



MEMORANDUM

TO: Ms. Deborah A. Ford
Of Jacksonville, Florida¹

CC: St. Clements University
Africa University
The Lemba Cultural Association
The Mackey & Ford Families (Suwannee, Florida)

DATE: 27 February 2025

RE: Citation for Excellence in Pan-African and DNA Research
On an African American Family from the United States and
On the Black Hebrew Israelites also known as the Lemba People

COMMENDATION LETTER FOR YOUR DNA RESEARCH ON THE LEMBA

Dear Madam Prophetess Deborah:

The hand of God has truly spoken through your research into the DNA-genetic origins of various members of an African American family from the United States, ultimately revealing that they share lineal DNA links to a

¹ Ms. Deborah A. Ford holds the bachelor of science degree from Edward Waters College and master of science degree in accounting from the University of Pheonix. She is also the sister of the author.

population of Black Hebrew Israelites known as the Lemba peoples of southern Africa.

I know that you have been trying to disclose this wonderful news to me for several years; but, like doubting Thomas, I did not wish to accept it, at least not until I could review your research together with its scientific evidence.²

During the meanwhile, the Spirit of the Lord moved me to conduct my own independent research that was separate and apart from yours. During this time, I learned about a special group of Black Africans living in Zimbabwe and South Africa, who had long ago claimed to be the lineal descendants from the ancient Israelites. (They are known as the Lemba people, but they also refer to themselves by different names). From this research, I was able to locate voluminous material, including the following:

1. **Jewish Virtual Library**

“Lemba” <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/lemba>

2. **Jewish Virtual Library**

“Zimbabwe’s ‘Black Jews’: The Lemba People”

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/zimbabwe-s-quot-black-jews-quot-the-lemba-people>

In other words, I had learned about the Lemba people long before we finally met, in person, on Christmas Day, December 25, 2023, at which time you revealed to me the scientific evidence of your “maternal mitochondrial DNA” research, to wit:

“Your Closest Genetic Modern Population”

1. Lemba (5.594)
2. Bantu (7.267)
3. Mandenka (9.552)
4. Bantu.S.W. (9.941)
5. Bantu.S.E. (10.58)
6. Sub-Saharan (11.78)
7. Yoruba (11.78)

² My focus then was upon the Y-Chromosome, which is passed down only from father to son, which naturally would exclude your DNA evidence from my area of focus. I was not aware of the “maternal mitochondrial DNA” testing allowing for location of genetic matches going back thousands of years! . [See, e.g., *The Library of Congress Research Guide* (online), stating, “Autosomal DNA captures roughly five to seven generations of the family tree, **whereas Mitochondrial DNA extends back to ancient origins.**”].

8. Bianka-Pygmy (14.53)"

This revelation is the kind of knowledge that all African American families need in order to begin the process of *spiritual and psychological healing* from the long nightmare of *self-hatred* and *inferiority complexes* which the transatlantic slave trade set in motion more than 400 years ago.

In addition, this sort of information is inherently extremely liberating because, should the African continent ever begin the process of welcoming back its lost tribes in the Americas, we will no longer need to guess about the origins of our African roots, while always having to assume falsely that we only come from certain slave-trading outposts along the coasts of West Africa.

The truth of the matter is, rather, that our African lineage goes much further and is much deeper, reaching down into South Africa, and stretching up from there to the horn of Africa and the lower Nile Valley in Egypt. All of this you reported to me over the course of a few years, as you were conducting your original research; and all of this, in due time, I have eventually confirmed in the writings of great African and African American scholars, such as W.E.B. Du Bois, who wrote the following in *Black Reconstruction*:

In origin, the slaves represented everything African, although most of them originated on or near the West Coast. Yet among them appeared **the great Bantu tribes from Sierra Leone to South Africa**; the Sudanese, straight across the center of the continent, from the Atlantic to **the Valley of the Nile**; the Nilotic Negroes and the black and brown Hamites, allied with **Egypt**; the tribes of the great lakes; the Pygmies and the Hottentots; and in addition to these, distinct traces of both Berber and Arab blood. There is no doubt of the presence of all these various elements in the mass of 10,000,000 or more Negroes transported from Africa to the various Americas, from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries.³

And in *The World and Africa*, Dr. Du Bois also wrote: "...the Bantus are not 'genuine' Negroes... [when based upon the standard of] so-called 'woolly' hair,

³ W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (New York, N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1935), pp. 3-4.

thick lips, and nose....”⁴ “[T]he Bantu, who are a congeries of peoples, belonging predominantly to Central and South Africa and occupying the southern two-thirds of black Africa... are defined on purely linguistic criteria. The term ‘Bantu’ primarily implies that the tribes included speak languages characterized by a division of nouns into classes....”⁵

Within the Bantu family of African tribal clans are two groups with similar names: the “Limbas” and the “Lemba.” The Bantu-Limbas appear to have some ties to the Nile Valley. As W.E.B. Du Bois has written, when the Islamic-Arabs invaded the Egyptian Nile Valley during the 16th century, the said invasion resulted in “[a] vast migration of black people, **the Limbas**, [who] moved slowly westward from Central Africa. They were a part of the migration of the Bantu moving down from the Mohammedan invasion of the Nile Valley and the empire-building of the black kingdoms of the Sudan.... Migration and native wars lasted for a generation. This meant that the cheap labor of captives became available on the West Coast and opened the way for the beginning of the American slave trade.”⁶ This “Limbas” connection to the Nile Valley could explain why some African Americans with Bantu-Limba DNA, whose ancestors were taken from the Sierra Leone region of the western coast of Africa, may have links to ancient Egypt and the Sudan. Hence, this might explain how some of your research resulted in our ancestral links in the northeastern part of Africa.

On the other hand, the “Bantu-Lemba” is a separate and distinct group who claim links to the ancient Hebrews. As the Bible informs us, these ancient Hebrews were the slaves to the Egyptians who left there under the leadership of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, and whose lineal descendants have been disbursed throughout the world, as described in the Bible.

According to the Lemba oral tradition, a dozen or more Levitical priests left Israel following the Babylonian captivity, moved down into northern Africa, and married Ethiopian wives. When these Levitical priests tried to relocate to Jerusalem following the Edict of Cyrus the Great in 539 BC, which allowed the

⁴ W.E.B. Du Bois, *The World and Africa* (New York, N.Y.: International Pub., 2015), p. 90-91.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-97.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

captive Jews to return to their homeland from Babylon, these same Levitical priests were rejected because of their black wives. They then migrated down into the Arabian Peninsula, into Yemen, then into Ethiopia, and then into what is now present-day Tanzania and Zimbabwe; and they founded several settlements along the way. They kept their ancient Hebrew/Jewish heritage intact! They claim blood lineage to present-day Ethiopians, particularly with the Beta Israel (i.e., Ethiopian Jews). Today, the Lemba people are *non-rabbinical* Jews and (or) Jewish-Christians (e.g., Messianic Christians or Jews who accept Christ). They are not particularly interested in converting to orthodox European-centered Judaism – although some of them have done so.

Obviously, the Bantu-speaking peoples are all God’s children, no matter if they be “Limba” or “Lemba,” and no matter their genetic connections to the ancient Hebrews or not! Nevertheless, this DNA evidence of our connection to the Lemba people, which you have uncovered, comes *as further divine revelation* – whereby I have called you a “prophetess” in my greeting – regarding the wickedness of the transatlantic slave trade! When in America we hear the words of white racial superiority and that slavery was necessary to bring the African heathen to Christ, your DNA evidence comes as a revolting refutation of such wicked untruths!

Wherefore, I have dedicated to you my paper titled, “*THOUGHTS UPON ZIONISM AND THE JEWS: A Review of Harvard Law School Professor Noah Feldman’s To Be A Jew Today: A New Guide to God, Israel, and the Jewish People,*” and I have presented this commendation letter to several of my dear friends and important colleagues on the continent of Africa.

Love Always Your Brother,

Roderick Andrew Lee Ford, LLD., Esq.

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