

# CLASSICAL RECORDS OF THE ORIGINS OF THE SCYTHIANS, PARTHIANS, & RELATED TRIBES

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In the preface to Josephus' *Wars*, the historian explains that he originally wrote the book in "the language of our country", i.e. Hebrew or perhaps Aramaic, and sent it to the "Upper Barbarians", among whom he then names as "the Parthians ... Babylonians ... remotest Arabians ... and those of our nation beyond Euphrates, with the Adiabeni."

Except for the Parthians, Josephus' designations here are geographical, where it is clear from the pages of his *Antiquities* that many of the Israelites of the Babylonian deportation still dwelt around Babylonia in his time (15.3.1), and this would include the "remotest" part of Arabia adjacent to Babylonia (cf. Acts 2:11; 1 Pet. 5:13). Also, Josephus attests that many Israelites of the Assyrian deportations were "beyond Euphrates until now", where they were "an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers" (11.5.2). Adiabene is that part of Assyria which, according to Strabo in his *Geography*, is not in Mesopotamia but which consists of the plains beyond the Tigris bordering Babylonia to the south and Armenia to the north (16.1.1, 19). Media borders Adiabene on the east.

Herodotus listed Parthians among those who fought under the Persians in Xerxes' famous invasion of Greece, and like the Arians and Sogdians, says that they were equipped like the Bactrians "in all respects" (7.66). The Parthians had a district immediately east of Media, southeast of the Caspian Sea, which they obtained by force. Strabo says of Parthia that in the Persian and Macedonian periods "in addition to its smallness, it is thickly wooded and mountainous, and also poverty-stricken", and that at that time its people paid their tribute along with the Hyrcanians to the west (11.9.1). Strabo then says that "Arsaces (Ἀρσάκης), a Scythian, with some of the Däae ... invaded Parthia and conquered it. Now at the outset Arsaces was weak, being continually at war with those who had been deprived by him of their territory, both he himself and his successors, but later they grew so strong, always taking neighboring territory, through successes in warfare, that finally they established themselves as lords of the whole of the country inside the Euphrates ..." (11.9.2). Elsewhere Strabo tells us that the Däae, along with the Massagetæ and Sacæ, are Scythians (11.8.2). So we see that the Parthians of the Parthian empire were Scythians, and Josephus surely indicates to us that they were Israelites.

In the second century B.C. the Parthians arose over the entire eastern world, ruling over much of the old Persian Empire, a position they held for about four hundred years. All of their kings, according to Strabo, were given the surname "Arsaces" (15.1.36), which seems to come from the words *ar* and *Saka*, apparently meaning "highest of the Saka". While the Euphrates was generally the border between the Parthian and Roman empires, often the two clashed along it, and the Parthians were at various times involved in the affairs of Syria and Judaea (Josephus, *Wars* 1.13.1 ff.; *Antiq.* 14.13.1 ff.) and also contended with the Romans for Armenia, where Rome prevailed (*Antiq.* 18.4.4).

While the Assyrians resettled various groups of deported Israelites along the northern frontiers of their empire (i.e. 2 Kings 17:6), in addition to much of Judah and Benjamin (2 Kings 18:19), and our Biblical records here are far from complete due to the circumstances of the time, the Assyrian records themselves tell us that these tribes began migrating to the north nearly as soon as they were settled, for which see *Missing Links Discovered In Assyrian Tablets* by E. Raymond Capt, and also the Apocalypse of Ezra, or 2 Esdras in the King James Apocrypha, 13:39-50. One branch of these Israelites, the Kimmerians, ravaged much of Anatolia and destroyed ancient Phrygia before crossing into Europe and settling north of Thrace and around the Black Sea, who later migrated westward where they became known as the Kelts. Here we shall discuss the larger portions, the Scythians, who stayed behind in Asia for some centuries before many of their own descendants began crossing into Europe as the "Germanic" speaking tribes. In my previous pamphlet concerning these people, *Herodotus, Scythians, Persians & Prophecy*, it was shown that the Scythians fulfilled the roles which the Hebrew prophets had forecast concerning the children of Israel. This discussion is meant to complement that one.

In his *Library of History* at 2.43.1-5, Diodorus Siculus says of the Scythians: "But now, in turn, we shall discuss the Scythians who inhabit the country bordering upon India. This people originally possessed little territory, but later, as they gradually increased in power, they seized much territory by reason of their deeds of might and their bravery and advanced their nation to great leadership and renown. At first, then, they dwelt on the Araxes River, altogether few in number and despised because of their lack of renown; but since one of their early kings was warlike and of unusual skill as a general they acquired territory, in the mountains as far as the Caucasus, and in the steppes along the ocean and Lake Maeotis (the sea of Azov today) and the rest of that country as far as the Tanaïs River ... But some time later the descendants of these kings ... subdued much of the territory beyond the Tanaïs River as far as Thrace ... for this people increased to great strength and had notable kings; one whom gave his name to the Sacae, another to the Massagetae, another to the Arimaspi, and several other tribes received their names in like manner ..." (Loeb Library edition).

So while Diodorus described the naming of the various related Scythian tribes fancifully, he surely is accurate in the description of the origins and growth of these people, and corroborates Herodotus concerning their relationship and locations. The Araxes river was the ancient boundary between Media and Armenia. Herodotus,

describing the Persian King Cyrus' expedition against the Massagetae, describes the Caspian Sea, the Araxes river which empties into it from the west, and the Caucasus Mountains which bind the Caspian there, and places Cyrus' expedition in this very place. Herodotus describes the Massagetae: " In their dress and mode of living [they] resemble the Scythians", and, as he says later that the Scythians carry, " their favorite weapon is the battle-axe" (*Histories* 1.201, 215). Later Herodotus describes the Persian King Darius' expedition against the Scythians, where to get there Darius crossed the Bosphoros, and then going through Thrace crossed the Danube to attack them (4.97). He also described how these Scythians had migrated into Europe from Asia (4.11, 48), as Diodorus tells us, and he says that the Scythians of the east who were once subject to the Persians, the Scythians of the Caucasus mountains, and the Scythians of Europe were all related (7.64).

Herodotus says of the Scythians that " the Persians called them Sacae, since that is the name which they give to all Scythians" (7.64). Strabo says only that the Sacae are of Scythian stock (7.3.9), but elsewhere that the Däae, Massagetae, and Sacae are Scythians, and that the inhabitants of Bactriana and Sogdiana (districts which border upon India), if not Scythians themselves, are ruled over by Scythians, and also that the Asii, Tocharians, and Sacarauli (found east of the Caspian near to Tibet) appear to be Scythians (11.8.2). Note the occurrence of the " saka" sound in so many names related to the Scythian tribes, such as **Arsaces**, **Massagetae**, **Sacarauli**, and also **Sacasene** as we shall see below.

There was no " Armenia" in the time of the Assyrian deportations of the Israelites. It is apparent that the name may have evolved from a Hebrew phrase meaning " mountain regions", for which see Strong's Hebrew lexicon #'s 2022, 4480 and 4482. In earlier times the land was partly occupied by the Urartu, who seem to be related to the Medes, and the upper portions by the Moschi and Tibareni, as attested to by Strabo and others. These tribes are evidently the Meshech and Tubal of Genesis 10:2.

Speaking of the time around the fall of Assyria, Herodotus tells us that the Scythians conquered all of Asia (1.104), of which Strabo relates that " In ancient times Greater Armenia ruled the whole of Asia" (11.13. 5). Yet both men are correct, where we have seen from Diodorus Siculus the Scythian origins along the Araxes river in part of what later became known as Armenia, and their presence there in Persian times as Herodotus describes Cyrus' expedition against the Massagetae there. Strabo tells us that Sacasene, a district in Armenia, was so named for the Sacae who dwelt there (11.8.4).

While this entire eastern world, once predominately Caucasian (Adamic, or White), has been overrun and mongrelized by Arabs, Edomite-jews, Turks and Mongols over the past 1500 or so years, the Armenians seem to never have forgotten their Israelite background, and an Armenian quarter was maintained in Jerusalem even in the 20th century. The Armenians, the original White Armenians, accepted Christianity even before Constantine, and this was noted by them in later accounts.

In Strabo's time, sandwiched between Armenia to the south and the Caucasus Mountains to the north were three small districts occupying much of the land known today as Georgia: Colchis which bordered the Black Sea, Iberia which was landlocked, and Albania which bordered the Caspian Sea. The eastern portion of Albania (not to be confused with the later Albania in the Balkans) contained a region called Caspiana.

Colchis was an ancient district, certainly first settled by some of the Japhethite tribes, known to the Greeks at the earliest times, and by their myths even before the Trojan War. Jason and the Argonauts, a story which supposedly took place a couple of generations before the Trojan War, sailed through the Black Sea to Colchis in search of the golden fleece. Here Jason met Medea, daughter of the king, who ran off with him after helping him steal the fleece from her father, and then married him in Greece, as the myth generally goes.

Herodotus tells us that the Colchians practiced circumcision, however there appears the odd statement that the Colchians were black and wooly-headed (2.104), a statement which his most famous translator, George Rawlinson, disputed in a footnote. Herodotus claimed that the Colchians were related to the Egyptians, from whence they received their circumcision custom, and also called the Egyptians black and wooly-headed. Since Egypt was overrun and ruled for nearly a century by Nubians, from about 750-661 B.C., Herodotus, writing about 200 years later, may well have seen some Egyptians of this sort, yet such could not be said of the Colchians. It may be conjectured that Herodotus, if the statement is not an interpolation, only imagined that the Colchians should look like certain "Egyptians", if they were indeed related. As Rawlinson states in his footnote, the paintings, monuments and mummies show the original Egyptians to be neither black nor wooly-headed. While not mentioning this particular statement of Herodotus', Strabo scoffed at "some writers, wishing to show forth a kinship between the Colchians and the Egyptians" (11.2.17). Euripides, a contemporary of Herodotus and just as acquainted with the region as the historian was, in his account of Jason's voyage in his play *Medea*, described the title character's "snow-white neck", a description much more agreeable to the historical and archaeological records. It is possible that the Colchians, if the area was inhabited by deported Israelites in Herodotus' time, did practice circumcision, a custom which began among them before the sojourn in Egypt. Yet here the testimony found in Herodotus appears to be tainted, and if not by a later hand, his statements concerning the Colchians appear to be one of his graver errors, while most of his other testimonies are worthy of great respect.

Bordering Colchis to the east was Iberia. Strabo calls the Iberians of the Caucasus "both neighbors and kinsmen" of the Scythians and Sarmatians, and "they assemble many tens of thousands, both from their own people and from the Scythians and Sarmatians, whenever anything alarming occurs" (11.3. 3). Strabo also says that "the greater part of Iberia is so well built up in respect to cities and farmsteads that their roofs are tiled, and their houses as well as their market-places and other public buildings are constructed with architectural skill" (11.3.1).

Anciently there were two lands named Iberia, and such is certainly no coincidence: the one the peninsula later known as Spain and settled by Hebrew-Israelite-Phoenicians, and the other this one here in the Caucasus mountains, settled by Hebrew-Israelite-Scythians. In the Hebrew language, “Hebrews” would be “Iberi”, or as Strong’s has it, Ibriy (#5680). Strabo, unsure why Iberia was called such, imagined that both lands were so called from gold mines said to be in each country (11.2.19). Even that would require both peoples, so far apart, to have a common word related to gold mines, which is not the case in any of the regions’ languages, and so Strabo’s conjecture here must be dismissed.

East of Iberia and reaching to the Caspian Sea was Albania, of which the eastern part, Caspiana, sat at the mouth of that same Araxes river where the Scythians are placed at the earliest times. Herodotus mentions the Caspians at 7.67, and in company with the Bactrians in Xerxes’ Persian army at 7.86. In Strabo we have seen the relationship of the Bactrians and Scythians mentioned above (11.8.2). Caspiana must be, as Dr. George Moore agrees in his *The Lost Tribes And The Saxons Of The East And The Saxons Of the West*, that same district mentioned at Ezra 8:17, Casiphia, to which Ezra sent for Levites to come to Jerusalem after the rebuilding of the Temple. Moore wrote as much in the 1870’s, when his book was first published.

So while we see that the ancient historians surely made some mistakes in certain places, or offered fanciful conjectures where the truth of a matter was obscured by time or language, we have a consistent pattern of testimony among many ancient accounts that the Parthian, Scythian, and other “Indo-European” tribes shared a common origin in and around the regions of ancient Media, Armenia and northern Assyria, and from there soon spread themselves east as far as the borders of India and Tibet, and west to Thrace and the Danube river. And we can tell their descent from the Israelites not only because they first appear in places where the Bible tells us that the Israelites were brought to by the Assyrians, and not only because they fulfilled the many prophecies which were foretold of the Israelites, but also from the testimonies such as those of Ezra (Ezra 8:17; 2 Esdras 13:39 ff.), Josephus (*Antiq.* 11.5.2), and Paul (Col. 3:11), who certainly wrote to no one but the “lost” Israelites. There was no “immense multitude”, as Josephus and Ezra call them, of “Jews” beyond the Euphrates in the time of either Josephus (say, 70 A.D.), or Ezra (say, 450 B.C.), or the contemporary historians who described those entire regions surely would have noted them (Herodotus about 450 B.C., Diodorus about 50 B.C., Strabo before 25 A.D.). But there was indeed an immense multitude of Scythians in those regions, under the many names that we see the various Scythian tribes had adopted, such as Parthians, Iberians, Massagetae, etc. And these were strong enough not only to withstand the subjugations attempted by the Persians, but that a portion of them came to subjugate Persia, and to keep Rome from bringing its empire north of the Danube or east of the Euphrates.

Josephus’ concern that the Parthians receive an account of the events which resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem, since they and the other “Upper Barbarians” were of his nation (in the ethnic, and not in the geographical sense), should certainly

seal our assurance of the certainty of these testimonies. The Scythians, who eventually migrated westward as the Saxons and other Germanic tribes, surely were the children of Israel.

While other so-called “Indo-European”, “Caucasian” or “Aryan” tribes were in Europe long before the Kelts and Scythians, it is clear that these also may be traced to Mesopotamia, having come at various times through Palestine, Anatolia, or even Egypt at a much earlier time, and settling the coasts of Europe from Greece all the way around to the British isles and Denmark, and also the Danube, Tiber, Po, Rhone, Seine and other river valleys. The tribes of Japheth and the Lydian Shemites were in western Anatolia and southern Europe for nearly two thousand years before the Israelite exodus, a period which we have virtually no historical and scant archaeological evidence to tell us about. Our historical accounts begin to develop only after the Israelite exodus from Egypt and their settlement of Palestine, Phoenicia, Troy and Greece, and apparently the Greek records weren't recorded in writing until some time after that, in the 8th century B.C., about the same time that the Assyrians began deporting the Israelites from the Levant!

Yet all of the ancient records concerning our origin (“our” meaning the White Europeans of today) are ignored or scoffed at by modern anthropologists, archaeologists, and historians. There is a book which I have read, but which I can't recommend, which reflects quite well the debate concerning Indo-European origins among today's academics: *In Search of the Indo-Europeans* by one J. P. Mallory, published in the late 1980's. In it Mallory discusses the many prominent modern theories concerning Indo-European origins and the possible locations of some supposed common, prehistoric Indo-European homeland. Yet none of the theories presented are anywhere near the truth, because none of the theorists even consider Mesopotamia, never mind the ancient land of Israel! Mallory even spends a few pages dismissing any link to the Hebrews, and using the Indo-European and Hebrew words for the numbers one through ten in comparison to somehow prove his point, *seven* being the only one remotely similar. Yet I can find Hebrew cognates for at least 600 basic English words, and also many in Greek and Latin! But that is well beyond our purpose here.

No academic today could possibly approach the truth without risking his or her career, and who among them would have such nerve or such gumption to challenge the false accounts of history being presented to us by the Jews? In earlier times, we were called “Caucasians” because anthropologists knew of our sojourn through the Caucasus mountains. Today our historical accounts are denied, and our academics spend their resources in pursuit of something which does not exist, only to avoid one burning question: If we Germanic, Keltic, Scandinavian and related Whites are the Biblical Israelites, then who are these people calling themselves “Jews” today?