

Does This Zephaniah 3 Sign Prove We Are in the End Times?

“For then I will restore to the peoples a pure speech that all of them may call on the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one accord. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshippers, the daughter of My dispersed ones, will bring My offering” (Zeph. 3:10)/

Zephaniah chapter 3 describes the return of Jesus Christ (*Yeshua HaMashiach*) to rule and reign. In this chapter, we learn about Christ defeating the armies gathered at Armageddon (verse 8). However, we also learn about a special group of people coming back to the land of Israel from beyond the rivers of Ethiopia.

During the destruction of Samaria in the 720s B.C. and the conquering of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., the Israelite people became scattered. Some Israelites went into captivity to the east. Some fled northward into Russia and then into Europe. Some went westward to the coasts of North Africa and even into Ireland. Another group went south into Africa.

In this week's segment, we want to focus on this southern migration and how God is calling those Israelites back to the Promised Land. Papyri written in Aramaic have been found on Elephantine Island, near the city called Aswan in southern Egypt. From the archeological digs and papyri, we learn that the Jewish people had established a temple complex mirroring the one in Jerusalem. We know for certain the temple goes back as far as 523 B.C., which was over 60 years after the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem.

These Israelites kept traveling south, some settling in Ethiopia. Others traveled all the way to South Africa. Today,

there are a group of people in Ethiopia called the Falashas. When they were first discovered, they were known simply as “beta Israel” or the house of Israel. Some of their customs are identical to those of Israelites who traveled in other directions. In Zimbabwe and South Africa today dwells a tribe called the Lemba, who are also remnants of Israelites who traveled south. Their priestly class—Bubas—have the same genetic traits as the priests in Israel.

As time has passed, the identity of these peoples has become more widespread. Their return to the Promised Land is a definite sign that we live in the last days. Although the fullness of this verse comes to pass at Christ’s public return, it is starting to happen now.

At certain times in the last 30 years, Israel allowed Ethiopian Jews to return back to Israel. The program was abruptly stopped in 2013. In 2015, Israel approved a program to bring the remaining 9,000 Falashas in Ethiopia back to the land. In January 2016, Israel announced it was going to re-start the “law of return” (*Aliyah* in Hebrew) program for those who live in Ethiopia who can prove their Jewish ancestry. Sixty-three Ethiopian Israelites arrived in Israel just last October. The goal is to have the remaining Falasha people brought to Israel by 2020. There are currently over 135,000 Ethiopian Israelites living in Israel.

We could soon see a greater number of Jewish people from Southern Africa, including Madagascar and South Africa, begin to return to Israel. These migrations from the southern part of Africa back to the land of Israel are vivid reminders of Zephaniah 3:9-10. Furthermore, they remind us that we are at the very door of seeing our Messiah return. {eo}

Kelly McDonald Jr. *is an ordained evangelist at Hungry Hearts Ministries in Jackson, Tennessee. He has written over 40 books and booklets on pursuing Christ, Hebrew roots and end-times prophecy. He is currently president of the Bible Sabbath*

Association (BSA). You can follow him at: .