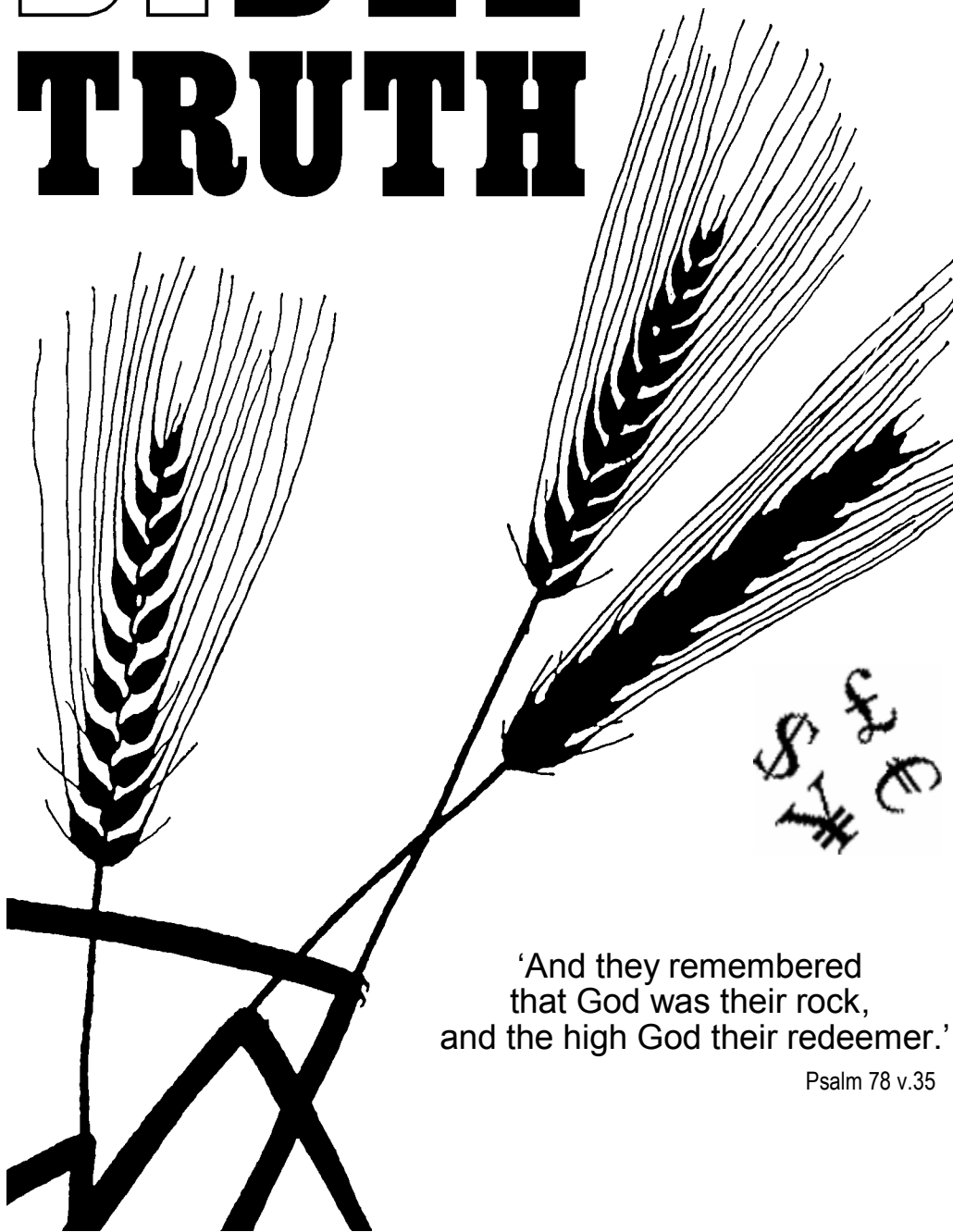


# BIBLE TRUTH

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'And they remembered  
that God was their rock,  
and the high God their redeemer.'

Psalm 78 v.35

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## Which Way Did They Go?

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It has been asserted, by many historians over a period of several centuries, that the Royal House of David was transplanted to the 'Isles of the sea', meaning Britain. If this be true, we are faced with some interesting questions.

Why there? Why would God move David's Throne, an Israelite throne, to the British Isles? What possible reason could He have for doing such a thing? Is it even feasible? David's descendants were to rule over the House of Israel (see Jeremiah ch.33 v.17, Isaiah ch.9 v.7 & Luke ch.1 vv.32-33) not the British!

But just where was Israel in the time of Jeremiah?

In 2 Samuel ch.7 v.10, in the time of David (quite some years before the time of Jeremiah), the Lord said,

'... I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, [in that place] ...'.

Notice the striking similarity between this passage and Jeremiah's commission 'to build and to plant' (see Jeremiah ch.1 v.10).

The Israelites were **already in Palestine** when this promise was made, so this indicates that the place where the Lord would plant His people Israel was a place other than Palestine. Another 'Promised Land', if you will.

But where was this place? How would Israel get to that place from their home in Palestine? What would cause them to move in the first place?

When a family relocates today, there could be a variety of reasons. Our job may move us, health reasons may warrant a change in climate, or you may just like to travel. But back then, as a general rule, people did not jump around like we do today. This

prophecy is not talking about just one family, or even a number of families; but about the relocating of **an entire nation!** How would God move His Israel to this new place?

In the 8th century before Christ, God began to chastise His beloved people for their awful disobedience in serving other gods; first with the Assyrian captivity of Israel, and later by the Babylonian captivity of Judah. The Assyrian captivity, which is what we will deal with here, came in waves beginning around 771 BC, and reaching a climax with the siege of Samaria 723-721 BC. Samaria was the capital of the kingdom of Israel (see 1 Kings ch.16 vv.23-24).

In 721 BC, Israel was taken captive into the land of Assyria by Shalmaneser. We read about it as follows.

‘And it came to pass in the fourth year of King Hezekiah [king of Judah], which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. **And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria**, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes: Because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them.’

2 Kings ch.18 vv.9-12

Again we can read,

‘In the ninth year of Hoshea the King of Assyria [Shalmaneser] took Samaria, **and carried Israel away into Assyria**, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes ... For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. **So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria ...**’

2 Kings ch.17 vv.6 & 22-23

The Israelites had heroically withstood Shalmaneser three years, but it was now God’s plan to turn them over captive to Assyria.

So, the entire ten-tribed nation of Israel (along with 200,150 or so of the people of Judah a few years later, see *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* ed. J.B. Pritchard, 1950, p.287f) was moved from their own land into Assyria because of their disgraceful wickedness and

disobedience towards God. They were used by the Assyrians as a 'buffer' around their kingdom against any outside attacks. God had begun the moving of His people.

But they did not stay in Assyria. After their captivity, the Israelites left Assyria. They could not go back to their own land, however, because when the King of Assyria took Israel away captive, he filled the area where the Israelites had dwelt, with the heathen.

'And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria **instead** of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.'

2 Kings ch.17 v.24

So where did the Israelites go? Scholars are variously divided on this question. There is such controversy over this issue, that the people of this Assyrian captivity (all of the House and Kingdom of Israel, along with a great portion of the House and Kingdom of Judah) are called the 'Lost Tribes of Israel'.

They are believed by many to be gone forever, having become amalgamated together with the people of Assyria, and mongrelised. But I do not believe this to be the case.

The Lord had said of the northern ten tribes (those thought to be 'lost') and their kingdom,

'Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom [the northern kingdom - Israel], and I will destroy it [the kingdom, not the people] from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD. For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, **yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth**'.

Amos ch.9 vv.8-9

He also said, 'I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me;' (see Hosea ch.5 v.3), and that,

'... the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, **and David their king**; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days'.

Hosea ch.3 vv.4-5

There are numerous prophecies, yet to be fulfilled, which include each of the twelve tribes. What about these prophecies? If these people are truly 'lost' forever, how can they be fulfilled? They cannot be! But the veracity of God's Holy Word demands that these tribes do exist. The book of James, written eight centuries after the Assyrian captivity, is addressed to 'the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad'. So they have got to be out there somewhere! I refuse to believe the scholars who say that these ten (plus) tribes were lost!

They may be lost to the world, lost to the present day Jews, and even lost to their own selves, for, 'Who is blind, but my servant?' (See Isaiah ch.42 v.19.) Nevertheless, I believe God when He says that He will not 'lose' His people. No, they're not lost. God knows where they are. And if we will look, and study history and the scriptures, we will know where they are too!

Josephus, writing in the first century AD, knew where his kindred were. He wrote,

'... there are but two tribes in Asia\* and Europe subject to the Romans, while the ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates [west from Palestine] till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers'.

Antiquities Bk xi, ch. V.2

\*According to Young, the term 'Asia' was anciently used to designate the northwest peninsula of the Asiatic continent (i.e. Asia Minor).

So they have still got to be out there somewhere. And they have got to be a great people!

The prophet Ezra writes more specifically,

'And whereas thou sawest that he gathered another peaceable multitude unto him; those are the ten tribes, which were carried away prisoners out of their own land in the time of Osea [Hoshea] the king, whom Salmanasar the king of Assyria led away captive, and he carried them over the waters, and so came they into another land. But they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind had dwelt,

That they might there keep their statutes, which they never kept in their own land. And they entered into Euphrates by the narrow passages of the river. For the most High then shewed signs for them, and held still the flood, till they were passed over. For through that country there was a great way to go, namely, of a year and a half: and the same region is called Arsareth'.

2 Esdras ch.13 vv.39-45

The area referred to is near the headwaters of the Euphrates, in the Caucasian Mountains, between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. That area has a ravine or 'gate', if you will, called 'the pass of Israel' in early writings. The fascinating thing is that according to classical history, this was the point of origin of the Kimmerians, or Cimmerians; and the area referred to as Arsareth is the same area where the Scythians emerge on the scene of history. Who were these Cimmerians and Scythians?

There stands in the British Museum an Assyrian monument called the Black Obelisk. This monument refers to the Assyrian captivity of Israel, but does not call the Israelites 'Israelites'. The Black Obelisk refers to the Israelites, whom the Assyrians had taken captive, as 'Bit Khumri', meaning 'House of Omri'. Omri was the king of Israel who established Samaria as the capital of Israel (see 1 Kings ch.16 vv.23-24). Omri made an impression on history outside of Israel. Not only did the Moabites remember his name, but after his death and the annihilation of his family the Assyrians for a time still attached his name, which they wrote 'Humri' (Khumri), to the reigning monarch and land of Israel (see *A Dictionary of the Bible* by John D. Davies, PhD, DD, LL.D, 4th edition, 1940, p.556).

Among the many variations of this name, Khumri, we find Kimmerians, Kymry, Gimmiri. The Kimmerians, or Cimmerians, were also called Sakai. but these same Sakai are also called Scythians. This fact is established by the best known inscriptions which have furnished the key to Assyriology. (See the Behiston Rock inscriptions.)

So we see that the vast majority of Israel became 'lost' to her original identity and became known as the Cimmerians, Scythians, Kymry, Gimmiri, Sakai, etc. These peoples were all the same people in reality (Israelites), but were known by different historians at different periods by different names. Archaeology and anthropology bears this out. These people went northward and westward and later in history became known as the Celts, Vikings, Angles, Normans and Saxons of history. And they were already in the 'Isles of the Sea' (see Isaiah chs 24 vv.14-15, 49 v.1, 51 vv.4-5 & Jeremiah ch.31 v.10) in large numbers by Jeremiah's time.

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