

Chapter 5 : Gomer (Strong's # 1586 – 'completion' : 'perfection')

The Celtic Peoples of Ancient Gaul

Many of the Japhetic Nations are largely missing from the biblical record, while others are so prevalent as to remove all doubt of their Indo-European, Caucasian character. Unfortunately, the nation descended from the Patriarch Gomer, son of Japheth, is one of the former. In such circumstances it becomes necessary to consult sources outside of the Biblical text to confirm the national identity of Gomer.

But first, let the scriptural text be examined: **EZEKIAL 38:6** "Gomer and all its troops, Beth-Togarmah from the remotest parts of the north with all its troops and many peoples are with you." (emphasis mine).

This verse, the single prophetic reference to Gomer outside of the genealogical lists of the descendants of Japheth, is all the Scriptures mention of Gomer. The second emphasized word, Beth-Togarmah, simply means "House of Togarmah" in Hebrew, alluding to the son of Gomer, Togarmah, who also is mentioned in the Table of Nations (Genesis 10). This connection confirms that the Gomer mentioned is indeed the Patriarch son of Noah.

Yet, even in this brief reference we find that these two Nations are 'northern' nations, and, even more identifyingly, from "the remotest parts of the north". We will attempt to prove that amongst the ancient Indo-European peoples, this could refer to none other than the Celts.

The ancient Jewish historian, Josephus, in his monumental Antiquities of the Jews (1:6:1), identifies the nation of Gomer with the Galatians of Asia Minor of the 1st century A.D. 'Galatia', roughly translated means 'land of the Gauls'. Gaul was the former name of the nation known today as France (2017). At the time of Josephus, and from time immemorial before him, it was originally inhabited by a people known as the Celts. The history, both recorded and archaeological, of the Celtic presence in Gaul is indisputable.

The Celtic peoples of Asia Minor (modern day Turkey) were relative newcomers to the region. The Galatians were an offshoot of the larger Celtic world centered in Gaul and the unique circumstances of their presence in the heart of Asia Minor bears some explanation.

The Patriarchal descendants of Ham, and the nations they founded, did not cease from the wicked transgressions of their forefather upon their dispersal from Babylon. It was shown earlier how, when dividing the earth, Noah caused his children to swear on oath, cursing him who "endeavoured to seize a portion which had not been allotted to him", which Shem, Ham and Japheth all ratified (Jubilees 9:12).

Most of the Hamitic nations proceeded to their African homelands. The Hamitic nations of Canaan, however, did not. Canaan (Strong's #3667 'humiliated') and the eleven nations descended from him (see Genesis 10) seized the semitic lands of the fertile crescent. They later changed their name from 'Canaan' to 'Phoenicia'. Scripture speaks extensively of God's desire to drive out these nations – The Sidonians, Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, Arvadites, Zemarites and Hamathites and restore the land to its rightful ownership of the Semitic nation of Israel. The Canaanites were transgressors and occupiers, and, as such, God commanded Israel to drive them out completely and purge them from the land. (Numbers 33:50-56; Joshua 3:10; et al)

(Most of the Phoenician nations, especially the Sidonians, were eventually repatriated back to Africa through Phoenician colonies around N. Africa. The city of Carthage itself, which would later form the core of the mighty Carthaginian Empire that battled Rome, was originally a Phoenician colony founded by a Sidonian Princess).

The wicked line of Ham, however, even after the post-diluvian transgressions and the dispersion from Babylon, did not limit their aggressions to invading Semitic lands. They also penetrated into Japhetic territory, again attempting to subdue and enslave the sons of Japheth.

The Hittite Empire, lasting from around 1850 B.C. – 1200 B.C. was centered in the Japhetic lands of Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). Their capital was Hattusha, near the modern day capital of Ankara in Turkey. They were a Hamitic (black) nation descended from the Biblical 'Heth', son of Canaan, son of Ham (Gen 10), "Heth" (Strong's #2845) means 'terror' or 'prostrate' in Hebrew as they were fearsome fighters whom even King David would sometimes utilize as mercenary soldiers (cf 2 Samuel 11:3-24).

The Hittites were a wicked people constantly at war with their neighbours around them and peoples as far away as Egypt. God later promised to drive them out with a pestilence (Exodus 23:28). They were so cursed and hateful to God that he absolutely forbade the Holy nation of Israel to mix with them in intermarriage and, later on, would order the wholesale genocidal destruction of them. (Deut 7:16; 20:17). Around 1200 B.C., after having been exhausted through constant warfare, the Hittite Empire was overthrown and came to an end.

The territory of Asia Minor then became a point of contention between various warring empires, the Assyrians, the Greeks, and the Medio-Persians among them. In 480 B.C. Xerxes, king of the Medio-Persian Empire, subdued the region on his way to enslave the Hellenic (Javan) nations of Greece and incorporate them in to his expanding empire. After sustaining heavy losses exterminating a 300 man Spartan vanguard at the Battle of Thermopylae in 480 B.C., Xerxes was soundly defeated at the battle of Platea in 479 B.C. by Greek infantry and in the battle of Salamis in a naval battle off the coast of Athens (see Herodotus, The Histories).

Asia Minor then became embroiled in an empirical tug-of-war as the Greeks and the Persians vied with each other for dominance. Around the later half of the 4th century B.C., the Greek King - Alexander the Great - concluded the contest by conquering the entire Middle East and subsequently destroying the Persian Empire (331 B.C.) (see Xenophon, Hellenika, Arrian, Alexander) (Daniel 8:3-8 8:20-21).

The Hellenic Empire that Alexander founded was short lived. After his death at age 32, his empire fractured and was divided amongst four of his generals (Ptolemy, Antipater, Antigonus and Seleucios), who, in turn, began to quarrel and war amongst themselves. The Celts had been known to the Greeks for some time, indeed, since antiquity, and were occasionally involved in Hellenic affairs. Thucydides, the 4th century B.C. historian, in his Peloponnesian Wars mentions a contingent of warriors known as 'Celts' being sent to Sicily to aid the Spartan forces against Athens. The 1st century B.C. historian Arrian, in Alexander recounts that while Alexander was campaigning in Bulgaria, around 335 B.C., a delegation of Celts was received by Alexander who expressed an absolute fearlessness of his forces. In fact, when questioned by Alexander what they thought of him and his army, the delegates claimed to be "more afraid of the sky falling upon them" than they were of Alexander the Great.

A century after the death of Alexander and the fracturing of the Hellenic Empire, 3 of these Celtic tribes from central Gaul would descend upon Macedonia and on in to Greece, sacking the Greeks most sacred shrine at Delphi before proceeding on in to Asia Minor.

One tribe of these "Galatae" (or Gauls) known as the 'Teutosages' remained around Delphi until they were defeated and dislodged by the Greeks, but they, surviving, later regrouped and joined the other two Celtic tribes in northern Phrygia of Asia Minor (Turkey). They there entrenched themselves in to a Celtic stronghold and formed a Celtic state in the region that they named 'Galatia'. It was these "Galatians" whom Josephus had identified as the Biblical nation of Gomer. They were not native to the region and had a language and culture unlike any of the nations that surrounded them.

St Jerome was one of the four pillars of the Latin church of Christendom in Western Europe. He was eminently renowned for his learning and command of languages, and was responsible for translating the Greek and Hebrew scriptures in to the Latin of his day and forming the Latin Vulgate bible still in use in most parts of the Catholic world. He was born in the Balkan Peninsula in the Roman province of Dalmatia around the middle of the 4th century and died in Palestine around 420 A.D. He was a widely travelled man and an even more widely read scholar. And he, too, was aware of the connection between the Galatians and the wider Celtic peoples of central Europe.

In his preface to the 2nd Book of Commentaries on the New Testament epistle to the Galatians, St Jerome voices these observations. He also quotes an earlier authority – Caecilius Firmicianus (AKA ‘Lanctantius’ 240 – 320 A.D.) as saying that the Galatians were from antiquity one in body with the Gauls (located in modern day France). He quotes Lanctantius as saying that the Galatians migrated from Gaul in to the province of Galatia that they then inhabited in his very lifetime. He also, in turn, quotes the famous Roman poet Virgil in the epic ‘The Aeneid’ (Bk 8, W 660 - 661) that identifies them in this regard as well. As noted above, the very name ‘Galatians’ means, roughly translated, “Land of the Gauls” in Greek.

St Jerome, in other writings, notes the distinction of the Galatian language from the nations that surrounded them. He also remarked that their dialect had similarities to those spoken in the far northern regions of modern day Italy, that he, in his travels, would have inevitably passed through and spent time dwelling in. This region would have marked the southern perimeter of the larger Celtic world. Other writers, more recently, have remarked on the similarities and common origins of Celtic languages such as Irish Gaelic and the ancient language of the Galatians.

For these reasons, among others, the identification of the Jewish historian, chief priest and General connecting the Biblical nation of Gomer with the Galatians should be indicative of Gomers association with the wider Celtic world as a whole. Josephus’ confirmation of the Celtic identity of Gomer with Galatia is probably due to the fact that he, as a Jew, would have dwelled most of his life in the Roman provinces of Judea and Gallilee, and would inevitably have had more contacts with these Celtic peoples than with those of Gaul or the British Isles at the far flung outposts of the Roman Empire.

The biblical nation of Gomer is identical with the Celtic mother nation centered in ancient Gaul. The presence of the Celts in this region is well documented by both historians and archaeologists alike. Though the original Celtic homeland was located near the headwaters of the Rhine, Rhone and Danube rivers of Western Europe, they were a widely decentralised people that according to Hecataeus of Miletus (540 – 475 B.C.) (whose work only survives through the quotations of other writers) originally ranged over the entire regions of Europe encompassing the modern day nation-states of Portugal, Spain, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium and the British Isles.

Herodotus of Helicarnesus (480 – 425 B.C.), who was described by the Roman statesman Cicero as the ‘Father of History’, in his work The Histories, says that a Greek merchant named Colceus was trading off the African coast around 630 B.C. when he was driven off course near Tartessos, Spain. He found a tribe of the ‘Keltoi’ exploiting the silver mines of the area. Around 600 B.C., merchants from central Greece made a treaty with these same Keltoi to trade goods for their silver. The Keltoi King was named Arganthonius, which turns

out, as it happens, to be the Celtic word for silver. The ancient historians Diodorus Siculus, Polybius, Strabo, Pausanias and Caesar all recognised that "Keltoi/Celtae" was equivalent to 'Galli' and 'Galatae'. Julius Caesar explicitly makes clear in De Bellum Gallo that the 'Galli' of his time called themselves 'Celtae'.

Unfortunately for us, the Celtic peoples had no written language. Their historians and religious leaders, known as the Druids, passed on their teachings by word of mouth, through stories, songs and poetry. These Druids were forbidden to commit this knowledge to writing under pain of death. It wasn't until after the power of the Druids was broken that Celtic languages began to be recorded and preserved for posterity through writing. But in semi-ancient times, the Celtic literature that did survive, mainly from Ireland and Wales, is amongst the oldest Indo-European literature extant, after Sanskrit, Greek and Latin.

Archaeologists, however, have been able to confirm that the Celts engaged in a massive expansion across Western Europe during the first millennium B.C. By the 6th century B.C., their invasion and control of the modern regions of France, Spain, Austria and the Czech Republic was complete. On the eastern flank of the Celtic world, archaeologists came upon a distinctly different ethnic group, known to historians as the 'Teutones', or Germanic peoples.

The Teutonic peoples were originally centered east of the Elbe River until as late as the first century B.C., at which time they began to move west and encroach into Celtic lands. The difference between the Celtic and Germanic religions, languages and social structures were so distinct as to merit the acknowledgement of separate cultural identities by archaeologists and anthropologists alike. Yet the numerous parallels between the Celts and other Indo-European peoples, such as these very Germanic peoples, and also the Latins and the Aryans, can be discerned in cults, mythologies, art and racial characteristics. Even the existence of a large common vocabulary are all things that linguistics scholars reasonably have concluded must have been derived from a common ancestral source. Another similarity is that of these nations religious cults. Dion Chrysostom (1st cent. A.D.), who was highly respectful of the Celtic Druids, compared them extensively with the Aryan Brahmins of the Hindu religion.

The numerous parallels between the Celtic peoples of Western Europe and the Aryans of northern India show them to be but members of a far flung family descended from a common patriarchal source. That patriarch is the biblical Japheth. The fact that the Celts and the Aryans represent the polar peripheries of this far flung heritage accounts for the fact that they were able to preserve such characteristics largely uncontaminated from admixtures with intermediate cultures. Both survived the fracturing and splintering of the parent Japhetic culture from which they originated. The biblical account of Japheth and the dispersal from Babylon gives an adequate explanation for this.

Yet the Celtic nation of Gomer was also different and distinct from the other nations of Japheth. Early writers such as Polybius, Strabo, Ephorus and Diodorus Siculus describe their physical characteristics as being tall of stature, of fair skin, muscular build, blond or reddish haired and blue eyed. This contrasts sharply with the short statured, dark haired Japhetic Latin nations to the south of them. The Celts often wore no beards, but wild flowing moustaches and long, wild, back swept hair. Numerous artistic representatives in sculptures and around Celtic graves confirm this from both native and foreign source alike.

Strabo describes the whole nation as "... hot blooded and both great spirited and constantly ready for battle, although otherwise simple men and not uncivilised". He noted the value they placed on personal bravery, their innate tendency to excitability and recklessness, but their hospitality at home. These virtues of the Celts were acquired through the repeated individual actions of their ancestors Gomer, who developed such a disposition, and later transmitted them through his blood along to his posterity after him.

The same characteristics and attributes continued to define the nation of Gomer for hundreds of years, throughout successive generations until it was forged in to a decisive national character. The great Roman historian, Livy, in book V of his monumental 'Ab Urbe Condita', records a movement of a people he described as 'Celtic' around the fifth century B.C. pushing south in to the Italian peninsula from their Gaulic homeland to the north. He describes extensively how, due to a surplus population growth, they crossed the Alps seeking to migrate into Roman territory to acquire new lands for their tribes and families. Although resisted repeatedly by the Romans and their allies, the Celtic invaders continued arriving in droves that eventually culminated in a Roman-Celtic war. Utterly fearless and impervious to personal danger, the Celts succeeded in overcoming the organized and disciplined ranks of the Latin Romans. In 390 B.C., after having been soundly defeated, the Romans fled and abandoned the city of Rome to the Celts, who subsequently sacked it. Yet true to their nature, the Celts being noted for personal bravery and skills in battle, were also noted for their lack of skill in discipline, conquest and maintaining control of conquered territory. Despite initial successes over the Romans, once the disciplined and orderly Romans were able to recover and regroup, the Celts were easily driven back out of the region.

Another excellent source for a glimpse in to the character of the Gomerian Celts is the Priest, General, historian and subsequently dictator of the Romans, Julius Caesar. Over 300 years after the first encounter of the nation of Gomer with the Romans, Caesar, under the pretext of retributive justice, went on to invade and subjugate the land of Gaul and incorporate it into the rapidly expanding Roman Republic. While doing so, he supplemented the written historical record of these peoples with the extensively documented observations that he personally witnessed and recorded.

In The Gallic Wars, Caesar detailed the war he waged against the Celtic peoples for years that not only included Gaul, but also the modern regions that encompass the nations of Belgium, the Netherlands and the British Isles. The very manner in which he described the tribes, customs, religion and culture of the Celts show us that little had changed of the Gomeri nature through the passage of time. Also invading Germanic territories by crossing the Rhone River, Caesar remarked on Celtic-Germanic differences in religion, culture and disposition. He noted that the Celts, wherever they were encountered, were an industrious people who lived in walled cities in every place they inhabited, while the Germans, cruel in nature and even more skilled in warfare, had no cities at all, but roamed freely, almost unseen over the wooded territories they controlled, making it difficult for the Romans to engage them decisively and defeat them.

With the subjugation of Gaul and its incorporation in to the rapidly emerging empire of Rome, the Celtic character of Gomer began to become obscured. Yet the Celtic traditions continued uncontaminated for the Irish, the Welsh and the Scottish nations. The Celtic subsidiary nations of Gomer – Riphath, Togarmeh and Ashkenaz correlate to these populations, although the scriptures, outside of the genealogical tables of nations in Genesis 10 Chronicles is largely silent concerning them.

Togarmah : "Greece, Thubel and Meshech, they were thy merchants they brought to thy people slaves and vessels of brass. From the house of Togarmah they brought horses and horsemen and mules to thy market". (Ezekial 27:13-14)
"Gomer and all his bands, the house of Togarmah, the northern parts and all his strength, and many peoples with thee"
(Ezekial 38:6)

Ashkenaz: "Set ye up a standard in the land; sound with the trumpet among the nations: prepare the nations against her: call together against her the kings of Ararat, Menni and Ashkenaz : number Taphsar against her: bring the horse as the stinging locust" (Jeremiah 51:27)

The Celtic peoples show every evidence of being descended from these children of Japheth who were of antiquity held in captivity at Babylon by the tyrant Nimrod after having survived the Great Flood. Variations of the story of a Great Flood destroying much of humanity are common to most of the populations of the world. The Celts are no exception. One Celtic deluge account, preserved by the Irish, is the story of "Leabhar Gabhala". Another preserved by the Welsh, tells the story of the overflowing of 'the lake of the waves' which resulted in a flood that wiped out mankind, Dwyvan and Dwybach alone escaping by building

nefyed nav nevion – the “Welsh Ark”. This deluge was suppose to be created by the evil dragon ‘Addone’, who dwelt inside the lake.

Such commonalities of deeply held religious and historic beliefs cannot be the result of coincidence. They bespeak to the fact of a common origin and experience of humanity who once dwelled amongst each other before their division and separation. The Bible relates just such as experience in the story of Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth.

The biblical nation of Gomer identical with the ancient Celtic peoples, is simply one of the nations descended from these men (Noah & Japheth) at the regenesis of humanity. The Celtic peoples they sired were merely one component of a wider civilization that would later enter in to a community of nations known as Christendom. They would later be instrumental in carrying the light and glory of western civilization throughout the world and thereby altering global events for the better, forever.

References

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