

USB 4 PAL GAA Article 01.29.10 The Jewish Exile that Never Was!

THE JEWISH EXILE THAT NEVER WAS!

By: Gulamhusein Abba

Note: Recently I submitted a piece by Mazin Qumsiyeh, PhD to various editors and moderators for posting on their sites. In it Mazin stated, among other things, "The victimhood pathology started rather early with the myth of the exodus from Egypt (archeologists and historians have long shown that this notion of enslavement in Egypt and redemption is simply not consistent with the facts or the historical record)".

While some of the editors/moderators published the piece, several rejected it, claiming that Mazin's statement about "the myth of the exodus from Egypt" was unsubstantiated and unacceptable. That made me evaluate the claim and the following article is the outcome of that research.

Even more than the oft averred promise by God to the Jewish people, exile is central to the Jewish claim on Palestine. Because they were exiled, they have a right to return. (Incidentally, this is precisely why the Zionists keep denying, in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that the Palestinians were forced out of their homes and villages by the Zionists during the formation of an Israeli state. If they admit that they were forced out, they would have to admit Palestinians' right to return. But if the Palestinians, as the Zionists insist, left of their own accord, they have no such right!)

The Jewish "exile" claim raises two questions. First: Even if they were exiled, and had a right to return, does that mean they have a right to claim Palestine, or a part of it, as a Jewish state? Second, the more important one: Were they in fact exiled from Palestine?

Research scholars, several of them Jewish and some of them ardent Zionists, have been asserting for quite some time that the claim of exile is a myth propagated by the Zionists.

Dr.Mazin Qunsiyeh, PhD, recently wrote : "...archeologists and historians have long shown that this notion of enslavement in Egypt and redemption is simply not consistent with the facts or the historical record".

This is by no means a new or far fetched claim.

Dissertations by Dr. Shlomo Sand and Jeremiah Haber

Dr. Shlomo Sand the author of "*Invention of the Jewish People*" and an expert on European history at Tel Aviv University, has claimed in his book that "The Jews were never exiled from the Holy Land.... most of today's Jews have no historical connection to the land called Israel".

His earlier book, "When and How Was The Jewish people Invented", has been on Israel's bestseller list for 19 weeks.

Sand annotates what prompted him to write the book: "I started looking in research studies about the exile from the land - a constitutive event in Jewish history, almost like the Holocaust. But to my astonishment I discovered that it has no literature. The reason is that no one exiled the people of the country. The Romans did not exile peoples and they could not have done so even if they had wanted to. They did not have trains and trucks to deport entire populations. That kind of logistics did not exist until the 20th century. From this, in effect, the whole book was born: in the realization that Judaic society was not dispersed and was not exiled."

The original Jews living in Israel, contrary to the propounded history, were not exiled. Sand argues that most of the Jews were not exiled by the Romans. They were permitted to remain in the country.

Sand suggests that the story of the exile was a myth promoted by early Christians to recruit Jews to the new faith. They portrayed that event as a divine punishment imposed on the Jews for having rejected the Christian gospel. Sand writes that "Christians wanted later generations of Jews to believe that their ancestors had been exiled as a punishment from God."

Elaborating further, Sand continues: "The supreme paradigm of exile was needed in order to construct a long-range memory in which an imagined and exiled nation-race was posited as the direct continuation of 'the people of the Bible' that preceded it."

Jeremiah Haber, an orthodox Zionist and a professor Jewish studies, writing under the nom de plume Jeremiah (Jerry) Haber, was critical of columnists like Charles Krauthammer and Leonard Fein. In the July 29, 2007 issue of the *Magnes Zionist*, Jeremiah admonished the two columnists for accepting "the myth that the Jews were forcibly expelled from the Land of Israel, and taken into captivity by the Romans."

Jeremiah went on to emphasize: "To this day, most lay people, Jews and non-Jews, accept the myth of the exile, whereas no historian, Jew or non-Jew, takes it seriously." And to further detox the seemingly blind addiction to this myth, he presented two assertions: : "The first point to make is that well before the revolt against Rome in 66-70 c.e., there were Jewish communities outside Palestine, most notably in Babylonia and in Egypt, but elsewhere as well. References to the dispersal of the Jewish people throughout the civilized world are found in the book of Esther, Josephus, and Philo. There is no indication that these communities were small, satellite communities.

"Second, there is no contemporary evidence – i.e., 1st and 2nd centuries c.e. – that anything like an exile took place. The Romans put down two Jewish revolts in 66-70 c.e. and in 132-135 c.e. According to Josephus, the rebels were killed, and many of the Jews died of hunger. Some prisoners were sent to Rome, and others were sold in Libya. But nowhere does Josephus speak of

Jews being taken into exile. As we shall see below, there is much evidence to the contrary. There was always Jewish emigration from the Land of Israel.....”.

Similarly, in a post dated March 25, 2008 of the *Jews Sans Frontieres*, it was claimed that there are “a couple of pervasive racial myths upon which Zionism is founded. One is that of exile and the other is that of the common origin of the Jewish people...”

Yet another learned critic of the Jewish Exile is **Israel Jacob Yuval**, director of the Interdisciplinary Research Center in Jewish Studies, Backenroth Senior Lecturer in Medieval Jewish Studies. In his book, *The Myth of the Jewish Exile from the Land of Israel: A Demonstration of Irenic Scholarship*, Jacob Yuval extended his sincere empathy to the Palestinians. “On the one hand, I am a Zionist loyal to awareness of the need for the existence of the State of Israel. On the other hand, I am deeply troubled by the price paid by the Palestinians for the fulfillment of this dream. Like many others, I desperately seek a fair solution that will minimize the pain and suffering for both sides”

All this leads one to ask by whom was this myth of exile concocted and why?

As already stated, the suggestion made by Sand is that the story of the exile was a myth promoted by early Christians to recruit Jews to the new faith.

This myth suited the Zionists exceedingly well.

Jerry Haber, in his post dated July 29, 2007, suggests that though the myth was not invented by the Zionists, they dropped the “punishment” part and used it and nurtured it, “in part, to justify the return of the Jews to their ancestral homeland. For the tacit assumption of the Zionists was that if the Jews had left the land willingly, if they had merely ‘emigrated’ because they found opportunities beckoning in the Diaspora, then they would have betrayed their allegiance to the land, and their return would have been less justified..... it (the myth)dovetailed nicely with the historical view of the wandering Jew that finds no rest outside of his native place from which he was expelled”.

In Sand's view, at a certain stage in the 19th century, intellectuals of Jewish origin in Germany, influenced by the folk character of German nationalism, took upon themselves the task of inventing a people "retrospectively," out of a thirst to create a modern Jewish people. From historian **Heinrich Graetz** on, Jewish historians began to draw the history of Judaism as the history of a nation that had been a kingdom, became a wandering people and ultimately turned around and went back to its birthplace.

The third chapter of Sand’s book “The Invention of the Diaspora” starts with the quotation from the preamble to the Israeli Declaration of Independence: “After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people remained faithful to it throughout their

Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom" As we have seen, Sand argues that the Jewish people's exile from its land never happened.

Sand goes on to state that the description of the Jews as a wandering and self-isolating nation of exiles, "who wandered across seas and continents, reached the ends of the earth and finally, with the advent of Zionism, made a U-turn and returned en masse to their orphaned homeland," is nothing but "national mythology." Like other national movements in Europe, which sought out a splendid Golden Age, through which they invented a heroic past - for example, classical Greece or the Teutonic tribes - to prove they have existed since the beginnings of history, "so, too, the first buds of Jewish nationalism blossomed in the direction of the strong light that has its source in the mythical Kingdom of David."

Sand asserts: "Zionism changed the idea of Jerusalem. Before, the holy places were seen as places to long for, not to be lived in. For 2,000 years Jews stayed away from Jerusalem not because they could not return but because their religion forbade them from returning until the messiah came."

These revelations about the oft asserted exile of the Jews being a myth are indeed revealing and shocking. They completely demolish the Jewish claim of their right to return to the Holy Land. But this is not all. Modern researchers and historians go further. They claim that the Jews never existed as a nation and that the vast majority of the present day Jews have no connection to the Biblical Jews or the Biblical Holy Land.

But that is another story. (Please watch for: "Was there a Jewish nation?")

Private Note: For references see Document 14 in USB 4 under "General."