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Tsiyon News

Tsiyon Messianic Radio Newsletter - Vol 8.15 - 02/07/6013 TAM - 04/17/13 AD



Jacob's Ladder

Genesis 28

Jacob's Ladder



Jacob ..dreamed.

Behold, a stairway set upon the Land, and its top reached to heaven.

Behold, the angels of Elohim ascending and descending on it.

Behold, YHWH stood above it, and said, "I am YHWH, the Elohim of Abraham your father, and the Elohim of Isaac. The Land whereon you lie, to you will I give it, and to your seed.

Your seed will be as the dust of the earth, and you will spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. In you and in your seed will all the families of the earth be blessed.

Behold, I am with you, and will keep you, wherever you go, and will bring you again into this Land. For I will not leave you, until I have done that which I have spoken of to you." Genesis 28:10-15

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Tsiyon News

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Lost Ten Tribes and Judaism

Many Jewish rabbis of the past and present acknowledge that the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom of Israel were exiled from the Land by the Assyrians, remain in exile as distinct from Judaism, and have yet to return to the Land as prophesied in Scripture. For example, the *Jewish Encyclopedia* explains how this came about:

According to the Bible, Tiglath-pileser (II Kings xv. 29) or Shalmaneser (ib. xvii. 6, xviii. 11), after the defeat of Israel, transported the majority of the inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom to Assyria, and placed them in Halah and Habor, on the stream of Gozan, and in the towns of Media. In their stead a mixed multitude was transported to the plains and mountains of Israel [These became known as *Samaritans*]. As a large number of prophecies relate to the return of "Israel" to the Holy Land, believers in the literal inspiration of the Scriptures have always labored under a difficulty in regard to the continued existence of the tribes of Israel, with the exception of those of Judah and Levi (or Benjamin), which returned with Ezra and Nehemiah. ...In the Apocrypha it is presumed that the Ten Tribes still exist as tribes. Thus Tobit is stated to be of the tribe of Naphtali, and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs assume their continuous existence. In the Fourth Book of Ezra (xiii. 39-45) it is declared that the Ten Tribes were carried by Hosea, king in the time of Shalmaneser, to the Euphrates, at the narrow passages of the river, whence they went on for a journey of a year and a half to a place called Arzareth. Schiller-Szinessy pointed out that "Arzareth" is merely a contraction of "erez aheret," the "other land" into which the Lord says He "will cast them [the people] as this day"; see Deut. xxix. 27, which verse is referred by R. Akiba to the Lost Ten Tribes (Sanh. x. 4; comp. "Journal of Philology," iii. 114). [TRIBES, LOST TEN: *Jewish Encyclopedia*]

These Biblical facts are affirmed by many of Judaism's leading rabbis; that Ten Lost Tribes exist apart from the tribes of Judah, Levi and Benjamin, which three tribes collectively became known as "Jews". The non-Jewish Ten Tribes Biblically hold equal claim to the title "Seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" along with the known Jewish tribes. To the "seed" of Israel has the Land of Israel been promised. Therefore, what is true for the "Jew" regarding the Land of Israel holds equally true for the Lost Ten Tribes as well. Unfortunately and inaccurately, it has become common to speak of Jews as synonymous with Israelites. Of course, Jews ARE Israelites, but they are not ALL Israel, as the scattered Remnant of Israel, the rest of Israel, well know. With that in mind, please substitute "Israel" and "Israelites" for "Jews" and "Judaism" as you read the following article, and you will come pretty close to the truth for most of this, with exceptions speaking specifically of religious Judaism.

Judaism and [the Land of] Israel

Article by: NSW Board of Jewish Education

Introduction



This map shows the location of the modern state of Israel in the world

Jews have lived in the land of Israel for nearly 4000 years, going back to the period of the Biblical patriarchs (c.1900 BCE). The story of the Jewish people, Israel, its capital, Jerusalem, and the Jewish Temple there, has been one of exile, destruction and rebirth. In its 3000 years of history Jerusalem has been destroyed 17 times and 18 times reborn. There has always remained a Jewish presence in the land of Israel and in Jerusalem, and the Jewish people as a whole always dreamt of returning to and rebuilding it.

The concluding words of Israel's national anthem, *HaTikvah (The Hope)* summarise that aim: "The hope of 2000 years:/ To live as a free people/ In our own land,/ The land of Zion and Jerusalem."

From Biblical Israel to 70 CE (Destruction of the Temple)

The story of Jewish life in ancient Israel is recorded in detail in the Hebrew Bible (called the "Old Testament" by Christians). According to the Bible, the history of the Jewish people begins with Abraham, and the story of Abraham begins when God tells him to leave his homeland, promising Abraham and his descendants a new home in the land of Canaan. (Gen. 12). Canaan was later renamed Israel, after Abraham's grandson, Jacob/Israel. The land is also often referred to as the Promised Land because of God's repeated promise (Gen. 12:7, 13:15, 15:18, 17:8) to give it to the descendants of Abraham.

When Jacob (also known as Israel) encountered the site on Mount Moriah where centuries later the Temple would stand, he said: "How awe-inspiring is this place! It is the House of God! It is the gate to heaven!" (Gen. 28:17). He was told Jerusalem was "the site that the Lord your God will choose from among all your tribes, as a place established in His name. It is there that you shall go to seek His presence" (Deut. 12:3).

Jerusalem began to fulfil the function of a spiritual and national capital for the Jews in the 10th century BCE when King David conquered it. He made Jerusalem his seat of judgment and took the Ark of the Covenant to rest there. It was David who conceived the idea of building a Temple there as a permanent house of God, a plan eventually fulfilled by his son Solomon.

The Temple in Jerusalem was the centre of Jewish religion and life from the time of Solomon to its eventual destruction by the Romans in 70CE. It was the one and only place where services and certain other religious rituals were performed. Three times a year, on the harvest holydays of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles, the entire Jewish nation would make a pilgrimage there.

It is in the direction of Jerusalem that Jews face when they pray three times daily. The prayers themselves contain numerous references to Jerusalem and Zion. In the Amidah, the Silent Devotion, God is praised as the Builder of Jerusalem. In many other places the prayers echo the messianic belief that God will restore the Jewish people to His holy city. On Passover and the Day of Atonement, Jews conclude services with the fervent hope: "Next year may we be in Jerusalem!"

When the Babylonians destroyed the city in 586 BCE, they also partially destroyed the Temple. The Jews, sent into exile by this event, pledged that they would never forget their beloved Jerusalem or its Temple:

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, and we wept, when we remembered Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither. Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember thee not; if I set not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy" (Psalms 137:1-6).



The Arch of Titus in Rome portrays the Temple in Jerusalem being looted in 70CE by Roman soldiers

In 165 BCE the Temple was rededicated after Jewish soldiers succeeded in recapturing Jerusalem. The Romans destroyed this Second Temple in 70 CE, for them a victory of such significance that they commemorated it by erecting the triumphal Arch of Titus, which still dominates the Roman Forum.

Jerusalem's famous Wailing Wall is the remains of the western retaining wall of the Temple, and it is as close to the site of the original Sanctuary as Jews can go today. The site of The Temple is now occupied by a Muslim Mosque called the Dome of the Rock.

When the Emperor Hadrian later began planning to replace the destroyed Second Temple with a shrine to Jupiter, a Jewish revolt known as the Bar Kochba Rebellion broke out. This revolt broke out in 135 CE and some 580,000 Jewish soldiers were killed; following the revolt, the Emperor Hadrian decreed that the name "Judea" (which was then the name by which the land of Israel was known) should be replaced by "Palestina", the Latin name for Philistia, the land of the Philistines, an ancient people who had invaded and occupied part of the land of Israel but who disappeared from history at the time of the Babylonian conquest of the region. Emperor Hadrian's motivation for doing this was simple - the name Judea was derived from Judah, the name of the largest Jewish tribe, and its use implied that the land was Jewish, whereas Hadrian wished to teach the Jews that Rome, and not they, now controlled the land and everything about it, including what name was given to it.

In the years following the destruction of the Second Temple, the greater part of the Jewish population went into exile as captives, slaves and refugees, although Galilee remained a centre of Jewish institutions and learning until the sixth century CE. For the past 2000 years, on the 9th day of the Hebrew month of Av, Jews everywhere have commemorated the destruction of their city and Temple with a 25-hour fast. They sit on low stools in their synagogues and recite Jeremiah's Lamentations. They recite elegies for the city which is "scorned without her glory".

The Importance of Jerusalem in Judaism

"Jews care intensely about Jerusalem. The Christians have Rome and Canterbury and even Salt Lake City; Muslims have Mecca and Medina. Jerusalem has great meaning for them also. But the Jews have only Jerusalem, and only the Jews have made it their capital. That is why it has so much deeper a meaning for them than for anybody else...." (Teddy Kollek, Mayor of Jerusalem from 1965-1993).



A panoramic view of the modern city of Jerusalem. (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

Throughout its long and turbulent history, Jerusalem, more than any other city, has evoked the emotions, aspirations, yearnings and religious fervour of civilised mankind. Yet this homage of the world cannot overshadow the consuming and single-minded passion of one particular attachment: that of the Jewish people. For that people, as no other, Jerusalem is not just its one and only religious centre and source of spiritual life; from time immemorial it has been and, still is, the very heart and core of the people - the tangible embodiment of its nationhood, the lodestar in its wanderings, the theme of its prayers each day, the fulfilment of its dreams for the Return unto Zion and indeed the cornerstone of its continuity.

There has been a Jewish presence in the city of Jerusalem over the centuries, despite the massacres and deprivation brought about by its ruling powers and invading armies. The only times Jews did not live in the city were in the period immediately after the Roman destruction and for a short time during the Crusades, which was also the only period when Jerusalem was a capital city for a non-Jewish group: from 1099 with the founding of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. The city has always been the designated national capital of the Jews. It was home to the Jewish kings, the Sanhedrin and the High Priests. In 1948 it automatically became the capital of the State of Israel.

In October 1995, the US Congress passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act which recognised Jerusalem as the united capital of Israel and authorised the relocation of the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The then US Senate majority leader, Robert Dole, stated: "Yesterday's vote to relocate the American Embassy to Jerusalem was truly a bipartisan effort... No other city on earth represents the same capital of the same country inhabited by the same people, speaking the same language and worshipping the same God as it did 3,000 years ago."

Judaism in Israel Today

In Israel's Declaration of Independence, the desire is expressed to reflect the historical, cultural and spiritual centrality of the Land of Israel in its statehood, and its openness to Aliyah. This is achieved by Public holidays being observed on Jewish Festivals; the IDF, most hospitals and public services, ensuring that the food they serve is Kosher, and such. The Declaration also promises that the State of Israel "will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the holy places of all religions..."

About one quarter of Israel's Jewish population observe some traditions, while another 20% say they go to the synagogue on Yom Kippur (=70%) and another 8% (=78%) say that they fast on Yom Kippur but stay at home. A similar percentage observe the Seder gathering in some form on the first night of Pesach. Some other traditional practices observed in a limited way by the Hiloni (secular) of Israel are lighting the Shabbat candles, or keeping kosher to some extent. This is rare practice amongst American Reform Jews, and unheard of among secular American Jews.

Even though this reveals that most Israelis do not formally identify themselves with a movement, Orthodoxy is the only movement that is formally and legally recognised in Israel. Religious councils were served only by Orthodox Jews until recently, and matters such as marriage, conversions and divorce are controlled by the Orthodox Rabbinate.

There is a strong movement to de-institutionalize Judaism as the state Religion, in terms of its impact on individual free will and practice, issues of pluralism and on personal status. Under Israel, freedom of religion has been guaranteed for all faiths in Israel and particularly in Jerusalem. By contrast, between 1948 and 1967, under the rule of Jordan in East Jerusalem, 54 synagogues were destroyed in the Old City; gravestones from the ancient Jewish cemetery on the Mount of Olives were used as paving stones; and Jews were expelled from the sector. Under Article 8 of the Israeli-Jordanian Armistice agreement of April 1949, free access to the Western Wall and Mount Scopus was supposed to be guaranteed to the Jews, but the Jordanians never allowed it. Immediately after the Israeli reunification of Jerusalem, the Protection of Holy Places Law was passed by the Knesset, on 22 June 1967, guaranteeing the sanctity of all holy sites. This law imposes prison sentences of up to seven years on those who desecrate such places. The 1980 Basic Law on Jerusalem as the capital of Israel reaffirmed the principle of free access to the holy sites of all religions.

Israel permits Christians and Muslims to administer their own holy places and institutions. Jordan still administers the Muslim holy sites in the city. In 1988 King Hussein exempted Jerusalem when he ended his administrative ties with the West Bank, and the October 1994 Israel-Jordanian peace treaty agrees on respecting "the present special role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in the Muslim holy shrines in Jerusalem". C. Witton Davies, Archdeacon of Oxford, wrote after a visit to Jerusalem: "From my own personal conversations and observations, I testify that Jerusalem has never been so fairly administered, or made accessible to adherents of all three monotheisms, as well as to the general tourist sightseer or visitor."

Former US President Jimmy Carter, a devout Southern Baptist and an outspoken exponent of human rights, has acknowledged the freedom of religion in East Jerusalem under Israeli rule: "There is unimpeded access today. There wasn't from 1948-1967."

In April 1990, the chairman of the US House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, Dante Fascell, noted on the floor of Congress that "since Israel gained control of the (Old) City in 1967, it has been open to worshippers of all faiths."

Israeli rule has not been perfect, yet it has effectively safeguarded the religious freedom of Christians, Muslims and Jews and their holy places.

The Historic Jewish Capital of the Historical Jewish Land

For 3000 years Jews have turned towards Jerusalem for spiritual, cultural, and national inspiration. After the destruction of the city, by the Romans almost 2000 years ago, foreign powers ruled the city vanquishing its inner beauty. Today the beauty has returned to the city. Jerusalem has once again truly become the centre of the Jewish people. The adage of the Talmudic sages has now been fulfilled: "Ten measures of beauty were bestowed upon the world; nine were taken by Jerusalem."

Through the centuries of exile, the hope for redemption of Jerusalem and the land of Israel remained a focal point of the Jewish religion and national identity. Today there are about 14 million Jews in the world, of whom nearly five million live in Israel, almost half a million in Jerusalem.

This is an excerpt from an address by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin, given at the inauguration of the Jerusalem 3000 festivities on 4 September 1995 - two months before his assassination:

“Three thousand years of history look down upon us today, as do the dreams which cover the hyssop of the Western Wall and the silent graves of the Mount of Olives and Mount Herzl; the hush of the footsteps of the pilgrims and the thunder of the nailed boots of the ruthless conquerors; whose walls resonate with the prayers of the children and the pleas of the praying; where the exultation of victory mingled with the tears of the paratroopers next to the remnants of the Temple, liberated from the yoke of strangers. Three thousand years of dreams and prayers today wrap Jerusalem in love and bring close Jews of every generation - from the fires of the Inquisition to the ovens of Auschwitz, and from all corners of the earth - from Yemen to Poland. Three thousand years of Jerusalem are for us, now and forever, a message for tolerance between religions, of love between peoples, of understanding between the nations, of the penetrating awareness that there is no State of Israel without Jerusalem, and no peace without Jerusalem united - the City of Peace. On the day that the government offices were moved to Jerusalem, on 13 December 1949, the first Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion, said: ‘The State of Israel has, and will have, only one capital, Eternal Jerusalem. So it was 3000 years ago and so it will be, as we believe, for eternity’.”

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From Elijahu

I'm so excited about the growth of the message here at *Tsiyon Road*. Our 24/7/365 *Tsiyon Road* radio station is now broadcast all the time, around the clock, via *Glorystar* satellite. This makes our station available to millions of satellite listeners in North and South America, not even counting our global internet reach. And now, we have a new Android App. This is huge! Android dominates the global smart phone market "...now being at 68.1%. It doesn't seem like there's anything stopping Android from going past the 80% mark either, seeing how it's already reached that in China" (androidauthority.com). Soon Android will be powering over a *billion* [1,000,000,000] phones worldwide, potentially bringing *Tsiyon Road* to a 7th of the world's population! This is in addition to the billions that can access us on the internet via computers and other devices. Modern communications are a virtual miracle of our time, making it possible to bring our message to the Remnant around the globe. Particularly since YHWH told us to "go!" we have been expanding our reach to leverage every means of communication we can access to reach the scattered Remnant. Thank you for helping us get this message out to more and more people!

On another note, I want to tell you a little about our Midrash this Sabbath. It is about "Jacob's Ladder" - the amazing dream YHWH gave Jacob that impacts us down to this day. There have been many speculations about the meaning of this dream, but I know you will understand it's meaning for your life much more clearly once you hear this latest program. YHWH has this to say to the Remnant through this message, so you won't want to miss it.

Blessings and Shalom!

Elijahu ben David

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