

Margot Crossing

MIZORAM

Lost Tribe of Israel?



Introduction

Mizoram, located in the north east of India, bordering Myanmar and Bangladesh, is a strange place to find descendants of the so called 'Lost Tribes' of Israel. Since 1952, when a man named Chala had a vision and declared the people of Mizoram to be Israelites, there has been controversy in this state up unto today. In 2005, then Sephardic Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar endorsed the Bnei Menashe's¹ (Mizo) claim to Jewish ancestry.² How could

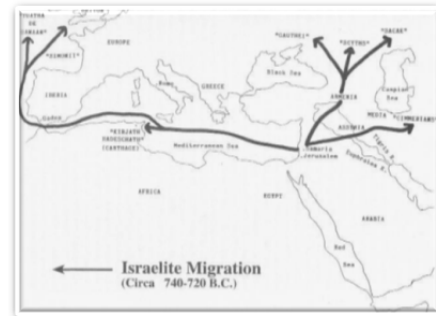
¹ Bnei Menashe is the term used by the people of the Mizo, Chin, or Kuki who have converted to Judaism.

² 'Lost' Indian Jews come to Israel despite skepticism over ties to faith. By [ITA](http://www.haaretz.com/misc/writers/jta-1.428693) | Oct. 20, 2013 | 8:01 AM
<http://www.haaretz.com/misc/writers/jta-1.428693>

they have gotten there and how could they have retained their identity? Some of those answers may be found in ancient Egypt as well as the clans of Scotland; others in the Jewish folklore of the mythical Sambatyon River and yet others in the once lost but now recovered Hebrew language. First century Jewish historians as well as Greek will be colourful threads in this great tapestry. For those living in Central Asia these threads extend to the tartan clad mummies in the famous Tarim Basin of the infamous Silk Road.

History

Between 740 BC and 722 BC the northern kingdom of Israel, known as the House of Israel and also the 'Ten Lost Tribes' of Israel, were taken into captivity by the Assyrian Empire. (see map³) The half tribe of Manasseh, Gadites and Reubenites were taken to Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan⁴ and also to the cities of the Medes.⁵ Some say this should read the mountains of the Medes.⁶



According to Steven M Collins the ships of Tarshish⁷ had port cities from Carthage to Great Britain prior to the captivity. His assertion is that many Israelites had migrated before the fall of Samaria to Carthage and Great Britain and beyond and formed colonies. Later, Israelite groups travelled to these centres after their forced captivity and transmigration. Researcher Yair Davidi⁸ and Collins both make compelling arguments that the tribe of Dan settled in Ireland and the other tribes, now known as Celts, migrated to the British Isles to become Scots, Welsh and Irish. Rawlinson from his work on the Behistun Rock finds the name the Assyrians gave the Ten Tribes as Gimeri. The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III found by Henry Laynard in 1845 gave us this "missing link" to the name that was given to the Israelites by the Assyrians. They were known after the House of Israel king - King Omri. Omri begins with the consonant 'Y' ayin which is pronounced with the guttal "H" and is

³ Map hand drawn by Steven M Collins page 212 Israel's Lost Empires

⁴ And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgathpilneser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day. ([I Chronicles 5:26](#))

⁵ In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria 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. ([II Kings 17:3-6](#))

⁶ The Assyrian Exile: Israel's Legacy in Captivity by [Cam Rea](#) page 47 ISBN-13: 978-1604811735

⁷ Ships of Tarshish 1 Kings 10:22

⁸ Brit Am <http://www.britam.org/>

represented in Assyrian transliterations as “Gh” or “Kh”⁹. The Hebrew is Ghomri and Assyrian, Khumri. Gomah, Cimmer, Cimmerian, Samarian, Celts, are all linguistically related names for migrating tribes across Europe. Sargon II (722 B.C. - 704 B.C.) also makes mention of “khumri” in his records of the capture of Samaria.¹⁰ Today, when we search out the name “Khumri” we find it still in use as a district of the Baglan Province in Afghanistan and it is called Puli Khumri and also Wales. The Welsh even today go by the name Cymri. Wilson and Blackett^{11 12} state that, technically, ‘Khumry’, ‘Khumric Welsh’ or Khumric Britons are historically more accurate descriptions than ‘Celt’.

Scythian - Israelite - Son of Isaac Connection

In his book, *‘Israel’s Lost Empires’*, Steven M Collins makes the case in forty-eight pages that the Samaritans became the Cimmerians; that the northern kingdom was named after Isaac and continued to be known by Sacae, Saka, Saxoi or Saxones.¹³ Assyrian records mention the rebellion of the Esakska, who called themselves “Beth Sak” or “House of Isaac” in their own country.^{14 15} Scythians arose in the seventh century BC in southern Russia and were not known before the eighth century according to Tamara Talbot Rice in her book *The Scythians*. This means, Collins states, that they originated south of Armenia during the time of King Sargon (722-706 BC) which precisely matches the migration of Israel from Palestine to the southern steppes of Russia.^{16 17}

Steven M Collins writes; “There is a common misconception that the ten tribes of Israel ‘disappeared’ when they migrated into Asia. Nothing could be further from the truth! For many centuries, ancient historians knew both who the Israelites were, and where they went. They were not ‘lost’ at all.” He then goes on to quote Flavius Josephus the Jewish first century AD historian,

“....there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers.”

⁹ Drummond Joseph F *2300 Days of Hell*

¹⁰ *Missing Links Discovered In Assyrian Tablets* by E.R.Capt page 99

¹¹ <https://sovereignwales.com/tag/khumric-welsh/> Retrieved 28/4/16

¹² <https://web.archive.org/web/20150313230612/http://dailywales.net/2015/01/29/are-the-welsh-the-lost-ten-tribes-of-israel/> Retrieved 28/4.16

¹³ Collins. Steven M. *Israel’s Lost Empires* Chapter 4 pages 191 - 238 pp 206

¹⁴ Amos 7:16

¹⁵ Gawler, Col.J.C., *Our Scythian Ancestors Identified with Israel* page 6

¹⁶ Collins *Lost Empires* page 195

¹⁷ Rice, Tamara Talbot, *The Scythians* pages 19-20 & page 44

Collins points out that eight centuries after the migration it was well known that they were great in number and the Euphrates served as their western border. They were known by various names including; Cimmerian, Sacae, Saka, Ghomer and Khumri. Later we will read how one particular tribe would keep its name from the battles with Alexander the Great near the Onus River, Afghanistan, to the Epic poems of Kyrgyzstan right over to the folktales of the Hill Tribe peoples of the NE India.

Parthia arises where the Israelites were relocated. Scythians disappear

Steve Collins writes “the Scythians, the Asian ‘Sacae’...had a large empire of their own. The eastern Scythians eventually migrated into the Parthian Empire and their history became inseparably linked to that of Partia.”¹⁸

The Parthians were not known to exist before the ten tribes of Israel were relocated to the area next to the cites of the Medes. This area is where the bible history records as the destination from forced Assyrian expulsion. Parthian cities located here bore these Hebrew names; Asaak, Dara, Gaza and Samariene.¹⁹

Tartan - Joseph and his many coloured coat



The Israelites may hold a key to unlocking the mystery of the Celtic Mummies found in the Tarim Basin. According to Egyptologist David Rohl in his book “A Test Of Time: From Myth to History”²⁰ a broken cult statue of a Semitic high official or vizier was found in a mud-brick pyramid tomb in an area of Egypt, where according to the bible, the Israelites had been enslaved. This pale skinned, red haired vizier may be non-other than Joseph, Rohl asserts. This statue shows ‘Joseph’ with his tartan of many colours, presumably with more colours than his brothers from the Genesis story.

Tartan is the trademark of the Scots (as well as the Irish). Tartan is not, however, isolated to the British Isles. The Hill Tribe peoples of Myanmar, Thailand and NE India all specialise in

¹⁸ Collins.,Steve M. Parthia The forgotten Ancient Superpower and its role in Biblical History. Page 3

¹⁹ Ibid.. page 32

²⁰ “A Test of Time: From Myth to History” was turned into a three-part television documentary, “Pharaohs and Kings.”

tartan. These Scottish dancers to the right who are often seen dancing around crossed swords resemble the image at the top of this article where the Mizos of NE India are dancing their famous 'Cherow' bamboo dance.



Celts were Israelite

Thomas Moore's *History of Ireland* relates that there were wave after wave of migrants into Ireland and Western Europe. He states:

"There appears to be no doubt that the first inhabitants of Ireland were derived from [the] same Celtic stock which supplied Gaul, Britain and Spain with their original population... there exists.... strong evidence of an early intercourse between Spain and Ireland...which could only have arisen out of her Phoenician colonies." ²¹

This verifies the Celtic migrations were, according to Steven M Collins,²² facilitated by the Phoenician colonial network. Collins asserts that the Phoenicians were overwhelmingly Israelites, which he says explains why the early Celtic tribes had names such as **Danaans**, the **Simonii**, and the **Brythonic** Celts.²³

J.H. Allen's book, *Judah's Scepter and Joseph's Birthright*, records that "the greatest influx of the Tuantia de Danaan to Ireland" occurred around 720 BC, just after the fall of Samaria.²⁴

Earlier it was documented that the Assyrians called the Israelites the "**Khumri**" a term derived from the name of Israel's King Omri. Names used were Gomah, Cimmer, Cimmerians, Celts and Cymry. It is in the Celtic population we find the tartans that denote tribes and clans. This is still seen today amongst especially the Scots and the Irish.

Linguistically, there are many similarities between Gaelic and Hebrew. In 1675 Charles Edwards ("Hanes y Fydd") published A number of Welsh Cambro-Britannic Hebraisms in which he shows that whole phrases in Welsh can be closely paralleled by whole phrases in Hebrew.²⁵

²¹ Moore, Thomas *History of Ireland* page 3

²² Collins, Steven M. *Israel's Lost Empires* pages 96-111

²³ Ibid., page 103

²⁴ Allen, page 275

²⁵ <https://chiefio.wordpress.com/2012/02/10/irish-scots-gaelic-egyptian-connection/>

Phoenician/Hebrew similarities

Currently classified as Archaic Biblical Hebrew, 10th Century BCE, the Gezer calendar (right) may be one of the oldest surviving examples of written Hebrew. Scholars are divided as to whether the Semitic script is paleo-Hebrew or Phoenician. It is for this reason, Steve M Collins asserts, that the many instances when the Greeks referred to **Phoenicians** that the reference should be understood to be **people of the northern Israelite kingdom** - the famous Ships of Tarshish.²⁶

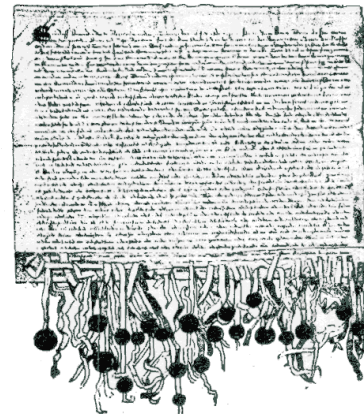


Scottish Declaration of Independence connects the Scots to the Israelites

Robert the Bruce and his nobles drafted a letter which they addressed to Pope John XXII and which can still be seen in **Register House in Edinburgh**²⁷. It had attached to it coloured ribbons and seals with the signatures of Robert the Bruce and twenty-five of his nobles.

The letter which is drafted:- **April 6, 1320**, read in part:-²⁸

"Most Holy Father, we know and from the chronicles and books of the ancients we find that among other famous nations our own, the Scots, has been graced with widespread renown. It journeyed from **Greater Scythia** by way of the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Pillars of Hercules, and dwelt for a long course of time in Spain among the most savage peoples, but nowhere could it be subdued by any people, however barbarous. Thence it came, **twelve hundred years after the people of Israel crossed the**



THE DECLARATION OF ARBROATH

Red Sea, to its home in the west where it still lives today. The Britons it first drove out, the Picts it utterly destroyed, and, even though very often assailed by the Norwegians, the Danes and the English, it took possession of that home with many victories and untold

²⁶ <http://bloombsburylinguistics.typepad.com/continuum-linguistics/2014/03/bloombsbury-linguistics-five-fun-facts-about-hebrew.html>

²⁷ <http://www.nas.gov.uk/about/090401.asp>

²⁸ <http://jahtruth.net/scotdec.htm>

efforts; and, as the histories of old time bear witness, they have held it free of all servitude ever since. In their kingdom there have reigned one hundred and thirteen kings of their own royal stock, the line unbroken by a single foreigner.”²⁹

Celtic Mummies of the Tarim Basin- Were they Ancient Israelites?

Mallory and Mair in their book *The Tarim Mummies: Ancient China and the Mystery of the Earliest Peoples from the West*³⁰ written in 2000 found evidence of many different peoples present in the mummies of the Tarim Basin. To the interest of this article are the Celtic Mummies. Professor Mair 'believes rather that the early Europeans headed in different directions, some travelling west to become the Celts in Britain and Ireland, others taking a northern route to become the Germanic tribes, and then another offshoot heading east and ending up in Xinjiang.’³¹



Picture right³²

“Solid as a warrior of the Caledonii tribe, the man's hair is reddish brown flecked with grey, framing high cheekbones, a long nose, full lips and a ginger beard. When he lived three thousand years ago, he stood six feet tall, and was buried wearing a red twill tunic and tartan leggings. He looks like a Bronze Age European. In fact, he's every inch a Celt. Even his DNA says so.

But this is no early Celt from central Scotland. This is the mummified corpse of Cherchen Man, unearthed from the scorched sands of the Taklamakan Desert in the far-flung region of Xinjiang in western China, and now housed in a new museum in the provincial capital of Urumqi. In the language spoken by the local Uighur people in Xinjiang, "Taklamakan" means: "You come in and never come out."

²⁹ <http://www.nas.gov.uk/downloads/declarationArbroath.pdf>

³⁰ *The Tarim Mummies: Ancient China and the Mystery of the Earliest Peoples from the West* (2000) Mallory & Mair

³¹ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/a-meeting-of-civilisations-the-mystery-of-chinas-celtic-mummies-5330366.html>

³² A red haired mummy dressed in Tartan, found on the Silk Road in the Taklamakan Desert in the Tarim Basin.

The extraordinary thing is that Cherchen Man was found - with the mummies of three women and a baby - in a burial site thousands of miles to the east of where the Celts established their biggest settlements in France and the British Isles.

DNA testing confirms that he and hundreds of other mummies found in Xinjiang's Tarim Basin are of European origin. We don't know how he got there, what brought him there, or how long he and his kind lived there for. But, as the desert's name suggests, it is certain that he never came out.

His discovery provides an unexpected connection between east and west and some valuable clues to early European history.

The burial sites of Cherchen Man and his fellow people were marked with stone structures that look like dolmens from Britain, ringed by round-faced, Celtic figures, or standing stones. Among their icons were figures reminiscent of the sheela-na-gigs, wild females who flaunted their bodies and can still be found in mediaeval churches in Britain. A female mummy wears a long, conical hat which has to be a witch³³ or a wizard's hat. [Right picture Skunkha, king of the *Sakā tigraxaudā* ("pointed-cap-wearing Sakae", a group of Scythian tribes). Detail of Behistun Inscription.]³⁴ Or a druid's, perhaps? The wooden combs they used to fan their tresses are familiar to students of ancient Celtic art.



At their peak, around 300 BC, the influence of the Celts stretched from Ireland in the west to the south of Spain and across to Italy's Po Valley, and probably extended to parts of Poland and Ukraine and the central plain of

³³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tarim_mummies#cite_note-6 [Though modern Westerners tend to identify this type of hat as the headgear of a witch, there is evidence that these pointed hats were widely worn by both women and men in some Central Asian tribes. For instance, the Persian king Darius recorded a victory over the "Sakas of the pointed hats". The Subeshi headgear is likely an ethnic badge or a symbol of position in the society.]

³⁴ <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Behistun.Inscript.Skunkha.jpg> Skunkha, king of the *Sakā tigraxaudā* ("pointed-cap-wearing Sakae", a group of Scythian tribes). Detail of Behistun Inscription.

Turkey in the east. These mummies seem to suggest, however, that the Celts penetrated well into central Asia, nearly making it as far as Tibet.

The Celts gradually infiltrated Britain between about 500 and 100BC. There was probably never anything like an organised Celtic invasion: they arrived at different times, and are considered a group of peoples loosely connected by similar language, religion, and cultural expression.

The eastern Celts spoke a now-dead language called Tocharian, which is related to Celtic languages and part of the Indo-European group. They seem to have been a peaceful folk, as there are few weapons among the Cherchen find and there is little evidence of a caste system.

A believer in the "inter-relatedness of all human communities", Professor Mair resists attempts to impose a theory of a single people arriving in Xinjiang, and believes rather that the early Europeans headed in different directions, some travelling west to become the Celts in Britain and Ireland, others taking a northern route to become the Germanic tribes, and then another offshoot heading east and ending up in Xinjiang."³⁵

Rather than say "how did the Celts get so far east?" with the now understanding that the Celts derived from Phoenician/Israelite blood stock it should rather be asked, "Did the red haired pale skinned Israelites go into China as well as Europe and Britain?" The Scythians pictured wearing a 'druid's' hat above lends more weight to this Celtic/Israelite Connection.

Massagetae defeat Cyrus the Great at Jaxartes River

Frederick Haberman, in his book, "Tracing our Ancestors", using conventional dating quotes the synthesis of understanding by Professor George Rawlinson, Herodotus and Diodorus, when he wrote:

Frederick Haberman – "It appears, that Cyrus himself was defeated and killed by the Saki in 529 BCE (352 BCE according to the Jewish Calendar). Herodotus and Diodorus tell us that Cyrus was killed by the Massa-getai, under their

³⁵<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/a-meeting-of-civilisations-the-mystery-of-chinas-celtic-mummies-5330366.html>

Queen Tomyris on the Jaxartes River. Another prominent name attached itself to lost Israel, that of Getai, which is the Median form of Guti or Catti, and likewise means “wanderers,” or “adventurers.” And so indeed, for the God of Israel sent His people wandering over Eastern and Western Asia for centuries and later into Europe. Massagetai, means, according to Professor George Rawlinson, (Canon of Canterbury and Camden Professor of Ancient History) “Great Wanderers,” and it was they who defeated Cyrus the Great when he attempted to invade their territory on the Jaxartes River east of the Oxus.” (Frederick Haberman, “Tracing our Ancestors”, pg. 125)³⁶

Other scholars identify that the Massagetai tribes were actually the **Tribe of Manasseh** of the House of Joseph. It has already been shown that the identity of the Israelites had re-emerge into a new identity called the “Scythians”, which also means “wanderers”.³⁷

Alexander the Great defeats the Massagetae

In 327/6 BC, near the Jaxartes River east of Onus, Alexander the Great came to subdue the Massagatae (Great Wanderers)³⁸ after they refused to submit to his imperial authority. They had lived on the high plateau with plenty of water and food for many centuries, after their exile by the Assyrians from their homelands. They were the Ar-sakes or “ruling Saks” known for having defeated Cyrus the Great at the hand of Queen Tomyris after her son was killed in battle. They were the Assacenes - undefeated! Why should they submit to Alexander?

Ptolemy and Alexander’s secretary, Eumenes, document the final battle between Alexander and the Massagatae at the mountain citadel of Aornus. Jona Lendering³⁹ writes that “it was nothing short of genocide. Strategically the capture of the citadel made no sense, though the Assacenes were close to Alexander’s supply lines, but psychologically the impact to India was that ‘one greater than Krishna’ was coming to take India. Now Alexander, with an even larger legend, was free to conquer the Punjab.”

³⁶ <http://www.biblesearchers.com/hebrewchurch/primitive/losttribesisrael7.shtml#GobryasDarius> Retrieved 16/4/2016

³⁷ <http://www.biblesearchers.com/hebrewchurch/primitive/losttribesisrael10.shtml> Retrieved 28/4/16

³⁸ <http://www.biblesearchers.com/hebrewchurch/primitive/losttribesisrael10.shtml> Retrieved 28/4/16

³⁹ Lendering, Jona Alexander the Great - The Demise of the Persian Empire, 340-320 BC 2004 Athenaeum - Polak & Van Gennep Amsterdam,

In another valley the Sakae fled, burning their own villages. Where did those who didn't surrender⁴⁰ go? Could it be that some of them made their way over the mountains, keeping their distance from Alexander, to the 'river of sand' that must be the Taklamakan Desert in the Tarim Basin? This exodus on this part of the Silk Road would hold a shared memory for millennia of the hardship endured. Could this be one of the possible reasons for many of the Jewish folklore stories of a mystical Sabbath River⁴¹ of which the 'Ten Tribes' are now dwelling on the other side? The Karen of Myanmar also have an event in their history of crossing 'a river of running sand.'⁴²

Hebrew names along the Silk Road

Hebrew is historically regarded to be the language of the Hebrews or Israelites and their ancestors. Around 200 CE, Hebrew ceased to be an everyday spoken language. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (1858-1922) (אליעזר בן יהודה), is often regarded as the "reviver of the Hebrew language."⁴³

The results of Hebrew's revival are unique. It is now the language of 9 million people across the globe.

For this reason people like Dr Avigdor Shachan, who now speaks Hebrew as his first language, have been able to identify Hebrew names and phrases in the place names of towns, rivers and deserts along the Silk Road. Taklamakan or Taklim-Kan in Hebrew, he says is a phrase which means "you will be destroyed here". The river Kar-Kan in a low temperature location means "it is cold here" ; a city named Lohulan means "He did not rest here" and the tel towering over the entrance to the Taklamakan Desert is called Dandan whist the city by the Tarim Basin is Kum-Torah.⁴⁴ Surely the Lost Tribes passed this way.



Sgaw Karen - Israelites in SE Asia

In the early eighteen hundreds in the depth of the jungles of northern Burma missionaries, Dr and Mrs Mason, found remarkable understandings of redemption and stories of creation and the flood in the hill tribe peoples of the Sgaw Karen. They surmised that they

⁴⁰ *When the capital of the Assacenes, a town called Maasga surrendered Alexander exterminated all the defenders who had placed themselves at his mercy.* Jona Lendering Livia

⁴¹ Hillel, *Across the Sabbath River*

⁴² <http://www.infomekong.com/peoples/karen/Retrieved> 28/4/16

⁴³ <http://bloomsburylinguistics.typepad.com/continuum-linguistics/2014/03/bloomsbury-linguistics-five-fun-facts-about-hebrew.html>

⁴⁴ Shachan, Dr Avigdor, *In the Footsteps of the Ten Lost Tribes*, page 121

were part of the ten 'lost' tribes of Israel.⁴⁵ Others studying the Karen culture found stories of **crossing a river of sand** on their journey as an important event in their oral history. Other legends as coming from a land they called Thibi Kawbi, which may indicate Tibet and the Gobi Desert. Of particular interest is the dating of the Karen. "The Karen reckon 2010 to be their year 2749. This means that they **look to BC 739 as the year of their founding.**"⁴⁶ It was at this precise time that the two and a half tribes of Israel, situated east of the Jordan River, went into captivity. Can this be a coincidence considering the other evidence?

They had many singular traditions relating to the origin of the human race, the fall, the flood, etc. These, many believe, must have been received from the Jews; which seems probable enough, inasmuch as the Jews are said to have made their way to China several centuries before the Christian era. Dr M'Gowan, in a paper read before the British Association in 1860, stated that he found evidence of the existence of a numerous colony of Jews⁴⁷ in the city of Chintu about a century before the birth of Christ, and that in all probability some of them made their way to the mountainous regions lying between China and Burmah. He is also of opinion that they were either the progenitors, or that through them the Karens received their Old Testament traditions.⁴⁸

China and the people of the Min River

In the early 1900's a Scottish missionary by the name of Torrence found a group of people with very Israelitish customs. Just like Asahel Grant M.D. in his 1841 published book, *The Nestorians or the Lost Tribes*,⁴⁹ found a group which he called the Independent Nestorians in the isolated mountains between modern day Turkey and Iraq with many Israelite like customs, so too did Rev. Thomas T Torrance find an isolated group with Israelitish customs on the ridges of the steep mountains surrounding the Min River, near Wenchuan in western Sichuan. This group was called the Ch'iang Min. [Ch'iang or Q'iang can be applied to many different groups since the word *Qiang* was an ethnic label by which the Chinese referred to some non-Chinese in the west, it might be describing a sense of otherness for

⁴⁵ **Project Canterbury-Journey from Rangoon to Toungoo, and Six Weeks in the Toungoo Mountains of Burma** By John Trew
From *Mission Life*, Vol. V (1874), pages 563-578.http://anglicanhistory.org/asia/burma/trew_six1874.html

⁴⁶ <http://www.infomekong.com/peoples/karen/>

⁴⁷ The word 'Jews' is sometimes used in the context of meaning any of the descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel.

⁴⁸ http://www.forgottenbooks.com/readbook_text/Modern_Missions_Their_Trials_and_Triumphs_1000656870/103

⁴⁹ Grant, Asahel; *The Nestorians or the Lost Tribes* John Murray, London 1841

the Chinese.^{50]} In both cases the isolation and ruggedness of the mountains had managed to preserve customs that, in the opinion of both Grant and Torrance, identified them as Ancient Israelites. Torrance wrote of this extensively in his book *China's First Missionaries: Ancient 'Israelites'*⁵¹

"My father was deeply impressed with the Chiang way of life and with their monotheistic religion which stood out in marked contrast to the prevailing idolatry of the Chinese. But it was the biblical nature of their faith and worship, and the detailed correspondence between their religious observances and the teaching of the Old Testament, that captivated him." wrote his son in the forward of the 1988 second edition.⁵²

Some of the many similarities include: an ancestor called "Bae-lan" whom a Chiang scholar says is a transliteration where "Bae" approximates the sound "Ab" and "lan" for "ram" as proof that Abram was their ancestor.⁵³ Others are that there is a tradition their ancestor had twelve sons.⁵⁴ Then there are the sacrifices, the architecture, the groves, the high places all with strong similarities to the Semitic practices in old Palestine. To conclude without exhausting the numerous references to these parallels Torrance writes,

*"But finally when we found a tradition among them of a brazen serpent in the wilderness, and further secured a very old priestly Rod bearing upon it the image of a serpent, we felt that this, together with so much accumulated evidence, made the deduction legitimate that their religion was of Semitic origin."*⁵⁵



Rabbi Eliyahu Avichail from the organization Amishav writes in his book⁵⁶ that he, Micha Gross and Hillel Halkin⁵⁷ travelled to Sichuan Province in 1998 to investigate the connection between the Chiang-Min, Karen and Shinlung peoples.

⁵⁰ Chapter in *Imaging China: Regional Division and National Unity* Ed. by Shu-min Huang & Cheng-kuang Hsu. Taipei: Institute of Ethnology. P. 43-80." **From the Qiang Barbarians to the Qiang Nationality: The Making of a New Chinese Boundary** Wang Ming-ke <http://ultra.ihep.sinica.edu.tw/~origins/pages/barbarbook4.htm> sourced 15th April 2016

⁵¹ Torrance, Rev. Thomas T., *China's First Missionaries: Ancient 'Israelites'* 2nd Edition 1988 Daniel Shaw Co. Chicago.

⁵² Ibid., page iv

⁵³ Ibid., page 46

⁵⁴ <https://www.geni.com/projects/Where-are-The-Ten-Lost-Tribes-of-Israel/3474> accessed 20/4/2016

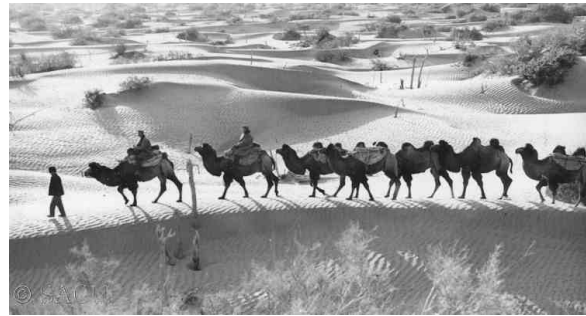
⁵⁵ Torrance page 98

⁵⁶ Avichail, R. Eliyahu, *The Tribes of Israel* Jerusalem 5765

⁵⁷ Author of *Across the Sambatyon River*

"At a Chiang-Min teachers' conference, the author and Micha Gross met teachers and a college president who told of continued practice in villages of animal sacrifice with Israelite elements, as described by Torrance in his articles and books.....when asked to explain today the discrepancy between the author's calculation that the Chiang should number today 8 milion, when in fact they number only about ¼ million, the teacher explained that in the past many Chiang migrated south to Thailand, Burma, Bangladesh and India and are now known by other names. Curiously, both the Karen and the Shinlung have a tradition of Chinese ancestry."⁵⁸

River of sand - mythical Sambatyon River of the Jews



Halkin documents in depth the many and varied stories of the Lost Ten Tribes disappearing beyond a river of sand. Mythically it only rested on the Sabbath. Beyond, they lived under a strong prince among people who had no noses. Torrance in his book of the Chiang-Min says "they arrived several hundred years before the time of Christ."⁵⁹ His son Bishop Thomas F Torrance states that "their own chanted sagas and iliads handed down from father to son in their priestly families told of long wanderings through the steppes of Central Asia."⁶⁰ Walking through a river of sand is a strong memory of the Karen on their journey to Burma.

Manas, Manmasi, Menashe - Tribe of Manasseh?

Richard Hewitt author of *Manas: Lost and Found* wrote twelve essays on twelve lectures given in Kyrgyzstan. In it he relates the parallels of the Epic of Manas with the ancient oracles; as he calls the Torah or the Old Testament part of the Bible. "By 2006" he writes, "I

⁵⁸ Avichail. page 172

⁵⁹ Torrance, Thomas T *China's first missionaries: Ancient Israelites* 1988 page 7

⁶⁰ Ibid.. page ii

had accumulated significant data supporting a hypothesis that Manas and Manasseh shared a common origin.”⁶¹ Dr Lenthang⁶² puts forward a similar hypothesis regarding the Kuki, Chin and Mizo of the north east of India in regards to their ancestor Manmasi. Pi Zaithanchhungi⁶³ finds the same for her research in Mizoram relating to sons of Menashe.

Manmasi/Menashe of Mizoram

In the 1980s eight hundred Bnei Menashe [Hebrew for sons of Manasseh] immigrated to Israel but the immigration ceased sometime afterwards due to disputes that they did not practice Judaism. Jewish agencies have been involved and synagogues built in both Aizawl in Mizoram and Imphal in Manipur. In 2005, then Sephardic Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar endorsed the Bnei Menashe’s claim to Jewish ancestry. Everyone who returns now must profess the Jewish faith and undergo conversion and circumcision.

The works of Amishav’s Rabbi Eliyahu Avichail⁶⁴ and journalist Hillel Halkin⁶⁵ have done much to make the Bnei Menashe a world wide name. It is, however, two local ethnographers, one Mizo from Mizoram and the other Kuki from Manipur, that have documented the customs and practices as well as the epics, songs and oral traditions of faith and genealogies of the people on the NE of India who are collectively called Shinlung.

Shinlung, meaning ‘*cave dwellers*,’ is the one of the names by which the people in the north-east of India were known. It is a collective term transcending state and national boundaries. Other names today include Chin, Kuki, Mizo and Chhinlung and the area that they live in includes parts of Myanmar, Manipur and Bangladesh. They all without prejudice believe that they came from China about four hundred years ago.

Dr Lenthang M.D. from the state of Manipur, NE India, started his research of the Manmasi in 1949 and during fifty years of research he systematically wrote down in his diaries the Themthu and Lapi, those priestly incantations and hymns, which are the true identity embodiment of a people who no longer have a written record. As Hewitt says in his recommendations of Lenthang’s work that not only had he himself had noticed the similarities between the Kyrgyz hero “Manas son of Jykyb” with Manasseh son of Jacob but

⁶¹ Lenthang, Dr Khuplam Milui. The Wonderful Tales of the Manmasi (Kuki-Chin-Mizo) 2013 page xv

⁶² Ibid entire book

⁶³ Author of Israel-Mizo Identity

⁶⁴ Avichail, R. Eliyahu., The Tribes of Israel 5765 Amishav Jerusalem

⁶⁵ Halkin, Hillel. Across the Sabbath River 2002 Houghton Mifflin Company New York

that he had also gained confirmation, upon visiting Dr Lenthang, before his own book was published of similarities between the Kyrgyz and Kuki. Comparing the legends, epics, songs, faith, genealogies, customs, language and histories was an ethnographer's dream says Hewitt and confirmed to him that Lenthang was not regurgitating biblical and religious knowledge but retelling his forebears' ancient history and their migration memories.

Pi Zaithanchhungi is the other local researcher. She hails from Electric Veng in the city of Aizawl, Mizoram. She started out as a headmistress but became very successful as an insurance saleswoman. It was some of her relatives that first endeavoured to go to Israel. She thought that it was a shameful thing for them to think they could be Israelites she comments. However, a chance meeting with a Jewish man at an airport in India and an around the world trip with her son brought her to Israel and a meeting with R. Avichail. He asked her to do research among the Mizo elders. He instructed her how to ask questions so as not to get biased answers and how to document those answers. Back in Mizoram her work as an insurance saleswoman caused her to visit all the towns and villages across Mizoram. At night she interviewed all the old people from eighty-fives years up to one hundred and four years old including those from priestly families. "After a very short time I changed my mind" she said in an interview.⁶⁶ Pi Zaithanchhungi stated that one after another of the old people told her that their parents and grandparents had told them that they were sons of Manasseh. Upon this revelation she went on to research⁶⁷ many Mizo customs that have Israelite like similarities and it was on this work as well as that of Dr Lenthang that Rabbi Shlomo made his 30th March, 2005 verdict.

Themthu(song) on the Journey of Manmasi people to reach their destination safely

He He He Yah!

Oh, the faith of our forefathers

For the fame of the Themthu_lhun bom

Like a war trophy of the enemy's heads at the Khomol

We carry in our chest to the four corners

We gather the stones of the river bed and walk across

We worship God of our forefathers with this blood of goat in the seven bamboo vases.

⁶⁶ Interview at Hope Lodge Electric Veng 2014 with the author.

⁶⁷ Zaithanchhungi, Israel-Mizo Identity 2008 Hope Lodge, Aizawl

*Let wellness and good health always be with the children of Manmasi your creation.
Aboriyah!*⁶⁸

Themthu on the dry-up of the Red Sea:

*During the reign of Kutpi maangpa
The Red-Sea had gone dried
Cloud in the day and fire in the night led the people
Many days and nights together,
Like wild animals the water had swallowed
We fetch water that originates from the rock (stone)
To satisfy the thirst of the people and their flock.*⁶⁹

Lenthang also writes that two missionary couples during the British rule were amazed by the similarities of the Kuki-Chin-Mizo culture and customs with biblical Israel. Although they had lost their scroll the people had evolved games to help maintain continuity of these customs and culture,⁷⁰

Lost Book/scroll

A common theme which connects the Q'iang Min to the Hill Tribesmen of Myanmar, Thailand and NE India are their stories of a 'lost book or scroll'. Torrance in 1925 was privy to priestly rites which resembled the Yom Kippur or Day of Atonement practices. After he read to the priest the sixteenth chapter of the book of Leviticus the priest leaped up and exclaimed the scriptures to be the Q'iang's 'Lost Book'. The Karen in northern Myanmar and western Thailand have a folklore that they were careless with their scroll and it was partly burnt and then chickens and pigs ate it. The Lahu tribe say they were hungry and ate their book that was made of rice paper. The Mizos say a dog ate their book. According to Don Richardson⁷¹ there were ten peoples including the Karen, Lahu and the Mizo who had a 'Lost Book' story as part of their oral history. All of them had migrated from south western China in the previous four hundred years.

⁶⁸ Lenthang page 179

⁶⁹ Ibid Briefing notes on Manmasi identity page i before page 299

⁷⁰ Ibid page 164

⁷¹ Richardson, Don Eternity in their hearts 3rd Ed. 2005 Regal Books. Ventura, California Chapter 2

Summary of the segments of history

- The Manmasi of Mizoram, Manipur and Myanmar share a common ancestry through their 'lost book' stories, their migration from China, their common customs and hill living practices with nine other Hill Tribe peoples in the Burma Region (including the Karen) with the Q'iang Min in the western valleys of the Min and To Rivers in modern day Sichuan.
- The Q'iang Min remember they travelled from the steppes of Central Asia approximately 300 BC. One of their ancestors, Abram (Bae-lan), was important to them and the bible was declared to be their Lost Scriptures.
- The Karen record their first year to be 739 BC and remember crossing a river of sand.
- The Jews say their northern kingdom brothers crossed a river of sand that 'rests on the Sabbath' and the crossing was so hard that they could not come back.
- Mummies belonging to an Iranian speaking people associated with the Celts were discovered in the Taklamakan Desert, which resembles a river of sand. The Celts have a strong connection with ancient Israelites.
- Alexander the Great is recorded as having beaten a people who were the Massagatae, who many say were the tribe of Manasseh, near the Jaxartes River, Afghanistan . They fled northwards to possibly Kyrgyzstan and/or eastwards across the Taklamakan Desert. The name Manas and Manmasi connect the Kuki of the Shinlung with the Kyrgyz. Other customs were also shown to be consistent with this hypothesis.
- In the first century, the historian Josephus records that the ten tribes [of Israel] are beyond the river [Euphrates] and were an immense population that could not be numbered.
- The Scythians were a strong nomadic group who arose in the eighth century BC and went on to become the Parthians. They occupied the area east of the Euphrates River northwards to the Central Asian Steppes.
- In 740 BC the half tribe of Manasseh was taken captive by the Assyrians and sent to the region bordering Afghanistan. They were known as Isaac sons or Ar-Saks or Sacae. This was synonymous with the Scythians.

Conclusion

Once the knots tie together the shorter segments of history then the thread becomes the weft that can now be pulled through the warp of time making a beautiful tapestry. What we see is that a large, very large group of people were translocated to places near the ancient cities of the Medes. From there they spread out, forming and then reforming themselves into empires from time to time. Some of them, by now part of wider Parthia and known as the Great Wanders, lived on a spur overlooking the Hindu Kush. Also known as the Massagatae or Manasseh they were seemingly invincible until Alexander. Those who were not killed fled over the mountains to the region of the Silk Road crossing of the Taklamakan Desert. Here we see Hebrew names in the tapestry picturing the hardship of the survivors; also here, red haired tartan wearing mummies uncovered in this river of sand. The next picture is of a people in western Sichuan having arrived three hundred years before this common era looking Semitic, with bronze serpents on the rods of their priests. A much larger group had existed there, trading with the Chinese over the centuries and fending off aggressors from their Middle-eastern like rock towers perched on the high spurs around the Min River Valley, until four centuries ago. The thread now forms the pictures of Hill Tribesmen, also in tartan, with Israelitish customs in Thailand, as with the Karen, Myanmar and NE India all with their Lost Book narrative from when they were in China. The Shinlung or Kuki-Chin-Mizo of Mizoram and the surrounding areas carry the name Manasseh in their Manmasi or Menashe versions. They remember who they are and start to make their way back to the 'promised land'. While the thread has filled in their corner of the picture on the loom of history many others are waiting for their part of the tapestry to be woven. How many other peoples are part of this great wall hanging depicting a dispersion and then a regathering of the ancient children of Israel?

Postscript

Breaking News Israel reports **With DNA Tests, Mystery of the "Lost Tribe" of Indian Jews Finally Solved** April 15, 2016 Recent DNA tests have tied the Bnei Menashe of NE India to other descendants of Abraham. ⁷²

⁷²<http://www.breakingisraelnews.com/65744/lost-tribe-found-new-dna-tests-prove-bnei-israel-india-share-jewish-genes/#bR1rkbJhFFAee3rO.97>
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