

SIXTH EDITION

The British-Israel Theory

*Briefly
Tested
By
Scripture*

By
A. J. POLLOCK



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THE BRITISH-ISRAEL theory asserts that the British nation is the "lost" ten tribes of Israel, with however one modification. It is stated that the tribe of Benjamin, originally belonging to Judah, just before the siege of Jerusalem broke off from Judah, and attached itself to the ten tribes; and that the tribe of Manasseh, identified by the advocates of this theory as the United States of America, broke off at the same time from the ten tribes, thus leaving the number of tribes at the figure ten. This will be referred to later on. The British nation is often spoken of by British-Israelites as Ephraim, seeing that tribe took the lead among the ten, and its name, as a matter of fact, often stands in Scripture for the ten tribes.

We are thankful to state that this theory is not anti-christian in the sense that Spiritualism, Christian Science, Millennial-Dawnism, Christadelphianism and the like are. These different cults differ in details, but they all unite in the fatal error of denying the Godhead of the Lord Jesus, His true humanity, and His atoning work. With these denials these cults are antichristian, and form part of the apostasy foretold by Scripture as coming to pass in the last times.

The adherents of the British-Israel theory can be, and often are, truly converted men and women, but the most of their zeal is displayed in spreading their theory, the chief attraction of which is that, if true, it would make prophecies of the Bible flattering to the national pride of the British and American peoples.

This is not a healthy appeal, for the appeal to natural pride is after all but an appeal to the flesh. "The pride

of life is not of the Father, but is of the world.”
(1 John 2: 16.)

Further, supposing the theory to be true, the Israelite when converted, as likewise the Jew, would necessarily in taking Christian ground give up Israelitish or Jewish hopes. How wrong then for Gentile believers to-day, who never had Jewish and earthly hopes, to give up heavenly hopes in exchange for earthly hopes. For it is said of believers:—

“ Our conversation [Greek, *polituma*, literally **enfranchisement** or **citizenship**] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

(Philippians 3: 20.)

British-Israel writers would drag Christians down from this heavenly citizenship, and connect them with earth. Earthly blessing will be right for Israel in a coming day, but it is not the portion for the Christian to-day. For the moment Israel is set aside. “ Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.” (Romans 11: 25.)

Literature is abundant on the British-Israel theory, but for the purpose of our enquiry we shall quote mainly from two volumes:—

BRITISH-ISRAEL TRUTH*

A Handbook for Enquirers. Edited by the late Ven. Archdeacon Denis Hanan, M.A., D.D. (Author of “ Israel: a Thesis ”) and H. Aldersmith, M.B., F.R.C.S. (Author of “ The Fulness of the Nations ”), published by the Authority of THE IMPERIAL BRITISH-ISRAEL ASSOCIATION. Twelfth Edition. Thirty-first Thousand; and, secondly,

THE LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL,

by the late Reader Harris, K.C., Founder of the Pentecostal League. Second Edition. Twenty-fifth Thousand.

For the sake of brevity in giving quotations from these

* There are ten contributors to this volume, so that it stands for the opinions of representative exponents of British-Israelism.

two volumes, we shall designate the former by the letter "A" and the latter by the letter "B."

It is very manifest, for this theory to succeed, there must be two things:—

1. **Reliable historical proof; and**
2. **Clear, ample Scriptural proof.**

History and Scripture are the two pillars on which this theory must securely rest in order to be proved.

We shall see in the course of our enquiry that Scripture is misinterpreted, misapplied and twisted to suit a theory; whilst for historical proof we are treated to legends, myths, surmises and conjectures.

First, let us look at the historical proofs set forward, if they can be dignified by such a name.

The late Mr. Reader Harris, K.C., who by his profession should have been well versed in the laws of evidence, writes:—

"Much of what I have said rests upon tradition, but tradition is the basis of history, and if we turn from tradition as untrue, we shall lose an important source of knowledge." (B., page 59.)

Now if Mr. Harris had reliable written history to back up his theory, he would not have been slow to furnish it. The fact that there is no appeal to reliable written history is proof that none exists. Tradition at best is a mixture of truth and error, and is very unsafe to build upon. Events handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation are liable to be greatly corrupted in the process, so much so that one never knows where legend ends and history begins.

Let us hear what the Rev. I. M. Condit, M.A., says:—

"Now this multitude which has become so vast [referring to the 'immense multitude of the descendants of the deported Israelites Josephus wrote about] seems* to be identified with the ancient Scythians, and it seems* to be quite as clear that the Scythians are the ancestors of the Saxon race."

* Bold type is ours.

Note that there are two **surmises** in this sentence. First the deported Israelites **seem** to be identified with the ancient Scythians, and they in their turn **seem** to be the ancestors of the Saxon race. If there had been solid history to appeal to we should certainly have had it. If this is a sample of historical proof, it is certainly far from convincing.

Mr. Sharon Turner is **par excellence** the great historian of the British-Israel theory. He is looked up to as a great authority by their writers. Shall we get good reliable history from him? He writes:—

“Of the various Scythian nations which have been recorded the Sakai or Sacea are the people from whom the descent of the Saxons may be inferred with the least violation of probability.”

Note here we have an **inference**. If it is an inference that carries with it “the least violation of probability,” that means in plain English the theory violates probability. On such slender grounds is the historical pillar raised. It has no solid ground to stand on, only the shifting quagmire of surmise, inference, probability. Let the British-Israel writers give us something better than this, if they can.

The late Reader Harris, K.C., writes:—

“What is the meaning of the word, ‘Saxon’? The word Saxon undoubtedly means Isaac’s son or the son of Isaac.” (B., page 52.)

Strange to use the word, “**undoubtedly**,” when this writer resorts to a mere ingenious arrangement of the word without a particle of proof, or proof even attempted. And this from a K.C.!!!

Referring to the names, “Saca, Sachi, Sacki, Sacksen,” the Rev. Mr. Condit, M.A., writes:—

“These names by dropping the initial ‘I’ are easily traced to Isaac; and by adding suffix, ‘on,’ meaning ‘son,’ we easily have ‘Saxon,’ the ‘Son of Isaac’.”

If this is the historical ground of the belief of the adherents of the British-Israel theory we can only marvel at their credulity. Such reasoning might do for children in a fairy story book, but to solemnly present this as historical proof

on a religious subject to reasonable people can only raise a smile, unless indeed it excites righteous indignation that Christians can be found trifling with such solemn subjects. A more bare-faced assumption it would be hard to find. It is pure juggling.

By such methods anything can be manipulated at will. What right has the reverend gentleman and his *confrères* to drop the initial "I," and add the suffix "on"? It would be just as correct to drop the initial "B" in Briton, and make the assertion that the British are the sons of Rit; or "A" in Abel, and identify the first martyr with Bel, the heathen idol of Isaiah 46: 1. Such a contention only proves that the advocates of this theory are hard up for facts. They resort to **pure fancies**.

Again we quote Mr. Reader Harris, K.C.:—

"The word 'Saxon' is traced to Isaac's sons, or sons of Isaac, and is claimed to be a fulfilment of Genesis 21: 12, where we have the prophecy—'In Isaac shall thy seed be called'." (B., page 18.)

Where, we ask, is the word "Saxon" traced to Isaac's sons? It is at best a very clumsy guess. Further, the appeal to Scripture is unfortunate, showing how hard pressed the author is to prove his point. If the reader will turn to Genesis 21 he will find that it was a question between the lad Ishmael, and the infant Isaac. God told Abraham that the promise made to him, that in his seed all nations should be blessed (a prophecy only to be fulfilled in Christ) should come through Isaac, the true child of promise, and not through Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman. Further, Mr. Harris' contention proves too much. Isaac was the progenitor of **ALL the twelve tribes**, and therefore according to Mr. Harris' contention the Jews as well as the "lost" ten tribes must be Saxons. This would prove too much for his theory. In the Bible we never read the expression, **the sons of Isaac**, as meaning more than Esau and Jacob. This is significant in view of the groundless assertions of British-Israelites.

An attempt has been made by British Israel writers to prove that the British Royal Family is descended from the

kings of Judah. This may be very flattering to the British nation, but it is certainly a very curious and illogical claim on the part of British-Israelites. On reflection it is strange to find among the British-Israel nation, a family, and the Royal Family at that, **who are NOT British-Israelites**. We may well ask in astonishment, How comes it that the British royal house, descended, as is claimed, from the Kings of Judah, should be found in British-Israel, descended, as is claimed, from the ten tribes? Why should one family be the exception, and that above all others, the Royal Family? On the face of it the claim is utterly absurd.

Mr. Reader Harris, K.C., writes:—

“ **Tradition*** says that about that time king Heremon married an Eastern princess, whose name was Tea Zephia, and who was **according to Irish legend*** the daughter of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah . . . This daughter of Zedekiah was **apparently*** entrusted by God to the care of the Prophet Jeremiah.” (B., page 60.)

This tradition, even if true, does not help matters. It would not follow; for instance, because King Edward VII married a Danish princess that the British nation is descended from the Danes. If Zedekiah's daughter married an Irish king it would only affect one family and not a nation. And please note the flimsy foundation on which this theory is reared. “ **Tradition,**” “ **according to Irish legend,**” “ **apparently,**” are not the words that carry conviction with them.

A great point, too, is made of the claim that the coronation stone in Westminster Abbey, on which the sovereigns of Great Britain sit when crowned, was the stone on which Jacob's head rested, when asleep he had the vision recorded in Genesis 28: 11-22. This is based by Mr. Reader Harris upon a **tradition** of the Jews, and he says:—

“ There is a good deal of Scripture to support their belief.” (B., page 67.)

If there is “ a good deal of Scripture,” Mr. Harris might have given us a little of it. The very little he does give

* Bold type is ours.

does not convince us that it refers to Jacob's stony pillow at all.

The one Scripture that Mr. Harris refers us to is as follows:—

"This may have been* what Paul referred to in 1 Corinthians 10: 4—'THE ROCK THAT FOLLOWED THEM.' Not the rock that led them, but the rock that followed them. **Perhaps*** this very stone was the one that Moses struck, for the rock that followed them was a moving stone." (B., page 68.)

"May have been" and "perhaps" are not very substantial words for proof.

Why did Mr. Harris not complete the quotation? Let us make good his omission:—

"They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and **THAT ROCK WAS CHRIST.**"

That Rock was not the coronation stone in Westminster Abbey, but was symbolical of Christ. The rock following is a poetical way of stating that the water from the smitten rock miraculously continued to flow, following the children of Israel in their journey in the wilderness, supplying their need of water. It was symbolic of Christ supplying the spiritual needs of His people in the wilderness of this world. When we find this theory resting on wild guesses, and fanciful misinterpretations of Scripture, we know that the British-Israel theory has no solid proof whatever, for its adherents would not have been slow to give real proofs from Scripture and history if such existed.

Professor Canon Rawlinson writes of this history:—

"Such effects as it may have can only be on the ignorant and unlearned—or those who are unaware of the absolute and entire diversity in language, physical type, religious opinions, and manners and customs, between the Israelites and the various races from whom the British nation can be shown historically to be descended."

The "Encyclopædia Britannica" says:—

The theory of Anglo-Israel rests on premises which

* Bold type is ours.

are deemed by scholars both theological and anthropological to be utterly unsound.

With this we are in full accord. A theory that depends on wresting Scripture from its plain meaning and out of its obvious context, as well as withholding Scripture, which would mitigate against and destroy its teaching, is manifestly not of God.

We have seen that of historical proofs British-Israel theory has none. We may now proceed to examine the Scriptural proofs that are advanced by the advocates of British-Israelism.

The Bible states that the ten tribes, which broke loose from the two tribes—Judah and Benjamin—in the reign of King Rehoboam, after a period of wickedness and idolatry lasting about two hundred and sixty years, were deported to Assyria. This was about the year 725 B.C.

We read:—

“In the ninth year of Hoshea, the King of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.” (2 Kings 17: 6.)

But before this time there had been a great admixture of the ten tribes with the two, as we shall see.

To begin with, the sacred tribe, the Levitical, seeing the Temple was at Jerusalem, naturally threw in its lot as a body with the kingdom of Judah. Jeroboam made two calves of gold, turning Israel into an idolatrous land, so as to keep the ten tribes from going up to Jerusalem to worship at the temple. This did not succeed with the Levites for we read:—

“And the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to him out of all their coasts. For the Levites left their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem; for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the Lord.” (2 Chron. 11: 13, 14.)

Moreover whenever there was a godly king in Judah, it was the signal for the godly-minded of the Israelites to forsake the land of idolatry, and throw in their lot with

the Southern kingdom. So we read, in the reign of King Asa:—

“ And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon; for they fell to him out of Israel IN ABUNDANCE, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him.” (2 Chron. 15: 9.)

Again, at another time of happy revival we read of King Jehoshaphat:—

“ He went out again through the people from Beersheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the Lord God of their fathers.” (2 Chron. 19: 4.)

Please note the extent of the royal mission, “ **From Beersheba to Mount Ephraim.**”

Yet British-Israel writers say:—

“ The kingdom of **Judah** continued under Rehoboam, and embraced the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Benjamin, also the Levites, and a few families from the other tribes that happened to be resident within its bounds.”

(A., page 29.)

“A few families from the other tribes that **happened** to be resident within its bounds ” is a strange contrast to the Scripture, “ They fell to him out of Israel in ABUNDANCE, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him.” Surely Archdeacon Hanan must have known of this Scripture.

Nothing could be more striking than the following passage relating to what occurred one hundred years after Israel's deportation.

“ And when they came to Hilkiah the high priest, they delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of **Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel**, and of all Judah and Benjamin.” (2 Chron. 34: 9.)

There is no mistaking this verse. It refers to Manasseh, Ephraim, all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin. It shows how there was largely a blending of the twelve tribes, though, doubtless, the ten tribes were distinct from the two.

Coming to the time of the Captivity it must be borne in mind that when Cyrus, King of Persia, made a proclamation that God had charged him to build Him a house at Jerusalem, he called upon all Israelites in his realm to respond. We read:—

“Who is there among you of all His people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah; and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is the God), which is in Jerusalem.”

(Ezra 1: 3.)

Let it be remembered that before this time the Assyrian kingdom had been incorporated with the Babylonian empire, and that by this time the Babylonian empire itself had passed away. Cyrus succeeded to the empire by force of arms, extending its territories, thus forming the Medo-Persian empire—the second world-empire prophesied in Scripture.

That being so, **both** the ten tribes and the two—**both** Israel and Judah—were in his kingdom. His appeal went forth therefore to **all** Israel.

Naturally the chiefs of Judah and Benjamin responded, seeing the appeal was for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the capital of the Southern Kingdom, indeed of the whole land before the ten tribes broke away. So we read:—

“Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites.”

However, it did not stop there, but Ezra goes on to say,

“With all them whose spirit God had raised.”

(Ezra 1: 5.)

We find the prophet Daniel praying about the same time:—

“O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither Thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against Thee.”

(Daniel 9: 7.)

Evidently Daniel recognised Israel as scattered among the nations, not a compact nation among nations, but as having no territory of its own.

When we come to the New Testament we find no hard and fast distinction between the ten tribes and the two. On the contrary we find **all** Israel recognised in such passages as the following:—

“Unto which promise our **twelve** tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.” (Acts 26: 7.)

In this passage the apostle Paul speaks of the **twelve** tribes, serving God and with one hope. This then is a **fact** not to be disputed. Then again the writer James addresses his epistle:—

“To the **twelve** tribes, which are scattered abroad, greeting.” (Chapter 1: 1.)

Like the Apostle Paul he knows no difference between the ten tribes and the two, but addresses them as “the **twelve** tribes.”

On that great day of Pentecost we find “devout men” in the audience, who came from the very parts to which the ten tribes were deported. We read of:—

“Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia.” (Acts 2: 9.)

And the Apostle Peter, commencing his address, says:—

“Ye men of Judæa and all ye that dwell in Jerusalem” (verse 14),

but later on says:—

“Ye men of Israel” (verse 22),
and again:—

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly” (verse 36),

most evidently addressing the whole **twelve** tribes.

Anna, living at Jerusalem, when our Lord was born, was of the tribe of Aser, one of the ten tribes (see Luke 2: 36).

The Lord said of Nathanael:—

“Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” (John 1: 47),

showing that the word Israelite is applied generally.

The late Rev. David Baron, a well-known Christian of Jewish birth, who carefully examined the British-Israel theory, wrote:—

“The name of ‘Jew’ and ‘Israelite’ became synonymous terms from about the time of the Captivity.

It is one of the absurd fallacies of Anglo-Israelism to presuppose that the term 'Jew' stands only for a bodily descendant of 'Judah.' It stands for all those from among the sons of Jacob who acknowledged themselves, or were considered subjects of the theocratic Kingdom of Judah."

Another quotation from the same author is weighty:—

"Altogether by the application of wild guesswork about historical origins and philological analysis, and by a slavishly literal interpretation (or misapplication) of selected phrases of prophecy, a case is made out for the identification of the British race with the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel sufficient to satisfy uncritical persons desirous of finding their pride of race confirmed by Holy Scriptures. The whole theory rests upon an identification of the word 'isles' in the English version of the Bible unjustified by modern philology which identifies the original word with 'coasts' or 'distant lands,' without any implication of their being surrounded by the sea."

For the advancement of the British-Israel theory its advocates had to take the ground that the ten tribes must be Christianized.

We therefore read:—

"That the house of Joseph must be found Christians in this dispensation and before they return to the land given to their fathers, is evident from Hosea 1: 10; for the prophet when foretelling Israel's increase (that is, the House of Israel, as contradistinguished from the House of Judah—the Jews) into an innumerable multitude, adds that it is then to be said to them, 'Ye are the sons of the living God'." (A., page 86.)

The emphasized words in this passage are as given in the book from which we quote.

It would be well for the reader to turn up the passage quoted, Hosea 1: 10, and note the careless handling of this Scripture. Note two things. It is stated by the British-Israelites that the ten tribes must be found Christians (1) "in this dispensation," and (2) "before they return to the land." Note in the Scripture it distinctly says,

"In the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God."

It was in the land where they were told they were no longer God's people, and it will be in the same land it shall be said to them, "Ye are the sons of the living God," that is in the land of Israel. Hosea wrote over a century before Israel was deported "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel." Evidently this prophecy will not be fulfilled until they come into the land.

Further, it is stated by the British-Israelites to be "in this dispensation." But this is contradicted in the next verse.

"Then shall the children of **Judah** and the children of **Israel** be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel." (Hosea 1: 11.)

Note the time is stated when this happy event will take place. It is when Judah and Israel will be joined together in the land with one King, even the Lord Jesus Christ, their Messiah.

So both as to place and time the British-Israelites are wrong in their contention. It is an instance of how blind a person may be when there is a theory to be proved. Scripture is twisted to fit the theory. When only part of a verse is quoted, and the rest of the verse clearly proves just the opposite of what is stated by the British-Israelites, it shakes one's confidence in anything that they may have to say.

And to contend that the expression, "**Sons of the living God**," must mean the Christianizing of Israel is quite beside the mark. The very same prophecy says,

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called **My son** out of Egypt." (Hosea 11: 1.)

This refers to the time of the Exodus, when the term Israel embraced the whole of the descendants of Jacob. It would be equally poor reasoning and unwarrantable inference to contend from Hosea 11: 1 that the children of Israel were Christianized when in bitter bondage in Egypt, before ever the law was given, as to contend from

Hosea 1: 10 that Israel in contradistinction to Judah was Christianized because of the expression, "Sons of the living God."

God has an earthly people, though under His displeasure at this present time, and He has a heavenly people. To confuse and confound the one with the other, as the British-Israelites do, is to do no good service to either.

The following is a flagrant example of the twisting of Scripture to fit a theory.

"Such a separate existence of the House of Israel in Christian times is taught both by Christ and His apostles. It will be remembered that our Lord mentions some people, whom He calls 'the lost sheep of the House of Israel.' Who, then, were these? Not Jews, for at the time He speaks they were not lost, but all around Him in their own Land. They were not Gentiles or Samaritans, for they are spoken of as distinct from them. It follows, therefore, that they were, what the language naturally implies—viz., those Ten Tribes who long before had been exiled from their home, and had become wanderers among the nations." (A., page 146.)

A reference is made here to the commission given by the Lord to His Twelve Apostles, when He sent them forth on their missionary journeys. They were told not to go to the Gentiles, nor to the Samaritans,

"But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matthew 10: 6.)

It is very evident that our Lord meant that the Apostles were to confine their testimony to the land of Israel, and in the lifetime of our Lord they preached the gospel of the kingdom, confining themselves to that land as the result of their commission.

Again we read:—

"The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19: 10.)

How absurd it would be to limit that verse to the ten tribes. How narrowing to Scripture to the extent of absurdity are the theories of British-Israelism. Surely the "lost" in this verse refers to the **spiritually** lost.

So we have the Good Shepherd saying,

“ Rejoice with Me: for I have found My sheep which was lost.” (Luke 15: 6).

On the face of it, it would not do to limit the thought of “ lost,” to being lost nationally, as British-Israelites would seek to make out.

Lastly when the Canaanitish woman begged the Lord to heal her demon-possessed daughter, in order to test her faith, He said to her,

“ I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matthew 15: 24.)

What would the Canaanitish woman understand by this statement? Surely that the mission of the Lord was to His own people.

“ He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” (John 1: 11.)

Would a British-Israelite be so carried away by his theory as to degrade common sense by supposing that the heathen woman would understand that the Lord was sent to the “ lost ” ten tribes? What about the two tribes? Was He not sent to them?

As a matter of fact the Lord never put foot outside the land of Israel, so far as the record of Scripture goes.

If His mission had been to the lost ten tribes then we have the spectacle of the perfect Servant of God entirely neglecting the mission that was given to Him by God.

Our contention is further strengthened when we see the careful distinction Scripture makes between the two words—**lost** and **scattered**—as used in reference to Israel. The former word refers to a **spiritual** condition, the latter to a **physical** and **geographical** condition.

There are two Scriptures in the Old Testament where these two words are used in close proximity to each other.

“ My people hath been lost sheep.” (Jeremiah 50: 6.) clearly noting their **spiritual** condition in their own land; whereas we read lower down in the chapter,

“ Israel is a **scattered** sheep . . . this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones.”

(Jeremiah 50: 17.)

as clearly referring to a **physical** and **geographical** dispersion.

Ezekiel 34: 4-6, likewise shows up the distinction between **lost** and **scattered** very clearly:—

“ Neither have ye sought that which was **lost**; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were **scattered** . . . yea, My flock was **scattered** upon all the face of the earth.”

In the New Testament the Apostle Peter addressed his inspired Epistle to

“ The strangers **scattered** [Greek, **diaspora**] throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia.”
(1 Peter 1: 1.)

Indeed the word, **diaspora**, a pure Greek word, has been transliterated, and has found its way into the English language. The dictionary gives the meaning, “ dispersion, used collectively for the dispersed Jews after the Babylonian captivity, and also in the apostolic age for the Jews living outside of Palestine.”

On a par with the foregoing we quote the interpretation given by British-Israel writers of John 11: 49-52.

“ Then there is the remarkable prophecy of Caiaphas:—‘ And one of them, **named** Caiaphas, being the high priest, that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all.

Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

And this spake he not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation.

And not for that nation only [i.e. the Jews], but that He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.’ (John 11: 49-52.)

The ‘ children of God,’ ‘ scattered abroad ’—not belonging to the Jewish nation—in Caiaphas’ time must have been the cast-out ‘ House of Israel ’.” (A., pages 76, 77.)

Here again we get the same obsession. Surely the contrast here is between the Jewish nation, and the blessing that would extend among the Gentile nations, Jew and Gentile

believers formed into the one great family of God, the middle wall of partition broken down.

Moreover James in the memorable council at Jerusalem, when the question of Judaizing the Gentile Christians was debated, refers to the Apostle Peter,

“ Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles [Greek, *ethnos*], to take out of them a people [Greek, *laos*] for His Name.” (Acts 15: 14.)

There is no such thing as a Christian **nation** [Greek, *ethnos*], in God's ways, but out of the nations God selects a **people** [Greek, *laos*] for Himself. The thought of a Christian nation in this dispensation receives no support from Scripture. The idea of the ten tribes being found a Christian nation, and identified with the British nation, is clearly unsupported by Scripture.

In the attempt to make Scripture fit the theory we get the following:—

“ St. Peter tells us that these scattered Israelites—the cast out Ten Tribes—the ‘ Sojourners of the Dispersion ’ had obtained the promised mercy in his day, i.e., in the then commencing ‘ latter days.’ It is impossible to give this prophecy any other intelligible interpretation, because the Gentiles, or heathen nations, had never been ‘ scattered abroad,’ and the expression ‘ children of God ’ must here apply ‘ to the elect,’ or the chosen covenant people of God.” (A., page 77.)

Archdeacon Hanan says, “ It is impossible to give this prophecy any other intelligible interpretation.” Of course he is quite right in the statement that the Gentiles had never been scattered abroad, but had he never read about the great persecution that arose against the Christian church in Jerusalem, and the consequent **scattering** of the early Christians? We read:—

“ And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all **SCATTERED** ABROAD throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles. Therefore they that were **SCATTERED ABROAD** went everywhere preaching the word.” (Acts 8: 1, 4.)

It may be contended that this scattering only extended to Judæa and Samaria, but note "they . . . went EVERYWHERE preaching the word." This is amply confirmed by the verse,

"Now they which were SCATTERED ABROAD upon the persecution that arose about Stephen [the time referred to in Acts 8: 1, 4] travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only." (Acts 11: 19.)

Is it not an intelligible interpretation to say that the Apostle Peter wrote to **the believing Jews** that were SCATTERED ABROAD as the result of this persecution?

And why cannot the expression, "elect" and "children of God," apply to converted Jews and converted Gentiles? Why must these terms be limited to the ten tribes, and filched from the members of the Christian church?

Further, the advocates of this theory land themselves into contradictions. According to them we have the ten tribes Christianized and the Apostle Peter addressing them in his two epistles. If the ten tribes were Christianized in those early days, what became of their Christianity when they became known as the warlike Scythian nation? Were the Saxons, supposed by British-Israelites to be descended from the Scythians, Christian? Was Britain Christianized when the fierce Saxons conquered the ancient Britons? If the stream flowed on in heathen channels centuries after the Apostle Peter wrote his epistles, is it likely that it had a Christian source then? The question answers itself.

The British-Israel writers assure us that it is impossible to give this prophecy any other intelligible interpretation than what they have given. We contend their interpretation is impossible and unintelligible, doing violence to the truth of Scripture, robbing the Christians of this dispensation of their distinctive blessings.

It is bad enough when British-Israelite writers apply (1) Christian blessings to Israel, and so deny Christianity proper; and (2) blessings that apply to ALL Israel, to "Israel" in contradistinction to "Judah"; but (3) when

they ascribe to Israel the fulfilment of prophecies clearly relating to the Lord Jesus Christ it is far worse.

For instance, the reader will remember the dream that Nebuchadnezzar had of the great image, with head of gold, with breast and arms of silver, with belly and thighs of brass, with legs of iron, and feet part iron and part clay, and how a stone cut out without hands smote the image, destroyed it, grew to be a great mountain, filling the whole earth.

Archdeacon Hanan writes:—

“What is this kingdom of the mountain that is to stand ‘for ever’? It is undoubtedly not Christ Himself for He is to reign over it . . . This kingdom of the mountain, which is to stand ‘for ever’ is no new power, but is formed by the expansion of the stone kingdom itself . . . Christ personally is not ‘the stone’ that smites the image of Daniel, for that ‘stone’ is a kingdom, and moreover, the kingdom over which He Himself, with His saints, has to reign.”

(A., pages 67, 68.)

One of the contentions of this quotation is that the stone cannot be Christ Himself for He has to reign over the stone kingdom. But the passage itself furnishes an example where the ruler and his kingdom are spoken of interchangeably. The head of gold in the vision was symbolic of the Babylonian Empire, and yet the prophet said to the king,

“Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee.”

(Daniel 2: 38, 39.)

This is clearly a case where a king and his kingdom are interchangeable.

Further, Scripture speaks of Christ under the symbol of a stone. When the Lord used the parable of the vineyard being given to others, and the husbandmen destroyed, the chief priests and scribes and elders saw that the parable meant the destruction of their nation, and they cried out, “God forbid.” We know that it was actually fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, the Gentiles taking possession of the Holy Land, and the Jews being dispersed among the nations.

The Lord replied,

"Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner . . . ?"

"Therefore say I unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

"And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." (Matthew 21: 42-44.)

Who is meant by the stone? Scripture clearly states that it stands for Christ Himself. We read,

"Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone."
(Ephesians 2: 20.)

"Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him [a Person] shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient." (1 Peter 2: 6-8.)

Two things are proved by these Scriptures. (1) Christ is presented under the symbol of a stone; and (2) that the stone shall fall upon the enemies of God, and grind them to powder. To make out that this stone in Daniel 2 sets forth the ten tribes of Israel is to ignore the plain meaning of this passage, and substitute for it a fanciful interpretation that breaks down at every point. It is to make a rôle for the ten tribes in a future day that would becloud the very glory of Christ.

Instead of Israel being triumphant in the last days, smiting the ten toes of the image (the Roman Empire revived), we find her sorely pressed by her enemies, and but, for the timely intervention of the Lord, utterly destroyed. As narrated in Zechariah 14, deliverance will come when Christ's feet shall stand on the mount of Olives, and the mount shall be cleft in twain, making a way of escape for His people.

Is it to be the British nation that is to break up the Roman Empire in the last days? Nay, Britain was part of the old Roman Empire, and will be part of the revived Roman Empire, which will be destroyed by Christ Himself.

It will be the Lord and not Israel, that shall bring deliverance and victory. Revelation 19 gives us the Battle of Armageddon, mentioned as the place of conflict in Revelation 16: 16, when "the stone cut out without hands" (could such a description possibly apply to the ten tribes?) will smite the feet of the image; in other words Christ shall bring the Gentile domination to an end. Delivering His people, subduing the power of the enemy, He shall set up His millennial kingdom, which indeed shall grow, and fill the whole earth.

When this happens it will be that Judah and Israel shall be reunited according to Scripture.

Just here it will be well to have a clear understanding of what British-Israelites mean by "Israel." It is difficult to follow all the guesses that are made.

The late Edward Hine (1826-1891), one of the pioneers of the theory, wrote:—

"It is not true that all the ten tribes were carried into the Assyrian captivity; some of them escaped: those that were carried captive and those that escaped are both directed by Scripture to the same meeting place of 'the isles' (Isaiah 66: 19). We are not told the names of the tribes that escaped, but most reasonable suppositions would point to those of Dan and Simeon."

Here we are given "most reasonable suppositions." Why these "**suppositions**"? Whatever British-Israel writer we turn to, we get these "**suppositions**." Then building on this "most reasonable supposition," Mr. Hine informs us dogmatically that the tribe of Dan settled in Ireland, and the tribe of Simeon on the West Coast of Scotland. What is missing in fact is made up in confident assertion with no real proof behind it. It is an old trick for a writer to make a surmise, and then treat the surmise as a fact, and build upon it. It is the old story of the house built on sand, "Great was the fall of it." (Matthew 7: 27.)

Again the same author writes:—

“ Up to the siege of Jerusalem under Titus, the House of Judah contained the Tribe of Benjamin. But that tribe separated from Judah before the siege, by virtue of the prophecy commanding them to do so (Jeremiah 6: 1), so that Benjamin is not now with Judah.”

All this astonishing information is given to us without any historical proof whatever.

Mr. Reader Harris, K.C., goes a step further. He quotes,
“ Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf.” (Genesis 49: 27.)

He then proceeds to state that to ravin was a characteristic of the Normans, or Northmen, and that the wolf was the emblem of the tribe of Benjamin, as it was of the Normans. There is no proof that the wolf was the emblem of the Benjamites. It is true that they are likened to a wolf in their ravening propensities. On these slender grounds Mr. Harris says,

“ These Northmen are believed to be part of the tribe of Benjamin.” (B., page 98.)

Mr. Harris is not consistent. If the wolf be the emblem of the Benjamites and of the Normans, and therefore the Normans are Benjamites, it follows that the lion being the emblem of Judah and of Great Britain, the British are Jews. But this would prove too much for Mr. Reader Harris, for according to him the British are Ephraimites.

We have dealt with the Saxons and Normans, and would here like to ask a question. There were Saxons left in Germany when many of them adventured forth to conquer England; there were many Normans left in Normandy when William the Conqueror invaded this country. There are many Saxons* in Germany, and many Normans in France to-day. What becomes of these Saxons and Normans, the former according to British-Israelites “ sons of Isaac,” the latter descendants of Benjamin?

* The Anglo-Saxons migrated from Saxony, a province in Prussia, and not from the kingdom of Saxony, since the first great world war a part of the German Republic.

They are apparently without their birthright, they are of no account to British-Israelites, they are conveniently ignored, as will be seen by the following.

When the late Mr. Edward Hine was a youth, he heard a lecture delivered by Mr. John Wilson, one of the very earliest pioneers of this theory we are considering.

Mr. Hine writes,

“ The main point of my differing with the late Mr. John Wilson, author of ‘ Our Israelitish Origin,’ is that he sought to identify all the Modern Teutonic Nations as parts of Israel.”

Mr. Hine was terribly upset with this idea, which seems to be true, if the point could be proved that the Saxons were the ancient Scythians, and they in turn the “ lost ” ten tribes.

Mr. Hine continues,

“ I stoutly maintain that to accept this view would lead us to terrible inconveniences and calamities . . . Hence Mr. Wilson’s view, in my judgment, does violence to Scripture, and would destroy the prophets. Scores of reasons can be advanced in support of this judgment.”

Why does he not give us one or two out of these scores of reasons?

The British nation is identified as Ephraim, as Ephraim was the possessor of the birthright of Joseph, and stands in Scripture for the ten tribes oftentimes. Then the United States of America are identified as Manasseh. On the addition of Benjamin to the ten tribes Manasseh ceased to belong to Israel, so we are told, but again without any proof.

The late Mr. Edward Hine wrote:—

“ Manasseh is a thirteenth tribe . . . Therefore in seeking for Lost Israel, we need not deal with Manasseh for the present.”

But where does Scripture speak of a thirteenth tribe?

It is like a jigsaw puzzle to follow the guesses and dogmatic assertions of the British-Israelites. The following will give some idea of what is asserted by them.

British-Israel Truth gives us on pages 81-83 nineteen marks which are given as proofs that the British nation stands for Ephraim-Israel, and the United States of America as Manasseh-Israel.

Let us test a few of these proofs briefly. We read:—

- (1) "A great and mighty nation."
(Genesis 12: 2; 18: 18.)

This promise was made to Abraham personally in the two Scriptures given as proof. What right have British-Israelites to filch this from the twelve tribes, and allocate it to the ten? These Scriptures will be fulfilled when Judah and Israel are united in the land under the millennial reign of Christ. To read into this promise—given to Abraham, and surely applying to ALL his descendants in the line of promise—a special meaning is unwarrantable.

We read:—

- (2) Possessing "the gate of his enemies."
Genesis 22: 17; 24: 60.)

This is said to point to Gibraltar, Malta, Port Said, Suez, Singapore, etc., but in the first Scripture the promise is again made to Abraham, and includes the **whole** of the **TWELVE** tribes. Nor must the British-Israelite come to the conclusion that this prophecy, "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies," has not been fulfilled. Doubtless its fulfilment will be complete in the coming day, when our Lord shall roll back the hordes of enemies raised up by Satanic power in the last days. His people shall indeed possess the gate of their enemies. See Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39.

But centuries before British-Israel theory was ever thought of, this prophecy received a partial and striking fulfilment. Canaan was the land that was bitterly opposed to God's people. Joshua led the armies of Israel into Canaan, conquered these Canaanitish nations, dispossessed them of their territory, and established the Israelites in the land of God's promise. Surely this was in measure a fulfilment of the prophecy, "Thy seed shall possess the

gate of his enemies." We have a list of their enemies in Gen. 15: 19-21—Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaims, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, Jebusites. The children of Israel, when they got possession of the land God had promised to Abraham, would not be slow to see how wonderfully God had fulfilled His promise in this particular.

We read:—

(3) "A nation and a company of nations."

(Genesis 35: 11; 48: 4.)

Both passages refer to Jacob, the second where the patriarch told his son Joseph that God had promised to make of him a multitude of people, the former referring to the time in Padan-aram when God blessed Jacob and promised that from him should come a nation and a company of nations, and that kings should come out of his loins.

This is said by British-Israelites to refer to the great nations of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, etc. But again we note that Jacob was the progenitor of the twelve tribes, and why should this promise be limited to the ten tribes? Certainly kings came out of the loins of Jacob, as witness the long line from David to Zedekiah. A nation the children of Israel became, and the twelve tribes were like twelve nations composing the nation, just as we say that Britain is made up of the English, Scottish and Welsh nations; nations making one nation. The word, nation, was used to describe small tribes in the Biblical days. Read Joshua 23, where Joshua spoke of the nations, which the children of Israel dispossessed in the land. The land contained a number of what we should call petty nations, dignified by that name in those days. Joshua 8: 2 speaks of Jericho and her king, and Ai and her king, showing how very small these kingdoms were compared to our present-day ideas. Jericho was a small, walled border town, covering only an area of seven acres. Ai was still smaller. In these days we should designate their kings as headmen or sheiks.

The whole of Palestine covers only 6,000 square miles. The county of Yorkshire covers 6,066 square miles. Wales

covers 7,446 square miles. By these comparisons we can see what a little country the land of Palestine is.

We read:—

(4) "Under the new covenant, and therefore Christians." (Hosea 1: 10; 2: 23; Isaiah 42: 4, 6-8, 16-19; 44: 21, 22; Jeremiah 31: 31-34; Hebrews 8: 8; Ezekiel 11: 16; 20: 35-37; Zechariah 10: 9.)

Hosea 1: 11 plainly says it is when Judah and the children of Israel are gathered together that the blessing shall take place. It in no wise applies to the ten tribes becoming Christians. Isaiah 42: 4, etc., refers to Israel blessed UNDER CHRIST in the future day, and not to the present time at all. Jeremiah 31 and Hebrews 8 refer to the new covenant, and tell us that this will be made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not with the house of Israel alone. The British-Israelites would make this to be already made with the ten tribes, but the passage is plain that it will be with the house of Judah as well as of Israel, and that in the future. So we might comment on all the passages quoted. Enough has been said to show how obsessed the British-Israelites are in making every Scripture fit in with their theory.

Even the Christian is not under the new covenant, though he has the blessings of it through the death of Christ, for it is not yet made. That day is still future. When it is publicly made with Israel, it will mean the ushering in of the millennium.

We read:—

(5) "The chief of the nations, Ephraim-Israel."
(Jeremiah 31: 7.)

Let us quote the proof passage in full:—

"For there shall be a day, that the watchman upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, 'Arise and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God. For thus saith the Lord; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations; publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save Thy people, the remnant of Israel.'" (Jer. 31: 6, 7.)

Really one is weary of pointing out the extraordinary slovenliness of British-Israel exegesis. It is unpardonable.

This passage **does not** say that "Israel" is "the chief of the nations," but it is a call of joy **among** the chief of the nations. Israel means there the whole twelve tribes.

We read:—

(6) "Manasseh-Israel to be 'A great people'; but Ephraim-Israel is to be 'greater than he,' and is to become 'a fulness of nations'."

Genesis 48: 19; Romans 11: 25.)

According to British-Israel writers the British Empire (omitting the coloured races within it) stands for Ephraim, as meaning the ten tribes with the addition of Benjamin, and the exclusion of Manasseh, as we have seen.

The two proof texts are evidently chosen because a multitude (margin Heb. **fulness**) of nations (Gen. 48: 19) **seems** to correspond with the expression, "Fulness of the Gentiles." (Rom. 11: 25.)

A very brief examination of Rom. 11: 25, will completely destroy this seeming connection. The "British-Israel Truth" writer is carried away by his obsession into a complete absurdity. Rom. 11: 25, 26 reads:—

"Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Be it observed:

- (1) Israel and Jacob stand for the whole twelve tribes.
- (2) Blindness happens to Israel **till** the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. British-Israel writers contend that "Israel" is not blind but Christianized, and is the fulness of the Gentiles, thus contradicting the plain statement of this verse.
- (3) It is **consequent** on and **subsequent** to "the fulness of the Gentiles" being come in that Israel (the whole twelve tribes) shall be saved.
- (4) Their salvation is dependent on the Deliverer (Christ) coming out of Sion; a prophecy of the day when Christ shall return to this earth, deliver His people, and set up His millennial kingdom. Then, and not till then shall ungodliness be turned from Jacob.

“ **The fulness of the Gentiles** ” is an expression showing how spiritual blessing shall reach out to the Gentiles, which when completed, “ **the blindness in part** ” which has governmentally happened to Israel will be lifted, and Judah and Israel as a united nation will come in for blessing under Christ.

As for the United States of America being Manasseh, where is the proof of this? It is simply a guess like the rest. How were the United States formed? To begin with it was by the Pilgrim Fathers forming a settlement in that vast land. They were British, and according to this theory Ephraimites. How did they become Manassehites? They started from English shores Ephraimites, according to this theory. How and when and where did they become Manassehites? We know that this country is to-day a composite nation made up of the blending of British, German, Swede, Pole, Italian, Russian, negro and every nation under the sun. Cold facts are against the wild guesses of the British-Israelites.

We have not space to go over the nineteen marks given us to prove that Britain is Ephraim. They are no more convincing than those we have examined. Scripture is twisted out of its setting in the attempt to prove the theory. We will, however, pass on to proof 16.

We read:—

(16) “ Possessed of enormous wealth, and thereby enabled to lend to all nations, but to borrow of none; and is also to rule over many nations, but never to be ruled over by them.” (Deuteronomy 8: 18; 15: 6.)

In both of these proof texts it is Moses who is addressing the WHOLE of the twelve tribes. Again we see how the two tribes are robbed of these promises that are as much for them as for the ten. Moreover the promise is to the people WHEN in the land, and contingent on their obedience. It was remarkable how that little land stood up against mighty lands such as the Egyptians, Assyrians, Amorites, etc., and were unassailable as long as they honoured Jehovah.

As to lending money, it is well known that the **Jews** have been the great money-lenders of the world. But that day is now over. Britain, as the result of the second great world war, is no longer a credit nation, but is heavily in debt, and in no position to lend.

We read:—

(18) "Observing the Sabbath, thus showing that they possess the 'sign of the Sabbath' given only to Israel, as a sign between the Lord and the children of Israel for ever, for a perpetual covenant."

(Exodus 31: 13, 16, 17; Ezekiel 20: 12-20.)

Again we have to point out, at the risk of wearying the reader, that these two Scriptures refer to the **WHOLE** twelve tribes, and there is not a shred of reference to the ten tribes as such. The Sabbath in these proof passages refers to the **SEVENTH** day of the week, and this the British nation does not keep. It is one of the reproaches that the Apostle Paul pressed upon the Galatian churches that they were lapsing into Judaism and law keeping, that they were observing days and months and times and years; that is, reviving the keeping of the Sabbath, and the observing of Jewish feasts. The same Apostle exhorted the Colossian believers to allow no one to bring them into bondage in respect of Sabbath days. So we read:—

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the **SABBATH DAYS**:

Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body [the substance, the fulfilment] is of Christ."

(Colossians 2: 16, 17.)

It is the conflict between Judaism and Christianity over again. In this the British-Israel writers deny Christianity in its true and proper character.

It is true, of course, that Judah and Israel will be joined in a coming day. Ezekiel, the prophet, is bidden to take a stick and write upon it, "For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions," and to take another stick and write upon it, "For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions." He was then bidden to join them into one stick. When the prophet

should be asked what he meant by these actions, he was bidden to reply,

“ Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and there shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.” (Ezekiel 37: 21, 22.)

What a wonderful day that will be!

“ For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” (Romans 11: 15.)

Hallelujah! Christ will reign.

“ He'll bid the whole creation smile,
And hush its groan.”

But before that day comes, the Christian church will have been raptured to glory; the earth, and specially Israel, will be visited by God's governmental judgments, as foretold in the Book of Revelation, till repentance is produced and Christ shall come to reign. Lord haste that day when Thou shalt have Thy rights over Thy earthly people, as we pray Thou mayest have them over us, Thy heavenly saints waiting for the summoning shout of our Lord (1 Thessalonians 4: 16).

May God be pleased to use this pamphlet for His glory to the deliverance of many from this mischievous theory of British Israelism, and for the instruction of His people in some little measure in the true character of Christianity. Amen.

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