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The truth of the Igbo People: The Lost Tribes of Israel

ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS

- The Igbo people of Biafra.
- The origin of the Igbo people.
- The Biblical record of the Lost Tribes of Israel.
- The cultural and linguistic similarities between the Igbo people and Hebraism.
- A core Biblical concept that aligns with the Igbo culture
- The precedent case of the Ethiopian Jews.
- The racial difference observed between the Igbo people and Israeli Jews.

ARTICLE SUMMARY

The long documented cultural, religious, and linguistic similarities between the Igbo people, a West African ethnic group, and ancient Israel has been discussed for centuries. Apart from significant cultural and linguistic evidence, and the precedent case of the Ethiopian Jews; the Holy Bible provides the historical, cultural, and theoretical evidence which supports that the Igbo people are descended from the Lost Tribes of Israel.

THE IGBO PEOPLE OF BIAFRA

The Igbo people are a major ethnic group of the Biafran nation, which is currently part of Nigeria (Ogili & Israel, 2019a). Nigeria is a West African nation that was created in 1914, from the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Nigerian Protectorates by Lord Lugard of Britain (Akomolafe, 2014; Ezeogidi, 2020). In the year of Nigeria's independence in 1960, the nation was composed of four regions with 12 states of diverse cultural, linguistic and spiritual identities: the North, Arewa; the West, Oduduwa; the Mid-West, the Republic of Benin; and the East, Biafra (Biafra means "Come Live") (Ogili & Israel, 2019a).

The Igbo people are indigenous to Biafra amongst other brother nations of Eastern and Mid-West Nigeria such as the Ibibos, Efiks, Annangs, Ogonis, Afikpos, Abakalikis, Umons, Yakos, Nembes and Arochukwus (Ogili & Israel, 2019a). The Igbo people (those whose mother tongue is Igbo) are spread across multiple states of the Eastern region of Nigeria, and are the known ancestral and indigenous people of the states of Imo, Abia, Anambra, Enugu and Ebonyi (Ogili & Israel, 2019a). The ancestral land of the Igbo people also includes large parts of Benue, Delta and Rivers States (Ogili & Israel, 2019a). The diverse multiethnic nature of the Igbo and Biafrans is an exacerbated consequence of British colonization, and their systemic influence over the structure of Nigeria, which essentially divided the Igbo people and Biafrans into smaller sub-ethnicities (Ezeogidi, 2020). The consequences of the divide-and-conquer tactics of the British had an even greater effect once direct British rule had ended in Nigeria, as ruling power was delegated to the Hausa-Fulani Caliphate (Ezeogidi, 2020). The post-colonial history of Nigeria is marked by the brute military force of the Hausa-Fulani Caliphate, which resulted in the systematic oppression and persecution of the Biafran people through the succession of unilaterally imposed and unconstitutional military decrees (Ezeogidi, 2020; Ogili & Israel, 2019c). These unconstitutional military decrees resulted in the creation of 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja (Ezeogidi, 2020; Ogili & Israel, 2019c). However, the majority of Nigerian states are Hausa-Fulani states, which equates to greater representation in government; hence, the government, law enforcement, and also by natural extension, the judiciary of Nigeria are, and have always been solely dedicated to the interests of the Hausa-Fulani Caliphate and British coalition, who only seek to control the natural resources of the Biafran Land, and therefore all its associated wealth (Ezeogidi, 2020; Uche, 2008).

The greatest of all atrocities by the Hausa-Fulani Nigerian Government was the genocidal campaign set against Biafrans' during the Biafran War (1967-1970) (Heerten & Moses, 2014; Julius-Adeoye, 2017; Omaka, 2013). The Biafran War resulted in the death of millions of Biafrans through the organised starvation and massacre of the Biafran people, which is a known account of genocide that still remains an unrecognised crime against humanity (Heerten & Moses, 2014; Jell-Bahlsen, 2016; Julius-Adeoye, 2017; Omaka, 2013). The Biafran War was the British and Hausa-Fulani response to the Eastern and Mid-West regions of Nigeria asserting their right to self-determination (Heerten & Moses, 2014; Ogili & Israel, 2019d; Uche, 2008). Hence, the Biafran War was a large scale genocidal war effort that was incited for nothing more than the control of the crude oil reserves of Eastern and Mid-West Nigeria, which have, and still provide excessive and uncountable wealth (Heerten & Moses, 2014; Ogili & Israel, 2019d; Uche, 2008)

THE ORIGIN OF THE IGBO PEOPLE

The origin of the Igbo people and how they came to inhabit Eastern Nigeria has always been shrouded in mystery, nonetheless it is, was, and has always been associated with ancient Israel (Afigbo, 1983; Afsai, 2016; Ogili & Israel, 2019a; Ucheagbo, 2018). According to Afigbo (1983), *“There are two main variants of this traditions—the one identifying the Igbo with one of the lost ten “tribes” of Israel, the other tracing them to ancient Egypt. The claim to Hebrew origin is the one of which we have the earliest mention, and that in the autobiography of Olaudah Equiano, an Igbo ex-slave who wrote in 1789”*. The known traditional history of the Igbo people is based on the combination of the quotation by Afigbo (1983) and Biblical records. The known traditional story of Igbo ancestry is connected to Areli, Arodi and Eri, the sons of Gad, whose names are recorded in Genesis 46:16: *“¹⁶The sons of Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli.”* According to traditional history, the three sons of Gad were said to have left Egypt prior to the first Exodus of God’s people (Book of Exodus), based on the God-given prophetic knowledge of the hardships that Israel (God’s people) were to face at the hand of Pharaoh and the Egyptian people (Ogili & Israel, 2019b). As a result, Areli, Arodi and Eri departed from Egypt and were led to settle in the uninhabited Biafra land, an event that was memorialised with a religious landmark, an altar of the House of Gad (Obu-Gad) that was established in Honor of the Most High God (Ogili & Israel, 2019b). The altar set up by Areli, Arodi and Eri apparently still remains in existence to this day in Aguleri, Anambra state (Ogili & Israel, 2019b).

Hence, the Igbo traditional history demonstrates strong ties to the tribe of Gad, but there is no known or accessible Biblical evidence of the children of Gad departing from Egypt prior to the First Exodus (Book of Exodus) and settling in another land. However, there is Biblical evidence which supports that the tribe of Gad, who are one of the Lost Tribes of Israel, being displaced from their land and being settled in another land that is not present-day Israel. Hence, the Lost Tribes of Israel must be accounted for, and where there are clear connections heritage cannot be denied, but rather they give credence to a long-held belief that has been claimed by the Igbo people for centuries; who have also been known as the Eboe, Eboan, Ebo, Hackbu, Heebo, and Hiburu, of which Heebo and Hiburu are noted to be an ancient derivation of the word Hebrew (Afsai, 2016; Akannam, 2012; Njoku & Falola, 2016).

THE BIBLICAL RECORD OF THE LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL

The displacement of the Ten Tribes of Israel, who later became the Lost Tribes of Israel, occurred at the time when Israel was divided into two Kingdoms: the Northern Kingdom was called Israel (Samaria) and the Southern Kingdom was called Judah. The Book of 2 Kings chronicles the removal of the Ten Tribes of Israel from their land, Samaria. In short, the Ten Tribes of Israel were taken into captivity by the King of Assyria, Salmanaser (Shalmaneser), under the Kingship of King Osea (Hoshea) of Israel. The reason for the defeat of the Kingdom of Israel by Assyria was attributed to the transgression of Mosaic Law (Covenant) that was established between God and His people. The consequence of breaking the Covenant of the Lord was defeat and displacement from the land of Israel, and forced relocation to a foreign land, as outlined in Deuteronomy 28: 25, 30-33:

- **Deuteronomy 28: 25** - ²⁵ *Yahweh will cause you to be struck before your enemies. You will go out one way against them, and will flee seven ways before them. You will be tossed back and forth among all the kingdoms of the earth.*
- **Deuteronomy 28: 30-33** - ³⁰ *You will betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her. You will build a house, and you won't dwell in it. You will plant a vineyard, and not use its fruit. ³¹ Your ox will be slain before your eyes, and you will not eat any of it. Your donkey will be violently taken away from before your face, and will not be restored to you. Your sheep will be given to your enemies, and you will have no one to save you. ³² Your sons and your daughters will be given to another people. Your eyes will look, and fail with longing for them all day long. There will be no power in your hand. ³³ A nation which you don't know will eat the fruit of your ground and all of your work. You will only be oppressed and crushed always,*
 - **NOTE:** The Mosaic curses for disobedience that are outlined in Deuteronomy 28 are consistent with the history of the Igbo and Biafran people, and include slavery (forced removal from home country/land of heritage), British colonization, and the indirect rule of Biafrans by the Hausa-Fulani, who's reign of militant jihadist terror still continues to this day because the Hausa-Fulani caliphate refuses to acknowledge Biafra's right to self-determination, which has caused (forced) millions of Igbo people (and Biafrans) to relocate to other countries in the hope of a more stable life, while those who have remained are subject to and effected by the persecutory and oppressive acts of the Nigerian Government (Akamolafe, 2014; Ezeogidi, 2020; Njoku & Falola, 2016; Ubah, 1991; Vanguard, 2020).

- **2 Kings 18:9-12** - ⁹ In the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. ¹⁰ At the end of three years they took it. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. ¹¹ The king of Assyria carried Israel away to Assyria, and put them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, ¹² because they didn't obey Yahweh their God's voice, but transgressed his covenant, even all that Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded, and would not hear it or do it.
- **2 Kings 17:1-14** - ¹ In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea the son of Elah began to reign in Samaria over Israel for nine years. ² He did that which was evil in Yahweh's sight, yet not as the kings of Israel who were before him. ³ Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him, and Hoshea became his servant, and brought him tribute. ⁴ The king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year. Therefore, the king of Assyria seized him, and bound him in prison. ⁵ Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. ⁶ In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. ⁷ It was so because the children of Israel had sinned against Yahweh their God, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, ⁸ and walked in the statutes of the nations whom Yahweh cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they made. ⁹ The children of Israel secretly did things that were not right against Yahweh their God; and they built high places for themselves in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city; ¹⁰ and they set up for themselves pillars and Asherah poles on every high hill, and under every green tree; ¹¹ and there they burned incense in all the high places, as the nations whom Yahweh carried away before them did; and they did wicked things to provoke Yahweh to anger; ¹² and they served idols, of which Yahweh had said to them, "You shall not do this thing." ¹³ Yet Yahweh testified to Israel, and to Judah, by every prophet, and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets." ¹⁴ Notwithstanding, they

would not listen, but hardened their neck, like the neck of their fathers, who didn't believe in Yahweh their God.

- **NOTE:** The four Gospels of the Apostles; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, make it clear that even up to the time of Jesus, the Northern Kingdom of Israel (Samaria), was occupied by another people, the Samaritans, which supports the fact that the Lost Tribes were never recorded to have returned to Israel. In fact, the Samaritans were recounted as the inhabitants of Israel at the first advent of Christ, but were not identified as His people:
- **2 Kings 17:24 - 24** *The king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, from Cuthah, from Avva, and from Hamath and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they possessed Samaria, and lived in its cities.*
- **John 4:9 - 9** *The Samaritan woman therefore said to him, "How is it that you, being a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)*

The only Biblical evidence that tracks the movement of the Lost Tribes of Israel after they were permanently displaced from Israel to Assyria, was their relocation to another land, Arzareth, by the Lord, The Most High God. It should also be mentioned that the displacement and relocation of the Lost Tribes of Israel, an event that occurred before the first coming of Christ; explains why Jesus Christ was not mentioned in Igbo (or Biafran) traditional history i.e. the connection to ancient Israel was lost, which resulted in Jesus Christ being introduced by foreign European nations, where the Gospels of Christ had already been spread for centuries. The relocation of the Lost Tribes of Israel is chronicled in the apocryphal book of 2 Esdras chapter 13. Esdras is another name for Ezra, the well-known Scribe or teacher of the Law from the self-titled Bible chapter.

- **2 Esdras 13:39-46 -** ³⁹*And whereas you saw that he gathered to himself another multitude that was peaceful,* ⁴⁰*these are the ten tribes which were led away out of their own land in the time of Osea the king, whom Salmananser the king of the Assyrians led away captive, and he carried them beyond the River, and they were taken into another land.* ⁴¹*But they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go out into a further country, where mankind never lived,* ⁴²*that they might there keep their statutes, which they had not kept in their own land.* ⁴³*And they entered by the narrow passages of the river Euphrates.* ⁴⁴*For the Most High then did signs*

for them, and stayed the springs of the River, till they had passed over. ⁴⁵ For through that country there was a great way to go, namely, of a year and a half: and the same region is called Arzaeth. ⁴⁶ Then they lived there until the latter time. Now when they begin to come again,

Hence, there is Biblical evidence that supports the existence of a large settlement of The Lost Tribes of Israel, who were settled and established in another Holy Land by the Lord, the Most High God. It is of note that there is the assumption that a significant number of people from the Tribes of Judah and Levi lived among the Ten Tribes who settled in Biafra, after all it is noted in the Bible that the Levites had no allotted land, but were to live amongst all the Tribes in service to the Lord:

- **Genesis 49:5-7** - *“Simeon and Levi are brothers. Their swords are weapons of violence.⁶ My soul, don’t come into their council. My glory, don’t be united to their assembly; for in their anger they killed men. In their self-will they hamstrung cattle. ⁷ Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.*
- **Joshua 13:33** - *³³ But Moses gave no inheritance to the tribe of Levi. Yahweh, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, as he spoke to them.*
- **Numbers 35:78** - *⁷ All the cities which you shall give to the Levites shall be forty-eight cities together with their pasture lands. ⁸ Concerning the cities which you shall give of the possession of the children of Israel, from the many you shall take many, and from the few you shall take few. Everyone according to his inheritance which he inherits shall give some of his cities to the Levites.”*

As for the Tribe of Judah, it is likely that some (a smaller remnant) lived amongst the Ten Tribes in the Kingdom of Israel, which suggests a confluence of all the Tribes of Israel before migration to, and settlement in Biafra. Hence, the term “Ten Tribes” is likely used because they formed the large majority of the population, and it indicates the location they were removed from. This is comparable to the Book of Ezra, which summarises the exile and return of the Southern Kingdom of Judah to the Holy land of Israel, where the Tribes of Judah, Levi and Benjamin are specifically mentioned, but with sparse mentions of “all of Israel” i.e. a remnant of the Ten Tribes. This suggests that a large majority of Judeans, Levites and Benjaminites returned to the land of Israel, along with a smaller minority of the Ten Tribes that lived among them in the Kingdom of Judah,

who were forcibly displaced from their land by Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon (2 Kings 24, 25). Conclusively, the other land mentioned in 2 Esdras Chapter 13 is believed to be Biafra, or the Eastern region of present-day Nigeria, that was settled by the Ten Tribes of Israel, a significant population of Levites, and a smaller remnant from the Tribe of Judah. Overall, this indicates a division or separate branching of the populations of God's people.

THE CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC LINKS BETWEEN THE IGBO PEOPLE AND HEBRAISM

There are numerous cultural similarities between Judaism and Igbo customs, tradition, and culture (Afsai, 2016; Ogili & Israel, 2019c). These Igbo cultural practices have existed for generations without any known interactions between the Igbo and Israeli Jews, who have existed as totally separate and isolated populations (Afsai, 2016; Ogili & Israel, 2019c). For the Igbo people, the elements of Judaism (Mosaic Law) are not performed as part of an organised Jewish religion, but as part of the custom, tradition and culture of daily life, and across other forms of worship/religion (Afsai, 2016; Ogili & Israel, 2019c). Some examples of the overlapping practices of Igbo customs and Judaism include: circumcision of male children 8 days after birth; abstinence from unclean foods; a strongly established and respected council of elders; Mosaic style oblation throughout religious codes i.e. prayer, sacrifices, burnt offerings, washings, and purifications; the celebration of new moons; and mothers paying customary visits to their daughters after childbirth (Ọmugwo) (Afsai, 2016; Ogili & Israel, 2019c).

There are also known linguistic connections between the Igbo language and Hebrew language (Afsai, 2016; Ogili & Israel, 2019c). Although, the total number of linguistic similarities between the Igbo language and Hebrew language are not known, there are records of words that are the same or similar, and actually have the same meaning (Afsai, 2016; Ogili & Israel, 2019c). Linguistic overlap is a strong indication of a connection between two groups of people, in this case, it demonstrates a connection between the Igbo people and ancient Israel (Afsai, 2016; Ogili & Israel, 2019c). There is a table on the next page containing a small collection of words in the Igbo and Hebrew languages that are spelt the same (or similarly) and also hold the same meaning, (Afsai, 2016; Ogili & Israel, 2019c).

Igbo Language	Hebrew Language	English Meaning
Ada	Adah	First daughter
Ara	Ara	Madness
Zaam	Zaam	Answer Me
Gaba	Geba	Move On
Sobe	Sobe	Follow
Eze	Ezer	King
Ahia	Ahi	Market
Agu	Agur	Lion
Amara	Amariah	Grace
Anya	Ayya	Eye
Aziza	Aziza	Broom
Chima	Chema	God Knows
Uba	Ubal	Wealth
Eri	Eri	My Guardian (Law/Grace)
Arodi	Arodi	Bronze (Man power)
Areli	Ariel	Hero; Messenger or Lion of God
Yako/Yaakob	Ya'akov	Jacob

Last, but not least, the Igbo people have an ancient system of writing called Nsibidi or Nsibiri, which can be equated to Egyptian hieroglyphics, which was used as a form of communication between Biafran peoples, as well as for the decoration of walls, building features, clothing, weaponry, pottery, beads, ivory, precious metal artworks and jewelry (including bronze and copper) and woodcarvings (Dayrell, 1910, 1911; Ogili & Israel, 2019e; Shaw, 1975; Slogar, 2007; Willet, 1983). The Star of David, also known as the Seal of Solomon, was identified as part of the Nsibidi writing system, which further substantiates the body of research that ties the Igbo people to ancient Israel (Acholonu & Davis, 2014; Ogili & Israel, 2019e). An image containing a set of Nsibidi symbols is provided on the next page.

	NKARA, NSIBIDI	SUMERIAN	NORTH-AFRICAN	INDUS	Igbo Ukwu	DANUBIAN	Sumerian name or Symbol Name
1							GA/N/NUN
2	+	+		+	+	+	
3	+	+		+	+	+	GA/L/LUGAL
4	+	+		+	+	+	
5	+	+		+	+	+	KHA/HA/QA
6	+	+		+	+	+	PIR
7	+	+		+	+	+	
8	+	+		+	+	+	
9	+	+		+	+	+	GIN
10	+	+		+	+	+	GU/GUT
11	+	+		+	+	+	SHU
12	+	+		+	+	+	
13	+	+		+	+	+	
14	+	+		+	+	+	ESH/ICHI
15	+	+		+	+	+	IMN/ASH
16	+	+		+	+	+	UDU
17	+	+		+	+	+	Star of David
18	+	+		+	+	+	ARA/BU
19	+	+		+	+	+	DU/DUN
20	+	+		+	+	+	
21	+	+		+	+	+	
22	+	+		+	+	+	PAR/BU/puri
23	+	+		+	+	+	
24	+	+		+	+	+	AR
25	+	+		+	+	+	Kham/uman
26	+	+		+	+	+	Caduceus
27	+	+		+	+	+	ZAG
28	+	+		+	+	+	NUN

Plate 68c: Comparing Sumerian with other ancient scripts: Igbo Ukwu, Nsibidi/Nkara, Danubian, Indus, North African. Courtesy Waddell.

Image 1: Examples of Nsibidi, the ancient writing system of the Igbo people, which features the Star of David (Acholonu & Davis, 2014). It is of note that Igbo-Ukwu is Nsibidi that is used in artwork created by Igbo people from Anambra state (Shaw, 1975; Willet, 1983)

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The Nsibidi of the Igbo (and Biafrans) was discouraged and dismantled by the British through colonization practices, that included the destruction and theft or “looting” of Biafran historical artefacts, which are one of the strongest links to a peoples culture, identity and history, (Peek, 2020). A lack of abundant archeological or physical evidence to support the Igbo claim of descentance from ancient Israel is rectified by the early Nigerian flags (1914 to 1959) and Nigerian coins, which featured the Star of David (CBN, 2020; Smith, 1975; Warwick, n.d.). According to Smith (2018), it was common practice among the British to use the cultural representations of a major ethnic group on the flags of colonized nations, as a homage to their cultural identity. Hence, it stands that the use of the Star of David was a homage to one of the major ethnic groups of Nigeria, the Igbo, and therefore, a symbol that was unique to them was used in national representations i.e. the flag. This same concept is extended to currency, as seen below, the 1959 Nigerian half penny coin features the Star of David; and for this very same reason it also features Arabic letters, as Arabic is the major language of the Hausa-Fulani (CBN, 2020; Warwick, n.d.). The change of the Nigerian flag in 1960 to the simple green-white-green design, coincided with Nigerian independence (Smith, 2018). Apparently, simple flag designs are common among African countries, so that there is no favour given to the representation of one religious or ethnic group over another (Smith, 2018). Hence, the eventual removal of the Star of David from the Nigerian flag and currency.



Image 2: Early Nigerian Flag that features the Star of David (Smith, 1975).



Image 3: Nigerian one-half penny (1959) featuring the Star of David and Arabic writing (Warwick, n.d.).

A CORE BIBLICAL CONCEPT THAT ALIGNS WITH THE IGBO CULTURE

The Igbo phrase, “A’furum gi n’anya”, pronounced “Ah-foo-rum ghee n-eye-yah”, means “I love you”. In the Igbo concept of love: love is not initially or primarily based on emotions, but through the behaviour that defines love, which facilitates the development of the emotional aspect of love and its reciprocation (Kanu, 2019). Therefore, love can be characterised by a set of behaviours and/or actions which can be summarised as being respectful, considerate, and polite to other people, and the absence of intentionally doing harm or wrong to another. This same Biblical concept of love is expressed in 1 Corinthians 13 by Apostle Paul, who originated from ancient Israel (reference Philipians 3:5):

- **1 Corinthians 13: 4-7-** ⁴Love is patient and is kind. Love doesn’t envy. Love doesn’t brag, is not proud, ⁵ doesn’t behave itself inappropriately, doesn’t seek its own way, is not provoked, takes no account of evil; ⁶ doesn’t rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.

Throughout the Bible, the concept of love is elaborated upon to describe it more fully, even though it is a remarkably simple concept, which is that no one wants to be treated badly, so do not treat other people badly (Kanu, 2019). Alternatively, everyone wants to be treated well, so it is good to treat other people well (Kanu, 2019). Therefore, to have love means to treat others with the behaviours and/or actions that characterise love (Kanu, 2019). Hence, as in the Igbo culture, to have love within yourself is to show love to others, as *“to love the other is to love oneself, to help the other is to help oneself and to respect the other is to respect oneself. Put the other way round, to hate the other is to hate oneself, to refuse help to the other is to refuse help to oneself and to disrespect the other is to disrespect oneself.”* (Kanu, 2019). Conclusively, love is not simply expressing the words “I love you”, but demonstrating that you have love through your behaviour and actions towards other people, which is God’s definition of true love. This is why the Bible repeats that Christians are to do His Word, and the most important part of His Word is to love God and others:

- **Mark 12:29-31**— ²⁹ Jesus answered, “The greatest is, ‘Hear, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one: ³⁰ you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. ³¹ The second is like this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”
- **James 2:8**— ⁸ However, if you fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself, ”you do well.

- *James 1:22—²² But be doers of the word, and not only hearers, deluding your own selves.*
- *1 John 3:18—¹⁸ My little children, let's not love in word only, or with the tongue only, but in deed and truth.*

THE PRECEDENT CASE OF THE ETHIOPIAN JEWS

The Ethiopian Jews provides an example of another African people and cultural group who have ties to ancient Israel (Spector, 2005a, 2005b). The Ethiopian Jews connection to ancient Israel is based on descendance through King Solomon, the son of the infamous, King David, and the maintenance of Mosaic religious practice (Spector, 2005a, 2005b). Hence, the Igbo people have a similar claim to the Ethiopian Jews, which is based on patriarchal descendance, and traditional history substantiated by evidence of Mosaic religious practice (Spector, 2005a, 2005b). However, the major difference between the Igbo people and Ethiopian Jews, is that the Ethiopian Jews maintained very strong religious ties to the practice of Mosaic Law as a form of organised worship, but the Igbo people did not. The reason accounted to this phenomena is cultural diversity, as the region that encompasses Biafra includes numerous ethnic groups (Ogili & Israel, 2019e). Notably, the Igbo people and their neighbors co-existed in relative peace, and this peace would have naturally led to intermarriage, and with intermarriage the introduction of foreign gods and worship practices. This would have led to the dilution of Mosaic religious practice, and a simultaneous increase in the practice of introduced religions over time. The concept of intermarriage leading to the acceptance of foreign gods and worship practices is a phenomenon that is recorded in the Bible:

- *Deuteronomy 7:1-4 - When Yahweh your God brings you into the land where you go to possess it, and casts out many nations before you—the Hittite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite—seven nations greater and mightier than you; ²and when Yahweh your God delivers them up before you, and you strike them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them, nor show mercy to them. ³You shall not make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to his son, nor shall you take his daughter for your son. ⁴For that would turn away your sons from following me, that they may serve other gods. So Yahweh's anger would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly.*

- *1 Kings 11:4 - When Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with Yahweh his God, as the heart of David his father was.*

Overall, this suggests that many Biafran's may have a share in the claim of descent from The Lost Tribes of Israel, however, this article only provides the knowledge and evidence which supports that the Igbo people are descendants of The Ancient House of Israel through direct patriarchal Abrahamic heritage.

THE RACIAL DIFFERENCE OBSERVED BETWEEN THE IGBO PEOPLE AND ISRAELI JEWS

The cultural and linguistic evidence that connects the Igbo to ancient Israel is undeniable, as the Igbo *"...way of life, points to nowhere in the universe except the ancient House of Israel."* (Elder Pinchas Ogbukaa of Gihon Hebrews' Synagogue, Afsai, 2016). However, the claim of Igbo descent from the Ancient House of Israel has long-been rebuffed or ignored on the basis of race, as noted by Olaudah Equiano, a freed Igbo slave who wrote his life memoirs in 1789 *"...for we had our circumcision (a rule I believe peculiar to that people): we had also our sacrifices and burnt offerings, our washings and purifications, on the same occasions as they had. As to the difference of colour between the Eboan [Ibo or Igbo] Africans and the modern Jews, I shall not presume to account for it."* (Afsai, 2016). However, the racial difference between the Igbo people and Israeli Jews can be accounted for quite simply: the aforementioned isolation of the two different populations and intermarriage. But to be clear, the ancestors of the Igbo people were/are racially classified as African. To further emphasise the legitimacy of this point: the land of Israel is situated in a location that is close to Europe and the Middle East, which suggests that any intermarriage that may have occurred in the past was between Israeli Jews and the people of the neighboring nations. Hence, the substantially European/Middle Eastern appearance of Israeli Jews can be attributed to this factor, which is also supported by genetic evidence (Das, Wexler, Pirooznia, & Elhaik, 2017). This point is further supported by a study conducted by Moorjani et al. (2011), which elucidated a common ancestral population between West African ethnic groups and Jewish ethnicities such as the Ashkenazi, Sephardi and Mizrahi. The study revealed 3-5% African ancestry among the Jewish ethnicities, which is associated with generational admixture over the course of approximately 1600-3400 years (Moorjani et al., 2011). Hence, there is genetic evidence that supports the likely, but ancient common ancestry between the Igbo people and Israeli Jews, which also verifies why there is an observed racial difference between the two populations.

ARTICLE PINPOINT

There is a long history and substantial body of evidence that connects the Igbo people (and Biafrans) to the Ancient House of Israel. More so, there are centuries of stories that have not been forgotten, but instead have been passed down from generation to generation through the culture and traditions of the Igbo people. In testament to this very fact, the Bible prophesies the return of The Ten Tribes of Israel to their native land, and so, it is without a doubt that God will restore the nation of Biafra. Therefore, Igbo and Christian Biafrans, must always remember the Lord, the Most High God and commit to His ways by ceasing to do what is evil and doing what is good, so that God will sooner establish a future and a hope for the lost one's of His heritage. Remember that: (1) the Lord once delivered His people from the land of Egypt in mass Exodus; (2) He relocated His people to the Biafra Land; (3) Biblical prophecy states that God will return His people to their land in an Exodus-like manner before the time of His second coming (2 Esdras 6:46-48); and (4) God promised to restore the fortunes of His people. These prophetic events have long been set in motion through the 'Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra' (MASSOB), and the 'Indigenous People of Biafra' (IPOB) led by Ralph Uwazuruike and Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, who have thrust the Biafran plight into the forefront of international audiences, and as a result, the establishment of Biafra draws nearer to actualization (Julius-Adeoye, 2017; Omaka, 2013). Coincidentally, the campaign for the restoration of the Biafran nation is reaching its zenith, with countless Biafrans calling for the right to self-determination in order to establish a proper nation for those who live in Biafra, and for those who left their homeland to seek a more stable life for themselves and their families. Hence, the actualization of the Biafran nation is the hope of many multi-generational Biafran expats who desire to return home, in order to help establish a great city and nation free from politico-ethnic and religious oppression and persecution, which continues to this day and includes countless acts of government sanctioned violence against unarmed Biafran men, woman and children (Ogili & Israel, 2019d; Vanguard, 2020).

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