



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

“British Israelism” examined and its errors exposed, Part3



These articles continue to cause quite a stir amongst those who would see themselves as defenders of the teaching of British Israelism. We have had to bar certain entries from our Guest Book on “The Burning Bush” website, because our opponents have taken to using libellous attacks upon members of the Bob Jones family, university faculty and anyone who has had contact with them, in an attempt to discredit what is said in these articles.

It has been repeatedly stated that Bob Jones IV is presently pursuing a degree at Notre Dame University in USA. I understand that he did for a time undertake studies at that Roman Catholic institution but left it some time ago before completing the course. It has also been stated that he is to be the next President of Bob Jones University. That too, according to my information, is untrue. It has been alleged that because some members of the BJU faculty prefer the Minority Text to that used by the translators of the KJV, they are evil men. While I do not agree with the views of these faculty members, I cannot call them evil men. I readily acknowledge that they possess a much greater knowledge of the subject of textual criticism than I do. Nevertheless, I believe them to be mistaken and that on the basis of the writings of others of equal or greater scholarship.

But even if all connected with Bob Jones University were rogues and Ron Johnstone and I were liars, it would not suffice to answer what is said in these articles simply to state that of us. Do we reject the statement: *Jesus of Nazareth . . . I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God* because it was uttered by a demon-possessed man? I think not! Red herrings may appear substantial to the dull of mind but they can never be an answer to truth.

These attacks but underscore the inability of Bliers to answer from the Bible the objections to their notions laid down in these articles. Those proponents of British Israelism who have trivialised the issue by bombarding our Guest Book with schoolboyish sneers and jibes tell us much about the substance of their views and the sincerity with which they hold them. We are pleased to present Rev. Ron Johnstone’s third article in this series, confident that our detractors will still be unable to answer what is said except perhaps to continue their deceitful tirade. The Editor.

Since the last article, I have received abuse for ‘attacking Mr Campbell’. I would urge that the article be reread, as I did not anywhere attack his character. I stated facts. We have



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every right and indeed a duty to examine the published beliefs of others. Others have freedom to teach their particular views in their own churches. To show why we reject certain doctrines that are contrary to our own position is only construed as bigotry by those who have no real confidence in their own position or who are unable to answer in a sane and sensible way. To some, it seems justifiable for people to attack our sincerely held views on what the Bible teaches about the tribes of Israel, but immediately we examine British Israelite views we are accused of all kinds of evil motives. Such an attitude is very far removed from true Protestantism.

Few enjoy having their views challenged. We realise then that some will not be happy at the articles. Yet Mr Campbell has written against our beliefs. For instance, every Free Presbyterian minister and elder has taken a solemn vow to teach that the Church is the 'Bride of Christ'. Yet Mr Alan Campbell states clearly in his writings that this is a deceptive Roman Catholic heresy. When the Westminster Confession and the views of Calvin, Luther and Knox are described as a carry over from Roman Catholic heresy we have every right to object.

As I write this article, Mr Campbell's British Israelite site still carries an article by Sheldon Emery. He is the writer who openly states that the gospel is not for coloured people but only for the 'White Israel Race.'

BRITISH ISRAELITE 'PROOFS'

Many BI's claim that the term 'Jew' is not used to denote descendants of all the tribes of Israel. That is, while Jews descending from Judah are Israelites not all Israelites are Jews.

They generally teach that when the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom were carried into Assyria they did not return to their land but were scattered and lost. Judah, the Southern kingdom was then carried into Babylon and a remnant later returned. We believe that the Bible does not support such a view. Rather members of all the tribes returned to the land of Israel and were there in New Testament times.

Teachers of BI claim the 10 tribes were 'lost'. Yet James wrote to the 12 tribes scattered abroad. These were obviously members of all the tribes who were living outside the land of Israel. They were not 'lost' but were scattered and therefore living outside the Promised Land.

When Paul went on his missionary journeys he would go first to the local synagogue to address his fellow countrymen. If the term Jew can be shown to have become synonymous with Israel then the major foundation of BI claims is swept away. Contrary to BI claims we believe the term Jew did come to be interchangeable with the term Israelite. Consider the following verses in the New Testament.

When Christ told the Canaanitish woman that 'I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel,' Matt 15:24, surely He did not mean that He was sent to the 10 tribes that had been lost in Western Europe! He meant that His mission on earth was to His own people who were lost spiritually. He never left the land of Israel during His ministry. 'He came unto His own and His own received Him not.' John 1:11. Was that just to two tribes? John preached repentance in Judaea (Mark 1:4,5) yet preached repentance 'to all the people of Israel,' Acts 13:24. Jews "out of every nation" were dwelling at Jerusalem (Acts 2:5). Peter referred to all of these Jews as "men of Israel" (Acts 2:22). Acts 13: 6 refers to the



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“synagogue of the Jews” in which Paul preached. In verse 16, Paul called them “men of Israel” and in verse 17 “this people of Israel.” In verse 24 he says that John “had first preached repentance to all the people of Israel,” in verse 26 he called them the “stock of Abraham,” and in verse 33 he referred to the Jews as “us their children”; then, showing that the Jews were the ones to whom he was speaking, verse 42 says “when the Jews came out of the synagogue.” So Acts 13 adds up to this: Paul went into the “synagogue of the Jews”; talking to the Jews in their synagogue, he called them “men of Israel,” “this people Israel,” “all the people of Israel,” “stock of Abraham,” and “us their children”; — and then “the Jews came out of the synagogue.”

Yet there are still British Israelites who claim that Jews are not Israelites! People on the earth at present are described in 1 Cor 10:32 as being Jew, Gentile or of the Church of God. If, as BI teachers claim, the term Jew does not refer to the Israelite then where is the Israelite? Roms 1:16 — The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, ‘to the JEW first and also to the Greek.’ Roms 2:9 — ‘The JEW first and also of the Gentile.’ See also Roms 2:10, 14, 17. In Roms 3:9 — ‘We have before proved BOTH JEWS AND GENTILES that they are ALL under sin.’ To get round this clear teaching of scripture many BI Teachers state that the term ‘Gentile’ actually refers to the ‘10 lost tribes’ who were ‘gentilized’ by living outside the land of Israel! Paul being sent as an Apostle to the Gentiles really means he was sent to the 10 Tribes of Israel and even travelled to Britain to preach to them. Such a twisting of the term ‘Gentile’ is easily disproved. In Eph 2:11-22, Paul describes Gentiles as being aliens from the commonwealth of ISRAEL (NOT MEMBERS OF IT) but in Christ the wall of division is broken down and believers whether ISRAELITE or GENTILE are one in Christ. In Galatians 3, Paul speaks of the two groups of mankind as being JEW and GENTILE and emphasises that when they believe, JEW and GENTILE are now one in Christ.

These and other verses prove that the term Jew did come to be used to describe members of all the tribes of Israel. The most common passage used to draw young Christians into British Israelism is Jeremiah 33:17. “For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel . . . ” This passage is often quoted as proof for the British Israelite theory by its propagators. The BI teacher will argue that the passage teaches that the throne of David is to exist continuously forever—through all generations. They then ask, if so then where is it today? They claim to have the answer and an appeal is made to the ‘ancient annals of Ireland’ to attempt to prove that Queen Elizabeth now sits on David’s throne.

It is claimed that a Hebrew princess Tephi was the daughter of King Zedekiah of Judah, and therefore heir to the throne of David. The prophet Jeremiah brought her to Ireland to where Israelites had already migrated. They carried with them the stone upon which Jacob slept and upon which Kings of Judah were crowned. This became the coronation stone which until recently was in Westminster Abbey. A chart is produced that claims to trace Queen Elizabeth’s ancestry back to Tephi, to Zedekiah and on back to David. British Israelite speakers love to relate these and other romantic legends. If they just stuck to the legends we would not take issue with them. However we must take issue with them when they misapply scripture to bolster up the ‘ancient legends’. The text in Jeremiah 33:17 must be studied in its context. Note 2 things about the context.



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1) British-Israelites usually only quote the first part of the covenant, but the covenant continues: "Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually" (Jeremiah 33:18). Are there Levites today offering burnt offerings, kindling meat offerings and doing "sacrifice continually?" Notice the similar references in vs. 21, 22. The answer is no! (Some BI writers have claimed the Druids were in fact Levites and that 'priests' in the Church of England are doing the work of Levites'.)

2) The promise, "David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel" is referring to Christ. Consider the context: "Behold, the days come . . ." (v. 14). What days? "In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land" (v. 15). The Branch is singular (i.e. "he") and does not, therefore, refer to a successive line of kings and queens. This description can only refer to Jesus Christ. (For 'Branch' as a title of Christ see Is 4:2; 11:1; Jer 23:5; Zech 3:8; 6:12; Rev 22:16.)

Hosea 3:2 foretold that there would be a period when Israel, "shall abide without a king and without a prince." In Luke 1:31-33 we read of Christ, "...The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the House of Jacob forever; and of His Kingdom shall there be no end." Christ came to be the true King of Israel.

Jer 33:16 — "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness." Neither Judah, Jerusalem nor Great Britain can be said to presently be "saved" or "dwell safely." Certainly today, Great Britain does not merit the description, "The LORD our righteousness." Jeremiah's prophecy has not failed, for it is referring to Christ Who is the Prophet, Priest and the King. The text is a Messianic text. British Israelism not only takes promises given to Israel and applies them to Britain and to the United States, but they also take prophecies that belong to the Saviour and apply them to Britain and to the United States!