

The Lost Tribes of Israel

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The three most important world religions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — have a deep though conflicting interest and involvement in Jesus. Among them, the three religions claim adherents who account for a vast majority of the world population. The present conference is designed to focus world attention on a matter of great importance so that the controversy around the person of Jesus is resolved and all seekers after truth are enabled to shed their wrong beliefs. It certainly is an invitation to each one of us to reflect deeply on the matter, weigh objectively the evidence and historical proof now available, and acknowledge the truth even if it should be in conflict with our present beliefs.

The enigma surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus and his post-crucifixion life among the lost tribes of Israel was first untangled through Divine guidance by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, in his book “Jesus in India” which was written as far back as 1899. The evidence on the subject, which has been put together from older books, has only confirmed the thesis which he had presented some 80 years back. The controversy still persists, the differences still exist, but the consensus in the direction pointed out by the Promised Messiah at the close of the last century, is unmistakable. We believe it is only a matter of time before the world will be compelled to acknowledge the truth which Divine guidance had revealed to him. This will have a profound impact on the adherents of all the three great world religions and will greatly help them to reach common ground from which should arise an era of tranquility and peace after which humanity strives ceaselessly, but without success so far.

It is relevant to briefly summarize the beliefs about Jesus of the vast majority of adherents of the three religions.

The Jews totally reject Jesus, share no part of his mission and, indeed, believe that according to the Old Testament his death on the cross was an accursed death.

(Deuteronomy 21:23)

The Christians, on the other hand, claim that Jesus died on the cross in atonement of the sins of humanity, was resurrected soon thereafter, and then ascended to Heaven.

The vast majority of orthodox Muslims believe that Jesus was never put upon the cross, ascended bodily to heaven, and will come down to earth again to smash the cross and what it stands for and to purify the faith of the believers.

In common with other Muslims, the Ahmadiyya Community believes that Jesus was a righteous prophet raised by God among the Israelites. The Ahmadiyya version of the crucifixion is that Jesus did not die on the cross. When he was taken down from the cross he was still alive but only in a state of swoon or unconsciousness. He was removed to the sepulcher by his close friends and followers. Healing ointments and herbs were administered to his wounds and he was restored to health. He then travelled to the East in search of the lost ten tribes of Israel in fulfillment of his Divine mission, lived to a ripe old age, died and buried in Kashmir. References to his Second Advent are not to be interpreted as his return in his physical body but relate to the advent of one who would come in his power and spirit, with many similarities; he will restore and revive the beliefs and faith of the Muslims and others in the true teachings of Islam.

Before I revert to the proclaimed Divine mission of Jesus to the lost tribes of Israel, it will be helpful to show that he did not die on the cross. Since this is not the main subject of my address, and will no doubt be covered by other speakers, I will confine myself to brief references in support of Jesus' survival from the cross. This alone can form the basis of his subsequent travels in search of the lost tribes of Israel in the post-crucifixion period of his life.

The fact that Jesus did not die on the cross can be established on the basis of evidence drawn from the following sources:

(a) The Scriptures and the Holy Quran;

(b) Medical evidence;

(c) Other historical proof.

Evidence in Scriptures and the Holy Quran

Let us first examine the evidence provided by the Scriptures and the Holy Quran.

1. First of all, the prophecy of Jesus himself as recorded in Matthew 12:39,40 and Luke 11:29,30. There shall be no sign given to it but the sign of Jonah, the prophet. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Now it is an admitted fact that Jonah entered alive into the whale's belly and also came out alive. Jesus tells us that he shall be in the heart of the earth in the same manner as Jonah entered alive into the whale's belly. In other words, he would enter alive into the heart of the earth and come out alive. No other interpretation can establish a similarity between the two. In citing his resemblance with the prophet Jonah, Jesus foretold his own end, indicating that he would not die on the cross but would, like Jonah, be only in a state of unconsciousness.
2. The old Testament says that "a person who dies on the cross is accursed of God". Such a death is inconceivable for a righteous prophet of God and the occurrence of such an event deserves to be rejected out of hand on that score alone.
3. After Jesus was taken down from the cross, his body was handed over to Joseph of Arimathaea – a respectable, noble man of the neighborhood commanding great influence with everyone, including the Romans. He was a secret disciple of Jesus. The handing over of the body of Jesus to him was part of the design of Pilate to save Jesus, since Pilate, both under the influence of his wife's dream and his own conviction, was favorably disposed towards Jesus. Whatever hostile action he took against Jesus was only out of fear of the Jews. Joseph found that Jesus was, in fact, not dead but only unconscious, and removed him to a large new sepulcher in a garden close by.
4. The Gospels afford further proof that it was not in celestial body but in the same body of flesh and bone which had been nailed to the cross that Jesus appeared to his disciples after his supposed death. Thus we read that Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples as they sat at a meal (Mark 16:9,14). And when they saw him they supposed that they had seen a spirit. But he showed them his hands and feet and asked them to handle him saying, "A spirit hath not bones and flesh as ye see me have." Then he took from them a piece of broiled fish and honeycomb and ate it before them (Luke 24:39-43). It is evident that the acts which Jesus performed, like eating, drinking, sleeping, holding conversations and taking a long journey, were performed with a human body and not with a celestial body. This proves irrefutably that Jesus did not bodily rise to Heaven.

The Gospels said that Jesus remained on the cross for a very short time and, because of the sanctity of the Sabbath on the following day and the storm on that afternoon, his body was removed speedily from the cross. His wounds were treated with a special ointment and, on gaining strength, he escaped to Galilee.

Let us now see what evidence the Holy Quran provides on the subject. It is stated in the Holy Quran:

The Jews did not slay Jesus nor did they put an end to his life on the cross but simply were in doubt concerning his end. In other words, they imagined that Jesus had died on the cross which was, in fact, not true.

Another verse of the Holy Quran regarding Jesus runs thus:

He would be distinguished in this world and in the next and would be one of those who have near access to God. (ch. 3: v. 46)

In other words, it was proclaimed that Jesus would attain to dignity, honor and eminence in this world and in the next. Worldly honor and eminence certainly did not come to him in the land of his birth and fulfillment of this part of the prophecy took place only after he had journeyed to Kashmir where he achieved temporal dignity also among the lost tribes of Israel.

Again we find in the Holy Quran the words which show that, in answer to a question from God if he had taught the people to take him (i.e. Jesus) for God, Jesus would state:

...and I was a witness of their action so long as I lived among them but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast watched over them. (ch. 5: v. 118)

These words tell us plainly that the Christians departed from Jesus' teachings after his death. In another verse, the Holy Quran hints at his journey to Kashmir. It says:

...and We gave Jesus and his mother refuge in a lofty place which was secure and watered with springs. (ch. 23: v. 51)

The word *awa* used in Arabic signifies the giving of refuge against danger. It will thus be seen that the thesis about Jesus having escaped from the cross, as stated in the Gospels, is also confirmed by the verses on this subject in the Holy Quran.

Evidence in Medical Research

Let us now see what medical research and evidence on this subject signifies.

We learn from the Gospels that Jesus remained nailed to the cross only about three hours and this way by no means sufficient to bring about his death. It was a Friday afternoon when he was put upon the cross. The following day was the Sabbath and the Passover of the Jews who were strictly forbidden to leave anyone nailed to the cross on the sacred day. There was darkness over the whole land and the Jews, fearing lest they should sin against the Lord by performing on the Holy Day, hastened to take down the body of Jesus. Happily for Jesus, although the soldiers came and broke the legs and toes of the other two who had been put on the cross at the same time, they gave no such treatment to Jesus.

Further medical evidence is provided by the story of the piercing of the side of Jesus with a spear by one of the soldiers at the time of the removal of the body from the cross, when blood and water poured forth from the resultant wound. This flow of blood from the wound shows that Jesus had not died upon the cross, because blood could not have poured out from a dead body.

We also have evidence in hundreds of books on medicine which describe an ointment as marham Isa which means the "ointment of Jesus". "Materia Medica" in Greek stated that this ointment was first prepared for the injuries received by Jesus Christ. The reference to this ointment is found in over a thousand books on medicine including the famous book "Qanun by Bu Ali Sena" (Avicenna). The ointment is particularly suited to stop the flow of blood from external injuries.

Importance of the Turin Shroud

The recent discovery of the Turin Shroud, the history of which goes back to the ninth century in Jerusalem, has been another remarkable find.

Prof. Max Frie, a distinguished criminologist and director of the scientific laboratory of the Zurich police, has tested the Turin Shroud for the pollen adhering to it, and, after years of meticulous analysis, using the most advanced techniques, has been able to build up a detailed picture of the shroud's history and origins. In particular, he discovered on the shroud tiny grains of fossilized pollen that, after detailed tests, turned out to be from plants existing only in Palestine twenty centuries ago. This result of Max Frie's

investigation into the shroud is contained in Mr. Faber-Kaiser's book "Jesus Died in Kashmir" published in 1976. The author is a scholar of comparative religion who has pieced together an impressive dossier which fills a number of biblical lacunae that have perplexed scholars for hundreds of years. Let me quote another passage from this author's book:

...After seven years of investigations concerning the shroud that covered (Christ's) body, many scientists have come to the conclusion that Jesus was buried alive. The experts affirm that the Holy Shroud preserved in Turin lay on a crucified body that suffered exactly the same passion as Jesus, but state that this person did not die on the cross, but was buried while still alive. The twenty-eight bloodstains on the shroud prove this. The investigators assure us that a corpse wrapped in a shroud could not bleed in that manner. Jesus was buried alive, unless a second Jesus existed, and he was made to suffer the same agony.

In the same book the author quotes from Kurt Berna's book in German "Jesus Did Not Die on the Cross". This author talks of the importance of the discovery of this shroud for both the Christians and the Jewish religions – and indeed for Islam also which he omitted to mention – and, in his letter to Pope John XXIII, he clearly mentioned that "...this discovery suggests that the present and past teachings of Christianity are incorrect". Kurt Burna also concludes that medical evidence shows that Jesus was not dead when he was wrapped on the shroud because had he been dead no fresh blood could have flowed from his injured body and left traces on the cloth.

It will thus be seen that the combined evidence from the Scriptures, the Holy Quran, important medical research and the recent stimulating research on the Turin Shroud clearly affirm that Jesus did not die on the cross. Now, if Jesus did not die on the cross and did not bodily ascend to Heaven, where did he go? We have shown that the story of his resurrection and bodily ascension is a myth. Incidentally, no one has cared to explain why there was an interval of three days between the removal of the body from the cross and Jesus' alleged resurrection and ascension to heaven. This interval of three days is, in fact, only consistent with his medical treatment and escape after gaining strength from his ordeal on the cross. This introduces us to the story of his travels in search of the lost tribes of Israel.

Search for The Lost Tribes of Israel

We read in the Bible that Jesus Christ was sent only “to the lost sheep of the House of Israel” (Matthew 15:24) and that he had come ... “to seek and save that which was lost”. (Luke 19:10) Now if the Jews living in Palestine are to be regarded as lost, then the Israelites who had settled farther afield must certainly be so regarded, for they were lost physically as well as spiritually. Jesus further said that he had come to seek that which was lost and this can by no means apply to any but the Israelites who lived further away from Palestine. The Jews of Palestine were around him in large numbers and, therefore, it was not necessary for him to seek them.

It is a historical fact that the Israelites were divided into 12 tribes of which two were in the country where Jesus taught his Gospel and was put on the cross and the other 10 were scattered in other lands. The assigned Divine mission of Jesus would not have been complete, much less could it be described as successful, without his appearance among the remaining 10 tribes representing a vast majority of the Israelite people. The choice here is either to admit that Jesus failed to comply with his Divine mission – an obvious contradiction of terms in regard to any prophet – or that he did travel to that part of the world where the remaining 10 tribes, representing an overwhelming majority, had settled.

There is other evidence in the Gospels, of Jesus going to the East. The star which indicated his birth appeared in the East. (Matthew 2:2) Guided by this star certain wise men undertook a long journey and visited the place of his birth. This shows clearly that they had been waiting for his appearance. As the promise of the appearance of Messiah and the signs of his advent had been given to none but the Israelites, therefore, the men that came from the East on seeing the star must have been Israelites.

It is claimed that the people of Kashmir, Afghanistan, parts of India and the surrounding lands represent the lost tribes of Israel. Let us examine whether this contention can be proved by historical and other forms of evidence.

Let me begin with a quotation from the second book of Esdras:

And whereas thou sawest that he gathered another peaceable multitude unto him, those are the ten tribes which were carried away prisoner out of their own land in the time of Hosea, the King, whom Shalmanesar, the King of Assyria, led away as captive, and he crossed them over the waters, as they came into another land. But they took this counsel among themselves that they would leave the multitude of the heathen and go forth into a farther country... that they might raise up their statues which they never kept in their own land. And they entered into the Euphrates by the narrow passage of the river, for the Most High then showed signs for them, and held still the flood till they were passed over. For

through that country there was great way to go, even for a year and a half; and the same region is called Asareth.

This shows that the ten tribes had not returned to their “own land” but had left their place of captivity for a place which to them looked even farther away from their own land, i.e. further towards the East, and to a place called Asareth.

The confirmation of what has been stated above is to be found in “Tabaqat-i-Nasiri” where it is stated:

...in the time of the Shansabi dynasty, a people called Bani Israel (Children of Israel) used to live in Asareth and were engaged in trade. Thomas Ledlie in his book, “More Ledlian”, writing on the origin of Afghans, gives cogent reasons for connecting Asareth with Hazara District in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan; and the territory of Kashmir adjoins that of Hazara. But the old boundary of Asareth in Swat was just on the opposite bank of the Indus river, and, higher up near Chilas, it ran into Kashmir territory.

St. Jerome, who wrote in the fifth century of the Christian era while discussing the Dispersion of Israel, stated ... “Until this day the ten tribes are subjects to Kings of the Persians nor has their captivity ever loosened”.

Another eminent scholar, Dr. Alfred Edersheim, in his book entitled “The Life and Times of Jesus”, the Messiah, says that vast numbers of Israelites, estimated at millions, inhabited the trans-Euphrates provinces – the great mass of the ten tribes was in the days of Christ, as in our own times, lost to the Hebrew nation.

We read in the Jewish Encyclopedia under the heading Tribes: “Abraham Farissol identifies the River Ganges with the River Gozan and assumes that the Bani-Israel of India are the descendants of the lost ten tribes”.

Inhabitants of the Trans-European Provinces – AFGHANS

Let us look more closely at the history of the people of these regions.

The claim of Afghans to be Children of Israel is not merely founded on tradition. It is supported by ancient monuments, old inscriptions and historical works which are still to

be found in manuscripts in their possession. In these books of history of genealogies of the Afghans tribes are given in great detail.

The most ancient manuscript available to us is “*rauzat uo Albab fi Tawarikh-ul-Akibir wal Ansab*” – The Garden of the Learned in the History of Great Men and Genealogies – by Abu Suleman Daud bin Abul Fazal Muhammad Albenaketi which was written in 717 A.H. and in which the author traces the ancestry of the Afghans to the Israelites.

Bukhtawar Khan in his most valuable universal history “*Mirat-ul-Alam*” – the Mirror of the World, gives a vivid account of the “Journeys of the Afghans from the Holy Land to Ghor, Ghazni, Kabul and other places in Afghanistan.” Similarly Hafiz Rahmat bin Shah Alam in his “*Khulasat-ul-Ansab*” and Fareed-ud-Din Ahmad in “*Risala-i-Ansab-i-Afghana*” give the history of the Afghans and deal with their genealogies. They both prove that the Afghans are the descendants of Israel through King Talut.

Sir Alexander Burnes in his book “*Travels into Bokhara*” which he published in 1835 states: “The Afghans called themselves Bani Israel, that is Children of Israel. The Afghans look like Jews and the younger brother remarries the widow of the elder.” The Afghans entertain strong prejudices against the Jewish nation which would at least show that they have no desire to claim, without just cause, a descent from them. The same distinguished author, when he was sent as British Envoy to the Court of Kabul in 1837, questioned the King of the Afghans about the descent of his people and had no doubt of that.

Similarly, Dr. Joseph Wolff, in his book “*Narrative of a Mission to Bokhara in the Years 1843-1845*” was “wonderfully struck with the resemblance which the Yusuf Zayes and the Khaibarries, two of their Afghan tribes, bear to the Jews”. The same is affirmed by J.B. Farser in his book “*An Historical and Descriptive Account of Persia and Afghanistan*” which he published in 1843, and I quote:

According to the Afghans’ own tradition they believe themselves to be descendants from the Jews... They preserved the purity of their religion until they embraced Islam.

Again, we have the evidence of George Moore in his famous work “*Lost Tribes*” published in 1861. He cited numerous facts to prove that these tribes are traceable to the Afghans and the Kashmiris. After giving details of the character of the wandering Israelites, he said:

And we find that the very natural character of Israel reappears in all its life and reality in countries where people call themselves Bani Israel and universally claim to be the descendents of the Lost Tribes. The nomenclature of their tribes and districts, both in ancient geography, and at the present day, confirms this universal natural tradition. Lastly, we have the route of the Israelites from Media to Afghanistan and India marked by a series of intermediate stations bearing the names of several of the tribes and clearly indicating the stages of their long and arduous journey. Moore then goes on to say:

Sir William Jones, Sir John Malcolm and missionary Chamberlain, after full investigation, were of the opinion that the Ten Tribes migrated to India, Tibet and Kashmir through Afghanistan.

Moore has mentioned only three eminent writers on the subject. But reference can be made with advantage to General Sir George Macmunn, Col. G. B. Malleson, Col. Failson, George Bell, E. Balfour, Sir Henry Yule and Sir George Rose. They, one and all, independently came to the same conclusion.

Among more recent writers on the ancestry of Afghans, Dr. Alfred Edersheim states as follows:

Modern investigations have pointed to the Nestorians and latterly, with almost convincing evidence (so far as it is possible), to the Afghans as descendants from the lost tribes.

Similarly, Sir Thomas Holditch, in his book, "The Gates of India" says:

But there is one important people (of whom there is much more to be said) who call themselves Bani Israel, who claim descent from Cush and Ham, who have adopted a strange mixture of Mosaic Law in Ordinances in their moral code, who (some sections at least) keep a feast which strongly accords with the Passover, who hate the Yahudi (Jew) with a traditional hatred, and for whom no one has yet been able to suggest any other origin than the one they claim, and claim with determined force, and these people are the overwhelming inhabitants of Afghanistan and Kashmir.

Inhabitants of the Trans-Euphrates Provinces – Kashmiris

It will, therefore, be acknowledged that ethnical and historical evidence, both ancient and modern, establishes that Afghans are the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel. The same

is true of the people of Kashmir, whose descent can be traced back to the tribes of Israel as has been mentioned in some of the quotations reproduced above. The Kashmiris also claim to be Bani Israel (that is, Children of Israel) and call themselves Kashar which is a Hebrew word meaning right. But let us probe further into this claim and examine what historical and other evidence is available to substantiate it.

The first three early historians of Kashmir, namely Mulla Nadiri (1378-1416) in his book “Tarikh Kashmir” (History of Kashmir), Mulla Ahmad in his book “Waqya-i-Kashmir” (Events of Kashmir), and Abdul Qadar Bin Qazi-ul-Quzat Wasil Ali Khan in his book “Hashmat-i-Kashmir”, have all categorically stated that the inhabitants of Kashmir were the descendants of Israel. The last mentioned author adding that they had come from the Holy Land.

Apart from these three Muslim historians of Kashmir, Hindu scholars like Pandit Narian Kaul in his book “Guldasta-i-Kashmir” and Pandit Ram Chand Kak in his work “Ancient Monument of Kashmir” describe Kashmiris as being of Jewish countenance of descent.

Pandit Jawaher Lal Nehru, ex-Prime Minister of India and an eminent scholar of history, in his book “Glimpses of World History” writes: “All over Central Asia, in Kashmir and Laddakh and Tibet and even farther North, there is still a strong belief that Jesus or Isa travelled about there.”

Francis Bernier (a courtier at the Court of Emperor Aurang Zeb) states that the inhabitants of Kashmir struck him as resembling Jews, having the countenances and manners of the Israeli people.

S. Manoutchi, a physician in the service of Emperor Aurang Zeb, corroborates Francis Bernier and states: “although ... we find no remains in Kashmir of the Jewish religion, there are several vestiges of race descended from the Israelites.”

George Foster in his famous work “Letters on a Journey from Bengal to England”, 1773, writes:

On first seeing the Kashmirians in their own country, I imagined from their garb, the cast of their countenances, which were long and of a grave aspect, and the forms of their beards, that I had come among a nation of Jews.

The Rev. Claudius Buchanan talks about the discovery of an ancient manuscript of Moses in Hebrew which was written on a roll of leather 48 feet in length and about which he

was told it was brought from Kashmir.

The Kashmiri pundits claim that they had come from Persia and beyond and that some of their people had settled on the Malabar Coast. Mr. Henry Wilson in his book “Travels in Himalayan Provinces” writes: “. . . the physical and the ethnical character, which so sharply marks off the Kashmiris from all surrounding races, has always struck observing visitors to the valley and they have universally connected them with the Jews.”

Major H. W. Bellew in his book “Kashmir in Kashgar” refers to the dress of Kashmiri men and women and their features and infers from these and other facts their descent from the Jews.

Similarly, Mr. Cowley Lambert in his book “A Trip to Kashmir and Laddakh” refers to the physical appearance of the Kashmiris and concludes that they have a most unmistakable Jewish cast of face.

Similarly, Mr. James Milne in his book “The Road to Kashmir” states that the three races (Afghans, Afridis, and Kashmiris) have large aquiline features and skins which have been well described as subdued Jews.

More recently, Sir Francis Younghusband, who for many years was the British Representative in Kashmir, writes:

Here may be seen fine old patriarchal types, just as we picture to ourselves the Israelitish heroes of old. Some, indeed, say . . . that these Kashmiris are the lost tribes of Israel and certainly as I have already said, there are real biblical types to be seen everywhere in Kashmir and especially among the upland villages. Here the Israelitish shepherd tending his flocks and herds may any day be seen.

We also find a Christian missionary who lived in Kashmir for many years (C. E. Tyndale Biscoe) who contends: “. . . “the Kashmiris belong to the lost tribes of Israel as many of them have such Jewish noses, also their love of money and of getting the better of their neighbors is a strong one.”

Mr. John Noel in an article in Asia Magazine in 1930 under the title “The Heavenly High Snow Peaks of Kashmir” writes about Kashmiris as follows:

They seem more perfectly Jewish than the purest Jews you have ever seen; not because they wear a flowing cloak-like dress that conforms to your idea of biblical garment, but

because their faces have the Jewish cast of features. The curious coincidence – or is it a coincidence? – is that there is a strong tradition in Kashmir or its connection with the Jews. A recent Indian writer, Mr. V. Rangacharya, in his “History of Pre-Moslem India” describes the inhabitants of Kashmir to the North West Frontier of Kashmir to be very Jewish.

Here then, we have an overwhelming accumulation of historical evidence emanating from a large number of independent and objective scholars, from different countries, belonging to different religions, all asserting the close connection of the Kashmiris to their Israeli descent. The evidence is visible in ethnic features, which no one can concoct or fabricate, in the dress which they wear, in names of persons which they carry, in names of places where they live – indeed, an all permeating reflection of their origin and past. When this large volume of evidence is seen in the context of what the Holy Quran and the Scriptures contain on the subject; is left with the conclusion that the lost tribes of Israel did settle primarily in the area now known as Afghanistan and Kashmir and some parts of India, like Bombay and Malabar Coast.

Evidence of Writers and Historians on Migration of Tribes

We have the evidence of the Holy Quran and the Scriptures. We have also the evidence of eminent writers and historians, both ancient and modern, on the migration and the settlement of the lost tribes of Israel in new lands away from their original home. In search of facts and truth, however, let us see if there is other evidence available on their subject.

It is a well known historical fact that migrating people carry with them their customs, their traditions and, sometimes, even the names of places of their original homeland. The names get distorted, and customs undergo some changes in the new environment, or by passage of time, but nevertheless they retain sufficient traces of their origin. By itself this type of evidence may not be sufficient to categorically establish a particular proposition, but at the same time it cannot be disregarded as irrelevant or of no value. I reproduce below a few names of tribes and places in Kashmir, Afghanistan, in North-western parts of present Pakistan, in Gilgit, Laddakh; areas which bear strong resemblance to biblical names and betray their Israeli origin.

These names are either replicas of biblical names or bear close resemblance to them. The small deviations are both a product of time and change of language and some distortion. No one can travel even a short distance in these countries without coming across a member of a tribe or name of a place or a monument which historically takes him back to the biblical period.

Khawaja Nazir Ahmad in his book “Jesus in Heaven on Earth” has in fact listed some 405 such names in Afghanistan, Kashmir and parts of Pakistan and India which show strong similarities and common origin with biblical names. Those interested can have recourse to this valuable piece of research.

The strong linguistic evidence is further fortified by and reflected in customs and habits which, despite the passage of centuries and change of religion, have persisted. Both Afghans and Kashmiris observe customs, practice habits and observe festivals which establish similarities with those of the Jews. A detailed collection of them is also available in the book to which I have just referred.

Again, the common heritage and ancestry is reflected in the structure of the Kashmiri boats and the heart-shaped oars commonly used to paddle the Major T. R. Swinburne in his book “A Holiday in the Happy Valley.” This unusual evidence alone connects the Kashmiris with the lost tribes of Israel. Again, all three people name their sub-tribes after various animals and practice methods of irrigation of which the origin can be traced back to the Israelites and Egypt.

The evidence of common ancestry and heritage is also to be found embedded even deeper in traditions, folklore and fables which resound with stories of Jewish flavor and origin. There is a well in Afghanistan and also in Kashmir called Chahi Babal, that is Well of Babylon, associated with angels like Harut and Marut.

Archaeological discoveries also point in the same direction of common ancestry and the pottery found in Afghanistan and Kashmir bears close resemblance to that found in Babylon and associated with the Jews.

The old monuments in Kashmir tell the same story. The ancient temples in Kashmir have little in common with Buddhist or Brahmanical architecture and have more affinity with the Jewish synagogues and pediments of Syrian origin. G. T. Vrine in his book “Travels in Kashmir, Laddakh and Iskardoo” raised the question whether the Kashmiri temples had not been built by Jewish architects. Similarly, Dr. James Ferguson, an authority on

Indian and Eastern architecture, notes as a point of interest that temples in Kashmir reproduce, in plan at least, the Jewish temple more nearly than any other known building.

There is also the famous Takhte Sulaiman in Srinagar which is associated in Kashmiri tradition with the visit of King Solomon and is described as an exact replica of the throne of Absalom, the third son of David, in the Woods of Ephraim not far from Jerusalem.

The mass of evidence on the settlement of the lost tribes of Israel in Kashmir, Afghanistan and the surrounding lands is indeed formidable. It is to be found in religious books, in books of history and research by ancient and modern writers belonging to different countries and different faiths. The adherents of these faiths violently disagree on many fundamentals of life and faith but reveal a rare unanimity and consensus on the descent of the Afghans and the Kashmiris from the ancient Israeli stock.

The evidence is indeed all permeating. It is reflected in their distinctive features, in language, in names, in dress, in customs, in traditions, in folklore, in pottery, in architecture, in monuments – in fact in every conceivable aspect of human life and activity. It is difficult to reject or ignore this mass of evidence in the absence of strong reason and at least a semblance of evidence to the contrary.

The Travels of Jesus

The proclaimed mission of Jesus was to seek, preach to and save the lost tribes of Israel. Following his escape from the cross and sensing danger in staying at the place of his persecution, we find him traveling in disguise to Damascus through Judea, Samaria, Nazareth and to the Sea of Tiberius in search of the lost tribes. The place where Jesus first stayed for a time about two miles from Damascus is even to this day known as Maqam-i-Isa (which means the resting or halting place of Jesus). This place was originally called Rabwah.

Mir Muhammad Khawand Shah Ibn-i-Muhammad wrote in his famous book “Rauza-tus-Safa fi Sirat-ul-Ambia wal Muluk wal Khulafa” (The Gardens of Purity concerning the biography of the Prophets and Kings and Caliphs) that the Jews turned Jesus out of the city and Jesus and Mary set out and went to Syria. From Syria Jesus travelled to Mosul and then to Aleppo.

It is stated during his journey Jesus travelled incognito under the name of Yuz Asaf, the word Yuz stands for Yusu (meaning Jesus) and Asaf in Hebrew means gatherer, namely,

one who was to collect the lost sheep of Israel.

Next we hear of Jesus in Iran. It is said that Yuz Asaf came to this country from the West and preached there and many believed him. The sayings of Yuz Asaf as recorded in Iranian traditions are similar to those of Jesus. (Agha Mustafai, Ahwali Ahalian-i-Para, 219).

We can then trace Jesus in Afghanistan: In Ghazni (Western Afghanistan) and in Jalabad (in the extreme south-east of Afghanistan) there are two platforms which bear the name of Yuz Asaf, for he sat and preached there.

We then find a quotation from Acta Thomae which records the presence of Jesus and Thomas at Taxila, in present day Pakistan.

Jesus, his mother Mary, and Thomas proceeded towards Murree also in Pakistan. Mary died there and was buried at a hill top known as Pindi-Point. The town Murree was until 1875 called Mari and, was named after her. Her tomb adjoining the Defense Tower is even today called: Mai Mari da Asthan – the resting place of Mother Mary.

We can almost with certainty trace the entry of Jesus into Kashmir through a valley called Yusu Margh, which is named after him and where the race of Yudu (Jews) is still to be found. It lies on the bridle route followed by merchants coming, generally on foot, from Kaghan and Afghanistan. The Kaghan valley on one side touches Kashmir and on the other the Murree hills. Aish Muqam (about 47 miles from Srinagar) is not far from Yusu Margh. In fact it lies on the same route. Aish or Ashush is a perversion of Issa (Jesus).

There is another significant fact which, more than anything else, proves that Jesus did come to Kashmir. I give below a few names known to Kashmir history and geography:

Aish Muqam Arya-Issa Issa-Brar Issa-eil Issa Kush Issa Mati J-yes-Issa J-yes-Issa-vara Kal-Issa Ram-Issa Yusu-dha Yusu-dhara Yusu-gam Yusu-hatpura Yusu-kun Yusu-maidan Yusus-mangala Yusu-marg Yusu-nag Yusu-para Yusu-raja Yusu Yusu Varman

The Tomb of Jesus in Kashmir

We have traced the life of Jesus from his escape on the cross to this travel and abode in the mountains of Afghanistan and the Vale of Kashmir in a successful search of the lost tribes of Israel and in fulfillment of his proclaimed Divine mission. Another decisive

piece of evidence in support of this is provided by the discovery of his tomb in Mohalla Khaniyar in Srinagar. It is called Rauzabal and is described as the tomb of Yuz Asaf, the prophet, who is also styled as Shahzada Nabi (the Prince of Prophet). This discovery and revelation was made by the Promised Messiah through Divine guidance and research. Here again we find strong evidence in support of proclamation. We find a description of the tomb in the book of the “British Resident in Kashmir” (Sir Francis Younghusband):

There resided in Kashmir some 1,900 years ago a saint of the name of Yuz Asaf, who preached in parables and used many of the same parables as Christ uses, as, for instance, the parable of the sower. His tomb is in Srinagar ... and the theory is that Yuz Asaf and Jesus are one and the same person. When the people are in appearance of such a decided Jewish cast, is it curious that such a theory should exist.

Captain C. N. Enrique in his book “The Realms of God” says:

During my stay in Srinagar I came upon a curious tradition concerning some of the tombs in the city. There is one tomb said to be that of Christ.

Sheikh Al-Said-us-Sadiq, who lived in the third and fourth centuries of the Muslim era, and who wrote over 200 books, writes as follows:

Then Yus Asaf, after roaming about in many cities, reached that country which is called Kashmir. He travelled in it far and wide and stayed there and spent his (remaining) life there, until death overtook him, and he left the earthly body and was elevated towards the Light. But, before his death he sent for a disciple of his, Ba’bad (Thomas) by name, who used to serve him and was well-served in all matters. He (Yuz Asaf) expressed his late will to him and said: My time for departing from this world has come. Carry on your duties properly and turn not back from truth, and say your prayers regularly. He then directed Ba’bad (Thomas) to prepare a tomb over him (at the very place he died). He then stretched his legs towards the West and head towards the east and died. May God bless him.

Abdul Qadir bin Qaziul-Quzat Wasil Ali Khan writes in his book “Hashmat-i-Kashmir”:
“... the tomb is described by the people of the location to be that of a prophet of the people of the book which words are generally applied to Christians.”

Mulla Nadiri, the first Muslim historian of Kashmir, writes about Takhte Sulaiman on the flank walls encasing the staircase. One of them says: “At this time Yuz Asaf proclaimed

his prophethood, year fifty and four”; and another says: “He is Jesus”, Prophet of the Children of Israel.”

The Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, declared nearly 1400 years ago, that Christianity would not decline nor would its progress be retarded until the Promised Messiah, at whose hands the cross was destined to be smashed, appeared in the world. This prophecy indicated that in the time of the Promised Messiah such discoveries would be made as would throw light on the Christian doctrine of crucifixion and ascension which would be discarded in the face of overwhelming evidence from the Scriptures, medical research and other discoveries. This time has arrived. It is happening. Like the first night’s moon all cannot see it, but for how long? The accumulated and entrenched prejudices and misconceptions nourished and held for nearly 2,000 years have begun to be dissipated. Indeed, truth is beginning to assert its slow but undeniable and inevitable claim to recognition. Look at the storm which greeted the Promised Messiah’s writing on the subject some 80 years ago. Look how much of what he revealed then to a hostile world is quietly accepted today. The rest, too, is bound to be acknowledged as the knowledge spreads and barriers of prejudice and preconceived notions tumble down in the face of new discoveries and the truth. Then nations the world over will begin to acknowledge the truth and the ground will be cleared to lay the foundation of a new world order which will free humanity from its present costly conflicts and acrimonious dissensions which so hamper the attainment of the purpose of human creation.

Let me conclude my address with certain prophetic words from the Promised Messiah in his book “Tuzkira-tush-Shahadatain.”

The third century from this day shall not pass until all those who look for the descent of Jesus from heaven, Christians or Muslims, will despair of it and will forsake the false beliefs now so fondly cherished by them. Then there will be one religion in the world and one leader. I have been sent to sow a seed and I have sown it. It will grow and bear flowers and fruit in due season and there is none who can uproot it.

Mirza Muzaffar Ahmad was born in 1913 at Qadian, Punjab, India and is the grandson of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah. He became a director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank) in 1972 and in 1974 Deputy Executive Secretary of the Joint Development Committee.

Mr. M. M. Ahmad took a B.A. at the Government College, Lahore, followed by a B.A. (Hons) at London University. He became a barrister of the Middle Temple.

He joined the Indian Civil Service and held a number of important positions in Government. In 1966 he was appointed Deputy Chairman (with ministerial rank) of the Government of Pakistan's Planning Commission. In 1971 he was appointed Financial Advisor (with Cabinet rank) to the President of Pakistan.