

History: Return of the Bnei Menashe

A “lost tribe” has come home to Israel and the return could be part of biblical prophecy.

CBN News was at Ben Gurion Airport when more than 50 members of the Bnei Menashe tribe made history.

The group was just the first of a long-awaited migration. Nearly 2,000 tribe members live in Israel, but five years ago the government stopped their return.

“I feel like I’m home,” one tribe member said.

Another told CBN New they were, “excited, overwhelmed. And unexplainably, you know, feeling in my heart. I feel like crying. I’m emotional, total loss for words.”

A recent decision now permits all the Bnei Menashe, about 7,000, to return.

“The ten tribes may have been lost to us for many centuries, but they were never lost in terms of their identity,” Michael Freund, with Shavai Israel, told CBN News.

Freund worked for years to help bring about this moment. He said he believes the Bnei Menashe return fulfills of biblical prophecy.

“The prophet Isaiah says ‘al tera qui ka ani,’ which means ‘fear not for I am with you, God says,” Freund said. “‘Me israch avi zerecha,’” which translates ‘from the east I will bring your descendants.’”

“These are the descendants of Israel and they are coming back from the east,” he said. “It is as if the headline of today was written by Isaiah the prophet 25 or 2,600 years ago. It’s

a phenomenal thing.”

The Assyrian Empire exiled the tribe of Manassah almost 3,000 years ago. Although they settled in northeast India, tribe members kept their Jewish roots for more than 2,000 years.

Several Christian organizations helped bring them home.

“In fact, the Hebrew prophets said when God gathered His Jewish people back from all the ends of the earth in the last days that there would be Gentiles helping and bringing them back,” David Parsons, with the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, told CBN News.

“He said, ‘I’ll beckon to the Gentiles.’ And so we have this invitation from God Himself to be involved in this Aliya,” he said.

Another 300 tribe members are scheduled to arrive in January, with thousands more yet to come.

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