



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

"British Israelism" examined and its errors exposed, Part 1.



The first in a series of articles by Rev. Ron Johnstone, minister of Armagh Free Presbyterian Church

Some months ago I was asked to speak at a youth rally to highlight the dangerous teachings of extreme British Israelism. I began by stating that there have been true believers that have held the view that most British people are Israelites and that Jeremiah brought a King of Israel's daughter to Ireland. I did not believe, nor did I know of any minis-

ters in our Church who did. However I clearly said that I would not fall out with those people who held such a view as long their ideas did not go on to contradict important doctrines of Scripture. I then refuted some of the abominable teachings of extreme British Israelites. These included such doctrines as the claim that the Gospel is only for white people (Israelites) and that white people have a spirit while coloured people do not. That Adam was not the first man but the first white man. That Noah being 'perfect in his generations' meant that he was of pure white descent and that was why God preserved him in the ark during a local, not a worldwide flood. That there is a 29th chapter of Acts which has been discovered relating Paul's journey to England. That the ark of the covenant is buried in the Hill of Tara in Southern Ireland and there is a prophecy that when it is dug up there will be peace in Ulster. I spoke at the meeting of my concern that literature promoting some of these views had been given to Free Presbyterian members who had been invited to British Israelite meetings.

My message was taped and over the next few weeks I received interesting anonymous letters. One claimed to be from a Free Presbyterian and stated "this is what we really believe." Included with the letter was a tape of Pastor James McConnell. On listening to the cassette it became clear to me that the person was indeed wise not to sign their name! The sermon did not convince me of British Israelism but rather shocked me at the lengths to which British Israelites will go to promote their theory. In a vain attempt to prove that Britain really owns Palestine, Pastor McConnell not only misapplied scripture but also contradicted clear statements of God's Word. He put great emphasis on the claim that the word Jew only referred to those from the tribe of Judah in contrast to those of the House of Israel who are now located in Britain and the United States. He maintained it was the Jews who returned from captivity to crucify Christ while the Northern Israelite tribes migrated to Britain and America. He, however, must believe that a few members of tribes other than Judah returned because in a reference to Judas Iscariot he dogmatically states, "Christ chose 12 Apostles and only one of them was a Jew and it was the Jew who betrayed Him." It is obvious that Pastor McConnell's British Israelite views led him to make such a bold statement. Yet it is strange that the Apostle Paul did not know what Pastor McConnell claims to know because Paul referred to Peter as being a Jew. Gal 2:14 -"I said unto Peter before them all, If thou being a Jew . . . " I would rather take the Apostle Paul and the Word of God as my authority than Pastor McConnell's statement. I was also sent a large



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parcel containing books, booklets and leaflets by British Israelite writers including many by Mr Alan Campbell. These were sent anonymously along with a text from Proverbs 18:13: "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."

I already possessed and had read many B.I. books but I was grateful to receive these extra publications because they confirmed the dangerous and blasphemous statements being circulated by some B.I. teachers. In one of the booklets Mr Alan Campbell states the following: "One of the most dangerous and deceptive doctrines of Roman Catholicism which has been carried over into our Evangelical and Pentecostal church world is the theory that the Church is the Bride of Christ. This doctrine can be traced back to the Dark Ages when Roman superstition was growing and developing ... Regrettably this teaching was not abandoned at the Reformation, but was carried over with certain variations into Reformed Theology where it was claimed with equal vehemence that the invisible church made up of born-again believers out of all denominations, constitute the Bride. Such teaching persists to this very day in spite of the vast amount of evidence to prove that the Israel people of the Bible are found today -- redeemed and regathered -- in the British Isles, the United States and the Old Commonwealth, as the Nation and Company of Nations promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, married to Almighty God at the foot of Mount Sinai and spoken of continually throughout Bible Prophecy. It is these people who constitute the National Bride of Christ, as distinct from the Church which is His body " We have no apology to make that we hold to the Reformed and Biblical position that the church, made up of some out of every tribe, tongue, people and nation as described in such passages as Eph 5, is the Bride of Christ.

Some will be annoyed that we should highlight such a subject but Matthew 12:37 states "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." It is our intention to examine the words that are being circulated by British Israelites in our Province and test such by the Word of God. It will be seen that sadly in their zeal to claim that Britain is Israel some have been led into dangerous and anti-scriptural positions.