histories were to examine Scythian or Parthian history in much depth at all, their identity as the ten tribes of Israel would be impossible to miss. Perhaps that is why their history (prominently cited by Greek and Roman historians) is mostly ignored in the modern world.

The fact that the Ephthalites were "fair-skinned" (Semitic or Caucasian) further verifies their identification as Israelites (since the Israelites were of the Semitic, or "white" race). The fact that the Ephthalites were called "White Huns" indicates that while they came out of Asia, they were differentiated from the rest of the Huns, who were not fair-skinned or white. Indeed, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* itself refers to the Sakas (or Sacae Scythians), the Yue-Chi and the Ephthalites as being related "Indo-Scythian" tribes.<sup>32</sup>

The Bible shows us why the tribes of Naphtali, the Machirite clan

of Manasseh, and parts of Dan, Issachar, Asher or Reuben (i.e. the Nephthalites, Massagetae, Chorasmii, Dahae, Tochari, etc.) could be located together as a group of proximate tribes in Asia. II Kings 15:29 states that about twenty years prior to Samaria's fall, the Assyrians invaded Israel and carried captive the entire tribe of Naphtali, and the Israelites living in Gilead and Galilee. This occurred in approximately 740 B.C. I Chronicles 5:26 reveals that "Gilead" means one-half the tribe of Manasseh and the tribes of Reuben and Gad. Numbers 26:29 further shows us that the half-tribe of Manasseh which lived in Gilead was the Machirites. A look at a biblical atlas will reveal that the tribes of Issachar and Asher and a portion of Dan lived next to Naphtali in the region of Galilee, and these tribes would likely have lost part of their populations when their neighbors, the Naphtalites, were taken captive. The Assyrians relocated the tribes of Naphtali, Gad, Reuben, half the tribe of Manasseh, and portions of other tribes eastward into their empire. At the time of their captivity, these Israelites were mostly sun worshippers (followers of Baal). The Book of Tobit claims to relate the experiences of a family of Naphtalites (Tobit 1:1-2) after their Assyrian captivity, and shows them maintaining contact with each other as they were resettled in Assyria and in the cities of the Medes. While Tobit is an apocryphal (non-canonized) book, its historical context makes it interesting reading for this time period. Tobit 1:21 parallels II Kings 19:37 in mentioning the death of the Assyrian King Sennacherib at the hands of his sons, who then fled to "Ararat" (Armenia) where they sought refuge. Tobit 14:12-15 shows that Naphtalites lived in Ecbatana in Media when Nineveh fell. This is consistent with secular history as Ecbatana is named as a city of the "Scythians" who lived in Media during the fall of the Assyrian Empire.<sup>33</sup> While the book of Tobit, written from an Hebrew perspective, calls these people "Naphtalites," secular history, written from a non-Hebrew perspective, calls these people

“Scythians.”

When the Assyrian Empire fell, many of their formerly-subject peoples were free to migrate to new locations. One such people were the Israelites (including the tribe of Naphtali according to the book of Tobit) who were known as a Scythian people that supplanted the old kingdom of Ellip (east of Assyria). They must have migrated northeastward beyond the Caspian Sea. The half-tribe of Manasseh later became known as the sun-worshipping Massagetae who annihilated a Persian army under Cyrus the Great when he tried to subjugate them. The tribe of Naphtali went even further into Asia, but were still called the Nephthalites when they migrate back toward Parthia. The migrations of the Massagetae and Nephthalites toward Parthia may not have been a coincidence. If they were being pushed westward out of Asia by other nations, it may have been an attempt on their part to retrace the routes they had initially followed into Asia.

The connection is clear. The Massagetae, the “Saka” (or Sacae) and the “Ephthalites” were related clans of the ten tribes of Israel. While many settled in the eastern portion of the Parthian Empire, some Saka founded a kingdom of their own near the Indus River and the Ephthalites apparently remained outside the Parthian Empire. It is likely that the tribe of Naphtali retained its exact Israelite name over many centuries because it was taken captive in one entire group. The other tribes, which left Palestine in a piecemeal fashion and in different directions, were later known by their appropriate clan names.

Since the Ephraimite role in the formation of Parthia was discussed in chapter seven, this infusion of Scythian Israelites meant that the Parthian empire came to include portions of the Israelite tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, Asher, Reuben, Naphtali, Dan and Gad (while Gad is unnamed among the Scythians, it was likely present as Gad migrated into Asia with

the half-tribe of Manasseh and the tribe of Reuben). Since there were many Jews living in Parthia's territory, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were present as well. The tribe of Levi was also in Parthia because there were Levites among the Jews (Ezra 1:5) and the Parthian Magi may have included Levites. The Israelite character of the Parthian empire is obvious. The wars between the Roman and Parthian Empires will be much more interesting to read when it is realized that the Parthian Empire was composed of the reunited and revitalized tribes of Israel ruling over native populations who had previously been Israel's captors.

Rome and Parthia did not initially come into contact with each other as enemies. Between them lay the kingdom of Armenia which had a large domain in Asia Minor. Rome became embroiled in a war with Armenia while Parthia tried to remain neutral.

Parthia's neutral policy finally became untenable, and the Parthians entered the war on the side of the Romans. Rome offered Parthia an alliance with the promise that Rome would respect Parthia's right to have certain territories as her portion for assisting the Romans. After the Parthian-Roman alliance was successful, the Romans reneged, and resisted the Parthians when they tried to occupy their promised portion of the conquered territory. Rawlinson comments on this episode that "Phraates (the Parthian monarch) learnt what Roman promises were worth."<sup>34</sup> Note that this Parthian king (Phraates) had a name that included the Hebrew root word for Phares, the dynastic line of David and the kings of Judah. From this very first Parthian-Roman contact (in the first century B.C.), the Euphrates River became the border between their two empires.<sup>35</sup>

Parthia's king was then assassinated by his sons, Mithridates and Orodes, with the former then banishing the latter. The Parthian nobles (the "Wise Men" and Magi) later deposed Mithridates because of his harsh rule, and recalled Orodes from banishment

to be the new king.<sup>36</sup> [The Wise Men and Magi were powerful enough at this time (circa 56 B.C.) to dethrone a monarch they disliked. This will become more significant in the next chapter.]

Crassus, a prominent Roman Consul in a ruling triumvirate with Julius Caesar and Pompey decided to advance his wealth and fame by launching an invasion to subjugate Parthia. His campaign began the first of many Roman-Parthian wars which invariably occurred as a result of Roman aggression against Parthia.<sup>37</sup>

After he defeated a few weak kingdoms, Crassus turned to looting the wealth of the Middle East. Full of avarice, he stole all the gold and treasure that he could find, including an immense amount of gold from the Temple of God in Jerusalem.<sup>38</sup> Crassus was more interested in looting the weak than in seriously invading Parthia. Parthia, well-prepared for war and eager to teach the Romans a lesson, taunted Crassus with a message which was intended to inflame him into seeking battle. Parthia sent Crassus this provocative message:

*"If the war was really waged by Rome, it must be fought to the bitter end. But, if, as they had good reason to believe, Crassus, against the wish of his country, had attacked Parthia and seized her territory for his own private gain, Arsaces [the Parthian king] would be moderate. **He would have pity on the advanced years of the proconsul** [Crassus was a sexagenarian], and would give the Romans back those men of theirs, who were not so much keeping watch in Mesopotamia as having watch kept on them. Crassus, stung with the taunt, exclaimed 'he would return the ambassadors an answer in Seleucia [a large*

*city near the Parthian capital]'. Wagises, the chief [Parthian] ambassador...glad to heap taunt on taunt, replied, striking the palm of one hand with the fingers of the other: 'hairs will grow here, Crassus, before you see Seleucia.' "*<sup>39</sup>

Infuriated, Crassus invaded the Parthian Empire, but was deceived into thinking the Parthians were fearful and retreating. In reality, the Parthian king had invaded Armenia with the Parthian infantry to prevent the Armenians from aiding the Romans while the Parthian cavalry remained to face the Romans. The cavalry was commanded by Surenas (a noble of the Suren family which crowned Parthian monarchs). The Roman invaders consisted of 39,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry.<sup>40</sup>

In order to understand what the Romans were up against, one must realize the nature of the Parthian cavalry. This was no wild mob from the steppes, but a disciplined and prepared military force. The Parthians maintained both a heavy cavalry and a light cavalry. The light cavalry was composed of fleet horses with riders armed with bows and arrows. These horsemen could rain down upon an enemy a fairly continuous barrage of arrows as they could ride in shifts, with each troop resupplying itself from camel-borne arrow carriers when their supply became exhausted in battle.<sup>41</sup>

The heavy cavalry must have been truly frightening to the Roman foot soldier. Rawlinson describes them in the following manner.

***"The strong horses selected for this service were clad almost wholly in mail. Their head, neck, chest, even their sides and flanks, were protected by scale-armour of brass or iron...Their riders had***



***cuirasses and cuisses [breastplates and leg armor] of the same materials, and helmets of burnished iron.*** For an offensive weapon they carried a long...spear or pike. They formed a serried line in battle, bearing down with great weight on the enemy whom they charged, and standing firm as an iron wall against the charges that were made against them."<sup>42</sup> (Emphasis added.)

In other words, the Romans were opposed by a superior phalanx of armored Parthian cavalry. With their armored mounts, body armor, and long spears, the Parthian heavy cavalry must have looked like mounted European Lancers from the middle ages! Again we see another parallel between the ancient Parthians and the Europeans of the feudal period. The Parthian heavy cavalry sounds like a huge formation of feudal knights armed for combat instead of jousts. Indeed, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* openly called the Parthian heavy cavalry "knights."<sup>43</sup>

Having a heavily armed and mail-clad army was a trait of several ancient Mideast peoples, including Israelite troops. In II Chronicles 26:14, Uzziah (a Davidic king of the line of Phares), equipped his army with "shields, spears and helmets, coats of mail [and] bows..." (RSV) Put Uzziah's troops on mounts, and you have a good description of the Parthian cavalry.

The invading Romans met the Parthian defenders at the battle of Carrhae in 53 B.C. (near the modern border of Syria and Turkey). The Romans suffered one of the worst defeats in the history of the Roman Empire; half the 40,000 man army perished, a quarter fled, and 10,000 Romans were captured. Crassus, a member of the triumvirate ruling the Roman Empire, was slain. Parthia's treatment of the captured Romans was unusually magnanimous, especially considering that the Romans

were the aggressors. The 10,000 captured Romans were resettled east of the Caspian Sea, given wives, and later even served as Parthian soldiers.<sup>44</sup> Rawlinson comments that the Parthians:

*"acquired by their use of the bow a fame like that [of] the English archers...at Crecy and Agincourt. They forced the arrogant Romans to...allow that there was at least one nation in the world which could meet them on equal terms...They henceforth obtained recognition from the Graeco-Roman writers...as the second Power in the world."*<sup>45</sup>

Richard Frye's *Heritage of Persia* also notes that, after the battle of Carrhae: "the world was divided between Rome and Parthia according to Greek and Latin authors."<sup>46</sup>

Crassus was due one final, gristly insult at the hands of the Parthians. Surenas sent the head of Crassus to the Parthian king in Armenia, where Armenia had made peace with the Parthian king. The Parthians, mindful of Crassus' avarice, poured molten gold into the mouth of Crassus' decapitated head. This was done in the presence of the Armenians, apparently to impress upon them the utter superiority of the Parthians over the Romans.

Perhaps fearing that the great victory of Surenas would make him a rival, Orodes, the Parthian king, had his successful commander killed. This illustrates a paradox in Parthian history. Although Parthian rule over its subjects was generally wise and temperate, the Parthian royal family, the Arsacids, had a history of murderous, internecine struggles. Since any Arsacid could be king, there was always a host of pretenders and schemers with kingly ambitions, causing many Arsacids to kill each other to eliminate potential rivals. This violent family history fulfilled a biblical prophecy (II Samuel 12:10) that the "sword [violent

deaths] would never depart" from the progeny of David because of David's murder of Uriah.

Parthia retaliated for Rome's invasion by attacking Rome's territory in 40 B.C. The Parthian attack was so successful that they conquered Syria, Palestine, and Asia Minor. Emboldened by Parthian successes, the Jews revolted against Rome and a Jewish prince, Antigonus, ruled Palestine as a satrap of the Parthians until 37 B.C.<sup>47</sup> The Romans counterattacked, recovered their lost territories and reestablished the Euphrates River as the border between the two empires. Rawlinson records that the short Parthian rule of the conquered Roman provinces was "mild and just,"<sup>48</sup> and was preferred by the natives over Roman rule. Indeed, Antigonus, the Parthian-sponsored ruler, successfully resisted King Herod, his Roman-sponsored replacement for a short time.

In chapter six it was noted that when the Scythian Israelites reconquered Palestine around 620 B.C., it resulted in the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel again briefly ruling over Palestine. They stayed only a few years, and left voluntarily. When the Parthians controlled Palestine, it was a second instance when the ten tribes of Israel again dominated Palestine. Once more, it lasted only a few short years.

During the three years of Parthian rule over Palestine, there would have been a considerable exchange of information between the Jews and the Parthians. The Jews would have become aware (if they did not already know) that the Parthians were descendants of the ten tribes of Israel (their "brother" tribes). Under Parthian rule the Jews would have enjoyed unhindered contacts with the large Jewish communities living in the Parthian Empire. Josephus, a prominent Jewish historian, likely drew on this knowledge when he later designated the Parthian Empire (the land "beyond the Euphrates") as the region

inhabited by the numerous descendants of the ten tribes of Israel.<sup>49</sup> As of the first century A.D., it is clear that the “lost ten tribes of Israel” were not “lost” at all.

The next Parthian king, Phraates IV, was a moral wretch who killed his brothers, his father (King Orodes, who had abdicated in his son’s favor), and even some of the Megistanes. The chaos within Parthia invited another Roman invasion. This invasion was led by the famous Mark Antony, who invaded Parthia in 37 B.C. with an army of 113,000 soldiers.<sup>50</sup> The Romans besieged a Parthian provincial capital in Media (northwest Iran), but could not subdue it. The Parthian army arrived, and wiped out Antony’s supply columns, killing 10,000 Romans. With winter imminent, Antony had to admit defeat, and led his beaten army back through Armenia, fighting the terrain, the weather, hunger and the Parthians the whole way. Considering the hardships faced, Mark Antony did well to salvage 60-70,000 Romans soldiers from his disastrous campaign, as he could have lost his whole army and his own life. Antony acted cruelly toward the Armenians, and this helped create a lasting impression among the Armenians that Parthian rule was preferable to Roman rule.

A period of “detente” then occurred between Parthia and Rome which lasted almost a century (36 B.C. to 58 A.D.).<sup>51</sup> Parthia and Rome had learned that they were equal “superpowers” in the ancient world, with the Euphrates River marking their border. While Parthia had crushed two Roman attempts to invade the Parthian Empire, Rome had successfully pushed Parthian armies back across the Euphrates after Parthia occupied Rome’s eastern territories for three years. Phraates IV, the emperor of Parthia who had killed his brothers and father after ascending to the throne, lived to “reap what he had sown.” After reigning thirty-five years, he was assassinated by his wife and son in 2 B.C. In 1 A.D., when another Roman invasion of Parthia seemed

imminent, Parthia and Rome avoided hostilities via a major “summit conference.” The classical writers recorded that the respective armies of the Roman and Parthian empires lined up on each side of the Euphrates River while the negotiators met on neutral territory (an island in the river). Parthia’s emperor, Phraataces, met with Caius Caesar, the grandson of Augustus Caesar as they negotiated an agreement.<sup>52</sup> While war was averted, the Romans seem to have won a slight victory at the conference table. While the Romans agreed to withdraw their armies, and threaten Parthia no more, the Parthians agreed to accept Armenia as being within Rome’s sphere of influence. This Parthian-Roman summit conference resulted in the prolongation of the period of “detente” between the two powers. It was during this time that Jesus Christ was born, conducted his ministry, and was crucified. Jesus Christ himself played a role in the Parthian-Roman rivalries (a subject examined in chapter nine).

The internecine conflicts of the Arsacid family members became so great that Parthia established the habit of sending various members of its royal family to Rome (perhaps believing them to be safer there than in Parthia due to the assassinations among the Arsacid family members in Parthia). Some Parthian kings were summoned from the Arsacids who had been raised in Rome, but they alienated the Parthians with their foreign ways. Several times the Scythians became arbiters of who should be the Parthian king by their military intervention in behalf of specific Arsacid princes.

Given the turmoil within the royal house of the Arsacids, it is remarkable that this one dynasty maintained its rule over Parthia throughout its existence. The prophecy of Jeremiah 33:17, that David’s descendants would continually rule over the ten tribes of Israel, was kept unbroken during Parthia’s existence. While many Parthian monarchs were quite corrupt in their personal lives,

there is at least one record of a Parthian provincial king adopting Judaism,<sup>53</sup> indicating that some Parthian rulers did acknowledge the God of the Bible. The presence of Parthian pilgrims at a Pentecost (Feast of Weeks) celebration in Jerusalem (Acts 2:9) confirms that a portion of Parthia's population also served the God of Israel. Since this occurred during the "detente" period between Rome and Parthia, Parthians were free to travel to Jerusalem and participate in the Holy Days observed by the Jews.

While Parthian-Roman affairs were calm, Parthia fought (and lost) a war over Armenia to an alliance of Iberians and Scythians headed by king Pharasmanes of Iberia.<sup>54</sup> This war (35-36 A.D.) pitted Israelite against Israelite. Earlier chapters demonstrated that Israelites fleeing Assyrian tyranny had fled to the Black Sea regions north of Armenia and established Iberian and Scythian kingdoms. King **Pharasmanes** bore the name of the royal Davidic line (the Judaic line of **Phares**), and "Iberia" was named after "Eber," a patriarch of the Hebrews. After the Parthian king, Artabanus, lost this war, he was forced to flee to other Scythians for sanctuary.

The Parthian Arsacids were in a state of great turmoil which ended in 51 A.D. with the death of an extraordinarily cruel emperor, Gotarzes, who sought to eliminate all rivals to the throne by murdering all the close and distant male relatives that he could find, including children and even pregnant wives.<sup>55</sup>

In 51 A.D., a remarkable amity occurred between three brothers who were heirs to the Parthian throne. One (Volagases I) became the Parthian emperor, a second (Pacorus) became vassal-king of Media, and the third (Tiridates) was appointed king of Armenia. This latter choice involved severe political problems. Armenia was claimed by both the Romans and the Parthians. However, Armenia had been recognized as part of the

Roman sphere of influence for decades as part of the overall Parthian-Roman detente. Indeed, at that time, Armenia was ruled by a king named Mithridates, the brother of King Pharasmanes of Iberia. To assert Parthian rule over Armenia would result in a Roman war, yet an external war was likely preferable to the internal civil war which could have occurred within Parthia had not the third royal brother been awarded a prominent province.

This Parthian action resulted in a desultory Parthian-Roman conflict over Armenia until 62 A.D. when Nero, Rome's emperor, sent an large army to challenge the Parthians. The Romans were shocked when Parthia launched a winter offensive against them, and the Romans suffered an ignominious defeat. During this time the Armenians fought to live under Parthian rule rather than Roman rule.<sup>56</sup> This was understandable since Parthian rule habitually offered more local autonomy than Roman rule.

A strange peace settlement occurred the following year in which Parthia won control of Armenia and Rome won a concession to her imperial vanity (at massive cost to Rome). The agreement left Tiridates, the brother of the Parthian king, as the undisputed ruler of Armenia (recognizing the status quo which Parthia had won on the battlefield). However, to assuage Rome's pride, Tiridates agreed to travel to Rome to receive his crown from Nero (to preserve the facade that Rome was willingly giving rulership of Armenia to Tiridates). Tiridates traveled to Rome, escorted by 3000 Parthian cavalry troops. Rome paid the bill for all Parthian travel expenses. (Classical writers recorded that it cost the Roman treasury 800,000 sesterces a day for nine months!)<sup>57</sup> This treaty gave the Parthians full control over Armenia, and the Romans "won" the right to give over 3000 Parthians an all-expenses-paid trip to Rome so Tiridates would feign some obsequious words to Nero in Rome. At any rate, both

parties were satisfied, and Parthian-Roman relations were amicable for another half-century.

Toward the end of the first century A.D., the Parthians established friendly relations with the Dacians, a people living in Eastern Europe along the Danube River, who also disliked the Romans.<sup>58</sup> The establishment of Parthian good-will with the Dacians (called "Getae" by the Greeks)<sup>59</sup> will become significant in chapter ten.

In the reign of Mithridates IV (107-113 A.D.), the Parthians began placing Semitic inscriptions on their coins (previous coins had continued the Seleucid practice of using Hellenist inscriptions).<sup>60</sup> This was consistent with the fact that the Parthians utilized a Semitic alphabet. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* notes the following regarding Parthia's language:

*"The alphabets in use in Persia, at least from the time of the Arsacid dynasty onward [i.e. the time of the Parthian Empire] are based upon the Aramaic."*<sup>61</sup> (Emphasis added.)

The Parthian use of an alphabet based on Aramaic (a Semitic language closely related to Hebrew) supports the conclusion that the Parthians were the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. If the Parthians and Scythians had originated deep in the interior of Asia, their alphabet and language would not have been Semitic. The fact that the Parthians utilized an alphabet which originated in the eastern Mediterranean region inhabited by the Israelites and Aramaeans confirms that Parthian origins were in the eastern Mediterranean, the former homeland of the ten tribes of Israel.

The year after the death of Mithridates, the Roman Emperor Trajan broke the peace, and began military hostilities. Trajan, by subterfuge, had a nephew of the Parthian monarch killed who



had come to him in anticipation of a peaceful settlement. In noting Trajan's deceitfulness, Rawlinson describes Trajan's actions as "disgraceful" and "base."<sup>62</sup> Filled with vanity and pride, Trajan set out to emulate the Asian conquests of Alexander the Great.

While wintering in Antioch of Syria, Trajan barely escaped with his life when he was almost killed in a destructive earthquake, which was "of a violence and duration unexampled in ancient times...many Romans of the highest rank perished."<sup>63</sup> Besides leveling Antioch, it destroyed nine other cities in Roman provinces in Asia Minor and Greece. Was it a portent of things to come? Rawlinson commented:

*"it seemed as if Providence had determined that the new glories which Rome was gaining by the triumphs of her arms should be obscured by calamities of a kind that no human power could avert or control...that [the reign of Trajan]... should go down to posterity as one of gloom, suffering, and disaster."<sup>64</sup>*

If the earthquakes were a divine warning, Trajan paid them no heed. He resumed his invasion of Parthia, and was almost unopposed as he marched through Mesopotamia, advancing as far as the Persian Gulf. Trajan then indulged in egomania, regarding himself as "another Alexander," taking a "pleasure voyage" down the Tigris River into the Persian Gulf, and regretting "that his advanced years prevented him from making India the term of his labours."<sup>65</sup> The Bible states in Proverbs 16:18 that "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." Trajan was about to become a living example of the truth of that proverb.

The Parthians had not yet fought a serious, pitched battle. Either

they were caught unprepared by Trajan's campaign or they sensed that the usual Roman arrogance would soon cause the conquered Parthian provinces to realize what a good thing they had under Parthian rule. While Trajan was indulging his ego on the Persian Gulf, the recently-conquered Parthian provinces rebelled on a massive scale. Although the Romans burned Seleucia and other major cities, the natives exacted a heavy toll on the Romans, and even exterminated an entire Roman army. The Parthians, meanwhile, risked little as their former subjects did the fighting to remove the hated Romans. History was repeating itself. These same native populations had previously fought the Seleucid Greeks in order to return to Parthian rule. Trajan was in a dangerous position as his line of retreat was full of hostile nations. Additionally, it was as if nature itself became a Parthian ally. It is recorded that the Romans:

***"suffered from the heat, from...the swarms of flies which disputed with them every morsel of their food and every drop of their drink, and finally from violent hail and thunderstorms."***<sup>66</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Perhaps it was no coincidence. The Parthians were Israelites, some of whom worshipped the God of Israel (Acts 2:9), at least one Parthian provincial king openly worshipped Israel's God in the apostolic era, and the Parthians were placing Semitic inscriptions on their coinage. The last fact indicates that the Parthians were officially identifying with their Semitic (i.e. Israelite) roots. It is also quite significant that a delegation of Parthia's nobility (the "Wise Men" or "Magi" of Matthew 2:1-12) had come to worship Jesus Christ as this indicates God was closely involved with portions of the leadership of Parthia's empire.

Given the above, it is possible that God himself caused the

earthquakes, plagues of flies, hail, etc. to punish the arrogant Trajan. The Old Testament records several instances where God intervened in similar fashion in behalf of the Israelite tribes. While God gives humans a "lot of rope," the Bible has many accounts of God's personal intervention to punish nations and national leaders when they become too vain.

Most unusual at this time was the lack of any major Parthian military action against the Romans. In the past they quickly clashed with invading Romans, generally routing them on the battlefield. Why did they not so confront Trajan? Were they internally weakened, or had the Parthians been told by an unnamed prophet of God not to fight because "the battle was the Lord's?"

The Parthians reoccupied their territory as it was abandoned by the retreating Romans. Trajan died soon after his humiliating retreat, and the new Roman emperor (Hadrian) unilaterally gave back to Parthia all territory taken by Trajan, yielded Armenia back to Arsacid rule, and pulled all Roman forces back on their side of the Euphrates River. It was very uncharacteristic of Rome to yield large amounts of territory to an enemy under any circumstance, but it was unprecedented for Rome to cede so much territory absent any military threat. Since the Parthians had done nothing militarily to cause the Romans to fear them, it is likely that the polytheistic Romans feared Parthia's God, and viewed the persistent natural disasters visited upon the Romans in the east to be divine punishment upon them. Nothing else explains Rome's very uncharacteristic behavior.

Rome avoided any Parthian wars for another half-century. Indeed, when hostilities did seem imminent at one time, peace ensued from another "Summit Conference" in 122 A.D. between the Roman and Parthian emperors, Hadrian and Chosroes.<sup>67</sup>

The next Parthian emperor, Vologases, continued the use of

Semitic inscriptions (“Volgasa Malcha”) on his coins.<sup>68</sup> The use of the word “Malcha” for king is significant. John 18:10 shows us that “Malchus” was being used as a Hebrew proper name in the first century A.D. The Hebrew word for king is represented by the consonants M-L-K,<sup>69</sup> and the Parthians used the consonants M-L-CH to designate the Semitic word “king” on their coins. When one considers that the “CH” symbol can represent the same phonetic sound as a “K,” the origin of this Semitic word is clear. Rawlinson noted that Semitic legends “are frequent on the coins of the later Parthian kings.”<sup>70</sup> On this specific issue, I again acknowledge the help of Dr. Charles Dorothy, a graduate of the Claremont Graduate School, who noted that the Hebrew caph may be transliterated as either “ch” or “k.”

The Parthian switch to Semitic inscriptions on their coins is evidence of a renewed awareness of their Semitic origin. This watershed event has not been fully appreciated in the histories of the Parthians, and it deserves further comment.

Acts 2:9 records that many people from Parthia and their provinces (Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians) served the God of Israel in the first century A.D. The visit of the Parthian “Wise Men” (or Magi) to worship and offer gifts to the child, Jesus Christ, is a striking event. The fact that high-ranking Parthian Magi came to worship Jesus Christ documents that God was very personally involved with some of the Parthian nobility and had even revealed Jesus Christ’s divinity to them. The timing of their arrival in Jerusalem further indicates that the Parthian Magi were familiar with Hebrew prophecies indicating that the Messiah was due at that time. Parthia was evangelized by Christians: Eusebius recorded that the Apostle Thomas was sent to Parthia.<sup>71</sup> I Peter 5:13 records that the Apostle Peter was in Parthian territory (the city of Babylon) when he wrote his first epistle. Since Matthew 10:6 states that Jesus sent his Apostles to “the lost sheep of the

House of Israel," the presence of at least two Apostles in Parthian territory confirms that they were evangelizing the ten tribes of Israel located in Parthia. Their message surely included the theme: "you Parthians are the ten tribes of Israel, and the Messiah (Jesus) has sent us to you!" Since some of Parthia's ruling class (the Magi) had already worshipped Jesus Christ, the apostles were assured of a much warmer reception for their message in Parthia than in Roman domains.

The above reveals that Parthian-Roman events of this period must be understood in the context of what was clearly a significant penetration of the Christian religion into Parthia (including the ruling classes). The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* comments as follows regarding this period in Parthia's history:

*"...Greek culture practically vanishes and gives place to Aramaic; it is significant that in [the] future the Kings of Mesene stamped their coinage with Aramaic legends. **This Aramaic victory was powerfully aided by the ever-increasing progress of Christianity...**[and cites] Edessa, a city in which the last king of Osroene, Abgar IX (179-214 A.D.), had been converted to the faith"<sup>72</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

According to *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, Aramaic was:

*"a Semitic language closely related to Hebrew...[and] several passages in the OT are written in Official Aramaic [cited are texts in Ezra, Daniel, Jeremiah and Genesis]. Jesus probably spoke a dialect of Western Aramaic and some words in the NT come from Aramaic, e.g., 'Talitha Cumi,' 'Maranatha,' and 'Golgotha.'"<sup>73</sup>*

The prominence of Aramaic in Parthian life during the Christian apostolic and post-apostolic period was linked to the spread of Christianity into Parthia from the Mideast (where Aramaic was dominant). Add to this the record of Josephus, the Jewish historian of that period, who stated that the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel were exceedingly numerous and living "beyond Euphrates." As mentioned earlier, the phrase "beyond Euphrates" was, for Josephus a euphemism which meant "in Parthia's empire" since the Euphrates had long been the recognized border between the Roman and Parthian Empires. If educated Jews such as Josephus realized that the Parthians were the ten tribes of Israel, and since regular commerce and communication occurred between Judea and Parthia (as Acts 2:9 confirms), then it is logical that the Parthians also realized their origins at that time. Indeed, how could they **not** have known it? The presence in Judea of high-ranking Parthian Magi to worship the young Jesus argues that many Parthians were aware of their Israelite heritage and origins.

The reign of Volagases II, Parthia's emperor for 19 years (130-149 A.D.), is characterized as having "a general character of tranquility."<sup>74</sup> This tranquility within Parthia's ruling house stands in stark contrast to the murderous internal struggles of the Arsacids prior to the Christian apostolic era. As Christianity penetrated the Parthian Empire, it would seem that its benign doctrines influenced the conduct of Parthia's rulers as well.

Predictably, the Romans eventually reneged on their treaty with Parthia. During Trajan's invasion, the Romans had captured a Parthian "golden throne," and had promised to return it as part of the peace settlement. After attempts to secure Roman compliance with the treaty failed, Parthia went to war.<sup>75</sup> Under Volagases III, Parthia conquered Armenia, and restored a native ruler as king of Armenia. A Roman legion crossed the Euphrates

and was destroyed by the Parthians. The Parthians then crossed the Euphrates into Roman Syria and Palestine, but their presence was short-lived. A Roman army led by Avidius Cassius won a major battle against the Parthians, who retreated across the Euphrates.

Avidius Cassius then led his army across the Euphrates, and proceeded to reconquer Parthian territories occupied briefly during Trajan's invasion. Cassius burned Seleucia (having then 400,000 residents), and captured Ctesiphon (Parthia's western capital). The Romans marched at will through Parthia's western provinces, and the Parthians seemed powerless to resist. Just when the Romans seemed invincible; however, they were driven from Parthia, not by a Parthian army but by a terrible plague.

One wonders if the arrogant Romans taunted the heavens with words like: "where is the God of the Parthians who supposedly plagued Trajan?" or "Parthia's God can't protect them from us!" Whether such an attitude provoked a divine response (as it did in the time of King Hezekiah of ancient Judah—II Kings 18-19) or whether God merely allowed the Parthians to come to the point of realizing their dependence on him, this plague devastated the entire Roman Empire. This plague was so overwhelming that there was no doubt in Roman minds that the plague was supernatural in nature. The polytheistic Romans, with no awareness of the Creator God, attributed the divine plague to "spells of the Chaldeans" unleashed because of Roman excesses in looting a temple of Apollo.<sup>76</sup>

The plague, of a "strange and terrible character,"<sup>77</sup> was so virulent that Rawlinson refers to the return of this army to Rome as "a march of death through the provinces" as it spread the disease throughout the provinces of the Roman Empire. Rawlinson cites Roman historians in stating:

*"the pestilence raged with special force*

*throughout Italy, and spread as far as the Rhine and Atlantic Ocean...more than one-half of the entire population, and almost the whole Roman army, was carried off by it.”<sup>78</sup>*

This plague was responsible for severely reducing the native Latin population of both the Roman Empire and its army. Significantly, while this plague devastated the whole Roman Empire, there is no mention of it affecting Parthia. That this plague rescued Parthia and devastated their Roman invaders supports a belief that the plague was a divine judgment of God against Rome.

The Romans, remembering that the last Roman army to enter so deeply into Parthia was also devastated by “divine action,” developed a belief that the previous return of Parthian territory by the Emperor Hadrian “sprang more from prudence than from generosity.”<sup>79</sup> While modern man may scoff at the thought of divine intervention in the affairs of nations, the ancient Romans did not believe it to be coincidental that terrible natural plagues befell them each time they penetrated deeply into Parthian territory.

Decades later, another major Roman-Parthian war was fought in approximately 194-200 A.D. in which subject Mesopotamian peoples massacred Roman garrisons, aided by Parthian vassal kings. This led to a Roman-Parthian war when Severus, Rome’s emperor, led an army across the Euphrates. Diverted by internal problems, Severus returned to Rome. The Parthians attacked, routed the Romans armies, besieged Nisibis (a Roman headquarters) and crossed the Euphrates into Roman territory. Severus returned to the Middle East, and supported by local natives, conquered his way to Ctesiphon, Parthia’s western capital on the Tigris River. The Roman army perpetrated an orgy of bloodletting, killing every Parthian male captive, and carrying



captive into slavery about 100,000 women and children.<sup>80</sup> Short of supplies, the Romans withdrew, but this time retained control of most of Mesopotamia. Parthia was inert and failed to retaliate, indicating a state of internal decline within Parthia. Furthermore, if the previous defeats of Roman armies under Trajan and Avidius Cassius were the result of divine action, the lack of divine assistance in repulsing this Roman attack speaks volumes. Since God's assistance is dependent on obedience to God's laws, the lack of any evidence of divine assistance argues that Parthia was in a state of moral decline.

The final Roman-Parthian war began with immense treachery on the part of the Romans. In 215 A.D., the Emperor Caracallus, developed an elaborate "disinformation campaign" to dupe the Parthians into letting down their defenses. He proposed a peace settlement which would be cemented by a marriage between Caracallus and a daughter of the Parthian monarch. The Romans even proposed a political and economic union between Parthia and Rome.<sup>81</sup>

Even though Roman promises had never had any worth, the Parthians believed the deceitful Roman "peace initiative," and allowed the Roman Emperor (escorted by a huge army) to proceed to the Parthian capital for the wedding. It is a testimony to the human capacity for self-delusion that the Parthians were so gullibly willing to believe the Romans in spite of every historical warning that such an offer could not be genuine. They continued in a state of denial even as Caracallus marched his army to Ctesiphon, Parthia's western capital. Parthia so wanted to believe that Caracallus was a reformer, an enlightened man of peace, different from the warlike Romans of the past. The Parthians received the Romans with genuine hospitality, certain that a "New World Order" [to borrow a modern term] of peaceful harmony was beginning.

According to Herodian's history, the Parthians "were transported with joy at the prospect of an eternal peace...and were keeping holiday"<sup>82</sup> as Caracallus and his army arrived. The Romans then dropped their pretense of peace and began slaughtering the gullible Parthians. The Parthian monarch barely escaped with his life. Not content with his already heinous betrayal of Parthian trust, the Romans then added massive insult to massive injury by desecrating the Parthian royal cemetery and scattering the remains of the deceased Parthian emperors.<sup>83</sup>

Outraged, the Parthians assembled a vast military force to take vengeance on the Romans. Based on subsequent events, it may have been the largest army Parthia ever assembled. Since Rome's armies had never penetrated the huge interior of Parthia's empire, most Parthian provinces had never experienced the treachery of Rome's aggressions. However, all Parthians throughout the empire were outraged by the violations of the tombs and corpses of their dead emperors!

Indeed, Rome's armies had never even come close to Parthia's homeland, which was located southeast of the Caspian Sea. Ctesiphon, the "western capital" known to the Romans, was nowhere near the actual homeland of the Parthians. It is possible that Ctesiphon was an administrative center for governing their western provinces, but that other "capitals" existed eastward in their empire. The Scythian nature of the Parthians is well-known, and Scythian reverence for the dead was an historic trait. When Darius attacked the Scythians many centuries earlier near the Black Sea, he was warned that retribution would be most dire if he desecrated Scythian cemeteries.<sup>84</sup> Given the historic relationship between Parthia and the Sacae tribes of Scythia, it is possible that Scythian tribes furnished troops for this battle as well.

The Roman headquarters in the area was at Nisibis (near the

modern border of Syria and Turkey). The enraged Parthian army headed for Nisibis to avenge themselves on the Romans. Caracallus had been assassinated prior to the arrival of the Parthians, and the new Roman emperor, Macrinus, tried to appease the Parthians by offering to return Parthian captives as part of a peace treaty. The Parthian emperor, Artabanus IV, spurned this offer as his army was there to exact vengeance and spill as much Roman blood as possible.

**The Parthian and Roman armies, both headed by their emperors, clashed in what must have been one of the fiercest (and bloodiest) battles ever fought in the ancient world.** What occurred was not merely a battle, but the death struggle of two mighty empires. Citing the classical writers, Rawlinson states:

***"The battle of Nisibis...was the fiercest and best contested which was ever fought between the rival powers. It lasted...three days. The army of Artabanus was numerous and well-appointed: like almost every Parthian force, it was strong in cavalry and archers; and it had...a novel addition of...soldiers, clad in complete armour, and carrying long spears or lances, who were mounted on camels... The Romans suffered greatly from the bows of the horse-archers, and from the lances of the corps mounted on camels; and...as they retired, they strewed the ground with spiked balls and other contrivances for injuring the feet of animals."***<sup>85</sup> (Emphasis added.)

This kind of fighting went on for three full days. The armor-clad Parthians must have looked like medieval knights as they

charged the Romans with leveled lances. The Romans, however, were ingenious in countering these assaults by maiming the Parthian animals. The killing was awesome. It is recorded that the bodies of the dead were:

*"piled to such a height that the manoeuvres of the troops were impeded by them, and at last the two contending hosts could scarcely see one another!"<sup>86</sup>*

At this point of mutual exhaustion, the battle ended with a clear Parthian victory. Macrinus, the Roman emperor, fled the scene and afterward agreed to repatriate all Parthian captives and to pay a huge war indemnity to Parthia. In his book, *Persia*, published in 1888, historian S.G.W. Benjamin writes of this event:

*"Macrinus...the Roman emperor...was obliged to...pay an indemnity of \$50,000,000 denarii...to the great rival of Rome almost in the very hour when the doom of Parthia was sounding on the great bell of time. The hero [Artabanus, Parthia's emperor] who wrested a war indemnity from a Roman emperor was also the last of his line."<sup>87</sup>*

The classical Greco-Roman historians wrote copiously about Scythian and Parthian history. As recent as 1888, a historian could still recognize the battle of Nisibis between Rome and Parthia as one of the greatest events of world history. Yet today, the important histories of Scythia and Parthia have been virtually erased from history texts. What caused this glaring omission?

During the nineteenth century, the famous historian George Rawlinson wrote books about the Parthian Empire in an attempt to counter what he called a "defective" and "false" view of history

which omitted the major role of the Parthian Empire in world history. Is it only coincidental that modern history books deemphasize or omit the histories of empires founded by the ten tribes of Israel (Phoenicia, Carthage, Scythia and Parthia) while waxing eloquent about the histories of the non-Israelite empires? In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the dogma of evolution became the new religion of a secularized world. It is now "politically incorrect" to have real faith in the Bible or the God of Israel. It hardly seems coincidental that the world's awareness of the history of the ten tribes of Israel (an important biblical theme) declined even as evolution became the new "god" of modern, secularized culture.

The Parthian Empire had won a great victory over the Roman Empire. One would expect the Parthian Empire to be reinvigorated by its triumph, but, in fact, the end of its empire was at hand. It is recorded that, in this time of trial, Artabanus IV, Parthia's emperor, sought to the occult for guidance and was told Parthia's empire was about to end.<sup>88</sup> This account echoes that of Saul, the first Israelite king, whose effort to seek occult guidance via an ancient "seance," led to his defeat and death (I Samuel 28:7-25). Based on biblical precedent, it is a symptom of advanced moral decay in a society when its leaders seek to the occult (astrology, "channelers," etc.) for guidance. Such actions not only forfeit God's favor (via the sin of idolatry), but also invite his punishment. If God had divinely protected Parthia in earlier battles, this sin of Artabanus was especially grievous. Soon after one of Parthia's greatest victories over Rome, Parthia collapsed.

In 220 A.D., the province of Persia revolted. A series of three battles was fought which resulted in a Persian victory in 227 A.D., costing Artabanus IV his life and effectively ending the Parthian Empire. The Sassanian Persian Empire replaced the

Parthian Empire, and the Parthians were forced to migrate out of their old empire to flee the Persians. Some histories discuss Parthian history as part of "Persian" history, although this is misleading. Although the Parthians ruled the territory of the previous Persian Empire, the Parthians and Persians were two separate people in the same region of the world. The Parthians had been the subjects of the Persians before establishing their own empire, in which the Persians were a subject nation. In 220-227 A.D., the Persians threw off Parthian rule and drove the Parthians out of the region. Where they went and the new names by which they came to be known will be discussed in chapter ten.

The discussion of Parthia's history has so far been dominated by events along its western borders. This is unavoidable since classical Greek and Roman writings are the basis for much of what we know about Parthia. Naturally, these ancient writers wrote mostly about the events that occurred in the western areas of Parthia where Rome's and Parthia's spheres of influence overlapped. The wars and events detailed so far took place basically within the territories of modern Syria, Turkey and Iraq. Parthia's Empire also included modern Iran, Afghanistan, a portion of western Pakistan and the southern regions of the former Soviet Union. No Roman army ever penetrated these regions of Parthia, and less is known of their ancient history.

Besides Parthia, portions of the ten tribes of Israel also ruled a "Saka" kingdom to the east of Parthia in the region of modern Pakistan and west India. Various Saka (Sacae or Scythian) kings began ruling in Pakistan and Northwest India in the first century B.C.<sup>89</sup> These rulers were later replaced by "Pahlava" or "Indo-Parthian" rulers who had names like the Parthian Arsacids.

Among these rulers was Gondop**hares**, who exhibited the name of the Davidic royal line of the kingdom of Judah (**Phares**). The *Encyclopedia Britannica* states "the name [Pahlavi]... means

Parthian.”<sup>90</sup> These “Saka” kings bore the name of “Isaac,” and their kings had Parthian names. We do not know to what extent the Parthian emperors and the Saka kings either cooperated or competed. Richard Frye writes the following concerning Parthian-Saka affairs:

*“Indian sources imply that the Sakas and the Pahlavas [Parthians] were allies in their Indian conquests and this would seem to be corroborated by the coins with both Saka and Parthian names. [However] The adoption of the title ‘king of kings’ by Gondophares ...would imply that these Indo-Parthian kings were completely independent of the Parthian rulers.”<sup>91</sup>*

The title “king of kings” was the standard title of Parthian Emperors, and the Indo-Parthian use of the term confirms their affinity with Parthia even if they constituted a separate kingdom. While little is known of Parthia’s eastern affairs, we do know that Parthian dominance and/or influence extended into modern India.

We have already seen that the Parthians placed Semitic legends on their coins during the early Christian era. However, there is additional evidence that the Parthians had long spoken a Semitic language. Josephus observed that he originally wrote his *Wars of the Jews* in his native Semitic tongue so that the people of Parthia could understand what happened in the Roman-Jewish war of the first century A.D. Josephus stated:

*“I have proposed... for the sake of such as live under the government of the Romans, to translate those books into the Greek tongue, **which I formerly composed in the language of our own country, and sent to***

***the Upper Barbarians...*** [identified in a footnote as the Parthians, Babylonians, Arabians, and "the Jews **beyond Euphrates...** and the Adiabene.]<sup>92</sup>  
(Emphasis added.)

Josephus, before writing in Greek to the Romans, had written *Wars of the Jews* in his own Semitic language so the Parthians and other nations in the Parthian empire could read his works. Note the phrase "beyond Euphrates" is again used as a euphemism to designate Parthian territory. When he wrote to the Romans, he was mindful of Roman sensitivities in calling the Parthians "Upper Barbarians." Rawlinson states the following about Josephus' comments:

***"Josephus...regarded the Parthians as familiar with Hebrew, or Syro-Chaldaic, and wrote his history of the Jewish War in his own native tongue, before he put out his Greek version, for the benefit especially of the Parthians, among whom he declares he had many readers"***<sup>93</sup> (Emphasis added.)

It is a telling commentary that the Parthians were so familiar with the Hebrew/Aramaic language that the Parthians could read whatever Josephus wrote "in his native tongue." The obvious conclusion is that the Jews and Parthians shared a common "native tongue," and the similarity of the Parthian and Hebrew/Aramaic languages further indicates that the Parthians were the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel.

Why would the Parthians have a particular interest in the writings of Josephus, and why would Josephus have a particular interest in communicating information to them? The clear answer is that both the Parthians and Josephus realized that the Parthians were



the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel! Nothing else makes sense. Josephus was a product of the same Jewish culture that shaped the converts of the early New Testament church (Acts 10:28). That culture regarded non-Israelites as “unclean” people with whom Jews could not fellowship. Josephus, himself a Pharisee, would have been shaped by anti-gentile ideas, and would not have regarded the Parthians as “worthy” of extensive communication on his part unless he realized that the Parthians were fellow Israelites of the ten tribes of Israel.

On Parthia’s northern border were their Scythian kinsmen. While there were hostilities between the Parthians and the Scythians, such episodes were the exception rather than the rule. In fact, on many occasions, the Parthians received reinforcements from the Scythian tribes to strengthen their own military power. In some instances, various Scythian tribes essentially decided which Arsacid would rule Parthia by intervening in behalf of certain claimants in disputes over the Parthian throne.

Parthia maintained extensive trade relations with the Scythians and other people on their northern and eastern borders as indicated by the presence of Parthian coins being:

*“found on the Volga, in the Caucasus, in Chinese Turkestan and elsewhere...At the same time Parthian-Chinese contacts overland are attested in Chinese sources.”<sup>94</sup>*

Parthia also had extensive trade relations with Rome during their periods of “detente.” During these times the Parthian merchant class imported metals and various manufactured items from Rome in exchange for textiles and spices supplied by the Parthians.<sup>95</sup> The above indicates that the Parthians were capitalists who took advantage of their strategic position as geographic middlemen between the Roman world and the Orient.

Concerning Parthia's religion, we know that their empire contained sun-worshippers and other pagan religions. As discussed earlier, Judaism was common in Parthia, and Christianity became quite significant in the first and second centuries A.D. Indeed, Rawlinson wrote the following:

*"Christianity also penetrated the Parthian provinces to a considerable extent, and in one Parthian country... seems to have become the state religion. The kings of Osrhoene are thought to have been Christians from the time of the Antonines...and a flourishing church was certainly established at Edessa before the end of the second century."*<sup>96</sup>

Parthia allowed considerable "freedom of religion" for its subjects,<sup>97</sup> a tolerant attitude not typical of the ancient world's empires. Rawlinson adds:

*"The Parthians had many liberal usages which imply a fairly advanced civilisation...in political matters they seem to have been free from the narrowness which generally characterizes barbarous nations. They behaved well to prisoners, admitted foreigners freely to offices of high trust, gave an asylum to refugees, and treated them with respect and kindness, were scrupulous observers of their pledged word, and eminently faithful to their treaty obligations."*<sup>98</sup>

Additionally, Parthia's empire was based on a feudal system which foreshadowed the feudal system of Medieval Europe by a millennium. The Parthians elected their monarchs via the Megistanes, a bicameral body representing the royalty, the

priestly tribe and the nobility. They were capitalists who traded widely with other nations, and even with their enemies when possible. The Parthians permitted freedom of religion, and gave liberal dispensations of home-rule to many nations and cities in their empire. Given the fact that there were many adherents of Judaism and Christianity in the Parthian Empire, it is not surprising that their empire was known by many of the commendable traits of what is now referred to in the modern world as the "Judeo-Christian ethic."

In contrast, the Romans had a religion of superstitious polytheism, launched many wars of aggression simply to exalt the ego of various emperors and commanders, enslaved other nations with tight-fisted control, oppressed the Jews, persecuted the Christians, regularly violated treaties, and watched gladiators and animals kill each other in the arenas for sport. Yet histories routinely describe the Romans as "civilized," and call the Parthians "barbarians."

**By any standard of comparison, which empire was "civilized," and which was "barbaric?"** The answer is obvious; it was far more pleasant to live under Parthian rule than under Rome's, as the nations caught between the two empires regularly affirmed.

The western world is generally taught that its roots come from ancient Roman institutions, and new generations are force-fed the history of Rome while the empire of Parthia is scarcely mentioned. However, it is clear that the governmental and societal structure of medieval Europe and the modern western world have much more in common with the institutions and practices of the Parthian Empire than those of the Roman Empire. As will be seen in chapter ten, the western world has been taught a major historical error. Even though Europe and the modern western world developed in the geographic area of

the old Roman empire, their social and political institutions are firmly rooted in the heritage of Parthia.

Before we examine the history of the Parthian migrations out of Asia, an important chapter must be inserted. The following chapter will discuss the life of Jesus Christ and the initial history of the early Christian church within the historical context of the Roman-Parthian rivalry which dominated the world into which Jesus was born. The full story of Christ's life cannot be understood apart from this Parthian-Roman context. The coming of the Magi (members of Parthia's ruling class) into Roman territory to worship the young Jesus as "a king" hints of many mysteries involving the life of Jesus Christ. The following chapter contains major surprises!

## Endnotes: Chapter Eight

1. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, preface, pp. v-vii
2. Rawlinson, *Parthia*, p. 47
3. Josephus, *Antiquities*, XI, VIII, 5
4. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 49-51
5. *Ibid*, pp. 54-57
6. *Ibid*, pp. 63-67
7. *Ibid*, pp. 94-95
8. *Ibid*, pp. 77 and 79
9. *Ibid*, p. 99
10. *Ibid*, p. 105
11. *Ibid*, p. 105
12. Josephus, *Antiquities*, XIII, VIII, 4, and XIII, IX, 1 (also see footnote)
13. Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, translated by Horace Jones, 11, 9, 3
14. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, p. 85
15. *Ibid*, p. 85
16. *Ibid*, p. 86
17. *Ibid*, p. 393
18. *Ibid*, p. 87
19. *Ibid*, pp. 87-88
20. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Persia," p. 578
21. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 88-89
22. Rawlinson, *Parthia*, p.82-83
23. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 116-118
24. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, pp. 207-208; and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Parthia," Vol. 17, p. 344
25. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 117-118
26. *Ibid*, see map after p. 78
27. *Ibid*, p. 115
28. *Ibid*, p. 118
29. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Ephthalites or White Huns,"

- Vol. 8, p. 646
30. *Ibid*, Vol. 8, p. 646
  31. *Ibid*, Vol.8, p.646
  32. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Indo-Scythians," Vol. 12, p. 270
  33. *Ibid*, Vol. 2, "Babylonia and Assyria," p. 857
  34. Rawlinson, *Parthia*, p. 140
  35. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, p. 146
  36. *Ibid*, pp. 147-148
  37. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Persia", p. 579
  38. Josephus, *Antiquities*, XIV, VII, 1
  39. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy*, p. 154
  40. *Ibid*, pp. 155-156
  41. *Ibid*, p. 160
  42. *Ibid*, p. 161
  43. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Persia," p. 581
  44. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, p. 172 (see also footnote # 5)
  45. *Ibid*, p.174
  46. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, p. 214
  47. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, p. 188
  48. *Ibid*, p. 190-191
  49. Josephus, *Antiquities*, XI, V, 2
  50. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 200-201
  51. *Ibid*, p. 216
  52. *Ibid*, pp. 218-219
  53. *Ibid*, pp. 246-247, 266
  54. *Ibid*, pp. 231-234
  55. *Ibid*, p. 255
  56. *Ibid*, pp. 270, 279-280
  57. *Ibid*, p. 282
  58. *Ibid*, p. 294
  59. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Dacia," Vol. 6, p. 969
  60. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 296-297

61. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 1., "Alphabet," pp. 683-684
62. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 304-305
63. *Ibid*, p. 308
64. *Ibid*, p. 309
65. *Ibid*, p. 312-313
66. *Ibid*, p. 315
67. *Ibid*, p. 317
68. *Ibid*, p. 318
69. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, Hebrew Lexicon, word "Melek," p. 26
70. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, p. 297 (footnote No. 1)
71. Eusebius, *The History of the Church* (The Ecclesiastical History), Book 3, 1, 1
72. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Persia," Vol. 17, p. 580
73. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, "Aramaic," p. 43
74. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, p. 319
75. *Ibid*, pp. 322-325
76. *Ibid*, p. 328
77. *Ibid*, p. 328
78. *Ibid*, p. 329
79. *Ibid*, p. 329
80. *Ibid*, pp. 340-341
81. *Ibid*, p. 352
82. *Ibid*, p. 354 (footnote no. 1)
83. *Ibid*, p. 356
84. Herodotus, *The History*, 4.127
85. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 358-359
86. *Ibid*, p. 360
87. Benjamin, *Persia*, p. 170
88. *Ibid*, p. 173
89. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, p. 198
90. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Pahlavi," Vol. 17, p.30

91. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, p. 213
92. Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, Preface, 1-2
93. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, p. 424
94. Frye, p. 224
95. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 425-426
96. *Ibid*, p. 401 (see also footnotes 5-7)
97. *Ibid*, pp. 400-401, 426
98. *Ibid*, p. 426



## 9. The Life of Jesus Christ—The Untold Story

### Part One: The Childhood Years (Birth to Age 12)

Much has been written about the life of Jesus Christ, the historical person whose name is attached to the many different denominations of Christianity which exist today. In fact, so much has been written that one might wonder whether anything truly new could be written about this one life. As the reader will see, new information about the life of Jesus Christ can be ascertained by combining biblical and secular historical accounts and traditions about the time in which he lived. This chapter is not intended to be a complete history of the life of Jesus Christ. It will cover those aspects of his life and times which have not been generally known.

The prior chapter dealing with the Parthian Empire discussed historical events which shaped the world into which Jesus Christ was born. When some surprising information about his life is added to the history contained in the previous chapter, it can be seen that Jesus Christ actually played a role in the great power politics which occurred between the empires of Parthia and Rome. If he had chosen to do so, he could have had a **much larger** role in the political affairs of that era, and the Bible hints at such a possibility.

This chapter will begin by offering firm evidence that Jesus Christ was a real, historical person. Josephus, a Jewish historian of the first century A.D., regarded the life of Jesus Christ as an established fact. In *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus wrote:

*"there was about this time [Josephus here refers to matters concerning Pontius Pilate, Roman procurator of Judea], Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, - a teacher of*

*such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principle men among us, had condemned him to the cross...he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.”<sup>1</sup>*

In this account, written shortly after Christ died, Josephus not only gave us a powerful witness that Jesus Christ truly lived, but also provided an independent corroboration of many of the biblically-discussed events of his life. Josephus refers to him as “a wise man,” and wonders whether he was more than a mere man because of the “wonderful works” he did. That a non-Christian, Jewish historian of the apostolic era writes of the miracles of Jesus as actual facts offers proof of his miracles. Josephus agrees with the testamental writings that Jesus was indeed sentenced to be crucified by Pontius Pilate at the behest of the Jewish Sanhedrin (“the principle men among us”). Josephus acknowledges that Jesus Christ fulfilled the many prophecies of the Hebrew prophets about the Messiah, and **even refers to his resurrection as a historical fact!**

Josephus’ reference to Jesus as “the Christ” acknowledges that Jesus was the Messiah (“the anointed”). Since a non-Christian source so close to the actual time of Christ has confirmed these facts of his life, the musings of modern skeptics questioning Christ’s existence are without merit. Josephus could speak with eye-witnesses of Jesus’ life; modern skeptics are almost two millennia removed from the events, and their writings are merely

speculative.

Roman secular sources also agree with Josephus. Celsus, an anti-Christian writer of the Roman Empire in the second century A.D., wrote: "It was by magic that he [Jesus] was able to do the miracles which he appeared to have done."<sup>2</sup> In this statement, an antagonist of Christianity grudgingly acknowledges the reality of Christ's "miracles." However, Quadratus, writing in approximately 117-134 A.D. "urged people to believe in Jesus because the effect of his miracles continued up to the present - people had been cured and raised from the dead, and 'some of them...have survived even to our own day.'"<sup>3</sup> Tacitus, the famous Roman historian, writing about the Christians several decades after the death of Christ, stated: "their originator, Christ, had been executed in Tiberius' reign by the governor of Judea, Pontius Pilate."<sup>4</sup>

Clearly, Roman records confirm that Jesus Christ lived, and that he was executed in Judea during the administration of Pontius Pilate. Even his detractors and non-Christian writers acknowledged that he performed supernatural deeds, and one writer recorded that some previously dead persons were known to be alive as a result of being resurrected by Jesus Christ. Whatever one thinks about Jesus Christ, we begin with the fact that he indeed lived and died when the Bible states that he lived and died, that he performed marvelous deeds, and that he made a major impression on the civilization of his day.

Let us now review the historical setting into which Jesus Christ was born. The Roman and Parthian Empires were both powerful, well-established "superpower" rivals at the time Jesus was born. Rome ruled the Mediterranean region, and Parthia ruled Asian lands from modern Syria to India. Palestine was located within the Roman Empire, but was close to the Parthian border (the Euphrates River).

In the decades previous to the birth of Jesus, Rome and Parthia fought several battles with one being fought near Antioch of Syria (very close to Palestine).<sup>5</sup> In about 40 B.C., the Parthians launched a major assault which swept the Romans out of Asia for a short time. For three years (40-37 B.C.) Palestine was within the Parthian Empire and was ruled by a Jewish vassal king of the Parthians named Antigonus. At that time King Herod (the Roman king of Judea) fled from the Parthians in fear of his life. While the Parthian-sponsored rule of Antigonus was brief, it was apparently popular with the Jews. When the Parthians withdrew across the Euphrates, Antigonus, with Jewish support, attempted to maintain himself as king of the Jews, but was defeated by Herod. Mark Antony (the Roman leader famous for his dalliance with Cleopatra) ordered Antigonus beheaded, and Josephus records that this was done to compel the Jews to reaccept the hated Herod as their king.<sup>6</sup> Mark Antony then led a massive invasion of Parthia in 37-36 B.C., but his army was utterly defeated by the Parthians.<sup>7</sup>

To help modern readers gain a frame of reference for these ancient events, these Roman-Parthian wars were more recent events for the people in the period when Jesus was born than World War II and the Korean War are to modern readers. Parthian rule over Palestine was, therefore, vividly remembered by many in Jewish society as being preferable to Roman rule. Mark Antony's defeat led to a long period of "detente" between the two empires, with the Euphrates River serving as the border between their two vast empires. This prolonged period of peaceful relations lasted from 36 B.C. until 58 A.D.,<sup>8</sup> including not only all of Jesus Christ's life, but also the early period of the Apostolic church as well. Rawlinson records that it was an established Roman policy not to provoke a Parthian war during that period of time so long as both empires agreed to coexist on

separate banks of the Euphrates River. Rawlinson comments on this peaceful interlude as follows:

*"It is a well-known fact that Augustus left it as a principle of policy to his successors that the Roman Empire had reached its proper limits, and could not with advantage be extended further. This principle, followed with the utmost strictness by Tiberius, was accepted as a rule by all the earlier Caesars..."*<sup>9</sup>

Obviously, as long as the Caesars wanted peace with Parthia, Roman officials along Parthia's border (such as King Herod and Pontius Pilate) knew they would risk their positions and lives if they entangled Rome in an unwanted war with Parthia.

Without this period of Parthian-Roman detente, it would have been well-nigh impossible for some of the events of Jesus Christ's life to have occurred, as we shall see. The first such event was the coming of the Magi, or "Wise Men" to pay homage to Jesus. We read of this event in Matthew 2:1-12, which becomes more important when considered in the overall context of Roman-Parthian relations.

The Magi were powerful members of one of the two assemblies which elected Parthian monarchs and wielded great influence within the empire. One assembly was composed of members of the royal family (the Arsacids), and the other consisted of the priests (the "Magi") and influential Parthians of non-royal blood (the "Wise Men"). The Magi and Wise Men were jointly known as the Megistanes.<sup>10</sup> The *King James Version* of the Bible states in Matthew 2:1 that "wise men from the east" came to worship Jesus. The term "Wise Men," can be seen as the proper title of Parthian Megistanes. The Greek word translated "wise men" is "magian," literally meaning "Persian astronomer or priest."<sup>11</sup> Parthia had long governed all Persian territory at the time of

Christ, and the “Wise Men” cited in the Bible were clearly members of the Megistanes, very high Parthian officials. While traditional Christian accounts of this episode celebrate the coming of “the three wise men,” the Bible does not limit the number of visiting Magi/Wise Men to three men. **Indeed, Biblical events and the realities of that time argue for a much larger contingent of Parthian Magi.**

Since we saw in previous chapters that the Parthians were descended from the ten tribes of Israel and that their priests were likely descended from the tribe of Levi, this delegation of Magi consisted of leading members of the ten tribes of Israel. Since there were numerous members of the tribe of Judah in Parthia’s empire, they may have been represented as well. Consequently, the delegation of Magi could easily have consisted of at least ten or twelve men representing the various tribes of Israel.

Also, the Bible shows that the Magi did not visit the young Jesus in the manger at Bethlehem (as most nativity scenes depict), but rather visited Jesus in a house somewhat after his birth. Matthew 2:11 states that this visit of the Magi took place **in a house** (not at the manger) when Jesus was old enough to be called **a young child** (no longer “an infant in swaddling clothes”). Luke’s version of Christ’s birth (Luke 2:8-40) mentions the shepherds’ arrival at the manger, but makes no mention of any Magi visiting Christ at that time.

Matthew 2:8 adds that Herod sent the Magi “to Bethlehem” after conferring with the Jewish hierarchy about the prophesied location of the Messiah’s birth. They cited Micah 5:2 that the Messiah would originate in Bethlehem, and they were likely familiar with Daniel 9:25-26 which predicted that the arrival of the Messiah was due at that time. Armed with this information, Herod then privately met with the Parthian delegation, and

enquired when "the star" which they followed had first appeared. He apparently learned that this period of time was almost two years because he killed all male children in Bethlehem under two years of age in an attempt to kill the Messiah (whom he regarded as a competitor for his position as king of the Jews).

Although the Bible tells us that "the star" appeared to the Wise Men almost two years prior to his birth, this offers inexact information in determining how old Jesus was when the Wise Men came to him. Since the Wise Men were prominent people in Parthia at the time of the arrival of "the star," they had to make a very time-consuming journey to reach Judea. Also, it took time to prepare the costly gifts to present to the Messiah, set their affairs in order for a long absence, organize a caravan (and likely obtain an armed escort for protection) and make the lengthy journey to Judea, a journey which moved at the speed of the slowest pack animal in the caravan. Since the "star" may have appeared to the Wise Men prior to Jesus' birth, Jesus may have been a few months (or up to two years) old at the time of the Magi's arrival. Consider also that Matthew 2:1-3 states:

*"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east **to Jerusalem**. Saying, where is he that is born King of the Jews? for **we have seen his star** in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king heard these things, **he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.**"*

This account does not indicate that three wise men from the east quietly visited Herod, then Jesus, and then just as quietly left Judea to return to Parthia. Their arrival in Jerusalem was a **very public affair** because "all Jerusalem" was "troubled" by their

arrival. This indicates that the Magi (a delegation of a dozen or more high Parthian officials) came to Jerusalem in a caravan loaded with costly treasures and escorted by a strong force of armed Parthian soldiers! Since the Magi were high officials of the Parthian government, they would customarily travel with a substantial escort of Parthian soldiers to guarantee their protection. Since they were traveling with many costly treasures to present to the new-born Messiah, their escort may have been unusually large.

Also, these high officials would have traveled with a large entourage of servants, animal-handlers, cooks, etc. on such a long journey. The entourage in this Parthian caravan may have constituted many hundreds of people! Given the fact that many high Parthian officials and very expensive treasures were in the caravan, there may have been many thousands of Parthian soldiers escorting the caravan. This is not an overstatement. Josephus records that treasure caravans bringing expensive offerings to Jerusalem from Jews living in Parthian territory did so with "many ten thousand men" as escorts.<sup>12</sup> In ancient times, traveling with expensive items was dangerous. There was danger not only from brigands, but also from local satraps who might use their armies to conquer a treasure train passing through their territories. If Jewish commoners from Parthia were allowed to travel to Jerusalem with the equivalent of several infantry divisions as escorts, would an important delegation of Parthia's ruling class and a treasure train of gifts have been accompanied by fewer armed escorts?

The Wise Men who came to Jesus were not bringing just a few samples of gold and other precious things that they carried in their personal saddlebags. They were coming to worship he who was born "king" of the Jews. This Parthian delegation was offering tribute money to a "king," and therefore would more



likely have brought a whole train of pack-animals loaded with “gold, frankincense and myrrh.”

Their caravan was so big that their arrival quickly became a “cause celebre” in Jerusalem. The whole city was in an uproar over their arrival, and that argues for **a very visible and impressive** Parthian caravan arriving in Jerusalem not long after Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem. **The sheer size of the caravan, its treasures and its escorts awed King Herod and the whole city to the point they were all “troubled.”** This indicates that the Parthian caravan had so many armed escorts that many feared it was an invasion force coming to besiege Jerusalem. However, their announced reason for coming to visit the Messiah stunned a city of Jews which intensely wanted the Messiah to come and free them from Roman rule! It is clear that the Jewish hierarchy understood the Parthians were looking for the Messiah as they quickly looked for Messianic prophecies to locate the city of his birth.

After their consultations with Herod and high Jewish officials, the Parthian delegation traveled to worship Jesus and present their gifts to him (by this time, Matthew 2:11 states Jesus and Mary were living in “a house,” so they were no longer in the manger). Their journey would have been closely followed by Herod’s spies.

Joseph was then warned by God in a dream to flee into Egypt (Matthew 2:13) to avoid Herod’s impending slaughter of Bethlehem’s young male children. Since Herod’s edict applied only to Bethlehem, there would have been no need for Joseph, Mary and Jesus to flee unless they were still in Bethlehem. Going to Egypt took them completely out of Herod’s area of jurisdiction. Herod made the mistake of assuming the Messiah would be born to a family native to the Bethlehem area. However, Luke 2:4 shows that although the family into which Jesus was born resided in Galilee, they had to journey to Bethlehem at that time

to comply with a taxing edict because they were direct descendants of King David. Since Luke 2:39 states that Joseph, Mary and Jesus returned to Galilee not long after Jesus was born, and doesn't even mention the Egyptian trip, it seems apparent that the stay of Joseph, Mary and Jesus in Egypt was brief. Indeed, since history records that Herod ("Herod the Great") died in 4 B.C.,<sup>13</sup> and Matthew 2:14-19 states that Jesus and his parents returned from Egypt as soon as Herod was dead (4 B.C.), Herod must have died soon after he gave the order to slay the male children in Bethlehem.

Since Herod died in 4 B.C. and the date of Jesus' birth is accepted to be around 4 B.C. by many historians, the events of his birth, the arrival of the caravan of the Parthian Magi, the flight to Egypt, the death of Herod and the return of Jesus' family from Egypt occurred within a short time. Since Luke 2:39 indicates that Joseph, Mary and Jesus returned to Galilee soon after Jesus' birth, the above events had to occur in a short period of time.

It is significant that Jesus' parents were faithful to God's law requiring circumcision on the eighth day (Leviticus 12:2-3), and to Jewish custom by making an offering to God at the Temple in Jerusalem to consecrate their firstborn male child (Luke 2:21-24). This is an important observation as it shows Jesus was raised and shaped in a family environment that obeyed God and devoutly observed Jewish customs.

History records that Roman-Parthian relations were peaceful at the time that Jesus was born. The Bible confirms this was the case as the Parthian Magi did not sneak into Roman territory to look for the Messiah, but rather came directly to King Herod, quite open about their reasons for being in Roman-occupied Palestine. They informed Herod that they had come to worship "he that is born king of the Jews."

It is a tribute to the power of Caesar's policy that the Roman-Parthian peace be maintained that war did not result from this statement, for Herod could easily have flown into a rage, and yelled "How dare you ask to see another 'king of the Jews' besides me; I am king of the Jews!" That Herod swallowed his pride, and meekly answered the Parthians is quite noteworthy. This is a tribute not only to Caesar's policy to maintain the peace, but also to Herod's memory that the Parthians had militarily controlled the throne of Judea a few decades earlier. Herod's very meek response to the highly provocative question of the Parthian officials may also indicate that he was intimidated by the many Parthian soldiers who accompanied the Magi. Indeed, since the whole city was "troubled" by the Parthians' arrival, the presence of many Parthian soldiers may have sparked rumors that a new Parthian-Roman war was imminent. Herod may even have suspected that the Parthians' question was designed to provoke an incident which would lead to an outbreak of hostilities and his removal from the throne.

A comment must be made concerning the "star" which led the Magi to Jesus. Some have proposed that this star was a comet or a celestial phenomenon although the context shows that this was not possible. The biblically-described star led the Magi over a long east-to-west route from Parthia to Judea, and Matthew 2:9 states that it finally "**stood over where the young child was.**" No comet or celestial phenomenon could pinpoint a single city, much less an individual child within a particular house. The Bible periodically uses the word "star" to represent an angel (Job 38:7, Rev. 1:20), and there is every reason to believe that this "star" which led a delegation of Parthian nobles to a specific child in a specific house in Judea was an angel of God. Nothing else makes sense. Only an angel (a spirit being) could literally "stand over" the baby Jesus to designate one specific child to the Parthian nobles.

**Also, there is nothing in the biblical account which indicates that this "star" was visible to anyone other than the Magi (Wise Men)! Matthew 2:2 states that the Magi saw "the star," but the context indicates no one else ever saw it. Verse 7 shows Herod asking the Magi when "the star" appeared to them, indicating no one in Judea was aware of any such "star." If there had been some unusual celestial object in the sky, Herod and his astrologers would already have known the exact date on which it had appeared.**

After leading the Parthians to Judea, the angel ("star") disappeared, forcing the Parthians to ask Herod for directions.

After the Magi left Herod, the "star" again appeared to them, led them directly (Mathew 2:9), and "stood over" the young child, Jesus, to set him apart from all others. Verse 10 states the Magi rejoiced that the star was again showing them the way they should follow. Obviously, a "star" which appeared, disappeared and reappeared for the Magi (but which was apparently not seen by any other humans) was an angel. Supporting this fact is that Luke 2:8-15 records that the birth of Jesus was announced to shepherds by angels speaking to them out of a heavenly light which accompanied their appearance. Since God used angels to bring the shepherds to Jesus' manger, it follows he also used an angel to lead the Magi to Jesus.

Having found Jesus, the Magi worshipped him, offering rich gifts of gold, myrrh and frankincense. They then were warned by God in a dream (Matthew 2:12) not to return to Herod, resulting in the prompt exit of the Magi and their escorts from Judea. When Herod realized that he had been fooled, he wrathfully killed all the young male children of Bethlehem in a vain effort to kill the Messiah. However, there is no record that he made any attempt to overtake or punish the Magi. As high Parthian nobles, they had "diplomatic immunity," and Herod dared not anger Caesar by

provoking the Parthians. Also, the size of the Magi's armed escort apparently dissuaded Herod from attempting to pursue them.

There is another important aspect of this remarkable episode. While it is not surprising that Jewish leaders during Herod's reign were sufficiently familiar with the prophetic writings to pinpoint for Herod where the Messiah would be born, **it is surprising that God was working more closely with members of the Parthian ruling class than he was with the Jewish priests! This makes no biblical sense unless (A) the Parthians were descended from the exiled tribes of the House of Israel and (B) the Magi (Parthian priests) were Levites.** During his ministry Jesus Christ himself asserted that he was not sent to the gentiles, but only to the descendants of the Israelites (Matthew 15:24-28 shows the reluctance of Jesus to assist a gentile). Throughout the Old Testament God worked almost exclusively with the House of Israel and the House of Judah; his involvement with other nations was incidental (i.e. using them to punish his people when they sinned). It was not until after the death of Christ that gentiles were permitted unrestricted access to the God of Israel. The fact that God was working intimately with the Parthian nobility confirms that the Parthians were the House of Israel in Asia, and supports the conclusion that the Parthian Magi (their priests) were Levites.

The fact that some of the Parthian ruling classes were worshippers of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is most revealing. That God himself sent an angel to lead them to Jesus, and gave instructions to the Magi via dreams is further revealing. God obviously considered these Parthians to be "righteous" men under the terms of his laws or he would not have been dealing with them so personally. That educated Parthians were ready to visit and worship the Messiah at the time of Christ's birth

indicates they were also familiar with the prophecies of the Old Testament. Who but transplanted Israelites would have been looking for the Messiah at that time?

Although we are jumping ahead in the narrative, consider the events of Acts 2 which state Parthians (verse 9) were among those who made pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the Feast of Weeks (known to Christians as Pentecost Sunday). Verse 9 also mentions "Medes, Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia" as being present at this feast, and all these regions were provinces of the Parthian Empire. We know that portions of the ten tribes had been relocated to "the cities of the Medes," so the presence of devout visitors from Media could easily designate people from the ten tribes of Israel. Interestingly, verse 9 also mentions "dwellers...in Asia" were present. The word "Asia" has clouded origins, but the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that "It is probable that it ["Asia"] has an Assyrian or Hebrew root, and was used first... with a specific or restricted local application, a more extended signification having eventually been given it..."<sup>14</sup>

One of the Scythian tribes was called the "Asii" (or "Asiani").<sup>15</sup> Since the "Asiani" were one of the Scythian tribes bearing the name of Isaac (the Sacae or Saka), the Bible's reference to "Asians" attending the Feast of Weeks could indicate that Scythians were also present in Jerusalem at that time. This further indicates that the Parthians and Scythians were the displaced members of the "lost ten tribes of Israel." The gentile populations of Asia had no cultural interest in the worship of the God of Israel; only the ten tribes of Israel would retain such a custom.

It was not unusual for large pilgrimages originating in Parthia to travel to Jerusalem to worship the God of Israel. We noted that Josephus wrote of caravans (of offerings to the God of Israel) from Parthian Mesopotamian arrived in Jerusalem under the

protection of “many ten thousand men.” These must have been magnificent treasure trains to have warranted the protection of a sizeable army. Such huge “offerings” going to Jerusalem from Parthia indicates that many people within the Parthian Empire worshipped the God of Israel. This meant that, at the time of Jesus and Herod, there was a great deal of travel and trade between Judea and many regions of the Parthian Empire.

In an earlier chapter it was shown that the Magi were loyal to one dynasty (the Arsacids), whose members continuously ruled Parthia. It was shown that many rulers of Parthian (Saka) kingdoms had names incorporating the word “Phares” or the consonants of the Hebrew root word for that name (PH-R-S). This indicates that the Arsacids were descended from the seed of David, who was the first king of the Phares family (Matthew 1:2-6). I Chronicles 3:17-24 reveals that the royal lineage continued to flourish after Judah’s captivity. Indeed, this dynasty was given high status in the Babylonian Empire (II Kings 25:27-30). This post-exilic elevation of the Davidic dynasty in Asia likely led to their serving as vassal kings (over captive Israelites) under Babylonian and Persian masters. Their later elevation to the throne of Parthia fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah 33:17 that David’s descendants would always rule over the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. This may explain the unshakable loyalty of the Parthians to the Arsacids. With the Parthians being Israelites, and the Arsacids being descended from King David, the Arsacids were the only dynasty in Asia that was racially, historically and culturally related to the Parthian people.

Since Matthew 1:3-17 tells us that Jesus Christ was also a descendant of Phares and King David, Jesus was a blood relative of the Parthian ruling dynasty, which also descended from Phares. The relationship of Jesus to the Parthian Arsacids serves as a further explanation for the homage paid to Jesus by the

Parthian nobility. It was customary for the Parthian Megistanes (the Magi and Wise Men) to keep track of Arsacid relatives in foreign nations. In some cases the Megistanes sent to foreign nations (Scythia and Rome) to summon various relatives of the Arsacids to come to Parthia to serve as their king. As mentioned in chapter eight, some Parthian rulers killed every male relative they could find in an effort to eliminate potential rivals to their throne. This compelled the Magi to look for distant individuals who had the bloodline of the Arsacids (the lineage of Phares and King David). At the time of the birth of Jesus, the recent Parthian emperor, Phraates IV (who reigned 37-2 B.C.), had killed many male relatives, including his own father and many of his brothers.<sup>16</sup> Male Arsacids at the time of Jesus' birth were in short supply.

When the Magi were led by an angel of God to pay homage to the young Jesus, they doubtless asked Joseph and Mary everything they could think of concerning Jesus' background. They must have learned that Jesus was a blood descendant of Phares and King David. **This relationship made Jesus an Arsacid, a blood relative of Parthia's kings.** In fact, since Parthia could offer the kingship to any Arsacid, not just the oldest son or closest relative of the previous king, **Jesus Christ was technically eligible for the Parthian throne.** While the Bible does mention Jesus' royal lineage (of the seed of David), it does not mention his relationship to Parthia's dynasty. However, as we shall see later in this chapter, the Bible twice implies that this relationship existed.

Since the Magi who worshipped Jesus were members of the body which selected the kings of Parthia and kept track of male Arsacids, they must have been ecstatic to learn that the young Jesus was an Arsacid. While the Bible is silent on their future contacts, Parthian Magi likely would have stayed in contact with Jesus in



future years and monitored the events of his life.

We will now examine the possibility that the visit of influential Parthians to the young Jesus Christ almost led to a Parthian-Roman war. Recall that from 40-37 B.C., Parthia had ruled Palestine and Syria before the Romans drove them back across the Euphrates River. That war ushered in a long period of Parthian-Roman detente which included the entire lifetime of Jesus Christ. However, a great Parthian-Roman war was barely averted in 1 A.D. when (as discussed in chapter eight) a “summit conference” was held between the Parthian emperor, Phraataces, and Caius Caesar, the grandson of Augustus Caesar on an island in the Euphrates River (i.e. neutral territory). Roman sources record that:

*“The armies of the two chiefs were drawn up on the opposite banks of the river [the Euphrates], facing one another; and the chiefs themselves, accompanied by an equal number of attendants, proceeded to deliberate in the sight of both hosts.”<sup>17</sup>*

This “summit conference” averted war, but how could the Magi’s visit have had a role in this crisis?

Scholarship has documented that Jesus Christ was apparently born in approximately 4 B.C. Bible accounts of the Magi visiting Jesus cease when the Magi left Judea and returned to Parthia, leaving the impression that the issue was concluded. However, if we consider the geopolitical realities of that time, there is no way that the Magi’s exit from Judea ended the matter.

Matthew 2:3 records that Herod and “all Jerusalem” were troubled by the arrival of the Magi. Jerusalem was a commercial city at the nexus of major trade routes, and it commonly received caravans of many hundreds or thousands of people.

Three tired Magi arriving from the east wouldn't have made a ripple in the city's calm. For that matter, caravans from Parthian territory (as discussed in chapter eight) could arrive in Jerusalem with many thousands of armed escorts, and such events did not trouble the city. What was singularly different about the caravan that brought the Magi? The Magi (perhaps ten, twelve, or more of them) were Parthian nobility who selected the rulers of Parthia's empire. Such a visit was unprecedented and unrepeated in the history of the city of Jerusalem. Such prominent people did not "sneak into town," but came with many attendants and perhaps thousands of regular Parthian soldiers as escorts. This occurred at a time when Parthia and Rome had a peace treaty, and no major Roman or Parthian military forces had crossed the Euphrates River in decades. The arrival of a significant Parthian military force in Jerusalem escorting high Parthian officials was militarily provocative and could justifiably be seen by Herod and the Romans as a treaty violation.

When Parthia had occupied Palestine, it had crowned its own vassal king, Antigonus, as ruler of Judea. When the Magi (Parthia's official king-makers) came to Jerusalem looking for "a new king of the Jews," it must have sounded to Herod and the Romans that the Parthians were there to reassert their claim to Judea and dethrone Herod. Their speaking directly to Herod (who was Rome's king of the Jews) about wanting to find a "new king of the Jews" could be seen by the Romans as close to a declaration of war, given the region's history. The fact that King Herod "bit his tongue" and made no rash statement to the Magi and treated them with deference argues that the Parthians must have had an intimidating number of troops at Jerusalem to compel Herod to be so uncharacteristically meek. Since a major Roman-Parthian treaty had been in effect for over three decades, Rome felt unthreatened in the region, and would, consequently, have had a small garrison in Jerusalem.

Caesar's decree that no Parthian war be provoked also put Herod in an awkward position. While the Magi and Parthians were in Judea with no harmful intent, there is no way the Romans could be sure this "visit" was benign in nature. After the Parthians left, reports had to be filed with Caesar about this highly unusual event.

Herod was justifiably fearful of Parthian intentions in the area. Hadn't they come to anoint a replacement for him as "king of the Jews?" Hadn't they also deceived him by leaving the area without his knowledge or permission? Herod's murderous act in Bethlehem would also have inflamed Jewish opinion, and rumors of revolt against the hated Romans would have intensified. Faced with a possible Parthian invasion and/or a Jewish revolt, Herod needed more Roman soldiers in the region. In his reports to Caesar, Herod undoubtedly put himself in a favorable light, and warned Caesar that the Parthians had crossed the Euphrates, made a military reconnaissance to Jerusalem to spy out the city's weakness and were openly talking about crowning a "new king of the Jews." Because the Parthians' arrival in Jerusalem had scared the whole city, news of this extraordinary event would have spread quickly along the trade routes connected to Jerusalem.

Also, in 2 B.C., Rome and Parthia were facing a possible conflict in Armenia over succession to the throne of Armenia. In both Armenia and Judea, the issue was whether Rome or Parthia would choose the kings of those nations. While Parthia had not forced the crisis in Armenia, Parthia's actions in Judea (the Magi's visit) were provocative. Rome's response was to send a large army "to the east" to prepare for a possible Parthian-Roman war. Rawlinson records that the Roman army arrived in 1 B.C., delayed by the retirement of Augustus Caesar's preferred commander, and that the situation was further muddled by the death of Phraates IV, Parthia's emperor during the visit of the

Magi to Jerusalem.<sup>18</sup> Herod the Great had also died by the time Roman reinforcements arrived, so all the major principals had a fresh viewpoint by the time Rome and Parthia had their “summit conference” at the Euphrates River.

Historical accounts do not mention the Parthian visit to Jerusalem as a factor in this near confrontation, but its occurrence can now be seen as adding to Roman fears of a Parthian invasion of its empire. Although the historical accounts mention only the Armenian dispute, it is worth noting that the Parthian and Roman armies did not confront each other in the mountains of Armenia but rather along the Euphrates River (the invasion route to Syria and Palestine). Since the Roman army arrived in 1 B.C., and the Roman-Parthian peace conference did not defuse the situation until 1 A.D., there was a two-year period of “war fever” in the Mideast. Everyone in the region breathed a huge sigh of relief when war was averted. As we shall soon see, if a war had been fought (ending the Parthian-Roman detente), much of Jesus Christ’s ministry in Judea could not have occurred.

Very little else is said in the Bible concerning the early years of Jesus Christ. Luke 2:40 states that Jesus grew up strong and healthy, and that he was filled with wisdom and favored by God. Luke 2:41-50 tells us that Jesus, at age twelve, amazed the teachers in the Temple with his wisdom. This passage shows that he was still being raised by his parents according to the Laws of God, as his family annually attended the Passover in Jerusalem (the location of the Temple). Jesus would have been seen by others as a devout, brilliant son of a traditional Jewish family.

Luke’s account mentions that Jesus was absent from his family for a full day before they realized he was missing, and initiated a search which located him in the Temple. How could Jesus, a twelve-year-old youth, be apart from his parents, and his parents not know about it for a full day? **How did a mere**

**twelve year old lad even come into the presence of the teachers of the Temple**, the religious hierarchy of the Jewish religion? There is more here than meets the eye.

It would have been inappropriate for Joseph and Mary to have allowed Jesus to be wandering around Jerusalem unescorted by an adult. It seems apparent that Jesus was being escorted by an adult relative. That they were unconcerned about Jesus' absence for a full day before searching for him indicates that such absences were commonplace. It is recorded in the Jewish Talmud and in other sources that Joseph of Arimathea was the great-uncle of Jesus Christ.<sup>19</sup> It is likely that Joseph of Arimathea was the adult relative who was serving as Jesus' mentor and escort.

Joseph of Arimathea was a powerful figure in Jewish society, and was apparently a member of the Sanhedrin itself. Years later, when the Sanhedrin plotted the death of Jesus, Luke 23:50-51 asserts that Joseph of Arimathea **had not consented** to the deed that was done to Jesus. That Joseph had not consented to the Sanhedrin's murderous plot indicates that Joseph was a member of the body with the inherent right to consent to (or dissent from) the actions of the Sanhedrin.

It is now clear how the young Jesus came to be involved in a discourse with the Temple hierarchy. Since Jesus' great-uncle, Joseph of Arimathea, had easy access to the highest echelons of Jewish society, it is likely that Jesus simply accompanied Joseph of Arimathea to the Temple, and eventually participated in a discussion between his great-uncle and the Temple teachers. Apparently, Jesus was with his great-uncle often enough that Jesus' prolonged absence from Joseph and Mary at that time was not a unique experience.

The remainder of Jesus' life until age thirty is a mystery. While the Bible is silent on the subject, it does give us a clue. The fact that Jesus was, by the age of twelve, spending more time in the

care of Joseph of Arimathea and less time in the care of Joseph and Mary is significant. It appears that a major transition was occurring in Jesus' life. When Joseph and Mary found Jesus in the Temple after a three-day search (Luke 2:46), Mary reproved him with the words: "Why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously." (RSV) Jesus replied: "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" Jesus, at the age of twelve, essentially told them: "Why were you even bothering to look for me?" The phrase "I must be in my Father's house" indicates that the Spirit of God was now leading him away from the household of his human family and into the work of his heavenly Father. The Bible adds that Jesus went back to Nazareth with Joseph and Mary, so Jesus did not yet make a "clean break" from his childhood home. However, the event at the Temple and Jesus' own words indicated his departure was imminent.

### **Part Two: The "Missing Eighteen Years" (Age 12–30)**

Is it not incongruous that while Jesus Christ is the central character of the New Testament, nothing is written concerning the majority of his life? The Bible tells us a little about his first twelve years, a lot about his last three and one-half years, but nothing about an eighteen year span between ages twelve and thirty.

Luke 3:23 observes that Jesus was "about 30" when he became a public figure in Judea due to the advent of his ministry, but where had he been and what had he done in the intervening eighteen years? Since the Bible makes no direct comment about this period of time, we must rely on non-Biblical sources for information about these "missing years."

The New Testament's silence about these eighteen years of Jesus' life is significant. Since Luke 1:2 states that the gospel narratives of Jesus' life were eye-witness accounts, it implies

that the gospel writers had not witnessed any of the events of Jesus' adult life before age thirty. This further implies that Jesus was not even present in Judea during the "missing" eighteen years. If he had been living in Judea or Galilee, it would have been impossible to hide such a precocious youth who had been worshipped by foreign nobility as a child, and who had awed the Temple's rulers with his brilliance at age twelve. Did the spiritual power that was manifesting itself in Jesus at age twelve go dormant for eighteen years? Did Jesus "quench the spirit" at age twelve so he could live as an obscure Galilean carpenter for eighteen years? That is highly unlikely. Indeed, the event at the Temple indicates that Jesus was in the process of separating from his parents to pursue the divine mission that he had been born to fulfill. It is the contention of this book that soon after the Temple incident, Jesus left Palestine altogether for eighteen years. There is biblical evidence supporting such a conclusion.

The account of Matthew 13:54-56 indicates that **after this eighteen year period, Jesus was scarcely remembered in his own home town**. Whereas, at age twelve, Jesus is amazing the teachers in the Jerusalem Temple with his wisdom, the common folk in his home town synagogue are asking themselves eighteen years later (after hearing Jesus speak): "Where did this man (Jesus) get this wisdom?" If the uncommon wisdom of Jesus had been present in Nazareth for those eighteen years, such a question would have been ludicrous. Note also verses 55-56 where the listeners ask: "Isn't this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? and his sisters, **are they not all with us?**" This indicates that the members of his home town synagogue were struggling to identify or remember who Jesus was. The fact that they easily named all his immediate family members, and said "are **they** not **all with** us?" indicates that Jesus had not been "with them" as were his other family members. Their

quizzical response to Jesus indicates that while Jesus had been gone from Nazareth for a **long** time, his immediate family members had remained there in the community. Obviously, if Jesus had been a hard-working carpenter in Nazareth all his life, the local citizenry would have easily recognized him. Yet they spoke as having never previously witnessed either his wisdom or power!

Jesus' wisdom had awed the most learned Jewish leaders in the nation at age twelve! To believe that Jesus lived the next eighteen years in Nazareth as a "humble carpenter" while showing no wisdom at all until age thirty, one has to believe that for eighteen years Jesus "quenched" the Holy Spirit that was burning brightly in him at age twelve! Christians are forbidden in I Thessalonians 5:19 to "quench the spirit." Did Jesus do what Christians are forbidden to do? Hardly! Yet traditional dogma (that Jesus lived inconspicuously in Nazareth until age thirty) advocates just such a view.

The logical conclusion is that Jesus did not work as a carpenter in Nazareth during the "missing eighteen years." In fact, the Bible offers no statement that Jesus was ever employed as a carpenter during his adult life. Matthew 13:55 refers to Jesus as a "carpenter's son," not as a "carpenter." Luke's account about Jesus' meeting with the Temple elders at age 12 records Jesus declaring that his future was not linked to the profession of his physical father, but with the calling of his spiritual Father in heaven. When his parents chided Jesus for being in the Temple rather than with them, Jesus replied "know you not that I must be about my Father's business?" This does not portray Jesus as a "rebel" since verse 51 shows that he was an obedient youth, but it shows that as early as age twelve, God's Spirit was drawing Jesus away from the carpenter "business" of Joseph, and toward the spiritual "business" of God.



As a child growing up in a carpenter's household, Jesus was certainly familiar with carpentry, but the Bible does not assert that he was a carpenter in Nazareth during the "missing years." Mark's account of Jesus' visit to his old home synagogue (Mark 6:1-6) does quote townsfolk as calling Jesus a "carpenter." However, these were the same townsfolk who struggled to identify Jesus, as the context confirms. Note that the Bible itself does not declare "Jesus was a carpenter," but rather quotes the comments of those who did not know him very well. That some hometown folk would call him a "carpenter" is consistent with the likelihood that Jesus had been a carpenter's apprentice to Joseph when they had last seen him.

This passage also declares that Jesus had four brothers and at least two sisters. Jesus was an oldest son in a family of at least seven siblings. Whatever the number of siblings, it is clear that Mary had a large family after Jesus was born.

The Bible never mentions Joseph, the step-father of Jesus, after the episode of Jesus being in the Temple at age twelve. Since Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the siblings of Jesus **are** cited as living in Nazareth when Jesus is 30 years old and Joseph is not mentioned, it is apparent that Joseph died during those "missing years." Since Joseph of Arimathea was already spending a lot of time with Jesus at age twelve, he likely became Jesus' guardian after Joseph died. Joseph of Arimathea was surely a good role model for Jesus as Luke 23:50 refers to him as "good" and "just." Given the fact that Joseph of Arimathea was a man of prominence in the Jewish community, and Jesus' precocious wisdom was known to the Temple elders in his pre-teen years, how is it possible that no record of Jesus' activities in Palestine exists for the missing eighteen years of Jesus' life? The logical answer is that he was not present in Palestine during that time! Ordinarily, with the death of a father, the oldest son (even a

young one like Jesus) would have been compelled to begin working for a living to support the family. However, since Joseph of Arimathea was a wealthy relative (who could guarantee the economic health of the family), Jesus was free to pursue his real calling in life. Also, the Parthian Magi had lavished gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh upon Jesus when they had visited him shortly after his birth. Since this large sum of wealth would have been held "in trust" for him by either his parents or Joseph of Arimathea, Jesus could have tapped that wealth to provide for his family's needs without having to work as a carpenter.

In *The Traditions of Glastonbury*, E. Raymond Capt cites evidence that Joseph of Arimathea was an international merchant involved with the tin trade in the British Isles. Earlier chapters of this book documented that the British Isles were Israelite regions since at least the reign of Solomon. Also, chapter four presented evidence that large bodies of the tribes of Simeon and Dan entered Briton and Ireland around 721 B.C. when ancient Israel fell to Assyria, adding more Israelites to the population base of the British Isles. It is hardly surprising that Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the tribe of Judah, would be trading with people descended from the other tribes of Israel.

Capt cites the account of Gildas Badonicus (an early British historian of the sixth century A.D.) which refers to Joseph of Arimathea as a "nobilis decurio."<sup>20</sup> The very fact that an early historian of Britain discusses Joseph of Arimathea at all gives weight to accounts that Joseph was involved with the events of early Briton. Capt asserts that Joseph's role was as follows:

*"The same title 'Decurio' [applied to Joseph of Arimathea] is used by St. Jerome in his translation of the Vulgate of St. Mark's 'honourable counsellor' (Mark 15:43) and St.*

*Luke's 'counsellor.' (Luke 23:50) In the Roman world, a 'decurio' denoted an important Roman office, usually connected with the general management of a mining district. The implication is that Joseph was in charge of Rome's mining interests in Britain. Such a position would require Joseph to spend a considerable amount of time away from his homeland."*<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, Joseph had to be a prominent man in the Roman world to receive immediate access to Pilate, the Roman administrator of Judea, during the intense political turmoil surrounding the crucifixion (Mark 15:43-45). Unless Joseph of Arimathea was both known to and trusted by Pilate and the Roman rulers of Judea, he would not have been allowed swift access to Pontius Pilate at so sensitive and critical a time. Capt also states that during that period, both Roman and Jewish law called for the disposal of the bodies of criminals in common pits with all memory of them removed, unless the body was promptly claimed by a relative.<sup>22</sup> The fact that Joseph of Arimathea came forward to claim Jesus' body is convincing evidence that he was a relative of Jesus. That he obtained such approval not by going to an lower official, but to Pilate himself, indicates that he was used to doing business with the highest Roman officials.

However, what of the activities of Joseph of Arimathea and Jesus during the "missing eighteen years?" If Jesus were under Joseph of Arimathea's tutelage during those years, he would have spent considerable time traveling, given that Joseph's business involved international trade between the nations of that day. While the information which follows is based on legends and traditions, they are buttressed by the Bible's implication that Jesus was absent from Palestine for a prolonged period of time.

Obviously, Jesus went **somewhere** during that time, and legends and traditions offer the only evidence that exists.

Many traditions assert that Joseph of Arimathea and Jesus were not only present in Britain, but had homes in the area of Glastonbury, England. Supporting these traditions, Capt cites evidence that Glastonbury bore two titles from ancient times - "Secretum Domini" and "Domus Dei" (Latin for "The Secret of the Lord," and "The House of God").<sup>23</sup> William Steuart McBimie, in his book, *The Search for the Twelve Apostles*, also wrote concerning these traditions:

*"There certainly is no other tradition known concerning the history of St. Joseph of Arimathea and since the British tradition is vigorous we see no reason to challenge it...If in any country there is a strong tradition concerning some Apostolic figures, and no counter-tradition elsewhere, then we at least stand on the ground of possibility and even probability. So it is with...St. Joseph."*<sup>24</sup>

Capt also lists a fifteenth century document that Joseph of Arimathea converted King Arviragus of first century A.D. Britain to the Christian religion, and that this early king in Britain gave Joseph and his party twelve portions of tax-free land in the area of Glastonbury.<sup>25</sup> This tax-free land in Glastonbury is confirmed in the Domesday Book of early English history under the title "Domus Dei."<sup>26</sup> The fact that there were **twelve** portions of land is significant. Did God inspire this symbolism...one portion for each of the twelve tribes of Israel?

Another fact cited by Capt is that the Druids worshipped a "trinity" of gods "known as 'Beli,' the Creator as regards the past; 'Taran,' the controlling providence of the present, and 'Yesu,' the coming saviour of the future."<sup>27</sup> The name "Beli"

preserves a Hebrew word for "Lord",<sup>28</sup> and in its expectation of a coming "Yesu" savior, "Druidism thus anticipated Christianity and pointed to the coming saviour under the very name by which Christ was called."<sup>29</sup> The name "Jesus" is from the Greek, but the Hebrew name of Jesus was likely "Yeshuah," meaning "salvation."<sup>30</sup> The presence of Hebrew words in Britain's Druidic religion indicates that it had some roots in the religion of the ancient Israelites. This is logical given the dominant presence of Israelites in Britain throughout the first millennium B.C.

Other ancient legends assert that Jesus traveled as far east as India and Nepal.<sup>31</sup> There is a biblical basis for legends that Jesus could have traveled both in the British Isles, and as far into Asia as India. In Matthew 15:24, Jesus said: **"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel."** The House of Israel refers to the ten tribes of Israel who have been identified in earlier chapters as including the early Britons, the Sacae/Saka Scythians and the Parthians in Asia. Since the area of Parthian/Saka dominance extended as far as India,<sup>32</sup> groups of the ten tribes of Israel could be found that far into Asia. **Since Jesus said he was "sent" to those ten tribes, it is logical that he travelled to where the various tribes of the House of Israel lived in the first century A.D.** Since the British Isles and even portions of India (at the eastern edge of Parthia's empire) were then inhabited by the tribes of Israel, Jesus' presence among these people would be a fulfillment of that scripture.

As seen earlier, Jesus lived during a period of peace between Parthia and Rome. During this period, trade flourished between the merchants of both empires. Rawlinson records that this trade was "considerable," and that merchants brought "various metals and numerous manufactured articles" from Rome into Parthia.<sup>33</sup> Given the indications that Joseph of Arimathea was involved in

the Roman mining (metals) trade, and that Joseph's homeland in Judea was ideally located to facilitate exports into Parthia and Asia via overland trade routes, it is likely that Joseph's business included the export of metal products into Parthia and Asia. As Jesus grew, he likely became a trusted member of Joseph's international trading business. Who could possibly be better suited than Jesus to supervise Joseph's business trade with Parthian territories? Jesus had already been worshipped by members of the Magi, the Parthian ruling elite! Jesus was assured of a very warm reception in Parthia due to the Magi's favor, and would have been given access to any portion of Parthia's sphere of influence that he wished to visit. Jesus' participation in Joseph's international trading business gave him an ideal opportunity to visit those regions to which the ten tribes of Israel had migrated (Briton, Parthia, Scythia and other Asian locations). One other possibility exists. Earlier chapters have shown that both the Israelite/Phoenician and the Carthaginian Empires of the first millennium B.C. planted colonies of Israelites in North America. It was also shown that some Carthaginians likely fled North Africa to seek refuge in their North American colony after the fall of Carthage. In chapter five we also saw evidence that this Punic colony in North America lasted until about 500 A.D., so there was a significant Israelite civilization in North America during the life of Christ. Since Christ was visiting the regions of the earth inhabited by the descendants of the ten tribes, could he have visited ancient North America as well? The surprising answer may be "Yes!"

Consider the Quetzalcoatl legends of the ancient New World. While "Quetzalcoatl" is usually depicted as a serpent god, the legends record that some Quetzalcoatl legends are quite different.

In *Voyages to the New World*, Nigel Davies includes a

compilation of various Quetzalcoatl legends. These legends include the assertions that Quetzalcoatl "**had a white skin and...was traditionally expected to return...but once only, in human form,**" that "amid the lamentations of his people, Quetzalcoatl thereafter set out on his long journey **to the place in the East where he was destined to meet his end,**" that "**he rose to heaven and entered therein,**" and that "he remained four days in the land of the dead and, on the eighth day, reappeared as **the Morning Star.**"<sup>34</sup> (Emphasis added throughout.) Davies also comments that Quetzalcoatl is depicted as being a "**god in human form,**" and that he was the "**creator God.**"<sup>35</sup> It is also significant that the humanized Quetzalcoatl legends appear **only** in the **Christian era.**

There are additional Peruvian legends about a deity named Viracocha, who "departed across the sea," but was "**destined to return.**"<sup>36</sup> Viracocha is also portrayed in Spanish sources "like Quetzalcoatl—as a benevolent figure who traveled from place to place, **preaching repentance and performing miracles.**"<sup>37</sup> Charles Boland's book, *They All Discovered America*, adds that "the first Quetzalcoatl is said to have sprung from a **virgin birth.**"<sup>38</sup>

New World legends about a human-deity who was a benevolent white (Semitic) person, preached repentance, performed miracles, was both divine and human at the same time, was born of a virgin, was from the Old World, took a long journey to the East (across the Atlantic toward the Old World) on a mission of self-sacrifice, was dead, but was resurrected and rose to heaven, and who would return at a future time unmistakably point to one (and only one) historical person: Jesus Christ. Indeed, many of the doctrines about the humanized Quetzalcoatl parallel Christian teachings about Jesus Christ! Even Quetzalcoatl's title (the "Morning Star"), is one of Jesus Christ's biblical titles (Revelation

22:16). The many Christian themes attached to the early Quetzalcoatl strongly indicate that the humanized Quetzalcoatl represented Jesus Christ who visited the New World during the “lost” years of his life. These ancient New World legends even record that he returned to the Old World aware of the destiny of self-sacrifice which was ahead of him.

The fanciful legends depicting Quetzalcoatl as a serpent god do not, of course, apply to Jesus Christ. Since Satan is depicted as a “serpent” in the Bible (Genesis 3:1-13, Revelation 12:9-15), it is apparent that the worship of Quetzalcoatl was subverted from biblical themes into a form of Satan-worship (even including rites of human sacrifice). The separate legendary figure of Viracocha may also be based on Jesus Christ, or even one of the Apostles who were sent by Christ to “all nations” (Matthew 28:19).

Earlier chapters presented much evidence that Israelite civilizations were established in the New World by the Hebrew-Phoenicians, Carthaginians, and Iberians. These Israelites, by bringing Old World knowledge and customs to the New World, had a large role in the founding of New World civilizations. For example, the Carthaginians who colonized the New World were Israelites who practiced human sacrifice as part of their Baal worship. The fact that ancient New World cultures practiced human sacrifice indicates this grisly practice was planted in the New World by the Carthaginians. Since Carthaginians were also North Africans (familiar with Egypt’s pyramids), it is also likely that the presence of pyramids in the Meso-American civilizations of the New World attests to linkages between the two regions.

At this juncture, we will digress to examine this subject. While this will not directly involve the life of Christ, it will support the contention that Jesus Christ was in the New World by establishing that the Christian religion was present in the New World soon after the lifetime of Jesus Christ—demonstrating that



the sea route to the New World was known during Christ's lifetime. To the extent people in the New World were Israelites, it provides a biblical basis for Jesus Christ to visit the New World as Matthew 15:24 records that he was "sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (the ten tribes)."

Matthew 15 contains a persuasive argument on this point. In Matthew 15:21-28, a gentile woman asked Jesus to heal her daughter (something that Jesus readily did for Jews). Jesus initially refused to help, stating he was sent only to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Only via a repeated, humble approach did this gentile woman move Jesus to help her. Jesus' reluctance to help gentiles "in his own backyard" argues that he would not have wasted any time journeying across the Atlantic to visit or evangelize inhabitants of the New World **unless they were Israelites!**

We have already seen much evidence documenting that there was a substantial Israelite presence in the New World both before and during Christ's lifetime. There is also evidence that Israelites were present well after his lifetime as well. Some of this evidence will be examined to demonstrate that transatlantic voyages were possible at many times in the Christian era, including the first century A.D.

The Toltec civilization flourished in Meso-America from 900 A.D. until 1200 A.D. The *Encyclopedia Americana* states:

*"Their capital was Tollan, now Tula...the name 'Toltec' is derived from the name of their capital...the most important figure in Toltec history was...Topiltzin."*<sup>39</sup>

One of the branches of the Israelite tribe of Issachar was named after "Tola" (Numbers 26:23). Notice the similarity between the Israelite name **Tola** and the root words **Tollan**, **Tula**, and

**Toltec**, indicating the tribe of Issachar was involved in founding the Toltec civilization. [An intermediate location where they may have also left their tribal name is found in **Thule**, Greenland.] An analysis of Topiltzin's name points to a Viking/Scandinavian origin. His name concludes with the syllable "-zin." The letters "z" and "s" are phonetically similar. Substituting an "s" for the "z" in his name, we get Topilt-sin, or Topilt-**son**. The suffix "-son" or "-sen" is very common at the ends of Scandinavian names. The consonants "S-N" or "Z-N" at the end of Topiltzin's name argue for a Scandinavian origin for this man.

An article by Lawrence Athy, Jr. printed in the *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, and entitled "Foreign Influences on the Priesthood and Nobility of Pre-Columbian America" maintains that the Olmec and Toltec civilizations were ruled and directed by foreign elites who were tall and bearded. This foreign elite was in sharp contrast to the squat, flat-nosed and rarely-bearded Indian peasants over whom the foreign elites ruled. Clearly, the foreign elites exhibited characteristics of Semitic people from the Old World. Athy notes that by the time of the founding of the Toltec civilization, these "tall bearded elites" had been present in the New World for "over two thousand years."<sup>40</sup>

The Toltec ruler named Topiltzin was "a venerable and devout person...an old man with a long red beard turning white...who had come from a foreign country."<sup>41</sup> Athy further relates:

*"Topiltzin and his Toltecs were gentle people, were opposed by a wicked leader of many of the native people, and were persecuted to the point that the Toltecs abandoned this country and returned to their place of origin. Topiltzin called together the people of Tula explaining that he was leaving due to persecution, and prophesied the arrival of strangers who would*

*come...from the east...thus the people were to be punished for their mistreatment of the Toltecs....Topiltzin also told them that the arrival of the strangers would not be witnessed by them...but would be seen by the fourth or fifth generation.”<sup>42</sup>*

The Spaniards under Cortez arrived approximately three hundred years later and fulfilled Topiltzin’s prophecy about the destruction of the Aztec culture (which had followed the Toltecs). Athy adds:

*“Cortez had arrived in the year 1 Reed in the Aztec calendar...the year in which Topiltzin had been born—the year in which the return of his sons had been forecast.”<sup>43</sup>*

In chapter five, it was noted that Christian inscriptions dating from the first to the third centuries A.D. were found in the Mayan ruins of Comalcalco, indicating Christianity existed in the New World very soon after the life of Jesus Christ. There is further evidence that Christianity was at one time well-established and widespread in the New World, but that it had degenerated over time as Christian symbols and practices were blended into the sun-worship religion of the native populations found by the Spaniards. Consider the following:

*“Many of the Catholic rituals taught to the Maya were already familiar to them, to the great surprise of the early missionaries. The Maya practiced baptism in water, confirmation, fasting...The cross was a familiar ikon...When the friars explained that the cross was the sign of God, who had died on the Tree of Good and Evil and now lives in the heavens, the Maya accepted it as another*

*version of a story they already knew.”<sup>44</sup>*

The cross, in particular, was a well-known symbol in the New World, especially among the ruling elites. Walter Stender wrote:

*“When the Spaniards conquered Peru, they were astonished and puzzled to find crosses in the temples and palaces of the royal Inca family...For the Incas **the use of the cross was a continuance from preceding cultures...it becomes evident that the cross had a religious significance.**”<sup>45</sup>*  
(Emphasis added.)

Stender also records the following:

*“The Mayas used it [the cross]...in one of their glyphs... Legends exist from various sites in South America that **white men came to the natives to teach them a better way of social life.** A similarity is obvious with the well-known Mesoamerican traditions, where white men arrived and tried to develop the cultural level of the natives...all these white men...were bearded, and another feature is particularly remarkable: **the garments of these white visitors have been decorated with white and black crosses.**...At the time of the Spanish conquest there was a broad awareness in South America of an early presence of white residents...”<sup>46</sup>* (Emphasis added.)

Stender’s article documents that the symbol of the cross had been present in the New World at least as early as the middle of the first millennium. Combined with the evidence (from chapter

five) that a Christian inscription had been placed at Comalcalco in the first to the third centuries A.D., it can be seen that Christianity had been present in the New World from virtually the beginning of the Christian era!

During the Middle Ages, there were Christian Norseman allied with the Catholic Church of Rome. *The Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications* has reproduced a series of letters from three different popes, dated 1282, 1448 and 1492 A.D., written to Norse bishops and a church in Greenland.<sup>47</sup> The letter of Pope Martin IV to a Norwegian Archbishop in 1282 A.D. concerned the tithes of the Greenland churches, and the letter of Pope Nicolaus V in 1448 A.D. acknowledged that Christians in Greenland "For almost 600 years [had] kept the faith of Christ..."<sup>48</sup> This extraordinary papal letter places Christians in Greenland in the ninth century A.D.

Viking voyages to the New World had been taking place for centuries prior to Pope Nicolaus V's letter, and Icelandic history records that a Catholic bishop named Eric Gnuppsen travelled from Iceland to the New World (Vinland) in the year 1121 A.D.<sup>49</sup>

This concludes the above digression on the evidence of Christianity in the New World. It was deemed necessary to confirm that **Christians** were voyaging to the New World not only in the first century A.D., but at many other times prior to the arrival of Columbus or Cortez. While not directly relating to the life of Jesus Christ, it **does** provide background information indicating that it is not so revolutionary a proposal to assert that Jesus Christ visited the New World during the eighteen year period about which the Bible is silent. We will now examine specific evidence that it was possible for Jesus Christ to have made a journey to the New World in his lifetime.

There is no doubt that the means for Jesus Christ to travel to the New World did exist. Earlier chapters have shown that huge

Phoenician and Carthaginian vessels crossed the Atlantic throughout the first millennium B.C., and Roman vessels also learned the routes in later centuries.

Records exist that the Romans had ocean-going vessels as large as 1200-1600 tons displacement, and that such vessels could be 180 feet in length, have a beam of 45 feet and a cargo hold 44 feet deep.<sup>50</sup> Josephus records that he rode in a Roman passenger ship carrying 600 people,<sup>51</sup> and Acts 27:9-36 records that Paul rode in a Roman vessel carrying 276 people in a dangerous sailing season (when a reduced passenger total was likely). Roman artifacts have also been found in the New World. Boland comments on Roman artifacts found on the American east coast.<sup>52</sup> In *Saga America*, Dr. Fell documents that Roman coins, artifacts and inscriptions have been found in the American states of Alabama, Tennessee, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Georgia, and others.<sup>53</sup> Dr. Fell's comments on Jewish coins (second century A.D.) being found in Kentucky, and the Missouri-Arkansas border region confirm that **sailing routes from Judea to ancient North America were known in the early Christian era.**<sup>54</sup> Dr. Fell also wrote concerning a Hebrew inscription found in Tennessee:

*"...the Bat Creek stone from Tennessee, supposed by the Smithsonian finders to be Cherokee, but recognized by all Hebrew scholars who have studied it as **a Hebrew text of the first century A.D.** Dr. Robert Stieglitz of New York reads it as 'A comet for the Hebrews,' with reference to Halley's comet, which 'hung over Jerusalem like a flaming sword' in the year 69 A.D. during the first revolt...The evidence suggests that Kentucky and Tennessee became havens of*

*refuge for persecuted Hebrews...*"<sup>55</sup>  
(Emphasis added.)

The above piece of evidence places Judean Jews traveling to ancient North America in the first century A.D. (Just decades after Jesus Christ's lifetime). From this evidence, it can be seen that transatlantic routes existed during the lifetime of Jesus Christ. Since Joseph of Arimathea was involved in an international trading firm which necessitated long oceanic voyages, Jesus would have ready access to sailing routes to North America. If Joseph was also a Roman official (a "decurio"), he would have had privileged access to Rome's knowledge of routes to North America.

There is an episode in the Bible which indicates that Jesus was physically adapted to the effects of long ocean voyages. Mark 4:35-41 describes an event in which Jesus and his disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee and were caught in a storm. Verse 37 states: "there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full." Afraid for their lives, the disciples found Jesus "in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow." After being forcibly awakened by the disciples, Jesus commanded the wind to "be still," and an immediate calm prevailed. Apparently Jesus was sleeping in a lower deck. Hebrews 4:15 tells us that Jesus was a human being as well as the Son of God, and that he "was in all points tempted like as we are." If Jesus experienced all the sensations which humans experience, his human body was subject to seasickness and nausea. That Jesus was able to sleep on a ship that was rolling and pitching in a severe storm indicates that his human body had previously become adapted to the buffeting of waves and the movements of sea swells. His involvement with Joseph of Arimathea's international trading business would have given him ample time to get his "sea legs." While the context of this

account shows that this storm was the most severe experienced by these fishermen on an inland lake, it was likely less severe than the storms and sea swells experienced by Jesus on the open ocean (enabling him to sleep through a storm on an inland lake). Another biblical account also supports the concept that Jesus was outside of Palestine during the "hidden years." In John 10:16, Jesus had a discourse with the Jews in which he said:

***"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."***

In Matthew 10:6 and 15:24, Jesus referred to the "lost sheep" of the House of Israel (the ten tribes of Israel). In Mark 6:34, Jesus regarded the multitudes who followed him as "sheep," and most of those multitudes would have been Jews of Judea. Since sheep dwell in "folds," what was meant by Jesus' imagery of John 10:16 that he had "sheep" in more than one "fold?" Jesus refers to Judea (the land of the Jews) as "this fold," but informs them that they are not the only "fold." Clearly, the other "fold" was where the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel lived. Since Jesus told them "**Other sheep I have** [in other folds]," his use of the present tense indicates that it was already an accomplished fact: he already had "sheep" (followers) in a "fold" other than Judea. Since there is no evidence of Jesus being in Judea from ages 12 to 30, he had plenty of time to visit and preach to the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel during those eighteen years.

The Gospel books of the Bible (Matthew-John) are eyewitness accounts of Jesus' ministry to the **House of Judah**, which lasted 3½ years. None of his ministry to the **House of Israel** is recorded for us in the Bible even though the Bible implies it had occurred prior to Jesus' ministry in Judea. The life of Jesus, as



presented in the Bible, is like a book in which only the first and the last few chapters are included, with all the middle chapters (the majority of the book) left out!

The Apostle John wrote that the Gospel accounts did not provide a comprehensive account of the life of Christ. John 21:25 states:

*"there were also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."*

John's assertion that the life of Jesus was extraordinarily active and eventful is significant in light of the fact that the Bible says nothing about his life from age 12 to age 30. It is logical that many of Jesus' undescribed activities spoken of by John 21:25 were not done in Judea, or they would have been discussed in the "eyewitness" gospels. Many of Jesus' unwritten exploits must have been performed **outside** of Judea, and this is consistent with legends that Jesus traveled to many parts of the ancient world.

There are reasons to believe that the response of the ten tribes of Israel to Jesus was favorable. Since some of Parthia's ruling class worshipped Jesus when he was a child, they likely welcomed him eagerly in Parthia's Asian empire when he was a young man. The positive legends about the first Quetzalcoatl (which parallel many biblical facts about Jesus' life) indicate that he made a lasting, favorable impression in the New World. The Druids of the British Isles and Northwest Europe had long expected a savior named Yesu (Yeshuah), and the legends of early Briton record a warm response to Joseph of Arimathea and other early Christians. It seems apparent why Jesus told the Jews he had "sheep" in other "folds."

The New Testament records that Jesus was well-received by the common people of the House of Judah. (Indeed, who could respond negatively to one who miraculously healed so many people?) It was the Jewish hierarchy which reacted negatively to Jesus. The reason is simple. The nations of the ten tribes of Israel were sovereign nations at the time Jesus visited them. Therefore, they didn't resent that Jesus' mission did not include physical "salvation" from oppressors. They didn't need any! In sharp contrast, the House of Judah (the portion that lived in Judea) was hungry for physical "salvation" from Roman oppression. Their rulers had little interest in a message of **spiritual** salvation; they wanted a Messiah bringing **physical** salvation from Rome!

As Jesus approached age thirty, he said good-bye both to his great-uncle's international mining and trading business, to his "sheep" living in the "folds" of the ten tribes of Israel, and returned to his native land of Judea. The satisfying years of international responsibility and warm welcomes among many diverse and distant people were over. The difficult years of his earthly mission were now ahead of him, and he knew it.

The New Testament teaches that if Jesus Christ had failed in his mission (to atone for mankind's sins) God the Father (the "Most High God" of the Old Testament), would not have permitted a single human being to ever taste eternal life since mankind would have had no atoning sacrifice. If Jesus failed, all mankind died with him. This young man, with the royal blood of King David in his veins, and filled with the Holy Spirit of his Father (the "Most High God"), must have had a tremendous load on his mind as he made what was to be his last trip home. He must have felt like he was "carrying the world on his shoulders" as he returned to Judea, for so he was.

### Part Three: His Ministry and Death

The Bible asserts that Jesus Christ began his ministry at the age of thirty (Luke 3:23). This is significant because the Old Testament required a man to be thirty years old in order to serve in the priesthood (Numbers 4:3). Jesus Christ, who was God in the flesh, was not subject to the normal human maturation schedule. His discourse with the Temple elders indicated that he was spiritually mature at the age of twelve. However, due to the sensitivities of the Jewish community in Judea, Jesus did not enter their culture in a priestly role until he attained the age of thirty.

When Jesus returned to Judea, one of his first public acts was to be baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River (Matthew 3:13-16). This affirmed the ministry of John the Baptist, and set an example for his future followers concerning the necessity of water baptism. Since he went to the Jordan River to be baptized, and Matthew 3:16 states "Jesus, when he was baptized went **up...out** of the water," it is clear that Jesus' baptism was by immersion.

After his baptism, Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-15 tell us of a direct confrontation between Jesus and Satan the devil. Satan repeatedly tempted Jesus in an effort to entice him into doing something sinful or idolatrous. If Jesus had failed the test, he could not have served as the sinless "Passover lamb" which mankind needed for its salvation. Luke 4:2 asserts that Jesus fasted for 40 days to prepare for his spiritual battle with Satan. Fasting is frequently discussed in the Bible as a means of drawing nearer to God.

One of Satan's temptations involved his showing Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world," and saying:

*"**all** this power will **I give thee**, and the glory of them: for **that is delivered unto me; and***

***to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.***” (Emphasis added.)

Satan claimed to be the unseen ruler of the earth, who had the authority to select national leaders as he wished. Furthermore, he was offering temporal power over **all** the earth to Jesus if he chose Satan as his lord. Significantly, Jesus did not dispute Satan’s claim to being the unseen lord of **all** the world’s nations, and that he had the power to select their human rulers.

Jesus, in resisting these temptations, was qualifying to **replace** Satan as the ruler of the earth, but the Bible is clear that the actual rulership of Christ will not occur until his second coming. His first coming was to qualify to replace Satan as world ruler, and to become an atonement for all mankind so they could have eternal life. The Bible acknowledges Satan as the “prince of **this world**” (John 12:31 and 14:30), and acknowledges him as “the prince” of **this world** even after the death of Christ (Ephesians 2:2). He will remain the “prince” of **this world** until Jesus dethrones him at his second coming, at which point Revelation 20:1-3 states that Satan will be imprisoned and restrained from invisibly manipulating the nations.

Consider Satan’s sweeping offer and Jesus’ response. Jesus did not challenge Satan’s right to give the world rulership which he offered; however, he declined a temporal world rulership under Satan’s auspices in favor of a future, eternal world rulership under God (Revelation 19:11-16, 20:1-6).

Remember these facts: (A) Jesus had already been worshipped by some of the king-making Magi of Parthia (an ancient “superpower”), and his status as a relative of the Arsacids made him eligible for Parthia’s throne, (B) Jesus had been well-received in Briton, and his Hebrew name identified him as the promised Messiah (the “Yesu”) expected by the Druids, (C) Jesus

had already gained a following in the New World, and was likely the subject of the first Quetzalcoatl legends, and (D) the Jews were expecting the Messiah during his lifetime due to the timetable of Old Testament prophecies. In other words, Satan's offer was quite practical in human terms. The physical conditions were already in place for Jesus to be made a powerful world leader! Satan was offering his services to use the above circumstances to make Jesus a world emperor if he was willing to choose short-term gain instead of long-term good. Thankfully, Jesus resisted his offer.

It should now be apparent that Jesus Christ was hardly an obscure carpenter in Galilee. At the time he began his ministry, he had concluded visits to the far-flung ten tribes of Israel, utilizing his excellent relations with the Parthian Magi to travel east into Asia as well as the transoceanic routes available to him via Joseph of Arimathea's business to travel westward to Europe and the New World. Jesus would have been known to the influential classes of the Parthian Empire, Briton, the New World, and also the Roman officials of the countries in which Joseph's mining and trading company conducted business. Luke 2:52 hints that he was well-liked wherever he went. Luke wrote that after Jesus amazed the teachers in the Temple with his precocious wisdom at age twelve, he:

*"...increased in wisdom and **stature**, and in **favor with God and man.**" (Emphasis added.)*

**Luke's comment that Jesus' wisdom and favor (fame) continued to increase after age twelve contradicts the modern viewpoint that Jesus' went "dormant" to live as an obscure carpenter in Galilee until he "burst" onto the scene at age thirty.** Since Jesus was unknown in his Judean hometown at the time he began his ministry at age thirty, it is

apparent that the “favor” he had in the eyes of “man” occurred in regions far from Judea and Galilee.

After the confrontation between Jesus and Satan, Jesus began his ministry with miraculous events and numerous appearances in synagogues (Matthew 4:23-25 and Luke 4:14-15). He did mighty miracles, and people “glorified” him (Luke 4:15). Luke 4:16-30 then describes his visit to the synagogue in Nazareth (his home town) where they tried to kill him. This event contained several harbingers of the future impact of Jesus’ ministry in Judea.

Luke 4:16 begins by stating that Jesus “came to Nazareth, **where he had been brought up.**” Notice that Luke did not say Nazareth was “where Jesus lived,” but rather that Nazareth is “where he **had been brought up.**” This language indicates that Jesus had lived in Nazareth only during his formative years. Indeed, the *Living Bible* renders this passage as “he came to the village of Nazareth, **his boyhood home.**” Luke’s comment clearly indicates that Jesus did not live in Nazareth as a young man or adult!

Luke then tells us that Jesus “**as his custom was,** went into the synagogue **on the Sabbath Day,** and stood up for to read.” Jesus was still loyal to the religious traditions taught him by his parents, and it was customary for Jesus to observe the Sabbath Day. In other words, Jesus was acting as would any devout Jew of the period. If Jesus had been present **in his hometown synagogue** from age twelve to age thirty, his wisdom and fame (attested to by Luke) would have been well-known to them as Jesus (even at age twelve) was making no effort to conceal his spiritual maturity. Yet verse 22 shows that the congregation “wondered at the gracious words” of Jesus and said “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” To reiterate an earlier argument, the local congregation had not experienced Jesus’ power or wisdom during

the intervening years, and were struggling to identify him. Clearly, Jesus had not been there in many years! If Jesus lived in Nazareth, one must also believe that God's Spirit, which moved Jesus so powerfully at age twelve, went completely dormant for eighteen years and suddenly reawoke in him after a long hiatus. This author finds such a viewpoint untenable. All scriptural examples show that once God's Spirit is moving a person, it either waxes stronger or is "quenched." It is not a commodity that can stagnate or go dormant for almost two decades. Indeed, in the parable of the talents (Matthew 25), Jesus regarded a servant who "went dormant" with his gift to be worthy of punishment! It is impossible that Jesus "went dormant" for eighteen years!

Jesus then read (and applied to himself) a passage from Isaiah 61 which states: "the spirit of the Lord is upon me because he [God] hath anointed me to preach the gospel..." Jesus openly claimed to be the Messiah, the "anointed one" of God when he stated: "this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." In verse 23 Jesus tells them "Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself." Jesus is here speaking in the future tense, indicating he already knew he would be mocked during his eventual suffering on the cross.

Mark 6:4 parallels Luke's account, and quotes Jesus as saying: **"a prophet is not without honor, but [except] in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house."** This speaks volumes. Jesus affirmed that he was a prophet, but predicted that his own nation (the Jews), his own community and his own relatives would not recognize him as the Messiah. There is another implication of this statement which could easily be missed. This statement also implies that while he would not be honored in his own country as a prophet, **he would be honored outside his own country, community and family** (he would

**not be “without honor”).**

Jesus then ended his message to his home-town folk by mentioning an account in which Elijah healed and saved a gentile from Sidon rather than any of his own countrymen. This foreshadows the historical fact that while being generally rejected by his countrymen (the Jews), the benefits of Jesus' ministry would be received by those outside of Judea. This happened when Paul, the Apostles and others spread the message that he was the Messiah to all lands while the Jews mostly rejected him.

Jesus' message infuriated his listeners. They attempted to kill him, and Jesus escaped this “lynch mob” by “passing through the midst of them.” The fact that those who sought to kill him did not recognize him as he passed through the angry crowd further illustrates two points. It confirms the contention that he had been gone from his home-town a long time (otherwise they would have recognized him easily), and it also shows that Jesus was an average-looking person who did not stand out in a crowd.

That Jesus was an average-looking Jew debunks a modern myth about him. The average Judean of Jesus' day did not have “hippie”-length hair, as Jesus is depicted as having on modern pictures. If his hair were inordinately long, he would have **easily** been recognized in a crowd of Jews. Since Paul the Apostle observed in I Corinthians 11:14 that it is a “shame” for a man to have long hair, it is evident that Jesus could not have had long hair. Some confusion on this matter may result from a misunderstanding of the terms “Nazarite” and “Nazarene.” A “Nazarite” was one who, during the length of a vow, refrained from drinking alcohol or cutting his hair (Numbers 6:2-5). Since growing long hair would separate them from the rest of the male population, Nazarites could easily be identified by their long hair. Jesus was a “Nazarene” (indicating that he was from Nazareth),



but he was no Nazarite, since he drank alcohol (Matthew 11:19 shows that Jesus' detractors called him a "winebibber" because they thought he drank too much wine).

This episode is atypical of Jesus! It shows Jesus going to the synagogue of his boyhood home and rebuking them so strongly that even the "religious" people of the synagogue tried to murder him! This would sound strange if it were not for several hints in the text. The account of this episode in Mark 6:1-6 shows that while the locals voiced no ill feelings toward his mother and siblings, verse 3 states that the townspeople "were offended" at Jesus! Why?

There is a strong implication here that when Jesus left Nazareth soon after age twelve, his memories of Nazareth were not happy ones. Indeed, since Jesus had the Spirit of God from birth, there are many ways in which Jesus would not have "fit in" with the attitudes, actions and interests of the other children in the area. Since Jesus lived a sinless life, he would have been unwilling to participate in the usual trouble-making and mischief that characterize young boys, making him a target of considerable "hazing" by the other children. Also, since he could confound the Temple elders at age twelve, Jesus was "light years" ahead of his peers in maturity, and would have had almost nothing in common with other boys his age. Also, the strange visit of foreign dignitaries (the Magi) to lavish gifts on Jesus as a little child would have made some townspeople jealous or suspicious of him. If the Magi continued to send emissaries to him over the years (a distinct possibility), this action would have further complicated his life in a rural town of Galilee.

After the death of Joseph, his step-father, his mother Mary may have thought it was best for Jesus to leave the area, and become an "apprentice" to his great uncle and international businessman, Joseph of Arimathea. When Jesus came back to his home area

after an eighteen year absence, many of the people in that synagogue were likely the very ones who had hazed and ostracized Jesus when he was a boy. When he claimed to be the Messiah, their reaction was "Oh no, not him!" They were "offended" when they learned that the marvelous new teacher was the same Jesus they had hazed and taunted years ago. The above is supported by Luke 4:15 which indicates that Jesus was "glorified" in all other synagogues, and rejected only in his own hometown.

Another early act of Jesus was his selection of twelve men to serve as the initial apostles of his church (John 1:35-51). Since Jesus knew that each of these men would serve not only as a contemporary spiritual leader, but also as future kings over the tribes of Israel after his second coming (Matthew 19:28), he was selecting people who would fit the distinct temperaments and needs of each of the twelve tribes of Israel! Where had Jesus gained a knowledge of the unique personalities of the various tribes of Israel so he could select a suitable future king for each of them? He obtained such knowledge during his visits to them between ages twelve and thirty. Since only two of the tribes of Israel were present in Judea at the time of Jesus (a fact confirmed by Josephus), the only way he could have gained personal knowledge of each tribe's needs was via international travel!

Before proceeding further, it is worth recalling that Josephus, the Jewish historian who wrote soon after the death of Jesus, did not doubt that Jesus was the Messiah. Josephus openly stated of Jesus, "**He was [the] Christ.**"<sup>56</sup> He also affirmed the divine miracles of his life with the words "**he was a doer of wonderful works,**" and confirmed the resurrection of Jesus as a historical fact with the words "**for he [Jesus] appeared to them [his followers] alive again the third day, as the divine prophets**

**had foretold...**"<sup>57</sup>

Josephus, a prominent Jewish leader and historian of that time acknowledged that Jesus was the promised Messiah, and since the Bible records that he was widely "glorified" among the masses, it would seem that many Jews did perceive Jesus to be the promised Messiah. Even some Jewish religious leaders accepted Jesus as one sent by God.

John 3:1-3 states "there was a man **of the Pharisees**, named Nicodemus, **a ruler of the Jews** [who] came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, **We know that you are a teacher come from God:** for no man can do these miracles **that you do**, except God be with him." Interestingly, Nicodemus came to Jesus "by night," implying that he was on a secretive mission. He was representing Jewish rulers, because he spoke for a group in saying "**we know...**" The leaders of the Jews were not ignorant men; they could see from the Old Testament prophecies that the Messiah was due in their time period, they could see that Jesus was doing miracles that only someone with the power of God could do, and they could see that Jesus was fulfilling Messianic prophecies. The words of Nicodemus make that evident. Then why did they later kill Jesus when they knew he was sent from God? There are two plausible answers.

One possible answer has been offered by William Steuart McBirnie, in his book *The Search for the Twelve Apostles*. He states:

*"As...history's long judgment has since confirmed, the greatest reason for his condemnation was the fact that Jesus had lanced through the swollen hypocrisy of the Jewish political and ceremonial religion and the religious bureaucracy of professional priests, Pharisees and Sadducees. So all the*

*main Jewish leaders, including the official party of the Herodians...consented to or sought his death.”<sup>58</sup>*

Josephus essentially agreed with the modern opinion of Stuart McBirnie in stating:

*“He [Jesus] was the Christ; and when Pilate, **at the suggestion of the principal men among us**, had condemned him to the cross...”<sup>59</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

This is a very candid statement by Josephus. After declaring the righteousness of Christ and affirming the status of Jesus as “the Christ” (the “anointed one”), Josephus acknowledges that the “principal men among us” (the Jewish leadership) arranged for the death of Christ. The Jewish religious leaders and their allies held much power over the Jewish people in Judea. Their conduct clearly showed that they were more interested in selfishly clinging to their power than in serving the people by a fair administration of the laws of God as given through Moses. Because Jesus was exposing their hypocrisy and venality, the religious leaders saw Jesus as the symbol of a “reform movement” which could sweep them from power. The Bible records that Jesus was generally “glorified” in the Jewish synagogues of the day (Luke 4:15), and was a popular figure with the general Jewish population. Luke 5:15 records that the fame of Jesus became such that “great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him.” Josephus agreed with Luke that Jesus was very popular in Judea by stating that Jesus “drew over to him many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles.”<sup>60</sup>

The Pharisees were surely familiar with prophecies that the Messiah would set up a kingdom of his own. Therefore, it was clear to the Pharisees that if Jesus was the Messiah and was

destined to set up a kingdom, he would oust them from their authority. Obsessed by their desire to cling to their temporal power, they determined to slay Jesus to prevent the loss of their power...even if it meant killing the Messiah! In arranging the execution of Jesus, they actually fulfilled the prophecies pertaining to the Messiah's betrayal and death. Matthew 26:15 fulfilled Zechariah 11:12's prophecy about "thirty pieces of silver," and Jesus' death to redeem mankind fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel 9:26 that the Messiah would be "cut off, but not for himself."

This first possible explanation suggests that the Jewish leaders did not actually believe the Bible or fear God: that they viewed religion as a means of perpetuating their power over the nation. Matthew 27:1 states that "the chief priests and elders took counsel against Jesus to put him to death." It does not say the whole Jewish nation wanted to slay Jesus. Their middle-of-the-night trial and condemnation of Jesus was designed to thwart any opposition to their plan from the masses who held Jesus in high esteem.

There is also a second possible answer to the question of why the Pharisees arranged the death of Jesus. Consider the life of the Jews under the Roman yoke. They hated the loss of their independence, and keenly resented being ruled by gentile Romans. Many Jews could recall the relative freedom they had enjoyed a few decades previously when the Parthians had briefly freed them from Roman rule. Having had a taste of freedom, they hungered for more of it! The Bible stresses the hatred the Jews felt for the "publicans," the collectors of the Roman taxes, and Luke 13:1 refers to a violent confrontation in which the Romans executed a number of Jews. Josephus confirms that this was a time of tremendous discontent on the part of the Jews with their Roman rulers, leading to both verbal and violent

confrontations.<sup>61</sup>

The Jewish leaders were expecting a Messiah who would free them from Roman tyranny. No doubt many were familiar with such Messianic prophecies as Zechariah 14 which promised that the tribes of Israel would be exalted over the gentiles and that Jerusalem would become a world capital. The Jews must have thirsted for these prophecies to be fulfilled in their day and for the Messiah to lead them in a great war against Rome.

As Jesus fulfilled many Messianic prophecies and confirmed his Messiahship by manifesting divine powers, it is logical that the Jews would expect Jesus to start using his divine power against the hated Romans! This expectation must have grown like wildfire, and Jesus' own disciples shared this expectation!

After all, Jesus had promised his twelve closest disciples that they would each **rule** over one of the tribes of Israel when he (Jesus) would "sit in the throne of his glory" (Matthew 19:28). Jesus consistently spoke of the coming "**kingdom of heaven**" in many comments and parables. It was common knowledge that Jesus was a direct descendant of King David and the ancient Jewish kings (Luke 2:4). There are many instances cited in the Gospel accounts of the common people addressing Jesus as the "**son of David.**" Also, in Matthew 10:34 Jesus proclaimed that he had come "to bring a sword, not peace." The disciples even quarreled about who would be the greatest in the kingdom which Jesus would rule (Matthew 18:1, Mark 9:33-37). Small wonder there was a widespread expectation that Jesus was about to establish the "Messianic kingdom" in their day.

Little did the people know that the "deliverance" which the prophesied Messiah would bring in their day would be a **spiritual** deliverance from their sins, not a **physical** deliverance from Rome. When Jesus had quoted Isaiah 61:1-2 in his rebuke to his home synagogue, he omitted verses 3-11 (the prophecies about

the “conquering Messiah”) when he told them “this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” This deliberate omission implied that Jesus would not fulfill those millennial prophecies during his human ministry.

It is possible that some Jewish leaders of the day, not realizing that Christ’s first coming was to bring spiritual salvation instead of physical salvation from Rome, felt they had to “assist” or “push” Jesus into confronting Rome in order to fulfill all the Messianic prophecies at that time. After all, did not Ezekiel 37:15-28 prophecy that the House of Israel and House of Judah would be united under “David” their King? Since Jesus was a direct descendant of David, and was a relative of the Parthian kings, and had already been worshipped by some of the Parthian nobility that picked Parthian kings, the Jews could easily assume that Jesus was poised to fulfill this prophecy by uniting Parthia (the House of Israel) and the Jews (the House of Judah) in a war against Rome! Those expecting (and wanting) such a war must have been very frustrated and disgusted at what they perceived to be a “cozy” relationship between Jesus and the Romans.

Rome was a despotic empire which tightly controlled its subjects. Yet the entire life of Jesus exhibited a lack of Roman control over his activities. He could travel where he wanted, when he wanted and with whom he wanted without the supervision or permission of Roman authorities. This freedom was permitted by the Romans in spite of the fact that Jesus was drawing huge crowds and talking about a new “kingdom,” a message that Rome could easily have seen as encouraging a Jewish revolt. **Why did the Romans allow freedoms to Jesus that they regularly denied to others?** There are at least four reasons for Rome’s permissive attitude toward Jesus.

To begin with, it was discussed earlier in this chapter that Jesus was related to the rulers of the Parthian Empire at a time when

Caesar wanted “detente” with the Parthians. The Roman rulers of Judea risked Caesar’s wrath if they provoked the Parthians into a war Caesar didn’t want! They were likely aware that Jesus Christ was a relative of Parthia’s emperor (an Arsacid) because of the widespread knowledge that Jesus was of the royal seed of David. The Romans may even have been aware of Jesus’ special relationship with the Parthian Magi, who elected Parthian emperors from the male Arsacids. Rome had great interest in matters which could affect the political relationships between Rome and Parthia, so Rome’s actions regarding Jesus could affect Roman-Parthian relations.

Coupling Jesus’ “special relationship” with the Parthians with Caesar’s decree that good relations with Parthia should not be disturbed, Roman officials in Judea had to be very careful not to antagonize the Parthians by mistreating Jesus Christ! There is an historical legend that supports the contention that Parthia’s ruling class was closely watching the affairs of Jesus while he was in Palestine (confirming Rome’s need to handle matters involving Jesus Christ with great caution).

This legend relates that a Parthian provincial ruler, King Abgar of Edessa (a city of Northern Mesopotamia) carried on a correspondence with Jesus during his ministry in Palestine. William Steuart McBirnie relates the legend as follows:

*“[the] legend has come down to us from Eusebius...This legend tells of a correspondence between Jesus and Abgar, King of Edessa (in what is now southern Russia)...Eusebius claims to have seen this correspondence in the archives of Edessa and to have translated it himself from the Syriac language.”<sup>62</sup>*

McBirnie misidentifies “Edessa” as a city in “southern Russia”



(apparently confusing it with "Odessa," a Russian city on the Black Sea). King Abgar's "Edessa" was a city in the northern Mesopotamian region of Parthia's Empire. It was located near the Euphrates River, almost on the border where the Parthian and Roman Empires met. Edessa was ruled by a series of kings named "Abgar," who were vassals of the Parthian Emperor. Eusebius was a famous Christian historian who lived from 260 A.D. until 340 A.D. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* writes concerning him:

*"Eusebius was one of the most learned men of his age, and stood high in favour with the emperor Constantine... Eusebius' greatness rests upon his vast erudition and his sound judgement. He is best known by his History of the Christian Church completed in 324 or early in 325 A.D."*<sup>63</sup>

Eusebius was not a man given to wild claims. Let us examine his own words about the exchange between King Abgar of Edessa and Jesus Christ. Eusebius begins:

*"...when King Abgar, the brilliantly successful monarch of the peoples of Mesopotamia, who was dying from a terrible physical disorder which no human power could heal, heard continual mention of the name of Jesus and unanimous tribute to His miracles, he sent a humble request to Him by a letter-carrier, begging relief from his disease."*<sup>64</sup>

This record that news of Jesus' miracles was commonly heard in Parthia's western provinces confirms that the trade routes must have been full of news about Jesus' exploits. The following excerpt from King Abgar's letter to Jesus is taken from Eusebius'

account:

*"Abgar...to Jesus, who has appeared as a gracious saviour in the region of Jerusalem-greeting.*

*"I have heard about you and about the cures you perform...If the report is true, you make the blind see again and the lame walk about; you cleanse lepers...and raise the dead...I concluded that...either you are God and came down from heaven to do these things, or you are God's Son doing them. Accordingly I am writing you to beg you to come to me, whatever the inconvenience, and cure the disorder from which I suffer. I may add that I understand the Jews are treating you with contempt and desire to injure you: my city is very small, but highly esteemed, adequate for both of us."*<sup>65</sup>

The reports heard by Abgar closely parallel the narratives in the Gospel accounts about the miracles of Jesus. King Abgar professes his faith in Jesus, is desperate for Jesus to come, and offers him refuge in Edessa from the risks faced by Jesus in Jerusalem. **It is remarkable that Eusebius preserved for us a record that Jesus was given an official offer of sanctuary in Parthian territory from the dangers he faced in Jerusalem.** According to Eusebius, the following reply was sent by Jesus Christ himself to King Abgar by a courier named Ananias.

*"Happy are you who believed in me without having seen me! For it is written of me that those who have seen me will not believe in*

*me, and those who have not seen me will believe and live. As to your request that I should come to you, I must complete all that I was sent to do here, and on completing it must at once be taken up to the One who sent me. When I have been taken up I will send you one of my disciples to cure your disorder and bring life to you and those with you.”<sup>66</sup>*

This letter attributed to Jesus would have been about three hundred years old when Eusebius read it in the Royal Records of Edessa, and it reflects a doctrine and attitude entirely compatible with that expressed by Jesus in the Gospel accounts. Jesus' words give the impression that his crucifixion may have been imminent. Significantly, while Jesus was reluctant to perform a healing for a non-Israelite in Palestine (Matthew 15:21-28), he readily agreed to send someone to heal King Abgar. This argues that King Abgar and his Parthian subjects were Israelites from one of the ten tribes of Israel. If Jesus had traveled in Parthia's empire during his missing eighteen years, he would have known this to be true from personal experience and, therefore, he exhibited no reluctance to heal King Abgar.

There is more to the story. According to Eusebius, the archives of Edessa recorded that after Jesus' death and resurrection, Thaddaeus (mentioned in Mark 3:18) was sent by the Apostle Thomas to Edessa. Once there, he not only healed many of King Abgar's subjects, but also laid hands on King Abgar himself and healed the king. King Abgar ordered his subjects to assemble and hear the preaching of Thaddaeus, and offered him silver and gold (which Thaddaeus refused). King Abgar is quoted as stating to Thaddaeus:

*"I believed in Him (Jesus) so strongly that I wanted to take an army and destroy the Jews*

*who crucified Him, if I had not been prevented by the imperial power of Rome from doing so.”<sup>67</sup>*

**Remarkable! Here is a record of a Parthian vassal king wishing to mount a military campaign to punish those responsible for crucifying Jesus Christ!** However, Abgar acknowledges that he alone did not have the power to challenge the Roman army in Judea (the Parthian Emperor would have to mass the armies of many of his feudal kings, like Abgar, to fight the Romans). This account confirms that Jesus had strong supporters within the Parthian Empire, justifying Rome’s reluctance to interfere with his life.

The second reason for amicable relations between Jesus and the Romans is that Jesus was likely well-known to Roman officials who had met him through contacts with Joseph of Arimathea’s company. If Joseph was a Roman “Decurio,” a Roman mining official, who traveled between Judea and Briton, people affiliated with Joseph’s company came in contact with Roman officials on a constant basis. This would have occurred in Briton, the Mediterranean region, and wherever the goods of Joseph’s company were shipped and transported within the Roman Empire. It is likely that Jesus assisted in Joseph’s business as he traveled under Joseph’s tutelage. At any rate, it would have been well-known that Joseph was the mentor of Jesus. During those years Jesus must have developed a personal rapport with a number of Roman officials. Indeed, while most of the Jewish community recoiled from personal contacts with Romans as “unclean gentiles,” Jesus had no reluctance in dealing with Romans. The example of Jesus’ willingness to use miraculous power to heal the servant of a Roman centurion (Matthew 8) is such an example. While this surely won for Jesus goodwill with the Romans, it must have infuriated the Jewish leaders who

wanted their Messiah to fight the Romans, not heal them!

If Joseph of Arimathea was a Roman Decurio, he certainly possessed Roman citizenship. Since Jesus was a blood relative and youthful protégé of Joseph of Arimathea, **it is also very possible that Jesus Christ obtained Roman citizenship during his "lost" eighteen years!** If Joseph of Arimathea and Jesus Christ possessed Roman citizenship, it further explains why (A) Joseph was given quick access to Pilate, the Roman governor, after Jesus was crucified; and (B) why Jesus came and went as he pleased! If Jesus was a Roman citizen, he had the **right** to travel as he wished within the Roman Empire! It was not unusual for Jews of that period to be Roman citizens. The apostle Paul (first named Saul) was also a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37-38, 22:22-29).

A third reason that enabled Jesus to go wherever he wished and do whatever he pleased was the fact that Jesus was wealthy! The Parthian Magi had given Jesus costly gifts of "gold, myrrh, and frankincense." We are not told how much gold and costly spices were given to Jesus, but it was no doubt a substantial amount. The Parthians regarded Jesus as royalty, and it was the ancient custom to give a royal personage a truly worthy gift when coming into his presence. Since the Parthian Magi were directed to Jesus by an angel of God, their sense of awe likely resulted in unusually large gifts being given to Jesus. This gold was likely held in trust for him until he was older (first by his physical father, and then by Joseph of Arimathea after his father's death). When he reached legal adulthood, Jesus controlled it. Also, since Jesus' mentor, Joseph of Arimathea, was also wealthy, one can be sure Jesus shared in that wealth. In all cultures and times, wealth can open a lot of doors.

Jesus' financial resources were confirmed by the fact that he and his band of disciples traveled for years without any visible means

of support! In spite of their itinerant lifestyles Jesus' band had monetary resources. (John 13:29 shows Judas Iscariot was their treasurer in charge of disbursements.) John 12:3-6 reveals that people around Jesus could afford expensive purchases and that Judas, the treasurer, was an embezzler. Judas was, therefore, handling sums of money large enough for him to think his embezzling would not be noticed. Judas' comment in John 12:5 also indicates that Jesus' group was in the habit of making donations to the poor. The fact that Jesus and his group never had to ask for donations from "the multitudes," but rather gave money to the poor confirms that Jesus traveled with plenty of financial resources to take care of his followers.

The fourth reason why Rome allowed Jesus to travel and speak as he did is that Rome had reason to believe that part of his message actually served Roman interests. The Roman rulers, knowing about Jesus' connection to Parthian royalty and seeing his divine powers, were likely quite relieved to hear Jesus preaching a message which did not include inflammatory remarks toward Rome.

For example, Matthew 22:15-22 records one attempt by Jewish leaders to push Jesus into a confrontation with Rome. The Pharisees wanted to entangle Jesus on the subject of the hated Roman taxes, and they made sure the "Herodians" (Roman sympathizers) were there to listen. They asked Jesus whether it was lawful for the Jews to pay Roman taxes? They apparently expected Jesus to answer "no," and wanted the Roman sympathizers to hear his answer, hoping to bring Jesus and Rome into conflict. However, Jesus declined the role of "tax protester," and said "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Hearing Jesus' response, the Herodians (and Romans) had to be pleased with his answer. The non-confrontational relationship of Jesus and the

Romans continued to the chagrin of the Jewish leaders.

Indeed, when the Jewish leaders urged Pilate to crucify Jesus, some of them may have seen it as a final attempt to make Jesus use his divine powers against Rome to save himself. Since similar desires for war existed among the disciples of Jesus, an alliance between the Sanhedrin and one of Jesus' disciples (Judas) to bring about this confrontation is understandable. They may have assumed that if Jesus' own life were put at risk, he would use his miraculous powers to save his life and fight the Romans.

Support for this possibility is found in the actions of Judas after Jesus Christ allowed himself to be crucified. Judas was so shocked at Jesus' death that he hanged himself (Matthew 27:3-5). Clearly, Judas had not expected that the outcome of his actions would be the death of Jesus. Perhaps Judas also assumed that Jesus would, when pushed to the point of death, finally oppose the Romans with his divine powers. If so, this hope was a result of wishful thinking and flawed prophetic understanding. Daniel 9:26 had prophesied that the Messiah would be killed, and Jesus had tried to prepare his followers for this event, telling them he would be buried for three days and three nights (Matthew 12:40). Also, the angel who had announced the birth of Jesus to Joseph in Matthew 1:21 had said only that "he shall save his people from their sins" (the angel did **not** say "he shall save his people from the Romans.") However, most Jews weren't interested in being saved from their sins; they wanted a Messiah who would save them from Rome!

Let us examine the political pressures on the participants who were involved in the trial and execution of Jesus to learn more about what really was happening.

Jesus was not only aware of his prophesied death, but also seemed to realize the manner in which it would occur. He told his

listeners that his death would involve "a lifting up from the earth" (John 12:32-33), which occurred when he was lifted up on a cross. The Pharisees, not realizing (or not accepting) that the Messiah had to die, became the instruments of fulfilling Daniel's prophecy that the Messiah would be "cut off." It never occurred to the Pharisees that the "conquering Messiah" prophecies would have to wait for a second coming of the Messiah.

It should be pointed out that the Jewish race, as a whole, is not collectively responsible for the death of Christ. As noted earlier, Josephus confirmed that it was the Jewish leaders (not the whole nation) who caused his death at the hands of the Romans. Those Jews who cried out to Pilate "crucify him," and "let his blood be upon us, and on our children" (Matthew 27:22-25) were an infinitesimally small fraction of the Jewish race at the time. The Jews crying for the blood of Jesus to be spilled and placed on their progeny were suborned agents of the Sanhedrin in a plot to engineer the death of Christ. Even if God placed a curse on the offspring of those who participated in this "kangaroo court" (which is possible!), it excuses the 99.9+% of the Jewish race who did not participate in the murder of Jesus and did not even know about it until it was over. The vast majority of the Jews living in Judea were not aware of Jesus' crucifixion until well after the event. The many Jews living in Parthian provinces were also oblivious to the crucifixion as it occurred. One can hardly blame these multitudes of Jews (or their descendants) for causing the death of Jesus Christ.

Consider now the extremely delicate position in which this conspiracy against Jesus placed the Roman rulers of Palestine. The first priority for Pontius Pilate and the Romans was to carry out the will of Caesar. What pleased the native population was secondary. Remember that the life of Christ occurred during a period of stability between the empires of Rome and Parthia, a



stability which Caesar wanted to maintain. Therefore, it was a top priority for Pilate to avoid incidents which could bring about a confrontation with the Parthian Empire. Pilate also knew that when Rome had provoked Parthia several decades prior to that time, Parthia had driven the Romans out of Palestine and controlled it for three years.

Rome likely had good intelligence about matters involving the political activities of people in their provinces, and was aware that Jesus Christ was a special favorite of high Parthian officials. Rome was also likely aware that communications took place between Jesus Christ and Parthian officials, including at least one Parthian vassal (King Abgar). Rome surely knew that Jesus Christ was a distant relative of the Parthian emperor (an "Arsacid" via the "Phares" bloodline of King David), and had to tread lightly where Jesus was concerned. Rome also favored the non-revolutionary message of Jesus, and had no desire to execute him. Since Jesus espoused the payment of Roman taxes, fomented no revolts, and was popular with the masses, the Romans viewed him as a counterweight to the revolutionary zealots among the Jews.

Jesus was also very likely a personal friend of some Roman officials as a result of Jesus' relationship with Romans during his association with Joseph of Arimathea's international business. Additionally, Roman spies had undoubtedly witnessed some of the miracles of Jesus and had reported these events to Roman leaders.

Since Jesus was close to the ruling elites of Parthia and was likely seen as a stabilizing influence for Roman interests in Palestine, Rome was disinclined to harm Jesus. In view of his miraculous powers, the polytheistic Romans were likely also averse to harming someone who was so "close to the gods."

When the Jewish religious leaders demanded that Jesus be

crucified, Pilate was in a terrible quandary. He had compelling political reasons for not harming Jesus, yet he also wanted to handle the situation in a manner that did not precipitate a Jewish rebellion. Another factor which must have concerned him was whether he was being “set up” by the Jewish leaders to do something which would precipitate a war not only with the Jews but with Parthia. After all, there were many Parthians who served the same God of the Jews, and they were present in large numbers in Jerusalem during the annual Holy Days (Acts 2:9). Since Jesus was crucified during the Passover season, Parthians were surely present in Jerusalem at that time. Pilate could have wondered whether the Jews were plotting with the Parthians to provoke an incident (i.e. crucifying an Arsacid) which could precipitate a Parthian-Jewish war versus Rome. This would anger Caesar, so Pilate had to avoid that possibility at all costs.

Matthew 27:18 and Mark 15:10 record that Pilate knew the Jewish leaders had “framed” Jesus. Pilate’s behavior showed that he did not want to crucify Jesus Christ, and he freely offered Jesus an opportunity to defend himself (Matthew 27:11-14). Pilate “marveled greatly” when Jesus took no action to avail himself of Pilate’s offer (ordinarily, anyone would do anything to avoid the hideous fate of crucifixion!) **The implication is that if Jesus had made any effort whatsoever to defend himself, Pilate would have released Jesus.** Knowing this and knowing that his central mission was to sacrifice himself for mankind, Jesus’ silence actually thwarted Pilate’s effort to free him.

Pilate grew exasperated with Jesus’ refusal to defend himself, and said privately to Jesus: “You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?” (John 19:10). In modern words, Pilate was saying to Jesus: “C’mon, get with it Jesus, play ball with me, and I’ll set you free.”

Even though Jesus refused to defend himself, Pilate was still determined to keep Jesus alive. He next offered to free Jesus as part of a Passover tradition, giving the public a choice between Jesus and a prisoner named Barabbas (Matthew 27:15-23). Pilate was likely again taken aback when the crowd requested freedom for Barabbas instead of Jesus. Pilate did not realize that the Sanhedrin had “stacked the deck” against Jesus by having only their followers in the crowd (verse 20). Pilate’s own wife then pressured him not to harm Jesus, saying she was having nightmares about the situation, and adding her view that Jesus was a “just man” (Matthew 27:19).

Pilate tried a third ploy to keep Jesus alive by an outright declaration of his innocence. Luke 23:4 quotes Pilate as telling the Jewish leaders and their mob “I find no fault in this man.” When the mob called for the crucifixion of Jesus, Pilate publicly defended Jesus, saying “Why, what evil has he done?” (Matthew 27:23). Pilate was relieved to hear that Jesus was a Galilean because it gave him a fourth option for keeping Jesus alive: a delaying tactic by giving the whole mess to Herod (who had jurisdiction over Galilee). Herod, however, gave this “hot potato” right back to Pilate (Luke 23:5-11).

**Most people have failed to appreciate that Pilate, the Roman governor, tried repeatedly to keep Jesus alive!**

When Romans wanted to execute someone, they didn’t worry about “due process,” yet here we see Pilate pursuing several options to prevent or stall the crucifixion of Jesus in spite of considerable pressure to the contrary. Luke 23:20 openly declares that Pilate was “willing to release Jesus.”

Finally, Pilate realized he was out of options. As Matthew 27:24 puts it: “Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but rather that a tumult was made...” The mob scene was ready to turn into a riot. The Passover celebration was one of the biggest of the year,

and a violent riot at that time could develop into a revolution. So, even though he knew Jesus was innocent, he finally agreed to crucify Jesus to forestall the most immediate threat to Roman interests. Even in condemning Jesus, Pilate engaged in political posturing to keep this event from turning into a confrontation with Parthia. Washing his hands before the multitude, he proclaimed himself "innocent of the blood of this just person" (Matthew 27:24). In doing this, Pilate was disassociating Rome from the killing of a celebrity who was popular with powerful Parthians. Pilate wanted it publicly obvious that the responsibility for this crucifixion lay with the Jewish hierarchy, not with Rome. In John 18:33-37, Pilate asked Jesus if he was really a king (his asking about Jesus' royal status implies he knew about Jesus' royal "Arsacid" bloodline). Jesus replied: "**My kingdom is not of this world**; if my kingship were of this world, **my servants would fight**, that I might not be handed over to the Jews..." Jesus added: "You say that I am a King, **For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world...**" Jesus acknowledged that he was born "a king," that his kingdom was "not of this world (the first century A.D.)," but that he would become a king in the future. Jesus also stated (verse 11): "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above." Jesus meant that unless Jesus' death was according to the will of God, no temporal government could have had any power over him.

This is affirmed by a comment of Jesus Christ in Matthew 26:52-54. When one of his disciples tried to resist the taking of Jesus by attempting to kill a would-be captor, Jesus told him not to resist with the words:

*"Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels'? But how then*

*should the scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?"*

His comment reveals that he was voluntarily refusing to use divine power to save himself in order to fulfill scriptures (such as Daniel 9:26). However, it is very sobering to realize that Jesus affirmed that if he were but to ask, the Father would "at once" send twelve legions of angels to rescue him. This statement shows that while it was the Father's will to save mankind, the final decision to "go through with it" belonged to Jesus, that if he chose not to "go through with it," the Father would have honored that choice and sent thousands of angels to slay all who threatened him! If Jesus had made that choice, mankind would have had no sacrifice, and the doorway of salvation would have been closed. Jesus knew the stakes, and put mankind's long-term good ahead of his short-term safety. Indeed, if Jesus had refused to "go through with it," the whole plan of salvation (which required a sinless, sacrificed savior for mankind's sins) would have been cancelled. This brings up a sobering possibility. If Jesus had "opted out" of being a sacrifice (terminating the plan of salvation), the legions of angels might have destroyed not just Jesus' tormentors but **all** mankind since the very existence of mankind would have become moot. If there were no savior to ransom mankind, there would have been no purpose in a continued existence for mankind itself. Jesus may well have seen legions of death angels poised in the spirit world to terminate mankind if Jesus chose not to implement the plan of salvation for mankind. If so, Jesus had a very stark choice set before him that no human being could see. If Jesus called on the Father to rescue him and stop the crucifixion, mankind would die, but if Jesus chose to sacrifice himself, mankind would live. It was up to Jesus.

Jesus knew that if he asked for angelic rescue, none of his

human friends could ever be saved. So he gave up his life, and made salvation available for not only his beloved friends, but all humanity. If the people at the crucifixion scene had realized the awesome choice before Jesus, they would have all fallen trembling at his feet. Jesus chose to let mankind live even as it tortured, mocked and reviled him (Matthew 27:39-44).

When Jesus died, many supernatural events occurred to confirm that Jesus was the divine son of a very real God (the "Most High") who had watched the entire episode from heaven.

Matthew 27:51-54 records that:

*"the veil of the temple was torn in two, from top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks were broken apart; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept [were dead] arose. And came out of the graves...and went into the holy city and appeared to many."*

The tearing of the curtain in the temple, which had sealed off the Holy of Holies, signified that the death of Jesus Christ meant that there were no longer any limitations on human access to God, and the concurrent resurrections of many people both testified that Jesus had triumphed over death and foreshadowed that there would be a future resurrection as a result of Jesus death.

The key question concerning the death of Jesus Christ is "Did he really rise from the dead?" He foretold that he would rise again after a period of three days (Matthew 12:40), and many eyewitness accounts are included in the Bible that he fulfilled his promise. Whether the reader believes his resurrection to be a fact depends on: (A) the faith the reader places in the eyewitness accounts in the Bible, (B) the credibility of the Bible (based on fulfilled prophecies, the unity of the Bible with the record of ancient history, etc.), and (C) the evidence of answered

prayer (offered in the name of Jesus) in the personal experience of the reader. However, we also have the contemporary affirmation of Josephus, a Jewish historian who lived shortly after the time of Christ, that "he [Jesus] appeared to them alive again the third day."<sup>68</sup>

This chapter has provided information which permits the life of Jesus Christ to be viewed in a much broader perspective than was previously possible. It is clear from the evidence presented in this chapter that Jesus Christ was not only a **real** historical figure, but also a **prominent** personality of his time whose fame extended far beyond the borders of Judea. The evidence is very strong that he was the Son of God, and prophecies declare that his second coming will see him crowned king over all nations (Acts 1:9-11, Revelation 19:11-20:6).

Revelation 19:16 prophesies that when Jesus Christ returns, he will bear the title "King of Kings." Modern society has lost track of the real significance of this phrase. George Rawlinson, in his epic history of Parthia entitled, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, observed that Parthia's empire was organized as a feudal system with many vassal kings owing their allegiance to the overall Parthian emperor. In view of Parthia's feudal system, he added:

*"...Parthian monarchs took the title of 'King of Kings,' so frequent upon their coins..."<sup>69</sup>*

Rawlinson also recorded an incident that confirms this title was used by Parthia's emperors during the time of Christ. Discussing events which led to the Parthian-Roman "Summit Conference" in 1 A.D., a few years after Jesus' birth, he records;

*"Phraataces [Parthia's emperor]...responded to Augustus, despatching to him a letter wherein he took to himself the **favorite Parthian title of 'king of kings,'** and*

*addressed the Roman Emperor simply as  
'Caesar.'* "70

The book of Revelation's claim that Jesus will rule forever as "King of Kings" now carries new meaning! Readers in the first century A.D. could recognize that this prophecy predicted that Jesus Christ would inherit the title of Parthia's Emperors at his second coming. Jesus was routinely called the "son of David" in his lifetime, and it was also prophesied before his birth that Jesus would eventually inherit "the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever" (Luke 1:32-33). Obviously, Jesus did not inherit such a throne in his human lifetime, and no human throne could last "forever." However, Jesus can rule "forever" on the earth after his second coming as "King of Kings." He also will inherit "the throne of his father David" when he inherits the title (and throne) of the Parthian Emperors. This prophecy not only confirms that Parthia's emperors literally sat "in David's throne," but it also verifies that Jesus Christ was himself an Arsacid, a blood relative of Parthia's ruling dynasty!

Also, the missions of the twelve apostles confirm that the Scythians and Parthians were descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. In Matthew 10:5-6, Jesus gave the twelve apostles this mission:

*"These twelve Jesus sent forth...saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles...But **go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**"* (Emphasis added.)

The ten tribes of Israel (the "house of Israel") were spiritually, (not physically) "lost" at that time. The apostles stayed with Jesus during his ministry, but they obeyed this commandment of Jesus to go to the ten tribes of Israel after Jesus died. Just



before he rose into heaven, Jesus told his apostles in Acts 1:8:

*"You shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, **and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.**"* (Emphasis added.)

Since Jesus had earlier sent them to the ten tribes of Israel, and later said they would go "to the uttermost parts of the earth," it is clear that at that time at least some of the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel lived "in the uttermost parts of the earth" (in other words: "a very great distance from Judea").

The book of Acts names only a few of the apostles as being present in Judea for very long after Jesus' ascension, indicating many of them soon departed Judea to evangelize the ten tribes of Israel. Many legends exist about the nations of the earth visited by the apostles. We have already seen the account that Thaddaeus was sent to northern Mesopotamia to heal the Parthian vassal king, Abgar, and evangelize his people. Eusebius also recorded:

*"Meanwhile, the holy apostles...were scattered over the whole world. Thomas, tradition tells us, was chosen for Parthia, Andrew for Scythia, John for Asia..."*<sup>71</sup>

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* writes concerning Thomas:

*"According to the tradition, St. Thomas founded the Christian churches in Malabar [India], and then crossed to Mylapur, now a suburb of Madras, where the shrine of his martyrdom...still stands on Mt. St. Thomas, where a cross is shown with a Pahlavi [Parthian] inscription."*<sup>72</sup>

Chapter eight documented that portions of the ten tribes established "Saka" kingdoms in India (to the east of Parthia), so Thomas' presence in India is consistent with Christ's charge that they go to the ten tribes of Israel.

Peter wrote the epistle of I Peter while in Babylon (I Peter 5:13), which was then within the Parthian Empire. Some have asserted that Peter's use of "Babylon" symbolized "Rome" but there is nothing in the text to support that view. Peter understood the difference between the cities of Babylon and Rome, and he was a simple fisherman not given to literary or scholarly devices. When Peter said "Babylon," he meant the city of Babylon.

Various legends state that the apostles Thaddeus, Matthias, Andrew, Bartholomew, and Simon the Canaanite (or "Zealot") all evangelized (or passed through) Armenia.<sup>73</sup> Armenia was settled by portions of the ten tribes after the fall of Samaria (as noted in chapter four), and was frequently a province of the Parthian Empire (though often disputed with Rome). Armenia was a gateway to Scythia via the Caucasus Mountains, so it is likely that other apostles besides Andrew passed through Armenia on their way to Scythia.

In the *Commentary on the Whole Bible* by Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, the following observations are made in the Introduction to I John:

*"Augustine...says this epistle [I John] was written to the Parthians. Bede...says that Athanasius attests the same. By the Parthians may be meant the Christians living beyond the Euphrates in the Parthian territory...in John's prolonged life, we cannot dogmatically assert that he did not visit the Parthian Christians."*<sup>74</sup>

This commentary confirms how deeply Christianity had taken hold in Parthia, indicating several apostles must have been there. Also note that this commentary uses the same phrase as Josephus (i.e. "beyond the Euphrates") in referring to Parthian territory.

One account places Jude in northern Persia (within Parthia's Empire).<sup>75</sup> Simon the Zealot is recorded as taking a missionary journey through North Africa (including the old Punic cities near Carthage), continuing on to the British Isles<sup>76</sup> where he reportedly perished. Earlier, we examined the legend of Viracocha, who "performed miracles and preached repentance" in ancient America. Was "Viracocha" one of the apostles of Jesus Christ who really did travel to the "uttermost parts of the earth?"

There are many more legends about the lands visited by the twelve apostles, but the above will suffice for this chapter. All the regions and nations discussed earlier in this book as being places inhabited by the ten tribes of Israel are also cited as regions and nations visited by one or more of the twelve apostles. Since Jesus had sent his apostles to the ten tribes of Israel, these legends further confirm that "the lost sheep" of the ten tribes of Israel were located in Parthia, Scythia, Armenia, the North African Punic regions, the British Isles, the Saka kingdoms of India and perhaps even the ancient Americas.

This chapter has illustrated how the life of Jesus Christ involved relationships between the empires of Rome and Parthia. To return to the theme of this book (the history of the ten tribes of Israel), the next chapter will resume the narrative where chapter eight concluded, examining the migrations of the ten tribes of Israel after the Parthian Empire fell in the third century A.D.

## Endnotes: Chapter Nine

1. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVIII, III, 3
2. Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*, p. 98
3. *Ibid*, 99-100
4. *Ibid*, p. 49
5. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 178-181
6. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XV, I, 2
7. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 199-205
8. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, p. 216
9. *Ibid*, p. 210
10. *Ibid*, p. 85
11. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see word "Wise," subhead 8, p. 1060
12. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVIII, IX, 1
13. *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, "Herod," p. 385
14. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Asia," Vol. 2, p. 512
15. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 117-118
16. *Ibid*, pp. 195-198
17. *Ibid*, pp. 218-219
18. *Ibid*, pp. 213-215
19. Capt, *The Traditions of Glastonbury*, p. 19
20. Capt, *Ibid*, p. 22
21. Capt, *Ibid*, p. 22
22. *Ibid*, p.20
23. *Ibid*, p. 10
24. McBirnie, *The Search for the Twelve Apostles*, p. 230
25. Capt, pp. 39-41
26. *Ibid*, p. 41
27. *Ibid*, p.9
28. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see "Lord," subhead 3, pp. 616-617
29. Capt, p. 9
30. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, Hebrew Lexicon,

word "Yeshuah," p. 55

31. Capt, *The Traditions of Glastonbury*, p. 7
32. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, pp. 200-201
33. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, p. 425
34. Davies, *Voyagers to the New World*, pp. 125-126
35. *Ibid*, p. 131
36. *Ibid*, pp. 126-127
37. *Ibid*, p. 136
38. Boland, *They All Discovered America*, p. 303
39. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 26, "Toltec," p. 829
40. Athy, "Foreign Influences on the Priesthood and Nobility of Pre-Columbian America," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 17, 1988, p. 114
41. *Ibid*, p. 114
42. *Ibid*, p. 115 (Athy cites *Book of the Gods and Rites and the Ancient Calendar* by Fray Diego Duran)
43. *Ibid*, p. 115
44. Morris, Walter, *Living Maya* (as cited in *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 17, 1988, p. 196
45. Stender, "The Cross of the Inca," *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 17, 1988, pp. 179-181
46. *Ibid*, pp. 181-183
47. *Epigraphic Society Occasional Publications*, Vol. 17, 1988, pp. 255-266
48. *Ibid*, p. 261
49. Boland, pp. 277-280
50. Casson, *The Ancient Mariners*, pp. 174, 215, 235-236
51. *Ibid*, p. 236
52. Boland, pp. 54-78
53. Fell, *Saga America*, pp. 31-35, 124-132, 153
54. *Ibid*, p. 168
55. *Ibid*, p. 168
56. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVIII, III, 3

57. *Ibid*, XVIII, III, 3
58. McBirnie, *The Search for the Twelve Apostles*, p. 36
59. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVIII, III, 3
60. *Ibid*, XVIII, III, 3
61. *Ibid*, XVIII, III, 1-2
62. McBirnie, p. 203
63. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 8, "Eusebius of Caesarea," p. 892
64. Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, I, 13
65. *Ibid*, I, 13
66. *Ibid*, I, 13
67. *Ibid*, I, 13
68. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVIII, III, 3
69. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, p. 88
70. *Ibid*, p. 218
71. Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, III, 1
72. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 22, "Thomas, St.," p. 143
73. McBirnie, *The Search for the Twelve Apostles*, pp. 199-202, 243
74. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, "Introduction to I John," p. 1495
75. *Ibid*, p. 206
76. *Ibid*, pp. 207-211

## **10. Israelite Migrations from Asia after Parthia's Fall**

Chapter eight concluded with the fall of the Parthian empire in 226 A.D. when it was overthrown by the Sassanian Persians. After this date, the Parthians virtually disappear from history. Clearly, so numerous and widespread a people did not simply "vanish" from the earth. Their rapid disappearance from their old homeland indicates that the Parthians quickly abandoned their homeland in Asia and migrated to new areas. The purpose of this chapter is both to locate their new homelands, and to examine the history of Parthia's descendants as they migrated. However, they quickly lost the name "Parthian." It is typical of migrating populations that they lose their old identity, and assume a new one as they become identified with new homelands. To locate the migrating Parthians, we need to look for masses of people possessing similar racial and cultural traits who "appeared" soon after the Parthians "disappeared."

While Parthia's population was very large, their military-age males were severely depleted by two very costly wars. The Parthian-Roman war of 216-217 A.D. took a very heavy toll even though it ended in a Parthian victory. Within another decade the Parthians were involved in an unsuccessful war with the Persians, who rebelled against their Parthian rulers. Parthia's losses in the Parthian-Roman war likely tempted the Persians to revolt when they did. Parthian-Persian hostilities began as early as 220 A.D., but the outcome was not finalized until 226 A.D. when a series of three battles decided the issue in favor of the rebelling Persians.<sup>1</sup>

The Sassanian Persians acted quickly to expel Parthians from the region, thereby eliminating any possibility of a Parthian "comeback." The transition to Persian rule was a bloody one. In addition to the massive loss of life in the Parthian-Persian battles, the Persians executed as many of the Arsacids as they could find, and they destroyed at least one major city (Hatra)

which did not want to recognize Persian rule.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, those opposing Persian rule had every reason to fear for their lives. With the Parthian empire collapsing and given the Persian massacres of their rivals, a speedy migration out of the region became the best survival option for the Parthians and their allies. If the Parthians could not stay where they were, where could they go? To the west was the Roman Empire, to the south lay the Arabian desert and the Arabian Sea, and to the east and northeast were the expanding oriental populations which had driven the Massagetae and other Scythians westward into Parthia centuries ago.

The only safe direction for the Parthians to flee was to the northwest. The Parthians could expect to find refuge in that direction since their kinsmen, the Scythians, lived there. Also, Parthian rulers had established good relations with the Dacians of eastern Europe at the end of the first century A.D.<sup>3</sup> The ancient Dacians also were enemies of Rome, and they inhabited a region roughly equivalent to modern Romania and portions of Hungary. This gave the Parthians two very good reasons to migrate toward the Black Sea and Europe. However, the greatest reason for Parthian migration to the northwest was that one Parthian province, in the northwest portion of Parthia's old empire, successfully resisted the Persians in battle, retaining both their independence and their Arsacid ruler. That province was Armenia. George Rawlinson's book. *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, describes these events:

***"The Armenian monarch, who had been set on his throne by Artabanus [the Parthian king defeated by the Persians], and was uncle to the young princes [of Parthia], was especially anxious to maintain the Arsacids in power: he gave them a refuge***



*in Armenia, collected an army on their behalf, and engaging Artaxerxes [the new Persian monarch], is even said to have defeated him in a battle.”<sup>4</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* adds:

*“The members of the Arsacid line who fell into the hands of the victor [the Persians] were put to death; a number of the princes [of Parthia] found refuge in Armenia, **where the Arsacid dynasty maintained itself till A.D. 429.**”<sup>5</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

These records document that the immediate reaction of Parthian Arsacids seeking safety from the Persians was to migrate northwestward from their old empire (toward Armenia and the Black Sea). Parthian citizens seeking safety from the Persians also had every reason to flee in the same direction. Since Armenia resisted Persian rule, remained “Parthian” in nature, and perpetuated the Arsacid dynasty, it would become a magnet for all Parthians fleeing Persian domination. Armenia also offered a cultural haven for the Parthians. Since it had been under Parthian rule and/or influence for centuries, life in Armenia would involve minimal “culture shock” for migrating Parthians. Also, since Armenia was still ruled by the Parthian Arsacids, Parthians could retain their traditional fealty to a monarch of this dynasty. During this first phase of Parthian migration to the northwest, it is still possible to recognize the Parthians by their own identity, due to the preservation of the Arsacid dynasty in Armenia.

There is another factor in the Persian war upon the Parthians that bears discussion. In previous chapters evidence was presented that Christianity had made many converts within the Parthian Empire. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* records that

Semitic literature and language was expanding its influence within Parthia, and that:

*"this Aramaic victory was powerfully aided by the ever-increasing progress of Christianity, which soon created, as is well-known, an Aramaic literature of which the language was the dialect of Edessa, a city in which the last king of Osroene, Abgar IX (179-214), had been converted to the faith."*<sup>6</sup>

Eusebius wrote that an earlier King Abgar of Edessa (circa 30 A.D.) had exchanged correspondence with Jesus Christ and had welcomed Christianity. Judaism, the older Semitic religion, was also common in the Parthian Empire, due to the large numbers of Jews residing in it. One regional ruler in Parthia, Izates, is said to have converted to Judaism.<sup>7</sup> An earlier chapter documented the placement of Semitic slogans on Parthian coins during the apostolic era. Acts 2:9 shows that Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians and Asians (all from Parthia's domain) were present in Jerusalem worshipping the God of Israel on a biblical Holy Day. A delegation of Parthian Magi had worshipped Jesus Christ, and the writings of Josephus were widely read by the Parthians in the native Semitic language of Josephus.<sup>8</sup> Clearly, Semitic culture, religion, and language were becoming dominant in the Parthian Empire. Since chapters six and seven demonstrated that the Parthians and their Scythian/Sacae kinsmen were the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, it is easily understood why Semitic ways were so well received in Parthia's empire: the Parthians and their kinsmen **were** Semites! However, many of the people ruled by the Parthians did not share these racial and cultural origins, and resented the surge of Semitic culture and religion washing around them. One such people were the non-Semitic Persians.

The Persians were Zoroastrians, and regarded the Parthians as heretics for slipping away from Zoroastrianism. All Parthian faiths (including Christianity and Judaism) were considered “idolatry” by the Zoroastrian Persians. Of course, to many Parthians, the Zoroastrians were the real idolaters. The Persian-Parthian conflict was also a “religious war,” as one Persian historian so observes:

*“The Persians **took offense at the religious practices of the Parthians**; this was probably one of the reasons that led them finally to revolt.”<sup>9</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

The Persians moved quickly to reestablish Zoroastrianism as the “state religion” under their first ruler, Ardashir. Richard Frye’s, *The Heritage of Persia*, states:

*“Later Sassanian tradition...traces the beginnings of all institutions of church and state back to Ardashir. He is the ruler who reinstated or resurrected the Old Persian empire with its various institutions **as well as the religion of Zoroaster which had been in eclipse under...the Parthians.**”<sup>10</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

The Persians quickly installed Persian rulers over all the conquered provinces of the Parthian Empire, including the old Parthian homeland itself.<sup>11</sup>

Persian zeal for Zoroastrianism as a “state religion” would have made life untenable for those who practiced other religions (Christianity, Judaism, etc.). The new Persian ruler quickly:

*“devoted his attention to the... strengthening of **the national religion**. He caused the idols of the Parthians to be destroyed and ordered a general restoration of the doctrines of*

*Zoroaster throughout the empire.*”<sup>12</sup>  
(Emphasis added.)

Gone was the old Parthian custom of religious tolerance. In its place Zoroastrianism was imposed as a state religion. Since the Persians regarded Semitic religions and culture as a threat to their rule, the logical assumption is that they sought to kill, harass or banish Semitic populations. In this regard the war of the non-Semitic Persians against the Semitic Parthians was a race war as well as a religious war, a Persian/Zoroastrian “Jihad” against Parthian/Semitic influences.

The Parthians were not the only target of the Persian zealots. It is recorded that Persia began its rebellion against Parthia, not by attacking the Parthians, but by attacking two Parthian provinces: Carmania (or “Kerman”) and Media.<sup>13</sup> The Kermans were also called the “Germanii,”<sup>14</sup> and were located close to Persia. Many Semitic people lived in Media as captives from the ten tribes of Israel had been settled in “the cities of the Medes” by the Assyrians in the eighth century B.C. (II Kings 17:6). In attacking Kerman and Media, the Persians were securing their flanks before directly engaging the Parthians.

Due to the racial and religious factors motivating the Persian revolt, Kerman and Media would not have been attacked unless they were regarded by Persia as natural racial and religious allies of Parthia. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* also shows that Sakastan (named after Saka settlers) was also subjugated by the Persians.<sup>15</sup> The Saka were Scythian kinsmen of the Parthians, further confirming that the Persian attacks were directed against all Semitic people, not just the Parthians. For this reason, many Semitic people throughout the old Parthian Empire had reason to seek refuge in Armenia, the surviving redoubt of the Arsacids. Armenia must have received large numbers of displaced Parthians, Kermans, Saka, Jews, etc. Since the Persians were

expunging Semitic religion and culture from their new empire, Semitic people were unwelcome in the new Persian/Zoroastrian Empire. These threatened Semitic populations had little choice but to flee northwestward toward the Caucasus Mountains of Armenia in a human "tidal wave."

Above, it was noted that the Arsacid ruler of Armenia was able to resist the Persians (while no other former province of Parthia was able to do so). This further indicates that the Armenian army had been reinforced by many Parthian and Semitic refugees fleeing from old Parthian homelands. Unless Armenia's army was swollen by reinforcements from immigrating Parthians, it is unlikely that this single province could have withstood the Persian attacks which overwhelmed all other former Parthian provinces.

Armenia had already been evangelized by Christianity. The previous chapter observed that five apostles (Bartholomew, Thaddaeus, Simon the Canaanite, Andrew and Matthias) had evangelized Armenia.<sup>16</sup> It is also recorded that: "...all Christian churches accept the tradition that Christianity was preached in Armenia by the Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew in the first half of the first century...Armenia was among the first to respond to the call of Christ so early."<sup>17</sup>

Armenia's receptivity to Christianity offered another reason for the Christians of Parthia's empire to regard Armenia as a place of refuge from Zoroastrian Persians. However, non-Christian Parthians would still have reason to migrate to Armenia as it was the last independent portion of Parthia's empire. Non-Christian Semites were aware of Parthia's long tradition of religious freedom. Many non-Christians logically saw an Arsacid Armenia as being tolerant; whereas, the Zoroastrian Persians were a real threat to all Semitic people. Refugees coming to Armenia were motivated by a number of considerations, and their ranks

included both Christians and non-Christians. Armenia became a magnet for many Semitic people seeking refuge from the Persians.

Chapters six through eight demonstrated that the Sacae/Scythians and the Parthians were both descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. Therefore, this migration of people out of Parthia into Armenia was composed primarily of refugee Israelites. However, there were other Semitic people with them as well.

At this juncture, the term "Semite" needs clarification. After the flood in the days of Noah, the earth was repopulated via Noah's family. His three sons were named Shem, Ham and Japheth (Genesis 10:1). All modern races are descended from these three sons of Noah. Shem's sons were named Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud and Aram (Genesis 10:22). Elam and Asshur founded the nations of Elam and Assyria, both well-known in ancient history. Aram's descendants were the Aramaean people whose name was attached to the Semitic language known as Aramaic. The Israelites descended from Arphaxad through Abram (Genesis 10:22-11:26), whose name was changed to Abraham. Abraham became the patriarch of the Hebrews through Isaac and Jacob (whose name was changed to Israel). Abraham had many other descendants besides the Israelites, however.

Abraham also fathered the Ishmaelites, named after Ishmael, the eldest son of Abraham. The Ishmaelites had long been identified with the Arabian Peninsula, and they remained south of the reborn Persian Empire when other Semites fled northwest to Armenia. To this day, the Arabs have a strong tradition of being descended from Shem and Ishmael.<sup>18</sup>

The term "Semitic" properly describes all nations descended from the progeny of Shem. This included many nations living within the boundaries of the Parthian Empire when it fell. Besides the innumerable descendants of the tribes of Israelites who

dominated Parthia's empire, the Assyrians, Elamites, Aramaeans, etc. were also Semitic people. In modern times, the term "Semitic" has become a synonym for the word "Jew." For example, the term "anti-Semitic" is understood to mean "anti-Jewish." However, this obscures the fact that many modern nations are descended from Shem. (Indeed, since the term "Jew" is used both in a racial and religious sense, a person can be a religious Jew without being a racial Semite). The vast majority of Semites in the world are not Jews, since the Jews are merely one small branch of the overall Semitic family of nations.

The Persians, on the other hand, were descended from Japheth. One of Japheth's sons was "Madai" (Genesis 10:2), who founded the nation of the "Medes," one of the partners in the earlier Medo-Persian empire. One Bible translation (*The New Jerusalem Bible*) translates "Madai" as the "Medes." The Medo-Persians (and other people descended from Japheth) had chafed under centuries of Semitic rule administered by the Parthians (the Israelites). When the Persians successfully revolted against the Parthians, centuries of pent-up resentments against the Semites were violently expressed in the pogroms of the Persians against the Parthians and other Semitic people.

History indicates that one group of Semites was less threatened by the Persian purge. Ironically (from a modern viewpoint), this group was the Jews. When Persia ruled this region prior to the Parthians, Jews were trusted members of the government and even joined the royal family. Esther became a queen of the Persian Empire (Esther 2:16-18), Mordechai apparently became a prime minister (Esther 9:4, 10:1-3), and Ezra and Nehemiah were trusted officials of Persian kings (Ezra 7:11-14, Nehemiah 2:1-9). Since Jewish-Persian amity predated the Parthian Empire, it is probable that it also survived the fall of Parthia. This is confirmed by the fact that Jewish scholars developed the

Talmud in Babylonia during the period when it was ruled by the Sassanian Persians.<sup>19</sup>

Since many Parthians and Semites fleeing to Armenia were Christians, it is not surprising that Armenia developed a strong early tradition of Christianity. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states regarding King Tiridates of Armenia:

*"King Tiridates (c. A.D. 238-314) had already been baptized [as a Christian] some time after 261..."*<sup>20</sup>

William McBirnie adds that:

*"Armenia became the first Christian nation in the world. Christianity was officially proclaimed in 301 A.D. as the national religion of Armenia. King Tiridates, together with the nobility of his country, were baptized by St. Gregory the Illuminator..."*<sup>21</sup>

The name of Armenia's king ("Tiridates") was a common name among the Parthian Arsacids, and several Parthian Emperors bore this very name. This confirms that Armenia's royalty were still Arsacids. Given the fact that Arsacid princes had fled to Armenia when Parthia fell, it is quite likely that at the time Armenia adopted Christianity, many of Armenia's nobility were also Arsacids.

It is a common mistake to assume that Rome, under Constantine, was the first to formally adopt Christianity. Portions of Parthia had been heavily Christianized centuries before Constantine was born. When the Arsacid king of Armenia adopted Christianity, it was with the firm support of his nobility and people. However, when Constantine later declared for Christianity, he had to move his capital to Constantinople due to Roman resistance to Christianity.



The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states:

*"It is probable that this step [moving the capital] was connected with Constantine's decision to make Christianity the official religion of the empire. **Rome was naturally the stronghold of paganism, to which the great majority of the Senate clung with fervent devotion.**"*<sup>22</sup> (Emphasis added.)

While Constantine was attempting to impose a largely-unwanted Christianity on the Roman Empire, King Tiridates of Armenia was, in effect, simply recognizing that Armenia's people were principally Christians. However, most Romans wanted no part of Christianity when Constantine adopted it. In moving his capital to the east, Constantine was actually moving his seat of power **toward** the region of Christian political strength.

The Arsacids, Parthia's dynasty, ruled in Armenia until 429 A.D., two centuries after the fall of Parthia. During the majority of this time, they presided over a Christian kingdom.

In an earlier chapter it was shown that Parthia's Arsacids were descended from King David, fulfilling God's promise that David's descendants would perpetually have rulers over the House of Israel. Since the Parthian Israelites had fled to Armenia, and were still ruled by the same Parthian Arsacids, this promise of God was still being kept in spite of the fall of the Parthian Empire.

Did all of the Parthians and their Semitic allies fleeing the Persians stop in Armenia? The answer is "no." The Parthian Empire had extended from the Euphrates River on the west to modern Pakistan on the east; from the Arabian Sea on the south to southern Russia on the north. Furthermore, there were various Saka kingdoms in India. There is no way that

mountainous Armenia, with limited arable soil, could have supported the great mass of Parthian refugees seeking a new homeland. As mentioned earlier, the Black Sea region northwest of Armenia had long been occupied by the Iberians and the Scythian/Sacae (both of whom were kinsmen of the Parthians). Since the Parthians were kinsmen of the Scythians and Iberians, the region around the Black Sea was a hospitable place for them to seek refuge and it offered much more "living space" than Armenia. Indeed, since the Scythians had been living in areas of Eastern Europe for many centuries, the hordes of Parthian refugees could spread out as far as eastern Europe. One historian states:

*"Scythian influence first made its mark in Hungary round about the year 500 B.C. when the foremost wave of Scythians penetrated to the area."*<sup>23</sup>

A Russian history of the Scythians comments that the Scythian presence in the Ukraine dates to the "late seventh and sixth centuries B.C."<sup>24</sup> By the fifth century B.C., the Scythians had penetrated into Europe as far as modern Bulgaria, Romania, Prussia and the Balkans.<sup>25</sup> The territory north and west of the Black Sea could hold an immense number of refugees. That it had historically been occupied by their Scythian kinsmen made it an attractive refuge for the large numbers of Parthian refugees who could not possibly find enough room in Armenia. Parthian refugees could, therefore, resettle in friendly territory as far as eastern Europe.

Given the immense number of Parthian refugees, some likely migrated to the Black Sea – Eastern Europe area via a northward route around the Caspian Sea and north of the Caucasus mountains. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states:

***"The main movement from Asia into***

**Europe** which went north of the Caucasus was in early times that of **the Scythians.**"<sup>26</sup>  
(Emphasis added.)

Since it is a well-established fact that the Parthians and Scythians were related tribes, the "Scythian" migration into Europe would have included masses of Parthian refugees (during the third century A.D. and afterward). While the Parthian dynasty retained its "Arsacid" identity in Armenia for two centuries after Parthia's fall, the Parthian refugees, separated from their homeland, quickly lost the name "Parthian."

Chapter six noted that large numbers of Israelites fled to the north of Armenia when the kingdom of Israel fell in 724-721 B.C., and were called the "Gauthei." The Greeks later called them "Getae" or "Scythians." L.A. Waddell, citing *Lives of the Saints*, by S. Baring Gould, notes that:

*"St. Andrew, the apostle..., is reported to have traveled in his mission to the **Scyths or Getae, the Greco-Roman form of the name.**"*<sup>27</sup>

Andrew, the apostle, lived in the first century A.D. indicating that the Scythians had also been called Getae long before the fall of Parthia's empire. Since Scythians had long been called "Getae" in eastern European, **Parthian refugees settling among their Scythian kinsmen in eastern Europe would also be known as "Getae."**

The region north of the Black Sea had been occupied by people descended from the ten tribes of Israel for almost a millennium by the time the Parthians fled in that direction. The Parthians had also had friendly relations with the Dacians of Eastern Europe, so Parthian refugees had many options when settling in eastern Europe. The Dacians were also known as "Getae,"<sup>28</sup>

indicating that they were a Scythian tribe which had earlier settled in eastern Europe.

Since the fall of Israel and Judah, the Israelite tribes in Asia had been scattered from Eastern Europe to southern Russia and western India, and were known as Scythians, Sacae, Saka, Getae, Parthians, Massagetae, etc. The easternmost Israelites had been pushed southwestward when the Massagetae and other Sacae migrated out of central Asia into Parthia. With the fall of Parthia, and the flight of its Semitic people into Armenia, the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel were compressed into a region the shape of a crescent (from Armenia, between the Caspian and Black Seas, around the Black Sea on the north and southeastward toward modern Romania and eastern Hungary). For the first time since the fall of the old kingdom of Israel, the ten tribes of Israel who had scattered into Asia were now mostly together again.

Was this mere coincidence, or was it the hand of God in world events to "herd" his "lost sheep" (Matthew 10:6) in the direction that he wished them to go? Genesis 49 prophesied that the tribes of Israel would eventually settle in locations with specific characteristics by the time of the "latter days" (these locations will be analyzed in chapter eleven). At some point God had to begin compelling them to migrate toward the regions that he had selected for their eventual settlement.

The migration of the Parthians and their allies, in turn, dislodged other peoples. Indeed, the migration of masses of Parthian refugees in the direction of Europe initiated a period of time (lasting for centuries) in which waves of displaced tribes (many of them racially related) began to surge into Europe seeking new homelands. One tribe would displace another tribe, who would, in turn, displace another as they jostled each other westward.

What has not been realized is that the great migrations of tribes

and nations spilling violently and chaotically into Europe was triggered by one singular event: the fall of the huge Parthian Empire. Parthia's fall resulted in whole tribes and nations of Semitic people spilling westward through the Caucasus Mountains and Black Sea regions toward Europe as they fled the Persians and sought new homelands. Josephus records that, in his lifetime, the [Semitic] population of the ten tribes of Israel had expanded so greatly in the Parthian Empire that they were too numerous to count! After Josephus penned that observation, the Israelite tribes further expanded their populations for over a century before their Parthian Empire collapsed. Now this teeming mass of people were being propelled by circumstances toward Europe via the Caucasus Mountains and around the northern shores of the Black Sea.

These refugee tribes came to be known by the name of the region (the Caucasus) through which they passed. Their descendants became known as "Caucasians," or "Caucasoids." *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* defines the term Caucasoid (or Caucasian) as:

*"...loosely called the **white race**, although skin color varies."*<sup>29</sup> (Emphasis added.)

The term "Caucasian" is a traditional, historic name commonly applied to the white race. The dictionary definition indicates that it is a traditional term, not a scientific one. It is important to realize, however, that the term "**Caucasian**" was so closely linked to "the white race" because so many whites poured into Europe via the **Caucasus** mountain region. The Parthians and Scythians were members of the white race, a conclusion invariably supported by the evidence and their own self-portrayals on coins and artwork. Their forced migrations out of Parthia toward Europe was one of the greatest migrations, in terms of the sheer number of people involved, in the entirety of

human history!

The term "Indo-European" has also been used to describe this Caucasian migration toward Europe, but the terms "Caucasian" and "Indo-European" have fallen out of favor as the anti-religious, evolutionary movement came to dominate academia. Those who have an enmity toward God and the Bible have "reinvented history" in a way that suppresses the history of the tribes of Israel. They have almost completely censored the history of the Parthian Empire from academic or educational awareness; no small feat because Parthia was one of the greatest and largest empires in the ancient world! To understand the depth of intellectual dishonesty now present in modern academia, consider the violence that would be done to the truth if all information on the Roman Empire was deleted from history texts! Yet that is what academia has done by ignoring the history of Parthia's empire, which was as powerful as the Roman Empire! As a result of ignoring Parthia's history, few comprehend why an almost endless stream of white tribes and nations came spilling out of Asia into Europe as refugees, beginning in the third century A.D. The reason for this mass migration was the fall of the Parthian Empire in the third century A.D.! Yet history texts recoil from identifying the Asian source of all these migrating nations as if making such an identification were an intellectual taboo. These refugee nations and tribes did not come from Siberia or from "the mists of history." **They came from Parthia and Scythia!** As a result of this incredible historical omission, millions of modern Caucasians do not realize that their ancestors originated in the ancient Parthian Empire. Now back to our narrative.

The Scythians had been present in Eastern Europe for many centuries. One historian has recorded that as early as 500 B.C., "Scythian advance-guards reach[ed] E. Germany, Hungary and

Bulgaria,” and added that from 400-300 B.C., the “Scythians establish[ed] outposts in the Balkans.”<sup>30</sup> Parthia did not fall until 226 A.D. so the Scythians had inhabited south Russia and portions of eastern Europe for over half a millennium by the time Parthian refugees came into their territories looking for refuge. Since the Parthians had a Scythian culture, it is not surprising that refugee Parthians would blend easily with their Scythian kinsmen, losing their identity as “Parthians.”

In 256 A.D., Gothic tribes “crossed the Carpathians and drove the Romans from Dacia.”<sup>31</sup> In other words, the Goths left the region north of the Black Sea, crossed the Carpathian mountains and entered Balkan Europe in formidable numbers. The Goths’ homeland was also the Scythian homeland. It begs the question of whether the Goths and the Scythians were the same people. Since we have seen that the Scythians living in eastern Europe were also called “Getae,” the answer is “yes” if the Getae and the Goths were the same people.

Etymologically the words are very similar with the consonants of Getae and Goth being G-T and G-TH. Henry Bradley, a historian of the Goths, notes the following about the relationship of the Getae (or Getes) and the Goths:

*“In ancient times the countries north of the Danube mouths were inhabited by a people called Getes (in Latin Getae)...Now in the third century after Christ **the Goths came and dwelt in the land of the Getes**, and... mingled with the native inhabitants; and so the Romans came to think that Goths and Getes were only two names for the same people, or rather two different ways of pronouncing the same word. Even the historian Jordanes, himself a Goth, actually*

*calls his book a Getic history, and mixes up the traditions of his own people with the tales which he had read in books about the Getes.*"<sup>32</sup> (Emphasis added.)

Most interesting! In the third century A.D. (the same century in which the Parthians fled their fallen empire), a mass of people (the Goths) "came and dwelt in the land of the Getes" (the Getae). That they "mingled" peaceably confirms that they were closely-related people with a common culture. Indeed, the Romans discerned scarcely any difference between them! Even a Gothic historian regarded the Goths and Getes (the Getae) as related tribes with a common heritage. Since the "Getae" lived in the Black Sea region prior to the arrival of the closely-related "Goths," the conclusion seems inescapable that the "Getae" were Scythians who had lived for centuries in the region and the newly-arrived "Goths" were Parthian refugees fleeing Asia in search of homelands among their Scythian kinsmen. Both Roman and Gothic sources regarded the Getes (Getae) and Goths as separate branches of a common people who united when the Goths migrated into the territory of the Getes (or Getae).

The record that the Goths peaceably settled (and mingled) with the Getae strongly supports the view that they were related tribes with a common culture and language. If the Getae had been invaded by a tribe with a different race, culture or language, common sense dictates there would have been determined warfare to resist them instead of the peaceable assimilation which occurred. Since the Getae were known to be Scythians, and since the Goths and Getae had a peaceful merger, it indicates that the Goths were predominantly Parthian refugees who were merging with their Scythian brothers. Since the Scythians assisted the Parthians on many occasions in times of warfare, it is logical that they would also offer refuge to the



Parthians when they were driven out of their former homelands by the Persians.

Modern second-guessing of Roman and Gothic writers has resulted in a speculation that the Goths originated in Sweden (Gotland). However, since we know that many Israelites fleeing the Assyrians had migrated into the Black Sea region and called themselves the "Gauthei,"<sup>33</sup> the term "Gauth" or "Goth" had been present in the Black Sea region since the seventh century B.C. Therefore, the Black Sea region is the logical homeland of the Goths. The Parthian and Scythian refugees who migrated into Europe from the environs of the Black Sea simply infused the ranks of (and came to be known as) Goths.

Col. Gawler cites classical writers such as Pliny, Stephanus, Iornandes (Jordanes) and Herodotus as regarding the terms "Dacian, Getae, Getes, Gothi and Scythian" to all denote the same people,<sup>34</sup> whose known homeland was near the Black Sea. Indeed, it is likely that Gothic colonists from the Black Sea colonized Scandinavia, bringing the name "Gotland" to that area.

The Goths exhibited Scythian cultural traits when they migrated into Europe in great numbers. Tamara Talbot Rice's book, *The Scythians*, comments that "Fleeing Goths spread (the) Scytho-Sarmatian style through Central and Southern Europe" in 200-300 A.D.,<sup>35</sup> confirming the Scythian nature of the Goths. Indeed, we have now reached the point in history where the terms "Parthian" and "Scythian" disappear, and the tribes formerly known by those names are known as "Goths" (and other names as we shall soon document) when they invade Europe.

It was known that Parthia's Arsacids fled to Armenia and sustained themselves there for two more centuries. The Parthian masses would logically have followed the Arsacid royalty to whom they had been unfailingly loyal for five centuries. The direction of this migration (when followed on a map) leads

directly to the Black Sea region and eastern Europe. Their need for "living space" led to the Gothic invasions of the Roman Empire. The connection between massive Parthian migrations to the northwest toward Europe, soon followed by massive migrations of Goths into Europe is clear.

The fact that the "Goths" arrived in the area, merged with the Getae and quickly invaded a Roman province soon after their arrival begins an interesting new chapter in Roman-Parthian confrontations. However, the Parthian refugees are now called "Goths" instead of "Parthians."

The Dacians (Getae) were unwilling subjects of the Roman Empire. Parthia's refugees, now called Goths, would have been vehemently anti-Roman as some of them lived through (and all of them knew about) the Roman treachery under Emperor Caracallus which led to such a costly war that the Persians were able to revolt and destroy the Parthian empire. The combination of the native Getae and the newly-arrived masses of Parthian refugees resulted in a very powerful force of Goths. These Goths then invaded Roman territory and wrested the province of Dacia from the Roman Empire in 256 A.D. (barely thirty years after the fall of Parthia). That the Goths specifically chose to attack **Roman** territory (even though Rome was the strongest military power in the area) further indicates that the newcomers were motivated by a special hostility toward Rome (a trait one would expect in Parthian refugees).

Not all of the migrating Parthians and Scythians came to be known as Goths. Many of the "Caucasian" people entering Europe in the centuries after the fall of Parthia were known as "Teutons," "Germans," "Vandals," "Saxons," etc. The Scythian/Parthian people had been known as the Sacae for over a millennium. This name was retained by some of the migrating refugees who were called "Saxons" by the Romans. Phonetically,

"Saxons" is the same word as "Sac's sons" (i.e. the Sons of Isaac). While the English word "Saxon" has a Latin "x," the German word for "Saxon" is "**Sachsisch**" or "**Sachse**."<sup>36</sup> The German words for "Saxon" preserve the name of the "**Sac-ae**" as they migrated into Europe from Asia. Since the Sacae were Parthians and Scythians in Asia, the Saxons (or **Sachse**) were none other than Scythian/Parthian refugees entering Europe. **The Bible prophesied in Genesis 48:14-16 that the name of Isaac would specifically be placed on the Israelite tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.** Since the Saxons still bore the name of Isaac as they migrated into Europe, it indicates that the Saxons were primarily the Israelite tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

The Romans had a custom of naming leaders after the enemies they fought. Thus one Roman leader was named "Germanicus" because he fought the Germans. Another took the name "Parthicus" because he fought the Parthians. One Roman general who fought (without success) against the Parthians called himself "Decidius **Saxa**."<sup>37</sup> Since the Sacae (Saka) were part of the Parthian Empire, this Roman general had apparently taken the name Sac-ae (or Sak-a), and represented it in a Latin form as "Sax-a." Since this was done **before** Parthia fell, the Romans apparently referred to the Parthian "**Sacae**" as the "Saxae" even before they migrated to Europe (the Latin plural is -ae, and "Sax-a" is a singular form). It is not surprising then that the descendants of the Sacae would be called the Saxons when they later migrated to Europe. Col. Gawler also notes that the classical writer Ptolemy is cited as:

*"mentioning a **Scythian people sprung from the Sakai named Saxones.**"<sup>38</sup>  
(Emphasis added.)*

The link between the Scythian/Parthians and the Saxons is well-

established. R. H. Hodgkin, in *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, elaborates further on Ptolemy's comment on the Saxones. He states:

*"After Ptolemy's statement that the Saxons were to be found 'on the neck of the Cimbric Peninsula,' we have to wait for more than a hundred years before we hear of them again. Then about 286 A.D. they are mentioned along with the Franks, first as pirates who infest the coasts of Gaul and later as allies of Carausius, the Roman admiral who revolted and established himself in Britain."*<sup>39</sup>

It is noteworthy that the Saxons were first recorded as being "on the neck of the Cimbric Peninsula [modern Denmark]" over a century prior to 286 A.D. Since the Scythian Sacae were well-established in eastern Europe by that time, it is hardly surprising that a group of Scythians (called Saxones by Ptolemy) would have traveled into Central Europe as far as modern Denmark. These were likely a small advance guard of Scythians (explorers or traders) who had not arrived in large numbers. After the fall of Parthia, great masses of Sacae poured into Europe as refugees in search of homelands. It is significant that the Saxons were never present in large numbers in Europe until **after** the fall of the Parthian Empire. However, by 286 A.D., large numbers of Saxons and Franks are found as pirates in Northern Europe, just six decades after Parthia's fall. The conclusion is inescapable that masses of refugee Parthians (Sacae) had migrated to Northern Europe, and were called Saxons by the Romans. That they resorted to piracy indicates they were nomads not yet able to support themselves by traditional means (agriculture, trade, etc.), and were supporting their families in any way possible. This lifestyle would be appropriate for a large mass of arriving

refugees. Refugee Sacae would also be expected to be anti-Roman, which these Saxons were. They preyed on Roman shipping and allied themselves with a Roman admiral who was willing to oppose Rome.

Alfred Church wrote in *Early Britain* that the pirate tribes who allied themselves to Carausius were the "Franks, Saxons, Danes and Normans," and that Carausius was not actually a Roman, but "was a native of the country now known as Holland."<sup>40</sup> This indicates that the Franks, Saxons, Danes and Normans were all related tribes who jointly migrated into the area from a similar location. Many of these tribes were often called "Germanic" tribes by the Romans. While the Saxons bore the name of Isaac, the "Danes" bore the name of the Israelite tribe of Dan (which had attached its name to the major rivers entering the Black Sea during Scythian times).

R. H. Hodgkin recorded that the Saxons:

*"began to molest the Island (Briton) some time **in the latter half of the third century...**After 250 A.D. the Imperial authorities began to construct defenses along the coast...the Saxon raiders are not mentioned...**till the last quarter of the third century.**"<sup>41</sup>*

These dates are extremely significant. The Parthian Empire fell in 226 A.D., precipitating a massive migration of Sacae to the northwest, through Armenia, south Russia and then across Europe. It is acknowledged that the Saxons were migrating out of the east in a westward direction when their migrations brought them into Europe.<sup>42</sup> In the time frame 250-300 A.D., the Saxons and related tribes are recognized as coming into Europe in great numbers. Could anything be clearer? The homeless Saxons were none other than the Sacae who had been dislodged

from their homelands by the fall of Parthia just decades previous to their appearance in Europe. While the Goths struck directly at Rome, the Saxons and their allied tribes migrated into Europe around the northern edge of Rome's European Empire, in search of a new homeland.

Rome's hold on Britain grew steadily weaker, and Rome eventually had to abandon Britain altogether. The native Britons at first invited Saxons from the European mainland to assist them as mercenaries, but the Saxons began to displace the native Britons.

The armaments of the Saxons included spears (pikes), bows and arrows, and defensive armor (mail-coats and helmets).<sup>43</sup> The fact that they wore metal armor on their bodies indicates that the Saxons were a people skilled in metallurgy, not ignorant nomads. Their use of the bow and arrow and pikes for offensive weapons, and their use of mail armor for defense attests to their Parthian origin. In chapter eight the Parthians were described as having a light cavalry which fought the Romans with bows and arrows, and a heavy cavalry which charged with long pikes (spears). The heavy cavalry (and their horses) were clad with mail armor and metal helmets. The Saxons, while retaining traditional Parthian weaponry, had to fight on foot instead of on horseback. The horses were needed for hauling their families and possessions, and may have been eaten during the privations of migration. The initial Saxon dependence on piracy or hiring out as mercenaries indicates a measure of desperation on their part to support and feed their families (typical of a migrating nation).

The migratory experience of the various peoples leaving Parthia and Asia for Armenia and Europe was not pleasant. They were in dire need of new homelands to grow food, build homes, etc. While Armenia and the historically Scythian areas around the Black Sea would have been hospitable, there was not nearly

enough room in those areas to support the masses of people displaced by the fall of the Parthian Empire.

These migrations took place at the speed of an oxcart, and took decades or centuries to accomplish. These migrating people needed to stop periodically to grow crops, hunt game or steal from other nations to feed their families. Undoubtedly, a large percentage of the elderly and the infirm died along the way. Wars (with native populations or each other) would have caused more casualties. Since the number of mouths to feed was at times greater than the food which was available, some starved. During severe shortages, they may have had to eat their horses, livestock, and seed grains. A nation on the move has few options. If it cannot obtain food peacefully, it has no choice but to take it by warfare or piracy from someone else. If its people have success in warfare, they can prosper for a time. However, if it displaces another nation, that other nation must then look for a weaker nation to displace. Some tribes had to accept mercenary service to other nations in order to feed their own people. A tribe could think it had found security in a new location only to be dislodged by a stronger tribe moving into their area. It was a difficult time, as many nations and tribes were migrating and jostling each other for living space.

While some Gothic outposts had long existed in Northern Europe,<sup>44</sup> the Goths were principally located in the Black Sea region when they began to invade the Roman Empire. At the beginning of the third century A.D., they were divided into the Ostrogoths (or Eastern Goths) and the Visigoths (or Western Goths). These two Gothic groups lived on each side of the Dniester River on the shores of the Black Sea.<sup>45</sup>

The Goths, Germans, Saxons, etc. have been collectively referred to as Teutonic people. Henry Bradley, whose book, *The Goths*, was published in Great Britain in the late nineteenth

century, wrote:

*"The Gothic language...is very much like the oldest English, though it is still more like the language that was spoken by the ancestors of the Swedes and Norwegians. There is little doubt that in the first century all the Teutonic peoples could understand one another's speech, though even then there must have some differences of dialect, which grew wider as time went on...the old Teutonic speech...developed into the different languages which we call English, German, Dutch, Swedish and Danish"*<sup>46</sup>

These tribes separated as they spread over Europe, and their Teutonic ("Gothic") dialects developed into distinct national languages. The original Teutonic or Gothic speech gradually fell into disuse and was last recognizable in its original form in the Crimea in the sixteenth century (the original Black Sea region from which they poured into Europe).<sup>47</sup>

There is evidence that the word "Goth" comes from the Gothic word "Guth," which meant "God."<sup>48</sup> The consonants of both **Goth** and **Guth** are "**G-TH**." Both words have identical consonants, supporting the concept that we are dealing with the same root word. Also, languages descended from the Gothic language (i.e. English, German) use words descended from the word "Goth" or "Guth" to describe the deity ("God", "Gott"). Since the descendant words still directly refer to the deity, there is every reason to believe the antecedent Gothic word did as well.

In chapter six it was noted that Col. J. C. Gawler, an official of the British Government in the nineteenth century, in quoting an book by M. Sailman (written in 1818) entitled *Researches in the*



*East; an Important Account of the Ten Tribes*, wrote:

*"It states on page 25, that 'on the authority of several Armenian historians, the ten tribes passed into Tartary.' It also quotes Ortellius, who, it says, 'in his description of Tartary, notes the kingdom of Arsareth, **where the ten tribes retiring...took the name of Gauthei' because, he says, they were very jealous of the glory of God.**"*<sup>49</sup>

(Emphasis added.)

This record that the Israelites, when fleeing into the Black Sea region from the Assyrians, took the name "Gauthei" out of a zeal for God argues that the Gauthei (or Goths) did name themselves after God. Since the Goths lived in the same region in which the term "Gauthei" originated, it follows that the term "Goth" was a more recent form of the word "Gauthei." Bradley also cites Gothic literature in which is found the word:

*"Gut-thiuda, [meaning] 'people of the Goths.'*  
*The word **thiuda** is the same as the Old-English **theod**, meaning people..."*<sup>50</sup>

There is good reason to conclude that the Goths considered themselves to be the "people of God." Once it is understood that they were the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, this becomes a logical terminology as their ancestors (the Israelites) literally were the "people of God."

The Gothic people, according to Jordanes (a Gothic historian of the sixth century), had migrated through **Scythia**. Jordanes describes how the Goths arrived in Europe as follows:

*"the Goths...and some other kindred peoples, united into one great body, first wandered...through what is now Western*

*Russia, till they came to the shores of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, and then spread themselves westward to the north bank of the Danube.”<sup>51</sup>*

The Gothic-Scythian connection is also noted by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, which asserts that the Goths “**migrated into Scythia.**”<sup>52</sup> Both the *Britannica* and Bradley discuss the assumption that the Goths migrated into Scythia from the north, out of Scandinavia. However, the *Britannica* expresses doubts about a Scandinavian origin for so many Goths in these words:

*“The credibility of the story of the migration from Sweden has been much discussed by modern authors... [however] so many populous nations can hardly have sprung from the Scandinavian peninsula.”<sup>53</sup>*

How true! While there were some Goths in Europe prior to the fall of Parthia, they were not known for great numbers or strength until their ranks were swelled by the masses of Parthians, Scythians and other Semitic people who fled from the fallen Parthian Empire. Some Goths had settled as far north as Scandinavia, but Scandinavia was not the original homeland for the masses of Goths who pressured the Roman Empire. There is no historical record of massive populations of Goths in Scandinavia before their appearance in Europe in great numbers. The main “Gothic homeland” had been Parthia, Scythia, and the region around the Black Sea.

Since modern history almost completely ignores the history of ancient Parthia’s massive empire, it doesn’t address the pressing historical question of where its hordes of Semitic people went when their empire fell. If modern history gave the Parthian

Empire the kind of prominent attention its position in the ancient world merits, the Parthian origin of the masses of refugee Semites (Caucasians) pouring into Europe would be impossible to miss. We know the Goths were part of the white race (Semites) which migrated in huge numbers out of Asia into Europe. We know the Parthians had a Semitic culture when they exited Parthia (their Semitic culture is what drove the Persians to expel them). Parthian coins and Scythian artwork show their people had white (Caucasian) features. Only Parthia could have provided the masses of refugees which poured into Europe soon after the fall of the Parthian Empire. Yet history texts seem unwilling to connect the fall of the huge Parthian Empire with the arrival of many tribes of white refugees arriving in Europe from Asia almost right after Parthia's collapse. Curious, isn't it?

**The very fact that the Goths risked the lives of their families to seek new homelands in Europe (in spite of military opposition) proves that they had no other choice!** If their former homelands had been available to them, they would not have risked their entire civilian population in this mass migration. The only recently-fallen empire large enough to generate such a mass of refugees was the Parthian Empire. These migrating nations included the descendants of both Israelites and non-Israelite nations who had been their vassals in the Parthian Empire. These non-Israelites included such nations as the old Assyrians, Elamites and Aramaeans.

The history of the ten tribes of Israel has been obscured by artificial gaps in their migratory history. The first artificial gap occurs with the fall of the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel ("the Phoenician Empire") in about 741-721 B.C. Historical accounts imply that these Israelites "suddenly disappeared" into Asia, or became "lost." Yet we have Scythians, Parthians, Gauthei, and related peoples "suddenly appearing" in Asia with Hebrew names

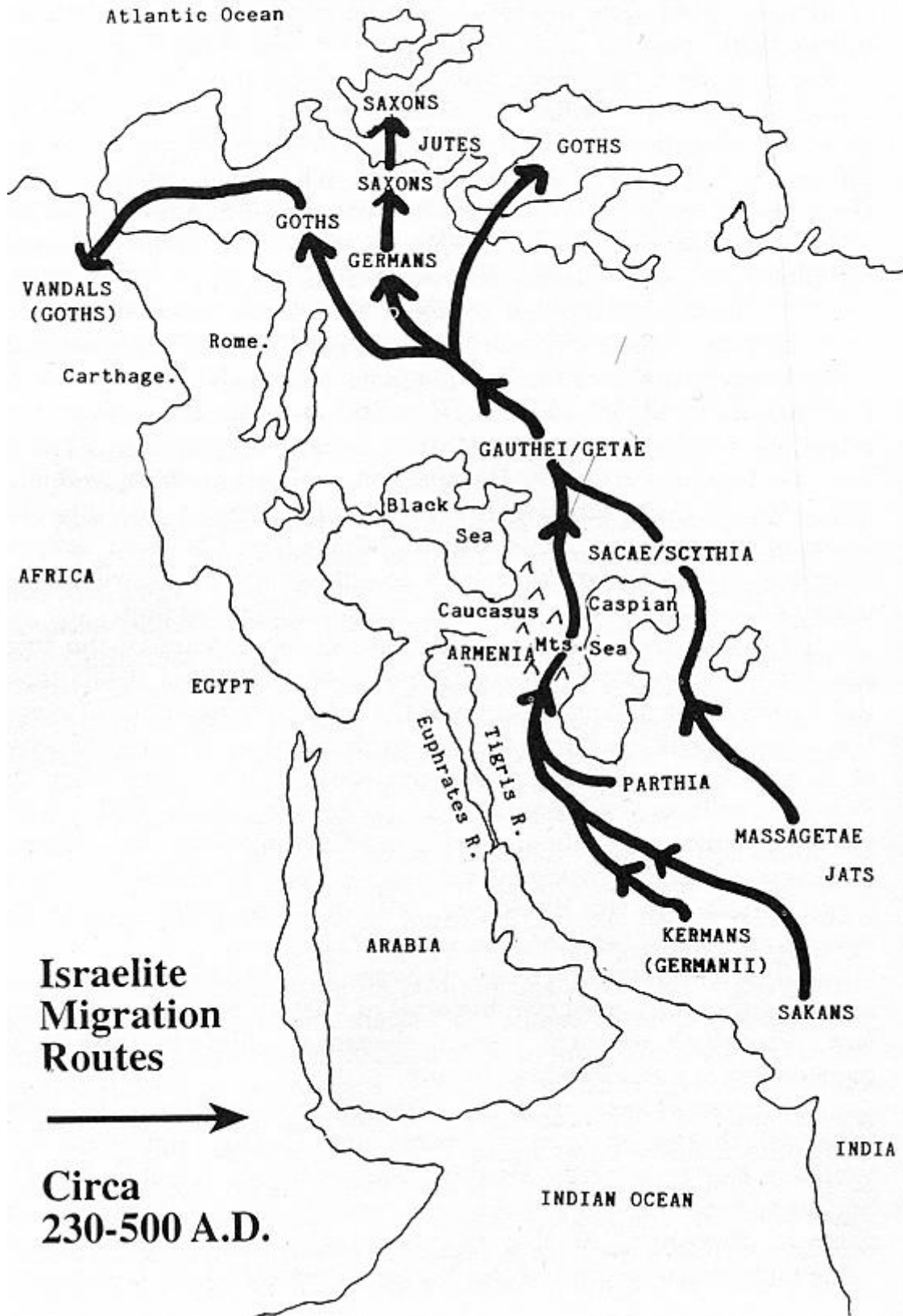
and customs just after the Israelites migrated to Asia. During the early Christian era, an educated Jewish historian such as Josephus did not regard the ten tribes of Israel as **ever** having been “lost” or difficult to find.

The next artificial gap in Israelite history occurs in the third century A.D. when history texts (if they mention Parthia at all) depict the Parthians as disappearing from their Asian homelands, although there are records the Parthians fled to the northwest in the direction of South Russia and the Black Sea. Just a few years after the Parthian collapse, we find the Anglo-Saxons, Goths and related Germanic tribes suddenly appearing in vast numbers as they migrate in search of new homelands, entering Europe from the regions of South Russia and the Black Sea. Is it really so hard to make the obvious connection between these events?

While the classical writers of Greece and Rome had much to say about Parthia, and extensive histories of Parthia were written in the late nineteenth century, twentieth-century history texts have increasingly ignored Parthian history.

Let us now document some striking commonalities between the tribes which formed ancient Scythia and Parthia and those who settled in Europe after the Parthian Empire fell. As noted earlier, the Scythian “Sacae” and the “Saka” who settled in Parthia also bore the name of “**Saxones**.” As they migrated into Europe, they left their name on various portions of the European mainland, such as several regions of Germany named “**Saxony**” and the modern French province of “Al-**sace**.” Also, it was noted earlier that the German word for the Saxons is based on the “**Sac-**” root word that was brought to Europe by the Sacae.

# Israelite Migration Routes (circa 230 - 500 A.D.)



Other Parthian names were brought to Europe as well. One Parthian province was named **Carmania**, the home of the **Kermans**. The Sassanian Persians attacked these people along with the Parthians, so the Kermans also had to flee Persian persecution. Indeed, since the Kermans were one of the first nations attacked by the anti-Semitic Persians, it is logical that the Kermans were Semites. As the "**Kermans**" migrated into Europe with the Parthians, they were called "**Germans**." The name "**Carmania**" was transplanted into Europe as "**Germania**," a general name used by the Romans to describe many similar, tribes.<sup>54</sup>

There is an account of Herodotus which supports the conclusion that the Kermans and the Germans were the same people. Herodotus cites that the "**Germanii**" were a subject people in the old Persian Empire of the Achaemenids, which predated the existence of either the Roman or Parthian Empires.<sup>55</sup> The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in commenting on this passage of Herodotus, states that the "**Germanii**" and the "**Carmanians**" were two names for the same people,<sup>56</sup> linking the Germanii to the Kermans or Carmanians in the Parthian Empire. Clearly, the term "German" originated in the region, and later spread to Europe. As the reader can see, the ancient term "Germanii" was virtually unchanged as it became "Germany" or "Germania" in Europe.

It is this book's opinion that the Germanii or Kermans were originally the Assyrians. When Assyria was crushed by the Scythians (circa 620 A.D.), they were attacked from the north and west. Their obvious option was to flee to the south and east (toward Persia). The territory of the Kermans was located to the southeast of the territory of ancient Assyria. Even today, the name "Kerman" is attached to a city in southern Iran. As the centuries passed, the land of Kerman was dominated by Persia,

Alexander the Great, the Seleucid Greeks and, finally, the Parthians. Since the Assyrians were Semites, descended from Shem's son, Asshur (Genesis 10:22), they had a racial bond with the Parthians (fellow-Semites) that did not exist with any of their previous rulers. The fact that the Sassanian Persians began their anti-Semitic crusade by attacking the Kermans is strong evidence that the Kermans were Semites.

There is a record that the ancient Mesopotamians explored and settled in Europe as long ago as 2800 B.C. A cuneiform record from approximately 800 B.C. was found in the Assyrian capital of Assur which recorded that Sargon I claimed to rule "the tin land which lies beyond the Upper Sea (or Mediterranean)." <sup>57</sup> If the "Upper Sea" of Sargon I was the Mediterranean (which seems logical), the most famous "tin land" beyond the Mediterranean Sea was in Cornwall of ancient Briton. As seen in earlier chapters, ancient mankind was quite able to travel great distances in maritime expeditions, and voyages from the eastern Mediterranean to northwest Europe were easily accomplished. The Assyrians could easily have established settlements in Europe during the time of Assyrian power. However, a more recent overland colonization is also possible.

At its zenith the dominion of the Assyrian Empire extended as far as the ancient territory of Armenia. The Assyrians defeated a number of people in this region, and following the usual Assyrian custom, they deported "great numbers of the inhabitants... while Aramaeans from Babylonia were brought to take their place." <sup>58</sup> The Aramaeans were also Semites (descended from Aram, the son of Shem), and this account shows them being placed in the region of ancient Armenia. Afterward, the region acquired the name of "**Armenia**." It is likely that the name "Armenia" resulted from either the placement of large numbers of Aramaeans in the area by the Assyrians (compare "Aram" and "Armenia") or was

named after the Carmanians themselves (compare "Armenia" and "Carmania").

If the above is correct, it further explains why the Parthians and Kermans of Carmania would **both** flee toward Armenia when threatened by a Persian "jihad" against Semitic people. Both the Parthians and Kermans would have known that Armenia and Europe contained groups of related Semitic people. The flight of Semitic people from the fallen Parthian Empire toward Europe was not an historical accident. Migrations toward Armenia, the Black Sea and Europe were deemed the most hospitable direction in which to seek refuge and new homelands.

The Assyrians were a militaristic, warlike nation. Strabo records that the Carmanians (also named Germanii or Kermans) were a warlike people.<sup>59</sup> Also interesting is the fact that Strabo records that an area of Asia Minor (into which Assyria had moved whole populations) was named "Prusa."<sup>60</sup> When Hannibal the Carthaginian (in the second century B.C.) was defeated by the Romans, he fled to Armenia and was given refuge by a king "Prusias."<sup>61</sup> Were the residents of Prusa called "Prusians?" If we see in their name the ancestors of the warlike Prussians who later settled in eastern Germany, it is possible that they were descendants of Assyrians who had been settled there during Assyria's period of dominance in the region.

The term "German" eventually came to be applied to many tribes of people migrating into Europe. In the first century A.D., the Roman historian Pliny wrote concerning the Scythians in Europe:

*"the name of the Scythians has altogether been transferred to the Sarmatae and the Germans."*<sup>62</sup>

**This is a most important historical observation.** It confirms that many Scythians, as they migrated out of Asia into Europe,



became known as "Germans." The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* notes that the Greek writers Herodotus and Hippocrates regarded the Sarmatae (or Sarmatians) as related to the Scythian tribes.<sup>63</sup> The above sources confirm that the Scythians were not "lost" in history, but became known as "Germans" when they migrated into Europe (we also have seen that many Sacae Scythians were also known as "Saxons" when they entered Europe). Pliny's comment also indicates that the Romans were calling the Scythians "Germans" as early as the first century A.D., long before Parthia fell! It follows logically that when great masses of Parthians and Scythians poured into Europe seeking new homelands, the term "German" would be applied to many of them as well.

As the Saxons migrated into Europe and the British Isles, they were closely allied to the "Jutes." History records that after their entry into the British Isles, they settled in Kent, the Isle of Wight and parts of Hampshire.<sup>64</sup> The Jutes left their name (**Jute-land**) on the Danish peninsula of "Jutland." Where did they come from? Is there evidence of their name in Asia? There certainly is, and, even then, we find them closely identified with the Sacae (who became the Saxons).

When describing the Sacae Scythian tribes who migrated out of Asia in the second century B.C. to merge with the Parthian Empire, George Rawlinson notes that the greatest tribe, the Massagetae, was also named the "great Jits, or Jats."<sup>65</sup> These migrating Sacae (or Saka) gave their name to the Parthian province of Sacastan and to the Saka kingdoms of Northwest India. The term "Jat" has survived as a caste-name in Northwest India into modern times, attesting to the ancient dominance of the Jats in that region. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* gives their origin as being either with the "Getae of Herodotus... [or] Scythians or Indo-Scythians."<sup>66</sup> *Collier's Encyclopedia* adds that

"They are believed to be descended from the Saka or Scythians, who moved into India in a series of migrations between the second century B.C. and the fifth century A.D." <sup>67</sup> As discussed in a previous chapter, the Massagetae tribe of Sacae were most likely the descendants of the Israelite tribe of Manasseh, and the suffix "-getae" indicates a common origin with the "Getae" of the Black Sea region.

Many of the Saka (Sacae) migrating to Europe became known as Saxons. However, one tribe retained the Indo-Scythian term "Jat" as they migrated into Europe, becoming known as the "Jutes." Since the Jats were closely linked to the Sacae in Asia, we would expect to find them closely linked to the Saxons after they migrate into Europe. Note that the consonants of Jats and Jutes are identical: "Jat" and "Jute."

As can be seen, the Indo-Europeans who migrated from Asia into Europe in the aftermath of Parthia's fall included many different nations and tribes. Another such tribe were the **Alans** (or **Alani**), who were first recorded in Asia near the Caspian Sea in the first century A.D., <sup>68</sup> and later penetrated toward the region of the Caucasus and the Danube River. They have been called "half-caste Scyths," and many **Alani** followed the Vandals into Europe. <sup>69</sup> *Collier's Encyclopedia* observes that the Alani for a time established a kingdom of their own in Portugal. <sup>70</sup>

To sum up, prior to the fall of the Parthian Empire, we find many Semitic tribes living within its borders and in the Scythian regions of South Russia. Many of these tribes (the **Sacae**, **Saka** or **Saxa**), **Kermans** (**Germanii**), **Jats**, and **Alani** migrated out of Asia into Europe via the Caucasus and the Black Sea region of the **Getae** (or **Gauthei**) after Parthia's fall. In Europe, many of these migrating tribes were called the **Saxons**, **Germans**, **Jutes**, **Alani** and **Goths**. The Asian origin of these tribes is readily apparent.

Now let us examine the historical record of how these migrating tribes from Asia conquered Europe and the Roman Empire. As the reader will see, this period of history appears in a much different light when told from the Gothic, instead of the Roman, viewpoint.

Soon after Parthia fell in 226 A.D., the Goths near the Black Sea became incredibly numerous and were compelled to expand their territory in the direction of Europe. Clearly, the sudden increase in the number of Goths was due to masses of Parthian refugees spilling into their region. Thomas Burns, in *A History of the Ostrogoths*, notes that:

***"Around the middle of the third century...the struggle for hegemony on the lower Danube produced the first lasting Gothic coalition...an early...Dacian confederacy, including some Goths, was gradually replaced by an alliance dominated by Goths."***<sup>71</sup>  
(Emphasis added.)

Burns also notes that Gothic power had grown so strong by 238 A.D. that the Romans began making cash payments to the Goths. He describes the Roman action as follows:

*"Although the Goths lived at some distance from the Roman frontier and had only infrequent contact with it, their leaders were important enough to receive annual gifts as early as 238 [A.D.], when Tullius Menophilus...attempted to detach the Goths from the Carpic alliance in separate negotiations with the Goths alone."*<sup>72</sup>

These cash gifts were essentially tribute monies designed to deter Gothic attack. Apparently, the Romans did not deem the

Goths sufficiently numerous or threatening to justify these payments until 238 A.D., **just twelve years after the fall of Parthia**. Another historian records that Rome began cash payments to the Goths as soon as “about twenty years [prior to] 245 A.D.”<sup>73</sup> This would bring the onset of Rome’s payments to the Goths back to the timeframe of 226 A.D., the very year the Parthian Empire fell! This supports the contention that the ranks of the Goths had been suddenly increased by masses of anti-Roman, Parthian refugees.

Roman concerns about the growing threat in Gothic territory led to an attempt to “buy off” the Goths with money. Why did Rome take that action instead of using their vaunted military might against these “barbarians?” Prior to 226-238 A.D., the Romans had seen no need to pay “tribute money” to the Goths to deter an invasion.

Rome likely understood that the Goths had been reinforced by Parthian refugees. Rome was aware of Parthia’s fall and the rise of Sassanian Persia. Roman reluctance to fight a mass of Parthians robbed of their empire was understandable. Rome had been defeated by the Parthians in a gruesomely bloody, three-day clash at Nisibis (see chapter eight) in 217 A.D. Some of the “Goths” were Parthian veterans of the battle of Nisibis. This event was still a fresh memory on both sides, and Rome very likely had no eagerness to renew hostilities with angry Parthians. It is significant that Rome tried to “buy off” the newly-powerful Goths on their border. After losing the battle of Nisibis, Rome had obtained peace by offering the Parthians a very large sum of money (tribute). The payment of tribute money to Parthians had gained peace in 217 A.D., so based on precedent, Rome likely felt this action would again buy peace. The Romans were not in the habit of giving tribute money to just anyone (doing so implied inferiority), so Rome’s payment of tribute money to the

Goths as a **first** option implies their perception of an unusually severe danger.

At first it worked. The displaced Parthians were in no mood for war either, and needed time to regather their strength and consolidate it with that of the native Goths. The merger of their populations went remarkably smoothly, given their common culture and ethnic heritage. The native Goths were descended from the "Gauthei," members of the ten tribes of Israel who had lived in that region since the fall of Samaria in 721 B.C. Other Israelites who had settled in the Caucasus were known as "Iberians," while many of the Parthian and Sacae tribes seeking refuge among the Goths were also descended from the ten tribes of Israel. Since this merger took place in the land of the Goths, and the people were all related to one another, the Romans simply called them all "Goths." Yet the Goths were also so closely related to the "Germanic" people who migrated into Europe north of the "Goths" that Thomas Burns describes the Goths as a "Germanic society" and a "Germanic coalition."<sup>74</sup>

The alliance of people which the Goths came to dominate was an "anti-Roman coalition."<sup>75</sup> Since Parthian refugees were swelling the Gothic ranks, it is logical that their alliance would have an antipathy toward Rome (their historic rivals). Also, Roman treachery under Caracullus had led to a severe loss of Parthian military strength, even though the Parthians were victorious. Parthian military losses allowed the Persians to revolt and drive them out of their old empire. Therefore, the Parthian refugees could blame Rome for the loss of their empire. They could further reason that if their empire and homelands were lost due to Roman perfidy, then they should obtain new homelands at the expense of Rome! Rome likely saw this danger and tried to forestall it with more "pay-offs."

When Rome quit paying money to the Goths, the Goths invaded

the Roman Empire to seize land for themselves. Between 248 and 251 A.D., the Goths "ravaged Roman soil, especially Dacia and Moesia." <sup>76</sup> Burns states that there were "at least four distinct Gothic groups roving the countryside in search of easy prey and supplies... [and that] the Goths had to disperse in order to find food." People who are comfortable and well-fed do not hazard their lives in a needless war. Launching a war to find the means of survival is typical of refugee populations, and there were so many Goths that they had to "disperse to find food." <sup>77</sup>

Allowing some time to pass (from Parthia's fall in 226 A.D. until 248 A.D. when the Goths attacked Roman territory) gave the Parthian/Scythian refugees time to raise and train a generation of males to replenish their military ranks. Parthian ranks had been badly depleted by the bloody victory over Rome at Nisibis in 217 A.D. and a series of defeats (ending in 226 A.D.) at the hands of the Persians. Allowing 20-30 years to pass from those debilitating battles allowed time for a generation of young males to grow old enough for a new war with Rome.

In this same time period a native Gothic king died in 250 A.D., and was succeeded by a new king (Cniva) who was not a relative of the old king. <sup>78</sup> This new king led the Goths in an invasion of Roman territory and warfare against Roman armies. From where had this new king originated? To be accepted as king over a coalition of many Gothic tribes, he had to have a firm claim to royal status and leadership rights. Since history records that Parthian princes (Arsacids) had fled northwest out of Parthia along with their people, and since the Parthians had been uniquely loyal to the Arsacids for centuries, and since the Goths were now dominated by Parthian refugees, it is logical that the "new king" who led these Goths against Rome was a Parthian Arsacid. Parthian refugees could easily rally around an Arsacid leader, who would be motivated to provide vengeful leadership

against Rome. The Romans had desecrated the graves of the Parthian Arsacid kings as recently as 216 A.D. during Caracallus' invasion of Parthia. An Arsacid would, therefore, likely be thirsting for a chance to spill Roman blood. Indeed, a lot of Roman blood was about to be spilled.

In 249-251 A.D., the Roman emperor Decius led a Roman army to oppose the Goths. In 251 A.D., he and his army were ambushed by an army of Goths, resulting in the death of Decius and the routing of his Roman army.<sup>79</sup> The new Gothic king had proven skillful in fighting Roman armies. Since the Roman army had fought under the leadership of its emperor, it was particularly motivated to do its best. That the Goths utterly defeated a disciplined Roman army led by the emperor himself is evidence that the Goths were not merely ragged barbarians in search of a meal. If the Goths were simply a horde of undisciplined nomads from the steppes, they would have been thoroughly outmatched by the Romans. Their defeat of a formidable Roman army indicates that the Goths had a strong military tradition of their own. This trait would be expected of an army led by Parthian refugees since Parthia had a long military tradition of its own, a tradition based on centuries of fighting Roman armies.

In drawing the Romans into an unexpected trap, the Goths repeated the Parthian tactic used to destroy the Roman army of Crassus in the first century B.C.

One final point on this battle. The body of the Roman Emperor, Decius "was never found."<sup>80</sup> Just prior to the battle of Nisibis in 217 A.D., the Romans had desecrated the graves of Parthia's emperors, scattering their bones. In 251 A.D., the vengeful Parthian refugees (now called Goths) had the body of a Roman Emperor in their possession. The reason Decius' body was never found is that the Goths probably scattered it in so many pieces

that there were no pieces large enough to find!

One other event confirms this Gothic army was motivated by a desire for bitter vengeance. The Goths also besieged and conquered Philippopolis, a large Roman city (located in modern Bulgaria), **massacring “a hundred thousand persons... [and taking] a vast quantity of plunder.”**<sup>81</sup> This action further indicates a blood feud and the motive of revenge. There is no historic basis for a blood feud between the Romans and the native Goths of the Black Sea, but there was ample justification for this type of revenge on the part of Parthian refugees with an Arsacid king.

Besides desecrating the graves of Parthian Emperors in 217 A.D., the Romans had also treacherously and mercilessly massacred the citizens of Ctesiphon, Parthia’s western capital. Indeed, since that event occurred about thirty-four years previous to the Goth’s massacre of Philippopolis, some of the “Goths” (Parthian refugees) could have personally remembered the slaughter of Parthian civilians at Ctesiphon. This explains a clear motive for the Goths to mercilessly kill the inhabitants of the first large, Roman city they conquered. Their deaths avenged the Roman murder of innocents at Ctesiphon, illustrating the veracity of the biblical proverb: “What you sow, you shall reap.” Rome had sowed death, destruction, and massacre in the Parthian Empire when the Parthians had gullibly trusted Rome’s “peace initiative.” It was now Rome’s turn to reap what it had sown, and its bitter harvest had only begun.

It is important to realize that Gothic invasions of the Roman Empire were not an accident of history. Since many of the Goths were Parthian refugees, the Gothic-Roman wars were simply a continuation of the long rivalry of the Roman and Parthian Empires which had been interrupted by the fall of Parthia and the migration of its people from Asia toward Europe. Now the battle



became a true death struggle as the two peoples were beginning to fight for the same territory. While the final outcome was generations away, Rome would ultimately lose this conflict.

The massive Roman defeat in 251 A.D. opened the door to a tidal wave of Gothic attacks against previously "safe" Roman territory. The massacre of Philippopolis was only the beginning, as the Goths devastated Roman lands for years. Bradley observes that: "During...fifteen years [253-268 A.D.] the history of the Goths is a frightful story of cruel massacres, and of the destruction and plunder of wealthy and beautiful cities."<sup>82</sup> In fact, this was historic justice. What Rome had previously done to many Parthian cities (and the cities of many other nations) was now being done to Roman cities. This indicates two things: that the invaders were motivated by intense hatred of Rome, and that they wanted to depopulate the land of its native inhabitants in order to obtain a homeland for their own nation.

After occupying Dacia and Moesia (roughly modern Romania and Bulgaria), the Goths split into three separate invasion forces. One group occupied the Crimea and sailed across the Black Sea to conquer Trebizond, a second force conquered much of Bithynia (in modern Turkey), and the third army invaded Greece, conquering Athens, Ephesus and other cities. This third force was transported by a great fleet of 500 ships.<sup>83</sup> That these invading Goths possessed technical skills to construct and sail a huge fleet further indicates that they came from a sophisticated background. Illiterate nomads from the inner recesses of Asian steppes would not possess such skills. Indeed, they would likely never have seen an ocean or a fleet of ships! However, Parthian and Scythian refugees, whose domains had bordered the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, and the Black Sea would have possessed such skills. Indeed, Scythian mariners from the Black Sea would have been familiar with the sea-routes to Greece as the

Scythians had long traded with the Greeks via this same maritime route.

In Ephesus the invading Goths "burnt the magnificent temple of 'Diana of the Ephesians,' one of the seven wonders of the ancient world."<sup>84</sup> This is the very temple which had been the site of an incident in the life of the Apostle Paul in the first century A.D. (Acts 19). While the Goths massacred whole cities in the Balkans, and destroyed the temple of Diana in Ephesus, they did not burn Athens when they occupied it, and spared "many noble buildings and works of art."<sup>85</sup> Why did the Goths spare Athens? One likely reason is that the Athenians and the Black Sea Scythians had historically been trading partners (see chapter six), so residual good will softened the Goths' wrath as they entered Athens.

A Greek named Dexippus described Athenian resistance to this Gothic invasion in a literary work entitled the "**Scythica**."<sup>86</sup> **This is significant since it confirms that while the Romans called these invaders "Goths," the Greeks still called them "Scythians."** The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* lists the Greek spelling of Scythica as beginning with the consonants "**S-k**," and states: the Scythica was "a history of the wars of Rome with the Goths (or Scythians) in the third century."<sup>87</sup>

The Greeks still recognized the Goths as being **Saka** (or **Sacae**) Scythians. In other words, these Goths were still bearing the name of **Isaac**, a Hebrew forebear of the ten tribes of Israel, as were the Saxons (or **Sachse**) who were invading northwest Europe. Genesis 21:12 and 48:16 prophesied that Isaac's descendants would be known by his name. The ten tribes of Israel, even after a millennium in Asia, were still bearing the name of Isaac as they invaded Europe.

The Goths' success could have been greater, but their individual tribes were not cohesive. They fought among themselves, and

one tribe even switched sides and joined the Romans. In the confusion many Goths withdrew from Greece, returning to the area of the Danube River. However, another force of Goths invaded another part of Rome's empire (Asia Minor). Bradley describes it as follows:

*"Through the Black Sea and the Hellespont sailed a vast fleet, conveying an army **numbering 300,000 warriors, accompanied by their wives and children.**"*<sup>88</sup> (Emphasis added.)

That this army **brought their wives and children along** confirms that they were a nation of refugees in search of a new homeland. Only a refugee army deprived of its homeland would bring its families along to a war. With family members counted, this mass of refugees could have easily numbered over a million people. That they were transported by a naval fleet is a testimony to their technical skills, as it would take thousands of vessels to accomplish the task. Emboldened by previous Gothic victories over the Romans, they expected more of the same. They would be bitterly disappointed. This mass of Goths were defeated by the Romans in a series of battles in the interior of modern Turkey. The Goths lost 50,000 men in a single battle, thousands more were sold into slavery or impressed into the Roman army, and the survivors retreated to the Balkans.<sup>89</sup>

Goths were generally recorded as being tall, blue-eyed blondes with fair complexions.<sup>90</sup> Clearly, they were members of the white (Caucasian) race. While the term "Caucasian" is not a scientific name for the white races, the term accurately reflects the historic fact that many tribes of white nations migrated through the Caucasus Mountains as they moved from Asia to Europe in search of new homelands. However, one major white tribe remained in Asia for a while. These holdouts were the Ephthalites

(or “Nephthalites”), who remained in Asia in considerable force until at least the sixth century A.D. While the Ephthalites were called Huns, they were referred to as the “White Huns” because they were fair-skinned people of the white race,<sup>91</sup> not Tartars as were the other Huns.<sup>92</sup>

In chapter eight, it was documented that the Nephthalites were undoubtedly the Israelite tribe of **Naphtali** which went into Asia in 741 B.C. as captives of the Assyrians. Since the tribe of Naphtali did not go into captivity in a piecemeal fashion, but rather in one complete mass (II Kings 15:29), they retained their original Israelite tribal name longer than the other tribes.

The Ephthalites waged war on the Sassanian Persians (which was natural since the Ephthalites were kinsmen of the Parthians and Scythians). As late as 484 A.D., the Ephthalites defeated the Persians and extended their control into India, establishing a capital at **Sakala** (which bore the name of Isaac).<sup>93</sup> The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* cites the Greek writer, Procopius, as stating the Ephthalite Huns were “far more civilized than the Huns of Attila.”<sup>94</sup>

Ephthalite power in Asia was not broken until 557 A.D. when they were beaten by the Persians and Turks. Perhaps some were absorbed by nearby tribes, but the Ephthalites, as a whole, simply disappeared from Asia. Where did they go? They were likely pushed toward Europe, arriving in a later migration. This would make the tribe of Naphtali one of the first to go into Asia and the last to leave it. We will attempt to identify their modern descendants in chapter eleven.

Returning to the Goths, they seemed content to coexist with the Romans for a time, building a large empire of their own under an Ostrogoth king known as Ermanaric. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states his empire ranged “from the Danube to the Baltic and from the Don to the Theiss.”<sup>95</sup> This would include the

region of Eastern Europe from the Baltic to the Black Sea and from Hungary into southern Russia. He reigned during 350-376 A.D., but his "empire" was short-lived as it was overwhelmed by invading Huns from the east.

While Ermanaric's brief empire was huge, it did not include all the Goths. Ermanaric ruled the Ostrogoths, while Bradley observes that "During this time [Ermanaric's rule], **the Visigoths appear to have been practically independent, divided into separate tribes ruled by their own 'judges.'**"<sup>96</sup> The Visigoths' custom of having tribal chieftains serve as "judges," is reminiscent of the pre-dynastic period in ancient Israel when the tribes of Israel were ruled by tribal elders and when the Israelites' leaders were called "judges."

Bradley also adds the following concerning the customs for selecting Gothic kings:

*"Down to this time, the Gothic kings seem to have been chosen by free elections from any of the noble families..."*<sup>97</sup>

In other words, the Goths selected their kings according to the Parthian tradition! As seen in an earlier chapter, Parthian kings were elected from a family of nobles who were all Arsacids. The king could be elected from any of the Arsacid nobles. That the Goths had continued Parthia's custom of electing a king from eligible nobles further supports their identification as Parthian refugees. This also would illustrate that God was still enforcing his covenant with David that his descendants would always have members ruling over "the House of Israel" (the ten tribes of Israel) wherever they went.

In the fourth century A.D. many Goths became Christians due to the efforts of a Gothic missionary named Wulfila, who even developed a Gothic Bible.<sup>98</sup> Wulfila was a member of the Arian

branch of Christianity, and the fact that the Goths became Arian Christians eventually led to more strife and warfare with the Romans (whose Christians regarded Arian Christians as heretics).

In 410 A.D., the Visigoths under Alaric conquered and occupied the city of Rome. Many people have the impression that the Roman Empire at this time was the last redoubt of western civilization, and that Rome's conquerors were all uncivilized "barbarians." As we shall see, this version of history has resulted from uncritically incorporating Roman propaganda into history books. The truth is considerably different.

Alaric was a Visigoth noble from a "princely family"<sup>99</sup> who had originally served in Rome's army leading Goths in Rome's service. When a new Roman emperor abrogated the pay agreements of a previous emperor, these Goths rebelled and Alaric became their king. Alaric conquered most of Greece, and the Goths again spared Athens which paid them tribute money and gave Alaric a banquet! Alaric was even made a military governor by the emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire at Constantinople. Alaric invaded Italy in 400 A.D., but was repulsed two years later when his Christian Goths were observing Easter Sunday and falsely assumed that the Romans would not attack on that day.

The Romans then made (and quickly broke) a treaty with Alaric. The Romans then expelled (as heretics) some 30,000 Goths who were Arian Christians from the Roman army while Roman mobs massacred the wives and children of these Arian Goths.<sup>100</sup> This heinous crime by the Romans compelled the 30,000 Goths expelled from the Roman army to join Alaric's army. Alaric besieged Rome but left after Rome paid him 5,000 pounds of gold, 30,000 pounds of silver and other costly items. While Alaric's army was on Roman soil, it behaved with incredible restraint, given the Roman slaughter of the families of 30,000

Goths. It is recorded:

*"He [Alaric] was careful to restrain his followers from committing any acts of rapine, and those Goths who were guilty of insulting Roman citizens were severely punished."*<sup>101</sup>

Who were the real "barbarians?" The murderous Romans or the supremely-restrained Goths? However, after more political intrigue and unfulfilled Roman promises, Alaric returned to Rome and finally conquered it. Many histories leave the impression that the "sack of Rome" by the Visigoths was a brutal, unprovoked aggression on the part of the Goths and other "barbarians." **As the above shows, Alaric's Gothic occupation of Rome was provoked by Roman crimes and treaty-breaking.**

In spite of the fact that the Romans had recently massacred the innocent families of 30,000 Arian Christians, Alaric did not permit a general massacre of the Roman citizens. His occupation is described in the two following accounts.

*"Alaric remembered that he was a Christian, and he tried to use his victory mercifully. He told his soldiers that the plunder of the city was theirs, but that no man was to be killed who was not in arms; even of the soldiers, all were to be spared who took refuge in the churches...all the churches and their property were to be held sacred...some of the Roman writers speak with wonder of the moderation of the Goths."*<sup>102</sup>

*"The Goths showed themselves not absolutely ruthless conquerors, and there is no reason to attribute any extensive destruction of the buildings of the city to Alaric and his army.*

*Contemporary ecclesiastics recorded with wonder many instances of their clemency: the Christian churches saved from ravage; protection granted to vast multitudes both of pagans and Christians who took refuge therein... ”<sup>103</sup>*

Since warfare was involved, some death and destruction undoubtedly resulted. Clearly, there must have been widespread obedience to Alaric’s orders for Roman records to comment on their clemency. This is remarkable given the fact that Alaric’s army contained 30,000 soldiers whose families had been cruelly murdered by the supposedly-Christian Romans. Alaric was a Christian who actually obeyed the biblical teaching of mercy and forgiveness. Since history is full of examples of “Christians” doing the most unchristian things to others, Alaric’s actions are exemplary. The above accounts reveal that Alaric respected the tradition of “sanctuary” in churches, and that “multitudes” of Romans were still pagan. Again, who were the real “barbarians”? The merciful, Christian Goths or the murderous, treaty-breaking Romans?

The historian, Henry Bradley, also noted:

*“That the Gothic people had many noble qualities was frequently acknowledged even by their enemies...They were brave, generous, patient under hardship and privation, and chaste and affectionate in their family relations...[T]here is nothing in their history more remarkable than the humanity and justice which they exercised towards the nations whom they conquered; and there are many instances on record in **which Romans were glad to seek under the milder sway***



***of the Goths a refuge from the oppressions of their own rulers...The Roman clergy...were often constrained to own that these barbarians obeyed the precepts of the gospel far better than did their own countrymen.***"<sup>104</sup> (Emphasis added.)

This commentary that the Goths were noted for a tolerant and enlightened rule over subject people is significant as they were exhibiting the Parthian style of rulership. The Parthians were long noted for having policies of tolerant rule over their subjects, allowing freedom of religion, etc. This chapter has provided considerable evidence that the Goths were descended from Parthians who fled in the direction of Europe when their empire fell. The fact that the Goths practiced the Parthian style of tolerant rulership further supports the belief that the Goths were the offspring of the Parthians.

The Parthian trait of religious tolerance was also a Gothic trait. Alaric's mercy toward Rome's Christians and pagans is not an isolated example. Theodoric, a king of the Ostrogoths who conquered the Romans after Alaric, adopted merciful policies toward the Romans and sheltered religious refugees. It has been noted that "religious tolerance was a cornerstone in the restoration of Roman society and the acceptance of Ostrogothic rule."<sup>105</sup>

The Ostrogoths also perpetuated the Parthian custom of extending favor toward the Jews. Far from imposing Christianity on the Jews, Theodoric reportedly stated to the Jews that "we cannot impose religion, and no one can be made to believe in spite of himself."<sup>106</sup> The tolerant Gothic policies even resulted in Jews volunteering to fight alongside the Goths.<sup>107</sup>

Theodoric the Ostrogoth ruled Italy from 493-526 A.D., and the

*Encyclopaedia Britannica* describes his rule as follows:

*"The thirty-three years' reign of Theodoric was a time of unexampled happiness for Italy. Unbroken peace reigned...The venality of the Roman officials and the turbulence of the Gothic nobles were sternly repressed. Marshes were drained, harbours formed, the burden of taxes lightened, and the state of agriculture so much improved that Italy...became a corn-exporting country...Theodoric, though adhering to the Arian creed of his forefathers, was during the greater part of his reign conspicuously impartial in religious matters."*<sup>108</sup>

Does Theodoric the Ostrogoth sound like a "barbarian?" Hardly! **On the contrary, this Gothic king civilized the Romans.** The Goths were not "barbarians" running amok, but rather enlightened rulers who brought "unexampled happiness" and "unbroken peace" to Italy! Roman chaos was replaced by tranquility during the reign of a Christian Gothic king. That he devoted himself to improving the nation he conquered shows a remarkable attitude indeed!

Before Theodoric was born, however, two important events occurred. In 428 A.D. Arsacid rule in Armenia finally ended. Armenia had been a redoubt of the old Parthian dynasty ever since the fall of Parthia. The end of Arsacid rule in Armenia meant there were more refugees in need of homelands. The second event was the Huns' invasion of Europe.

Attila the Hun led a mass of Asiatic Huns and subject tribes deep into Europe, but was stopped in 451 A.D. at the battle of Chalons (in modern France). The force which stopped him was a mixed force of nations and tribes, led by a general named Aetius. Aetius

led “an army of Romans (that is, of Romanized Germans) and Visigoths.”<sup>109</sup> It is also recorded that some Alans fought on both sides in this battle, and that Franks and Saxons fought on the side of Aetius.<sup>110</sup>

In one of history’s most important battles, the allied forces under Aetius repulsed Attila’s Huns. Although these allies are referred to as a “Roman army,” there were few, if any, ethnic Romans in the allied army. Aetius himself was born in Moesia (a non-Roman region near Dacia) and may have had a Gothic or German lineage.<sup>111</sup> The Germans, Goths, Alans, and Saxons who battled Attila were the descendants of the Kermans, Parthians, Alani and Sacae who migrated into Europe from Scythian and Parthian territory (in other words, this was primarily an army composed of the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel).

As the Gothic tribes fought native populations (and each other) for living space in Europe, one group of Goths migrated completely across (and out of) Europe when they crossed the Mediterranean to North Africa. This group was the Vandals. In 439 A.D., the Vandals captured the city of Carthage, making it a Vandal stronghold. The Vandals displayed a remarkable aptitude for maritime skills, building a large fleet and dominating the Mediterranean for about 30 years.<sup>112</sup> The fact that the Vandals had excellent maritime skills indicates further that they were not “barbarians.” Obviously they had descended from a nation which had possessed fairly sophisticated technical skills.

In 455 A.D., the Vandals under Gaiseric sailed across the Mediterranean and conquered the city of Rome. Legends about their destruction of Rome have led to our modern term “vandalism.” However, let us examine two accounts of the Vandal triumph to see whether they deserve their awful reputation. The description of historian Henry Bradley sounds fearsome enough:

*"...The city suffered far more terribly than it had suffered at the hands of Alaric. All the gold and silver and valuable possessions of every kind...were carried away to the ships of Gaiseric. **Amongst the spoil taken by the Vandals was the seven-branched candlestick, and the sacred vessels of the temple of Jerusalem, which had fallen into the hands of Titus when he captured the city.** Many thousands of prisoners were taken to be sold into slavery at Carthage..."<sup>113</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

A second account from the *Encyclopedia Britannica* sounds much milder:

*"He [Gaiseric]...for 14 days, in a calm and business-like manner, emptied it [Rome] of all its movable wealth...There does not seem to be in the story of the capture of Rome by the Vandals any justification for the charge of willful and objectless destruction of public buildings which is implied by the word 'vandalism.' It is probable that the charge grew out of the fierce persecution which was carried out by Gaiseric...against the Catholic Christians. The bishops were almost universally banished, and the congregations were forbidden to elect their successors."<sup>114</sup>*

While this occupation of Rome by the Vandals was more hostile than that of Alaric and his Goths, no massacre was involved, and the city was not destroyed. The Vandals were recorded as being Arian Christians, and had some religious restraints on them (the term "Arian" Christian identified the Vandals as followers of

Bishop Arius: there is no connection between the terms "Arian" and "Aryan.") Also, their banishing of Catholic bishops was a very mild form of "persecution." Many non-Catholic Christians and Jews during the Inquisition of the Middle Ages would have considered themselves lucky to have been "persecuted" so mildly.

Additionally, no tears need be wept for Rome. Much of what the Vandals took from Rome, was in fact, wealth that Rome had stolen from other nations during Roman conquests in preceding centuries. It was also "poetic justice" that the Vandals conquered Rome from their base in Carthage. Punic Carthage had fought Rome for generations, but the prize of occupying the city of Rome had evaded them. However, while under Vandal control, an army from Carthage finally conquered Rome.

Bradley's account states that a seven-branched candlestick and other sacred items from the Jerusalem Temple were taken by the Vandals. Rome had taken these vessels from the Temple of God when its armies conquered Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Since the Vandals were Christians, it is likely that they regarded these dedicated temple objects from the old Jerusalem Temple as highly sacred objects worthy of protection.

The Vandals ruled Carthage for almost a century, and they clearly saw themselves as punishing instruments in the hands of God. Gaiseric, the Vandal leader, reportedly declared that the Vandals attacked "the dwellings of the men with whom God is angry."<sup>115</sup>

We have now discussed three Gothic and one Vandal King: Alaric, Ermanaric, Theodoric and Gaiseric. Notice that all four names conclude with "-ric," recognizable as the Gothic/Germanic root word for the modern German word "reich." Since "reich" means "empire" or "kingdom," this root word in the names of these kings is appropriate.

The name "Erman-aric" appears to combine the terms "Kerman" and "ric," indicating a "Kerman empire" or (in modern terms) "German Reich." The name "Al-aric" appears to combine the old Semitic/Hebrew name for God ("El") with the Gothic word "ric." *Young's Analytic Concordance to the Bible* notes that the Hebrew word "Al" is translated as the "Most High [God] in Hosea 7:16 and 11:7."<sup>116</sup> Alaric's name could then literally mean the "Most High's kingdom" or "God's kingdom." The use of a Semitic term for God in a Gothic king's name further argues for an Israelite origin for the Goths. The name Theodoric is a combination of the Greek word for God (Theos), and the Gothic word "ric." His name, therefore, also can literally mean "God's kingdom." This is particularly appropriate when we realize that both of these Gothic kings were Christians whose rule was gentle and benign. In about 533 A.D. the Vandals were defeated and their dominance in the Mediterranean came to an end. While some were taken captive, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says of them: "the Vandals disappeared from history."<sup>117</sup>

Obviously, these Vandals no more "disappeared" from the earth than did the Israelites in 721 B.C., or the Parthian/Sacae in 227 A.D. The fact that the Vandals "disappeared from history" indicates that they simply migrated so far away from the Mediterranean region that they were lost to the historians of their day. What follows is an educated guess regarding their destination.

The Vandals occupied Carthage for almost a century, possessed remarkable maritime skills, and traveled via large fleets of ships, dominating the Mediterranean for decades. When the Vandals migrated from Europe to Africa, they (and their families) had traveled on a fleet of ships.<sup>118</sup> When they conquered Rome, they arrived in a fleet of ships. Clearly, the Vandals had an established pattern of traveling and migrating via ships.

When their new homeland in North Africa was conquered, it is logical that the Vandals again fled via the sea. The fact that they already had substantial fleets supports the likelihood that they chose a maritime escape route to elude their enemies. The fact that they “disappeared” from Old World annals argues that they migrated to a location far from Old World nations.

There is clear evidence that Old World nations at that time knew the route to the New World. Roman coins from the second and fourth centuries A.D. have been found in Georgia, Texas and Massachusetts of the United States, while a third century Roman coin was found in North Carolina.<sup>119</sup> A British Celtic coin was found in Illinois which, according to Dr. Fell, was “struck in Britain near the end of the Roman occupation or just after the Roman occupation.”<sup>120</sup> Roman occupation of Briton ended around 400 A.D., so this coin could date to mere decades prior to the Vandal occupation of Rome.

In *Saga America*, Dr. Barry Fell describes and translates a:

*“fifth century inscription in Libyan Arabic at Figuig Oasis, east Morocco, recording the flight to find refuge in North America of Christian monks persecuted by the Vandals.”*<sup>121</sup>

The inscription states that this group of refugees sailed from the coast of Africa to a land “where the sun sets in the evening” which is “far away,” and it describes the flight of Catholic North African Christians who were specifically fleeing from the Vandals. Sailing westward from the latitude of Morocco to a distant land will result in a landfall in North America. The inscription includes these words:

*“We were struck by total ruin in the shape of the Vandals, a contemptible race of no*

*consequence...They [the enemies of the Vandals] decided to sail away to Asqa-Samal to seek a livelihood where the sun sets in the evening...They journeyed on...far away to that land...They reached their destination and into the wilderness ventured. The void of surging waves they had overcome by adhering to their plan. Pray for our friends, each one. Bless them O Jesus!"<sup>122</sup>*

This inscription claims the knowledge that their friends had arrived safely in the New World after a long maritime voyage. This indicates that there were return and/or follow-up voyages as well. It was cited above that the Vandals (who were Arian Christians) had banished Catholic bishops from their territory. Therefore, it is not surprising that Catholic monks would have fled as well (either from banishment or fear). The arrival in North America of Catholics fleeing the Vandals offers a further explanation of how the cross and other Christian symbols came to be present in the ancient Americas many centuries before the Spaniards arrived (as discussed in chapter nine). Interestingly, this account indicates that North America was called "Asqa-Samal" in the fifth century A.D.

Indeed, Christian inscriptions in this same North African script have been found in Nova Scotia and California, confirming the arrival of Catholic Christians from North Africa in early America. Dr. Fell translated the California inscription as specifically describing the elements of a Catholic Mass Service.<sup>123</sup> Furthermore, a "prayer stick" with an engraved inscription was found among the Kickapoo Algonquins of Wisconsin. Dr. Fell describes it in these words:

*"...the inscription proves to be the **Kyrie eleison** of the ancient North African Christian*



*mass, rendered in dextral script of the late Punic language of Carthage...the presence of Carthaginian coins in American soil at widely separated localities, and some Punic inscriptions cut on rock, make it virtually certain the **Kyrie** was imparted to the Kickapu tribe by Carthaginian Christians in ancient times...the persecutions under Diocletian (284-304 [A.D.]) witnessed Christians being thrown to lions in Leptis Magna where Punic inscriptions are now to be seen. Perhaps refugees from North Africa at this date came to find peace among the Kickapu people of Wisconsin.”<sup>124</sup>*

Since North African Christians knew the sailing routes to the New World in both the third and fifth centuries A.D., it does not stretch the imagination to infer that the maritime Vandals of the sixth centuries A.D. also could have made the same voyage from North Africa to the New World when it was their turn to flee from Carthaginian North Africa.

The dogma that “Columbus discovered America” has so permeated American education that ancient American inscriptions and artifacts are routinely classified as “Indian” with little or no critical evaluation, as if the ancestors of American Indian tribes were homogeneous. In fact, the American Indian tribes manifested a diversity in physical appearance, language and customs which confirm that their ancestors also had diverse origins. While the following commentary on the cultural linkage of specific Indian tribes to Old World nations is a diversion for this book, it should prove especially interesting for American readers.

The abundant physical evidence demonstrating the presence of

Phoenicians, Hebrews and Carthaginians (i.e. "Israelites") and others in ancient North America has been officially "ignored" by academia. Indeed, some of these ancient Old World Semitic colonies were quite extensive, as earlier chapters demonstrated. For example, an ancient inscription from the first century A.D., found on a stone in Tennessee, was assumed to be "Cherokee" in origin until it was properly identified as Hebrew.<sup>125</sup> Regarding the "Ten Commandments inscription" found in New Mexico, it was easily identified as ancient Hebrew by a "member of the Hebrew and Middle Eastern Studies" of Harvard University, who added that "a number of Hebrew inscriptions have been found in America, chiefly in the southeast, in Indian graves."<sup>126</sup> The fact that "Hebrew inscriptions" are found in ancient American graves indicates that they were actually Israelite graves in ancient America which are incorrectly identified as "Indian." In chapter eight it was noted that ancient historians referred to many of the Asiatic "Sacaе Scythians" as the **Yue-chi**. Interestingly, the name **Yuchi** was attached to an Indian tribe of the American Southeast who reportedly had retained "Hebrew religious ceremonies."<sup>127</sup>

The case of the Christian prayer stick with a North African Punic inscription on it indicates a linkage between the Algonquin Kickapoos and Semites from Punic North Africa in the Christian era. Supporting this linkage is a photograph of a "Kickapoo Indian of a tribe of Algonquins occupying northern Illinois" reproduced in *Collier's Encyclopedia* which shows a Kickapoo Indian with distinctively Semitic ("White") features.<sup>128</sup>

The Kickapoos were a division of the **Sac** or **Sauk** Indians, who lived in the American Great Lakes Region. Notice the perfect match of consonants between the Old World Israelites known as the **Sac-ae** (or **Saka**) and the New World **Sac** (or **Sauk**) Indians. Is it only coincidence that some American Indian tribes

bore the name of **Isaac**, the name borne by Israelite tribes in the Old World? Their name survives in such modern American place names as **Sauk** County, Wisconsin; **Sac** County, Iowa; **Sauk** City and **Saukville**, Wisconsin; **Sauk** Center and **Sauk** Rapids, Minnesota; and **Sac** City, Iowa. Significantly, the Kickapoo Indians (who possessed a prayer stick with an Old World language and had tribal members with Semitic features) were originally a part of the **Sauk** Indian grouping. It seems apparent that Old World Sacae had at some point migrated to the American Midwest, most likely as refugees. Also, Lewis and Clark's famous Indian guide, **Sacajawea**, bore the name of Isaac. She was born a Shoshone, but was raised by a rival tribe, the Minnetarres, who had captured her and given her the name: "**Tsakakawias**." <sup>129</sup> (Emphasis added.)

The Mandan Indians of North Dakota also deserve comment. Their name, "**Mandan**," includes the name of one of the ten tribes of Israel (the tribe of **Dan**). The Danites had a habit of naming things after their tribal name, both in biblical times (Joshua 19:47) and during their sojourn in Scythian territory (i.e. the **Dniepr**, the **Don**, the **Dniestr** and **Danube** Rivers). Their tribal name in the American Midwest could be dismissed as coincidental if it were not for the residual presence of other distinctly Israelite names in the Midwest (**Sac**, **Sauk**, etc.). As Israelites, the Danites would also have been Sacae.

The tribe of Dan possessed considerable maritime skills and was known for its seafaring ways (Judges 5:17). One part of the tribe, the Tuatha De **Danaan**, fled to Ireland via ships when the kingdom of Israel fell to Assyria. Another part of the tribe, which went into Scythia, named four rivers after their tribal name. When the Scythians migrated into Europe with the Parthians, and became known as Goths, Saxons, Germans, Vandals, etc., it was the Vandals who possessed maritime skills, dominating the

Mediterranean for decades with their fleets (indicating that they may have been Danites). When the Vandals “disappeared” from North Africa and the Old World, they likely sailed to the New World in their ships. If the Vandals were (or included) Danites, they would have brought their tribal name with them into North America. The Mandan Indians may have been a remnant of **Danites** among the maritime Vandals who “disappeared” from the Old World in the sixth century A.D.

However, the Mandan Indians may have originated from an expedition of the Danites who settled in Ireland. Hakluyt, a writer of the sixteenth century A.D., related the saga of a Welch prince, Madoc, who sailed to the New World in a fleet of ships **from Ireland** in 1170 A.D., returned to the British Isles, and took a second fleet to the New World to reinforce the colony.<sup>130</sup> Madoc’s colonists may have been Danites or members of other Israelite tribes who then inhabited the British Isles. At any rate, Madoc’s voyages tell us that Old World colonists voyaged to the new World not only in ancient times, but also during the Middle Ages a few centuries prior to the arrival of Columbus.

According to a report published by the Secretary of State of Kentucky in the early nineteenth century, there was a tribe living northward on the Missouri River (reportedly, the Mandans) which was described as being:

***“an Indian nation which was white, or of light complexion, and spoke Welsh...whom they took to be white men in Indian dress.”***<sup>131</sup> (Emphasis added.)

This report indicates that the Mandan were descended from the twelfth century expeditions of Prince Madoc of Wales, who apparently had descendants of the Irish Tuatha de Danaan with him as his ships departed Ireland to the New World.

Unfortunately, the Mandan were exposed to smallpox in 1837, which (according to the *Encyclopedia Americana*) "caused the death of 95% of the tribe."<sup>132</sup> Interestingly, the Mandan were highly susceptible to a "white man's disease" when they were first exposed to it. The *Encyclopedia Americana* account even mentions the possible connection between the Mandan Indians and Welch Prince Madoc, but dubs it a "myth." Such is the strength of the "Columbus discovered America" dogma that any evidence which asserts otherwise is routinely labeled as "myth." [Another possible link to the twelfth century Welch colony of Prince Madoc was the presence in Oregon of an Indian tribe named the "Modoc."]

Whatever the Mandan's origin, their "Caucasian" origin is clearly apparent. Additionally, the plethora of "**Sac**" and "**Sauk**" names in the upper Midwest indicates that some of the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel found refuge in this area in past migrations. Since Israelite names (Saka, Sac, and Dan) are associated with tribes who manifested Caucasian (Semitic) features, an Israelite role in the origin for these tribes is clearly indicated.

Other Indian tribes exhibited evidence of past contact with (and perhaps partial descent from) other non-Israelite nations of the Old World. Dr. Barry Fell wrote that the traditional chants of the Pima Indians of the American southwest include recognizable archaic forms of Arabic. For example, the Pima "rain-chant" tells the story of Noah and the Deluge (in a very archaic form of Arabic) as told in the Koran...not the Bible.<sup>133</sup> While modern Pima no longer understood the archaic Arabic, the chant's content had been so faithfully transmitted from generation to generation that Arabic scholars from North Africa "have no difficulty in recognizing the Arabic origin of these remarkable chants."<sup>134</sup> Further documenting ancient Old World contacts with the Pima

are the existence of two other Pima chants which preserve versions of the Greek myth of Persephone, a story of the Creation, and Aesop's fable of "The Fox and the Crow."<sup>135</sup>

Also, the syllabary of the Algonquin Cree and Ojibwa Indians is traceable to the Basque language of ancient Spain and Portugal.<sup>136</sup> Dr. Fell's translation based on this transatlantic connection was supported by Imanol Agire, a Basque epigrapher and lexicographer.<sup>137</sup> However, American archaeologists (blindly devoted to the "Columbus discovered America" dogma) have dismissed recognizable Old World inscriptions found in the New World as "marks made by roots and plowshares."<sup>138</sup>

In the 1990 edition of the *Epigraphic Society Occasional Papers*, an article by Dr. E. Morgan Kelley of William and Mary College analyzed the linguistic origins and groupings of the North American Indian tribes. He notes "the degree to which the phenomenon of referring to one's tribe as 'the people' occurs among North American Indian tribes," [and] "that the Teutonic tribes of Europe, namely the Germanic and Celtic tribes, referred to themselves as... 'the people' in various fashions."<sup>139</sup> Is there a link between the Teutonic/Germanic tribes of the Old World and some North American Indian tribes? If so, the Vandals (a seafaring Teutonic/Germanic tribe which "vanished" from the Old World) are the most likely link.

Dr. Kelley's article also identified morphemes in the names of the various Indian tribes (names given by the Indians to themselves) in order to classify them linguistically. [A "morpheme" is essentially a lowest common denominator in word structure. One common morpheme identified in American Indian tribal names is the syllable "**DAN**,"<sup>140</sup> the name of the tribe of Israel which habitually carried its name wherever it went. Another common morpheme is the Hebrew/Semitic word "**ISH**," which Dr. Kelley identifies as "the Semitic morpheme for 'human being.'"<sup>141</sup>

Indeed, his article notes that the North Dakota Indian tribe known as the Arikara, combined the two morphemes "DAN" and "ISH" in their own tribal name, which was "Tanish."<sup>142</sup> His article identifies Hebrew origins in the names of the Alibamu, Pawnee and Pequot Indians, a Libyan origin for the Pima people (who called themselves the "Aatam" with "Atum" being the Libyan sungod), and a Semitic origin for the Chumash Indians (Shamash or Chemosh being a Semitic name for the sun-god).<sup>143</sup> Too many Indian tribes' names had the morphemes "Dan" and "Ish" to mention here, but the Twana tribe of the Salishan Indian group (the Flatheads) of the Northwest called itself the "Tuadhu," which Dr. Kelley traces to the Celtic word "Tuatha."<sup>144</sup> This is worth noting as The "Tuatha de Danaan" (the Israelite tribe of Dan) sailed to Ireland circa 720 B.C. and Prince Madoc's voyages to the New World originated in Ireland. Dr. Kelley adds this comment:

*"...a subtribe of the Salishan family, the Twana, called themselves the **Tuadhu**...which is precisely the same as the general proper name for Franks and other Teutonic tribes, all of these names meaning approximately 'the people.'*"<sup>145</sup>

There is an explanation for how Frankish/Teutonic names arrived in ancient America. The Vandals were a Teutonic nation which "vanished" from the Old World in the sixth century A.D. Given their well-developed nautical skills and their precedent of migrating via a fleet of ships, the above words could be the result of the Vandals arriving in ancient America about a millennium before the Pilgrims.

There are even reports that a few native Indians could speak Old World tongues at the time early English colonists arrived. Dr. Kelley adds:

*"Early reports from North America include reference to Samoset, the Wampanoag chief who...greet[ed] the Pilgrims in English, and testimony from Gaelic and Hebrew speakers who claimed to be able to communicate with the natives..."<sup>146</sup>*

Some Old World explorers apparently were present in North America long before any Hebrews, Phoenicians or Carthaginians arrived. Two cuneiform tablets with ancient Sumerian inscriptions were found in Georgia and Montana. Since the cuneiform tablet found in Georgia refers to a historically-known "king of Ur" while the Montana cuneiform tablet refers to a historically-known "high priestess of Nanna," they can be dated to 2042-2040 B.C.<sup>147</sup> The cuneiform tablet from Montana was in the possession of the great Nez Perce Chief Joseph when he surrendered to the U.S. army in 1877.<sup>148</sup>

The above accounts document many contacts between Old World and New World civilizations over a period of millennia. They demonstrate that if the Vandals fled to ancient America, they were simply one of many Old World groups who sought refuge in the New World. Their identity would have been lost as their descendants were gradually merged into various American Indian tribes. However, it is clear that ancient America was known to many Old World civilizations. When Columbus "rediscovered" America in 1492, he was making an initial step in rebuilding the transatlantic sailing routes that were mostly abandoned and lost during the "Dark Ages."

The above digression is not meant to assert or imply that all American Indian tribes are the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel. The Israelite migrations to the Old World happened so long ago that Israelite genes among the Indians would be thoroughly diluted by now. Racial characteristics indicate beyond



doubt that many Indian tribes have a Mongoloid ancestry in common with the Orientals of Asia. However, there is ample evidence that some Amerindian tribes once had extensive interactions with Semitic people of the Old World.

With this our discussion of the Saxon/German/Gothic migrations largely concludes. It is well-known that these tribes eventually settled much of Europe, and their descendants formed the population base of many modern European nations. Their descendants undertook waves of migrations to the New World when the English, French, Dutch and Spanish founded colonies in North and South America. In North America, these colonies eventually developed into the modern nations of the United States of America and Canada.

What is worth reviewing about the Gothic, Saxon and Germanic nations in the Middle Ages is that they exhibited a governmental structure known as feudalism, a system of government which reestablished (and descended from) the old Parthian system of government.

Parthia's feudal system featured a "king of kings" who ruled over lesser royalty and nobles who were autonomous within their local jurisdictions. The same system prevailed in post-Roman, medieval Europe with central kings being supported by lesser, but locally autonomous nobles, dukes, etc. The Parthian king could, in time of war, summon all his vassal rulers to assemble their armies and subjects to support his cause. Medieval Europe possessed a similar system with the armies of subordinate rulers being called upon to rally around a central king in time of warfare.

In Parthia, the nobles, priests, and influential Parthians acted as a check on the king's power. This is similar to the feudal structure of Europe which enabled subordinate rulers and nobles to exert some influence over the decisions of the central king. A

notable revival of this Parthian trait was the adoption of the Magna Carta in England wherein the nobles formally limited the king's power. The similarity between the Parthian Empire and post-Roman Europe has been noted by prominent historians.

Gibbon's *Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*, noted that the Parthian system **"exhibited under other names, a lively image of the feudal system, which has since prevailed in Europe."**<sup>149</sup> George Rawlinson observed that the similarities between the Parthian and European feudal systems were: "very main points, not few in number, and striking."<sup>150</sup>

The Parthian cavalry included armored horses and armored riders with long lances. The armored, lance-equipped Parthian cavalryman were the forerunners of the jousting knights of feudal Europe. It is likely that the migrating Parthians brought jousting to Europe, as one historian notes that Parthian motifs included "single combat between horsemen."<sup>151</sup> The mounted Lancers and Hussars of Medieval Europe parallel the cavalries of ancient Parthia. Parthians were famous for their archery skills, a trait continued by the English in Europe. Rawlinson notes this parallel as follows:

*"They [the Parthians] acquired by their use of the bow a fame like that which the English archers obtained for the employment of the same weapon at Crecy and Agincourt."*<sup>152</sup>

Another cultural trait brought by the Scythian/Parthians to Europe was their artwork. Scythian artwork has been identified as having a major impact on the artwork styles of the modern European nations in the book, *The Scythians*, by Tamara Talbot Rice. She documents that Scythians were settled in eastern Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria and the Balkans as early as 600-300 B.C.<sup>153</sup> When the Scythians (and Parthians) later migrated toward Europe, they were simply migrating in the direction of

fellow-tribesmen who had preceded them into Europe.

She also notes that "All traces of Scythians disappear" in South Russia in the time frame 200-300 A.D.<sup>154</sup> **This directly coincides with the Parthian Empire's fall in 226 A.D., and the subsequent mass migrations of Parthian and Scythian tribes out of Asia into Europe.** She also documents that at the same time the Scythians disappeared from Asia, "the fleeing Goths spread the Scytho-Sarmatian style through Central and South Europe."<sup>155</sup> The migrating Scythians came to be known as "Goths" as they migrated into Europe. That these Goths spread a "Scytho-Sarmatian style" into Europe confirms that they were bringing their traditional Scythian culture with them.

Rice comments that after the Goths were pushed from South Russia into Europe by the Huns in 300-400 A.D., that during 400-700 A.D.:

*"Scytho-Sarmatian style reflected in art of the Migration period in Central Europe and Gaul. It also influences the Viking art of Scandinavia...[and] the art of medieval Ireland and England."*<sup>156</sup>

She also states that:

*"Scythians...eventually affected the art of much of western Europe, permanently marking it with their own individual stamp."*<sup>157</sup>

Since the Parthians and Scythians were related tribes, the word "Scythian" would also identify Parthians fleeing into Europe with their Scythian kinsmen. That Europe became the new homeland of Scythian artwork forms is most important. This cultural bond confirms the linkage between (A) the Scythians and Parthians who "disappeared" from Asia and South Russia, and (B) the

Goths, Germans and Saxons who migrated into Europe from Asia and South Russia, bringing Scythian artforms with them. It is known that Scythian influence affected much of the European continent:

*"It [Scythian influence] can be seen in a flagon dating from the fourth or third century B.C., found...in Lorraine...the bronze handle in the form of a wolf is essentially Scythian in character...Somewhat similar Scytho-Sarmatian trends penetrated as far as Britain. The style was...carried to her shores by the Vikings and...by the more circuitous route across Germany. Once again southern Russia served as the starting point, for when the Goths fled...to attack and overrun much of southwestern Europe, they carried with them...their Scytho-Sarmatian elements...throughout many outlying regions. In this way the animal style was revived first in Romania, then in Austria, then in the Rhineland, whence it travelled...to England. The Scytho-Sarmatian style was particularly marked in central Europe..."<sup>158</sup>*

Numerous examples of Scythian influence on the artwork of post-Roman Europe exist, a few of which are listed below.

*"The Balkan burials...provide a link between Scythian Kerch and Merovingian France...The Goths' fondness for birds of prey played its part in preserving this large beaked, round-eyed Scythian bird motif...Thus **a very early Scythian version..reappears in the Frankish world many years later almost***

**unaltered**...One of the latest..comes from...  
England, on the purse lid from the treasure of  
Sutton Hoo in Suffolk. The treasure is dated  
to A.D. 655-656, and the bird...adheres  
remarkably closely to **the Scythian  
originals**...A resemblance to Scythian art can  
[be found] on the Scythian-looking beasts  
decorating the clay flask found at  
Matzhausen, now in Berlin...but **the likeness  
appears at its most striking in a group of  
eleventh-century Saxon stone slabs**. One  
of these, originally in St. Paul's  
churchyard...**shows a stag of wholly  
Scythian character. Its pose had not  
greatly altered in the fifteen hundred  
years which had elapsed since the  
Scythians first made the motif their  
own.**"<sup>159</sup> (Emphasis added.)

None of the above is surprising once it is realized that the Goths, Saxons, Germans, Jutes and other tribes who settled post-Roman Europe were the descendants of the Gauthei, Sacae, Kermans, Jats and other related tribes from Scythia and Parthia who migrated into Europe from Asia. That these Caucasian tribes brought Scythian artforms with them further confirms that they were the descendants of the Scythians (and their Parthian kinsmen).

It is very unusual that a single dynasty, the Arsacids, ruled over Parthia's empire from beginning to end. This striking continuity occurred because God was faithfully implementing his promise about David's descendants. When Parthia fell, history records the Arsacids fled northwest (toward Europe) along with the rest of Parthia's refugees. As Parthia's refugees dispersed into Europe, it

is likely that they followed Arsacid princes, dispersing the Arsacid bloodline throughout Europe. Over the centuries intermarriage among the rulers and nobility of Europe's kingdoms would have resulted in the Arsacid bloodline being preserved in many of Europe's dynasties. In this manner God has kept his promise into modern times that David's descendants would serve as kings over the ten tribes' descendants. While the role of European royalty is now largely ceremonial, their presence in a few nations still fulfills the promise of God that King David's descendants would remain in royal positions in Israelite nations until the Messianic kingdom is established on earth (Genesis 49:10). As discussed in chapter nine, Revelation 19:16 prophesies that Jesus Christ will inherit the Arsacid throne (i.e. become "King of Kings") at his second coming.

Discussed in chapter four was the migration of a band of Jews to Ireland after Judah fell in the sixth century B.C. Led by Jeremiah, this band of Jews did not go into eastern captivity, but traveled westward into Egypt. It included the prophet Jeremiah, his scribe, Baruch, and "the king's daughters," direct descendants of King David (Jeremiah 43:5-7). At least one of King Zedekiah's daughters accompanied Jeremiah and Baruch to ancient Ireland where she married an Irish king, continuing David's bloodline over Israelites in Ireland. Jeremiah reportedly brought a number of prominent artifacts from ancient Israel with him, including David's Harp, which became prominent in the emblems and heraldry of Ireland.<sup>160</sup> The offspring of this union included dynastic lines in Ireland, Scotland and Great Britain, and Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain is a direct descendant of this dynastic line. A chronological listing of all the Davidic kings from King Zedekiah to Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain is found in the book, *Jacob's Pillar*,<sup>161</sup> by E. Raymond Capt.

Therefore, when Judah fell, God's promise that David's

descendants would rule over the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel was kept in both Europe and Asia. When the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel migrated into Europe (led by descendants of Arsacid rulers), and the royal houses of the British Isles and mainland Europe intermarried, the two royal bloodlines of King David were reunited. **The fact that God has, over three millennia, kept his promise about maintaining David's dynasty over the tribes of Israel until Jesus Christ returns, confirms that God has guided human events into modern times to fulfill his promises. It also follows that one can locate the ten tribes of Israel throughout history by locating those nations which had David's descendants as rulers!**

When the Celtic people of Europe were displaced, and absorbed by Saxons, Germans, and Goths, this event actually resulted in a merger of the two bodies of Israelites who had been separated for a millennium. The Israelites who migrated to Europe after the fall of Parthia were accompanied by other Semitic people (Assyrians, Elamites, etc.) who had formerly lived as their subjects in the Parthian Empire. Therefore, the Caucasians who settled post-Roman Europe were a mixture of Israelite and non-Israelite people. This fulfilled another prophecy in Hosea 8:8 which stated:

*"Israel is swallowed up: now shall they be among the Gentiles..."*

Hosea prophesied that the tribes of Israel would be "among the Gentiles" as well as greatly multiplied in population (Hosea 1:10) after their captivity. This was fulfilled in Parthian/Scythian times as well as during their migrations into Europe since the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel were dwelling with and among non-Israelite nations. Indeed, the Israelites (even though they retained Israelite names and customs) were reckoned by

many to actually be “Gentiles.”

Chapter eleven will identify the tribes of Israel in the modern world, using both biblical and secular evidence. The Bible has specific prophetic clues about the characteristics of each of the twelve tribes of Israel in a period called the “latter days.” In some cases, these prophecies have been precisely fulfilled in our modern world. These dramatic fulfillments affirm that there is a Living God who has actually guided the migrations and affairs of nations in order to fulfill biblical prophecies.



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## 11. The Tribes of Israel in the Modern World

This chapter presents a double challenge. The first challenge involves specifically identifying the tribes of Israel among the nations of the modern world, based on biblical prophecy and the individual characteristics of modern nations. While this may seem daunting enough, the weight of evidence contained in preceding chapters and the clarity of biblical prophecies about many of the Israelite tribes in the latter days actually makes this the easier of the two challenges. The second challenge lies in presenting the evidence identifying the modern tribes of Israel. While truth should ideally stand on its own merits, the fact remains that truth must be presented to a world with many political and emotional sensitivities. In order to identify the tribes of Israel in the modern world, it is necessary to examine various ethnic and national characteristics in light of biblical prophecies and narratives about the tribes of Israel.

It is important to realize that identifying the tribes of Israel in the modern world imparts no sense of racial superiority to the nations so identified. This book expressly disassociates itself from any effort or intent to convey a sense of racial superiority to the modern nations of the tribes of Israel. While it is true that God worked almost exclusively with the Israelite tribes during Old Testament times, the New Testament "leveled the playing field" for all races and ethnic groups. For example, Galatians 2:11-14 records that the Apostle Paul openly chastened the early Galatian church (as well as Peter, his fellow apostle) for dividing into racially separate fellowship groups.

In Matthew 28:19 Jesus Christ told his followers:

*"Go you therefore, and **teach all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."*

Jesus Christ clearly presented himself as an “equal-opportunity Savior” for all nations and ethnic groups. Any attempt to use the Bible to construct a message of “racial superiority” misrepresents the Bible!

Having said the above, however, there are many biblical promises and prophecies which pertain only to Israelite nations. Since the New Testament did not annul these unique blessings and prophecies, they are still in effect. Indeed, Jesus Christ stated in Matthew 5:17:

*“I am not come to destroy the law, **or the prophets.**”*

Jesus made it very clear his ministry would not “destroy” (or annul) Old Testament prophecies. Therefore, Jesus Christ affirmed the binding nature of Old Testament prophecies and promises concerning the tribes of Israel.

Those people (and nations) who rediscover their Israelite “roots” have every right to a sense of wholesome pride in their heritage and forefathers’ accomplishments throughout history. The Israelite heritage through history reaches far beyond the accomplishments of a few biblical heroes in the ancient kingdoms of Israel and Judah. As the reader now knows from previous chapters, this Israelite heritage includes the histories of Carthage, Parthia, Scythia, the Saxons, the Celts, the Goths, etc. The Bible has specific prophecies about the tribes of Israel in its prophecies about the “latter days.” However, there are no nations in the modern world called “Manasseh,” “Ephraim,” “The House of Israel,” “Assyria,” etc., yet the Bible uses those names to describe nations in “latter day” prophecies. Therefore, we must identify which modern nations have descended from those ancient nations before we can accurately apply biblical prophecies to the modern world. This chapter will conclude this



book's narrative about the tribes of Israel by offering identifications for each tribe in the modern world. The second book in the series will examine "latter day" prophecies in light of this chapter's identifications of the Israelite nations.

It is likely that most readers of this book already are persuaded that we are now living in the biblically-prophesied "latter-days." Many books (by authors in many Christian denominations) have been written documenting the evidence that we are living in the latter days. However, for those readers not familiar with biblical prophecies about the latter days, a few of the major ones will be briefly discussed.

One major prophecy is found in Zephaniah 2:1-7 which specifically prophesied that a Jewish nation would be reestablished in Palestine just prior to "the day of the Lord" (the time of God's intervention in human affairs). This prophecy was fulfilled in 1948 when a Jewish nation was formally established in Palestine. Another major prophecy was given by Jesus Christ himself in Matthew 24 in response to questions from his disciples about what signs would indicate his second coming was imminent. One of the most important signs indicated by Jesus Christ was that a grave crisis would occur which could result in the extinction of "all flesh" on earth unless divine intervention stopped the crisis (see verse 22). It was not possible for any warfare or crisis to literally threaten all life on earth until nuclear weapons were invented at the close of World War II. In the post-World War II period, nuclear weapons have become so numerous and powerful that nuclear warfare literally could destroy all life on earth, fulfilling Jesus' prophecy about this latter-day possibility.

Also, Daniel 12:4 predicted that the time of God's divine intervention would be preceded by a great "knowledge explosion," which has also occurred in the post-World War II

period. Mankind has gone from horse carriages to space vehicles in less than a century. The invention of computers and other forms of modern technology have transformed human institutions and societies in an unprecedented manner. Finally, Revelation 9:7-17 prophesied that human weaponry in the latter days would include (A) armor-plated war machines which would fly like "locusts" and generate loud noises in their "wings," and (B) armored, land-going war machines which would "issue fire and smoke out of their mouths." Today's modern jet warplanes and heavy tanks were accurately foreseen in this prophecy from the book of Revelation.

The above prophecies confirm that the modern, post-World War II period constitutes the biblically-prophesied "latter days" which would precede the second coming of Jesus Christ. With this introduction, we can begin our search for the modern tribes of Israel knowing that "latter day" prophecies about them apply to real nations in our modern world.

The Bible is most emphatic that Israel's tribes will be prominent, identifiable nations in the "latter days," and it gives us many specific clues to help locate them. Those who maintain that the "lost ten tribes of Israel" no longer exist or cannot be identified are actually denying and opposing the Word of God. The same God who founded Christianity also made many prophecies concerning the future of the tribes of Israel. They stand or fall together, since both Christianity and prophecies about the tribes of Israel are based on the texts of the same Bible. Indeed, if biblical prophecies about the futures of the ten tribes of Israel can be disproved, the foundations of Christianity (and Judaism) crumble as well since those religions are based on beliefs that the Bible (with its prophecies about the ten tribes) is the infallible Word of God. Conversely, if God's prophecies about the future of Israel's tribes can be substantiated, it provides a powerful

witness of the Bible's divine authorship, and confirms that an active Creator God is involved in the world's affairs.

Where do we begin looking for the tribes of Israel in the modern world? Earlier chapters traced the migrations of the ten tribes of Israel as they became known as Carthaginians, Parthians, the Sacae, Goths, etc. Israelite tribes in Asia, such as the Gauthai (Getae), the Sacae, the Jats (of the Massagetae), etc. migrated into Europe and became known as the Goths, Saxons, Jutes, etc. Obviously, we must focus our search among modern nations which have descended from the Israelite tribes who migrated into Europe. Also, we cannot overlook some of the native populations of Europe as earlier chapters detailed much evidence that many Israelites migrated to Europe in 1100-700 B.C. either as colonists or refugees in search of new homelands.

An overriding guideline for locating Israelite tribes today is the realization that all Israelite tribes have descended from Shem, therefore, they must be located among the "Semitic," "White," or "Caucasian" nations. As evidence of this fact, historical records confirm that one of the tribes of Israel in Asia, the "Ephthalites" or "Nephthalites" (i.e. the tribe of Naphtali), was called the "White Huns," due to their being members of the white race. The "Ephthalites" were one of many "Sacae" tribes in Asia who were named after Isaac. Their related "Sacae" or "Saka" tribes would also be members of the white (fair-skinned) races.

The Goths who migrated into Europe from Asia were described by contemporary historians as being "tall...with fair complexions, blue eyes and yellow hair."<sup>1</sup> That the Goths were blue-eyed blondes makes part of our identification process easier. Almost everyone knows where the blue-eyed, blondes are located in Europe today. They are the Nordic peoples who came to reside in Scandinavia, Northern Europe, and in other nations as well.

However, the reader should not assume that all Israelites are

blue-eyed blondes. To substantiate this point, we need to examine the original nuclear family from which all the tribes of Israel descended. An elementary application of genetics will show that there will be varied characteristics among the Israelite tribes.

The original tribes of Israel resulted from the combination of several different bloodlines. While the twelve progenitors of the tribes of Israel had the same father (Jacob or "Israel"), they came from Jacob's mating with four different women. Six sons (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun) were born to Jacob and his first wife, Leah. Two sons (Joseph and Benjamin) were born to Jacob via his second wife, Rachel. Two sons (Gad and Asher) were born to Jacob and Zilpah (Leah's "handmaid") while two more sons, Dan and Naphtali, were born to the union of Jacob and Bilhah (Rachel's "handmaid"). The account of these births can be read in Genesis 29 and 30, with the exception of Benjamin's, whose birth as a "tag-along" is recorded in Genesis 35:18.

This formative Israelite family was not "one big happy family." It existed in a culture with customs alien to our modern society, some of which accounted for severe stresses in Jacob's family. The history of Jacob's family will be examined because some of its dynamics and the hereditary traits of some of his sons resurface in the prophecies about the tribes of Israel in the modern world.

Jacob was initially victimized by a cultural tradition of the time that the eldest sister had to be married first. He was tricked into marrying Leah, the older sister of Rachel (whom he really wanted to marry). His prospective father-in-law worked this deception by getting Jacob so drunk on his wedding night that he couldn't even recognize his "wife" in their honeymoon tent. Genesis 29:21-27 states that Jacob's father-in-law "made a feast" (no

doubt with much alcohol) on the wedding day before Jacob slept with his new wife, and verse 25 adds that Jacob didn't even realize whom he had slept with until the "morning after."

Imagine Jacob's reaction when he awoke with a fierce hangover, and saw that he had married Leah, not Rachel! This marriage was no "bed of roses" for Leah either, as she knew Jacob didn't desire her. One wonders what words Leah heard from Jacob's drunken lips on their wedding night that were intended for Rachel's ears, not Leah's. Since polygamy was a cultural norm in those days, Jacob married Rachel as well, but this built severe stresses into the family. Can you imagine the kind of tensions which existed in a family in which one man was married to two sisters, one loved and the other unloved?

A second cultural trait of the time was that large families were prized, and childlessness was a stigma. In view of this, the two sisters embarked on a competition to see who could produce the most children. While Leah produced six sons, Rachel was barren for a period of time. To "catch up" with her sister, she had Bilhah, her servant, serve as a "surrogate" mother for two sons which were deemed to be Rachel's children. Leah decided two could play at that game, and soon Jacob was also sleeping with Leah's maid, Zilpah, for the same purpose. Each maid produced two sons, and Rachel finally produced two natural born sons. Leah won the birthing contest, eight sons to four. Genesis 30:14-16 records an episode in which Rachel and Leah are playing "let's make a deal" about who would sleep with Jacob on a particular night. Rachel exchanged the right to sleep with Jacob for a harvest of mandrakes, a plant supposed to facilitate pregnancy.<sup>2</sup> Since Rachel was still barren at that time, she made this trade in an attempt to boost her chances of fertility.

Poor Jacob must have felt like the proverbial "piece of meat." Not only did he have two wives, but he also began sleeping with two

other women as well, at the insistence of his wives! The progeny of these multiple unions likely divided into cliques, based on their maternal origins. There were some very unhappy times in this original Israelite family. In modern terminology, it would have been called a profoundly “dysfunctional” family.

Many readers are familiar with the account of Joseph being sold into slavery by his brothers after Reuben intervened to keep him from being murdered by the other brothers (Genesis 37:12-36). This account shows the offspring of three of the women “ganging up” on Joseph, the offspring of the fourth woman. While Reuben, the eldest, had the honorable intention of freeing Joseph altogether, he failed to follow through with his good intentions. Reuben had other problems as well. He committed incest with Bilhah, the mother of his two half-brothers, Dan and Naphtali (Genesis 35:22). This act created even greater tensions in the family. Two of Leah’s other sons (Simeon and Levi) were “hotheads,” massacring all the males in a village and seizing their wives and property because they mistakenly thought one of them had raped their sister (Genesis 34). The Bible clearly shows that their sister was a willing partner in a fornication, and the two wanted to be married! Simeon and Levi committed mass murder to avenge a rape that never occurred! Jacob’s own actions made matters worse as he flagrantly treated Joseph as a “favorite son,” turning Joseph’s half-brothers against him. Jacob’s family was so “messed up” that their internal problems could serve as the plot of a modern soap opera.

However, for purposes of determining their hereditary traits, the genes of the twelve sons of Jacob were drawn from five separate “gene pools” (Jacob and the four mothers). Many of the sons must have had no resemblance to one another, other than being fair-skinned, and having physical characteristics common to Semitic people. By the time these sons matured enough to marry

and have their own children, the hereditary gene pool of the Israelites became even more diverse. We are not told the marriage partners of all the 'sons, but each of those unions would have added more divergence to the gene pools of the individual tribes of Israel.

Judah, the fourth son of Jacob, married a Canaanite woman, who bore at least three sons. Two of them were so abominable that the Bible records that God himself "executed" them (Genesis 38:1-10). This first Israelite family already included such sins as incest, fornication, attempted murder among brothers, mass murder, and selling one's own brother into slavery to strangers. None of these sins were "bad enough" to motivate God to execute anyone, so we can only wonder at how abominable the first two sons of Judah were to merit being personally killed by God!

Besides having children via a Canaanite (likely a darker-skinned woman), Judah also begat children through his daughter-in-law Tamar (of unspecified race), so the tribe of Judah came to include varied bloodlines (Genesis 38:2-30). Joseph married an Egyptian princess (Genesis 41:45), so the tribe of Joseph would have developed different characteristics than the other tribes, whose founders had taken wives from among the various races living in Palestine at that time. Obviously, the descendants of the various tribes of Israel intermarried among themselves and other non-Israelite peoples during the generations that followed, so the physical appearances and characteristics of the various tribes of Israel would have varied considerably in complexion, hair color, physiognomy, etc. Eventually, when the Israelites entered Palestine and lived in separate tribal regions, tradition and geography made it easier for people to marry within their own tribe, reinforcing the unique traits of each tribe.

Based on the origins of the tribes of Israel, one should not

expect to find all the Israelite tribes exhibiting the same physical traits. Returning to a more modern context, it is understandable that while many Goths (Israelites migrating into Europe) were described as blue-eyed blondes, there were many dark-eyed and dark-haired people among the Israelite tribes as well. Indeed, since blue eyes are a recessive gene trait, there would logically be more dark-eyed Israelites than blue-eyed Israelites.

The whole purpose of examining the initial Israelite bloodlines is to make it clear that when we begin looking for the tribes of Israel today, it is a mistake to look for people that look or act alike. The various Israelite tribes have appeared and acted differently since their very beginning.

Many biblical keys to identifying the tribes of Israel in the modern world are found in a prophecy in Genesis 49. God gave this prophecy about the modern (i.e. "latter-day") Israelites approximately 3600 years ago through the patriarch, Jacob. The first verse of this chapter states:

*"And Jacob called unto his sons, and said.  
Gather yourselves together, that I may tell  
you that which shall befall you **in the last  
days.**"*

The phrase "in the last days" (or "latter days") is an oft-repeated expression in the Bible for the time period just preceding the Messianic Age. As we shall see, these clues do apply to specific nations in the world today, further substantiating that we are in the "latter days," and that there is a God who is overseeing world events to implement his prophecies.

Reiterating earlier guidelines, historical information leads us to look for the modern Israelite tribes in Europe and those nations which were colonized and established by European nations. However, a modern fact must be noted. Since Europe and North



America (which was colonized by European nations) have received influxes of millions of non-Europeans over the centuries, there are many citizens in modern Israelite nations who are not hereditary Israelites. However, as long as they reside in Israelite nations, their future destinies will be linked to that of their “host” Israelite country. Therefore, biblical prophecies are important for all citizens in nations identified as modern Israelite nations, regardless of their racial background.

We will begin with the easiest tribes to identify in order that subsequent identifications will become easier via the process of elimination. The original twelve tribes of Israel actually expanded to thirteen tribes when the tribe of Joseph was subdivided into the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. All the tribes have biblically- and historically-revealed traits which will be examined to the extent necessary to help identify them. The Bible records the positive and negative attributes of the Israelite tribes in a dispassionate manner, and this chapter will examine all such traits in an effort to identify the modern tribes of Israel. We will begin with the Ephraim and Manasseh, the “birthright” tribes of Israel:

### **THE TRIBES OF JOSEPH (EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH):**

Ephraim and Manasseh were the chief tribes of the House of Israel, and the Bible offers considerable information about them. The tribe of Joseph was subdivided into the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (the two sons of Joseph), and they jointly received the “birthright” blessings, one of which promised exceptional population growth (Genesis 48:16). This division of the tribe of Joseph resulted in there being thirteen tribal units in Israel.

Joseph is a well-known biblical personality. His “coat of many colors,” his being sold into slavery and his promotion to be Egypt’s leader under Pharaoh are oft-repeated Bible stories. As a youth, Joseph had dreams which prophesied that he would

become the greatest among his brethren (Genesis 37:5-11), and he was the favorite son of Jacob (Genesis 37:1-4).

Unfortunately, Joseph tended to be naive as he told his family about his dreams (that he would be exalted over them) without realizing that this would offend them. As a result, his brothers developed a hatred toward Joseph, and later sold him into slavery.

After Joseph was exalted to a rulership position in Egypt, he had to overcome his own feelings of vengeance as he tested his brothers incognito. Joseph came to see that the other brothers had developed real remorse over what they had done to him (Genesis 42:18-23), and this facilitated their reconciliation. When Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, they were too scared to speak (Genesis 45:3)! They knew Joseph exercised life and death power in Egypt and had the power to execute them or sell them all into slavery (as they had done to him). However, Joseph mercifully forgave them, and magnanimously cared for them and their families. **This account shows that a merciful, magnanimous attitude toward former enemies was a core personality trait of Joseph.** This trait of being merciful to former enemies also characterized Joseph's progeny, as we shall see.

Many Bible scholars are familiar with the "birthright" promise which was given to Joseph. This "birthright" promise identified which tribe of Israel would receive the extraordinary promises made by God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel). These included: (A) great nationhood, God's blessing of their friends and cursing of their enemies, and the ability (and willingness) to bless the other nations of the earth (Genesis 12:2-3), (B) great population growth (Genesis 13:15-16), and (C) the promise of growth into many nations (Genesis 17:4-7). In Genesis 22:16-18, God reiterated his promise of explosive population growth,

and added a promise that Abraham's descendants would "possess the gate of his enemies." These birthright promises were passed from Isaac to Jacob with the following words (Genesis 27:26-29):

***"God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let people serve thee: and nations bow down to thee...cursed be everyone that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee."***

Immense agricultural blessings were added to this birthright (soil fertility, food surpluses, good climate), and the promise included prominence over other nations. This promise of agricultural bounty indicates Joseph's descendants would live in the earth's temperate zones (which are most suited for agricultural surpluses). In Genesis 28:10-14, God promised Abraham's seed would:

***"spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south."***

This shows that Jacob's descendants would not only have huge populations, but would spread abroad all across the earth. God again reaffirmed the promise of a huge population growth for Jacob's descendants in Genesis 35:11-12, and added a promise that:

***"a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee."***

Significantly, the above promises were not conditional on the obedience of the future generations who would receive these promised blessings. God gave these blessings to future descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob because of the

obedience of those patriarchs. While all of Abraham's descendants would share these blessings, the "lion's share" of these blessings were inherited by the tribes of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh).

In Genesis 48 Jacob (or "Israel") gave these accumulated birthright promises to Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph. They were each to be reckoned as individual tribes of Israel (verse 5), and were presented by Joseph to Jacob for the formal act of passing on the birthright. When Jacob put his right hand on Ephraim (Joseph's younger son) it made Ephraim the primary recipient of the blessing. Manasseh was the eldest son, but Jacob's blessing him with the left hand made him a joint (but secondary) recipient of this birthright promise. Symbolically, this meant that Ephraim inherited Joseph's status as one of the twelve tribes of Israel, but that Manasseh was added as a "thirteenth" tribe of Israel. Jacob (Israel) blessed them with these words (verses 14-16):

*"And **Israel** stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head...and his left hand upon Manasseh's head...and said...**let my name be named on them, and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac: and let them grow into a multitude...**"*

With these words the birthright promises of the Abrahamic covenant were given to Ephraim and Manasseh. The other tribes of Israel were not specifically named as inheritors of the "birthright" blessings. Ephraim and Manasseh were destined to become the most populous tribes of Israel (meaning they would also need the greatest amount of territory for their large populations). **It is particularly important to notice that this prophetic blessing involved the name "Israel" and the name "Isaac" being placed on the Israelite tribes of**

**Ephraim and Manasseh. For this reason, whenever the Bible thereafter uses the term 'Israel' in history or prophecy, it must designate primarily the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh!** After Israel went into captivity, the name "**Isaac**" was firmly placed on many of the Israelites in Asia as they were called "**Sacae**," "**Saka**" or "**Saxones**" in Scythia and Parthia.

In an earlier chapter we saw evidence that Ephraim's clans formed the backbone of the tribes which united to form the Parthian Empire, while one of the dominant tribes of the Sacae Scythians was the Massagetae (Manasseh). Even as the term "House of Israel" included the rest of the tribes of Israel who remained associated with Ephraim and Manasseh, the term "Sacae" was also applied to the tribes of Israel which were led by Ephraim and Manasseh (Parthia and Scythia) while in Asia.

When the Scythians and Parthians migrated to Europe, the names "**Sachse**," or "**Saxons**," ("**Saac's sons**") remained upon them as they settled in the British Isles, but this name also remained on some related tribes who stayed on the mainland (i.e. "**Saxony**" in Germany and "**Alsace**" in France).

In Genesis 48:19, Jacob prophesied that Manasseh "**shall become a people, and he also shall be great**," but added that Ephraim's descendants "**shall be greater than [Manasseh], and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.**" With these words Jacob prophesied that Manasseh and Ephraim would receive the blessing of Genesis 35:11 that the "birthright" promises would eventually include "**a nation and a company of nations.**" Genesis 48:19 specifically foretold the descendants of Ephraim (the younger brother) would become the "multitude of nations" while Manasseh's descendants would become the single great nation.

The modern nations which descended from an Anglo-Saxon

heritage are England, the United States of America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. **These nations have perfectly fulfilled all prophecies about the birthright tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.**

They easily fulfill the prophecy about large population. When you combine the populations of the above modern nations, they are, by far, the most numerous nations of the modern tribes of Israel. They have uniquely fulfilled the prophecy about becoming "a great nation" and a "company of nations." The single great nation is the United States of America and the Caucasian nations of the British Commonwealth (Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand) are the prophesied company of nations. Therefore, the "birthright" prophecies identify the United States as Manasseh, and the Caucasian nations of the British Commonwealth are identified as Ephraim.

Since Ephraim was to be the "greater" of the two, and received its birthright blessing first, we should expect that Ephraim would receive its inheritance before Manasseh. History fulfilled that expectation. Great Britain rose to international prominence before the United States, and was a major international power for centuries before being replaced by the United States in the post-World War II period. At its zenith, the British Empire also ruled over many more nations and a far greater geographic area than the United States ever has. For a time, it was true that "the sun never sat on the British Empire" because the British Empire ruled much of the world! At its zenith, it ruled over Great Britain, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, many Black African nations, Egypt, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Burma, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, eastern New Guinea, and many islands in Oceania. It was without question, the most expansive empire in the history of our planet.

According to the 1943 Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*,

the British Empire once ruled 13 million square miles of the earth's land surface.<sup>3</sup> [And that was before British rule was temporarily extended over Palestine, Jordan and Iraq after World War II!] Britain's navies also controlled much of the world's sea surface as well. "Britannia rules the waves" was a common axiom in Britain's glory days. The British Empire inherited the "birthright" promises of controlling the "gate of its enemies" (strategic "chokepoints" such as the Suez Canal, Gibraltar, and the Cape of Good Hope). British ownership of the Falkland Islands controlled access around Cape Horn between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and its colony in Singapore controlled the strategic Strait of Malacca between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea.

The United States of America (Manasseh) inherited its "birthright" portion after Ephraim had inherited its dominant portion of the "birthright." At its height, Manasseh ruled the United States, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Alaska and Hawaii (which later became states), Cuba and various islands in Oceania. The United States long controlled the Panama Canal, one of the world's most strategic "gates." While the United States is clearly more powerful than Great Britain in our modern world, the British Empire was far greater in a historical sense. While the British sought to expand its empire, the United States has exhibited an "isolationist" tendency in its history, and has not sought to rule a large empire. While the British used their armies to conquer and hold territory, America typically withdraws its armies quickly from conquered territory. In World Wars I and II, the Persian Gulf War, etc., America has exhibited no desire to create an empire out of conquered territory, even though it had the power to easily do so.

The above traits of the British and Americans were also exhibited by the Parthians and Scythians. The Parthian Empire began as a

union of the clans of Ephraim, and Parthia was comfortable with ruling an empire of diverse nations, using its armies to conquer and hold territory. The British emulated this Parthian trait in the time of the British Empire, further cementing their identity as modern Ephraim. The ancient Scythians, however, preferred to live in the "wide open spaces" of the Russian steppe and were isolationist (content to "live and let live"). One of the dominant tribes of the Scythians were the Massagetae (i.e. "Manasseh"). After the Scythians conquered Mesopotamia and virtually the entire Mideast (circa 620 B.C.), they completely withdrew their armies in a few years, disdaining to rule an empire when they could easily have done so. The Americans have emulated this Scythian trait. At the end of World War II, America could have enforced a "Pax America" on the entire earth! It ruled (or dominated) the Western Hemisphere, its armies occupied Japan, much of Europe and North Africa, most Pacific islands and only America had the atomic bomb. Americans, like the ancient Scythians, disdained having an empire. It quickly withdrew most armies from conquered nations, mothballed much of its fleet and returned its soldiers to civilian life as soon as they could be transported home.

Even as the Parthians and Scythians were allied fellow kinsmen in the ancient world, the British and the Americans have had a "special relationship" in the modern world. When Parthia needed military help in the ancient world, the Scythians regularly came charging to the rescue. The British and Americans have repeated this Parthian-Scythian tradition. When the British needed military help in World Wars I and II, the Americans came charging to the rescue! These ancient and modern alliances are no accident. Ephraim and Manasseh are "brother" tribes (with a common culture and language) and their descendants have traditionally acted as "brother nations" in the world.



At this juncture, a few readers may say: "Wait a minute, this sounds like British-Israelism;" however, this book does not espouse that doctrine. "British-Israelism" was a doctrine that developed during the Victorian heyday of the British Empire. It began with people who saw (correctly) that the Anglo-Saxon people were exhibiting the characteristics of the "birthright" tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, and who saw that the Christian British Empire was expanding its power throughout the earth. They then came to believe (erroneously) that the British Empire was (or would develop into) the kingdom of God on earth. This doctrine was discredited when it became clear that the British Empire would never become the millennial "kingdom of God." Although the Messianic nationalism of British-Israelism was proven incorrect, the evidence that the Anglo-Saxons were the modern tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh remained as solid as ever.

Since their initial struggles in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, the British-American alliance has dominated world politics, fulfilling the Genesis 27:29 birthright promise that "nations would bow down to thee." This has been true in both war and peacetime. Many nations have "bowed down" to the United States and Great Britain in warfare over the last few centuries. In peacetime, a map of the immediate post-World War II world indicated that a large percentage of the earth's population was subject to either the British Empire or the United States (either as colonies, protectorates or occupied territories). This British-American alliance was typically merciful to conquered enemies, exhibiting a characteristic of their forefather Joseph. This attribute of wise and benevolent rule was also common among the Scythians, the Parthians and among the Goths who conquered the Romans. The example of America's mercy and magnanimous behavior in restoring the people and economies of its former enemies, Japan and Germany, after World War II is a

marvelous example of this trait of the tribe of Joseph. After America and Britain conquered much of Germany in World War II, the Americans worked around the clock to feed Germans in "the Berlin Airlift" necessitated by Russia's grab for power over West Berlin.

The United States of America may be the most generous, magnanimous, and merciful nation in the history of our planet! Besides rebuilding and restoring Japan and much of Europe after World War II, the USA has poured mega-billions of dollars into nations everywhere (usually without repayment or even gratitude) in the form of the Marshall Plan, foreign aid, the Peace Corps, etc. When natural disasters strike anywhere on earth, American agencies (public and private) rush to the scene to offer aid and assistance (even to enemy nations). When American TV sets show suffering and starving people in Ethiopia, Somalia and Rwanda (to name recent examples), it isn't long before American aid rushes to those affected areas. This world would be a grim place if Americans were not such a philanthropic people. Indeed, America is generous to a fault. So many nations which owe so much to American generosity and help are frequently anti-American in their policies. Americans see this, but simply go on giving anyway. They can't help it; its in their genes that date back to Joseph.

In doing so, the United States has fulfilled the birthright promise of Genesis 12:3 that "in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Whatever America's faults are (and there **are** many), America has historically been "a cheerful giver" to friends, enemies and neutrals alike. II Corinthians 9:7 states that "God loves a cheerful giver," and Proverbs 10:12 and I Peter 4:8 mention a divine principle that "love covers a multitude of sins." Perhaps herein lies the reason why God withholds due punishment from America for its various sins: God "covers"

(pardons) some of America's sins because of its unusually generous and merciful attitude toward other nations.

Great Britain has also fulfilled this promise, but in a different way. When Ephraimites formed the backbone of the Parthian Empire, they ruled subject nations with wisdom, providing an environment of peace and stability. History records that nations fought the Greeks and Romans in order to live under Parthian rule. History repeated itself when the English (modern Ephraim) ruled an empire of many nations, providing an environment of peace and stability. In the wave of nationalism that swept the post-war world, many British colonies were granted an "independence" which proved to be a great curse. Many of these nations had so little capacity to govern themselves that they have been prey for despots ever since.

Besides the above, the birthright promises included wealth and agricultural abundance. This also typifies the United States and the British Commonwealth. It is common knowledge that these nations have a disproportionate share of the world's material wealth. While it is true that some of this can be attributed to English doggedness and Yankee ingenuity, the primary reason is that God (the invisible Ruler) was simply keeping his promises to the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh. God could direct their migrating descendants to land masses which had strategic advantages, soil fertility, favorable climates, and an abundance of natural resources. The fact that the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh didn't grasp their Israelite ancestry did not cancel out God's promises. God was faithful even if Israel's nations didn't recognize him as their primary benefactor.

Even as Joseph dispensed grain from huge surpluses to hungry nations during the seven lean years in Egypt, so the peoples of Ephraim and Manasseh have "fed the world" through vast agricultural production in our time. The United States, Canada,

and Australia are perennial grain exporters. This has been an Israelite trait throughout history, as earlier chapters documented that Israel, Carthage and Scythia were regular grain exporters as well.

Literally, all of the ancient biblical prophecies connected with the "birthright" promises given to Abraham have been fulfilled in the British and American people. That the above prophecies have been **precisely** fulfilled in the British and American nations confirms (A) that the British and American people are the modern tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, and (B) that there has to be a powerful, invisible God who exercises sufficient control of world events to personally guarantee that his prophecies come true.

Earlier Israelite nations and empires also fulfilled many of the birthright promises to Abraham. The Phoenician/Israelite Empire under King Solomon controlled Gibraltar, many land trade routes, the Mediterranean Sea, the Atlantic Ocean and much of the Indian Ocean. Carthage also controlled Gibraltar, the Western Mediterranean, and the Atlantic sea routes to North America. The Parthians and Scythians were land powers, not naval powers, but their strategic location controlled the world's overland trade routes between the continents of Europe, Africa and Asia, and Parthia controlled the strategic "Caspian Gates" which sat astride the invasion routes of ancient Asia.

The evidence that Great Britain (and her "company of nations") and the United States are the Israelite tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh is overwhelming. There are other parallels to examine as well.

When Manasseh received its inheritance in ancient Palestine, it was given an unusually large area of land. It included two portions of land divided in the middle by the River Jordan. Even at the beginning, the tribe of Manasseh preferred "wide-open

spaces." When the Israelites left Palestine, the tribe of Manasseh went in two separate directions. The half-tribe of Manasseh living in Gilead (east of the Jordan River) went into Assyrian captivity years before the fall of Samaria, and migrated to territories east of the Caspian Sea where they became the Scythian tribe named the Massagetae. The other half of the tribe of Manasseh migrated in about 721 B.C. with other fleeing Israelites to a new homeland near the Black Sea (they were also called "Getae"). One historian of the Scythians has observed the following:

*"since all the mounted nomads of the Scythian age spoke the same...tongue, whether they came from the Dniestr [Western Scythians] or the banks of the Oxus [Eastern Scythians], there seems reason to think that...the majority were linked by some sort of racial tie."*<sup>4</sup>

A common language, culture and name (the Sacae) confirms their common origin. Both halves of the tribe of Manasseh found new homelands in the "wide open spaces" of the Russian steppe. When America was being settled, Manassehites were especially drawn to North America because of its promise of considerable living space. When Americans spread westward toward the Pacific Ocean, they migrated in wagon trains. In doing so, they carried on a tradition of the ancient Scythians. The Scythians also migrated via covered wagons, which are described in the following words:

*"The wagons in which the women and children traveled had from four to six wheels. They were covered with felt roofs and the space inside was divided into two or three compartments. Little clay models of these prototypes of the modern caravan have been*

*found in some...Scythian burials.”<sup>5</sup>*

Like the cowboys of the American “West,” the Scythians also “excelled at lassoing.”<sup>6</sup> With their horse riding, lassoing, and “wagon trains,” Scythian culture resembled the pioneer days of the American West (without the six-shooters). Perhaps the power of genetic influence is more potent than generally realized. As in ancient times, the modern Manassehites found their home in the “wide open spaces” of North America.

The original twelve tribes of Israel grew to become thirteen when Joseph was subdivided into the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. Since Ephraim was given its portion before Manasseh, Manasseh essentially became “the thirteenth tribe.” The number “13” has uniquely been associated with the founding of America. The United States of America was born as a union of thirteen separate colonies, with its flag exhibiting thirteen stripes and thirteen stars. The prominence of the number “13” in the founding of America indicates a divine hand influencing world events to appropriately place the number “13” on this new Manassehite nation. Given the fractious history of the tribes of Israel, it is not logical that these thirteen American colonies could have formed a cohesive new nation unless they collectively represented regathered Manasseh. Interestingly, just as ancient Manasseh’s territory in Palestine was divided in half by a river (the Jordan River), modern Manasseh has become a nation with two halves on either side of a river (the Mississippi River).

It is apparent that God drew Manassehites from Europe to North America to found the United States of America (the great single nation of Manasseh that was prophesied in Genesis). God stated in Amos 9:9 that he “wouldn’t lose a single grain [a person or family unit]” of the Israelites as they were “sifted” through the nations, showing that God “kept track of all the families of the Israelite tribes in order to fulfill his prophecies about them.

While Manasseh loves wide-open spaces, Ephraim has a habit of sending out colonies from a cramped homeland. Although Ephraim was the chief tribe of Israel, its inheritance in Palestine was very small. Since Ephraim, like Manasseh, was promised a huge population by God, where did their growing numbers go? As we saw in chapter three, Israel colonized widely in North Africa, Europe and even North America. Because Ephraim's inheritance in Palestine remained small, it had to "export" its growing population to new colonies. As chapter three demonstrated, Israelite-Phoenician colonies bore the Hebrew root word for "covenant" (B-R-T) in their names and coins. Since Ephraim and Manasseh were the "covenant" or birthright tribes, and since Manasseh had more room than Ephraim in Palestine, it is logical that most of the "B-R-T-ish" people colonizing under ancient Israel's banner were Ephraimites. The ancient Hebrew word for "covenant" still forms the root word for the modern English word "British." Since "ish" is also a Hebrew word meaning "man,"<sup>7</sup> the word "Brit-ish" is Hebrew for "covenant man." **The modern "British" people, one of the main "covenant" tribes of the house of Israel, are still known by a Hebrew name which proclaims to the world that they are one of the "covenant" tribes of Israel.**

One of the early waves of Celtic immigrants into ancient Briton also bore the **B-R-T** name upon them. These **Bryth-onic Celts** also included the Hebrew word for "covenant" (**B-R-T**) as a recognizable root word in their tribal name. The Brythonic Celts settled largely in England and Wales,<sup>8</sup> further strengthening the Israelite population of the "**Brit-ish**" Isles. Indeed, one historical source has noted that the Celts were a "distant relation" to the Teutons<sup>9</sup> (i.e. Saxons, Goths, Germans, etc.). The Celts also inherited the "birthright" promise of greatly increased population and expansion in all directions. During the time of their migrations to find homelands for their expanding populations,

they settled in Europe from the Atlantic coasts to Asia Minor. A large portion of the Iberian Peninsula became known as "Celtiberia," and some Celts in Asia Minor merged with the Scythians, becoming known as "Celto-Scyths."<sup>10</sup> It is likely that many "Celts" were descendants of Ephraimites who had colonized regions outside of Ephraim's cramped little homeland in Palestine.

Parthia also had the **B-R-TH** root word in its name, identifying it as the "covenant" tribe of Israel (an earlier chapter pointed out the interchangeability of "P's" and "B's" in some ancient languages). Parthia began with a fairly small homeland southeast of the Caspian Sea, but expanded into a huge empire ruling over many different nations. The modern British Empire also eventually ruled over many nations, even though its homeland in the British Isles was fairly small. While Manasseh is more isolationist, the British (like the Parthians of old) displayed an aptitude for managing an empire of diverse people in a organized manner.

The British can also be remarkably determined in warfare. Their "standing alone" against Hitler despite impossible odds was, as Winston Churchill described it, their "finest hour." A few thousand Ephraimites who refused to flee from the Assyrians withstood a siege of three years in Samaria before succumbing (II Kings 17:5). Chapter eight also discussed a war in which the Parthians emerged victorious by refusing to "give up," despite losing three major battles against a superior force of Seleucid Greeks. Parthia had its capital burnt and its citizens massacred by the Romans after their faked "peace offensive" in 216 A.D., yet they came back to defeat the Romans. In spite of Britain's dramatic post-war decline, some of this old fighting spirit was revived when Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher dispatched English forces to defeat Argentina after it had seized the Falkland



Islands.

Genesis 49:22-26 prophesies the following for Ephraim and Manasseh in the latter days. That it refers to them jointly as "Joseph" shows their fates will be closely linked in the "last times."

*"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall: the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: But **his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob...even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee: and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb: the blessings of thy father...shall be on the head of Joseph.**"*

This accurately describes Britain's Commonwealth and America in our century. The analogy that these tribes are like spreading vines parallels the fact that Great Britain and America projected their power and influence far beyond their homelands. Even though they have divested themselves of many colonies and protectorates, they still occupy most of two continents (North America and Australia), the British Isles, and a variety of commonwealth nations and protectorates. The analogy to water ("by a well,") indicates that the nations of Ephraim and Manasseh (Great Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the USA) will be located adjacent to major bodies of water (i.e., "located on seacoasts").

The fact that Joseph's nations are "shot at" and "hated" by enemy nations is apparent in the modern world. Both the English

and Americans have been envied because of their material wealth and national power. Phrases like "Yankee, go home" personify the jealousy and envy that part of the world has toward the "Anglos." The old Soviet Union worked hard to stir up anti-Americanism among the largely uneducated third world nations by characterizing Americans as "Yankee imperialists."

Genesis 49 also prophesies that the tribe of Joseph will have considerable military strength in the latter days. The phrase "his bow abode in strength" refers to weaponry. This also has been true in the modern world, as the greatest collection of military power in recorded history was in the hands of America and Great Britain at the end of World War II. America has been a world superpower in the post-World War II period with its forces garrisoned in Europe, Korea, and many other places around the world. Even though Presidents Bush and Clinton have steadily reduced the size of the American armed forces, America is still one of the two most powerful nations on earth (the other being Russia). While the British have scrapped most of their famous naval fleet in recent decades, it still has a respectable nuclear arsenal. Both the British and the Americans have won wars in recent years. Great Britain defeated the Argentines in the Falklands War, and the Americans (supported by the British, French and others) routed the army of Saddam Hussein in the Persian Gulf War.

God's use of the word "bow" to depict the weaponry of Ephraim and Manasseh is significant. Bows and arrows were favored weapons of ancient Israel, Parthia, Scythia, and England in the Middle Ages. Parthia dedicated half of its cavalry to bowmen who fired arrows at their enemies, and English soldiers of the Middle Ages were famous for their use of the longbow. When Scythia sent a symbolic message to King Darius depicting how the Persians would fall under Scythian attack, they sent a clump of

arrows to symbolize their military power.<sup>11</sup> Genesis 49:22's reference to Joseph as a "fruitful branch" in the latter days is also interesting. What nation in the modern world is symbolized by the twin symbols of "a branch" and "arrows," as prophesied in Genesis 49?

A common symbol of the United States of America is an eagle clutching "an olive **branch**" and a "group of **arrows**" in its talons. The olive branch signifies America's desire for peace while the arrows signify prowess in war. Is it only coincidence that the ancient Scythians (a "Sacaean" nation) used the same war sign as modern America (a "Saxon" nation): a clump of arrows?

Furthermore, the eagle was also a common Scythian symbol.<sup>12</sup> One Scythian eagle-crest was found in a pose resembling the eagle-crest of the United States:<sup>13</sup> both show eagles with modern outstretched wings and flared tail feathers (the Scythian eagle holds prey in its talons, while the American eagle holds a branch and a clump of arrows in its talons). Indeed, the eagle-crest of the United States not only has its roots in the Scythian eagle-crest, but also proclaims a Manassehite origin by having **thirteen** arrows in one talon, **thirteen** leaves on the olive branch in the other talon, **thirteen** stars over the eagle's head, **thirteen** bars in the shield over the eagle's body, and even **thirteen** letters in the phrase "E PLURIBUS UNUM" (Manasseh being the **thirteenth** tribe of Israel!)

The national symbols of Great Britain are also found in Bible prophecies. Deuteronomy 33 contains prophecies about the futures of the tribes of Israel which are not "latter day" prophecies, per se, but they do assist in identifying some of Israel's tribes. After reiterating in verse 13-16 that "Joseph" will be blessed with remarkable prosperity in material things, verse 17 states:

*"His glory is like the firstling of his **bullock**,*

*and his horns are like the horns of unicorns:  
with them he **shall push the people  
together to the ends of the earth:** and  
they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and  
they are the thousands of Manasseh.”*  
(Emphasis added.)

Also, in Numbers 23 and 24, Balaam was compelled by the spirit of God to pronounce blessings on the tribes of Israel before they entered Palestine. In Numbers 23:22-24, Israel's strength is likened to that of a "**unicorn**" and a "**great lion.**" Numbers 24:8-9 repeats that Israel will be likened to the strength of a "**unicorn**" and a "**lion.**"

What modern nation has been jointly symbolized by a unicorn and a lion? The royal arms of Great Britain include a **unicorn** and a **lion**, and the British Empire truly did "push together" (conquer and govern) many nations "to the ends of the earth" under these symbols! The axiom "the sun never sets on the British Empire" expressed the fact that the British Empire extended "to the ends of the earth." The "bullock" symbol also is attached to the British people as the term "John Bull" has traditionally described them.

The subject of Deuteronomy 33:17's prophecy is that the tribes of Joseph will "push together" (rule, conquer or govern) many other people "to the ends of the earth" (throughout the globe). The "people" referred to in this prophecy are not the populations of Ephraim and Manasseh, but rather the "people" conquered or ruled by Ephraim and Manasseh! The "ten thousands of Ephraim" and the "thousands of Manasseh" refer to the numbers of "people" who are respectively "pushed together to the ends of the earth" by the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. This also reflects the reality of what occurred in world history. Ephraim (Britain) "pushed together" or ruled many more people and

nations around the earth than did Manasseh (the United States). Deuteronomy 33:13-16 also prophesy that Ephraim and Manasseh will inherit great material wealth. Their prophesied inheritance of the "blessings of the heaven above...precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth" mean that these tribes will have blessings of temperate climate, agricultural prosperity, natural resources (oil, iron ore, coal, gold, silver, etc.) All these things were inherited by America and the English nations. The great wealth of the Anglo-Saxon nations has not been a result of "good luck," but has been caused by the intervention of the Creator God in world affairs to implement his prophecies among the nations.

Another point is worth making about the tribe of Ephraim. The kings of the ancient kingdom of Israel were seated in Samaria, located in the territory of Ephraim. In Asia the main branch of the Arsacid kings (descended from King David) were seated in the empire of Parthia which had been formed by a reunification of the clans of Ephraim. Parthian Emperors were called "King of Kings," the same title given to Jesus Christ at his return (Revelation 19:16) when he assumes "the throne of his father David." Throughout history, the primary throne of Israelite kings has been located in the region of Ephraim, the chief "birthright" tribe of Israel. Earlier, it was noted that the royalty of the British ruling house are direct descendants of King David.<sup>14</sup> So, once again in modern times, the "throne of David" is located among the modern Ephraimites in Great Britain.

The Bible notes an interesting difference between the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh which has been fulfilled in modern times. Isaiah 11 is a prophecy about the Messianic kingdom being established among the nations, and verse 13 prophesies that "in that day:"

*"Ephraim shall not vex Judah, and Judah shall*

*not vex Ephraim."*

Notice that while "Ephraim" is prophesied to have a "vexing" relationship with the tribe of Judah until the Messianic Kingdom (the "kingdom of God") is established, "Manasseh" is not mentioned as having a vexing relationship with Judah. By omitting Manasseh, this prophecy indicates that Manasseh will not have a "vexing" relationship with Judah in the latter day period preceding the Messianic kingdom on earth. How has this been fulfilled in our modern times?

The British and Jews have had a difficult relationship in modern times. In fact, much "bad blood" between the two was caused during the time of the English Mandate over Palestine from 1945 till 1948. The Jews felt the English had a pro-Arab bias during this period of English rule which predated Jewish Independence, and the English regarded the Jews as "terrorists" who killed British troops, blew up the King David Hotel, etc. The British navy intercepted boatloads of Jewish refugees, preventing their arrival in "the Holy Land" (the movie "Exodus" offers insights into this period of time). The British blockade (along with Jewish acts of sabotage and English executions of Jewish saboteurs) led to very hostile Jewish-British relations.

While the British (Ephraim) and Jews (Judah) were barely on speaking terms, the United States of America (Manasseh) was one of the Israelis' strongest advocates in the United Nations, and the United States officially recognized Jewish Independence as soon as it was proclaimed. In the various Jewish-Arab wars, the United States of America was Israel's great ally and protector, rushing arms and support to the Jewish state in its wars. Sometimes, the United States was the only friend Israel had at the United Nations. It was the United States which midwived the famous "Camp David Accords" which united President Jimmy Carter with Anwar Sadat of Egypt and

Menachem Begin of Israel in 1978 in a famous photo of reconciliation.

The prophecy of Isaiah 11:13 has been fulfilled in modern times. While Ephraim (the British) and Judah (the Israelis) have, indeed, "vexed" each other, Manasseh (the United States) has had a very favorable relationship with the Israelis.

In conclusion, the United States of America and the Anglo-Saxon nations of the British Commonwealth are, unmistakably, the Israelite "birthright" tribe of Joseph in the modern world. The United States is Manasseh, and Great Britain and her Saxon Commonwealth nations are Ephraim. If this sounds surprising, consider the fact that in 1857, two messages were given by a Rev. F. E. Pitts to a joint session of the U.S. Congress, presenting evidence that the United States of America was descended from the ten tribes of Israel! Pastor Pitts had little of the information presented in this book available to him, so he based his conclusion on biblical prophecies alone. He utilized prophecies in the books of Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Hosea to show that America had fulfilled many prophecies about the ten tribes of Israel. Pastor Pitts wrote:

*"The United States of America, our great country, is foretold in the Holy Scriptures...The United States of America is the nationality that is promised in the prophetic Scriptures to arise in the latter times as Israel Restored...Such...was ancient Israel, and such is the United States of America."*<sup>15</sup>

While Pitts mistakenly thought America constituted all the tribes of Israel (He felt the thirteen colonies represented all thirteen of the tribes of ancient Israel), he nonetheless saw how the number "13" connected the original thirteen colonies of America to the

thirteen tribes of ancient Israel.

The above shows how radically the social and political environment has changed in America in the last century. Can you imagine today's U.S. Congress convening in a joint session dedicated to the theme of biblical prophecy? The fact that the U.S. Congress, in the nineteenth century, heard evidence that the United States was descended from the ten tribes of Israel shows that the conclusions of this book are neither radical nor unprecedented.

### **THE TRIBE OF REUBEN:**

Reuben was the eldest son of Jacob, and we learn much about him in Genesis 37:12-35. When the other sons of Jacob were intent on killing Joseph, Reuben intervened to prevent it. The Bible relates that Reuben did not participate in selling Joseph into slavery either, but had intended to return Joseph to the safety of Jacob's custody. While this account shows good intentions on Reuben's part, it also shows one of his weak points. Although Reuben's goal of rescuing Joseph was good, he lacked the follow-through to implement his worthy goal. One can only wonder why Reuben wandered away from an urgent crisis which required his full attention. Also, even though Reuben was the oldest and did not participate in the plot against Joseph, he did join his brothers' deception in telling Jacob that Joseph had been killed by a lion.

Years later, when the brothers felt guilty about their misdeeds toward Joseph, Reuben chimed in with an "I told you so" comment (Genesis 42:18-23). This account confirms that while Reuben still recalled his good intentions, he never had the determination to act on them. The above accounts make it clear that Reuben had a tendency to "cave in" when pressured or intimidated. Reuben preferred to grudgingly coexist with something he opposed instead of confronting the evil all alone.



Reuben also had great physical appetites, and had difficulty in controlling his sexual urges. Genesis 35:22 tells us that Reuben had sex with Bilhah, his father's concubine (the mother of Reuben's own brothers Dan and Naphtali). We are not told how long Reuben's "affair" went on before Jacob learned about it, but it surely created severe stress in Jacob's family. As the firstborn, Reuben would ordinarily have received the "birthright" promises, but Genesis 49:4 indicates his inability to control his appetites caused the transfer of the birthright promise to Ephraim and Manasseh.

The Reubenites lived in Gilead (with Gad and half of Manasseh east of the Jordan River), and they were carried into Asian captivity by the Assyrians years before the fall of Samaria (II Kings 10:33, 15:29 and I Chronicles 5:26). When Assyria's empire fell, many of the liberated Israelites migrated northward into South Russia. We have no specific word of the Reubenites after their exit from Palestine. However, as the seed of Isaac, they would have been one of the many "Sacaе" or "Saka" tribes.

When the Parthians and Scythians were forced into Europe in search of new homelands, the Reubenites would have been present among the waves of Caucasian people who poured into Europe from Asia. To identify the Reubenites, we must rely on the clues of the prophecy in Genesis 49:3-4 about this tribe in the latter days. It states:

*"Reuben, you are my first born...pre-eminent in **pride** and pre-eminent in **power**.*

***Unstable as water, you shall not have preeminence because you went up to your father's bed: then you defiled it..."***

[RSV, Emphasis added.]

Several things are readily apparent. While Reuben will have "pride and power" in the latter days, it will not have

“preeminence” over the other tribes of Israel because it had lost the birthright to Joseph. Reuben will also be a volatile, emotional people (“unstable as water” is rendered “boiling over like water” and “unruly as the wild waves of the sea” in the *Amplified* and *Living* versions of the Bible). Since Reuben’s lack of sexual restraint is again cited in this latter day prophecy, this will also be a characteristic of the Reubenites in the modern world.

What nation in modern Europe has substantial “power and pride” (but less power than the English or Americans), is volatile, emotional, and is famous for its physical and sexual appetites. The nation which immediately comes to mind is France. After the English and Americans, the French are the next-strongest nation in the western alliance. France became a populous nation, and also had a substantial colonial empire of its own. The French are famous for their emotional volatility, and the term “French-leave” is a euphemism for a hasty, unauthorized departure. Prior to 1958, the French exhibited profound “instability” in their nation, changing governments at an incredible rate. The *Encyclopedia Americana* has noted that:

*“...during the 70 years of the Third Republic [1875-1945]...more than 100 cabinets succeeded one another in France, with an average tenure in office of less than eight months. The main cause of ministerial **instability** was the lack of disciplined parties...constitutional life under the Fourth Republic [1946-1958] came to resemble that under the Third [Republic]...The average life span of governments was shorter than in the Third Republic...”<sup>16</sup>*

Interestingly, a modern Encyclopedia describes the French with the same term (“instability”) that Genesis 49 used to describe

the Reubenites in the latter days. Since the French also have a tradition as a nation with military power secondary only to that of the United States and Britain (in the western world), France fits the prophecy about the Reubenites in the latter days.

The word "French" has even become a synonym for passion and physical appetites. It is a common adjective for nouns associated with sensuality and eroticism (French perfume, French kisses, French films, French-cut fashions, etc). Paris has the world's most famous "girlie" shows. There is a cultural difference between the American/British viewpoint on sexual infidelity and the French viewpoint. American and British leaders can be brought down or severely weakened by sexual scandals, but if French leaders are revealed to have mistresses, the reaction of the French nation typically is "What's the big deal?"

The Reubenite "pride" of Genesis 49 is translated as "dignity" in the *King James Version*. Either definition characterizes the French. The French are known as a proud people who strive to preserve French culture and the French language against a dominant tide of Anglo-Saxon culture. Much "dignity" is apparent in such impressive French institutions as the Versailles Palace, the Louvre, and the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Paris is famous both as a city of culture and a city of romance (linking the "dignity" and "passion" of Reuben).

The Reubenites are a people associated with satisfying the physical appetites for food and drink as well. Gourmet food and drink have long been associated with French chefs, French cuisine and French grand cru wines. A longstanding reputation for refinement and excellence in food and drink are part of the "dignity" (as well as the "appetite") of Reuben.

Even as forefather Reuben did not willingly yield the birthright promise to forefather Joseph, the French did not willingly yield leadership of Europe to the Anglo-Saxons. If the French had

prevailed over the English in their wars, France would have inherited the bulk of the birthright blessings. Although biblical prophecy decreed that Abraham's "birthright" blessings would belong to Joseph's descendants (Ephraim and Manasseh), the Reubenites did not give up without a long fight. Interestingly, when America was fighting its Revolutionary War against the British, the role of France was decisive. Seen in a biblical perspective, Manasseh (America) achieved independence from Ephraim (the British) with the assistance of Reuben (France). France also displayed a Reubenite trait in World War II. When pressured by Nazi might, France quickly yielded and chose to coexist (via the French Vichy Government) with the Nazi evil rather than continue to oppose it. Even as forefather Reuben yielded to his brothers' pressures to lie to their father about Joseph's fate instead of opposing what he knew to be wrong, the French grudgingly cooperated with the Nazis rather than continuing to oppose what they knew to be wrong. In contrast, Great Britain (Ephraim) declared it would doggedly fight on alone rather than surrender to a great evil. Prime Minister Winston Churchill declared that England "would never surrender," and even declared that the English would carry on the fight against the Nazis from new bases in the British Empire if England itself should fall. Even though France also had an empire and a powerful fleet to help carry on the war against the Nazis, they decided to "throw in the towel." The French could honestly argue that they did not have the luxury of the English Channel enjoyed by the British to hold back the Nazis; however, France's collaborationist Vichy government and its refusal to allow the French Empire and fleet to continue to oppose the Nazis exhibited the tendency of forefather Reuben to coexist with evil instead of opposing it.

While the Reubenites did not receive the birthright blessings,

they do share the general blessings promised to the seed of Abraham. While not a superpower, the independent nuclear arsenal of France gives it considerable “might” in the modern world. France (like the United States and Great Britain) is one of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, and the French language is still dominant in many parts of the third world. Therefore, France does exhibit the “power” and “dignity” which was prophesied for the Reubenites in Genesis 49.

This book concludes that the nation of France (and other regions of direct French descent, such as Canadian Quebec) constitutes the Israelite tribe of Reuben.

### **THE TRIBE OF ZEBULON:**

Zebulon was a younger brother of Reuben, and little information is provided about Zebulon in the Bible. We know Zebulon lived in the area west of the Sea of Galilee. After their relocation to Asia, they were one of the many related “Saciae” tribes. Consequently, their migrations would have followed the larger tribes of Israel, first into Asia, and later into Europe. However, the Bible gives us a very revealing clue concerning their identity in the modern world. In fact, it is uncannily accurate in describing one modern European nation.

Genesis 49:13 gives this short but meaningful clue regarding their latter day location. The KJV states:

*“Zebulon shall dwell **at the haven of the sea**; and he shall be for **a haven of ships**; and his border shall be unto Zidon.”*

(Emphasis added.)

A dictionary definition of the word “haven” includes the alternate meanings “any sheltered, safe place; refuge,” and “a port, harbor.”<sup>17</sup> The Bible prophesied that the Zebulonites would inhabit an area that was a “haven” (i.e. a “shelter” or “refuge”)

from the sea. Since the Israelites migrated into Europe from Asia, we need to look for a European nation which is “sheltered from the sea.”

Many readers will know which nation in Europe was “bought back from the sea” via its famous dikes. That nation is the Netherlands (Holland). Much of Holland’s land is quite literally “sheltered from the sea” via its dike system, so the prophetic description of a “haven of the sea” is quite apt. The phrase “haven of ships” indicates that the land of Zebulon must also include a major harbor facility. Indeed, the *Amplified Bible* translates this phrase as “a landing place for ships.”

The Dutch port of Rotterdam has become the busiest seaport in the world. The *Encyclopedia Americana* states concerning Rotterdam:

*“Its port, in volume of freight handled, is the largest in the world...In addition to foreign trade, the port handles the huge barge traffic that is carried on the Rhine River and associated waterways...The port now extends continuously from Rotterdam to the Sea. At the mouth of the New Waterway lies the great port complex of Europort (“Gateway of Europe”).”*<sup>18</sup>

Not only is Rotterdam the busiest ocean-going seaport, it is now a gateway to all of Europe via a system of interconnected canals on Europe’s mainland. The above is sufficient to identify the Dutch people as modern Zebulon, but a prophecy of Moses in Deuteronomy 33:18-19 about the future of the tribe of Zebulon gives even more support to this viewpoint. Moses prophesied:

*“...of Zebulon he said...they shall **suck of the abundance of the seas and of treasures***

***hidden in the sand.*** (Emphasis added.)

The Hebrew word translated "suck" is used elsewhere in the Bible to describe infants sucking milk from breasts.<sup>19</sup> Moses prophesied that the Zebulonites would "suck" the "seas" and gain an "abundance" from doing so. The connection with Holland is obvious! The Dutch literally, "sucked out" the sea via their system of dikes and windmills, and gained "abundant" land as a result. The phrase "treasures hidden in the sand" could refer to the same thing, but it may have a completely separate meaning which also identifies the Dutch. What "treasure," frequently "hidden in the sand," has become critically important in the modern world? The answer is petroleum, and one of the largest, worldwide oil companies is "Royal Dutch/Shell." The Dutch nation formerly had overseas colonies of its own, the largest of which was oil-rich Indonesia (known for centuries as the Dutch East Indies). Indonesia became independent of the Dutch after World War II, and is now a member of OPEC. However, the Royal Dutch/Shell Oil Company is still one of the premier oil-producing companies of the world. It is unique in that it bears the name of a modern European nation in its corporate title, unlike Exxon, Standard Oil, Mobil Oil, etc.

The second portion of the prophecy in Genesis 49:13 is as cryptic as the first portion is clear, but since it is there, a possible decipherment will be proposed. What can be understood about the prophecy "...his border shall be unto Zidon?"

The key may lie in the Hebrew word translated "border," which literally means "**thighs.**"<sup>20</sup> This Hebrew word is so translated in Daniel 2:32 in the phrase "its belly and **thighs** of brass."<sup>21</sup> This phrase is part of a description of a body, and denotes the lower torso down through the uppermost portion of the legs of a statue seen in a dream since Daniel 2:33 refers to the statue's "legs" as being different from its "thighs." In other words, the ancient

Hebrew word for "thighs" in Genesis 49:13 includes the pubic area. [On this specific translation, I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Charles Dorothy, a graduate of Claremont Graduate School, who checked the above analysis for accuracy.] How could a reference to the human pubic area point to the modern Dutch nation?

The Dutch capital of Amsterdam is world famous for its "red light district" offering all manner of erotic/sinful pleasures in its various "sex shops." The CBS television program "60 Minutes" featured (in its 1990-91 season) a program about the Amsterdam "sex district" which includes prostitutes openly peddling their bodies just behind windows at street level! In 1992, the Dutch Parliament effectively legalized the prostitution industry by repealing a law which previously had banned pimps. The ancient Sidonians were famous for officially tolerating sinful sex practices which were part of the fertility cult practices of Baal worship. Wicked Queen Jezebel, whose name is synonymous with brazen sexual temptation, was a Sidonian.

Official Dutch tolerance of a major industry in sexual sin parallels the Sidonian tolerance of similar practices, and would give meaning to the Genesis 49 prophecy about modern Zebulon being comparable to the sexually-sinful Sidonians.

The Netherlands perfectly fulfills the biblical prophecy about a modern seacoast nation that is "sheltered from the sea," has a major "seaport," and a sex industry like that of ancient Sidon. That a prophecy thousands of years old has come true so accurately in the "latter day" period for which it was intended gives further testimony that there is an all-powerful God who can accurately foresee (and control) the future.

The Bible clearly identifies the Dutch as the modern Zebulonites.

## **THE TRIBE OF ASHER:**



Asher was born to Zilpah, the “handmaid” of Leah. Asher formerly inhabited a territory in northern Palestine neighboring Zebulun’s territory. The Bible records little about Asher, and the prophecy of Genesis 49:20 is also brief, stating:

*“Asher’s bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties.”*

At first glance, this prophecy seems unintelligible; however, an analysis is possible. The term “Asher’s bread shall be fat” indicates prosperity, but there are many prosperous nations in the world. The specific clue will have to be found in the part about “royal dainties.” The word “royal” is based on the Hebrew word “melek” which means literally a “king.”<sup>22</sup> The word “yield” comes from a Hebrew word literally meaning “to give,”<sup>23</sup> and the Hebrew word translated “dainties” also means “delights.”<sup>24</sup> When we utilize alternate literal meanings, this phrase states that Asher “shall give kings’ delights,” or “yield kings’ delights.” This, combined with some information from secular history, gives us a good clue about Asher’s identity in the modern world.

The early histories of Great Britain record that during the reign of Solomon, the tribe of Asher managed the tin mines of Cornwall, contributing materials for Solomon’s temple.<sup>25</sup> This indicates a large contingent of the tribe of Asher was present in the ancient British Isles. Numbers 26:45 records that one branch of the Asherites was named the “Heberites,” with the root consonants “**H-B-R**.” An early name for Ireland was “**Hibernia**,” and there is a group of Islands off the coast of Scotland named the “**Hebrides**.” Both names include the consonants “**H-B-R**,” the root word of the Asherite clan named after **Heber**. These Asherite names in the early British Isles lend weight to the historic records that Asherites were active in the ancient British mining trade.

Given the ancient association of the Asherites with mining, it

indicates that we should look for the Asherites among the prominent mining nations of the world, but there are many such nations. It would help to know what they are mining, and this clue is given in Genesis 49:20's prophecy about "yields royal delights." The Bible was written during ancient times when kings were the heads of state. When gifts were given to kings, what was given as a "royal delight"? The primary gift to an ancient king was always an offering of **gold**. When Solomon was visited by the Queen of Sheba and the other monarchs of the earth, they brought innumerable gifts of gold to Solomon. Ancient history is full of instances where tribute money was paid in the form of gold. When nations were defeated, their gold treasures were taken by their conquerors. Other precious metals and gemstones were also valued as gifts, tribute money or booty, but gold was the preeminent "royal delight." When the Magi visited the Jesus Christ as a child, "gold" led the list of gifts to him.

To locate modern Asher, we need to find a prosperous nation either in Europe (or founded by people from European nations) which is known as a mining nation, and which is particularly known for the mining of gold and perhaps gemstones. The Republic of South Africa meets all these criteria. South Africa is the dominant gold-mining nation in the world, and also is a dominant producer of platinum and diamonds.

The Republic of South Africa was colonized primarily by a mixture of British and Dutch people (the Boers). Since ancient history records the settlement of the Asherites in the British Isles, one can understand how Asherites could have migrated to South Africa from Britain. However, what about the Boers (or Afrikaans)?

In ancient Israel, the tribes of Zebulun and Asher lived side by side, and may well have migrated together into Asia and Europe. Even as Manasseh and Ephraim migrated together into Europe

before splitting into separate nations, other tribes could have done the same thing. Amos 9:9 quotes God as saying:

*"...I will sift the House of Israel [the northern ten tribes] among all the nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth."*

This prophecy does not refer to the diaspora of the Jews, but the scattering of the **House of Israel** (the northern ten tribes) among the nations of the earth. The reference that "not the least grain shall fall upon the earth" means that God would not lose track of any Israelite families or individuals. God is quite capable of directing the migrations of nations (and individual families) in order to fulfill his prophecies. The nation of South Africa fulfills the prophecy about the Asherites. That South Africa was settled by the Dutch and British indicates that the tribe of Asher was mingled among the Dutch and British (i.e. Zebulon and Ephraim) before their final migration to South Africa.

### **THE TRIBE OF ISSACHAR:**

Issachar was a son of Jacob and Leah, and the tribe's inheritance was southwest of the Sea of Galilee. After their migration into Asia, they were one of the many Sacae tribes of South Russia. There is one possible identification of them among the Sacae tribes. During the second century B.C., a tribe known as the "Tochari" migrated with the Massagetae and other Sacae tribes out of central Asia and into new homelands on the western edge of the Parthian Empire.<sup>26</sup> Numbers 26:23 identifies one of Issachar's clans as being named after "**Tola**," one of Issachar's sons. It is possible that the Scythian tribal name "**To-char-i**" is a composite word composed of the first syllable from the word "**To-la**" and the last syllable from the word "Issa-**char**." Since Tola was a clan of Issachar, the two words would have been often linked together in their usage.

A more specific evidence of the Issacharites passing through Russia on their way to Europe with the rest of the Sacae is the name "**Tula**," which has been (for many centuries) the name of a Russian city south of Moscow. Plotting a course on a map from the Caucasus region past Tula would lead one directly to Finland and Scandinavia. This indicates that the tribe of Issachar took a more northerly route into Europe. That **Thule**, Greenland was settled by Scandinavians indicates that the clan of **Tola** was involved with this settlement.

The Bible offers a significant clue in Genesis 49:14-15 regarding the location of the tribe of Issachar in the latter days. It states:

*"Issachar is a strong ass [donkey] **couching down between two burdens**: and he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and **bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute.**"*

(Emphasis added.)

To identify Issachar, we must look for a nation which has a tradition of being quasi-independent ("under tribute"), located "between" two stronger nations or spheres of influence (the "two burdens"), and dwelling in reasonable peace and prosperity (their "rest was good, and...the land...was pleasant.")

In the ancient world a nation that was "under tribute" had limited self-rule while under the dominance of a stronger nation. In ancient days this tribute was generally an annual payment of gold or the cessation of territory.

The nation of Finland has long been in the condition of being a buffer zone between stronger, competing nations. The 1700's and 1800's saw Finland caught between Russia and Sweden, who fought for sovereignty over Finland. This century has seen Finland's sovereignty regularly compromised. From 1899 to

1905, Russia dominated Finland, and "Russian officials and the Russian language were foisted on Finland wherever possible, and in 1903 the Russian governor...was invested with dictatorial powers."<sup>27</sup> The Finns were literally "under tribute" when "the Tsar peremptorily fixed an annual contribution"<sup>28</sup> on Finland.

In World War I "Finland escaped invasion, but her liberties were restricted,"<sup>29</sup> befitting a nation under tribute. World War I also saw Finns volunteering for service in the armies of both Germany and Russia (their "two burdens"). Representative government was restored in 1917, but in 1918, Finland "concluded a treaty which made her Germany's ally and vassal."<sup>30</sup> Finland was now paying "tribute" to its other "burden." Between the world wars, Finland became increasingly identified as a Scandinavian nation, but the ever-hungry Russian bear again launched an attack on Finland as World War II began. The Finns made a heroic resistance against the Soviets but had to sign a treaty ceding territory and dominance to Russia. When Germany attacked Russia in 1941, Finland briefly allied itself with Germany before signing an armistice with both Great Britain and Russia in 1944. At the end of World War II Finland had to pay certain amounts of finished industrial goods (more "tribute") to the Russians.

Finland has been a buffer state between stronger nations for most of its history and has literally been "under tribute" at times. It's current "tribute" is Finland's neutralist foreign policy, for which it receives an accommodative relationship with its big neighbor, Russia. Since Finland is located in a "buffer zone" between the western and eastern blocs, a neutralist position is a safe one for Finland. The Finnish capital, Helsinki, even gave its name to the "Helsinki Accords," an East-West agreement signed in the neutralist nation of Finland.

Finland has found peace and prosperity by "couching down between two burdens." This condition has even given birth to the

term "Finlandization." Finland accepts some limitations on its sovereignty, but it currently enjoys a milder form of "tribute" than it has borne in recent history. Finland fulfills the prophecy about Issachar's descendants in our modern world.

### **THE TRIBE OF NAPHTALI:**

Naphtali was a son of Jacob and Bilhah, Rachel's "handmaid." Naphtali's inheritance was in the northern portion of Canaan, and the entire tribe was carried captive into Asia by Assyria approximately twenty years prior to the fall of Samaria (II Kings 15:29). They are one of the easiest tribes to locate in Asia as their tribal name remained virtually unchanged. History records them as the "Ephthalite," or "Nephtalite" Huns, and also as the "White Huns," as they were members of the fair-skinned (Caucasian) race.<sup>31</sup> The striking similarity between the Israelite "Naphtalites" and the Asian "Ephthalites" is obvious. The fact that this tribe went into captivity as a whole unit (rather than in piecemeal clans) likely explains why they continued to be known by their Israelite tribal name as late as the sixth century A.D. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that before their arrival in the region of the old Parthian Empire, the Ephthalites "were originally a tribe of the great Yue-Chi, living to the north of the Great Wall."<sup>32</sup> Rawlinson places the arrival of the Yue-Chi tribes in Parthian regions during the second century B.C. when they migrated southward out of Central Asia.<sup>33</sup> That these Yue-Chi tribes were known collectively as the "Sacae" (bearing the name of Isaac) confirms their Israelite origins.

When Parthia fell, the Ephthalites did not join the Parthian/Scythian migration toward Europe. They fought many battles against the Sassanian Persians (who drove out the Parthians), and even ruled a portion of West India for a time. Their capital, **Sakala**, preserved the name of their forefather Isaac.<sup>34</sup> However, in the sixth century A.D., they were defeated and disappeared

from Asia. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* comments that the defeat of the Ephthalites “completed the ruin of the White Race of the plains from the Oxus to the Don.”<sup>35</sup> It is logical that the Ephthalites migrated toward Europe where the rest of Asia’s white tribes had previously relocated; therefore, the descendants of the tribe of Naphtali would be found somewhere in Europe.

While the Naphtalites are one of the easiest tribes to trace in the ancient world, their identity in the modern world is more difficult. Genesis 49:21 gives us this clue regarding the location of Naphtali in the latter days:

*“Naphtali is a **hind let loose**: he giveth **goodly words**.”* (Emphasis added.)

How do we make sense out of this clue? To begin with, a “hind” is a female deer, and the words “let loose” implies a condition of “being liberated” or “active in the wild.” Female deer are most active in the wild during the rutting (or mating) season when they are “in heat.” This implies that the Naphtalites (particularly the females) will be identified with sensuality in the latter days. *The New Jerusalem Bible* and the *Amplified Bible* add that Naphtali will “bear (or yield) lovely fawns” in the latter days.

Sweden has the reputation of being a sexually open, “liberated” society. Blond Swedish women have a reputation for beauty and have been prominent sex-goddesses in the movie industry, contributing to the image that “blonds have more fun.”

The phrase “giveth goodly words” can literally mean “beautiful sayings or speeches.”<sup>36</sup> Is Sweden identified with the giving of “beautiful speeches” or “pleasing pronouncements” of some kind?

Sweden sponsors the annual Nobel Prizes, which are “beautiful speeches” or “pleasing pronouncements” given to noteworthy achievers in a variety of fields. These awards are world-famous

and are reported in the world's media every year. No other nation of Europe is so closely identified with the practice of making internationally famous awards to the rest of the world on an annual basis.

The limited clues of biblical prophecy indicate that Sweden is latter day Naphtali.

### **THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN:**

Benjamin was the youngest son of Jacob and Rachel, and the only full brother of Joseph. This tribe was almost exterminated in an ancient Israelite civil war in which the Benjaminites were foolhardy (and warlike) enough to fight all the other tribes at once. This grisly civil war is discussed in Judges 19-21.

From that time on Benjamin's population lagged far behind the other tribes, and they were the smallest tribe in Israel at the time one of their members, Saul, was made the first king of Israel (I Samuel 9:21). When the tribes of Israel divided into the two nations of Israel and Judah, Benjamin remained in the kingdom of Judah (I Kings 12:21). After Judah went into captivity, a contingent of Benjaminites returned with the Jews to rebuild the Temple and Jerusalem under the kings of Persia (Ezra 1:5, Nehemiah 11:3-4). The Apostle Paul was descended from the Benjaminites (Romans 11:1). Most of Benjamin remained in Asia, and later migrated into Europe when the Parthian/ Sacae were pushed into Europe by the Sassanian Persians and the Huns. Therefore, while Joseph's tribes were fated to become the most populous tribes of Israel, Benjamin (Joseph's brother) became the tribe with the smallest population base. Therefore, we should look for Benjamin (in the modern world) to be a nation with a small population.

The biblical clue for Benjamin's location in the modern world is very limited. Genesis 49:27 states:



*"Benjamin shall ravin **as a wolf**: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil."* (Emphasis added.)

Wolves are common in northern climates, indicating that Benjamin's latter day territory will be in a northern latitude. The only European nation in a northern latitude not yet identified as one of the tribes of Israel is Norway. By the process of elimination, Norway would seem to be the modern Benjaminites. Norway is a lightly populated nation, consistent with Benjamin's historically having a small population among the Israelite tribes. Norway has traditionally had excellent relations with the British and Americans, which one would expect of the descendants of Benjamin (who are genetically the closest to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh). Since Iceland was populated by Viking Norseman, the Icelandic people are also likely of the tribe of Benjamin.

The phrases about "devouring the prey" and "dividing the spoil" very aptly describe Norway's Viking ancestors who were known for preying (wolflike) on all the other nations of Europe from bases in their northern homelands. This forms a parallel to ancient times. Even as Benjamin warred against all the other tribes in a bloody civil war in biblical times, the Vikings also fought all the other tribes of Israel who had migrated to various locations in Europe.

Based on the biblical clues about Benjamin's location in the latter days, Norway best fulfills the prophecy of Genesis 49 about the tribe of Benjamin.

### **THE TRIBE OF DAN:**

Dan was a son of Jacob and Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid. When the Israelites entered Palestine, Dan was given an inheritance

south of Ephraim's territory, but divided into two groups after some Danites conquered a second homeland in the northern part of Canaan. Joshua 19:47 indicates that the initial Danite territory included the seacoast port of Joppa. When the Danites conquered a second homeland in the north, Joshua 19:46 records that the Danites renamed the conquered city of Leshem: "Dan, after the name of Dan their ancestor." In conquering a second homeland and dividing their tribe, the Danites apparently acted without the permission or cooperation of any other Israelite tribe, indicating a tendency of Danites to act unilaterally from the other tribes.

The Danite trait of naming geographical locations after the name of their forefather Dan is important when we follow the Israelites' migrations through history. The Danites retained this trait throughout history, leaving a trail of "Danite" names along their migratory paths.

Judges 5:17 records a rhetorical question, "why did Dan remain in ships?", as part of the song of Deborah and Barak after the Midianites were conquered. That the Danites were already known for an independent, seafaring way of life at that time (circa 1200 B.C.) is confirmed by secular historical sources that a seafaring tribe bearing the name of "Dan" was then present in the eastern Mediterranean. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* records that sea raiders were active "in the Levant, between 1230-1190 B.C.," that Egyptian sources named them the "**Danauna...**[and] **Tzakari**," while Greek tradition referred to them as the "**Danaans.**"<sup>37</sup> (Emphasis added.)

The word "Levant" refers to the Eastern Mediterranean, which includes the seacoast of Palestine, the main base of the tribe of Dan. It is significant that the name of another group accompanying the Danite sea raiders included the root word "**Tzak**," because it is a Hebrew form of the name "Isaac" (two

modern Israeli leaders with this Hebrew name are **Yitzhak** Shamir and **Yitzhak** Rabin). If one represents the "Tz" sound with an "S," (both symbols are related sibilants) the name of this ancient tribe becomes the "**Sakari**," indicating that they were also Israelites. **This is an important point as it indicates that Israelites were known as the "Saka" in Palestine centuries before their descendants (the "Saka" or "Sacae") were known by that same name in Asia!**

These sea raiders are also known as the "Sea Peoples," who are described as having roots in Anatolia (modern Turkey).<sup>38</sup> Interestingly, the region of Turkey associated with ancient Troy used to be called **Dardania**,<sup>39</sup> and one of the narrow straits between the Aegean and Black Seas is still called the **Dardanelles**. Given the above, the seafaring portion of the tribe of Dan not only contributed many of its people to the ancient "Sea Peoples," but also apparently colonized regions of Anatolia near Troy. There is another possibility. These names are attributed to **Dardanus**, a mythical demi-god.

It is recorded that these Sea Peoples appeared around 1400 B.C., and that many of these "light-skinned" Sea Peoples eventually settled in ancient Libya around 1250 B.C., thereafter becoming sailors for the Egyptians.<sup>40</sup> The written language of the Sea People/ancient Libyans was "like that of the Phoenicians."<sup>41</sup> The Israelites (Semites) of the tribe of Dan would be light-skinned and have a language like that of the Phoenician/Hebrew language. The date of their initial appearance (1400 B.C.) is also significant, because that is the biblical time of the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites under Joshua. The tribe of Dan received a portion on the seacoast that was "too small" for its population (Joshua 19:47), requiring the Danites to conquer additional homelands for their people. Besides conquering territory in the north of Canaan, they apparently sought living space via sea

raiding as well (and became known as the **Danaans** of the Sea People). It is noteworthy that these Sea People became a tribe of professional sailors for Egypt around 1250 B.C. because Joshua 5:17 declares the Danites "dwelt in ships" around 1200 B.C.

Chapter two noted that the Egyptian fleets had a major presence in the Pacific Ocean during the time of King Solomon, reaching as far as Hawaii. Many of Egypt's "fair-skinned" Libyan sailors would have been Danites. In fact, Dr. Fell proposed that the Polynesian people have descended from the ancient Libyan sailors of Egypt's Pacific fleets, a conclusion supported by linguists in Europe, New Zealand and Israel.<sup>42</sup>

The presence of the name "Dan" in ancient Anatolia and the region of Troy also argues that Danites were involved in establishing Israelite colonies in that area. Moses prophesied in Deuteronomy 33:22 that the tribe of Dan "would leap from Bashan" (part of ancient Palestine), and historical evidence indicates that the Danites did, indeed, "leap" out of Palestine to settle new colonies of their own.

When many Israelites fled from Assyrian captivity around 721 B.C., history records that the **Tuatha De Danaan** arrived in Ireland.<sup>43</sup> The **Danaans** are mentioned prominently as some of the earliest settlers of Ireland,<sup>44</sup> so the tribe of Dan was present in large numbers in ancient Ireland. Since both biblical and secular accounts indicate the tribe of Dan was a seafaring tribe, it is not surprising that the Danites on the seacoast chose a maritime escape route from Palestine to avoid Assyrian captivity. This historical record indicates that many of today's Irish people have descended from the tribe of Dan.

However, landlocked Danites in the northern part of Palestine lacked a maritime escape route. These Danites migrated northward into the Black Sea region along with many other Israelite tribes, as the name "Dan" was placed on prominent

geographical features in that region soon after the Israelites arrived.

Rivers emptying into the Black Sea used to be named the Ister, the Tyras, the Borysthenes and the Tanais. After the Scythians (the Israelite "Sacaë") arrived, the Black Sea's rivers were renamed the **Danube**, the **Dnestr**, the **Dnepr**, and the **Don**. *Collier's Encyclopedia* states: "the names...of the rivers Danube, Dnestr, Dnepr, and the Don are Scythian..."<sup>45</sup> That the names of **all** these rivers were changed by the Scythians to bear the name of the Israelite tribe of "**Dan**" further confirms that the Scythians were Israelites, and that a significant portion of Danites accompanied them. These Danites would have migrated into Europe when the Scythians and Parthians were pushed into Europe in later centuries. In Europe the name of "Dan" was brought to such areas as **Danzig** (in Poland), and **Danmark** (the Danish name for Denmark). The language of Denmark is called **Danish**, and the people are called the **Danes**. Since the name of the tribe of Dan is still borne by the people of "Danmark," it is possible that the Danish people have descended from that portion of the tribe of Dan which originally lived in northern Palestine.

The Bible's prophecy about Dan in the latter days is:

*"Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward." (Genesis 49:16-17)*

The Hebrew word translated "judge" can also be translated "discern."<sup>46</sup> The text also likens Dan to a serpent (snake). Nature documentaries have shown how the telltale path of a snake in a desert can be seen even after the snake is no longer present. A possible meaning of Genesis 49:16-17's cryptic

passage is that one can “discern” or “judge” where the tribes of Israel migrated by following the names of the tribe of Dan throughout history, left on a map like the telltale path of a sidewinder snake in the desert. This conclusion reflects the reality of what has happened in history, and is supported by the fact that the rest of the prophecy continues a “serpent” (snake) analogy in describing the Danites.

A possible explanation for the second part of the prophecy is as follows. The Danites are pictured as being under the heels of a horse, but they succeed in “throwing off the rider” by “biting the heels” of his horse. The Irish were governed by (“under the heels of”) the British (the “rider”) until the early 1920’s. The Irish won their independence via a terrorist campaign against British representatives (i.e. “nipping at the heels”) of the British government. The prophecy of Genesis 49 aptly describes the manner in which the Irish obtained their independence in this century. This same activity has continued into modern times as the Irish Republican Army (the IRA) has utilized the same terrorist activities against the British in an effort to overthrow British rule in Northern Ireland as well. In this sense, the Genesis 49 prophecy captures the nature of the struggle of the Irish against the British in the modern world. It is not open warfare, but rather a “nipping of the heels” via terrorist acts.

A preponderance of evidence indicates that the Irish are modern Danites. It is also possible that a second portion of Danites migrated to Europe (Denmark) via the Black Sea route, imprinting the name of “Dan” on the route of their migrations.

### **THE TRIBE OF GAD:**

Gad was a son of Jacob and Zilpah, the handmaid of Leah. Gad’s inheritance was in Gilead (east of the Jordan River) when the Israelites came into Palestine. Therefore, Gad was one of the easternmost tribes of Israel in its ancient inheritance. This tribe

was taken into Asian captivity by the Assyrians years before the fall of Samaria, and were one of the "Sacae" or "Saka" tribes of Asia who were eventually pushed westward into Europe.

To identify Gad in the modern world, we must rely on the prophetic clue of Genesis 49:19, which states:

*"Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last." (KJV)*

Interestingly, the tribe of Gad is the **only** Israelite tribe which is prophesied to be "overcome" during the latter days. The Hebrew word for "troop" also means an "invading force."<sup>47</sup> To locate the Gadites, we must look for a European nation which (during the "latter days") was overcome by invading forces, but later emerged triumphantly from its defeat. At this point, we are left with few remaining alternatives. Most nations of northwest Europe and Scandinavia have already been identified as various members of the modern tribes of Israel. The process of elimination leaves us with such nations as Belgium, Switzerland and Germany.

Belgium and Switzerland are "amalgam" nations, composed of distinct racial or ethnic groups. Belgium is a mixture of ethnic Dutch and French people (the Flemish and Walloons), and is, therefore, a likely mixture of Zebulonite and Reubenite people. Switzerland is also a mixture of German-, French- and Italian-speaking people. The French Swiss are likely Reubenites, but the others are not yet identified. This leaves Germany as the most likely candidate for the modern Gadites.

Germany was, indeed, "overcome by a troop [of nations]" in World War II, yet it emerged to become one of the foremost industrial and economic powers in the world (it has truly "overcome at the last"). The nation of Germany precisely fulfills Genesis 49's prophecy about the Gadites in the "latter days."

Another biblical prophecy about Gad is fulfilled in the Germans. Deuteronomy 33, although it is not time-specific to the latter days, includes prophecies by Moses about the general futures of the tribes of Israel. Verse 20 of this chapter prophesies (in the RSV):

*"Blessed be he who **enlarges Gad!** Gad **couches like a lion**, he **tears** the arm, and the crown of the head."* (Emphasis added.)

This prophecy indicates Gad would have a large population ("be enlarged"), and act like a predator (a "lion" who "tears" at others). The Germans are a large European population group (comprising Germany, Austria, much of Switzerland, and portions of other nations as well), fulfilling the prophecy that they would "be enlarged." The traditional warlike characteristics of the Germans are well-known, and they have twice been like a predator (a "lion") in the modern era (World Wars I and II), attacking and "tearing" at neighboring nations. The above, together with the fact that Genesis 49's prophecy requires that the Gadites will be "overcome" by a troop (i.e. defeated by invading armies) but will recover to "overcome" their defeat **all during the latter days**, clearly points to the Germans.

Also, when the Parthians migrated to Europe, one of the Semitic tribes in its empire was the "Germanii" or "Kermans." This also indicates that the ancient Germans were closely linked to (or were a part of) the Sacae.

However, the identification of the Germans as Gad presents a problem. In chapter ten, it was demonstrated that the Germanii also paralleled the ancient Assyrians, another Semitic people (descended from Shem, Genesis 10:22) who migrated out of Asia when the Sassanian Persians drove the Semites from their old homelands. This problem has an obvious solution. Can the modern Germans be a mixture of the Israelite tribe of Gad **and**



the modern Assyrians? There is evidence to support this possibility.

To begin with, the entire tribe of Gad went into Assyrian captivity at the same time (I Chronicles 5:26). This may have resulted in the tribe of Gad being closely joined to the Assyrians. Did intermingling with Assyrians cause Gad to acquire a militaristic nature which it never displayed in biblical times, but which Deuteronomy 33:20 foretold it would acquire in the future?

The modern Germans are a numerous people with several ethnic divisions. There are three German-speaking nations in Europe: Germany, Austria and (most of) Switzerland. Other nations in Europe also have German-speaking contingents. Today's German-speaking population of Europe has descended from a variety of Caucasian tribes which migrated into Europe from Asia. Given the diverse origins of the German-speaking people, there is ample room for descendants of both Assyrian and Israelite forbears. One historian of the German people, S. Baring Gould, wrote that the German people migrating into Europe were divided into four major subdivisions: The Allemanni, the Franks, the Saxons and the Goths.<sup>48</sup> We have already seen the Israelite nature of the Saxons and Goths, while the Franks gave their name to France (identified above as the Reubenites). This leaves the Allemanni. It is the **Allemanni** which preserve the name of the old **Germanii** or **Carmanians** who were previously identified as Assyrians. The Germans also included the European "Prussians" who were identified with the ancient "Prusa" of Asia Minor. The "Germans" include many diverse tribes who migrated into Europe: dark-eyed, dark-haired tribes as well as blue-eyed blondes. Clearly, more than one ethnic background is present among the modern German-speaking groups.

Some German regions have long been named "Saxony," a name based on the "Sacae," or (in Latin terminology) the "Saxa." As

mentioned earlier, the German words for Saxon (“**Sachsisch**,” “**Sachse**”) preserve the “**Sac**” rootword of **Isaac’s** name. The Saxons who migrated to the British Isles were, principally, the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, but the “Saxons” who stayed on the continent were members of other Israelite tribes. Since portions of Germany were named after “Isaac,” it indicates that an Israelite tribe is present within Germany. Also indicative of a common origin for the Saxon and German people is the fact that the English and German languages are closely-related tongues with the same alphabet and many cognate words.

Germany has traditionally exhibited a split personality. It is the nation which led the Protestant Reformation, invented the printing press (and the “Gutenberg Bibles”), and it has excelled in such peaceful pursuits as literature, music and commerce. Yet, it is also the nation which produced Adolf Hitler and Nazism. In wartime, the “Prussian” martial skills come to the fore, making it a scourge to its neighbors. Germany’s militaristic heritage parallels that of the ancient Assyrians. Indeed, in ancient history, when one examines the ferocity with which the Assyrians waged war (deporting or executing whole populations, and the use of deliberate terror to induce fear in their enemies), the ferocity and holocaust of World War II parallel Assyria’s activities in the ancient world. Isaiah 10:7 makes this observation on the innate warlike tendencies of Assyria:

*“he [the Assyrian] does not so intend, and his mind does not so think; but it is in his mind to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few.”*

(RSV)

What an apt description of the “split personality” of Germany. While peacefully productive for long periods of time, the Assyrian aspect of Germany comes to the fore during warfare, when they can “cut off nations not a few.”

World War II saw Germany "overcome by a troop," but West Germany emerged from World War II to "overcome" its victors in a peacetime context (industrial might, international trade, strong currency, etc.). However, for most of the post World War-II period, East Germany remained under the impoverishing oppression of Russian Communism. Even though Germany is now reunited, it will take years to bring the former East Germany up to the prosperous standards of the former West Germany. Is it not interesting that part of Germany shared in the "birthright" blessings pronounced on the tribes of Israel, and part of Germany was excluded from those blessings? From a biblical point of view, this supports a conclusion that part of Germany has an Israelite origin, and part of it has a non-Israelite (i.e. "Assyrian") origin.

Given the evidence that Germany has both Israelite and Assyrian origins, and since Germany has precisely fulfilled Genesis 49's prophecy about the tribe of Gad in the latter days, it is the judgment of this book that the modern German people of Europe are a mixture of the Israelite tribe of Gad and the non-Israelite Assyrians.

We have not yet identified the tribes of Levi, Simeon and Judah. The tribes of Simeon and Levi were foretold to be "scattered" among the other tribes during the "latter days." For that reason, there can be no modern nation which is "Levite" or "Simeonite" in nature. However, we will attempt to locate their descendants in the modern world after examining the tribe of Judah. While Judah was not one of the "lost ten tribes of Israel," we will discuss it at this juncture.

### **THE TRIBE OF JUDAH:**

This is the most well-known Israelite tribe. Many readers can make this identification easily because the Jews have long been identified as the descendants of the Israelite tribe of Judah. The

tribe of Judah (as well as affiliated tribes in the ancient kingdom of Judah) came to be known as "Jews," a shortened form of the word "Ju-dah" (pronounced "Jew-duh"). While Judah was originally one of the largest tribes of Israel, it is one of the smallest in the modern world. Since the Jews were a stateless people until 1948, and given the depletion of the Jewish population during the World War II Holocaust and earlier pogroms throughout history, the Jewish population has had little opportunity for population growth. The fact that the Jews have been a stateless people for millennia supports their identification as the tribe of Judah, as we shall see in this section.

When the united kingdom of Israel under David and Solomon split into two nations, the term "Judah" or "House of Judah" referred to the southern nation with its capital at Jerusalem. The kingdoms of Judah and Israel thereafter fought many wars with each other. In II Kings 16:5-6, a war occurred in which "Israel" fought against the "Jews." While this sounds impossible to modern readers who are familiar with a Jewish state named "Israel," the Bible does not use modern terminologies to describe Israel's tribes. After the death of Solomon, the Bible's use of the term "House of Israel" consistently applies to the ten tribes of Israel. The term "House of Judah" consistently describes the Jews.

This vital fact is often overlooked in modern prophetic books since many assume that the terms "Judah" and "Israel" can be synonymously applied to the Jews (or Israelis) in biblical prophecies for the latter days. All prophetic scenarios based on this mistaken assumption will prove erroneous. Prophecies about "Judah" or the "House of Judah" refer to modern Jews, but the terms "Israel" or "House of Israel" apply to the descendants of the "lost ten tribes" in the modern world. The Bible is very consistent in its descriptions of Jacob's descendants by these

separate terms.

After Judah went into captivity about 576 B.C., a contingent of Jews were allowed by a Persian king to return to Judea, and reestablish a small Jewish enclave centered on Jerusalem. Ezra 1:5-2:70 makes it clear that only persons from the Israelite tribes of Judah, Levi, and Benjamin (the tribes of the former kingdom of Judah) were among the settlers. Although Ezra wrote that only people from the tribes of the House of Judah had returned to Judea, he occasionally uses the term "children of Israel" when referring to them. This is accurate in a racial sense because "children of Israel" is simply another way of saying "children of Jacob," and all Israelite tribes descended from Jacob, whose name was changed to "Israel." This demonstrates that the application of the term "Israel" can be confusing, and the context of its usage must determine the intended meaning.

The ten tribes of Israel did not return to Palestine, although a portion of them (the Scythians) temporarily occupied their old homelands in Palestine during the reign of King Josiah of Judah (as discussed in chapter six). Many Jews remained in Asia with the ten tribes of Israel, as only a small contingent returned to resettle Jerusalem under the Persians. These Asian Jews later flourished in the Parthian Empire, and remained free of Roman dominion. When Parthia fell, many Asian Jews migrated along with the Parthians into new European homelands. Since Jews throughout history have fiercely preserved their Jewish customs and culture, their descendants are readily identified today as "Jews." However, not all the descendants of Judah will be found among the world's Jewish population. This is particularly true of the royal descendants of King David.

Those Jews who migrated into Europe from Asia are frequently referred to as "**Ashkenazi**" Jews, which is significant! The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* notes that the Persians called the

Arsacid rulers of Parthia the "**Ashkanians**" (after "Ashak").<sup>49</sup> The *Britannica* asserts that "Arsaces," the name of the first Parthian king (as well as its dynasty), is based on "Ashak"<sup>50</sup> so (a form of "Yishak," the Hebrew/ Aramaic form of the name "Isaac"). Therefore, "Ashkenazi" Jews are named after Isaac, and bear the name of Parthian kings, who were themselves Jews descended from King David (as discussed in earlier chapters).

God promised that the tribe of Judah would produce a permanent dynasty of rulers (kings) in Genesis 49:10 with the words:

***"The sceptre [a symbol of royal authority] shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come."***  
(Emphasis added.)

The word "Shiloh" is a reference to the Messiah." Remember that Genesis 49 is a "latter-day" prophecy about the tribes of Israel, so the prophecy indicates that there must still be a Jewish dynasty on earth during the latter days, just prior to the coming of the Messiah (i.e. the second coming of Jesus Christ). Jeremiah also prophesied that King David's dynasty would be a perpetual one (Jeremiah 33:17), indicating that his dynasty will still be present on the earth in the latter days. When the Messiah "comes" and assumes David's throne, David's dynasty will truly be "perpetual" in the person of the immortal Jesus Christ (who was himself a literal "son of David"). "Where is David's dynasty today?" Obviously, it is not in the Jewish Israeli nation since they have no king.

The Davidic dynasty was continued in the Arsacid kings of Parthia, as the chapters on Parthia demonstrate. When the Parthians fled toward Europe, Arsacid princes went with them and continued to rule in Armenia for almost two centuries. When the Parthians and Scythians became known as Goths, Germans, Saxons, etc. and migrated into Europe, it is logical that their

royalty were still descended from Parthian Arsacids. These transplanted Arsacid princes furnished the gene pool for many of the kings of the Goths, Germans, Saxons, etc. as they migrated into Europe. Some of these dynasties still exist in the royalty of modern Europe, even though their roles are now chiefly ceremonial. The prophecy of Jeremiah 33:17 is particularly important because it foretold that David's royal descendants would permanently be found ruling **not** the House of Judah, but the **non-Jewish House of Israel!** This confirms that David's royal descendants will be found among the ruling houses of non-Jewish nations descended from the ten tribes of Israel. Since the royal houses of Europe intermarried extensively, David's royal blood was scattered widely throughout Europe's ruling dynasties. Genealogies confirming that the royalty of Great Britain are directly descended from King David are readily available. One such genealogy is cited in Raymond Capt's book, *Jacob's Pillar*.<sup>51</sup>

The term "divine right of kings" may have stemmed from a former awareness that many rulers were descendants of King David, whose descendants literally were given "a divine right" to rule by God. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states the following concerning the "divine right of kings:"

*"The principle that the kingship is 'descendible in one sacred family'...is not only still that of the British constitution, as that of all monarchical states, but is practically that of kingship from the beginning. This is, however, quite a different thing from asserting...not only that 'legitimate' monarchs derive their authority from...God alone, but that **this authority is by divine ordinance hereditary in a certain order of succession.**"<sup>52</sup> (Emphasis added.)*

The only royal family that was given a "right to rule" by "divine ordinance" in the Bible was the family of David's descendants. This fact may have originated the "divine right of kings" concept among King David's descendants.

Let us consider the characteristics of Judah, the forefather of the Jews to further document that modern Jews are the descendants of Judah. To many, this may seem like a needless exercise, but since some readers may be familiar with teachings that Jews are modern Edomites descended from the Khazars of Medieval Russia, the following discussion is necessary.

Some think that the Khazars were non-Israelite; however, it has been established that numerous Jews lived in the Parthian Empire and many of these Jews likely accompanied the migrating Parthians into Europe through territory north of the Black Sea (precisely where the Khazars were found). Also, as noted earlier, the Ashkenazi Jews (supposedly the descendants of the Khazars) actually bear a name of Isaac which dates to Parthian times. Even if the Khazars were gentiles, when they willingly adopted the customs and religion of the tribe of Judah, they would have become "Jews" in God's eyes as Ezekiel 47:22-23 required that "strangers (non-Israelites)" who "sojourned" in a particular tribe be given "an inheritance" in that tribe as one "born in the land." In the case of the Khazars, they would have been grafted into the tribe of Judah because they adopted the customs and religion of Judah.

There is also evidence that the Khazars were a Caucasian race. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that the Khazars were part of the "white race of the steppe."<sup>53</sup> It adds that the Khazars, in response to being threatened by hordes of Turkic tribes, built a stone fortress with the help of the Byzantines. The *Britannica* states:

*"Famous as the one stone structure in that*



*stoneless region, [the fortress] became known far and wide amongst the hordes of the steppe as Sar-kel or **the White Abode**. Merchants from every nation found protection and good faith in the Khazar cities...The dynasty accepted Judaism, but there was **equal tolerance for all.**"<sup>54</sup>*  
(Emphasis added.)

So, the Khazars were known by their contemporaries as a white ("Caucasian") race, and they built a great fortress to protect themselves from marauding Turkic tribes. They were capitalists known for "good faith," and practiced religious tolerance. In doing so, they perpetuated Parthian tradition, for the Parthians were famous for honest dealings and religious tolerance. The *Britannica* further asserts the Khazars and Ephthalites were both part of the "white race of the steppe,"<sup>55</sup> and it is worth noting that the Khazars lived in the old homeland of the Scythians. If the Khazars and Ephthalites were both tribes of the "white race of the steppe," the Khazars were likely Israelite (or at the very least Semitic) because the Ephthalites were clearly the tribe of Naphtali (as noted in chapter ten).

Also, when word spread on the trade routes that Khazaria had adopted Judaism, many scattered Jews would surely have migrated to Khazaria to seek refuge there. This would have progressively increased the numbers of Jews among the Khazars over time.

Let us now examine the prophecy of Genesis 49:8-12 which foretells the role of Judah in the "last days." It states:

*"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thy enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lions whelp: from the*

*prey, my son, thou art gone up...The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come..."*

Judah is depicted as a militaristic nation in the latter days. The Israelis have been warlike and militarily successful in their Mideast wars, fulfilling this prophecy likening them to a lion which has killed its prey. It is only since the founding of a Jewish state in 1948 that the ancient warring skills of Judah have again been evident. **Since there has been no independent Jewish nation for millennia (until 1948), this prophecy could not have been fulfilled until modern times when there was again a Jewish nation, further identifying the post-World War II period as the "last days."** Even the location of the modern Jewish state was foretold in Zephaniah 2:7, which prophesied:

*"And the coast shall be for the **remnant of the house of Judah**: they shall feed thereupon: in the houses of Ashkelon shall they lie down...for the Lord their God shall visit them, **and turn away their captivity.**"*  
(Emphasis added.)

This prophecy is set in a time just prior to "the day of the Lord's anger," clearly paralleling "the day of the Lord" which is associated in prophecies with "the latter days." Ashkelon was an old Philistine city on the Palestinian seacoast, so the Bible accurately predicted a Jewish homeland would be restored on the coastal portion of Palestine in the latter days, ending the "captivity" (the stateless diaspora) of the Jews. The founding of the Jewish state in 1948 is widely recognized by many as the fulfillment of this ancient prophecy, which predicted that the Jewish "captivity" would not be ended until just prior to the "day of the Lord." Because of this prophecy the Jews cannot be a

people who existed as a sovereign nation prior to the latter day period.

Additionally, this prophecy refers to the Jews as **“the house of Judah,”** and does not refer to them by the name of “Israel,” demonstrating that in prophecies for the latter days (our modern world) **God still refers to the descendants of the tribes of Israel by their ancient names, not their modern names!** (See also Zechariah 14:14.) The modern name of the Jewish state is misleading. Even though the Israeli nation is located in the ancient **land** of Israel, it was founded by the **descendants** of the tribe of Judah. When looking for the modern Jews in end-time prophecies, one **must** look for biblical references to “Judah,” not “Israel.” **That God himself, in 1948, used the Jewish people to fulfill latter day prophecies about “Judah,” is “prima facie” evidence that modern Jews are Judah.**

That the tribe of Judah is likened to a “lion” in the end time indicates that they will be bold (even predatory) in their military approach. Surrounded by enemies, the Israelis have had little choice but to be a martial nation. In the Arab-Israeli wars, their daring rescue raid at Entebbe, the preemptive strike on Iraq’s nuclear reactor, etc., the Jews have clearly fulfilled this aspect of Jacob’s prophecy about “Judah.”

The prophecy about Judah’s brethren “bowing down” to Judah could be a reference to the “sceptre” promise given to Judah that the kings of the House of Israel would be Jews from King David’s dynasty.

### **THE TRIBES OF LEVI AND SIMEON:**

These tribes are considered last because the Bible indicated they would not have nations of their own in the latter days, but would be scattered among the other tribes of Israel. Genesis 49:5-7 addresses them jointly:

*"Simeon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords. O my soul, come not into their council; O my spirit, be not joined to their company; for in their anger they slay men, and in their wantonness they hamstring oxen. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; and their wrath, for it is cruel! **I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.**" (RSV)*

The reference to oxen is more understandable in *The Living Bible*, which states Levi and Simeon "maimed oxen just for fun." The reference to their killing men concerns the events of Genesis 34, wherein Simeon and Levi massacred all the males of a town because one of them had premarital sex with their sister, Dinah (even though Dinah had consented to the act). In modern English, we would say that Levi and Simeon both had a tendency to "shoot first, and ask questions later."

Genesis 49's prophecy implies that if God had allowed these tribes to be sovereign nations in the last days, they likely would be militaristic, ruthless nations. Their descendants are to be scattered among the other tribes of Israel in the "last days," their inclination to warfare would surely draw many of them into the military services of the Israelite nations.

In the Bible's account of Joseph meeting his brothers who had sold him into slavery in Egypt, Joseph's harshest treatment was given to Simeon. He let Simeon languish in an Egyptian prison while the others were permitted to return to Canaan (Genesis 42:24). This indicates that Joseph identified Simeon as the "hothead" who had led the effort to kill Joseph before he was sold into slavery (Genesis 37:18-20).

Simeon did have good qualities as well. After the Israelites split into two warring nations, there was a time when Israel had

forsaken God but Judah had several good kings. During this time, various members of the northern ten tribes of Israel moved to Judah in order to serve God. II Chronicles 15:9 and 34:6 mention that on two different occasions, Simeonites were prominent in joining the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh to serve God. This indicates that the Simeonites can exhibit a zeal for God, and may also tend to be found in the "Bible Belts" of the nations of the modern tribes of Israel. Since Simeonites are mentioned as acting in concert with Ephraim and Manasseh in both of the above passages, it indicates that many Simeonites will be found among the modern tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

There is an historical record that the "Simonii" arrived in ancient Briton in 720 B.C.,<sup>56</sup> a time when many Israelites were fleeing from Assyrian captivity. These "Simonii" were a part of the tribe of Simeon. The ancient Celtic Britons who were fierce warriors and successfully limited Roman advances into the British Isles were most likely Simeonites. That neither the Romans nor the Saxons were able entirely to subdue them gives evidence to the innate military prowess of the early Britons. This would be expected of Simeonites. The early Celtic Britons were eventually pushed westward into Wales and northward into Scotland. Therefore, those with Welsh and Scotch ancestry would be prime candidates for Simeonite ancestry in the modern world.

While Genesis 49 prophesied that the Simeonites would not have a nation of their own in the latter days, that prophecy did not state that they would never be sovereign at any time in history. In fact, there is an interesting possibility that the Simeonites at one time did have a sovereignty of their own. We saw earlier that the Danites were part of the ancient "Sea-Peoples" who marauded in the eastern Mediterranean from 1400 B.C. to about 1200 B.C. The Greeks recorded that besides the Danaans, at

least one other tribe (the “**Tzakarai**” or “**Sacarai**”) was allied to the Danaans at that time. The name of **Isaac** argues that this other tribe was an unnamed Israelite tribe. A marauding, warlike way of life would be consistent with the Simeonites. The fact that the Danites and Simeonites sailed together to the British Isles in 720 B.C. (as the Tuatha De Danaan and the Simonii) supports the view that these two tribes were also sailing together as the Sea Peoples during the time of Israel’s Judges.

In Greece, the city-state of Sparta was established around 1100 B.C. This book examines the possibility that the Spartans were founded by Israelite Sea Peoples who were establishing homelands for their people. Supporting this proposal is a record that Spartan Greeks mingled with the Sea Peoples who had settled in Libya.<sup>57</sup> Interestingly, when Sparta later established a colony of its own in Italy, it named it “Taras.”<sup>58</sup> “Taras” is a name associated with the Israelites when they were wandering in the wilderness (Numbers 33:27-28) and “Terah” was the father of Abraham (Genesis 11:31).

Much stronger evidence of an Israelite origin for Sparta is found in the testimony of the Spartans themselves! The book of I Maccabees contains a fascinating correspondence between the Jews and the Spartans in the second century B.C. In the time of the Maccabean revolt from the Seleucids, a Jewish leader, Jonathan, sent a letter to the Spartans which included the following:

*“Jonathan, the high priest...and the rest **of the Jewish people send greetings to their brothers the Spartans.** In former times a letter was sent to the high priest Onias from Arius who was then a king among you, to say that **you are our kinsmen**, as the copy of it that is appended to this shows...we have*

*undertaken to send to renew relations of brotherhood... with you...as it is right and proper to remember kinsmen."*

The above letter is found in I Maccabees 12:5-18. Verses 19-23 record the following letter from King Arius of Sparta to the Jews (cited in the above letter).

*"Arius, king of the Spartans, sends greetings to Onias, the Chief Priest. **It has been found in a writing concerning the Spartans and Jews, that they are kinsmen, and they are descended from Abraham.** Now since we learned this, please write us about your welfare..."*

A King Areus I ruled in Sparta (circa 309-264 B.C.) as did a King Areus II (circa 259-251 B.C.), one of which likely wrote the above letter to the Jewish High Priest. Notice the Spartan king does not claim the Spartans are Jews, but rather "kinsmen" of the Jews. This is an appropriate wording if the Spartans were descended from one of the other tribes of Israel. Josephus regarded the above correspondence as genuine, and referred to it in his works.<sup>59</sup> The historian, A.H.M. Jones, also cited the above correspondence in his book, *Sparta*.<sup>60</sup>

Sparta was a warlike city-state, which could be very ruthless at times. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* observes:

*"The whole education of the Spartan was designed to make him an efficient soldier. Obedience, endurance, military success—these were the aims constantly kept in view, and all other ends took a secondary place."<sup>61</sup>*

This martial approach is consistent with the tribe of Simeon,

which had a natural inclination to “go to war” (Genesis 35:25-26, 49:5-6). Interestingly, it was Spartan King Leonidas and his 300 Spartans who valiantly rescued Greece by holding the pass of Thermopylae against the massive army of Persia’s King Xerxes. If the above identifications are accurate, 300 Simeonite warriors held back the army of Persia in this famous battle long enough for the Greeks to assemble the rest of their forces. Combining the Spartan example with the military skills of the early British Celts (who resisted the Romans), the Simeonites were (and are) a tribe with excellent warmaking skills. If God had allowed the Simeonites to have a nation of their own in modern times (rather than scattering them), it would likely exhibit the nature of ancient Sparta.

Now let us consider the Levites. We know that Levites migrated into Asia, and some of them accompanied the Jews who rebuilt Jerusalem during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. Many Levites also remained in the Parthian Empire where they may have been “the hereditary priesthood” who formed Parthia’s Magi. Today they are scattered among both the Jews and the nations of the ten tribes of Israel.

Although the Levites shared the Simeonites’ capacity for violence, they had a particular zeal for service to God, which was apparent in the wilderness under Moses. Exodus 32 records the episode of the Israelites sinning with the golden calf at Mt. Sinai while Moses was on the mountain with God. When Moses returned, he found the Israelites engaging in an idolatrous orgy. Moses asked for those “on the Lord’s side” to come to him, and the tribe of Levi came to Moses en masse. Moses immediately assigned the Levites the job of executing 3000 ringleaders of this idolatrous event (Exodus 32:25-28).

The combination of an inclination towards violence and a zeal for God made the Levites the perfect choice to be the priestly tribe



of ancient Israel because much of their responsibilities involved killing and butchering many animal sacrifices. Levites are not squeamish people, and they would make good surgeons, soldiers, morticians, etc.

Jeremiah 33:17-21, the same passage containing God's promise that David's descendants will perpetually include rulers, also promises that the Levites will perpetually be involved in the priesthood. Verse 22 even promises that both David and the Levites will be blessed with numerous descendants. It was proposed earlier that Levites constituted the Parthian Magi, who were a "hereditary priesthood." Supporting this conclusion is the fact that God himself was personally involved in bringing some of Parthia's Magi to worship Jesus as a young child (biblical precedent shows that God did not work "hand in glove" with pagan priesthods).

In 70 A.D. the Jerusalem Temple was destroyed, and the need for a Levitical priesthood became moot. Since there are no sacrifices to offer, but Jeremiah 33:17-22 promises that the Levites would always be "priests" of God, where are they today?

Given the traditional Levite zeal for God, it is logical that some modern Levites will be found among Jewish rabbis and Christian pastors. God prophesied that he would scatter the Levites among all the tribes of Israel. In so doing, God provided Levites to minister to all of Israel's tribes.

The tribe of Levi also had a special aptitude for music and entertainment. I Chronicles 15:14-28 and II Chronicles 5:12-13 show that the Levites served as official singers and musicians in ancient Israel. I Chronicles 15:16-22 states:

*"David spoke to the chief of the **Levites to appoint their brethren** to be the singers with instruments of music, psalteries and harps and cymbals...and Chenaniah, chief of*

*the Levites, was for song: he instructed about the song, because he was skillful.”*

These passages show that in Israel’s Temple services, the orchestra and choir were Levites with the “chief” Levite serving as choir director. Ezra 3:10 and Nehemiah 7:44 confirm that the Levites continued to perform these functions for centuries. The clear indication is that the Levites possessed superior musical, artistic and creative skills.

Consequently, we should expect to find many Levites in the music and entertainment business today. The tribe of Levi anciently attached itself to the tribe of Judah (II Chronicles 11:14), and Levites were among the Jews who rebuilt Jerusalem in the time of Ezra (Ezra 1:5). Therefore, one would expect that many Jews in today’s music, entertainment and movie industries are actually Levites because of the artistic talents of forefather Levi.

Like the Simeonites, the Levites do not compose a single nation today, but are scattered among all the modern nations descended from the original twelve tribes of Israel. Although many Levites are in the ranks of today’s Jews, God’s prophecy that they would be scattered among **all** the tribes of Israel demonstrates that many are also present among the non-Jewish nations of the modern ten tribes of Israel.

## **CONCLUSION:**

This concludes our discussion of the identities of the modern nations of the tribes of Israel. While many of the above identifications of the tribes of Israel (particularly the major tribes) are certain, some of the clues about the smaller tribes of Israel are cryptic and their identities less certain. The identifications presented in this chapter apply to modern nations in a general sense, and do not mean that all residents of such

nations are descendants of particular Israelite tribes. There are large contingents of other racial groups in all the modern Israelite nations, so their populations include many non-Israelites as well.

Non-Israelites living in Israelite nations will be affected by the prophecies and promises applying to the Israelite nations in which they reside. And as Ezekiel 47:22-23 makes clear, "strangers who sojourn among the Israelites" (i.e. racial non-Israelites who assimilate into the nations of the modern tribes of Israel) are also reckoned **by God** to have their "inheritance...among the tribes of Israel." This being the case, the people of each nation, whatever their racial background, will find themselves "in the same boat" as prophecies about those nations are fulfilled in the future. Therefore, all racial and ethnic groups within the modern nations of the tribes of Israel should try to be as brotherly and supportive to one another as possible, fulfilling the biblical injunction "to love thy neighbor as thyself," regardless of racial origin.

Again, identifying Israel's tribes among the modern nations does not confer upon them any "racial superiority." However, an Israelite heritage does confer certain blessings, responsibilities and destinies that are a result of divine dispensations and biblical prophecies. In this sense, the biblical identifications are actually racial "equalizers." They explain that the wealth, power and prosperity of the modern Israelite nations are a result of their inheriting blessings which were promised by God to their ancient forefathers. The blessings have occurred, not because of any racial superiority, but because of God's profound faithfulness to his promises and prophecies.

A final observation about the modern tribes of Israel will be made before this chapter concludes. Jeremiah 30 is a prophecy about Israel and Judah which is time-specific for the latter-days

(verse 24). Verse 21 offers us final, conclusive guidance in identifying the modern nations of the tribes of Israel. Its prophecy about Israel's tribes states:

***"And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them..."***

This prophecy foretold that all the tribes of Israel will have democracies. "Governors" (chief rulers) who "proceed from the **midst of them,**" and "nobles" (subordinate rulers) who are "**of themselves**" describe leaders who **are elected by the people.** Therefore, the Bible accurately prophesied that all the tribes of Israel would elect their own leaders in the latter days—another striking example of the accuracy of biblical prophecy!

Some will deny the identifications made in this chapter. Those who offer alternative identifications, supported by biblical and secular evidence, should be treated respectfully. However, those who still deny that the ten tribes of Israel can be identified in the modern world need not be taken seriously. **In Genesis 49 God absolutely promises that the ten tribes of Israel will be recognizable nations in the "latter days" of our modern era! Those who say otherwise call God a "liar."**

That these ancient biblical prophecies have come to pass so precisely in our modern world clearly shows that the God of the Bible is still actively involved in the events of our world. God has influenced world events throughout history, directed the paths of migrating tribes and determined the outcome of wars to ensure that the modern descendants of Israel's tribes would be positioned to fulfill the prophecies of Genesis 49. **No detractor of the Bible can state that these prophecies were written "after the fact" because these prophecies have existed for centuries and millennia before the borders and circumstances of modern nations were determined. It is**

**now time to acknowledge the infallibility and accuracy of the Bible's historical accounts and prophecies. The Bible is what it claims to be: the inspired word of the Creator God.**

The God of the Bible asserts his "credentials" in Isaiah 41:21-29 against all other so-called "gods" by declaring that he **alone** can control future events in order to fulfill his prophecies. God issues this challenge to all false "gods":

*"Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons...**Let them...show us what will happen: let them show the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them: or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods...behold you are of nothing...Who hath declared from the beginning that we may know?...Behold they are all vanity; their works are nothing.**"*

(Emphasis added.)

The God of the Bible declares that he alone is able to make prophecies about the future and control events to ensure they come to pass. No other "god" of any other religion can equal the God of the Bible in this regard. God's unfailing accuracy in fulfilling biblical prophecies in the past and present assures us that biblical prophecy will be equally accurate in the future.

This book's narrative examination of the history of the tribes of Israel now concludes. As the reader now knows, the "lost" ten tribes of Israel have never really been lost at all! The reader now has national identities for the modern nations of the tribes of Israel, based both on biblical and secular evidence.

The question still remains: "What role will Israel's tribes play in the latter-day prophecies which have yet to be fulfilled?" Many prophecies foretell that the various tribes of Israel will have major roles in the fulfillment of those prophecies. The second book in this series will examine not only the roles of the nations of the modern tribes of Israel in fulfilling prophecies for the future, but also the roles of many other modern nations as well. In addition, it will examine in greater detail the evidence that we are living in the biblically-propheesied latter days, and will offer evidence that the Bible contains clear answers for many "ancient mysteries" which have long baffled mankind. The explanation of those "ancient mysteries" will provide surprising insights to many biblical prophecies for the latter days.

For an examination of what the Bible has prophesied for modern nations between now and the epochal second coming of Jesus Christ, the reader is invited to read the second book in this series when it becomes available.

## Endnotes: Chapter Eleven

1. Bradley, *The Goths*, p. 9
2. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 14, "Mandrake," p. 795
3. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 4, "British Empire," p. 181
4. Rice, p. 42
5. *Ibid*, p. 60
6. *Ibid*, p. 76
7. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, See word "Man," subhead 2, p. 635
8. Edwards, *Wales*, pp. 12-17; and *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 5, "Celt," p. 102
9. Edwards, p. 17
10. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 5, "Celt," p. 102
11. Herodotus, *The History*, 4.130-134
12. Rice, plates 46-51 following p. 208
13. *Ibid*, plate 46
14. Capt, *Jacob's Pillar*, pp. 90-94
15. Pitts, *The U.S.A. in Bible Prophecy*, pp. 3, 16, 19
16. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 11, "France: Government," pp. 729-730
17. *Webster's New World Dictionary*, see word "haven," p. 343
18. *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 23, "Rotterdam," p. 805
19. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see word "suck," subheads 2 and 3, p. 945
20. *Ibid*, see word "Border," subhead 5, p. 105
21. *Ibid*, see word "Thigh," subhead 2, p. 975
22. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see word "Royal," subhead 2, p. 826
23. *Ibid*, see word "Yield," subhead 9, p. 1083
24. *Ibid*, see word "Dainties," subhead 3, p. 219
25. Capt, *The Traditions of Glastonbury*, p. 28
26. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 118-124
27. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 9, "The Sixth Oriental

- Monarchy Finland... History,"* p. 253
28. *Ibid*, p. 253
  29. *Ibid*, p.253
  30. *Ibid*, p. 254
  31. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 8, "Ephthalites," p. 646
  32. *Ibid*, p. 646
  33. Rawlinson, *The Sixth Oriental Monarchy*, pp. 115-118
  34. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 8, "Ephthalites," p. 646
  35. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 13, "Khazars," p. 362
  36. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see words "Goodly," subhead 14, p. 429; and "Word," subhead 1, p. 1067
  37. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 22, "Troy," p. 504
  38. Fell, *America B.C.*, p. 174
  39. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 22, "Troy," p. 503
  40. Fell, *America B.C.*, pp. 176 and 179
  41. *Ibid*, p. 174
  42. *Ibid*, p. 176
  43. Alien, p. 275
  44. Lawless, pp. 7-9
  45. *Collier's Encyclopedia*, Vol. 17, "Scythian," p. 434
  46. *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, see word "Judge, to-," subhead 1, p. 556
  47. *Ibid*, see word "Troop," subhead 4, p. 1002
  48. Baring-Gould, *Germany*, pp. 30-31
  49. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, "Parthia," p. 345; and "Persia," pp. 576-577
  50. *Ibid*, Vol. 17, "Persia," pp. 576-577
  51. Capt, *Jacob's Pillar*, pp. 90-94
  52. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "King," subhead "Divine Right of Kings," p. 394
  53. *Ibid*, Vol. 13, "Khazars," p. 362
  54. *Ibid*, p. 363



55. *Ibid*, p. 362
56. *Alien*, p. 275
57. *Fell, America B.C.*, p. 179
58. *Jones, Sparta*, p. 10
59. *Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews*, XIII, V, 8
60. *Jones*, p. 12
61. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 21, "Sparta," p. 170

## Epilogue

This book has traced the ten tribes of Israel throughout history, and has offered modern identifications for these tribes which are consistent with biblical prophecy and secular records.

It has also shown that the Bible's prophecies about the ten tribes of Israel have been fulfilled not only throughout history, but also in the modern world. The fact that biblical prophecies, written millennia ago by the prophets of Israel and Judah, have been (and are being) fulfilled offers powerful proof that there is a divine God who both authored the original prophecies and is implementing their fulfillment today! This fact gives us a compelling reason to believe that the God of the Bible will also unfailingly implement his prophecies for the future as well!

As the reader of this book now knows, the ten tribes of Israel comprise many of the modern western world's major nations. Based on the identifications offered in this book, biblical prophecies can now be examined in a new perspective and with new confidence. For example, we can now know that latter day prophecies about "Manasseh" apply to the United States, "Ephraim" refers to the Caucasian nations of the British Commonwealth of nations headed by Great Britain, and "Judah" refers to the Israeli nation in the Mideast. The prophetic term "House of Israel" refers to the Israelite nations of North America, Europe and Scandinavia while the "House of Judah" refers to Israelis and Jews. Most Christian books about prophecy assume, erroneously, that the ten tribes of Israel either "died out" or were "lost" in history. Therefore, they mistakenly apply latter-day biblical prophecies meant for the ten tribes of Israel to the Jewish nation in the Mideast, even though the Bible clearly shows "Israel" and "Judah" will be separate entities in the latter days!

The second book in this series will examine latter-day prophecies

in light of the correct information about which nations comprise the modern ten tribes of Israel. The symmetry between world geopolitics and biblical prophecy will become startlingly clear, with sobering ramifications for the nations of the western world who expect a tranquil "New World Order" to emerge from the break-up of the Soviet Union. The Bible reveals that a cataclysmic world war will occur after being preceded by a time of apparent "world peace."

However, before we examine those prophecies, it must first convincingly be demonstrated that we are, indeed, living in the prophetic period called "the latter days." The Bible offers many prophecies about the latter days which enable us to determine whether we are living in this epochal, prophetic period. The second book in this series examines many biblical prophecies which confirm that we are truly living in the "latter day" period which signals that the second coming of Jesus Christ is imminent.

While new perspectives on familiar prophecies will be included, the second book will also offer astounding new information. It will examine a cryptic prophecy of Jesus Christ (Matthew 24:37) that the "latter days" would parallel the pre-Flood world of Noah's time. Do previously inexplicable ancient artifacts (ancient batteries, airports, toy airplanes, etc.) attest that a "high-tech" civilization was previously present on the earth? This evidence has been described and documented in books by Erich von Daniken (i.e. *Chariots of the Gods, In Search of Ancient Gods*). These "high-tech" artifacts have routinely been written off as "ancient mysteries," and their existence has been censored out of modern textbooks because they are "politically incorrect" in an evolutionary educational system.

The second book will fearlessly examine these ancient "high-tech" artifacts and will offer a biblically-based explanation for

their origin. The Bible declares that mankind was created **“in the image of God,”** and was given unlimited freedom to “subdue the earth.” Even most Christians seem unaware that the book of Genesis asserts that mankind urbanized, developed a complex division of labor society and had a metallurgical industry in the pre-Flood world! Given this fact, do we really need “outer space alien” theories to explain the ancient “high-tech” relics which have been found on the earth?

The next book will also examine biblical prophecies describing how Jesus Christ will govern the earth during his millennial reign. Christians are not promised a vague heavenly “retirement” with eternal harp music. On the contrary, it declares that Jesus Christ will appoint his “saints” to literally and physically rule and govern the states, provinces and cities of every nation on earth for one thousand years! Bible prophecy is adamant that all human governments on earth will be replaced by Jesus Christ and his “saints,” who will serve as literal rulers within their jurisdictions. The Bible has many prophecies indicating how human societies and institutions will be restructured during the millennial rule of Jesus Christ. It will be a time of tranquility, peace and prosperity, to be sure, but even Christians will be surprised by some of the changes that the Bible reveals will be implemented and imposed by Jesus Christ!

For an “in depth” examination of the topics described above, you are invited to read the second book in this series. Watch for it soon.

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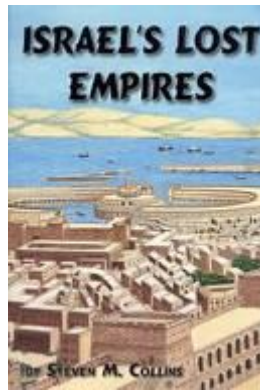
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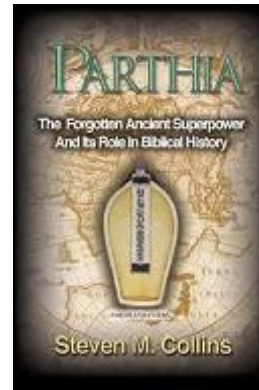
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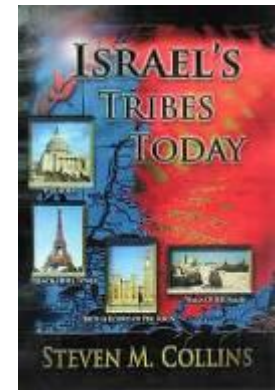
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