

# Africans, “the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel”

(Matt. 10:6)

By  
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Introduction:

*An array of Biblical, cultural and historical evidence shows without a shadow of doubt that (West) Africans are the remnants of “the lost sheep of the house of Israel”.*

*Therefore, as an African Hebrew Israelite, realize that you are the focus of God’s first love and that you must return to the warmth of that love through repentance and faith in Christ.*

Biblical proofs:

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***But first, is the Black African inferior to the White man? The Bible hardly suggests so:***

## **I. The first Biblical human family was African**

### **A. The location of the Garden of Eden, man's original dwelling-place (Gen. 2:9-15)**

#### **1. The boundaries of Eden are identified and delineated by four rivers and the lands they surround:**

***(1) First river Pison encircles the land of Havilah, situated "before" or "opposite" Egypt (Gen. 25:18; I Sam. 15:7), placing this part of Eden within Africa, most probably on the Ethiopian shore inhabited by Cushites (Gen. 10:7 International Standard Bible Encyclopedia). Rich in precious minerals, Havilah has gold, "And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone" (vv. 11-12). [Isn't this true of Africa? Isn't Africa the continent which abounds most in mineral riches?]***

***(2) Second river Gihon was also in Africa; it encircled "the whole land of Ethiopia" (Gen. 2:13).***

***(3) The third river Tigris (KJV "Hiddekel") flows towards "the east of Assyria" (modern Iraq), apparently bounded on the west by the "fourth river" Euphrates (v. 14).***

(1) The *Original African Heritage Study Bible* pinpoints the locations of the four rivers as follows: "They are Pishon, Gihon (Blue and White Nile), Hiddekel (Tigris), and Euphrates. The Nile River is the longest river system in the world. An early civilization was born along the banks of this river in Egypt. The Nile flows 4,160 miles. It is the only river in the world that rises near the equator and flows into the middle latitudes. It irrigates 6,300,000 acres of land in Egypt, about 2,800,000 acres in Sudan, and small areas in Ethiopia and Uganda. The Tigris River flows from southeast Turkey through Iraq (1,150 miles), joining the Euphrates to form the Shatt Al Arab, which flows for another 120 miles to the Persian Gulf" (Footnote Gen. 2:10-14, p. 4).

**Conclusion:** The whole region of Eden extended from Africa 'proper' to Mesopotamia, its eastern end where "God planted a garden" (Gen. 2:8). The entire stretch from Africa to Mesopotamia was therefore one contiguous land mass before the construction of the Suez Canal in 1869. This is corroborated by the Biblical description of Mesopotamia as

“the land of Nimrod” (Micah 5:6; cp Isa. 19:23-25; 11:11), the Cushite, who built several cities in the “Fertile Crescent” (Gen. 10:8-11). In the light of this overwhelming evidence, it was on African land that God stood and said “Let there be light, and there was light”—a continent later labeled “the dark continent”. Yet this was the land of Eden, a name which means “pleasure” or “delight” in Hebrew. In other words, God made Edenic Africa to be a paradise, a place of joy and delight blessed with all the essentials and luxuries of life.

## **B. The physical features and occupation of the first man (Adam)**

1. Adam was made in God’s “image”, after “His likeness”, i.e. Adam was reproduced after His kind (Gen. 1:26; Luke 3:38). It therefore follows that Adam and Eve looked like God. Now, what is the Biblical description of the ‘physical’ features of God? Daniel 7:9 describes the hair of His head as being “like the pure wool”. Rev. 1:14 describes Christ’s hair in similar terms—“white like wool” (Rev. 1:14).

2. God’s ‘colour’ is almost always depicted as fiery red. When Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and 70 elders of Israel saw “the God of Israel” (the pre-incarnate Christ) on Mount Sinai, “the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire” (Ex. 24:1, 9-10, 17; cp Heb. 12:29). Similarly, Revelation describes Christ’s feet as being like “fine brass, as if burned in a furnace” (v. 15) and His eyes as “a flame of fire” (v. 14).

Note: This is not to be dismissed as an example of naked anthropomorphism but how we might see God if He were to appear as man. Moreover, it hints us as to how God originally conceived man to look like. It’s His representation of Himself; He inspired His own description in the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21). Namely, ‘I have woolly hair and eyes like flames of fire’.

**Conclusion:** In all probability, Adam and Eve in their resemblance to God had woolly hair and were red in colour. In fact, the name *Adam* means “red earth” in Hebrew. (Note: 1 Sam. 16:12 describes David as “ruddy”, i.e. reddish, Twi ‘*ebere*’). Of the three main races of mankind (Caucasian Whites, Negro Blacks and Asians/Mongolians), the Black African race is the only race that has woolly hair like the astrakhan of the sheep. Meanwhile, the African colour ranges between deep reddish hue and black (see Acts 13:1 “Simon the Niger”). Although all races are physically descended from Adam, the Black African man in all likelihood bears closer resemblance to the original man God created. And scientists (anthropologists) confirm that the earliest humans were from Africa. The London-based *Daily Mail* newspaper reported in its 4th Nov. 2011 edition:

***Scientists confirm early humans were from Africa but their route out was via Arabia not Egypt  
Our ancestors headed into India via Yemen before wandering further east and north  
Researchers used complicated new DNA procedure 'recombination'***

By [Martin Robinson](#) Last updated at 7:07 PM on 4th November 2011

Our human ancestors did come from Africa but left the continent to spread across the world via a different route than first thought, scientists have revealed.

A six-year study mapping genetic patterns found that people who ended up in Europe, Asia and Oceania got there by crossing the sea to Arabia around 70,000 years ago.

Scientists had thought that humankind left for other continents in a northern direction through Egypt's Sinai region but now it seems they wandered further south, probably via Yemen.



<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2057546/Early-humans-Africa-route-Arabia-Egypt.html>>

Discount the incorrect carbon dating (70, 000 years) (arrived at by the inexact science of measuring the different forms of carbons in objects of antiquity), and the scientists are in full agreement with the Bible about the African origins of man.

**C. God made the original man to be ‘a man of the earth’— primarily a farmer (Gen. 2:15). This is particularly true of the African.**

**D. Black People were not Cursed by Noah.**

Black people have borne the insult for generations. They are said to carry the curse of Ham, their progenitor, which Noah pronounced on him for looking on his nakedness. And scripture is quoted in support of the view. Only it's a notorious misinterpretation of an otherwise plain scripture with a clear meaning. The scripture in question is Gen. 9:18-27:

*“And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan.*

*“These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.*

*“And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard:*

*“And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.*

*“And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.*

*“And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness.*

*“And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.*

*“And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.*

*“And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.*

*“God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant”.*

While Ham did indeed see his father's nakedness and humiliated him by telling his brothers, Noah did not direct the curse at Ham himself but his grandson Canaan, Ham's youngest son ( Gen. 10:6) whose descendants, the Canaanites, the Israelites would eventually displace in the land of Canaan in fulfillment of the curse (see Gen. 13:14-15; Lev. 18:22-28; Deut. 9:4-5). Moreover, not all black or dark-skinned peoples were descended from Ham. If Ham was black (as nearly all Bible scholars are agreed), so were his siblings. Being of the same parentage, the three brothers could not have been genetically different from each other. Definitely, they would be genetically related and in all probability had similar physical characteristics. The *Original African Heritage Study Bible* explains more:

“The ‘curse of Ham’ is a post-biblical myth. In fact, the sons of Noah—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—do not represent three different races. (It is an absurdity of no small order to claim that Noah and his wife could produce offspring that would constitute three distinct racial types!) In Gen. 9:18-29, Ham is not the recipient of a curse. The text explicitly says, ‘Let Canaan be cursed.’ Furthermore, *Ham* does not mean ‘black’ in Hebrew; it translates literally as ‘hot’ or ‘heated’.

“It does not make sense to say, logically or scientifically, that within ten generations from Adam to Noah (and without the introduction of any outside factors), a genetic change took place which allowed one man (Noah) and his wife (of the same race as himself) to produce children who were racially different! This is the logic many would have the modern reader believe” (Cain Hope Felder, *Original African Heritage Study Bible*, “Introduction”, p. ix).

*Willmington's Guide to the Bible* also has this to say:

“What was involved in Noah's threefold prophecy?

**(1) “To Ham [?] and Canaan—a ‘servant of servants’ shall he be unto his brethren.’**

(a) “Negative—it did not result in a special curse upon black people. Ham had four sons. These were: Cush—the progenitor of the Ethiopians; Mizriam—of the Egyptians; Phut—of the Libyans and peoples of Africa; Canaan—of the Canaanites.

*Thus, as the curse was specifically leveled at Canaan and not Phut (who may have founded the African nations), there exist absolutely no racial implications whatsoever within the curse. In fact, the skin texture of Israelites and Canaanites at the time of Joshua’s invasion was probably very similar [i.e. dark]. The problem concerning the Canaanites was not in the color of their skin but rather in the condition of their hearts” (p. 33).*

Commenting on the reddish colour of David reported in the scriptures, *The New Compact Bible Dictionary* concurs that the ancient Israelites were dark-skinned: “Ruddy, a word used to refer to a red or fair complexion, in contrast to the DARK SKIN OF THE HEBREWS (1 Sam. 16:12; 17:42; S. of Sol. 5:10)” (T. Alton Bryant. Ed. *The New Compact Bible Dictionary*, p. 510; capitals mine).

So not all black or dark-skinned peoples are descended from Ham; the Hebrew Semites were also dark skinned. In fact, so were all the ancient Afro-Asiatics, made up of Hamitic-Shemitic nations. That’s why the skin of Moses, a Hebrew Afro-Asiatic, turned white when God, as one of His signs to him, told him to put his hand in his bosom and then take it back. We read the account in Ex. 4:6-7:

*“And the LORD said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous, as white as snow.*

*“And He said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. (And he put his hand into his bosom again; and when he took it out of his bosom, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh.) (RV).*

Since white cannot show on white except on dark skin, a patch of Moses’ skin turning white in contrast to the rest of his skin colour is conclusive evidence that Moses was black. The effect was the same when God cursed Miriam for speaking against Moses and Gehazi, Elisha’s servant, for receiving Naaman’s gifts by false pretences—a patch of white skin appeared against a background of dark skin (Num. 12:10; 2 Kings 5:20-27). Indeed, the phenomenon of the skin turning white was regarded as a sign of a leprous skin disease, for which the LORD gave the priests of Israel extensive rules regarding its detection, control and treatment in Lev. 13. (How sad and ironic then, that today many

black people, especially women, spend good money on all sorts of chemicals just to make their skin lighter!)

If blessed nations and individuals as Moses were dark-skinned, surely black does not equal evil or backwardness. And the Hamitic nations were not backward or bystanders of history; they were the torchbearers of civilization. *Willmington's Guide to the Bible* quotes a Dr. Arthur C. Custance, a scholar and anthropologist:

“In the case of Ham and his descendants, history shows that they have rendered an extraordinary service to mankind from the point of view of the physical developments of civilization. All the earliest civilizations of note were founded and carried to their highest technical proficiency by Hamitic peoples. There is scarcely a basic technological invention which must not be attributed to them. As we shall show later, neither Shem nor Japheth made any significant contribution to the fundamental technology of civilization, in spite of all appearance to the contrary. This is a bold statement but it is not made in ignorance of the facts.

“The contribution of Japheth has been in the application of philosophy to technology and the subsequent development of the scientific method. As the application of Japheth's philosophy to the technology of Ham produced science, so the application of his philosophy to the religious insights of Shem produced theology. ... Most of us have been brought up to believe that we, Indo-Europeans, are the most inventive people in the world. It is exceedingly difficult to escape from this culturally conditional prejudice to take a fresh objective look at the origins of our technological achievements. One may take almost any essential element of our highly complex civilization—aircraft, paper, weaving, metallurgy, propulsion of various kinds, painting, explosives, medical techniques, mechanical principles, food, the use of electricity, virtually anything technological in nature—and an examination of the history of its development leads us surely and certainly back to a Hamitic people and exceedingly rarely to Japheth or Shem. The basic inventions which have been contributed by Shem or Japheth can, it seems, be numbered on the fingers of one hand. This seems contrary to popular opinion, yet it is a thesis which can be supported—and has been documented—from close to 1000 authoritative sources” (p. 34).

On further research, it turns out that Indo-Europeans were not the originators of philosophy but were secondhand learners and practitioners. Africa, the cradle of civilization, was also the birthplace of philosophy and not Greece which has traditionally been accorded that recognition. In an article titled “Greek philosophers who came to Africa to study”, writer-researcher Barima Adu-Asamoah picks holes in the widely accepted notion that the ancient Greeks were the originators of philosophy based on ancient historical records of both Egypt and Greece. He opens his article this way:

“It is interesting that the ancient Greeks knew much more about the cultural and racial identity of Ancient Egyptians than modern European historians, long before the coming of the Romans, Turks and Arabs. The primary aim of these modern Eurocentric scholars (modern Arab historians included) is to completely expunge black Africans from the ‘map of human geography’ and world history. The ideological position has been, and still is, that nothing came out of Africa but powerless, defenceless, uncivilised, barbaric and primitive peoples and ideas.

“If so, why did the great Greek philosophers cross the seas and deserts to study in Africa? Aristotle, one of the greatest of Greek philosophers, wrote in *Physiognomonica* that ‘the Ethiopians and Egyptians are very black’. Herodotus (also a Greek historian) adds that the ancient Egyptians had ‘black skin and wooly hair’” (*New African magazine*, p. 20, 42<sup>nd</sup> Year, October 2008).

Barima then comes to the meat of his article:

“There are two parts to the word ‘philosophy’ as it comes to us from the Greek: ‘Philo’ meaning brother or lover and ‘Sophia’ meaning wisdom or wise. Thus, a philosopher is called a ‘lover of wisdom’. The origin of ‘Sophia’ is clearly in the African language, Mdu Neter, the language of Ancient Egypt where the word ‘Seba’, meaning ‘the wise’ appears first in 2050BC in the tomb of Antef I, long before the existence of Greece or Greek.

“The word became ‘Sebo’ in Coptic, and ‘Sophia’ in Greek. As to ‘philosopher’, the lover of wisdom, that is precisely what is meant by ‘Seba’, the wise, in ancient tomb writings of the Ancient Egyptians. By all Greek and ancient accounts, philosophy as we know it, began first with the black Africans around 2800BC—that is, 2,200 years before the appearance of the first so-called Greek philosopher.

“Learning was until the modern age pointed to Africa where higher learning began. It is here that the seven ‘Liberal Arts’ originated from—the Ancient mystical teachings which formed the basis of the priesthood, the custodians of learning” (ibid., p. 23).

He continues:

“When Africans finished building the pyramids in 2500BC, it was 1,700 years before Homer, the first Greek writer, began writing *The Iliad*, the European classic. Homer is said to have spent seven years in Africa, and studied law, philosophy, religion, astronomy, and politics. Many of the great European philosophers studied in Africa because it was the educational capital of the ancient world. Pythagoras is known to have spent over 20 years in Africa. When Socrates wrote of his studies in the book *Bucyrus*, he admitted categorically: ‘I studied philosophy and medicine in Egypt.’ He did not study these subjects in Greece, but in Africa!



“In the area of medicine, the Africans (Ancient Egyptians) wrote such medical books as the *Hearst Papyrus* (7<sup>th</sup> Dynasty 2000BC), the *Kahun Papyrus* (12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Dynasty 2133-1766BC) which contains gynaecological treatments, and the *Ebers Papyrus* (18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty 1500BC).

“On the walls of the Temple of Kom Ombo, they left records of the original medical tools they used in their operations. These tools consist of forceps, air cups, knives, sponge, scissors, triceps, a balance to weigh portions of medicine, retractor to separate skin, birthing or delivery chair [Ex. 1:16], and the origin of the modern-day RX prescription symbol.

“In 47BC, the medical doctors in ancient Kemet [Egypt] delivered Cleopatra VII’s son named Caesarion (‘Little Caesar’). The medical procedure performed by these African doctors in the BC era to deliver this boy-child was named after Little Caesar, from which we now have the medical term ‘Caesarean Section’.

“When African doctors were writing these medical texts and performing all these medical operations, Hippocrates, the Greek (now said to be the ‘father of medicine’) was not yet born, until 333BC, almost 2,000 years later.

“Recently, Dr Jackie Campbell, a member of a British research team from the KNH Centre for Biological Egyptology at the University of Manchester, who examined medical papyri dating back to the 1500BC era—a whole 1,000 years before the birth of Hippocrates—affirmed that: ‘Classical scholars have always considered the Ancient Greeks, particularly Hippocrates, as being the fathers of medicine, but our findings suggest that the Ancient Egyptians were practising a credible form of pharmacy and medicine much earlier’.

“Imhotep, the world’s ‘first recorded multi-genius’, is the *real* ‘father of medicine’. He was born in 2800BC, so instead of modern doctors taking the derived Hippocratic Oath, medical students today should take the true, original Imhotep Oath” (ibid., p.24).

Africa had been great, but why our sorry state now? The Bible, the Word of God, offers the only credible explanation which we will examine later in this piece.

For now back to the beginnings of humanity: What accounts for the distinct racial characteristics of modern mankind, if all humanity descended from Noah’s three sons who shared the same genetic traits? Why do the physical characteristics of modern humanity differ along racial lines?

*Willmington’s Guide* picks the brains of another scholar, a Dr. Henry Morris:

“As each family and tribal unit migrated away from Babel, not only did they each develop a distinctive culture, but also they each developed distinctive physical and

biological characteristics. Since they would communicate only with members of their own family unit, there was no further possibility of marrying outside the family. Hence, it was necessary to establish new families composed of very close relatives, for several generations at least. It is well established genetically that variations take place very quickly in a small inbreeding population, but very slowly in a large interbreeding population ... even though the genetic factors for specifically distinctive characteristics are latent in the gene pool of the population. In a small population, however, the ... genes will have opportunity to become openly expressed and even dominant under these circumstances. Thus, in a very few generations of such inbreeding, distinctive characteristics of skin color, height, hair texture, facial features, temperament, environmental adjustment, and others, could come to be associated with particular tribes and nations” (Culled from *The Genesis Record*, p. 176) (*Willmington’s Guide to the Bible*, p. 35).

The descendants of Noah who would undergo the greatest genetic change were the Japhetites who dwelt in “the isles of the gentiles”, far from Shem and Ham:

*“The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.*

*“And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.*

*“And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.*

*“By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations” (Gen. 10:2-5).*

By contrast, Shem and Ham descendants dwelt close together and in most cases intermingled. That’s why Nimrod, a Hamite, operated and built in Mesopotamia which was strictly speaking Shem’s. In its footnote on Genesis 10:22 which names Asshur, the progenitor of the Assyrians of Mesopotamia, as a son of Shem, the *New English Translation* (the *NET Bible*) explains:

*“Asshur is the name for the Assyrians. Asshur was the region in which Nimrod expanded his power (see v. 11, where the name is also mentioned). When names appear in both sections of a genealogical list, it probably means that there were both Hamites and Shemites living in that region in antiquity, especially if the name is a place name”.*

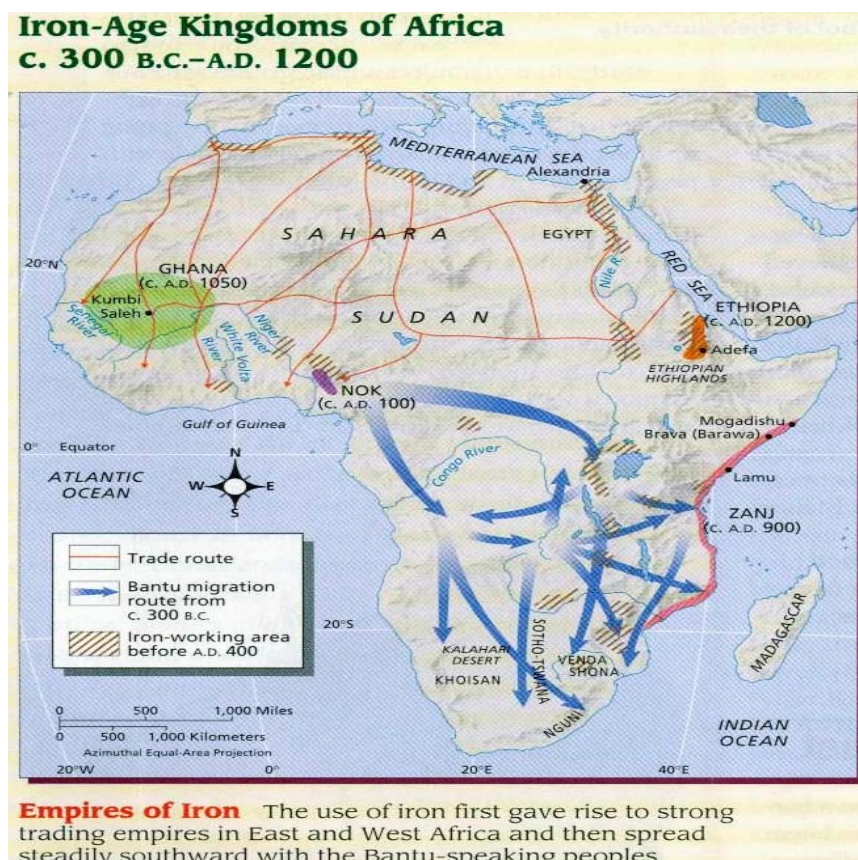
## **II. Biblical African Cultural Practices of “the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel”**

**But first, the great mass movement into West Africa:** The African Israelites of north-east Africa (Israel) were enslaved and dispersed worldwide for their sins and transgressions in fulfilment of Christ’s prophecy in Luke 21:24 that, shortly after His

death, resurrection and ascension “they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”. The beginning point of the fulfilment of this prophecy was the year 70 AD when the Roman army under General Titus destroyed the Jewish nation, sacked Jerusalem and burnt down the Temple. The surviving vanquished Jews were then sold into slavery, but many fled from the Holy Land for refuge elsewhere.

While some of the Israelites fled southwards into Yemen and westwards into Persia, mainland Africa was the most natural place of refuge for most of the fleeing Israelites. (Not to the north, the route of the advancing enemies). And many did come to Africa, first settling in the Horn of Africa region and, over time, pushing westward into the western Sudan or West Africa. It was in the western Sudan that these African Jews established such great empires as the old Ghana Empire founded circa 300 AD.

“The ancient black empire of Ghana was established in the western Sudan. During the colonial period, the western Sudan was called French West Africa: the northern boundary of this region is the Sahara Desert; the western and southern border is Lake Chad. Some rivers of this region are the Senegal, the Gambia, the Volta, the Benue, the Logone, and last but not least is the famous Niger River. This river flows from the Guinea highlands northeast to the famous cities of Timbuktu and Gao; then it makes a sharp turn and flows southeast toward the city of Benin in Nigeria.



“The Arabs, Moors, and the Sudanic writers attribute to ancient black African Hebrews the establishment of the first empires, ‘the erection of the first public buildings in the country, the construction of the first canals and irrigation systems, and the institution of a social economic regime which still survives in all Saharan communities’.

“... The Jews imported into the western part of Africa a superior material, educational, and moral culture soon after 300 A.D. ... The Jews made use of every opportunity; they were industrious and skillful people: In the Jewish Ghanaian states were found kings, princes, governors, generals, secretaries, treasurers, revenue agents, judges, architects, engineers, doctors, historians, language interpreters, mathematicians, jewelers, sculptors, masons, carpenters, painters of art, goldsmiths, leather-workers, potters, armorers. Saddlers, blacksmiths, agriculturists, et cetera.

“The black Hebrew kings of Ghana had two titles: (1) Kayamaga (master of gold); (2) and Ghana (war chief).

“The material foundation of the Ghanaian state was based on the affluence of gold and iron. The use of iron in Africa, especially Ghana, revolutionized the social and military systems. El Zouhri stated that the Ghanaians fought many wars against their neighbours, who did not use iron, but fought with bars of ebony. ... The king’s revenue agents levied taxes on imports and exports, and the medium of exchange was gold” (Rudolph R. Windsor, *From Babylon to Timbuktu*, pp. 87-91).

The book *African Glory* tells us more:

“Ghana’s commercial relations with the outside world were very important. It lay at the southern end of the western caravan route that ran from Sijilmasa in modern Morocco on through Taghaza in the Sahara desert, famous throughout recorded history for its salt mines. The principal imports of the Ghana Empire were cloths, brocades, copper, and salt, while the chief item exported was Ghana’s valuable gold dust.

“.... The population was very large and Ibn Khaldoun [an Arab travel writer] informs us that it [the capital, the city of Ghana] was ‘one of the greatest and most populous cities in the world’. The people wore clothes made of wool, cotton, silk, and velvet. A lucrative trade in textile fabrics, dates, copper, jewels, armour, and weapons of gold and silver was carried out in the Empire” (J.C. deGraft-Johnson, *African Glory*, Black Classic Press 1986, pp. 80-82).

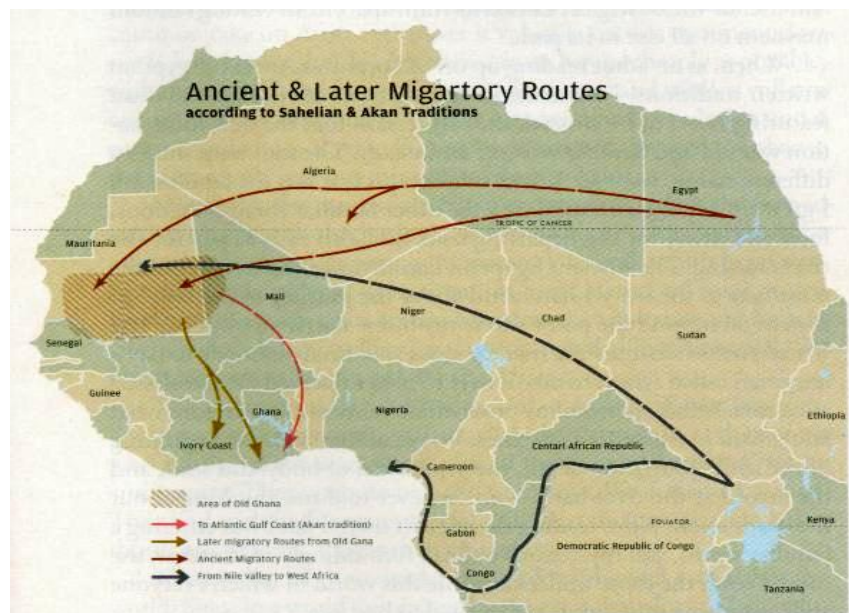
The Israelites now appear to have put down roots in the heart of Africa—the western Sudan—after fleeing and surviving persecutions and wars since the 70 A.D. tragedy and particularly after the Bar Kochba war of AD 135 when all Jews were systematically and permanently banned from the Holy Land. But it was not to be. Although the Ghana

Empire flourished for 700 years, the Israelites would not find a permanent home in the western Sudan.

From A.D. 1020 – A.D. 1060, Arab invaders launched a series of military assaults on the Ghana Empire until “in 1076, the blow that destroyed the Ghana Empire fell with shattering force. Almoravid forces under Abu Bekr captured and sacked the city, and this brought about the dismemberment of the Ghana Empire.

“The victory of Abu Bekr and his Almoravid forces in 1076 was a high-water mark in West African history. It resulted in the southward march of several tribes, including the Akan group—the Ashantis, Fantis, Akims, Akwapims, Akawmus, and Gyamans. The Akans today live roughly 1,000 miles south-west of their original home. They appear to have begun their long march southward as one political unit, bound together by common ties of language and custom; but by the time they arrived on the borders of the Gold Coast divisions had developed—divisions which have survived to this day.

“The Ashantis settled in the middle of the Gold Coast; the Akims (or Akyems) and Akwapims settled in the south-eastern regions of the country, and the Fantis in the middle and coastal regions.



“... Techiman in Ashanti (or Brong) was the first town, and was built by the combined efforts of the Akan group of tribes. Anyone who has visited Techiman and seen the flatness of the countryside, and noted that it is the last stop from the north just before one enters the forest belt, can appreciate why the ancestors of the Akan settled there for a time before entering the forest with its unknown dangers and mysteries” (ibid., p. 83).

Today, the African Hebrew Israelites of the Old Ghana Empire are known as Ghanaians, Togolese and Ivoirians, etc. While they have lost their original Hebrew language, what makes them still identifiable today as the descendants of the Biblical Israelites are their cultural beliefs and practices. Their customs and traditions are distinctly Hebraic; they

still bear the cultural badge of Israel! As the Akan sages would say, “*amamere yen sesa no*”, that is, ‘the culture of a people are unalterable’.

So, what are some of the distinctively Israelite cultural beliefs and practices of the West African Israelites?

#### A. Religious Beliefs

**1. 7<sup>th</sup> Day Sabbath observance—the eternal covenant sign between God and Israel forever (Ex. 31:16-17)—is traditionally acknowledged and observed in West Africa because it remains for the people of God (Heb. 4:4, 9; cp Luke 4:16, 31).**

*(1) The Akan name for Saturday ‘Memeneda’ is derived from God’s Name “Me ne” ‘I am’ (Ex. 3:14) and literally means “the day of I am that I am”.*

*(2) One of the traditional Akan names for the Almighty God of creation is “Tweadumpon Kwame”, i.e. Saturday-born God. Again, it derives from the Biblical notion of the seventh day as God’s special day.*

The 7<sup>th</sup> Day Sabbath, the only divine commandment dating to creation (Gen. 2:1-3) which the Creator commands men to “remember to keep holy” (Ex. 20:8-11; Mark 2:27), is almost intrinsic to the African and is etched deep in his consciousness. The book *Sabbath Roots The African Connection* states (drawing on research and the expert opinions of several Bible scholars):

“There is growing evidence from the African continent that a Sabbath consciousness exists among its peoples, and has from time immemorial. This consciousness long predates Christianity, and certainly does not derive from the European ecclesiastical establishment, which apparently strove mightily to suppress it.

“Jacob Nortey, of Ghana, a veteran church leader, says: ‘In the Ghanaian context, and especially within the people forming the Ashanti or Akan nation, Saturday has been a traditionally holy day, a day for worship of God’.

“And according to Joel Awoniyi, a Nigerian theologian: ‘Among the Yoruba people, the seventh day of the week is a day when no work, no marriage, no festivities, should be performed. It is known as the forbidden day’.

“Ethiopian Bible scholar Bekele Heye states emphatically: ‘The history of the seventh-day Sabbath is deep-rooted in the culture of the Ethiopian people. There is no record at

any time in the history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church that this church has officially given up Sabbath observance.’

“Missiologists recognize a Hebraic consciousness among the African people, a belief that the Sabbath is their day.

“... The centuries-long presence of the Falasha, a group of Sabbathkeeping Ethiopians, is persuasive to this argument. What is striking is that these Ethiopians, Black Jews, hold to a form of Judaism that was dominant in Solomon’s day. They seem to know nothing of later rabbinic Judaism. In the Falasha we have evidence that Africans have observed Sabbath at least as far back as the time of Solomon.

“In a quote from Bekele Heye, the Ethiopian emperor Galawdewos (A.D. 1540-1559) spoke to the issue in his reply to European church leaders who criticized Africans for keeping the ancient Sabbath and urged them to give their faith:

*“We do celebrate the Sabbath, because God, after He had finished the Creation of the World, rested thereon: Which day, as God would have it called the Holy of Holies, so that not celebrating thereof with great honor and devotion, seems plainly, contrary to God’s will and precept, who will suffer heaven and earth pass away sooner than His Word; and that especially, since Christ came not to dissolve the law but to fulfill it. It is not therefore in imitation of the Jews, but in obedience to Christ, and His holy apostles, that we observe that day.’*

“Kofi Owusu-Mensa, an Ashante Ghanaian, notes:

“Oral traditions and modern scholars and research into Akan traditions and customs affirm Saturday as Onyamee Kwaame’s special day in Akanland. Writing in the early twenties, Rattray, the British anthropologist, discovered that the Ashante name for God is Onyamee or Onyankopon Kwaame ‘whose day of service is a Saturday’ adding that, ‘this Ashante God is the same as the Jehovah of the Israelites, whom they worshipped on the Sabbath or Saturday’.

“The Akan peoples of Ghana worshiped the Creator on Saturday long before the first Portuguese ship anchored off the coast in 1471.’

“Ashante records have it that in the 1920s, the queen mother and women of Ashante presented a silver stool as a gift to Princess Mary of Britain, through the British governor in the Gold Coast (Ghana’s colonial name), and in an accompanying message, the queen mother alluded to the Akan God of Saturday, Onyamee Kwaame:

*“We pray that the great God Nyakopon, on whom men lean and do not fall, whose day of worship is a Saturday, and whom the Ashanti serve just as she [Princes Mary] serves*

*Him, that He may give the king's child and her husband long life and happiness, and finally, when she sits upon this silver stool, which the women of Ashanti have made for their White queen mother, may she call us to mind'" (Charles E. Bradford, Sabbath Roots The African Connection, 1999, pp. 25-27).*

Today, Akans and other Africans predominantly worship on Sunday in the name of 'Christianity' because they have been mis-educated and indoctrinated by European missionaries and theologians who by tradition owe allegiance to 'Sol Invictus' (the unconquered Sun) whose day of worship is Sunday. The Lord Jesus Himself observed the 7<sup>th</sup> Day Sabbath (Luke 4:16, 31), so did the apostles who followed in His footsteps (1 Cor. 11:1; 1 John 2:6; Acts 15:19-21, 17:2, 18:4, 13:42, 44; 16:12-13). No wonder, our forefathers called the White man 'Akwasi broni', for he proclaimed a God whose day of worship is Sunday, instead of the traditionally acknowledged Biblical Seventh-day Sabbath.

Nevertheless, "there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb. 4:9 *ESV*), or as the *Bible in Basic English (BBE)* put it, "there is still a Sabbath-keeping for the people of God" both now and in the world to come: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, *that* from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the LORD" (Isa. 66:22-23). Amen!

2. **The use of animal sacrifices to atone for sin—now superseded by Christ's perfect, once-and-for-all sacrifice (Heb. 10:1-4, 10).**
3. **Traditional dumping of sweepings on the outskirts of town to rid the town of curses and diseases is analogous to Christ's death outside the gate of Jerusalem "that He might sanctify the people with His own blood" (Heb. 13:12; cp John 1:29; 1 John 3:5).**
4. **Hebrew-sounding Akan name for the Creator 'bore-bore' akin to the Hebrew 'bara' pronounced 'baw-raw'.**
5. **Akan proverbs preach the Eternal God and His eternal Truths.**

In Africa, the knowledge of God is not taught; it's innate. A little research into African folklore easily confirms this—it abounds in proverbs and aphorisms that show the African peoples' profound, deep-seated knowledge of God. The book *A History of Christianity in Ghana* documents several Akan proverbs of this kind:

- *"Asase trew, na Onyame ne panyin'.* (The world is wide but God is the Master)". [See Ps 90:1-2].



- “God is Almighty. He is called ‘*Tweadumpon*’ (He on whom men lean and do not fall)—the most common explanation of a difficult term”. [See Gen. 17:1; 1 Pet. 2:6; cp Ex. 6:3].
- “God is omnipresent: ‘*Wope asem aka kyer Nyankopon a, ka kyere mframa*’. (If you want to tell God something, tell it to the wind.)” [See 2 Chron. 6:18].
- “God’s existence is self-evident even to a child: ‘*Obi nkyere abofra Onyame*’. (Nobody needs to point out God to a child)”. [See Rom. 1:19-20; Job 12:7-10; cp Ps 14:1].
- “God’s creation is good. ‘*Asansa se: Ade a Onyame aye nyinaa ye*’. (The hawk says: ‘Everything created by God is good’. [Gen. 1:31]). The hawk is high in the sky and has sharp eyes: he ought to know.”
- “God is a god of order: ‘*Onyankopon mpe asem mone nti na okye din maako-maako*’. (God does not like disorder; therefore He has given a name to everything).” [See 1 Cor. 14:33, 40].
- “We cannot change God’s will. ‘*Onyame nkrabea nni kwatibea*’. (There is no escape from God’s destiny for us).” [See Prov. 19:21; Isa. 14:24, 27].
- “But God is also gracious. ‘*Onyame na owo basin fufuo ma no*’. (God pounds the fufu for the man with one arm, that is to say, God helps the helpless)” [See Ps 72:12; 102:17]. (Hans W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, 1967, p. 3).

Others are:

- God is indispensable: “*Onyame ye kokromoti a yen san neho mopo*” (God is like the thumb; it’s impossible to tie a knot without Him). (John 15:5; Jer. 2:13; 17:13).
- No one can hide from God: “*Wo dwane Nyankopon a, wo hye n’asi*” (He who runs away from God tries in vain; he’s under Him). [See Ps 139:7-12; Jonah chapters 1-3].

How could anybody say Africans were destitute of divine knowledge before European ‘evangelistic’ efforts in Africa? Indeed, *A History of Christianity in Ghana* insists that Christ was in Africa before the arrival of the European missionaries:

“After thirty years of experience in many parts of Africa, Dr. H. Ph. Junod said, ‘Wherever I went, I found that my Master had been there before me.’

“This is true also for the history of Christianity in Ghana. CHRIST WAS THERE BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF THE MISSIONARIES. He was there in the boisterous and lively atmosphere of that country, the peculiar atmosphere so different from that of some other African countries, animated as it is by an immense zest for life” (ibid., Art. “He came into His own Home”, p. 1, Emphasis mine).

**6. Separation of women in their menses (Lev. 15:19-20); in Ezekiel 18:5-9 separation from a woman in her period is part of the general righteousness God requires of those who seek life.**

**Note:** This law of holiness still applies as long as women continue to have their menstrual flow. If not, then we may as well disregard the divine warning against all the evil deeds mentioned in conjunction with the avoidance of menstruous women in the text. Paul's statement in Gal. 3:28 – there's neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free neither male nor female in Christ - does not abrogate the divine law which women in their period are to keep. It simply means people of different races and gender have equal access to salvation in Christ (Luke 24:47; John 4:42; 1 Pet. 3:7). The same Paul who supposedly did away with distinctions of race and gender among believers is found instructing wives to submit to their husbands "as unto the Lord" and husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the Church—down to the place of children in the home and slaves (or today employees) in society (Eph. 5:21-6:9; 1 Tim. 6:1-4). In 1 Cor. 11:3, he teaches 'the divine order' in which "the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God". So then, while a person's racial background or gender do not prejudice his/her salvation, those distinctions remain facts of life even when a person becomes a believer, and Paul duly acknowledged them (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 7:18-20; 1 Tim. 2:11-14).

The distinctions of race, class and gender will only truly disappear among the saints of God in the Kingdom of heaven where "they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:35-36).

Until this new age arrives, women will continue to menstruate, and God will continue to insist that His law of holiness meant for them be upheld. In Ezekiel 22:9-12, He lists sexual relations with a woman in her period among the wickedness and sexual sins of the Israelites which He abhors with a passion:

*"There are men in you who slander to shed blood (see Lev. 19:16-17), and people in you who eat on the mountains; they commit lewdness in your midst.*

*"In you men uncover their fathers' nakedness (see Lev. 18:8; 1 Cor. 5:1-5); in you they violate women who are unclean in their menstrual impurity (see Lev. 18:19; 20:18).*

*"One commits abomination with his neighbor's wife; another lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law; another in you violates his sister, his father's daughter.*

*"In you they take bribes to shed blood; you take interest and profit and make gain of your neighbors by extortion; but me you have forgotten, declares the Lord GOD" (ESV).*

In similarly strong language, Yahweh indicated His disgust at the evil deeds of the pre-exile Kingdom of Israel by likening them to the uncleanness of a woman in her menstruation.

**Ezek. 36:17-18**

*"Son of man, when the house of Israel lived in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their deeds. Their ways before Me were like the uncleanness of a woman in her menstrual impurity.*

*"So I poured out my wrath upon them for the blood that they had shed in the land, for the idols with which they had defiled it" (ESV).*

This is how the Holy Father sees menstruation—utterly unclean! How then can we by any stretch of imagination say that God has now expunged His law of separation given to women to observe during their period?

Even Mary, after the birth of the HOLY CHILD Yeshua (Jesus), whom she conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35), observed the law of purification as written in the Law of the Lord given through Moses (Luke 2:22-24; see also Lev. 12). The only difference today is that, now that Christ's perfect sacrifice has superseded all the O.T. animal sacrifices (Heb. 10:1-10), no sacrifices have to be made again, but the Laws of separation and purification need to be observed as women **still** undergo the same conditions as their ancient counterparts and God **still** commands us to be holy like Him, as He commanded the saints of old (1 Pet. 1:15-16; 2 Cor. 6:17-7:1; Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2). If sins formerly cleansed (actually covered) with the blood of sacrificial animals are now cleansed with the pure blood of Jesus when a person comes to faith in Christ and repents of them, why not the uncleanness of obedient women previously purged with the same blood of sacrificial animals? Once we walk with God in the light of His truth which entails the observance of His holy laws (Ps 119:142), the blood of His Son cleanses us (men and women alike) from every sin and spiritual contamination (1 John 1:7).

7. Use of the hyssop plant ('Adwera' in Akan) for purification (Ps 51:7).
8. Passover festival is celebrated by the Gas (Gad tribe) of Ghana under the name 'Homowo' (Ex. 12). 'Popoi', the special festal meal they sprinkle in their surroundings, originated from the dough of unleavened bread Biblically prepared for the Passover (vv. 8, 15). Christ is now "our Passover sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7).
9. Presentation of the right shoulder of the sacrificial animal to the priest (Lev. 7:32-34) is now made to the king or chief.

## B. Traditional Royal Practices

1. Statues of Lions, symbolic of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, are erected in front of traditional palaces. First made by King Solomon, it was unique to Israel:

<sup>18</sup> "Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with refined gold. <sup>19</sup> There were six steps to the throne and a round top to the throne at its rear, and arms on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the arms. <sup>20</sup> Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps on the one side and on the other; nothing like it was made for any other kingdom" (1 Kings 10:18-20 NASB).

In Ethiopia where a direct Davidic descent through Solomon (and then Menelik) is claimed by the Royal Family, the Royal Arms are a Lion holding a Cross, with this Motto, *The Lion of the Tribe of Judah is Victorious.*



As recently as the 1960s when Emperor Haile Selassie ruled, live lions were kept in the royal palace as a vivid representation of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah.

In **Gen. 49:8-10**, the patriarch blessed his son Judah thus:

*"Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee.*

*“Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?”*

*“The sceptre 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”.*

**Rev. 5:5:**

*“And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof”.*

**2. The “Golden Stool” (as in Ashanti), also first made by King Solomon (1 Kings 10:18).**

**3. The royal Palanquin of Solomon (‘apakan’) is still used by traditional rulers in Africa, especially in Ghana, in which they are carried and borne to traditional gatherings:**

*“King Solomon made himself a palanquin of the wood of Lebanon” (Songs 3:9 Jewish Publication Society, Darby Bible).*

*“King Solomon is carried on a throne made of the finest wood” (Songs 3:9 GNB).*

**4. Judah’s royal sceptre (Akan ‘Ahenpoma) is in the hands of traditional African rulers. This is why kingship survives in Africa:**

*“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh [King Messiah] come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be” (Gen. 49:10; see also Ez. 21:27; Rev. 5:9-10).*

**Note:** Kingship is in the Gospel of Christ. When disciple Peter asked the Master what they would gain for following Him, this was His reply:

*“Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?”*

*“And Jesus said unto them, ‘Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel’” (Matt. 19:27-28).*

In **Rev. 21:24** we read:

*“And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it”.*

Thank God, the concept of kingship as described in the Bible is still practiced in Africa to serve as a reminder of the kind of kingly rule God has destined for His saints.

**5. The Royal Court of 24 Elders in heaven is replicated in African traditional palaces where the king/chief always sits in state surrounded by his elders. The similarity of arrangement is striking:**

**Rev. 4:3-4:**

*“And He who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.*

*“Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads” (ESV).*

**6. The royal sword ('Afena') (Isa. 1:20; Rev. 19:15; cp Heb. 4:12; John 12:48).**

**7. The Royal Footstool:**

**Ps 110:1:**

*“The LORD said unto My Lord, Sit thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool”.*

**Isa. 66:1:**

*“Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that ye build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest?”*

**8. Hebrew traditional musical instruments in African royal palaces, such as “mpintin”, “dawuro”, etc (Ps 150)**

**9. Traditional African queen mothers, in resemblance to the female saints of old, don't wear earrings, being a token of slavery (Deut. 15:12-17/Ex. 21:6; 1 Pet. 3:3-5)**

**10. Traditional low-cut hairstyle of African elderly women, known in Akan as 'dansinkran', is scriptural in origin:**

*“... if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head” (1 Cor. 11:6 NASB).*

**11. The traditional blowing of 7 rams' horns ('Menson') by the royal attendants leading the king's procession is a hangover from the 7 trumpets of rams' horns blown by the priests of Israel to bring down the walls of Jericho:**

**Josh. 6:1-5:**

*“Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.*

*“And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.*

*“And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days.*

*“And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets.*

*“And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him”.*

As in the days of Joshua, the overthrow of the Gentile kingdoms of this world will be precipitated by the blowing of 7 trumpets by seven angels to unleash a series of judgments on the earth:

**Rev. 8:1-2:**

*“And when He had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.*

*“And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets”.*

**Rev. 11:15:**

*“Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever” (ESV).*

**12. The punctuation of the king's speech with cries of 'Zion', Zion' by traditional linguists to urge him on as he formally speaks to his subjects in state recalls the royal city of David, “the stronghold of Zion” (2 Sam. 5:7; Ps 137:1).**

## **C. Biblical Social Norms**

**1. 24-hour period of a 'day' reckoned from sunset to sunset as defined in the Bible:**

**Gen. 1:5:**

*“And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day”.*

**Lev. 23:32:**

*“It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath”.*

That today the 24-hour period of a day is reckoned from 12-midnight to 12-midnight only highlights one fact: it's one of the changes the antichrist has made to God's “times and laws” in honour of Satan, the prince of darkness, just as Daniel prophesied:

*“And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” (Dan. 7:25).*

**2. The practice of women spreading their cover cloths before great personalities as they did to Jesus in His Triumphal Entry to Jerusalem. This is only possible in Africa and still done because:**

*(a) It's a tradition that has been passed down from our Israelite ancestors*

*(b) Our traditional style of wearing ankle-length, loose clothes with cover cloths easily lends itself to such practice, unlike tight-fitting European clothing styles like jeans and miniskirts, etc.*

**Mark 11:7-10:**

*<sup>7</sup>Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it. <sup>8</sup>And many spread their clothes on the road, and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup>Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:*

*“Hosanna!*

*‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’<sup>1</sup>*

*<sup>10</sup>Blessed is the kingdom of our father David*

*That comes in the name of the Lord!*

*Hosanna in the highest!” (NKJV).*

This is a very African way of celebrating a hero—a boisterous crowd cheering and spreading their clothes before the great man. They do it to their chiefs, their political leaders and sometimes even their spiritual leaders. It’s a sad observation, however, that, today, due to blind Europeanization, many of our young women have abandoned the decent, Biblical style of dressing inherited from our Hebrew ancestors for provocative European clothing styles which cast them as harlots! Many people tend to make light of clothing styles, but the truth of the matter is that clothing styles are *not morally neutral*. Some clothes are clearly ungodly and portray the wearer as such:

**Prov. 7:10:**

*“And behold, the woman meets him, dressed as a prostitute, wily of heart” (ESV).*

That’s why our elders preach decent dressing and associate ladies who are well dressed in the sense of being *well covered* (instead of the skimpy, tight-fitting clothes being worn today by many Europeanized African ladies) with decency. They call a young lady so dressed, ‘*akay taysia*’, to wit, a person who has dressed to cover all parts that need to be hidden.

And scripture commands same:



**1 Tim. 2:9-10:**

*“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;  
“But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works”.*

It’s time to go back to “the old paths” which is “the good way”, where we will find rest for our troubled souls:

*“ Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein” (Jer. 6:16).*

It’s sad, but I wonder how many so-called Christian ladies will be able to meet Jesus if He were to make another Triumphal Entry today in Accra, Kumasi and other places in Africa. Sadder still, how many He will identify as His own! Oh, the forlorn “old paths”, the deserted “old paths”!

**3. The traditional “Great Oath” (*Ntam kese*) invoked by litigants and feuding parties to have their cases heard in the traditional courts or to indicate the truth of a matter or their innocence in a case was a custom of the ancient Israelites as referred to in Judges 21:5:**

*“And the children of Israel said, Who is there among all the tribes of Israel that came not up with the congregation unto the LORD? For they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD to Mizpeh, saying, He shall surely be put to death”.*

**4. Traditional food of parched/roasted corn grains (*Nkyiwee*) is mentioned in 1 Sam. 17:17 as having been given to David by his father Jesse for his military brothers on the battlefield with King Saul:**

*“Jesse told his son David, ‘Take for your brothers this half-bushel of roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread and quickly take them to your brothers in the camp” (ISV).*

Another mention of roasted grain is made in 1 Sam. 25:18—as part of the provisions sent to David and his men by Abigail to appease David for her husband’s folly and ingratitude towards him:

*“ Abigail quickly took 200 loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five butchered sheep, five measures of roasted grain, 100 bunches of raisins, and 200 fig cakes and loaded them on donkeys” (ISV).*

Roasted grain—being an easy-to-prepare, frugal meal eaten by the ancient Israelites—is a fairly common traditional food in Ghana, especially among the Akans. It’s not sandwich nor fried rice high in cholesterol!

**5. The use of ‘professional’ female mourners at funerals and the mourning of the dead in public—as practised in Africa—are both Israelite in origin:**

**Jer. 9:17-21:**

<sup>17</sup> “Thus says the LORD of hosts,

*“Consider and call for the mourning women, that they may come; And send for the wailing women, that they may come!*

<sup>18</sup> *“Let them make haste and take up a wailing for us, That our eyes may shed tears And our eyelids flow with water.*

<sup>19</sup> *“For a voice of wailing is heard from Zion, ‘How are we ruined! We are put to great shame, For we have left the land, Because they have cast down our dwellings.’”*

<sup>20</sup> *Now hear the word of the LORD, O you women, And let your ear receive the word of His mouth; Teach your daughters wailing, And everyone her neighbor a dirge.*

<sup>21</sup> *For death has come up through our windows; It has entered our palaces To cut off the children from the streets, The young men from the town squares*

**2 Chron. 35:25:**

*And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations.*

**Amos 5:16:**

<sup>16</sup> *“Therefore Yahweh, the God of Hosts, the Lord, says:*

*““There will be wailing in all the public squares; they will cry out in anguish in all the streets. The farmer will be called on to mourn, and professional mourner to wail”” (HSCB).*

**Eccl. 12:5:**

<sup>5</sup> *“Furthermore, men are afraid of a high place and of terrors on the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags himself along, and the caperberry is ineffective. For man goes to his eternal home while mourners go about in the street” (NASB; see also Isa. 15:3).*

The mourning of the dead in the public squares and the streets by the youth in particular is known in local parlance as ‘sama mo’, a sort of carnival in which wailing is interspersed with singing (of dirges) and drumming.

6. Palm tree in Africa (Matt. 21:8).
7. Hebrew currency 'Shekel' pronounced as 'Shika' in Ga language of the Ga tribe of Ghana and Twi language of the Akans as 'Sika'.

### III. Biblical Prophetic History

Background: Yah, the God of Israel, made a covenant with our ancient Hebrew fathers going all the way back to Abraham. In that seminal covenant with Abraham, the father of the Hebrew Israelite nation, the LORD had told him:

*"And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;*

*"And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.*

*"And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.*

*"But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.*

*"And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.*

*"In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:*

*"The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,*

*"And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,*

*"And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites" (Gen. 15:13-21).*

After the death of Abraham, the covenant was renewed with Isaac (Gen. 26:1-5), his son, and then with Jacob (Gen. 28:13-14).

True to God's word, Abraham's descendants did become slaves in Egypt for 400 years after which He commissioned Moses to bring them out (Ex. 12:41). On Mount Sinai the LORD re-enacted the covenant with the entire nation containing blessing (rewards) and curse (penalty) clauses: Blessings for obeying His commandments and curses for disobedience (see Deut. 11:26-28).

Instead of obedience, the Israelites flagrantly and unremittently disobeyed God (Jer. 11:1-11; 2 Chron. 36:14-17) to bring on themselves the curses for violating God's covenant with them. The 28<sup>th</sup> chapter of Deuteronomy details most of these curses of disobedience, and they fit the historical and contemporary African story like a glove. This is evidence once more that Africans,

particularly the people of West Africa, are indeed the modern-day descendants of the ancient Israelites with whom God entered into a holy covenant.

The first thirteen verses of Deut. 28 enumerate the blessings of obedience which Israel failed to do, and the next verses 14 to 68 the curses of disobedience which have historically defined Israel's national life and that of her remnant nations to this day. Highlights of the curse prophecies of Deut. 28 include:

## A. Prophecy of Subjugation by Foreign Powers

### 1. Enslavement by foreigners

#### Deut 28:47-48

*"Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things".*

*"Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in **hunger**, and in **thirst**, and in **nakedness**, and in **want** of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee".*

#### Deut 28:68

*"And the LORD shall bring thee into Egypt again with **ships**, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be **sold** unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you".*

The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade lasted for 400 years from 1434 A.D. to 1834 A.D. During this period, many able-bodied African youths were captured, bound with 'iron yokes' and marched to the coast for onward transportation to Europe and the Americas by "ships", there to be sold as slaves.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to trade in African slaves. Initially, when the Portuguese set sail for Africa in the 1400s, their intention was to explore for a sea route to Asia as well as search for prized African gold. Although they found the gold, it was not long before the Portuguese saw Africa as a source of cheap human labour for their overseas plantations on the Atlantic islands and later in the Americas. Thus they took to a vigorous international trade in African slaves; competing European nations, like England, France, the Netherlands, and Denmark, soon joined in, and the *Transatlantic Slave Trade* was born.

Not that slavery did not previously exist in Africa. Slavery did exist in Africa, as in other parts of the world from ancient times. But slavery in Africa was more humane, unlike the brutal, inhumane *Triangular (or Transatlantic) Slave Trade* Africans would endure for nearly 500 years. Under the indigenous African system, slaves were never regarded as

sub-humans or inferior in any way. Apart from the slaves captured in inter-tribal wars, others sold themselves into slavery in exchange for food and shelter during drought and famine or to pay off a debt (debt bondage, Prov. 22:7). In the circumstances, a sharp social dichotomy between master and slave, the free and the enslaved, would not come about as prevailed during the slavery era in the Americas.

“African slavery was more akin to European serfdom --the condition of most Europeans in the 15th century. In the Ashanti Kingdom of West Africa, for example, slaves could marry, own property and even own slaves. And slavery ended after a certain number of years of servitude. Most importantly, African slavery was never passed from one generation to another [see Lev. 25:39-43, 47-55], and it lacked the racist notion that whites were masters and blacks were slaves” (Art. “Europeans come to Western Africa” <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1narr1.html>).

In general, slaves were treated as junior members of the society with specific rights, and many were ultimately absorbed into their masters’ families as full members [euphemistically called ‘*efie nipa*’]. This included even those captured in war.

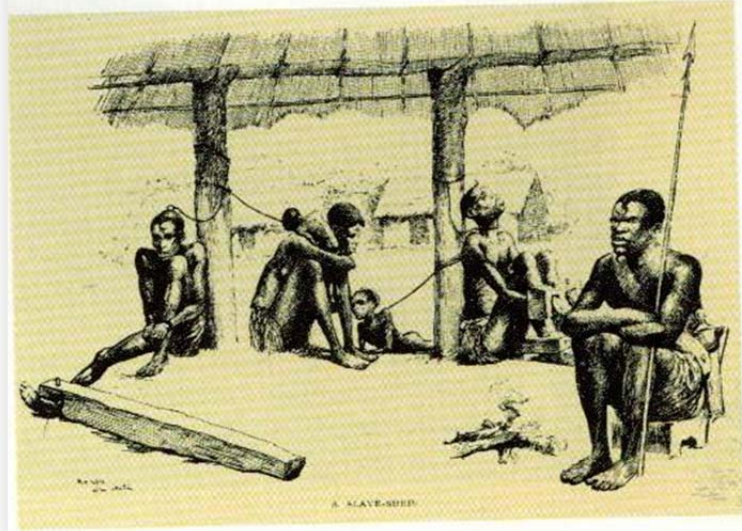
Not so with the transatlantic slave trade:

“The transatlantic slave trade was very different from African slavery. Africans were forced to leave their traditional societies and were transported thousands of miles across the Atlantic. In the Americas, they encountered a completely unfamiliar culture. White slave owners looked on black Africans as inferior beings whose only value was their labor” (Burton F. Beers, *World History Patterns of Civilization*, p. 495).

And how were the African slave-victims of the transatlantic trade obtained?

The slaves were obtained in two main ways. Sometimes, the European slavers raided unsuspecting African villages themselves and carried off a haul of captives for sale. But mostly the European slave traders got their supply of slaves from ‘local partners’ who went on raiding expeditions, sometimes on whole villages, or kidnapped defenceless individuals (see Ex. 21:16) and marched them—chained with iron and yoked in pairs—to the Europeans stationed on the coast. Once there, the captives were exchanged (bartered) for iron, guns, gunpowder, mirrors, cloth, glass beads and spirits like gin and whiskey brought by ships from Europe, “all of them manufactured especially for the trade, of most *inferior* materials” (Wilfrid Jenkins, *The Way of World History*, p. 227, 1964).

Slaves were captured in the interior of Africa and led in chains to the coast. There, they awaited shipment across the Atlantic, as this drawing shows. In the mid-1700s, about 100,000 Africans were shipped to the Americas each year.



Credit: *World History Patterns of Civilization*, p. 495.



In this obnoxious  
 were especially culpable,  
 having been bribed by

traders and thus compromised in their ability to defend their own. The Europeans had discovered a weak point in the local leadership—greed! Another effective weapon of the Europeans was the use of ‘divide and rule’ tactics whereby “they manufactured quarrels among tribesmen and set them at each other’s throats, taking care, of course, to supply them with modern weapons” (J.C. deGraft-Johnson, *African Glory*, p. 153). Thus by and large, local elites aided and abetted the European slave traders and even allowed them to maintain trading forts and castles along the coast—citadels built with dungeons to hold slaves awaiting shipment to the Americas.

practice, the chiefs  
 many of them  
 the European slave

And the most sought-after Africans for the European slave market were the able-bodied young men and women. The finest of these were in the Gold Coast (now modern Ghana): “the Gold Coast ... furnished slaves of the highest quality” (*Larousse Encyclopedia of History, 1500-1945*, .p. 155). Such ones always fetched a good price and were well able to survive the rigours of the long voyage across the Atlantic and the back-breaking, hard labour on the plantations. Thus kidnapping was frequently employed by local slave dealers in obtaining captives. And anybody could be kidnapped any time, any day, sometimes without regard to even their status. It was a deplorable state of affairs, to say the least. So deplorable that an African King of noble character, King Nzinga Mbema of the Kongo Empire, who on converting to Catholicism took the name Afonso I, protested to the Portuguese monarch about the criminal behaviour of Portuguese merchants and sailors in Kongo. The traders were kidnapping the young men of his kingdom to sell into slavery. Furthermore, they used European goods to bribe Kongolese to capture their own people to the extent that even noblemen and the king’s own relatives had been taken. (It was that bad). King Afonso asserted that European ways were corrupting the Kongolese. Although some of the king’s courtiers supported the slave trade on the grounds that it could make Kongo wealthier, the king remained firm in his position.

In 1526, King Afonso I wrote a letter to the king of Portugal, Manuel I, in which he urged “his ‘royal brother’ to stop the traffic in slaves:

*“We cannot reckon how great the damage is, since the ... [slave] merchants daily seize our subjects, sons of the land and sons of our noblemen and vassals and our relatives.... Thieves and men of evil conscience take them ... and cause them to be sold: and so great, Sir, is their corruption ... that our country is being utterly depopulated”*.

“The Portuguese paid little heed to the request, and the depopulation continued” (*World History Change and Continuity*, p. 443).

And why not, if some of the king’s own inner circle were in league with the unscrupulous Portuguese traders in human beings? Joel 3:3 foretold it: *“And they have cast lots for My people; and have given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink”*.

The Bible had not proved false. ‘They shall put a yoke of iron on your necks and carry you to Egypt again by ships’. In the words of an eye-witness, a British observer of the Slave trade, “The sufferings of the slaves were so appalling that they almost transcend belief. It would seem as though the inhuman traffic had created in Arabs, Negroes [local slave dealers] and white men a deliberate love of cruelty.... As the present writer can testify from what he has himself seen in the eighties and nineties of the last century [19<sup>th</sup> century], a slave gang on its march to the coast was loaded with unnecessarily heavy collars or slave sticks, with chains and irons that chafed and cut into the flesh, and

caused virulent ulcers. The slaves were half-starved, overdriven, insufficiently provided with drinking water, and recklessly exposed to death from sunstroke. If they threw themselves down for a brief rest or collapsed from exhaustion, they were shot or speared or had their throats cut with fiendish brutality. ... Children whom their mothers could not carry, and who could not keep up with the caravan, had their brains dashed out. Many slaves (I again write from personal knowledge) committed suicide because they could not bear to be separated from their homes and children. They were branded and flogged, and, needless to say, received not the slightest medical treatment for the injuries resulting from this usage" (Quoted by authors Esko E. Newhill & Umberto La Paglia in their book *Exploring World Cultures*, p. 133, 1986, from Sir Harry H. Johnston's work *A History of Colonization of Africa by Alien Races*). The slaves who eventually survived the death marches to "the coastal forts were put into underground dungeons where they would stay -- sometimes for as long as a year -- until they were boarded on ships where they remained confined until the next ship came to take them to the Americas" ("The African Slave Trade and the Middle Passage" <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1narr4.html>).



Captives on the grueling march to the coast yoked and shackled.

The voyage to America was a continuation of the nightmare, if not more hellish. It is popularly referred to as the **Middle Passage**:

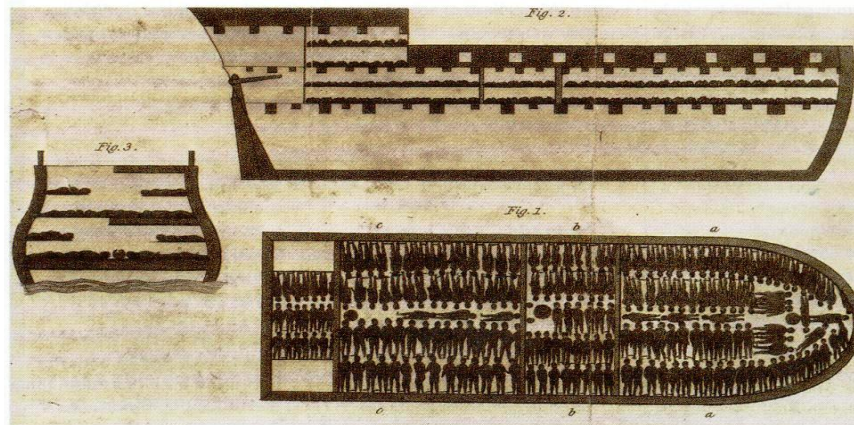
"Just as horrifying as the ... death marches [to the coast] was the Middle Passage, as it was called -- the transport of slaves across the Atlantic. On the first leg of their trip, slave traders delivered goods from European ports to West African ones. On the "middle" leg, ship captains such as John Newton (who later became a foe of slavery), loaded their then-empty holds with slaves and transported them to the Americas and the Caribbean. A typical Atlantic crossing took 60-90 days but some lasted up to four months. Upon arrival, captains sold the slaves and purchased raw materials to be brought back to Europe on the last leg of the trip. Roughly 54,000 voyages were made by Europeans to buy and sell slaves.



“Africans were often treated like cattle during the crossing. On the slave ships, people were stuffed between decks in spaces too low for standing. The heat was often unbearable, and the air nearly unbreathable. Women were often used sexually. Men were often chained in pairs, shackled wrist to wrist or ankle to ankle. People were crowded together, usually forced to lie on their backs with their heads between the legs of others. This meant they often had to lie in each other's feces, urine, and, in the case of dysentery, even blood. In such cramped quarters, diseases such as smallpox and yellow fever spread like wildfire. The diseased were sometimes thrown overboard to prevent wholesale epidemics. Because a small crew had to control so many, cruel measures such as iron muzzles and whippings were used to control slaves.

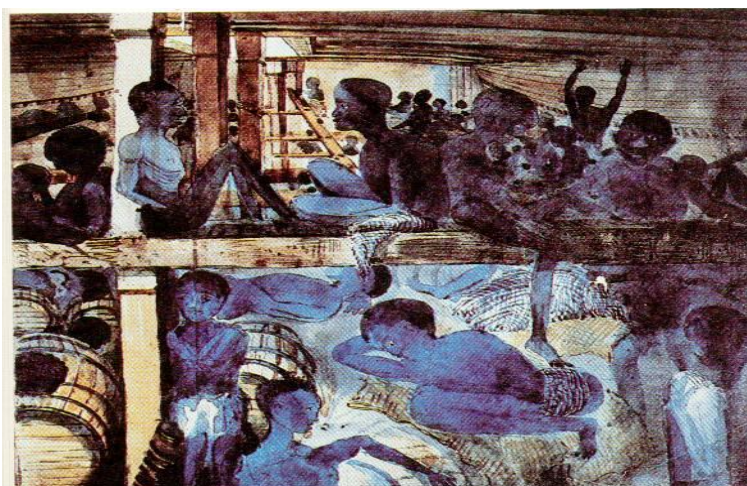
“Over the centuries, between one and two million persons died in the crossing. This meant that the living were often chained to the dead until ship surgeons such as Alexander Falconbridge had the corpses thrown overboard”

(ibid. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1narr4.html>).



▲ This diagram of an 1800s slave ship shows how the slaves were packed into the hold of a ship. About 17 percent of the slaves died on an average crossing.

(*World History Continuity and Change*, p. 445).



“Slave ships brought millions of to the Americas in chains. Captains packed as many men, women, and children as they could carry into the holds of their ships. This painting by a British naval officer is the only existing picture painted from life of the inhuman conditions aboard slave ships” (*World History Patterns of Civilization*, p. 314).

*African Glory* confirms the horrors of the Middle Passage with more details:

“The captives’ anguish appears to have reached its peak during the middle passage, as the crossing from West Africa to America and the West Indies was called. The term ‘middle passage’ was used because it represented the second stage in the slaver’s round trip, out and home. The slaves were forced into crowded canoes and taken to the ships, where the use of whips and spears compelled them to climb reeling and trembling up swaying rope-ladders.

“Once on board, the slaves were packed between decks within spaces which did not permit a tall man to stand upright. Men and women were put in separate compartments. The women were not chained together, but the men were chained in pairs, ankle to ankle, wrist to wrist. Those who were fortunate, or unfortunate, enough to escape being chained were packed in couples side by side, like sardines, the feet of one against the head of the other. The captain of a slave-ship giving evidence before a Commission, asked if the slaves were comfortable during the middle passage, replied, ‘They are about as comfortable as a man might be in his coffin.’ It must be noted that the middle passage generally lasted fifty days.

“A surgeon on board one of these slave ships described his experience in these words:

*“Some wet and blowing weather having occasioned the port-holes to be shut and the grating to be covered, fluxes and fevers among the Negroes resulted. While they were in this situation, my profession requiring it, I frequently went down among them till at length their apartments became so extremely hot as to be only sufferable for a very short time. But the excessive heat was not the only thing that rendered their situation intolerable. The deck, that is the floor of their rooms, was so covered with the blood and mucus which had proceeded from them in consequence of the flux, that it resembled a slaughter-house. It is not in the power of the human imagination to picture a situation more dreadful and disgusting. Numbers of the slaves had fainted, they were carried upon deck where several of them died and the rest with difficulty were restored. It nearly proved fatal to me also”*.

“it is difficult to determine the number of slaves who died during the middle passage, but during one such trip from West Africa, no fewer than 2,053 died of 7,904 slaves shipped” (pp. 154-155).

While death from sickness accounted for a large number of slave losses during the middle passage, this was not true of all the slaves who did not make it. The cold truth is that some slaves were thrown into the sea while still alive! Mostly, these were sick slaves whose value as commodities had been lost, and so keeping them did not make ‘business sense’. The US-run Public Broadcasting Service webpage *Africans in America* tells a chilling story:

“Heading for Jamaica in 1781, the ship *Zong* was nearing the end of its voyage. It had been twelve weeks since it had sailed from the West African coast with its cargo of 417 slaves. Water was running out. Then, compounding the problem, there was an outbreak of disease. The ship's captain, reasoning that the slaves were going to die anyway, made a decision. In order to reduce the owner's losses he would throw overboard the slaves thought to be too sick to recover. The voyage was insured, but the insurance would not pay for sick slaves or even those killed by illness. However, it would cover slaves lost through drowning.

“The captain gave the order; 54 Africans were chained together, then thrown overboard. Another 78 were drowned over the next two days. By the time the ship had reached the Caribbean, 132 persons had been murdered.

“When the ship returned to England the owners made their claim -- they wished to be compensated the full value for each slave lost. The claim might have been honored had it not been for former slave Equiano, then living in England, who learned of the tragedy and alerted an abolitionist friend of his. The case went to court. At first the jury ruled in favor of the ship's owners. Since it was permissible to kill animals for the safety of the ship, they decided, it was permissible to kill slaves for the same reason. The insurance company appealed, and the case was retried. This time the court decided that the Africans on board the ship were people. It was a landmark decision.

“On another voyage, on another ship, a similar incident occurred. On *La Rodeur* in 1812, there was an outbreak of ophthalmia, a disease that causes temporary blindness. Both slaves and crew were afflicted. The captain, fearing that the blindness was permanent and knowing that blind slaves would be difficult if not impossible to sell, sent 39 slaves over the rails to their watery death. As with the captain of the *Zong*, he hoped that the insurance would cover the loss. (Image Credit: © Musée de la Marine / Négrier poursuivi) (“Living Africans Thrown Overboard”, [www.pbs.org/wgbh/part1/1h280.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/part1/1h280.html)).

But what about those slaves who survived the middle passage? How were they received in the Americas?

The book *African Glory* reports:

“When the ship reached the harbour, the [human] cargo came up on deck to be bought. Their purchasers examined them for defects, looked at the teeth, pinched the skin, sometimes tasted the perspiration to see if the slave's blood was pure and his health as good as his appearance. Some of the women affected a curiosity, the indulgence of which, with a horse, would have caused





them to be kicked twenty yards across the deck. But the slaves had to stand it. Then in order to restore dignity which might have been lost by too intimate an examination, the purchaser spat in the face of the slave. Having become the property of his owner, he was branded on both sides of the breast with a hot iron. His duties were explained by an interpreter and a priest instructed him in the first principles of Christianity” (p. 155).



(A re-enactment of slavery, *New African*, 41<sup>st</sup> year, October 2007, p.28).

Another authoritative historical source corroborates:

“Once ashore in the Americas, the slaves fared no better. A Jesuit priest in Cartagena, a busy port in Spanish America, described a group of slaves just off a ship:

*“They arrive looking like skeletons; they are led ashore, completely naked, and are shut up in a large court or enclosure... and it is a great pity to see so many sick and needy people, denied all care or assistance, for as a rule they are left to lie on the ground, naked and without shelter’.*

“The slaves were next led to the auction block, where a crowd of prospective buyers could examine them, like livestock” (*World History Continuity and Change*, Gen. Ed. William Travis Hanes II, p. 445).

*“Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; ... thou shall serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, **in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee”.***

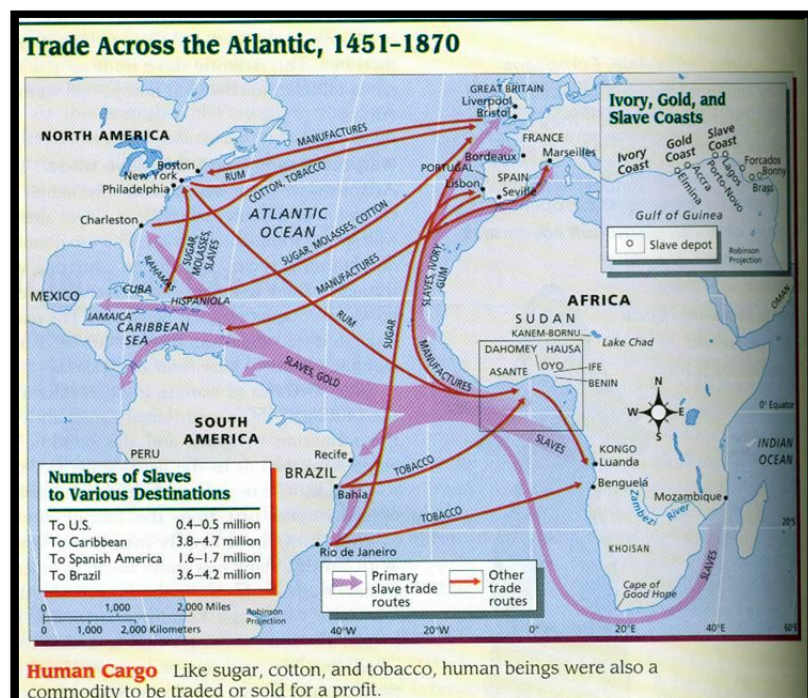
Bible prophecy fulfilled to a nicety!

After the slave ships discharged their human cargo together with gold and ivory from West Africa, they sailed for Europe laden with sugar, raw cotton and tobacco for the European domestic market. Then they set sail for the West African coast again, and the cycle began all over again in a triangular route from Europe to the West African slave ports and from there across the Atlantic Ocean to South and North America and then back to Europe. That is why the 15<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> century slave trade in black Africans is also known as the *Triangular Slave Trade*.

According to the history book *A Short History of the Gold Coast*, “the English [slavers] ran a regular service of ships in the form of a triangle, from England to the Gold Coast, from the Coast to North America and the West Indies, and from there back to England. The ships brought from England gin and guns and cloth and other goods to sell in Africa. They bought, in exchange for them, slaves, gold, and ivory, and sailed away to the West Indies. There they sold some of the slaves, and bought sugar and tropical products generally; and so away they went to the English colonies in North America, where they sold the rest of the slaves to work on the cotton plantations. In America, they bought raw cotton and tobacco; so that when they reached England again they had a very mixed cargo: gold, ivory, sugar, cotton, and tobacco. The round voyage took six months or more. The price of a good slave in the West Indies was £16 or £20” (W.E Ward, *A Short History of the Gold Coast*, pp. 83-84).

The slave trade wholly benefitted Europe. It provided them with free slave labour for their plantations which produced raw materials for their budding industries. The slave trade contributed in no small measure to lay a solid foundation for the European economy. The book *From Slavery to Freedom* makes the point that despite

“the great expenses attached to the trade and the extensive loss sustained in the mortality of slaves in transit, the slave trade was still one of the most important sources of European wealth in the seventeenth and eighteenth

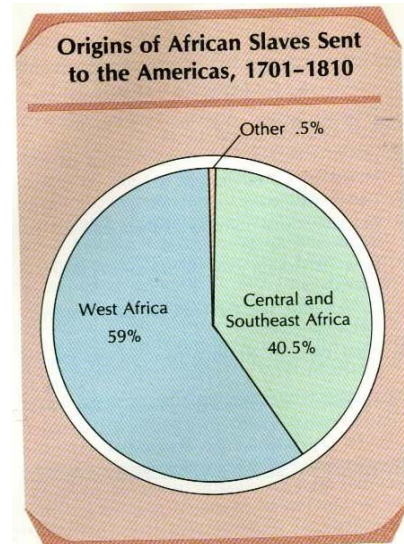


centuries. In the eighteenth century, it was possible for a ship captain to make a commission of E360 on the sale of 307 slaves and for the trader to earn E465 on the same sale. It was not unusual for a ship carrying 250 slaves to net as much as E7, 000 on one voyage. Profits of 100 percent were not uncommon for Liverpool merchants” (John Hope Franklin & Alfred A. Moss, Jr, *From Slavery to Freedom*, sixth ed. 1998, p. 37).

In his article “How Africa Developed Europe and America”, correspondent Osei Boateng writes in *New African* quoting Guyanese historian Dr Walter Rodney:

“Throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, and for the most part the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the exploitation of Africa and African labour continued to be a source of the accumulation of capital to be re-invested in Western Europe. The African contribution to European capitalist growth extended over such vital sectors as shipping, insurance, the formation of companies, capitalist agriculture, technology and the manufacture of machinery. The efforts were so wide-ranging that many are seldom brought to the notice of the reading public...

“In England, it was the county of Lancashire which was the first centre of the industrial revolution, and the economic advance in Lancashire depended first of all on the growth of the port of Liverpool through slave trading. Commerce deriving from Africa helped a great deal to strengthen trans-national links within the Western European economy, bearing in mind that American produce was the consequence of African labour. That is why the African connection contributed not merely to economic growth (which relates to quantitative dimensions) but also to real development in the sense of increased capacity for further growth and independence” (*New African*, October 2005 No. 444, p. 12).



Source: Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*.

■ Over a period of three centuries, more than 9 million Africans were sent to the Americas as slaves. The majority of these Africans came from West Africa, as this graph shows.

And what was Africa’s gain? Depopulation, ever frequent tribal wars, and, of course, the *worthless* European luxuries and wine the local elites enjoyed for helping in the sale of the *finest* of their own people to their “enemies”. The authors of *From Slavery to Freedom* explain further:

“The expatriation of millions of Africans in less than four centuries constitutes one of the far-reaching and drastic social revolutions in the annals of history. It is to be remembered that the traders would have none but the best available natives. They demanded the healthiest, the largest, the youngest, the ablest, and the most culturally advanced. The vast majority of the slaving was carried on in the area of West Africa, where civilization had reached its highest point on the continent, with the possible

exception of Egypt. The removal of the best of the African population deprived the continent of an invaluable resource. J.E. Inikori insists that the African population and its general well-being would have been much greater by the nineteenth century if the foreign slave trade had not existed. The encouragement that Europeans gave them to fight among themselves, with European explosive weapons, made it even more difficult for them to recover from the body blow that slave trade had dealt them. Africa, which culturally was within some measurable distance of Europe at the beginning of the fifth century [i.e. the gap between the developed areas of Europe and Africa in terms of social order and development was not much], received the worst possible influence from her Christian neighbors to the north. It was under these adverse circumstances that she entered a recession that in time would suffer the coup de grace of the imperialistic enslavement thrust upon her in the nineteenth century” (p. 39).

To this day, the coastal areas of Ghana are dotted with castles and forts (including the well known Elmina Castle) which serve as monuments to the hideous Transatlantic Slave Trade carried out by the Europeans for 400 years (see Gen. 15:13; Ex. 12:41).

It's generally estimated that between 10-12 million people were forcibly taken from Africa during the Transatlantic Slave Trade. But that's a conservative figure. "According to one estimate, 24 million Africans were taken by force as slaves from the west coast of Africa alone" (*African Encyclopedia*, Art. "Slave Trade", Oxford University Press, 1974, p. 462). But that is still nowhere near the true figure if we take into account all those captives who never made it to the land of captivity. The figure is absolutely staggering. A *New African* article reliably states that for "over 400 years, an estimated 150 million Africans were either shipped across the Atlantic or died during the long march from the interior of the continent to the coast, or during the horrendous Middle Passage across the Atlantic Ocean" (Osei Boateng, "Britain: We are Guilty!", *NA*, October, 2011, p.28).

History has borne out the truth of scripture. But the prophetic scripture specified that "thou shall serve thine enemies ... in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, **until he have destroyed thee**".

How did the Hebrew African slaves fare in America? How was slave life like in America?

It was harsh, cruel and demeaning.

However, things didn't start off this way. First classified as indentured servants (who were under binding contracts to their masters), the African slaves were not doomed to lifelong slavery when the English first brought them to work as farm labourers in North America. Their social status, however, took a turn for the worse when a series of laws were passed in colonial America which transformed the indentured black servants into permanent chattel slaves based purely on race.



“One of the places we have the clearest views of that "terrible transformation" is the colony of Virginia. In the early years of the colony, many Africans and poor whites -- most of the laborers came from the English working class -- stood on the same ground. Black and white women worked side-by-side in the fields. Black and white men who broke their servant contract were equally punished.

“All were indentured servants. During their time as servants, they were fed and housed. Afterwards, they would be given what were known as "freedom dues," which usually included a piece of land and supplies, including a gun. Black-skinned or white-skinned, they became free” (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/map1.html>).

Then the slave-making laws began to be enacted against mainly Black servants:

*“All servants imported and brought into the Country. . . who were not Christians in their native Country. . . shall be accounted and be slaves. All Negro, mulatto and Indian slaves within this dominion. . . shall be held to be real estate. If any slave resists his master. . . correcting such slave, and shall happen to be killed in such correction. . . the master shall be free of all punishment. . . as if such accident never happened”*. - Virginia General Assembly declaration, 1705.

Back in 1641, Massachusetts had become “the first [English] colony [in America] to legally recognize slavery. Other states, such as Virginia, followed. In 1662, Virginia decided all children born in the colony to a slave mother would be enslaved. Slavery was not only a life-long condition; now it could be passed, like skin color, from generation to generation” (ibid).



However, imposing slavery on a captive population who were once free would mean the application of brutal force. That also that came through another set of laws—draconian laws of control and oppression.

“As [Olaudah] Equiano [a former slave] wrote, white and black lived together "in a state of war." The more harshly whites enforced racial enslavement, the more they came to fear black uprisings. As they became more fearful, they responded by further tightening the screws of oppression.

“Carolina authorities developed laws to keep the African American population under control. Whipping, branding, dismembering, castrating, or killing a slave were legal under many circumstances. Freedom of movement, to assemble at a funeral, to earn money, even to learn to read and write, became outlawed” (ibid.).

*Negro slave hanged alive by the Ribs to the Gallows*





*Female African Slave with an iron muzzle, 1839*

We have seen the cruelty and the oppression the African Hebrew slaves suffered in fulfilment of the prophecy—“and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee”. Of course, the poverty bit – “want of all things” - was ensured as per laws first enacted in Carolina depriving them of the right to earn money.

But what about their everyday life? What sort of everyday life did the African slaves live? Did they serve their masters “in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness” as the prophecy specified?

The book *From Slavery to Freedom* describes the everyday experiences of the African slaves in the new Egypt—slave-buying, slave-owning America:

“Since Negro slaves were constantly being brought in from Africa, overseers found it necessary to develop a practice of ‘breaking in’ the new comers. In some areas they were distributed among the seasoned, or veteran, slaves, whose duty it was to teach the newly arrived slaves ways of life in the New World. In other places the newcomers were kept apart and supervised by a special staff of guardians and inspectors who were experienced in breaking in those who might offer resistance to adjusting in their new environment. The mortality rate among newly arrived slaves was exceptionally high, with estimates of deaths running to as much as 30 percent in a seasoning [or acclimatization] period of three or four years. Old and new diseases, change of climate and food, exposure incurred in running away, suicide, and excessive flogging were among the main causes of the high mortality rate.

“In the West Indies slaves were sent to the farms at daybreak and they labored all day except for a thirty-minute period for breakfast and a two-hour period in the hottest portion of the day, which was frequently the time set aside for doing lighter chores. At harvest time the workday was much longer, sometimes eighteen hours.

“The driver or overseer did not distinguish between men and women in work requirements or in applying the lash for dereliction of duty. The investigations made by the British Parliament in 1790-1791 brought out the fact that pregnant women were forced to work up to the time of childbirth and that a month was the maximum amount of time allowed for recovery from childbearing. Pregnant women were lashed severely when they were unable to keep pace with the other workers. Women who paused in the

fields to care for their babies, whom they carried on their backs, were lashed with cart whips for idling away their time” (pp. 43-44).

Meanwhile, the slaves faced the problem of feeding in two ways: they were underfed and ill fed at the same time. That is to say, they were given food rations that were woefully inadequate and those meagre rations were foods they were not used to:

“Food was, on the whole, insufficient for slaves. The planters did not often encourage any type of diversified agriculture [such as the cultivation of tropical crops] which would have provided food for the workers. ... On one plantation each adult slave was given a pint of grain and half of herring (not infrequently rotten) for twenty-four hours. In the famous investigation of 1790-1791 no plantation was found where a slave received more than nine pints of corn and one pound of salt meat per week” (p. 44).

The Transatlantic Slave Trade was an accurate fulfilment of Bible prophecy given some 3000 years earlier, as one of the curses that would come upon the descendants of the Hebrew nation for their transgression of God’s holy covenant with them. And it has remained a scar on Africa and people of African descent to this day: *“And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever”* (Deut. 28:46).

Accordingly, the slave trade “left a long heritage of bitterness, suffering, and social problems. ... The descendants of former slaves are still struggling for full equality” (*Exploring World Cultures*, p. 133).

In motherland Africa, it bequeathed a legacy of underdevelopment and mistrust between ethnic groups arising out of the intertribal wars fought for slaves.

One example will suffice. When Portuguese traders reached the mouth of the Congo River in 1482, they found a large, thriving Kingdom of Kongo with talented people who were skilled wood carvers and iron workers. But at an annual rate of 5000 slave exports to the Americas and other Portuguese provinces, the Kongo was drained of its youthful population and consequently declined in prosperity.

Just like the first Israelite enslavement in Egypt, the Transatlantic Slave Trade was carried out for 400 years well into the 1800s until, with growing sentiment in Europe against the barbarous trade, it was abolished. Britain took the lead in abolishing the African slave trade with an Act of Parliament in 1807. That same year the US Congress also outlawed the importation of slaves. By 1820, Portugal, Spain and France had also officially ended their slave trade. But only the *trade*, not slavery itself! Slavery continued in the Americas until much later, while many people still engaged in the banned trade in African slaves illegally. Slavery was only effectively ended by the 1860s.

## 2. Defeat by foreign enemies in battle

### Deut 28:25

*“The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth”.*

In Ghana, some of the historic battles in which our forebears suffered such defeats at the hands of foreign enemies include the ‘*Sagrenti*’ War of 1874 in which the British fought with the Ashantis and defeated them and “set fire to the town [of Kumase] and blew up the Asantehene’s house and fort with gunpowder” (W.E. Ward, *A Short History of the Gold Coast*, p. 185). This was followed by the *Yaa Asantewaa War* of 1900 in which Ashanti was again defeated and thereafter colonized by the British.

It’s astonishing, but there’s no record that African communities facing the onslaught of European colonizers were able to beat off the armed invaders and keep them off on a permanent basis as to maintain their independence and sovereignty.

The only glorious page in a chapter of defeats at the hands of European invaders was the *Battle of Adowa* fought in 1896 in which the Ethiopians, fighting under the banner of “the Lion of the Tribe of Judah”, successfully fought off and defeated the Italian invaders. In a painting of the battle scene, an African artist depicted Emperor Menelik II “viewing the battle, with the Bible in his hand open to the passage, ‘O Lord, hearken unto my prayer’” (*Exploring World Cultures*, p. 138).

Today, Africa is the weakest continent militarily—the least endowed with ultra-modern military weaponry: sophisticated hardware like unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs or drones), supersonic bomber jets armed with hypersonic weapons (8x the speed of sound), submarines, intelligence-gathering satellites (electronic surveillance), reconnaissance aircraft and robotic warriors, not to mention the fearsome weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) comprising nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Africa dare not stand up to Europe or America or China in the event of the outbreak of hostilities. We will helplessly be smitten and slaughtered before our enemies!

## 3. Colonization by foreign nations:

### Deut 28:49-52

*“The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;*

*“A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:*

*“And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.*

*“And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the LORD thy God hath given thee”.*

After the slave trade, Europeans did not lose interest in the exploitation of Africa. They only changed tack. They adopted a new strategy of control for continued exploitation. The new strategy involved seizing territories in Africa and imposing their rule on African peoples. Before long, European nations were jostling with each other for territories in Africa as each nation tried to establish a presence on the continent. Historians call this the “Scramble for Africa.”

Although as late as 1880 European nations controlled only 10 percent of the African continent, by 1900 the *swift flying* European colonialist *eagles* had swooped all over the continent and dug their claws deep into the land:

“... the Scramble gave Europe virtually the whole continent: including thirty new colonies and protectorates, 10 million square miles of new territory and 110 million dazed new subjects, acquired by one method or another. Africa was sliced up like a cake, the pieces swallowed by five rival nations—Germany, Italy, Portugal, France and Britain (with Spain taking some scraps)—and Britain and France were at each other’s throats. At the centre, exploiting the rivalry, stood one enigmatic individual and self-styled philanthropist, controlling the heart of the continent: Leopold II, King of the Belgians” (Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa*, 1999, p. xxiii).

Only Ethiopia in northeast Africa and Liberia on the West African coast remained as independent African states.

And how did the colonialists “from afar” go about their aggressive colonization of Africa?

They used brute force where necessary and trickery where convenient to get a stranglehold on Africa:

“Europeans used persuasion, force, and bribery to convince individual African rulers to sign agreements giving them economic and political rights. Once they established a foothold, Europeans often ignored the agreements and simply took what they wanted. If African rulers resisted, well-armed troops were sent in to crush them” (*World History, Patterns of Civilization*, p. 498).

The initial ‘friendly overture’ turned out to be a subterfuge which only served to advance the European policy of dispossessing the African of his land and wealth. Often, Africans

realized too late in the day that their chiefs (who could neither read nor understand the strange languages in which the treaties were written) had signed away their sovereignty and all their lands to some European monarch somewhere in Europe!

To introduce some sanity into the mad rush for African land and resources, German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck and Jules Ferry of France organized the Berlin Conference in 1884 and 1885. The conference established the principle that European claims to African territory had to rest on 'effective occupation' which meant that "the European powers 'could hold on to colonies only if they actually possessed them: in other words, if they had treaties with local chiefs, if they flew their flag there, and if they established an administration in the territory to govern it with a police force to keep order. The colonial power also had to make use of the colony economically. If it did not do these things, another power could do so and take over the territory. It therefore became important to get chiefs to sign protectorate treaties and to have a presence sufficient to police the area'" (Osei Boateng, "The Spoils of Berlin", *New African* magazine, Feb. 2010, p. 24-25).

Africa had become a common booty for Europeans, and rules had to be drawn up so there would be some decency in the sharing! A clear intent was to avert war among European nations as they went about carving up the continent. Since then (and even before then) the continent has been up for grabs through various schemes devised by Europeans to this day.

And the prophecy specified that the colonialists would be inconsiderate and merciless in their dealings with the disobedient descendants of the Israelites—"A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young".

Were the European colonialists harsh towards our Hebrew forebears or nice towards them?

"Atrocities were commonplace during the first phase of occupation by the Powers. When German brutality in South West Africa provoked a revolt by the Hereros, the German general, Lothar von Trotha, issued a *Vernichtungsbefehl* ('extermination order') against the whole tribe, women and children included. About 20,000 of them were driven away from the wells to die in the Omaheke desert. Europe ... imposed its will on Africa at the point of a gun" (*The Scramble for Africa*, 1999, p. xxv).

Next, they would gobble up our natural resources and control our entry points:

"The Europeans treated the Africans harshly. African rulers were often cheated out of their wealth in minerals, farmlands, and other natural resources, such as rubber, by the Europeans. ... European imperialists often forced African peoples to work under inhuman conditions. Forced to work long hours, many Africans were beaten if they did

not work hard enough to satisfy their European managers. Forced labor continued to exist in much of Africa until World War I” (Gerald Leinward, *The Pageant of World History*, p. 556).

European colonialism was mainly about the exploitation of African resources. This explains why the railway lines the British colonialists constructed in Ghana, for example, snake through only those parts of the country which are rich in natural resources (i.e. the Western, Ashanti, and Eastern Regions and, for easy access to the sea, the coastal Regions, but not the North). The railway was not built in the interest of the country’s development but to promote the self-serving interest of the British to get a reliable means of transport for the mineral resources looted from the land. The same European mentality was in evidence in all colonial Africa.

Then a new breed of educated Africans stormed the African political scene. They called themselves nationalists and freedom-fighters. Dr Kwame Nkrumah was a torchbearer. Their struggle for self-rule started yielding demonstrable fruits when modern Ghana (then called Gold Coast) became the first Black African country south of the Sahara to gain independence from British colonial rule on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 1957. This was followed by that of Guinea in 1958; Central African Republic, Cameroon, Chad, Zaire (now DR Congo), Benin (formerly Dahomey), Gabon, Ivory Coast (Cote d’Ivoire), Malagasy, Togo, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Congo (Brazzaville), Senegal, and Somalia in 1960. By the late 1960s, the Pan-African movement for self-determination and self-rule had seen off much of European colonial rule in Africa. Most of Africa now breathed the air of freedom. But did Europe this time refrain from further exploitation of Africa? Did they put on a new disguise?

#### 4. Neocolonialism:

##### **Deut 28:33**

*“The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always”.*

The *Chambers 21<sup>st</sup> Century Dictionary* defines neocolonialism as “the domination by powerful states of weaker but politically independent states by means of economic pressure”. In simple terms, it’s the attempt by a stronger nation to put a weaker nation on a leash in a post-colonial world in which direct imperial or colonial rule is a thing of the past but not at the expense of the vested economic interests of the stronger state!

The powerful tool in the hands of the neocolonialist is the subtle control of the weaker nation’s economy to ensure the latter’s perpetual economic stagnation and dependency in favour of the former’s continued economic prosperity. This control mainly takes the form of unfair trade practices (which the powerful nations of Europe and America

dictate) and economic conditionalities imposed on poor countries in return for foreign aid.

Just a look at the pricing aspect of international trade easily confirms the unfair nature of the world trade system. Contrary to natural justice and the accepted norms of commercial transactions, all pricing is determined by a cartel of powerful nations to the disadvantage of the poor (African) nations who neither have a say in determining the prices of their own exports nor that of the imported goods from the powerful nations. Accordingly, the price(s) of cocoa exports from Africa is fixed by the European buyers, even though Africans are denied the same 'right' to fix the prices of European vehicle exports to Africa.

The world trade system has been rigged in favour of Europe and America. As a campaigner for a fairer global economy put it, "the interests of rich nations and their corporations form the basis of WTO [World Trade Organization] agreements and directly influence the global political and economic architecture" (Regina Jere-Malanda, "Profiting from Poverty ... How Western companies and consultants exploit Africa", *NA*, November, 2007, p. 17, quoting Rajesh Makwana, director of Share The World Resources). Consequently, the current Euro-American-led world trade system has plunged Africa into a new slavery— 'economic slavery'! "The UN estimates that unfair trade rules deny poor countries \$700bn every year, and 70% of that trade is controlled by multinational corporations" (ibid. p. 11).

And why not when, in addition to the unjust pricing regime, African countries are forced to open their markets to cheap European goods which end up crippling local industries? The irony is that while European and American governments subsidize their agricultural industries, for instance, developing African economies are discouraged—nay—pressured from this very path by the West through the IMF and the World Bank.

The sad consequence is that only "2% of the world's farmers own two-thirds of trade in agriculture. US and EU governments spend six times more on agricultural subsidy per day than they spend on aid. This leads to the obscenity whereby every European cow receives \$2 per day from governments while 1.2 billion people live on less than \$1 per day. It is indeed bizarre that it is cheaper for a Ghanaian to buy an imported European-raised chicken than a locally raised one. According to Corp Watch, in 1992 domestic poultry farmers supplied 95% of the Ghanaian market; by 2001, their market share had dwindled to 11%. And when pressure from local poultry farmers compelled the Ghanaian government and parliament, under President John Kufour, to pass a law restraining unbridled poultry imports in 2005, in order to protect the local poultry industry, the IMF forced Kufour's government to cancel the law the very next week. As a result, uncontrolled poultry imports continue, destroying the local industry as Ghanaian poultry farmers cannot compete with the cheap chicken coming in from abroad" (ibid. p. 16).

Ironically, their aid is no solace either. The conditions they attach to their aid tend to worsen the situation, and in subtle ways we could not readily detect:

“Much in aid, in fact, directly benefits the donor country, as it is tied to the purchase of goods and services from the donor. This makes little sense in terms of costs or efficiency: food purchased through tied aid [from a specified supplier], for example, is 40% more expensive than what could be acquired through open market transactions”. The result is that “for every dollar of AID that comes to Africa, \$10 dollars go out. In simple terms, proportionally more resources flow out of Africa than come in”, says the Country Manager for East Africa for ActionAid, Dr. Dereje Alemayehu, (“Ghana still safe Haven for Tax Dodgers” 18/07/12 <http://business.peacefonline.com/news/201207/124464.php>).

Of course, the unfailing prophetic word foretold it all: *“The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always”*.

The word translated “oppressed” comes from the Hebrew verb ‘a<sup>h</sup>shaq (Strong’s #6231). It means “to press upon, oppress, violate, defraud, do violence, get deceitfully, wrong, extort ... to be exploited, to be crushed” (*Brown-Driver-Briggs [BDB] Hebrew Definitions*, e-Sword). As in English, “crushed” is also similar in the Hebrew sense to ‘ashaq’ (oppression). In Hebrew this word is râtsats (Strong’s 7533) and means “to crack in pieces, literally or figuratively: - break, bruise, crush, discourage, oppress, struggle together” (*Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries*, e-Sword). And that goes on without a break! The economic oppression is “always”; there is no respite in both the exploitation of our mineral riches and human resources by foreigners.

Is this not the sad economic story of Africa? African countries have been primary exporters of raw materials to Europe and America since colonial times to date. And all we get in return is a pittance in foreign exchange, while the Euro-Americans process and add value to the products in their industries and sell back to us at high prices.

The African economy is by and large controlled by external forces that have an interest in Africa’s economic retrogression. After their manipulative schemes, they then turn round and portray themselves as our benefactors by giving us sops—so-called donor aid which they find a way of taking back anyway. Unless something radical is done to re-orientate our economy away from the colonial emphasis on the export of raw materials and dependency on aid toward industrialization and self-reliance, neocolonialism is set to doom us to perpetual economic stagnation and dependency on the West and other emerging world powers who will happily use the opportunity to dominate us as they have always done since the slave trade era. And the sad thing is that poor Africa goes along with it for the sake of ‘donor support’, including ‘budgetary support’ for the



national budgets. Yet Dr Nkrumah proudly declared on the eve of Ghana's independence that independent Africa will prove to the world that "after all the Black man is capable of managing his own affairs".

Worse still, direct interference in Africa's internal political affairs is rearing its ugly head again! During the political crisis that ensued in Cote d'Ivoire in 2011 following the disputed elections there, eyebrows were raised when former colonial master France intervened militarily leading to the ouster of Laurent Gbagbo who is now facing trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague, the Netherlands. Later in the year, the Western military organization NATO also intervened in the Libyan conflict on the side of the rebels with heavy bombardment of government forces and positions. Months later, Muammar Qaddafi was toppled and later suffered an ignoble death. The Bible has proved true: Because of disobedience to the African God of Israel, you shall always be smitten before the foreign invader and crushed by him!

## **B. A Cursed Life of Dependence and Subsistence:**

### **Deut 28:13**

*"And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them".*

### **Deut 28:43**

*"The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low".*

#### **1. The foreigner towers above the indigenous African Israelite who sinks lower and lower in social status.**

### **Deut 28:43-44**

*"The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail".*

This sort of social system in which indigenes, instead of occupying the upper echelons of society—as is the norm elsewhere—are at the bottom of the ladder is unique to Africa. It's a strange phenomenon to say the least under normal circumstances, but it is not inexplicable in light of Bible prophecy: While poverty would grip the native African Hebrew in his own land, the foreigner in his midst would control the means of wealth. Consequently, the native would go to the foreigner for loans and other favours instead of the other way round. Is it not an undeniable fact that almost all the manufacturing companies and the multinational mining companies operating in Africa are foreign owned?

Indeed, African governments have made it their policy to hunt for so-called foreign investors because, it's believed that without their involvement in the economies of Africa, the African continent is doomed to a helpless state of underdevelopment. So the foreign investor comes and establishes extractive and other industries, taps into the local cheap labour, makes huge profits and repatriates the profits to his home country. Of course, he was promised a tax holiday for a minimum of five years, and government officials are all too pleased with their cuts. While foreigners mostly hold management positions (80-90%), it's the natives who do all the back-breaking menial work and go into the slimy, dark pits to mine the precious minerals.

Today, Ghanaian locals are being edged out of the home-grown, informal '*galamsey*' mining industry by foreigners from China and other countries using sophisticated machinery and methods. The introduction of modern technology in the '*galamsey*' operations has meant effective mining, but with devastating consequences for the environment. But has foreign investment really benefited Africa?

Let's use DR Congo as an illustration:

"DR Congo is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of natural resources, yet one of the poorest in terms of its population. This is because 32 Western corporations own the country's mineral wealth [including uranium used in producing nuclear energy and nuclear weapons]. ... In another example, when the IMF and the World Bank a few years ago insisted that Uganda privatise its water supply and sanitation, they deliberately created lucrative opportunities for Western corporations which gave the Ugandan leadership a short notice to remove government subsidies that gave ordinary citizens access to water. The result was that the people could not afford the clean water while the Western corporations laughed all the way to the bank. In the meantime, privatisation of water supplies for the benefit of Western multinationals decreased access to clean water, while the biggest killer of children clearly are preventable diseases caused by lack of clean water. The saddest thing of all is that these corporations are able to exert undue influence over African governments and economies, simply by influencing political decisions and public opinion in places that matter" ("Profiting from Poverty ... How Western companies and consultants exploit Africa", *NA*, Nov. 2007, p. 12).

But it has gotten worse yet.

**2. The whole African continent has been reduced to a club of aid-dependent, borrower nations despite her mineral wealth. The reverse has never been the case where Africa has lent to other nations.**

African countries always attend the international summits organized by the rich and powerful nations (such as the G8) with a cup in hand—to beg for more aid. So it's not surprising that the rich but loose Western nations now insist that African and other Third

World countries grant so-called 'homosexual rights' in return for continued aid. The first Western leader to announce this gay-tied aid policy was British Prime Minister David Cameron in October 2011, followed by a similar announcement by the US government of President Barack Obama. Lately UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon has also added his voice to the calls by the Western nations for the recognition of gay rights.

It is a matter of time before these 'masters of the world' cajole and compel Africa and the rest of the world to receive the 666 "Mark of the Beast" (Rev. 13:1-2, 4-7, and 14-18) leading to everlasting punishment in hellfire (Rev. 14:9-11).

Speaking to African Union leaders in January 2012 at the official opening of a new headquarters building for the AU in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon told "delegates that discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity 'prompted governments to treat people as second class citizens or even criminals. Confronting these discriminations is a challenge, but we must not give up on the ideas of the universal declaration (of human rights)' he said", quoted by AFP (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-16780079>). (Please see Isa. 1:9).

It's a big shame, but the new \$200million African Union headquarters inaugurated in January this year (2012) was built and funded by the Chinese as a 'gift' to the continental body—a body which embodies the worth and pride of Africa, the showpiece of Pan Africanism! Self-reliance is simply an old ideological relic of Pan Africanism—it has been thrown to the dogs!

**3. If in his own motherland the African occupies a low position in life, then it's even worse for him in a foreign land. African migrants in Europe and America not only eke out a living as "hewers of wood and drawers of water" doing multiple jobs, but also live in constant fear of being repatriated to Africa empty-handed because of lack of residence permits and other documents regularizing their stay.**

#### **Deut 28:64-67**

*"And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.*

*"And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:*

*"And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life:*

*“In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see”.*

**4. Lam. 5:1-7: A vivid African lament of our time:**

*(a) Foreigners have taken over the national assets and resources of Africa. These refer to the sale (or as is euphemistically called, ‘divestiture’) of state companies to foreigners (e.g. Ghana Telecom now Vodafone Ghana) and the granting of mineral rights to them (e.g. gold and oil) with the nation having just a token stake in those sectors (Obuasi gold [Anglo-Gold Ashanti] 1.7% and oil 10%) (v. 2).*

*(b) Africans are like orphans—disinherited in their own lands (v. 3). The best of the land—its riches and opportunities for wealth creation—are in the hands of foreigners.*

*(c) We pay high bills for “water” and “wood” (i.e. fuel or electricity, v. 4), although we own and manage them ourselves.*

*(d) There’s unrest almost constantly on the labour front, manifesting in a series of workers’ strikes throughout the year (v. 5).*

*(e) African professionals immigrate to Europe and America (today’s equivalent of Egypt and Assyria) for greener pastures. The result is the brain drain of Africa’s trained and skilled human resources (v.6)*

*(f) African Hebrews bear the iniquities of their fathers because they have followed in their footsteps of disobedience (v. 7; Ex. 20:5-6; cp Ez. 18:1-4, 20-21).*

## **Repentance is the Key**

Beloved, you have seen it all—the plight of the African is attributable to his breach of the divine agreement. Some may argue that some of the prophecies were fulfilled in Israel’s ancient history when the ten-tribe Northern Kingdom was uprooted to Assyria in 721 BC and the two-tribe Southern Kingdom of Judah and Benjamin were exiled to Babylon for 70 years. It needs to be pointed out that many Biblical prophecies are dual in fulfilment and rarely have a one-time fulfilment. There’s first a forerunner fulfilment and then a latter fulfilment years later.

An example is “the abomination of desolation” prophecy of Daniel 11:31, 36, 12:11 & 9:27. It was first fulfilled by the Seleucid Greek ruler Antiochus Epiphanes IV in 168 when, on conquering Jerusalem, he plundered the temple and sacrificed swine on the altar of burnt offering. Yet in 31 AD Christ indicated in His *Mount Olivet Discourse* that Jerusalem was about to be hit by another “abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel” and commanded the disciples to flee on witnessing it (Matt. 24:15-16). This was fulfilled in 70 AD with the Roman invasion and desecration of Jerusalem in which Roman soldiers, carrying images of the emperor together with avian emblems (eagles) of Jupiter, sacrificed to idols in the temple. And there’s an indication of yet a third, ultimate fulfilment of the same prophecy of Daniel in 2 Thess. 2:4: The Antichrist will desecrate the yet-to-be rebuilt temple of Jerusalem with his bodily presence “showing himself to be god”. (Compare Luke 21:24=70 AD and Rev. 11:2=rule of antichrist).

What is more, the prophetic text of Deut. 28:68 itself indicates a second enslavement in Egypt which is quite different from the first enslavement in Egypt, first prophesied in Gen. 15:13. Apart from the considerable time gap between the two, the second enslavement is distinguished from the first in three main respects: (1) the use of “ships” to transport Israelite slaves as was done during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Black African Hebrews; (2) the land of bondage would be far away from the original habitation(s) of the enslaved necessitating the use of ships; (3) the people would be “sold” into slavery, not made slaves by their hosts simply because they are non-indigenes or strangers living in a foreign country as was the case with the first enslavement .

But that is how far the distinctions go. Because both enslavements stemmed from the same prophetic root, they also had common features that are quite striking. First is the duration of the captivity: both lasted for 400 years (Gen. 15:13 & Ex. 12:41; AD 1434 - 1834). Second, slave life in the Americas was as harsh as it was in ancient Egypt when the Israelites were enslaved there. Hence the second enslavement takes place in “Egypt again”! (See Deut. 4:20; cp Hos. 9:3).

Beloved African Hebrew, this is no time to continue living in disobedience to God. Africans have suffered enough! Sure, the way of transgressors is hard (Prov. 13:15), but God’s grace is always available for a fresh start with Him! He says in 2 Chron. 7:14, *“If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land”*.

Repentance and faith in Christ is the key. He came for the good of His own but His own have continued to reject Him through lawlessness (John 1:11; 2 Tim. 2:19). Africa’s rest is in Christ (Matt. 11:28-20).

Our forefathers' transgression of the holy covenant has only brought ruin and suffering to Africa. Let's throw off that legacy: *"Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities"* (Lam. 5:7).

So then, the past behaviour of the forefathers in their relationship with God has a lot to do with the present underdevelopment of the continent as against its former glory days as the leading light of civilization. One reason is what we have just looked—their disobedience to the holy laws of the Creator. Another is that Yahweh dimmed the glory of Egypt, the star of Africa, because they proved a treacherous ally and a snare to Israel (Ez. 29:6, 16) in their heyday. We read in Ezekiel 29:13-16:

"For thus saith the Lord GOD: At the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the peoples whither they were scattered:

"And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their birth; and they shall be there a base kingdom.

"It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it any more lift itself up above the nations: and I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.

"And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, bringing iniquity to remembrance, when they turn to look after them: and they shall know that I am the Lord GOD" (RI).

Moreover, the ancient Black Egyptians were notorious idolaters, and the Eternal never took kindly to it (Ezek. 30:10-19). But God's punishment for sin is never forever. Repentance always brings pardon and restoration. The situation got even better: for all who believe, Christ Jesus has broken the curse and released the blessing:

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law [the penalty for sin written in the Law, Deut. 21:22-23], being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. 3:13-14).

This hope-filled scenario of a blessed life without curse was celebrated in Bible prophecy when the Psalmist wrote, "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God" (Ps 68:31).

And Isaiah wrote, "And the LORD shall smite Egypt: He shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the LORD, and He shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them.

"In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.

"In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land:

"Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance" (Isa. 19:22-25; see also 11:10-12).

Wont' you want to be part of this glorious future?

You can begin to break the curse at this very moment by repenting of your sins and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, the only possible means of rolling back the Biblical curses that have plagued Africa. This will entail forsaking all Eurocentric, unbiblical beliefs and practices in Euro-Gentile Christianity (which supported the slave trade, 2 Cor. 6:14-18) so you can fully embrace the truth of God, including His 7<sup>th</sup> Day Sabbath truth which remains for the people of God (Heb. 4:9)—an unchanging truth Africans traditionally acknowledge to this day. You must settle for nothing less than a genuine return to the God of Israel in wholehearted obedience to His will. God bless you, and God bless Africa and all people who seek after Him. Amen!

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