I recently dug up this groundbreaking article I wrote in 2014. While some of my views about Babylonians & Assyrian ancestry have evolved a bit, now geared more toward state-name designations rather than ethnic designations, the results of this study are still very striking.

November 24, 2014 | Oak Park, MI – Lawrence Goriel

After all the fussing and fighting about our ancestry and ethnicity, I took it upon myself to begin my quest for truth by investigating the history of Babylon and Assyria. After just preliminary superficial research it was very easy to see that Assyrians and Chaldeans of Antiquity were not the same ethnicity but were of the same origin. Although some have heard the stories of the two brothers who created a split after the Assyrian Empire was already created, the real division between the Akkadians occurred much earlier at the birth of the Old Assyrian Empire. I won’t go into too much detail here because the research has not yet been completed.

After this discovery, I wondered how I could find some kind of novel factual evidence which could support or disprove these claims, other than what I had already found through research. With the current conflict in Iraq, it would be very difficult and dangerous to travel to Nineveh, Hillah and Basra to look for artifacts. With that hope lost I began to think of other ways until I looked in the mirror. I looked and wondered why I don’t look like most other Chaldeans and Assyrians. I have green eyes, straight hair, I’m tall and I have other non-middle eastern features. I began to wonder if I’m even Chaldean or Assyrian at all. Maybe people were right, maybe Chaldean was just a religious sect and my ancestors converted, making me a Chaldean. That seemed like a reasonable explanation but I couldn’t be sure. Then I decided that now was a great time to find out who I really am and where I came from.

Ancestry.com is currently performing DNA analysis to predict ancestry for only $100, so I decided to give it a try. They requested all kinds of information from me for them to help predict my origin but I wanted to see what kind of results I would get with giving the least amount of information possible. I didn’t want to divulge information which might influence the results so I gave the bare minimum, just my name and my father’s name. The results came back and I was blown away.

The Results
Some of you might be wondering what Caucasus is, it is a northern Middle Eastern identity which primarily includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. Middle Eastern primarily includes Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Oman, Yemen, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Lebanon and Israel. As you can see from the map above, the overlap in these two ancestries are Syria & Iraq with one ancestry being the northern part of the middle east and the other being the southern part. Therefore I’m basically 85% Mesopotamian and 15% other. I was a little shocked that I was indeed 85% Mesopotamian due to my features, as I described before. But I always knew I had some Greek or Italian blood because of my eye color and had an inexplicable admiration for Alexander the Great.

**Interpretation**

The results themselves may seem meaningless until, of course, we look at history and the effects they would have on a person’s ancestry. A Chaldean who hasn’t looked at the history might wonder where the Italian and Greek came from. These ancestries are due to the occupations of the Greek and subsequently the Roman empires which occupied Babylon and Assyria. This would explain the Italian and Greek DNA fairly well, however, what about the European Jewish DNA?

**Devil in the details**

In Assyrian history, Sennacherib, King of Assyria, sacked Jerusalem and immediately returned to Assyria. This account is disputed by Jewish historians and biblical passages which claim that the Assyrian army suffered heavy losses and retreated.[1] Either way, there was no record of the Assyrian king ever taking Jewish slaves or mass importing Jews to Assyria. If I was indeed Assyrian, history would not be able to justify the Jewish blood, short of a very far-fetched love story.

**DNA connection to Chaldeans of Antiquity**
In Chaldean (Babylonian) history, however, there is indeed such an event. After the Assyrian Empire began its decline, Nebuchadnezzar II captured Jerusalem. This event is found in both the Babylonian and Jewish accounts. The Chaldean King deported a large population of affluent Jews from Jerusalem to Babylon, the number is estimated around 10,000. This is a large population for the world during the 6th century BC and an important historical event, which is evidently recorded in my DNA. This was likely done to replenish the population and economy of Babylon due to years of wars with Assyria and other invading forces, and would explain my 5% Jewish ancestry. The percentages are also in line with historical sequence, as this event occurred before Greek and Roman influence and would theoretically be less evident in the DNA, as seen in these results. Theoretically, a 50% mix which occurred 2,000 years ago would dwindle to a minute percentage (ex: 5%) whereas a 50% mix which occurred 500 years ago would be 4 times more (ex: 20%) evident in the DNA. To my astonishment, we have seen exactly that in my DNA. 5% Jewish which came before the 10% Italian/Greek and the 85% Iraqi which is present all throughout my lineage.

Conclusion

In this situation, I gave the DNA analysts as little information as possible about me other than my name. These results showed 85% ancestry in the middle east with the 15% coming from well documented historical events which occurred exclusively in Babylon. The shockingly accurate correlation with my DNA and the history of Babylon during Antiquity is proof that the modern day Chaldeans are indeed the Chaldeans of Antiquity.

This experience was a very enlightening one and the beginning of our Ancestry.com DNA Challenge. I would like to challenge all members of the Chaldean, Assyrian and Syriac communities to submit your DNA sample to Ancestry.com and show us your results. I would love to know what stories your DNA will tell us about our history.

Raw data

Ancestries tested:

Africa 0%
• Africa North 0%
• Ivory Coast/Ghana 0%
• Benin/Togo 0%
• Cameroon/Congo 0%
• Mali 0%
• Nigeria 0%
• Senegal 0%
Africa Southeastern Bantu 0%
Africa South-Central Hunter-Gatherers 0%

America 0%
• Native American 0%

Asia 0%
• Asia South 0%
• Asia Central 0%
• Asia East 0%

Europe 15%
• Italy/Greece 10%
• European Jewish 5%
• Great Britain 0%
• Ireland 0%
• Europe East 0%
• Scandinavia 0%
• Europe West 0%
• Iberian Peninsula 0%
• Finland/Northwest Russia 0%

Pacific Islander 0%
• Polynesia 0%
• Melanesia 0%

West Asia 85%
• Caucasus 53%
• Middle East 32%

References