

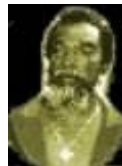


Jamaican radio station IRIE FM's Running African, July 13th,1997

## INTERVIEW WITH THE PROPHET GAD



## OF THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL



This is a literal transcription of the first interview that the leader of the 12 Tribes of Israel has ever given on radio. No money should be asked for the receiving of this document.

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The resistance to slavery, colonial domination, and racism have been the struggles of the sons and daughters of Africa in the Diaspora since we were Taken to the new world. African resistance began on the slave ships and Continues up to the present. The right to basic human rights were not Guaranteed after the emancipation act went into effect in 1834 and the chance of former slaves to now live as free men and women in dignity and to develop a human potential to the fullest had to be fought tooth and nail against former slave masters.

The list of martyrs for black liberation are many, and the struggle for complete freedom and self-determination have come in all shapes and forms. One of the most glorious moments of our struggle was during the organizational work of the honorable Marcus Garvey and the U.N.I.A. which linked the effort and the continent of Africa for majority rule, equal rights and justice and the struggles in the Diaspora with the now famous words: "Africa for the Africans, those at home and those abroad. We should move forward also with one God, one aim and one destiny".

In 1930 in Ethiopia, Ras Tafari Makonnen was crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords with the throne-name Haile Selassie the First and a new chapter in the struggle, one with religious connotations, was opened. God was finally real and the Christian doctrine was no longer the monopoly of white missionaries with headquarters in Rome. The bible was studied and any reference to Ethiopia took on added significance.

Ethiopia, being attacked by Italy at the start of the second world war galvanized interest and concern in the struggle of good over evil. During this period, the Ethiopian World Federation was formed in the United States of America under the guidance of the Emperor Haile Selassie the First, to unite the support for the restoration of Ethiopia's sovereignty. After the war, and the defeat of Italy, the Emperor showed his appreciation by donating land at Shashamane, to anyone of African descent in the west who wanted to return to the mother-land. Time, however, was creating Africans with various aspirations. New generations were producing new societies of Africans in the West.

Independent nations were beginning to form and black majority rule was imminent. In Jamaica, the reverence of Emperor Haile Selassie continued to create distinguishable movements, such as Nyabinghi, the Ethiopian National Congress or Bobo dreads, the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

The Twelve Tribes of Israel, founded by the Prophet Gad, has added another dimension in the liberation movement, to include liberation for all races through the teaching of the bible, and the acceptance of Jesus Christ. Membership is not limited, but inclusive. By identifying the spiritual sons of Jacob and finding truth for oneself through reading the bible "a chapter a day", man can find salvation. The divine lineage continues through the Ethiopian Monarchy, the seed of David, of which it is said, "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from beneath his feet, until Shiloh comes and unto Him will be the gathering of the people."

Running African caught up with the Prophet Gad at his Hopewood home, and for the first time ever, he consented to speak publicly on radio .

He tells us first of the history of the Twelve Tribes.

**"I was being converted in 1961 and I read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation twice. But I was being sent, I was called and sent, resurrected and sent to do this work and when I read the bible I strongly see that there is a gap that is there to be filled and I believe that I am one of them that send to do it Do the work."**

Where did the movement start, where were you at the time?

**" At Trenchtown. But I was called when I was living at Outlook Avenue, that is at Rockfort Garden."**

What form did it take, how did you convince people of what it is that you were sent to do?

**" Well, I keep telling them that if they read the bible a chapter a day, they will see that what I'm doing, if it is right or wrong. Well, majority read the bible and them say, what I am saying is there, so they be a part of it."**

How is the different tribes identified, how did you know who was Simeon and who was Levi and so on...

**"Yes, well there's a record in the bible, if you see it you see, that Ruben represent the eye, and Simeon represent the ears, and such like, it is all there, but there is a part there that the maid, that the maid have two children and the other one have two. So that is how come the Twelve Tribes of Israel. It's all recorded there you know. I have seen most of things I'm doing in the bible."**

Okay. Some more about the Tribes. and how they identify themselves.....

**" By a month. Each month, like Ruben represent April, Simeon represent May,"**

Glad You said that. I'm Simeon. (laughs)

**" And June represent Levy and Judah."**

How did you make the connection with the tribes and the months. How did you know that May was Simeon?

**Alright.** (At this point Gad points to body parts that correspond with the different Tribes) **Well, you see, I mean, Rueben, you see, so you know that is April, an your Ear : that is May, June, July, August, September, October, which is your back, November your penis, October, November, December: the knee, January, February, and March."**

Alright. The 12 Tribes of Israel have been accused of being elitist, catering to the middle class and whites. Is that a fair criticism?

**"No that is not a fair criticism. Because we are not catering for only one set of people, out of one blood is all nation, so it is all called, but we know that not everybody is going to see what we are all doing."**

So this talk..because I know a lot of people are listening now are saying to themselves: But no, we always did think that only a certain type of people were members of The 12 Tribes of Israel, and isn't it interesting that a Rastafarian group cared, when most Rastafarians are saying: "Down with the with the white downpressors" that 12 Tribes of Israel actually embrace all races.

**"That is correct. We read in the Bible that out of one blood all nation, so it would be wrong for us to say only one race, we wouldn't survive that way, God make all of us, so, that is where I stand."**

The 12 Tribes of Israel is seen as closer to Christianity than other Rastafarian groups. Is there a basic difference in the doctrine?

**"Yes there is a basic difference because we see Christ, and that die and rose again, and that die for our sin, we see that person. So that is, you know, a different teaching, because is not many see this teaching, that Christ is the person."**

I want to remind you that we're speaking with the Prophet Gad who is the leader, the head, the founder of the 12 Tribes of Israel. We want to move on now to the doctrine. Recently we've had much debate on this program "Running African" and other programs about the Divinity of His Majesty the Emperor Haile Selassie as it relates the return of Jesus Christ. What are your thoughts on the matter?

**"Well, Christ is to return and sit on the Throne of David, so I strongly believe that, you know, Christ is going to come and sit on the Throne of David."**

I want you to.. You said something very important here and something that may disturb the Rastafarian Movement in Jamaica. Christ, You're talking about the return of Christ.

**"Yes I am talking about the return of Christ who is going to sit on the throne of David."**

Are you making a differentiation between Jesus Christ and Haile Selassie.

**"Yes I am making a differentiation. Because Christ the same yesterday, today and forever. And even after His Majesty say, Him saved not by the man character but by the blood of Jesus Christ."**

Alright, let's move on. The doctrinal principals of the 12 Tribes of Israel at the outset of this program. I said that you as a head of a Rastafarian organization yourself, you don't wear dreadlocks. Do you have specific principals as it relates to hair, diet and the reading of the Bible?

**"When I read the Bible I see you know, there is not a hair-doctrine. Yet we know that man, you know, him hair is too long, but there is no law to compel him to trim. So as for me now, I say everyone have the right to wear him dreadlocks as long as him want to wear it. And nobody shouldn't have anything to say about it. I read the bible and I choose, prefer to, pole your hair. When you pole your hair, you comb your hair, like I don't trim, but I pole. So you have some of the dreadlocks dread and you have some that pole them hair."**

I have heard it said even on this station IRIE FM, that if you don't have your dreadlocks you can't go to Zion. How do you respond to that?

**"There is not a hair doctrine. You see, by grace through Christ, so hair can't save you."**

What about diet?

**"Diet. Well, it is already recorded in the book what you must eat from what you are not to eat. Yet, a man free to do what him want to do. But it's specifically recorded there in the bible what to eat (ie:cloven footed)and what not to eat." (that through the cut?)**

I know members of the 12 Tribes of Israel; that I have come in contact with, one of the differences that I found is that 12 Tribes of Israel members will eat meat, for example, whereas most other Rastafarians are vegetarians.

**"Yes well, there is so many things to eat before meat it was vegetables, afterward, you see, that you must eat this meat and you must eat that meat and you mustn't eat that meat. But before it was vegetables. And then afterward Noah and the flood then now we get meat to eat. And separate from what not to eat."**

Alright. Many argue, but before we get to that, let us look at the reading of the bible, because I know that one of your main principals is reading the bible. Tell me about that.

**"Yes well, it show to me, His Majesty even give we a little hint , that in the Bible you know, Him glorify in the bible, and from a little child Him was taught to read the bible. Now, when I look I see, that to understand fully, it is good to read timely and to read for yourself. A chapter a day it is preferable, still anyone free that they can the bible how they want to read it."**

You've been in this movement for very long time, you're the founder. Does that mean that you have continued to read the bible a chapter a day until now, so you must have read it a couple of times.

**"Yes I read it a couple of times, twice, and now again I go through it. But I don't read it as much as, you know"**

Many argue that the bible is not 100% reliable but that the reading of the bible actually is a main principal of yours and of the 12 Tribes of Israel. How do you respond to the skeptics who say that the bible is not reliable and burn the bible so to speak.

**"Anytime it show that you'll have them curse God, curse the king, and such a like, so I don't expect for them to accept certain things, but those who accept, well, give thanks to them."**

Moving on to rights of passage. How does the movement, the 12 Tribes of Israel address birth within the movement, the adolescence period, when the child is a teenager, and marriage and also death?

**"Well, if I could understand clearly, I know that, you have a birth, and after birth, you have child, adolescence, and when they grow up they're supposed to married, and after they marry they're supposed to help their fellow man, and when death come, it come. But right now we're trying to avoid that death business. But when that come, you can't run from it. As for us, we don't die. We only sleep, waiting for the resurrection."**

Are there any specific ceremonies concerning for instance birth. Is a child within the 12 Tribes of Israel christened or blessed by you as a prophet?

**"I don't do any christening. I wasn't told to Christen so I don't do any christening. Them can Christen when your born you have to Christen and then.."**

Not necessarily within any strict rules and so on. What about marriage are there any specific..?

**"Marriage is a holy vow. And I know that marriage is right. So if you see a partner and you love them, get married. That is as far as I'm concerned on marriage"**

Okay, moving on. The 12 Tribes of Israel is currently not having regular meetings. When can we expect the resumption of these meetings?

**"We were discussing about it, I think the time has come for it to start. But we was organizing for years and keeping a lot of meetings, so we take a break, a rest. Cause the same teaching over and over, so we take a rest but soon de we hope an trust that we open back to proceed as we was before, and then taking back some of the members who would like to be a part."**

Do you have any idea how soon, within a couple of months, or anything like that?

**"Not yet. I can't say it. Probably a little more, but not right at the moment."**

How does one who is interested in becoming a member of the 12 Tribes of Israel, how does one do that?

**"They have to wait until we announce the time when we are going to take in members and then they can."**

So listen out for that The monarchy. Discussions on the monarchy have served within the Rastafarian movement to separate the movement. Many see Haile Selassie as the final king. How does the 12 Tribes of Israel view the continuation of the monarchy in relation to the current political climate in Ethiopia?

**"Well, His Majesty won't be the final king, cause he is not here now, and we have other kings to come, right, so, as for me, I strongly believe, that the monarchy will establish, when, due time."**

So Haile Selassie, contrary to what a lot of other people are saying, is not the final king?

**"No, he is not the final king."**

Well, could you tell a little bit about the succession, then?

**"The succession His Majesty you know him name Amha Selassie already, as the heir to the throne, and he is not at the moment there, and him also name Yacob, but Yacob is there now, so we are looking for the speedily return of Yacob to Ethiopia."**

How does this fit in with the teaching of, not necessarily of the 12 Tribes of Israel, but of Rastafarians in general, who, because of the (well, at first you answered that anyway about the divinity of Haile Selassie and you've actually made a distinction between Haile Selassie and Jesus Christ). But many Rastafarians don't see anything outside of Haile Selassie which means that he is the final king to sit upon the throne, how do we resolve that?

**"Well, I have said before, he's not the final king, but I strongly believe that Christ is going to sit upon the throne, but HIM His Majesty is not the final king, you have more kings, because Amha Selassie is there, he is not there, and then you have Yacob supposed to be seated shortly."**

Do you see the monarchy being restored in Ethiopia, as a matter of fact, because what is happening in Ethiopia now, we know that Amha Selassie tried to go back recently, we don't know what happened with that, he didn't go back but do you see the restoration of the monarchy in Ethiopia?

**"At Now they don't accept the monarchy, but at least there is an amount of people is there that looking forward, because that is the only person they believe could able to get back the unity of the Ethiopian people."**

How do you see it happening, the restoration of the monarchy?

**"When the time come, you know, we will overturn and overturn, and who's right it is them will give it to them, so, when the fullness of time come, we don't know when , but we're sure that it must happen."**

Is this according to prophecy? That the monarchy must be restored?

**"Oh yes, Oh yes."**

Is the monarchy a dinosaur in the age of democracy do you think? and could it be could it be anything more than a constitutional monarchy?

**"Well I don't fully overstand that,"**

Right now, when Amha Selassie was trying to return, the last time, he was told that he could only come back as a constitutional monarch with no powers whatsoever. Do you see anything else happening apart from that, or do you see the monarchy restored at such a point, where the monarchy is once again as it was in the days of Haile Selassie, ruling in Ethiopia

**"Well, I keep saying over and over that when the time come, then we sure that we are going to have a king to seat up. It is going to take some time, but he is going to be seated for sure."**

Rumors have been circulating that Prince Zere Yacob is mentally deranged and therefore not fit to succeed. What light can you shed on this matter?

**"Well I bredda Gad don't know him as somebody that is mentally disturbed. He was here the last time and nobody see him and such a like, him is functioning normal as far as I understand, when I left him in Manchester. But I don't see him as a deranged person. It really, you know, unbelievable."**

I must point out at this point, I don't know if you want me to do this, but Zere Yacob is very close to the 12 tribes of Israel.

**"Oh yes he is very close. He's .... with bredrin them and sister in Manchester."**

Is he a member of the 12 Tribes of Israel?

**"He's a member of the 12 Tribes of Israel yes"**



Ermias, prince Ermias the nephew of Amha Selassie, will visit Jamaica in August, what is his position in the royal family?

**"I have not much knowledge about him but I read that he is one of the Crown Counsels, that is as far as I know. I don't say further what he is doing and what he is saying, but I do not have much knowledge about him, but I know that he is one of the Crown Counsels."**

Has Ermias been in contact with you?

**"No we haven't spoken and I don't know him and he don't know me."**

Have you been officially informed of his visit in August?

**"Yes, when I say officially I mean I read this, our document there before that he was planning to come, and now it's time for him to arrive to be here in August."**

The future of the monarchy. Is it a part of the doctrine of 12 Tribes of Israel, that the monarchy must be physical restored, you're touched on that before that it is prophecy, but is it a part of your teaching?

**"Yes, that is a part our teaching that the monarchy must be restored, just like how the sun and the moon and the stars is there, that nobody can remove them, same way, monarchy must restore."**

The 12 Tribes of Israel currently has the largest settlement on Shashamane. Is Ethiopia the final home and what about the rest of Africa?

**"Just Shashamane is not the final home. The whole of Africa, because One King shall rule over them all. And also, the whole of Africa, especially Jerusalem."**

Okay, you say the whole of Africa, especially Jerusalem, and I am sure a lot of people are saying "but Jerusalem is not Africa".

**"Yeah, Jerusalem is Africa. Jerusalem is a part of Africa is only certain things happen, and it break away. But there is no argument that Jerusalem is not a part of Africa, we are sure!"**

So when we speak of a new Jerusalem, what are we talking of?

**"When we are talking about a new Jerusalem, we are talking about Jerusalem in Asia Minor. New Jerusalem is a different thing all entirely, definition."**

I wanted to look just a little bit more at that, Jerusalem being the final home, all of Africa, especially Jerusalem. How is that, if you will, how will that work? How will that happen?

**"Consider they take out a lot of Ethiopians there if you notice the history show you that they always were saying that the people in Ethiopia is not the Jews. Alright? But then suddenly there is a changes, that them is the Jews, them take out most of them and carry them Jerusalem. So we see everything clear there that the people who is Israel and was in Ethiopia, them ancestor was from Jerusalem, and them send them back. So here is some of us out here, now it was quite interesting that, those who them take from there, and they carried there, they say they are the tribe of Dan, so them might then identify themself, as one of the tribes, of Dan. The people them who leave and go to Jerusalem, that them take out from Eritria, Falashas, yeah."**

Okay, who should lead the repatriation exercise, because there are so many different organizations all over the world, African organizations, non-African organizations, but how involved should they be in helping black people who want to go back to Africa.?

**"The first thing the OAU supposed to be the countries that come together and help voice for the return of the people in the western hemisphere back to Africa. I strongly believe they supposed to should be playing a part to help we to come home, who want to come."**

What about reparations from Europe, from America, from Britain?

**"Yes, well, we are going to need help because, you know, the ship is there, the plane is there, so we're looking for them to help to transport us back as even them said that they say the only thing to do now is away back the people them, and people that them send away, those are the people that help back the country."**

So we get to back to who should lead, who should lead this exercise, this back to Africa movement. Who do you think should lead that.?

**"Well the Rastafarian must come together and elect a person to represent the body. And then out of that them know we can able to write, to these different people and to tell them that we are united. We would like them to help us."**

The Shashamane land-grant is still in effect?

**"The Shashamane land-grant is still in effect but there is a lot of things to clear up within the settlement."**

Do you want to elaborate on that, some of the we need to clear up?

**"Not at the moment."**

Alright, so you say it is still in effect but there is things that need to be clear up. Now what is the 12 Tribes position on the EWF claim that all settlers, who of the land, that people who settle in Shashamane are squatters, if they do not settle through the permission of the EWF?

**"I really surprise them to know that they are saying that who is there on the land, squatters. How can African going home, going back home, can become as a squatters, it is unbelievable. Squatters, impossible."**

Is there need for Rastafarians to organize and centralize?

**"Oh yes, there is an urgent need for the Rastafarian to organize. Yes, there is"**

How do you think this process can begin?

**"Well, somebody that is capable of call a meeting and if they're sincere, they call a meeting and hope and trust that from there we can get somewhere."**

But you as a leader of the 12 Tribes of Israel you see a great need. Do you see yourself playing any part in that?

**"I strongly believe that I will help and play my little part that I can as a person with organizing over the years when that process, you know.."**

Alright, should there be a political as well as a spiritual arm of Rastafarians?

**"There's political movements, it is there, but I am not here to deal with it. I am not fighting them. I am here to deal with the spiritual part of it. Not politically."**

What are your thoughts on the Rastafarian Centralization Organization, the RCO ?

**"I have no knowledge at the moment I only know that them is here so is only left now to see what they are saying, before I can give a definite statement about them, but I have no knowledge presently."**

The RCO, they have been around for a little while. Haven't they contacted you officially, informing you of the organization and inviting you to join with them in the centralization process?

**"It came here they send a letter inviting us to help with the school, but we never get to it, so that is the only letter that I know I have so far but I don't get any letter them invited me and such to come."**

That is quite interesting that that is happening, that we have a Rastafarian Centralization Organization, and that the head of the biggest, the most organized Rastafarian movement in the world has not been invited to be a part in that centralization process. If you were invited, would you talk with them and see what's happening?

**"Yes, I believe the time must come for me to play a part of, you know, I think I would go and hope and trust that they proceed orderly and they have no commotion, because I don't deal the commotion, the confusion. I strongly believe that the time has come for Rastafarian to come together."**

I feel very good to hear that. The 12 Tribes of Israel have undoubtedly the most organized body of Rastafarians in the world, as I have said before, what role should the movement play in organizing Rastafarians in Jamaica, and in the rest of the world?

**"Well, at least we are organizing for a good while now, we have the organ, the 12 Tribes of Israel, in Jamaica, it start here, it is in Ethiopia, it is in the United States, it is in United Kingdom, Sweden, it is Germany, New Zealand, Tobago, Ghana, Australia, Kenya, and Grenada."**

That is 12 Tribes.....

**"That is 12 Tribes organization in these other country, and some other country, it is still there, but..."**

I am thinking that since the 12 Tribes has done so well in organizing the 12 Tribes of Israel, is there a particular role now that the 12 Tribes could play in helping then to organize the rest of the Rastafarians?

**"Yes, well, I just said a while ago that I think that I could help, to play a part, to give a helping hand, not as somebody to come to take over nothing, but as a helping hand, to help organize them. So we're looking forward....."**

The Prophet Gad. The man who boldly declares Jesus Christ. The head of a Rastafarian movement who doesn't wear dreadlocks. The man who coined the phrase: "A chapter a day". The Kebra Negast, or the book of The Glory of Kings of Ethiopia, has been in existence for at least a thousand years and contains the true history of the origin of the Solomonic line of kings in Ethiopia. It is as the ultimate authority and the history of the conversion of Ethiopians from the worship of the sun, moon and stars, to that of our Lord God of Israel.

Jesus Christ, and Menelik, the son of Solomon and the queen of Sheba, were sons of Solomon, and so, they were akin to each other. But Christ is the Son of God, and therefore, being the Kinsman of Christ, Menelik was divine.

The Kebra Negast asserts that the kings of Ethiopia who were descended from Menelik were of divine origin, and that their words and deeds were those of God's. Haile Selassie , a devoted Christian, reflected that divine nature and maintained the struggle of good over evil continually inspiring the Rastaman.