



The African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem

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New World Passover
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Dimona - Israel

Our Philosophy

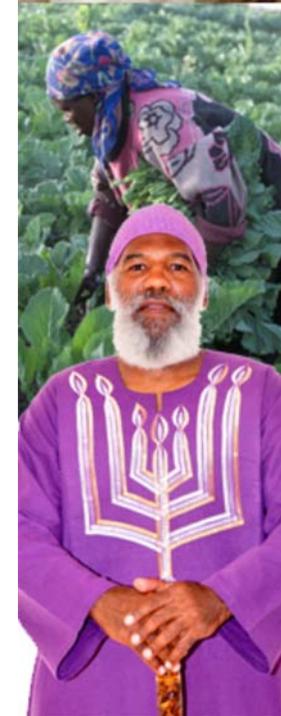
Most of the time around the world, when men speak of the Kingdom of God, they do so metaphorically. It is only some mythical paradise located in outer space, where the problems which have plagued humanity, magically cease to exist. What's more, one could only reach this heaven after death.

But in this land, Israel, Northeast Africa our perspective is different. Here the Biblical prophets, especially Isaiah and Daniel, taught us of this very real kingdom. The scriptures told us that it will be established in this land, at a time when larger nations dominate the global scene. This kingdom would start as a mustard seed, minute and obscure. Yet it will eventually grow, and never be destroyed.

What does this mean to mankind now? That somewhere in this land, there is a body of people dedicated to the fulfillment of this prophecy...in order that the words inspired by the Holy One of Israel, will not fail. Moreover, it is clear that Israel must live out its prophetic purpose... to be a light unto humanity demonstrating the benefits of living according to the word of God.

The African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem are comprised of approximately 2,000 men, women and children residing in three development towns - - Dimona, Arad and Mitzpe Ramon - - in southern Israel. We maintain a vibrant culture which includes a communal lifestyle, a vegan diet, a system of preventive health care and high moral standards - - a holistic approach to life based on righteousness. Our intent is to live according to the laws and prophecies of God.

Since our arrival in Dimona, in 1969, it has been our objective to be the foundation for the establishing of God's Kingdom on Earth. The accomplishments of the past years have only



strengthened our faith in the words of the prophets. Perhaps it will be hard for many to conceive that the former African Americans would be the source of this inspiration, and readily leave the pleasures of the ultra-modern America for life in the desert wilderness. But it is true. It is time now to bear testimony to the infallible word of God.

“Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings (insults).” - Isaiah 51:7

Although our presence (in previous years) raised opposition, controversy and much political clamor, we continue to nurture from within a lifestyle which is proving to be inspiring as well as refreshing to everyone in a world that has waxed cold.

Historical Background

As a direct result of their disobedience to the laws and commandments of God, the ancient Hebrew Israelites were held captive by various nations including the Egyptians, Assyrians and Babylonians. In 70 C.E. the remnants of The African Hebrew Israelites were driven from Jerusalem by the Romans into different parts of the world, including Africa. Many Hebrew Israelites migrated to West Africa where they, once again, were carried away captive - this time by Europeans on slave ships - to the Americas along with other African tribes people.

In 1966 our spiritual leader, Ben Ammi, had a vision that it was time for the Children of Israel who remained in America (the land of their captivity) to return to the Holy Land (the land of their origin).

In 1967, after almost two thousand years in the Diaspora, four hundred Hebrew Israelites were inspired by the spirit of God to make an exodus from America. According to plan, they settled in Liberia's interior to purge themselves of the negative attributes they had acquired in the captivity. After spending a two-and-one-half year period in Liberia, The African Hebrew Israelites were prepared to make the last portion of their journey home, returning to Israel in 1969.

In today's world, man has created so many diversions from and substitutions for the true worship of God that the people have lost their way. We realized just how far we had been led away from God and were astounded by the drastic changes required for those of us who desired to fulfill our responsibility

to God as Hebrew Israelites. Nonetheless, we have committed ourselves to the high degree of courage and discipline required to establish an alternative lifestyle that is in harmony with the cycles of God.

Why Israel?

Israel was not intended to be fashioned after the standards of Western societies. It was once a center of spiritual guidance and instruction. Israel was to be a place where all nations would come seeking the presence and wisdom of God. We have been motivated by our spiritual teacher and leader, Ben Ammi, to take on the Divinely-inspired mission to establish the prophetic "Kingdom of God" in the Holy Land. We have built a society based on the precepts of righteousness which emanates the presence of God and serves as a living example for all men... a society where solutions to the seemingly irreversible problems that plague mankind - rampant disease, drug abuse, sexual abuse, corruption, ecological destruction, disintegration of the family unity, etc. - can be found.

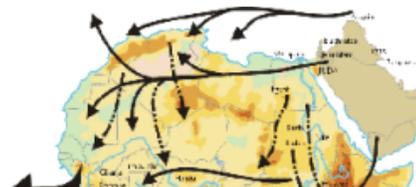
We do not subscribe to any religion because religions have only divided men. We regard the true worship of God as a continuous process: 24 hours a day... 7 days a week.

*"The true worship of God is an entire way of life, a continuous action, from the meal you eat in the morning, to the job you work on. It encompasses your every deed and thought." - **God The Black Man and Truth, Ben Ammi***

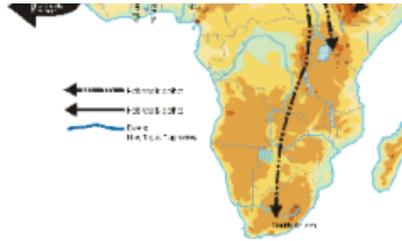
If we all worshipped God in this manner there would be no hole in the ozone, the water would be safe to drink, there would be no threat of war and there would be no inequality among men. As the 20th century comes to a close, we realize that pursuit of the modern technological society is not the answer to that which ails man. For this reason, we have sacrificed our individual interests and invested our lives in the building of the Kingdom of God - a viable solution for the salvation for all mankind.

Our Historical Connection To The Holy Land

Migration of The African Hebrew Israelites Throughout Africa



Prior to the excavation of the Suez Canal (1859-69) the entire Arabian Peninsula and what has become known today as the "Middle East" were physically connected with the African continent. African people lived and moved freely throughout this region of the world.



After the invasion of the Romans in 70 C.E., remnants of the Hebrew Israelites were driven from Jerusalem. For more than 1,000 years many of them migrated across the continent, eventually reaching West Africa.

From there, they were carried to the Americas where they were to become victims of the most cruel and inhumane slavery in recorded history. However, according to the word of God, this devastating path would eventually lead them back to their homeland (Israel) to fulfill their prophetic destiny.

*"The number of slaves taken by the companies and private traders during the whole period of the slave trade is difficult to estimate. One French historian says that it is no exaggeration to say that 100,000,000 people were lost..." - **The Story of Sierra Leone, Frances A. J. Utting***

There are many biblical references to various locations in Africa and interaction between the ancient Israelites and African peoples and places: King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba; migration into Egypt and subsequent enslavement, etc. Considering that such interaction and migration took place it is not hard to perceive that Hebrew Israelites were among the one hundred million who were taken from Africa during the trans-Atlantic slave trade. There is no way they could have escaped.

This fact is supported by the numerous accounts of Hebrew Israelite culture and religious tradition throughout Africa. In the introduction to his book **God the Black Man and Truth**, Ben Ammi points out that "We know that many West Africans, especially the Ashantis, are direct descendants of the ancient Hebrews because of the strong Hebrewisms that have been identified in Ashanti tribal customs, observance of the Sabbath (Saturday) as well as the name Ashanti from the words 'ti,' which in the west African tongue means 'race of'

and Ashan, a town in the domain of Judah (see Joshua 15:42).”

An article published in one of Israel's daily Hebrew newspapers, Ma'ariv (16 Sept. 1991) states, “No other Zimbabweans blow the Shofar except Zacharia who is of the lost tribe of Israel. Tens of thousands of “Black Jews” were discovered there recently... They are called “Lemba” and according to their tradition they are the descendants of Abraham, Moses and Solomon.” Mary Benson documented in her work Nelson Mandela The Man and the Movement, his reference to Israelites in South Africa, “...in 1921 General Smuts, the Prime Minister, had sent an army which massacred 163 men, women and children at nearby Bulhoek in the Eastern Cape; members of an Israelite sect...”

Acknowledging that a mass migration of Israelites did take place throughout Africa forces us to follow their footsteps across the landscape of time and to recall that during the centuries of enslavement in America the captives rebelled against the slave masters who stripped them of their names, their language, culture and religion. In his writing, Before the Mayflower, Lerone Bennett, Jr. points out that “Few slaves accepted this version of Christianity. Their God was the God who delivered the Israelites.”

Additionally, the Israelites who were taken into America maintained remnants of their heritage through the lyrics of what became known as slave songs or spirituals, “Canaan's Land where my possessions lie...” They never stopped praising the God of Israel and never turned their eyes from Zion. Even in terms of language they continued to use certain words which were definitely rooted in their original language (Hebrew). Words such as “ain't,” which is derived from The African Hebrew word “ayne” which also means no, not, nothing, there is not, etc.

Throughout the prophetic exile, migration, enslavement and later “assimilation” into the American way of life, many African Americans still know that their heritage is rooted in the Holy Land - Israel. On the eve of his assassination in 1968, the late Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was inspired to prophesy, “I just want to do God's will... He's allowed me to go up to the mountain... I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know... that we as a people will get to the Promised Land.” His words underscore an undeniable spiritual re-awakening.

Our presence in the Holy Land is fulfillment of Dr. King's vision, the words of the prophets - "And I shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." (Ezekiel 37:14) - as well as the spiritual yearning of all those children of Israel who had been cast out and have pleaded with God for almost two thousand years to be restored.

An unbiased investigation of the information presented in this writing will bring us to the conclusion that people of African origin have a definite connection with the Holy Land and a role to play in the prophetic spiritual re-awakening that is in progress. While we are acutely aware of the challenge presented, we are prepared (for the sake of the creation and all humanity) to live out our responsibility and invoke the presence of God in the affairs of man. Our purpose in pursuing our heritage, against all odds, is to establish the prophetic "Kingdom of God" in the Holy Land - to be that inspiration and guiding light which is destined to shine forth from Jerusalem.

"I just want to do God's will... He's allowed me to go up to the mountain... I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know... that we as a people will get to the Promised Land." - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. 1968

"The truth is, blessings or curses are each the fruit (results) of the works of those upon whom they fall. Thereby, in the final analysis, man either blesses or curses himself." - God and the Law of Relativity - Ben Ammi

Customs

Our life is a very active and fruitful founded on the laws, commandments and prophecies of the Holy One of Israel which govern interaction with family, friends and the community at-large. We do not perceive man's relationship with God as being prohibitive. We, very simply, adhere to customs and traditions that have been, either handed down to us from generation to generation or that have evolved as we undergo a process of redemption - - the recuperation from the effects of slavery and nearly having lost total knowledge of our identity and heritage. The keeping of the Sabbath and Holy Days, (Passover, Shavuot, Memorial Blowing of the Trumpets, Yom Kippur and Succoth) as outlined in the Old

Testament, is our way of expressing appreciation to the benevolent God. In conjunction with these Holy Days we also observe (among others) the following Biblical laws: the maintenance of a vegan diet void of all animal by-products **(Genesis 1:29)** the wearing of only natural fabrics - - cotton, wool, linen and silk **(based on Leviticus 12:12)** the circumcision of our male children eight days after birth **(Leviticus 12:3)** and, the maintenance of the laws of purification for women relative to their monthly cycle and childbirth **(Leviticus 12:2-5)** In accordance with the prophetic return of the Children of Israel **(Jeremiah 23:7-8)** annually, in mid-May, members of our community commemorate the historic exodus of the vanguard group which left the shores of America in May 1967. Two days of outdoor festivities, sports activities and entertainment mark this important remembrance which is one of our most festive, fun-filled events.

Conclusion

After more than 40 years in the Holy Land, the African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem have managed inarguable string of achievements: men who are capable, responsible and caring; women who are valued as equals and encouraged to achieve; children who are protected, nurtured and encouraged to grow and appreciate the Creation and respect their role in it; elders who are healthy, vital, revered for their wisdom and knowledge and expected to continue as integral, functioning parts of the community. These are the very tenants that once were the hallmarks of successful, progressive societies. Whatever might be said about the African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem, above all, it must be recognized as a tangible, viable and more importantly, righteous, alternative for those who long to see peace, justice, mercy, truth, love. Selah

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