



The British-Israel Myth

- Christian Identity and the Lost Tribes of Israel

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*“Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies,
which minister questions,
rather than godly edifying which is in faith”*

-- First Timothy 1:4, King James Version

1 INTRODUCTION

In his book *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler talked of an Aryan super-race that was destined to rule the world. The Jews were an obstacle to Hitler's 'glorious vision'. And so followed the extermination of Jews and other minorities of Europe, which was indisputably one of the darkest periods of human history.

Racism is not confined to the secular world. Some bible-based organizations and churches teach that the white races hold a privileged position, and that God specially blesses the Anglo-Saxons. They often also teach that God has cursed the Jewish race. One such justification for racism is called the 'British-Israel' or 'Anglo-Israel' theory. One particular church that used to teach the British-Israel message, but has had a change of heart, now writes "It saddens us when Christians erroneously justify their racist attitudes through misuse and misunderstanding of the Bible".¹

Throughout the American 'Bible-Belt', the British-Israelism teaching flourishes. These *Christian Identity* groups, as they call themselves, have asserted themselves throughout the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and other European nations. Nevertheless, as one author notes, "it is astounding how

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little serious attention has been paid to the subject by mainstream Christian denominations.”²

British-Israelism, or Anglo-Israelism, is a theory that identifies the Anglo-Saxon race with the ‘Ten Lost Tribes’ of Israel. It is said that promises given to Israel in Scripture will be fulfilled in Britain, America, and other Anglo-Saxon countries.³

There are dramatic and real-world implications of the British-Israel teachings. Timothy McVeigh, the now executed Oklahoma City bomber had ties to ‘Elohim City’. A bearded former Canadian Mennonite preacher named Robert Millar leads Elohim City. The seventy-five men, women, and children who live at Elohim City are adherents to the belief in British-Israelism.⁴ The alleged bomber of the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, Eric Rudolph, had links to British-Israelism. The Sydney Morning Herald reads, “Federal investigators believe Rudolph, 36, has had a long association with the radical Christian Identity movement, which believes North European whites are the direct descendants of the lost tribes of Israel”.⁵

The British-Israel teaching is incorrect. *The Encyclopedia Britannica* says, “The theory [of British-Israelism] ... rests on premises which are deemed by scholars - both theological and anthropological - to be utterly unsound”.⁶

Morris Silverman, Assistant Professor of History at Yeshiva University, New York, agrees that the theory is wrong. In *Time* magazine, he noted, “The British-Israel theory is complete nonsense, as anyone with the slightest knowledge of history, anthropology or philology can tell”.⁷

The British Encyclopedia notes that:

the fate of these ‘lost tribes’ and the identity of their descendants has long been a matter of curious and, for the most part, extremely fanciful speculation. The Anglo-Israelite theory, which would identify the missing tribes with the Anglo-Saxon race, has found many supporters, but possesses little or no solid grounds for serious consideration.⁸

David MacDonald, from the Illinois State University History Department, writes that:

The concept that the ten tribes [...] moved to Europe is a complete myth [...] Nothing — not archaeology, cultural history, or linguistics--gives the slightest credibility to this myth--or to the similar myth that the French are descendants of the Trojans. The Scots have a similar myth that they are descendants of the ancient Hebrews, and similar claims of descent from other ancient peoples can be found for virtually every group in Europe — all no more than absolute fantasy”.⁹

It is one thing, however, to lightly discount the British-Israel teaching; and it is another thing to explain why it is wrong.

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There are mountains of cleverly written pamphlets and books promoting British-Israelism. In many countries, the early morning television time-slots are clogged with organizations promoting British-Israelism. There are many well-meaning - but wrong- people who teach British-Israelism; and there are also those who teach the message out of wrong motives. There are many apparently good arguments.

It is completely right to examine every message, messenger, and method according to the Word of God. The apostle Paul wrote “keep an eye on those who cause dissention and offenses, in opposition to the teaching that you have learned; avoid them” (Romans 16:17). To Titus, he wrote, “preach with sound doctrine and ... refute those who contradict it”. He continued, “There are also many rebellious people, idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision; they must be silenced ... rebuke them sharply” (Titus 1:9-13).

The purpose of the book is to provide a Christian answer to the British-Israel theory. The Christian Identity teaching holds that the Aryan races are God’s chosen people. The Aryans are supposedly superior to other races: races that some writers claim are descended from animals. The teaching has led to terrorist acts. The claims of British-Israelism must be answered.

The Tribes of Judah and the Tribes of Israel are not one and the same. Israel and Judah were once united. Saul, in about 1117 B.C.E., first

ruled over a ‘united’ kingdom of Israel and Judah (1 Samuel 8:4-9). But then in about 998 B.C.E. the kingdom was split in two after the death of Solomon. The Tribes of Judah supported King Rehoboam, while the Tribes of Israel supported Jeroboam (1 Kings 11:29-37). The distinction between the Tribes of Israel and Judah is made clear when we see that there was even conflict between them on occasion (1 Kings 14:30; 15:7,16).

The Ten Tribes of Israel in the North were Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Zebulun, Issachar, Joseph (Manasseh and Ephraim), Gad, Levi, Reuben and Simeon.¹⁰ The two Tribes of Judah in the south were Judah and Benjamin.

For centuries, the Lord had promised that he would

scatter the tribes if they disobeyed him: “if you will not obey the Lord your God by diligently observing all his commandments and decrees ... the Lord will bring you, and the king whom you

2 BRITISH-ISRAELISM DOCTRINE

2.1 SCATTERING OF THE TRIBES

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set over you, to a nation that neither you or your ancestors have known” (Deuteronomy 28:15, 36, 48, 61). Many prophets repeated the threat for hundreds of years.¹¹

However, the tribes continued to disobey God. In fulfillment of prophecy, the Tribes of Israel and Judah were taken captive by the Assyrian and Babylonian armies and exiled to Mesopotamia.

There were two main captivities. First came the captivity of Israel (the ten Northern Tribes) by the Assyrians in about 721 B.C.E., then Judah (the two Southern Tribes) was taken into captivity by the Babylonians in about 586 B.C.E.. The importance of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities should not be understated. It is impossible to make sense of Bible history without a deep respect for the impact and implications of the captivities.

The Israelites were exiled by the Assyrian rulers Pul (Tiglath-Pileser III) and Shalmaneser V (2 Kings 15:29; 16:6; 17:5-24). Assyrian inscriptions confirm the deportation.¹² The Assyrians exiled the Israelites into Media and some Assyrian towns (2 Samuel 7:10; Jeremiah 29:4-7). The Assyrians repopulated Israel with people from Babylon and the surrounding areas - the people who later became known as the Samaritans (2 Kings 17:24). A scribe noted that, “the Lord

removed Israel out of his sight, as he had foretold through all his servants the prophets. So Israel was exiled from their own land to Assyria until this day” (2 Kings 17:23).

Judah’s later exile was related. Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar took the two Southern tribes of Judah captive. The House of Judah was exiled to Babylon, to the south of Assyria. The Babylonian captivity is made famous by Psalm 137, “By the rivers of Babylon - there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion”. The book of Lamentations was also written to describe the plight of exiled Judah.

King Cyrus of Persia eventually signed a decree allowing the captive Tribes to return to Canaan (2 Chronicles 36:22). However, according to some, only the Tribes of Judah returned. Sensationalists say that the Israelite Tribes never returned to Canaan but became the ‘Ten Lost Tribes’.

Many peoples have, at times, claimed to be descended from these Lost Tribes. Among them: the Nestorians, tribes discussed in the Book of Mormon, the Afghans, the Falashas of Ethiopia, the American Indians, and even the Japanese!¹³ The *Encyclopedia Judaica* notes that, “Various theories, one more far fetched than the other, have been adduced, on the flimsiest of evidence, to identify different peoples with the ten lost tribes”.¹⁴ British-Israelism puts the Lost Tribes in Britain.

First, many British-Israel writers say that even before the Captivity of Israel, by

about 1500 B.C.E., there was interaction between the Tribe of Dan and Ireland. The Tribe of Dan was a seafaring tribe (Judges 5:17), and it is suggested that they traded with and moved to Greece. Later, it is said that they moved to Ireland. They are equated with the Tuatha Dé Danann described in the Irish *Book of Invasions* (written ninth century C.E.). Some books skip over this part of British-Israelism.

2.2 THE BRITISH-ISRAEL CHRONOLOGY

Second, British-Israelites suggest that about 580 B.C.E., the Throne of David was transferred from Israel to Ireland. The daughters of King Zedekiah, escaping the Babylonian captivity of Judah, were taken to Egypt by Jeremiah and his scribe Baruch (Jeremiah 43:4-7). It is suggested that they then made their way for Spain, and from there to Ireland. It is said that one of the king's daughters, Tamar Tephi, married the Irish King Eochaidh (who also was allegedly Judean) and replanted the Throne of David in the new land. Allegedly, Tamar Tephi took with her from Palestine 'Jacob's Pillar', identified today with the coronation stone in Westminster Abbey. The current British monarchs, who are said to be the successors of Tamar Tephi and Eochaidh, are therefore considered the Kings and Queens of Israel.

Third, it is suggested that, during about the sixth century C.E., the Ten Tribes of the Assyrian captivity migrated across Europe. Allegedly, they were known as the Scythians during Christ's time. They became known as the Sacae, and finally as Saxons (Anglo-Saxons). Invading Britain in the sixth centuries from Germany, it is said that they made Britain the new Israel.

2.3 RICHARD BROTHERS

These teachings of British-Israelism were first hinted at by the British Member of Parliament, John Sadler, in his *Rights of the Kingdom* (1649). But the movement began in the eighteenth century after the self-styled 'Nephew of the Almighty', Richard Brothers, published his book *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times* (1794).¹⁵ Brothers was, as one source puts it, "a Canadian madman". He became troubled by visions, and said that the British parliament was the 'beast' of Revelation. Brothers believed he was a descendant of King David, and that only he had the right to be king of England. Unfortunately for him, King George III disagreed. Brothers was confined in a mental asylum from 1795-1806. Despite this, and the failure of his prophecy that Jerusalem would be restored to the Hebrews in 1798, his movement flourished.¹⁶ By the end of the nineteenth century,

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there were said to number two million adherents of British-Israelism, most of them Church of England members.¹⁷

The main pillar of the Christian Identity theory is the concept that the Tribes of Israel (exiled to Media) never returned to the lands of Canaan. They say that only the Tribes of Judah (exiled to Babylon) returned. A famous

book written by once leader of the Worldwide Church of God, Herbert Armstrong, reads “The house of Israel did *not* return to Palestine with the Jews in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, as some erroneously believe. Those who returned ... were only those of the house of Judah”.¹⁸ If this idea is wrong - if Israelites did return to the lands of Canaan - it means that the whole concept of the ‘Lost Tribes’ is also wrong.

In about 530B.C.E., Persian King Cyrus II issued an ‘edict’, or command, permitting the Hebrew captives to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-4). Many Hebrews, including women and children, returned to Jerusalem (Ezra 4:1). In 468B.C.E., more captives returned to Canaan with Ezra (Ezra 7:1-8:32). Even more may have returned with Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2:5, 6, 11; 13:6, 7).

3 BRITISH- ISRAELISM EXAMINED BY SCRIPTURE

3.1 ACCOUNTS OF THE TRIBE’S RETURN

Here is the first actual mention of Cyrus's edict from the Second book of Chronicles (chapter 36:20-23, italics mine):

the Lord stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus the Great of Persia so that *he sent a herald throughout all his kingdom* and also declared in a written edict: 'Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. *Whoever is among you of all his people*, may the Lord his God be with him! Let him go up'.

British-Israelites say that this edict only released the Tribe of Judah to return to Canaan. According to them, the Tribes of Israel were never released - but instead became lost and wandered through Europe.

So, the question becomes:
did Cyrus' edict mean only

3.2 KING CYRUS

that Judah should return to Canaan? Or did it mean that both Tribes should return? Well, who was Cyrus? He was no ordinary man. A hundred years before he was born, God through the prophet Isaiah told of Cyrus' birth and the deeds he would do during his life. In one astounding prophecy Isaiah wrote of this coming king who he named as 'Cyrus' who was to "subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes", and "set my exiles free" (Isaiah 44:24 - 45:7,13). In fulfillment of another prophecy, this 'Cyrus' was said to break the walls of Babylon so

that they became a ‘pile of stones’ (Jeremiah 51:37; Isaiah 44:27-45:2). King Cyrus who emerged in accordance with prophecy conquered Babylon in about 539B.C.E. The fall of Babylon is now immortalized by the phrase ‘the writing is on the wall’ (Daniel 5:26-28):

And this is the writing that was inscribed: Mene, Mene, Tekel and Parsin. This is the interpretation of the matter: Mene, God has numbered the Days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; Tekel, you have been weighed on the scales and found wanting; Peres, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.

After his conquest of Babylon, Cyrus was the ruler of the known world, and he is honored in Persian texts, which are inscribed “I am Cyrus, king of the world, great king, legitimate king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad”.¹⁹ After the fall of Babylon, therefore, Cyrus was ruler over both the Tribes of Judah in Babylon and the Tribes of Israel in Media (Daniel 6:8).

A major problem in the British-Israel argument is the failure to consider the

3.3 UNIFICATION OF ASSYRIA AND BABYLON

implications of Babylon’s fall to the Persian King Cyrus. The British-Israel model leaves Babylon and Media as two separate Kingdoms. When Cyrus made his decree in Babylon to release

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‘those who worship the Lord’, they assume that only the tribes of Judah are being released from Babylon. They don’t realize that Babylon and Media were one kingdom by then. The declaration of Cyrus to release the exiles, carried out by Darius (Ezra 6), would have extended over the whole Medo-Persian Empire and included the Houses of both Israel and Judah. This fact can be shown from scripture.

After conquering Babylon, Cyrus made his edict releasing all of the ‘Lord’s people’ in his kingdom. Cyrus’s edict was not carried out immediately, and his successor, King Darius I, carried it out. At one point, Darius searched the royal archives to find the edict (Ezra 6:1-7, italics mine):

Then King Darius made a decree, and they searched the archives where the documents were stored in Babylon. But *it was in Ecbatana, the capital in the province of Media*, that a scroll was found on which was written: ‘A record. In the first year of his reign, King Cyrus issued a decree: Concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, let the house be rebuilt ... let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God...’

It is fascinating that we see a copy of the edict being found in Ecbatana, capital of Media. It shows that Cyrus’s edict to release the captives was not only sent to the towns of Babylon, but also to the towns of Media. The edict was clear that ‘whoever is

among you of all his people' should return. Therefore, both the Tribes of Judah in Babylon and the Tribes of Israel in Media were set free to return to Canaan and rebuild the temple.

Scripture is clear that the Tribes of Judah and the remnant of Israel did return to the promised lands of Canaan and its surrounds. Jeremiah prophesies (chapter 50:17-20):

Israel is a hunted sheep driven away by lions. First the king of Assyria devoured it, and now at the end King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon has gnawed its bones ... I will restore Israel to its pasture ... I will pardon the remnant that I have spared.

Ezra talked of the return to Canaan, and he specifically makes mention of "Israelite people" returning (Ezra 2:2, 59, 70, 3:1, 11). Other scripture records plainly that, "the first to live again in their possessions in their towns were the Israelites ... [while] some of the people of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh lived in Jerusalem" (1 Chronicles 9:2, and also Ezra 6:16,17). By the time of Jesus Christ, we know that there were members of the Israelite tribe of Asher in Jerusalem (Luke 2:36).

3.4 RE-UNIFICATION OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

After the captivity, Scripture seems to say that the Tribes of Judah and Israel were again united. It seems that, over time, Israelites of the Assyrian

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captivity began “merging with the Judean exile”²⁰ (Jeremiah 50:17). Perhaps this was because their captors made no distinctions between them (Jeremiah 50:33). Ezekiel’s vision of the two sticks made one (37:15-28) tells of the re-unification of Israel and Judah. The Promised Land once again became known as “all Israel” (Ezra 2:70; 8:35; 10:5; Nehemiah 12:47). For this reason, at Pentecost, Peter could address the Hebrews as “Men of Judea”, and as “Fellow Israelites” (Acts 2:14, 29). The apostle Paul could be a “Jew” (Acts 21:29), an “Israelite” (2 Corinthians 11:22), and a “Hebrew” (Philippians 3:5) at the same time.²¹ There was no longer a distinction – and it is wrong to say that there is this distinction between the Tribes of Israel and Judah to this day.

Jeremiah’s prophecy is also clear, however, that only a remnant of the exiles returned to the Promised Land. Ezra, for example, was one who returned to Jerusalem whilst the Book of Esther is the story of another who stayed behind. In the Fifth Century B.C.E. exiles were still found throughout the 127 jurisdictional districts of the Persian Empire (Esther 1:1; 3:8). James referred to them as the “twelve tribes of the dispersion” (James 1:1).

So what happened to the Israelites that remained in Babylon and Media? The real, eventual, fate of many of the Israelites who

chose to remain in Media was probably death (Deuteronomy 28:15, 36, 48, 61; Amos 9:4, 9, 10). An old article in *Time* magazine says, “there is no mystery about the fate of the Ten Tribes. Most of those exiled to Media died of harsh treatment; the Assyrians were the Nazis of their day”.²² The prophet Isaiah powerfully prophesies their fate: “though your people Israel were like the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will return. Destruction is decreed, overflowing with righteousness” (Isaiah 10:22). It is a clear parallel for Christians today. All are offered forgiveness and restitution through the Lord Jesus Christ, but only a remnant will be saved through faith. Those refusing the invitation are forced to suffer the eternal consequence (Matthew 7:13,14; Daniel 12:2).

The Jewish Encyclopedia clearly sets out the Scriptural ‘proofs’ for British-Israelism, some of which must be answered:²³

3.5 LOOKING AT THE ARGUMENTS FOR BRITISH-ISRAEL

At the start, distinction is made between the ultimate fates of Israel and Judah [modern-day Jews] ... It is pointed out that while in the prophecies Israel will change its name (Hosea 1:9), be numberless (Hosea 2:1), dwell in islands (Isa. 24:15) with colonies and be the chief of nations (Micah 5:8), Judah will be a byword (Jer. 15:4). The ‘isles’ (Isa. 41:1; 42:4), to which Israel was banished, were to be north (Jer. 3:12) and

west (Isa. 24:15) of Palestine, and to be in a cold climate, since it is said: “Heat nor sun will smite them” (Isa. 49:10). It was further promised that the isles would become too small for Israel (Isa. 49:19) and that Israel would be a nation and a company of nations (Gen. 35:11). It would, therefore, have colonies (Isa. 49:20; 54:8), so that it might surround the nations (Deut. 32:7-9) and be above all of them (Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 28:1) ... The [British] lion and the unicorn are referred to in Num. 24:8, 9; while the American eagle is identified in the prophecy of Ezek. 17:3.

3.6 THE BRITISH ‘ISLES’

Perhaps the strongest Scriptural argument for British-Israelism – or most often brought up - is the reference to Israel being in “isles”, according to some translations. For example, the *King James Version* would translate Isaiah 49:1, 3 as “LISTEN, O *Isles*, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far ... Thou *art* my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified”. Why is Israel called an Island, unless Britain has now become Israel?

The Jewish Encyclopedia notes that:

The whole [British-Israelite] 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.²⁴

For example, in the *King James Version* you will also see that Tyre is described as an 'isle' (Isaiah 23:1,2). This example shows the mistranslation clearly, because Tyre is not an island, but was primarily a coastal town. And so, a more accurate translation renders Isaiah 49:1, 3 as "Listen to me, O *coastlands*, pay attention, you peoples from far away! ... And he said to me, 'You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.'" (NRSV, italics mine).²⁵ The original text did not have Israel dwelling in an island, and the faulty translation cannot be used to prove the British-Israel theory.

The British 'Lion and Unicorn' are also mentioned.

3.7 LION AND UNICORN PEOPLE

According to the *King James Version*, Israel is identified with a lion and a unicorn. This would seem to be a reason for associating Israel with the famous British 'Lion and Unicorn'. Numbers 24:8, 9 is rendered in that version, "God brought him forth out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an *unicorn* ... he lay down as a lion". This scripture was influential for a popular Australian British-Israel preacher, Lloyd Longfield - who has said, "when I came out of the army, I went to have a look at these prophecies because it seemed to be about Russia and you know, the Lion and Unicorn people are mentioned in the Bible in Numbers".²⁶

However, again there are problems in translation. The word Hebrew word *re'em*, is mistranslated as 'unicorn' in the King James Version, and really means 'wild ox' (a species of which is now extinct). In fact, *re'em* cannot be translated as unicorn (with one horn), because the *re'em* had "horns" - even as noted in the King James Version margin at Deuteronomy 33:17.

The New Encyclopedia Britannica notes that the "word [re'em] was translated 'unicorn' or 'rhinoceros' in many versions of the Bible, but many modern translations prefer 'wild ox' (aurochs), which is the correct meaning of the Hebrew *re'em*".²⁷ For that reason, more accurate translations render Numbers 24:8, 9 as "God who brings him out of Egypt, is like the horns of a *wild ox* for him ... he lay down like a lion" (NRSV, italics mine). Israel in Scripture is not identified with a 'lion and unicorn', so again another pillar of British-Israel support falls over.

British-Israel books also point to the American eagle as being a symbol of Israel.

3.8 THE AMERICAN EAGLE AND THE 13 STARS

For instance, the *Revival Times* says, "the scripture concerning God bearing Israel forth on eagle's wings (Exodus 19:4) caused the symbol of the eagle to be chosen as the foundation of the Great Seal".²⁸ However, if having an eagle in a national crest

makes a country Israelite, then even Babylon is identified with Israel (Ezekiel 17:3, 12).

Another pamphlet ‘The Great Seal of the U.S.A.’²⁹, notes another interesting fact:

Manasseh was the thirteenth tribe. Whether by coincidence or by design, on their Seal they placed also 13 stars (on the original flag), 13 constellations, 13 stripes, 13 arrows, 13 olive berries, 13 olive leaves and 13 letters to their motto: “Epluribus unum”

The incidence of thirteen is true, but has no theological significance. There were thirteen colonies at the time of the American War of Independence. So the thirteens were not meant to symbolize America with the Israelite Tribe of Manasseh, but to represent each of the colonies.

It should also be asked how the Tribe of Ephraim (Britain) could have become the Tribe of Manasseh (United States) simply by crossing the Atlantic in the Mayflower? Any reading of early American history makes it clear that the pilgrims who settled in America did not come as an organized ‘tribe’, but instead they dribbled into America from various European countries for various reasons – combining into the American racial ‘melting pot’. America is no separately identifiable ‘Tribe of Manasseh’ – and is now more than ever a combined disparate mix of races of people from all over the earth.

Another great failure of the British-Israel argument is that it does not see past the

Old Covenant promises. It is true that God made many great promises to Abraham. Genesis 12 and 17 are often quoted. Genesis 12:2; 17:5, 7 says,

I will make of you [Abraham] a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing ... I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations ... I will establish my covenant between me and you, and to your offspring after you.

Notice that Moses writes, “I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great”. Australian British-Israelite teacher Frank Nankivell writes that, “there is ONLY ONE commonwealth of nations in this world today, originating from ONE historically GREAT nation, i.e. GREAT Britain”.³⁰ Frank Nankivell takes the bold step of arguing that the word ‘Great’ in Great Britain proves that the blessings of Abraham in Genesis were fulfilled in that country and in the British Commonwealth.

Interestingly, most people living in the British Commonwealth are not Anglo-Saxon: the great majority of the 1.6 billion people in its 53 countries are of other races.

3.9 BLESSINGS OF ABRAHAM

There is a strong argument against Frank Nankivell in that that the promise of being a ‘great nation’ was already fulfilled in the House of Israel. With reference to the ‘great name’, the Hebrew word *gadol* is used for greatness, eminence, and excellence. Two generations after the quoted promise, the Lord fulfilled his promise by naming Abraham’s descendants after himself - ‘Israel’ - a ‘prince with God’ (Genesis 32:28).³¹ Israel became the ‘great nation’ promised.

Another related scripture reads “a nation [Heb. *goy*] and a company of nations shall be of thee” (Genesis 35:11, King James Version). And although this scripture is used to link Israel with the British ‘Commonwealth’, a literal translation could read: “a people, even an assembling of peoples, (it) shall be from thee”.

Importantly, the meaning of *goy*, translated “nation” has really a broader meaning than is usually associated with this word. In Hebrew, the “goy” did not always refer to a political unit, country or state as we know it (as it was used in Genesis 10:5). For example, it is used in Deuteronomy 26:5, where we read, “[Israel] went down into Egypt with a few people and lived there and became a great nation [*goy*]”. ‘Goy’ comes from the word “body” and could stand for any distinguishable group of people or of animals, referring to groups other than what we

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think of as a “nation”. In its singular form, ‘goy’ is used for an army and a swarm of locusts; in its plural form, ‘goyim’ is used for nomadic tribes or bands, the inhabitants of a city, the various groups of Samaritans, and even the remnants of the foreigners remaining in Canaan.

As explained by several Bible commentators, this prophecy of greatness was again fulfilled in the nations of the Tribes of Israel. They are especially distinguishable as separate nations when grouped in the wilderness and later in the Promised Land, each with their ensign and orderly grouping as separate tribes making up one people (Numbers 2:1-31; 10:5, 6, 13-28). During Joshua and Judges, the tribes had their own territories, armies, and governing structures and also came together under the judges as a single people. During the reign of Saul, Solomon, and David, there is more emphasis on the central government, but there were leaders that came together as representatives of the tribes, still constituting an assembly of peoples. During the Divided Kingdom, Ephraim became an assembling of the rebellious tribes of the Northern Kingdom; Judah, of all the tribes - Judah, Benjamin, Levi, and much of Simeon, and the faithful of the Northern Tribes. This was the ‘nation’ and ‘company of nations’ promised to Abraham.

This interpretation is verified by verse 12 of Genesis 35, where we read: “And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.” The “nation and company of nations” were to be in the lands of Canaan and surrounding areas. Therefore, it is only in this land should we expect to see this prophecy fulfilled, and nowhere else.

In fact, Abraham fathered not only the tribes of Israel and Judah - but also the Midianites (Genesis 25:2,4), the Ishmaelites (Genesis 17:20). Other tribes descended from his sons (Genesis 25:1-3), together with the Edomites from his grandson Esau (Genesis 36).³² This was also the “great multitude of nations” of Genesis 17:5,7.

Arguments based on the promises to Abraham are losing ground. Genesis 22:17 that the seed of Abraham would “possess the gate of their enemies”. In the past, this was given as a ‘proof’ – the British Commonwealth controlled the sea-ports of the world and other ‘gates’. Leo Harris, the now late leader of the Christian Revival Crusade in Australia and British-Israel teacher once wrote:³³

During the last 200 years or so, Great Britain and America, the ‘Joseph’ nations of the Bible, have gained control of the sea-gates of the world. Gibraltar, Panama, Malta, Aden, Suez, Hong

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Kong, Singapore, and Cape of Good Hope are some of the sea-gates which Anglo-Saxon-Israel possesses. One or two of these have been temporarily stolen from us in the ebb and flow of war, but these cause no alarm from a prophetic point of view, for they are still rightly ours, and we must wait the final peace terms before we wipe them off our list. And we have no doubt what those terms will be!

Leo Harris wrote that text in 1942. None of these ‘sea-gates’ remain in Commonwealth hands excepting Gibraltar. And Gibraltar now runs its affairs autonomously from Britain.

We should look at a greater fulfillment of all these promises to Abraham (Hebrews 10:1). The term ‘Israel’ can refer either to the physical Ten Tribes of the House of Israel, but also as the Spiritual Israel of the New Covenant. In the Old Covenant, the House of Israel was God’s holy nation (Exodus 19:6). In the New Covenant, the body of Christ is a “chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people” (1 Peter 2:9; Romans 9:6).

Galatians 3:13-14, 16, 29 explains that the blessings of Abraham discussed in Genesis are primarily for the new spiritual Israel, not fleshy Israel:

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law [Old Covenant] ... in order that in Christ Jesus the blessings of Abraham might come to the Gentiles ... Now the promises were made to Abraham and

to his offspring; it does not say, ‘And to offsprings,’ as of many; but it says, ‘And to your offspring,’ that is, to one person, who is Christ ... if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise.

Similarly, Romans 4:13,16-17 says:

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith ... he is made the father of all of us, as it is written, ‘I have made you the father of many nations’.

So, the blessings of Abraham are not on Great Britain because it is the leader of a Commonwealth of Nations. The blessings of Abraham are found primarily in the body of Christ, where we have taken hold of those promises (Acts 4:12; Romans 4:17).

Genesis 28:14 is a promise of the Lord to Jacob

3.10 PROMISES TO JACOB

that, “your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south”. British-Israel teachers take this to mean “the West, i.e. the United States of America ... to the East, i.e. India ... to the North, i.e. Canada; and to the South, i.e. South Africa, Australia and New Zealand”.³⁴

It seems most likely that the Lord's promise to Jacob was not meant to extend to far off lands in all directions. Chapter 13 of Genesis records the first time the promise was made. The Lord promised that "look ... northward and southward and eastward and westward ... *all the land that you see* I will give to you" (Genesis 13:14, 15, italics mine). This promise was fulfilled. God gave the promise at Bethel, the site that played a large role in Israel's conquest of Canaan. From there, Israel conquered surrounding Jericho, Ai and Bethel (Joshua 8:9, 17, 22).³⁵ Israelite tribes of the Diaspora were spread further (1 Peter 1:1, 2; Acts 2:9-11). And the Israelite nations did become as populous as the "dust of the earth" (1 Kings 4:20; Deuteronomy 1:10; 10:22; 28:62; Nehemiah 9:23). It was true that all the lands that *could be seen* from that high place of Bethel became the lands of Israel. So, those promises to Jacob were fulfilled in ancient Israel rather than Britain.

2 Samuel 7:10-16 (and its parallel scripture in 1

Chronicles 17) is also a famous 'proof text' for British-Israel teachers. The scripture reads, "I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place and be disturbed no more". The whole idea of a 'new

3.11 THE APPOINTED PLACE

place' for Israel, other than the Promised Land, seems out of place in the text.

It has been said that because the scripture says 'I will appoint a place' in a future tense, it means a new and different land for Israel – perhaps Britain. The nation was fairly well established in Israel; so this argument sounds logical. But we should first note some problems when we consider the nature of the 'promised land'.

Genesis 13:14ff sets the scene, "The Lord said to Abram ... 'Raise your eyes now and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land you see I will give to you and your offspring forever". The land promised to Abraham in perpetuity was *Pelesheth*, Canaan and the surrounding areas - what became the lands of Israel, and certainly not Britain.³⁶

Other scriptures set the bounds of the promised land. The Israelites were given the land, "from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15:18). It was "the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding" (Genesis 17:8). "From the wilderness and the Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, to the Great Sea in the west shall be your territory" (Joshua 1:1-6; see also Numbers 34). "I will set your borders from the Red Sea to the sea of the

Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates” (Exodus 23:31). One writer notes:

There is definitely no suggestion of the BOUNDS of the promised land being set unto any other place, certainly not to England.³⁷

After the Assyrian exile, the remnants of Israel were meant to return to the same Promised Land (Ezekiel 20:41ff). There is no indication that these Israelites would migrate across Europe into some ‘new promised land’.

But we have to still explain the statement in the

**3.12 A LOOK AT THE
HEBREW OF 2
SAMUEL 7**

book of Second Samuel. It was written well after the Israelites were settled in Canaan, but it says they ‘*will* be appointed’ a place. One Bible scholar, Ron Wilson, has thoroughly researched this topic and I include his thoughts below.³⁸

It should first be pointed out that the translation of this passage is very complex. Notice the verbs translated “I will appoint” and “I will plant”. In Hebrew there are no tenses (past / future) as we know them, just perfect and imperfect. Many translators show the first verb in the past tense and the second verb in the future. However, there seem to be no grammatical reason why these should be given different tenses. There are translations which put both verbs in the past tense.

The general context indicates that the ‘appointing’ had started but not finished. Notice how the context of this passage shows that there had been considerable establishing of a place of peace and security for the nation of Israel in David’s time (2 Samuel 7, King James):

1 When the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him ... 9 ... and have cut off all your enemies from before you ... 11 ... and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

It is obvious from the chapter following the prophecy there was work to be done to complete the establishing a place for Israel by driving out or subjugating enemies and enlarging the place:

Next are scriptures to express the completing the establishment of a peaceful place for Israel - the building of the Temple being the great climax of the preparation. 1 Chronicles 22:9, in the King James, reads:

Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about;... 10 He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever. ... 18 hath he not given you rest on every side?...25 The LORD God

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of Israel hath given rest unto his people that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever.

Therefore, the verb indicates here that the placing of Israel had begun, but was not completed. A study of the verb translated “appoint” shows that it often refers to a new function or appearance of a person or place. It is clear in the context that the main thought in Nathan’s words to David was that the Temple was to be built by Solomon. This placing of His presence in Jerusalem can be thought of the final stage in the establishment of that country as the home for His people. This understanding is borne out by reference to the ordinances listed in Deuteronomy chapter 12. Rather than serving the Lord on mountains, hills and under trees, the Israelites were to “seek the place that the Lord your God will choose”, and burn offerings to him there. “When you cross over the Jordan and live in the land that the Lord your God is allotting to you ... bring everything that I command you to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling ... there you shall offer your burnt offerings”.

The Second Samuel passage seems to refer to a *completion* of the ‘planting’ of Israel in Canaan. There is no indication that it refers to a future planting of Israel outside of the bounds of the promised land, but refers to the completion of the appointing of Israel in Palestine through the construction of the Temple which

was to be built in Jerusalem - as is confirmed by the surrounding passages in context.

There is another teaching
that the current British
Monarchy are direct

3.13 THE DAVIDIC THRONE

descendants of the Kings of Judah. British-Israel writers have written up pages of lineage to prove the theory. In a British-Israelite pamphlet 'Queen Elizabeth II is heir to great Bible Promises',³⁹ the writer quotes 2 Samuel 7:13-16 from the *King James Version*, "I will establish the throne of his (David's) kingdom for ever ... And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever". The writer notes that he believes that the Scripture says that the Throne of David will never be unoccupied. People who believe Zedekiah or Jehoiachin were the last kings of Israel until the Lord's return (Luke 1:32) are criticized: "They are undeterred however by the fact that this would leave a gap of centuries between the last king, Zedekiah, and Jesus Christ". The writer says that these people, "Having discarded God's promises to his chosen people, they, through faithlessness, fail to believe accept (*sic*) that God's intentions are unbreakable, preferring instead to see Israel as the Church".

Despite the arguments from British-Israelites, it is clear that the promise of a perpetual ruler on the Throne of David was

always conditional (1 Kings 8:25; 2 Chronicles 6:16; Jeremiah 33:20, 21). The promise was always conditional upon those kings being faithful to the Lord. The writer of the pamphlet should take note of Hosea 3:4, “the Israelites shall remain many days without king or prince”. Ezekiel 21:26-27 also says, “Remove the turban, take off the crown [the kingly symbols]; things shall not remain as they are ... A ruin, a ruin, a ruin - I will make it! (Such has never occurred) Until he comes whose right it is; to him I will give it” (that is, the Lord Jesus - John 1:49). The Bible is clear that there would be a period during which Israel would be “without king or prince” (John 19:15). After the death of Zedekiah, the turban and crown were removed. The vacant throne awaits the return of the Lord Jesus, descendant of David, who will take the throne and rule from Zion (Matthew 19:28). He will sit upon the everlasting throne (Hebrews 1:8), and rule the everlasting kingdom (Luke 1:33). There is no indication that this privilege belongs to Queen Elizabeth II.

Even beyond the implausibility of the concept that the current British

3.14 INHERITANCE OF DAUGHTERS

Monarchy are Kings and Queens of the House of Israel, the Bible is clear that kingship in Judah was never passed from father to daughter. The theory relies on the Scepter of the

Kingdom of Judah passing to Zedekiah's eldest daughter, who ran to Egypt. Apparently, her name became 'Tamar Tephi' and she took a ship to Ireland to reign as Queen. The Bible plainly says that, "the Lord God of Israel gave the kingship over Israel forever to David *and his sons*" (2 Chronicles 13:5, italics mine). In another place, it is written that "Here is the king's son! Let him reign, as the Lord promised concerning the sons of David" (2 Chronicles 23:3). There is no record of kingship passing to daughters, but only sons.

Further, it is clear that those fleeing to Egypt did not

3.15 DEATH IN EGYPT

then move on to Ireland, but all perished. The central scripture on this point in the book of Jeremiah notes that "I will take the remnant of Judah who are determined to come to the land of Egypt to settle, and they shall perish, everyone ... none of the remnant of Judah who have come to settle in the land of Egypt shall escape or survive". (chapter 44:12).

Some have also argued that Jehoiachin (Coniah) was the last king of Judah, and not Zedekiah in the first place. After Zedekiah's rebellion and the death of all Zedekiah's sons (discussed in Jeremiah chapter 52), the Bible talks of Jehoiachin's reconciliation with Babylon under King Evil-Merodach who "gave him a seat above the seats of the other

kings who were with him in Babylon” (Jeremiah 52:31-33). Also, Jesus was a descendant of Jehoiachin (‘Jechoniah’ in Greek), and not a descendant of Zedekiah (Matthew 1:11-12). Perhaps it is more convincing to say that the last king of Judah was Jehoiachin and not Zedekiah at all? If he was, the British-Israel lineage fails again.

Regarding Jehoiachin’s kingdom, prophecy relates that “Why are he and his offspring hurled out and cast away in a land that they do not know? ... Record this man as childless ... for none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David, and ruling again in Judah ... The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as a king and deal wisely “ (Jeremiah 22:28-30). Jehoiachin was recorded as childless, and in him was the end of the Judean kingdom. The kingdom is only restored finally to the ‘Branch’ – a title used elsewhere to describe the Christ (Zechariah 3:8; 6:12). We can look forward to a day when Christ will rule from Zion as the true Great King, and Lion of the Tribe of Judah.

In essence, the British-Israel theory fails to understand that, even if the theory was correct, “God shows no partiality, but in *every* nation anyone

**3.16 GOD SHOWS NO
PARTIALITY**

who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him” (Acts 10:34-35, italics mine). The blessings of God are no longer a matter of *race*, but *grace*.

Apart from inspired writing, British-Israelite writers also refer to the early Irish records to support British-Israelism. When the

Worldwide Church of God recently abandoned its doctrine of British-Israelism, it issued a Study Paper that said, “When reading Anglo-Israelite literature, one notices that it generally depends on folklore, legends, quasi-historical genealogies and dubious etymologies”.⁴⁰

Many British-Israel books are filled with references to early Irish legends and myths, trying to show a connection to the Israelites. However, the Irish legends cannot be regarded as history and they have serious defects:

[recently] the Irish legendary origins have been subjected to serious criticism. The fondly cherished theory which attributes Milesian descent to the bulk of the native population has at length been assailed ... The Tuatha Dé do not appear in any of the earliest quasi-historical documents, nor in Nennius, and they scarcely correspond to any particular race.⁴¹

It is useful to remember that most of these legends were written after 1000 C.E.. That is hundreds of years after the

4 WRITTEN RECORDS (OTHER THAN SCRIPTURE)

The British-Israel Myth

Israelites were meant to have come to Ireland. It also means that monks wrote the legends in monasteries. Archaeologist Peter Harbison noted of the early Irish legends:

[The Irish] monastic movement was extraordinarily vigorous throughout the sixth century, and the new foundations which it created became the great centres of culture in the following centuries ... It was these foundations which furthered the use of writing and produced many great illuminated manuscripts which survive today ... Their scribes helped to write down and thereby preserve many of the old Celtic tales - including pagan lore - which would otherwise have been lost.⁴²

It was primarily Church scribes, then, who wrote down the Irish legends. Irish Historian Sean O’Faolain says, “We do not read the literature as it was originally created. The Christian scribes and the patriotic ficto-historians have freely altered the original records and the traditional lore to suit their own ends ... Myth and history, dreams and facts, are forever inextricably commingled”.⁴³ So, the Celtic legends were altered by the Church. It is easy to imagine an Irish monk adding Hebrew names and stories to the legends they were writing down.

The early English legends, like Nennius and Gildas, are also unreliable. Some of those English legends do say that Britain had ties with Israel. For example, one legend says that ‘Britto’,

the original Britain, was descended from Noah, and came to Britain after the flood.⁴⁴

Like Irish history, English history was written in the Christian era. It was also changed by the monk scribes to fit into the Church's scheme of things:

since Christian ecclesiastical-national history applied the theology of history to national happenings, the events of past and present were adapted to the biblical and exegetical scheme, and the only 'origins' that mattered were the origins of Israel.⁴⁵

That is why we have some references to Israel in English histories - what has been handed down to us is a history "adapted to the biblical and exegetical scheme". Because of this, James Campbell, in his book *The Anglo-Saxons*, describes the early British legends as "largely romance".⁴⁶ It is wrong, therefore, to take these legends as literal truth, which is what British-Israelites do.

Let's say, for a moment, hypothetically, that the folklore (which largely consist of stories about giants and wizards) was reliable. Is British-Israelism proven? No. Even with these legends, "No first-hand account exists that traces the lost 10 tribes into north-western Europe. No eyewitness to European tribal migrations ever claimed an Israelite origin for any of them. No medieval or ancient genealogies ever linked the royal

families of the British-Isles with the Israelites”.⁴⁷ In fact, to be able to prove British-Israelism, these legends even have to be misquoted!

Most British-Israel writers used to say that there was a

4.1 TAMAR TEPHI

‘Tamar Tephi’ or ‘Tea-Tephi’ in Irish legends, and that she is King Zedekiah’s daughter. She was supposedly the first royal ‘Queen of Israel’ escaping with the prophet Jeremiah to Ireland – and her name is scattered throughout British-Israel magazines and books. Really, she never existed. In the Spring 2001 edition of the *Crown and Commonwealth* magazine (distributed through some British-Israel World Federation branches) there was an open admission that the Tamar Tephi story was simply an “error arising mainly from enthusiasm for a conjectural view of ill-founded data”. It admits that after the British-Israel World Federation ‘Investigating Committee’ re-assessed the *Annals of Ireland* (1171-1616 A.D.) it was clear that Tephi and Tea were “two different ladies”. Tephi was, in fact, “a daughter of Bachtir, king of Spain” – and not a daughter of the Zedekiah, king of Israel after all. The article admits that, “[h]er ancestry being so well known it does not seem possible for her to have been the daughter of a Judaic king”. Tea was a “daughter of Lugaidh, son of Ith, and queen of Heremon”. The British-Israel World Federation now admits that Tephi and Tea two different ladies,

and not only that - but that neither of them could have been Israelites!

British-Israelites also often attempt to identify the

4.2 TUATHA DÉ DANANN

'Tuatha Dé Danann', a tribe mentioned in the Irish legends, with the Tribe of Dan. One booklet on British-Israel, for instance, says:

All early histories of Ireland mention a people coming there *from Greece* called the *Tuatha De Danaan* ... The word *tuath* simply means "tribe" - "Tuath ... Irish History ... A 'TRIBE' or 'people' in Ireland" (*New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, vol.10, pt.1, p.441) ... the Tuatha de Danaan was none other than the Israelite tribe of Dan!⁴⁸

The same booklet even goes so far as to say, "Once we understand the racial connection between the Tuatha de Danaan of Ireland and the ancient tribe of Dan, it is easy to see why the song, 'O, Danny Boy' is so popular in Ireland!"⁴⁹ (Sometimes, the use of the 'dan', or similar prefix or suffix, in English place-names is used to support this position - despite the fact that the prefix had Old English meanings as *English Place Names and their Origins* explains: 'denn' meant a woodland pasture or swine pasture, 'denu' meant a valley, and 'dun' meant a hill).⁵⁰

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Can we translate ‘Tuatha Dé Danaan’ as the Israelite ‘Tribe of Dan’? If that is the translation, it would be good evidence for British-Israelism. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, however, translates the name more correctly as “Tuatha Dé Danann (Gaelic: ‘People of the Goddess Danu’)”.⁵¹ One mythologist describes this goddess: “Danu is the leader and progenitress of the Irish pantheon, the Tuatha de Danann ... She equates closely with the Welsh goddess Don and may have been perceived originally as a fertility and vegetation spirit”.⁵²

All the evidence shows that the Tuatha Dé Danann were not the Tribe of Dan at all. The Tuatha Dé were a mythical tribe mentioned in Irish folklore who worshipped a pagan goddess. Here, not only have British-Israelite authors quoted a spooky legend in defending their position, they have had to *misquote* a spooky legend!

At this point, it is useful in comparing the lifestyles of the Israelites and early Anglo-Saxons.

5 ANTHROPOLOGY

5.1 MASS AMNESIA?

The entire British-Israel theory relies on mass amnesia striking the Tribes of Israel. It is argued that for some reason, while walking across Europe, they forgot who they were, forgot their traditions and forgot their language. It is clear at least that the German tribes did not believe that they were descended from the Hebrews as, “Tacitus reports that the only kind of history known to [the Anglo-Saxon’s] 1st century Germanic ancestors was ancient songs about gods and heroes”.⁵³

British-Israelites try to say that the early Celts and

5.2 CELTIC RELIGION

Anglo-Saxons actually practiced the Jewish religion. *Today, Tomorrow and the Great Beyond* makes the statement: “According to the considered opinion of many secular historians, the Druids who worshipped and sacrificed in these Islands many centuries B.C., were ancient Hebrews”!⁵⁴

The idea that the Druids practiced Hebrew rituals is plain rubbish. The *National Geographic* magazine ran an article on

the Celts in May 1977. It said that the Celtic Druids had “local deities and cults; hundreds of names of gods and goddesses are known to us ... [they made] colossal wickerwork figures, the limbs of which are filled with living men: these images are then set alight and the victims perish in a sea of flame”.⁵⁵ The rituals ascribed to the Druids are more like those of the pagan God Molech than anything else (2 Kings 17:17). There was nothing Israelite about this ritual.

As for the Anglo-Saxons, at death, “a great [Anglo-Saxon] warrior could expect to be welcomed at Valhalla to feast and swap yarns with his ancestors”.⁵⁶ “The common God of the English people was Woden, the war-god ... whom every tribe held to be the first ancestor of its kings”.⁵⁷

It becomes increasingly obvious that the Anglo-

Saxons did not act anything like how real Israelites acted. The Bible says that the Israelites were meant to only fight in wars of the Lord (Numbers 21:14). The Israelites weren’t meant to rape or pillage (Deuteronomy 21:10-13). In contrast to that one author notes that, “The [Saxon] name became a synonym for piracy and barbarism”.⁵⁸

5.3 BARBARISM OF THE ANGLO-SAXON TRIBES

We can also look at the early British names. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*

5.4 ANGLO-SAXON NAMES

(eleventh century C.E.) begins like this:

In the year that was 494 years past the birth of Christ, Cerdic and his son Cynric came up to *Cerdicesora* with five ships; this Cerdic was the son of Elesa, son of Esla, son of Gewis, son of Wig, son of Freawine, son of Freothogar, son of Brand, son of Baeldaeg, son of Woden.⁵⁹

Those names don't sound very Hebrew. They actually sound Old German, or Nordic. It was common for the Israelites to be named after their ancestors, so why is there not one Hebrew name recorded in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*?

5.5 TRIBAL DIVISIONS

The Anglo-Saxons were made up of four confederacies: the Northumbrians, Mercians, East Anglians, and the Kents. Moreover, a copy of the make-up of their confederacy has survived, called the *Tribal Hidage*. It is a listing of their rulers and nobles of the seventh century period. It does not mention ten tribes, or the family rule that Israel knew.⁶⁰ In contrast to this, the Israelites tribes were close knit. Even their order of marching and encampments in the wilderness were according to tribe (Numbers 2:1-31; 10:5, 6, 13-28).

As a further point, we can also look at burial practices.

Noting Saxon cemeteries

archaeologist M. Welch says that, “many of the dead were cremated”.⁶¹ However, the only cremation recorded in Scripture is Saul’s, after his unusual death (1 Samuel 31:8-13). Israelites almost always buried their dead. Burying practices and traditions don’t change quickly, and if the Saxons were really Israelites we would have to wonder what made them change how they buried their dead.

5.6 CREMATION

We can also look at diet. Diggings at Saxon sites have revealed the Saxon’s diet:

“Animal bone was very well preserved at Feddersen Wierde ... Cattle formed 48.3 per cent of domestic animals ... 11.1 per cent pigs ... [and at the West Stow dig] 19.7 per cent pigs ... [at Bishopstone] pig 17 per cent”.⁶² Anglo-Saxon historian J. Clutton-Brock has commented that, “it is possible that during Anglo-Saxon times pigs greatly outnumbered all other domestic animals and were the basic component of the agricultural economy, although their skeletal remains are usually found in lower numbers than those of sheep and cattle”.⁶³ If the Anglo-Saxons were truly Israelites, why were they eating pigs? The pig was a forbidden food to the Israelites (Leviticus 11:4-8;

5.7 THE ANGLO-SAXON DIET

Deuteronomy 14:7, 8). What was it that caused the Saxons to forget that they couldn't eat pork, if they really were Israelites?

In conclusion, the Anglo-Saxons and Israelites did not look the same, talk the same, or eat the same things. It seems obvious that they were completely different peoples. But if this seems so obvious, how do British-Israelites defend their position?

British-Israelite books
often have a chapter about

6 ARCHAEOLOGY

archaeology. The brochure ‘America and Britain in Prophecy’ asks this: “Is there any archaeological evidence of the Israelites migrating northward through the Caucasus and around the northern side of the Black Sea?”⁶⁴ It is an important question. If millions of Israelites had absent-mindedly trekked through Europe, any reasonable person would expect to find some archaeological proof – at least some Hebrew graves in Italy, perhaps some Hebrew inscriptions somewhere in France and perhaps a few Hebrew coins found in a cave somewhere in Germany.

British-Israel authors
claim that they have records
of tombstones from the

6.1 CRIMEAN TOMBSTONES

Crimean region. The inscriptions are remarkable. *Today, Tomorrow and the Great Beyond*, sold in British-Israel bookshops, translates one of the gravestones:

This is the gravestone of Buki, son of Isaac the priest. May his rest be in Eden at the time of the deliverance of Israel. In the year 702 of the years after our exile.⁶⁵

This gravestone seems to be compelling evidence that the Ten Tribes were progressing through the Crimea to Europe in about the first century C.E.. However, *The Jewish Encyclopedia* discloses the deception behind the Crimean tombstones. It notes that:

In order to avoid the disabilities imposed upon Rabbinite Jews, the Karaites of Russia attempted to prove that they were guiltless of the execution of Jesus because they were descended from the Lost Ten Tribes and had been settled in the Crimea since the time of Shalmaneser (seventh century B.C.). In particular Abraham FIRKOVICH edited a number of forgeries of inscriptions on tombstones and manuscripts to prove the early date of their settlement in the Crimea.⁶⁶

Within a year of Firkovich's death, controversy raged over the authenticity of the tombstones. Since then, scholars have "demonstrated conclusively that the Firkovich material abounded in forgeries".⁶⁷ The Crimean tombstones, therefore, seem to be a fraud. This doesn't seem to stop these 'tombstones' continually showing up in British-Israel books, however.

6.2 THE SCYTHIANS

Sometimes, in an effort to show some further archaeological evidence, authors refer to Scythian artifacts. They say that the lost Israelites became known as Scythians, then 'Sacae'. Then the ancient geographer

Ptolemy says that the Sacae were ‘Saxons’. This, they say, proves that the Saxons were the Scythians. A problem with this argument is that ‘Saxon’ was a general word in Roman times, describing a number of tribes. One writer has noted that:

The name used by Ptolemy [‘Saxon’] was originally derived from the Old English ‘seax’ and the Old High German ‘sahs’, meaning ‘short sword’ ... it was a general name used by Roman writers. It was used to describe a number of tribes.⁶⁸

I know of an excellent couple who led a church in the Philippines, who took the time to investigate the British-Israel evidence concerning the Scythians. As I understand it, one of them was reading a British-Israel quote (from John Fox in *Today, Tomorrow and the Great Beyond*) supposedly from Herodotus – when they decided to check the original text. After reading the original quote, it was clear to them that the Scythians could not have been the Israelites. In Book 4, of his *History*, Herodotus writes regarding Scythian history:

Their tradition is as follows. A certain Targitaus was the first man who ever lived in their country, which before his time was a desert without inhabitants. He was a child – I do not believe the tale, but it is told nevertheless – of Jove and a daughter of the Borysthenes. Targitaus, thus descended, begat three sons, Leipoxais, Arpoxais, and Colaxais, who was the youngest born of the three ... All together they are named

Scoloti, after one of their kings: the Greeks, however, call them Scythians. Such is the account which the Scythians give of their origin.

Herodotus also noted that the Scythians drank blood, that they scalped their victims in battle and “make themselves cloaks, like the capotes of our peasants, by sewing a quantities of these scalps together”. The evidence is really completely lacking that the Scythians were Israelites. The couple has stopped teaching British-Israelism in their church.

Other British-Israel

6.3 JACOB’S PILLAR

writers point to the English coronation stone. A peculiar aspect of the British-Israel belief is that the English coronation stone is the same stone that Jacob rested his head on in the wilderness (Genesis 28:11). This stone is associated with the ‘pillar’ besides which kings were sometimes crowned (2 Kings 11:12-14). “As were the Irish kings, so also were the Scottish and English kings crowned while sitting on this stone, as indeed was Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of her coronation in A.D.1953. This same practice was followed during the coronation of the Davidic kings”.⁶⁹ (In answer to claims that Elizabeth is “a direct descendant of the first Irish kings” understand that Queen Elizabeth II is not even a direct descendant of the first British kings. She is descended, for

example, from a grand-daughter of King James I rather than his son, Charles I.)⁷⁰

Queen Elizabeth's coronation stone cannot prove that the Throne of David is in England. First, the stone is not from Israel. In his article on British-Israelism, David Williams noted that:⁷¹

Professor A.C. Ramsey of the Geology Department of London University inspected the [coronation] stone and identified it as red sandstone, probably of Scottish origin. The nearest red sandstone to Bethel, where Jacob found his stone is in Petra, nearly one hundred miles to the south; the stone around Bethel where Jacob slept is white limestone.

Second, the stone is not in England any more. In 1996, British Prime Minister John Major destroyed the British-Israelite argument by saying, "The stone of destiny holds a special place in the hearts of the Scots. I believe that on this, the 700th anniversary of its removal from Scotland, it's appropriate to return it to its historic homeland"!⁷² The coronation stone, therefore, cannot prove that the Throne of David is in England. Our rock is Jesus Christ (Acts 4:10-12) – and not any stone in Westminster Abbey.

In fact, there is no sound archaeological evidence for saying that millions of Israelites trekked across Europe. If there was evidence, we would expect a few chapters in Archaeology

The British-Israel Myth

textbooks asking why Hebrew artifacts are found all over Europe. These questions don't have to be answered because the artifacts don't exist - and I am not aware of any reputable archeologist in any university in the world who subscribes to the British-Israel theory.

There is another major problem with the British-Israel teaching – the Genetics

7 GENETIC AND RACE ISSUES

and Race problem. It is simple to show that the Anglo-Saxons and the Israelites are distinct peoples by comparing them genetically as races.

In referring to the racial background of the English and Israelites, *The Jewish Encyclopedia* notes that “Modern ethnography does not confirm in any way the identification of the Irish with a Semitic [Hebrew] people; while the English can be traced back to the Scandinavians, of whom there is no trace in Mesopotamia at any period of history”.⁷³ Anthropologist Dr. Calvin Kephart, in his *Races of Mankind: their Origin and Migration*, confirms that while the Anglo-Saxon people are ‘Aryans’, the Hebrews are of the ‘Turanian’ racial ancestry.⁷⁴ They are completely different races. In a footnote, he even writes:

Since the original Hebrews were Kassites, of typically Turkic build, i.e., with tawny complexion, of medial height and stocky build, with prominent nose, and brachycephalous, all efforts to identify Aryan Nordic people of Europe as descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel are

doomed to failure. A more futile task is inconceivable.⁷⁵

Genetically, the white Anglo-Saxons are simply a different race to the olive-skinned Israelites.

Some British-Israel teachers try to say that the Israelites of the captivity looked like Europeans today, and that features apparent amongst Jews (such as ‘the distinctive Jewish nose’) were a later curse from God.⁷⁶ This is simply wrong – and can be disproved by looking at old artwork depicting early Israelites and German warriors.

Figure 1 depicts a Nordic sculpture of a ‘German’ warrior, dating to the 3rd Century BC. Note how the facial structure and general appearance are identical to the



Figure 1 - Nordic sculpture, dated to 3rd Century BCE of a ‘German’ warrior.⁷⁷

white 'Aryan' look of today. The man in this sculpture is clearly an Anglo-Saxon, and an ancestor of the people in Britain today. But this sculpture dates to long before the Israelites are meant to have migrated to Germany.



Figure 2 - Assyrian alabaster relief of an Israelite dating to about 700BCE from Chorsabad Dur, Surrukin.⁷⁸

Figure 2 depicts an Israelite from about 700 B.C.E. It is taken from an Assyrian alabaster relief found in Chorsabad Dur, Surrukin. Note how the figure retains the particular 'Jewish' or Middle Eastern look of today. This relief dates to the

time of the Captivity, and there is very little that looks 'Aryan' about this figure.

In times past, 'race' was determined by this physical

7.1 OLD MARKERS OF RACE

appearance – including coloring, hair types and the like. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* notes that, “For centuries, geographical races and local races were identified by the most obvious physical differences, chief among them the color of eyes, skin, and hair. From such observations came the simple notion of a few groupings based on the apparent color of skin alone: ‘black’ men, ‘white’ men, ‘yellow’ men, and ‘red’ men”.⁷⁹

In modern times, however, biologists have moved beyond physical appearance when it comes to defining race. There has been an increasing focus on genetics in defining race. “Apparent skin color is deceptive ... [t]he greatest amount of information on simply inherited traits bearing on race has come from the study of blood and from biochemical analysis of the urine”.⁸⁰ One anthropologist has even said, “races are defined as populations which differ in their gene frequencies”.⁸¹

Scientists increasingly look at genetic differences in

blood. Races can be classified by differences in frequencies within the ABO blood-classification system. For example, Australian Aborigines lack the B blood group whilst it is common in eastern Asia, India, and Africa. There are also other markers in the blood – for example the Rh negative gene is

7.2 NEW MARKERS OF RACE - GENETICS

common in Europe but less frequent elsewhere. The M-N blood series is also used in racial comparisons – the frequencies of these genes being about equal in most parts of Europe, but with N being nearly absent amongst American Indians. By using these genetic markers, biologists have found great value in distinguishing racial groups and, for example, been able to chart migration of races among the Pacific Islands.⁸²

We can compare the gene frequencies of the British people with the relatives of Israelites in the Middle East to determine whether or not they are of the same race. Josh Hayes, Research Consultant in Biology at Columbia Basin Research (associated with the University of Washington) writes, “since I live in the Pacific Northwest, where ‘Identity’ groups are abundant, I felt it was wise to try to understand their point of view (they also view themselves as biblical literalists, and thus subscribe to the creationist viewpoint). I would think that the population genetic approach of Cavali-Sforza and others would be applicable here: do, say, the Irish share a lot of genes with their putative relatives in the Middle East? I doubt it very much ... It’s all so hopelessly contrived, so Rube Goldberg, I can’t believe anyone falls for it”.⁸³

Over much of western Europe, including the United Kingdom, the ABO gene frequencies are as follows: A 26%, B 6%, O 68% ... [w]ithin the

British Isles there are clearly established clinal gradations of increasing O and decreasing A gene frequencies from south-east to north-west, and higher B gene frequencies tend to occur in the Celtic parts of Britain.⁸⁴

The Israelite's closest relatives are the Jews. If the British are Israelites, then the British should have similar blood and genetic markers to the Jews. Figure 3 depicts the distribution of blood group B in Europe, while Figure 4 depicts the distribution of blood group O. The Jewish people of the Middle East have markedly different blood group frequencies than are found in Britain.



Figure 3 – Distribution of blood group B in Europe⁸⁵



Figure 4 – Distribution of blood group O in Europe⁸⁶

Further, the British-Israel teaching relies on a ‘pure racial strain’. It relies on the Israelite races to move, genetically untouched, across the vast expanse of Europe. Theories of a ‘pure Aryan race’ were discredited through the Second World War, and it is now accepted that “[a]ll human populations are of mixed origin ... [p]eople of English Origin are provided with documented evidence of mixture with Vikings, Romans, occasional Spaniards, Irish, Scots, Welsh, and Bretons (among other Frenchmen)”.⁸⁷

Most biologists now accept that there is no such

7.3 THE MYTH OF THE ‘PURE RACE’

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thing as a 'pure Aryan', so much as there is a 'pure African' or 'pure Asian'. One historian notes that:

Populations expanded and spilled into one another's territories, tribes fought, coalesced and split up to break new land, a network of trade routes spread over the Continent and the complex ethnic amalgam from which we, the living Europeans, arose, slowly began to take shape. Under such conditions, any pure racial strain, if such a unit were biologically possible, would have very quickly lost its identity.⁸⁸

The fact is that if Tribes of Israel did travel across Europe, migrating through the endless tribes and lands, their race and genetic makeup would likely have been swallowed up in the process:

Where now are the Picts and the Celts; or the Germanic tribes that Caesar catalogued; or the people of the Greek city-states; and where are the traditional ten tribes of Israel? Many of these groups live on only in the sense that their distinctive genes were added to and survive among the larger groups that eventually encompassed them.⁸⁹

So, what is the Aryan race? Where did the Western Europeans, the British, come from? Historians are of the view that the German races and what became the Britains are just an amalgam of various wandering tribes and peoples:

The pre-history of west-central Europe is perhaps more complex and difficult to unravel than that of any other part of the Continent. The lands bounded by the Baltic and the Rhine, the Oder and Danube have been crossed, recrossed and settled by migratory peoples from the Huns to the millions of refugees who surged westwards at the end of the second World War. The precursors of the ethnically tangled people who today speak varieties of German ... must be reckoned among the most genetically multifarious peoples in Europe".⁹⁰

The Anglo-Saxon people are, in fact, an amalgam. They are a 'genetically multifarious' people – as though dozens of tribes and tongues were all mixed up together and poured out. The Aryans today are not the same race as the Israelites of the past – they have different blood, they don't look the same. There isn't even such a thing as a 'pure' Aryan race.

John Dougherty of the American Cultural Resources Association writes:

The idea that the Anglo Saxons are the amnesiac descendants of the Diaspora is a "national origins" myth. Similar beliefs include the Roman tale of being descended from the Trojans, or similar stories current in renaissance England, or a number of others. Such stories are attempts to "legitimate" some stance - such as "we are really God's chosen" - by substituting a fictitious, ennobling history onto more humble origins.

The Germanic peoples have been around for millennia. The Romans had been fighting the Germans and the Celts for centuries before the Diaspora. Legions were lost to the Germans before the Diaspora - Varus disaster where something like two legions or about twelve thousand men were destroyed by the Germans. The Angles and the Saxons were simply a group of Germanic speakers who lived in the boggy areas and on the small, low islands of western Europe in the present Netherlands and Jutland. Some of their descendants still on some of those islands today. The Romans knew perfectly well who the Germanic tribes were, and they were also thoroughly familiar with Hebrews. The idea that the Romans could be confused about this, that some witty Roman historian would not have humorously remarked upon it, is silly.

Also, there are simple facts such as German and Hebrew are utterly different languages - utterly. The so called "lost tribes" would have had to not only lost their own language and borrowed another, but would have had to borrow a alien physiology, and a new and alien material culture and forgotten how to write as well. Also, by the time of the Diaspora, the rabbinical versions of Judaism were becoming established, and since this form of the religion focuses upon schools and teachers, tradition remained very strong among the scattered populations of Jews after the Diaspora.⁹¹

What about language? If the British are really lost

8 LANGUAGE

Israelites, then why aren't they speaking Hebrew? Even if the Tribes picked up vocabulary or grammar during a trek across Europe, we would expect that English would have a solid Hebrew foundation. Even if they completely took up a new language, wouldn't they keep many of their old words?

Some British-Israel teachers try to show a link

8.1 ATTEMPTS TO LINK HEBREW AND ENGLISH

between English and Hebrew. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* notes that, "Philology, of a somewhat primitive kind, is also brought in to support the theory ... An attempt has been made to derive the English language itself from Hebrew (R. Govell, 'The English Language Derived from Hebrew'). Thus, 'bairn' is derived from bar ('son'), 'berry' from peri ('fruit'), 'garden' from geder, 'kid' from gedi, 'scale' from shekel, and 'kitten' from quiton (katon = 'little'). The termination 'ish' is identified with the Hebrew ish ('man'); 'Spanish' means 'Spain-man'; while 'British' is identified with Berit-Ish ('man of the covenant')".⁹²

In his book *Indo-European Philology*, W.G. Lockwood noted that:

[some scholars] remained obsessed with the old notion that Hebrew was the mother of all tongues and that all languages were somehow related.

In order to prove this preconception, a number of writers produced Compendious comparative dictionaries, the so-called language harmonies. But they could at best produce a mere handful of serious correspondences. Some turned out to be fortuitous.... Loans ... which pass from one language to another, can tell us absolutely nothing about any genetic relationship between given languages.⁹³

In fact, the English language is not even related to the Hebrew language. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* says that “English [the modern Anglo-Saxon language] is a branch of the Aryan stock of languages, and has no connection with Hebrew”.⁹⁴ Confirming this, one linguist has written that:

English is no isolated, independent tongue, but one of the members of a vast family [the Indo-European] ... There are several other families of speech found over the earth, but so far no evidence of relationship has been shown to exist between any of them and the Indo-European. One of the most important of these is the Semitic [ie. Hebrew language family] ... no trace of the slightest real connection can be discovered [between English and Hebrew].⁹⁵

Even in writing the Hebrews wrote from right to left, but the Anglo-Saxons wrote from left to right. Can British-Israel

teachers seriously say that the entire race of Israelites at some point forgot which way to write and started writing in the opposite direction?

Before the eighteenth century, Scholars had often

8.2 SIR WILLIAM JONES

argued whether or not there was a proto-language that connected most European languages. In 1786 Sir William Jones announced to the Asiatic Society of Calcutta that Sanskrit had to be related to Greek and Latin. The table below⁹⁶ indicates similarities between some words in the European languages and Sanskrit :

English	Gothic	Latin	Greek	Sanskrit
Father	fadar	pater	pater	pita
Brother	brothar	frater	phrater	bhratar
Bear	baira	fero	phero	bharami
Wolf	wair	wir		virah
Three	thri	tres	tris	
Ten	taihun	decem	deka	

Sir William Jones began what would come to be known as the 'Neogrammarian' move from philology (the comparison of texts) to what we now consider linguistics. He found that Sanskrit not only had similar words with European languages - it

also had a similar grammar, suggesting that it shared a common source. On the 2nd of February 1786, he announced to the Asiatic Society that the Sanskrit language shared with Greek and Latin, “a stronger affinity ... than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong, indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists”.⁹⁷ That source, the original building block of the European languages, has come to be called ‘Indo-European’.

8.3 LANGUAGE FAMILIES

The world’s languages can be categorized into several large families. One main family is the Semitic: which includes Assyrian, Arabic and the Hebrew language of the Old Covenant. A second family is the Hamitic: which includes the Coptic languages of Egypt, as well as several African dialects. A third main family is Indo-European: which includes most of the European languages including Greek, Latin and English.⁹⁸

8.4 THE INDO-EUROPEANS

No one knows exactly where the Indo-European ‘source’ is. However, it is possible to deduce something about the original Indo-Europeans from the words they used. The Indo-European languages have

common words for snow, winter, spring – this suggests that the Indo-European climate was colder (not the Mediterranean climate of Israel). There are also similar words for dog, horse, cow, sheep and bear - but not camel, lion, elephant, or tiger (words we would expect to by the Tribes of Israel). There are common words for beech trees, oaks, pines, and willows, but not palm or banyan (suggesting again that the Indo-European homeland could not have been in a place such as Israel where plants such as the palm are commonly found). There was no common word for ‘sea’ – suggesting an inland source.⁹⁹ On the basis of the vocabulary, many linguists and archaeologists accept that Indo-European originated with the Kurgan culture that existed north of the Caspian Sea several thousand years before Christ– however, no one really knows.¹⁰⁰ Wherever the original language homeland was, there are “no traces of Proto-Indo-European elements in the Semitic vocabulary”.¹⁰¹

Steven Schauffele, Ph.D., Asst. Prof. of Linguistics, English Department Soochow University, Waishuanghsi Campus, Taiwan writes:¹⁰²

For centuries during the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, a great many educated Europeans entertained the hypothesis that Hebrew was the original human language and that all other human languages were descended from it. For many, this was an article of faith; it was self-evident that

Hebrew expressions such as *yehi or* were the tools that God had used to create the Universe, and therefore that before the divinely-instituted confusion at Babel the 'one language' shared by all the peoples of the Earth must have been Hebrew. Others noted interesting correspondences between Hebrew vocabulary items and words in various European languages, and drew the obvious conclusion that these correspondences must be due to derivation one way or another, and since Hebrew was demonstrably of greater antiquity than any known European language, there was only one direction in which such derivation could plausibly have gone. However, when comparative linguistics began to be put on a scientific footing in the late 18th and early 19th centuries of the Christian Era, such hypotheses quickly fell into disrepute among the educated elite. Comparative linguists quickly gave up the hypothesis of the universal maternity of Hebrew, the identification of what is nowadays often referred to as 'Proto-World', the original human language, with the documented, historical Hebrew language; most went further and gave up any notion of any affiliation at all between Hebrew and specifically the Indo-European languages (though a few individuals have from time to time returned to re-examine this question). [...]

The last and most serious problem with arguments for Hebrew-IE affiliation has to do with grammar. Whenever people, no matter how well educated, think of language, they typically think first and foremost of vocabulary; it is not unusual for even the most intelligent and well-educated

people to forget that a language also includes grammar; one frequently hears the task of learning a new language described as though all that was necessary was memorizing a new vocabulary, a different set of labels for objects and concepts than one was accustomed to using. But every language also includes a grammar that provides a structure to all utterances actually made in that language, and a vast amount of linguistic scholarship is related specifically to questions of grammar. Words don't really exist in isolation; they exist embedded in the context of a particular grammar.

And this relates also to issues of linguistic affiliation. If two languages are related, then not only their vocabularies but also their grammars must be related. Languages that are related only by their vocabulary have presumably just been borrowing from each other; English has been borrowing wholesale for centuries from just about every language it comes across; hence words like `punish', `banish', `onus', `elite', `map', `summit', `maim', `mask', `omen', `inoculate', `censure', `monitor', `invite', `envy', and `kangaroo'. But it's relatively difficult (though not impossible) for languages to borrow grammar from each other. With this in mind, let us consider merely a handful of the more notable differences between the grammars of Hebrew and English.

In Hebrew, 2nd-person pronouns as well as 3rd-person pronouns are marked for gender; in English and all other Indo-European languages, only 3rd-person pronouns have ever been marked for gender.

In Hebrew, verbs are inflected for aspect and for *binyanim* and that's it; they have no tense. In Indo-European languages generally, tense is the primary inflexional feature for verbs, aspect being important but secondary, and *binyanim* are completely unknown.

English, like all Germanic languages, exhibits both *umlaut* (mouse - mice, man - men) and *ablaut* (sing - sang - sung; bring - brought) - - this latter being inherited ultimately from Proto-Indo-European. The *binyanim* system in Hebrew bears no resemblance to Indo-European *ablaut*, which is tied to tense, a feature that doesn't exist in Hebrew, as noted above, and there is nothing equivalent to *umlaut* in Hebrew at all.

The plural suffixes in Hebrew are -im and -ot(h). I know of no cognates for these suffixes in any Indo-European language, English or otherwise.

English, like all Germanic languages, retains the original Indo-European suffixes for comparative and superlative degree (big - bigger - biggest). As far as I know, Hebrew has nothing equivalent to these.

Hebrew has a standard synchronic process of stop-lenition after open syllables (ex.: basar - be-vasar; par'oh - le-far'oh). Lenition occurs in a great many languages, including several of the Indo-European languages, not only over time but synchronically. However, no Indo-European language known to me, not even the Celtic languages that exploit lenition the most, has anything resembling the almost purely

phonologically-conditioned lenition process characteristic of Hebrew.

Like all Semitic languages, Hebrew has both uvular (qoph) and velar (kaph, gimel) stops. This distinction is unknown in Indo-European.

Most importantly, Hebrew like all Semitic languages makes an absolute, profound distinction between consonants and vowels; as I've said to my students, 'you may think the distinction between vowels and consonants is rather basic, but let me tell you, *no language* makes as much of it as the Semitic languages do'. Every Semitic word is founded on a consonantal skeleton to which a vocalic 'melody' is added, bearing with it at most subtle nuances of meaning. In the Indo-European languages like English, on the other hand, the vowels are just as important and meaningful as the consonants. Witness the difference between the words 'water' and 'waiter', or the words 'beat', 'bit', 'bait', 'bet', 'bat', 'bought', 'but', 'boat', and 'boot'. If English were fundamentally a Semitic language, all these 'b-t' words would merely be slightly different forms of the same root, differing only slightly in meaning, like the Arabic forms 'katab', 'aktub', 'uktab', 'kutib', and 'kitab'.

If English, and/or all the Indo-European languages, is/are indeed descended, or at all closely related to Hebrew, then there must be some explanation for the manifold distinctions between their fundamental grammatical systems, only some of which are mentioned above.

All of these approaches are essential parts of the scientific methodology of historical linguistics; no convincing case of affiliation can be made

without all of them being addressed. This is the reason the long-assumed affiliation of the languages of Western Europe to Hebrew was finally rejected a couple of centuries ago: No one, so far, has succeeded in building a convincing case for such affiliation that takes into account all the essential elements of the methodology.

Dr. Ronald Casper, linguist associated with the Department of Sociology at Saint Mary's University writes:¹⁰³

Yes, Hebrew is not related to English. Hebrew is a Semitic language, related to languages like Amharic, Babylonian and Arabic. Semitic is itself a member of the Afroasiatic phylum of languages. Afroasiatic includes, in addition to Semitic, the Chadic languages (Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad), the Cushitic languages (Ethiopia and the horn of Africa), the Omotic languages (western Ethiopia), Berber (North Africa, Canary Islands) and Ancient Egyptian (now extinct, but in the Nile valley prior to the arrival of Greek and Arabic, but still perpetuated in Coptic liturgy). It is generally thought that the Afroasiatic languages were unified and spoken in Northern Africa (Sahara or the Nile Valley) prior to about 4,000 BC.

English, on the other hand, is a Germanic language, closely related to Frisian, Dutch, German, and also the North Germanic languages, such as Icelandic, Danish, and Gothic (now extinct). Germanic itself, is part of the Indo-European phylum, which includes most of the languages of Europe, Northern India and Persia. Other Indo-European families include Indic (Hindi, Nepali), Greek, Romance (Portuguese,

Italian), Slavic (Russian, Czech), Baltic (Lithuanian, Latvian), Armenian, Albanian, Anatolian (extinct, Hittite), Celtic (Breton, Gaelic) and several others, both extinct and contemporary.

One theologian, Ron

8.5 THE BRITISH - “COVENANT MEN”?

Wilson, has researched the British-Israel teaching that the word “British” is formed from two Hebrew words: ‘Berit’ (Covenant); and ‘Ish’ (Man).¹⁰⁴ He has discovered that it could not have a Hebrew origin.

The word in Anglo-Saxon from which “brit” is derived from a word that meant spotted, because of their habit of painting their bodies. The ending “ish” means “pertaining or belonging to”. It is a suffix derived, according to etymology, from an early harder sounding suffix that had a similar meaning as “ish”. Its earlier spelling, then, lessens the possibility that it came from Hebrew.

In Hebrew, “Ish” does mean a human ‘man’, but always means a specific individual person. It is never used of a collective as in “people”. It would also be very unusual for this word to be suffixed to another word, such as covenant, and having any meaning such as “people”.

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The Hebrew word for covenant, 'berit', is a noun and never used in scripture as an adjective to modify a noun. If it were, it would follow the noun. Therefore "British" could definitely not mean "covenant man". It could mean "covenant of a man". The word covenant would be in its construct state and mean "covenant of"; "ish" would be without a definite article and thus be "a man". If there is a possibility that this name is related to Hebrew, then it would speak of a covenant made by a specific human, not God.

Some British-Israel authors allow the change from 'Berith' to 'Brit' because "In the Hebrew language vowels are never given in the spelling". That was partially true up until they invented the markings in the Massoretic text. Even then, silent consonants indicated some of the vowel sounds. Since then, all vowels are included in many copies of the scriptures and prayer books. Most children learn Hebrew here and in Israel by learning it with vowel points. It is common practice in Israel to leave vowels markings out in adult books, newspapers and signs, but they have included in their spelling an increased number of silent consonants that indicate the vowels. In any case, the fact that Hebrew text may not have all the vowels indicated does not have any thing to do with allowable pronunciations or transliterations. 'Berith' is the correct pronunciation and no messing with linguistics can change that to 'Brit' or 'Brit-Ish'.

The Great Pyramid of Egypt should also be brought up. Many British-Israel books refer to ‘Pyramidology’, or the idea that the Pyramid of Cheops (also called the

Pyramid of Khufu, or the Great Pyramid) was built under mystical direction. The theory is that English Imperial measurements were used in its construction – proof again of the British-Israel theory and the divine blessing. One pamphlet, ‘The Great Pyramid - God’s Witness in Stone’¹⁰⁵ says:

“‘In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt’ ... The Great Pyramid was constructed to a blueprint inspired by God, as a witness to the God of Creation, and His great plan of the ages”

The Pyramid of Cheops is an awesome structure standing in the white sands of Egypt. It was, for a time, the tallest and heaviest structure on earth. It might seem sensible to wonder whether or not aliens, God or some sort of other mystical source helped build it. But we need more than incredible theories or way-out ideas. As one book says, “ideas are worthless, unless they can be checked and supported by confirmatory evidence ...

9 THE GREAT PYRAMID – OR THE GREAT DECEPTION?

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It is much the same with the great number of pyramid theories which have been put forward through the ages”.¹⁰⁶

In 1859, in the book *The Great Pyramid, Why Was It Built and Who Built It?*, John Taylor of London first suggested that the Pyramid of Cheops was built under the Lord’s direction. John Taylor had never visited Egypt. He was neither an Egyptologist or engineer, but rather a retired publisher. Nevertheless, in the climate of British- Israelism, his theory flourished.¹⁰⁷

Taylor’s theory gained greater appeal when a Royal astronomer, Piazzi Smyth, put his mind to it. As one source says, “There can be no doubt that once he got it going, Piazzi Smyth’s innate eccentricity, his Scottish puritanism and his wish to find a connection between Britain and the Bible, completely took over”.¹⁰⁸ His book, *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid*, became famous. Another writer says, “*Our Inheritance* is a classic of its kind. Few books illustrate so beautifully the ease at which an intelligent man, passionately convinced of a theory, can manipulate his subject matter in such a way as to make it conform to previously held opinions”.¹⁰⁹

Refutation of Taylor’s theory came from an unexpected source - a once devoted student of Piazzi Smyth. In 1880-82, the student went to Egypt in the hope of getting even better

measurements to support Pyramidology. According to Egyptologist Kurt Mendelssohn, “He carried out a brilliant and extremely accurate triangulation of the Giza site which showed, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that Piazzzi Smyth’s measurements had been wrong and that there was nothing to support his theories. Incidentally, the young man’s name was Matthew Flinders Petrie and he became the greatest Egyptologist of his time”.¹¹⁰

We can now look at other reasons why the Pyramid of Cheops could not have been

9.1 ‘ALTAR TO THE LORD’

built under the Lord’s direction. British-Israel writers quote Isaiah 19:19, “In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt”, saying that the Pyramid was the altar. But they do not explain how the Pyramid, made of quarried stones, can be the Lord’s altar. No altar of the Lord was allowed to be made of quarried stones! In the book of Exodus, Moses wrote “if you make for me an altar of stone, do not build it of hewn stones; for if you use a chisel upon it you profane it” (20:25).

The Pyramid could not have been the Lord’s altar - but it was a religious monument of some sort. One writer notes, “the pyramid [of Cheops] was a religious monument ... the structure

was part of a complex of buildings; adjacent was a temple for carrying on the worship of the dead king and for making offerings to him".¹¹¹ In May 1954, a ceremonial boat was unearthed in one of the temple pits. Edward's book *The Pyramids of Egypt* explains how the dead Khufu would have meant to use this boat to accompany the Egyptian sun-god in his journeys.¹¹² So most books note that the Pyramid complex was associated with the Egyptian Sun god (compare 2 Kings 23:5, 11)! It is inconceivable that the Lord would have built this - "What agreement does Christ have with Beliar? ... What agreement has the temple of God with idols?" (2 Corinthians 6:15, 16). The truth is, pagan king Khufu built it. Next to his pyramid are smaller ones, demonstrating that (as we should expect) Khufu was a polygamist pagan king. These are the three 'Queen's Pyramids' - for his *wives*.

The Pyramid of Cheops was associated with pagan religion. As George Hart writes in *Ancient Egypt* (1990), page 20, "The pyramids were just one part of the funerary complex devoted to the pharaoh's afterlife". For example, the Egyptian *Pyramid Texts* explain how the pyramids were meant to be a stairway for the dead Pharaoh, to help him reach the realm of the sun god Ra (spells 267, 523, and 619). Religious boats uncovered under Cheops in May 1954 were also meant for his afterlife travels

with Ra. The *Microsoft Encarta 98* Encyclopedia, under 'Khufu', says:

In 1954 the 38-m (125-ft) solar funeral ship of Khufu was discovered near the Great Pyramid. In the ritual of the funerary cult as practiced by Khufu and his contemporaries, such vessels were constructed to transport souls of the departed through the heavens in the path of the sun god.

In view of all these facts, we cannot say that the Pyramid could be the 'Lord's altar', as God will not associate with darkness. And, "what agreement has the temple of God with idols?" (2 Corinthians 6:15, 16).

Another weak point in the Pyramid theory is that it includes only the Pyramid of Cheops. Comments one author about Smyth, "one extremely weak point of his theory was the existence of other pyramids, none of them containing any divine revelations. He got around this difficulty by declaring the Khufu pyramid the most ancient and the others as 'imitation pyramids'. Naturally, Egyptologists did not agree with this and, incidentally, not with his other theories either".¹¹³ Chephren's Pyramid, for example, is only a few meters shorter than Cheops. It is also on higher ground, which gives it the impression of being much grander!

The truth is that the Pyramid was nothing more or less than a pagan tomb for Khufu. One Egyptologist has noted, "The Great

Pyramid of Giza has always inspired thoughtful persons. It has also given rise to many mystical and occult theories ... They find in the dimensions of its passages and chambers the basis for many theories which explain or predict historical events. Some of them have found all the great occurrences of the Old and New Testaments recorded inside the Great Pyramid ... One thing most of these theorists agree on is that the Great Pyramid was not built as a tomb for Khufu. They offer up every kind of explanation for its purpose except the one accepted by archaeology. More than one Egyptologist has vehemently refuted all these mystical doctrines, but many people still believe in them. Archaeological research has proved beyond doubt that the Great Pyramid is nothing more or less than a tomb for King Khufu".¹¹⁴

Let's examine reasons why the Pyramid is said to have been designed by God.

The first argument is that the Pyramid could not have

9.2 BUILT BY MAN

been built by man. It must have been God, or aliens! However, by putting ourselves in the Egyptian's position, we can easily see how the work was done. During the inundation (flood) season of Egypt, from July - October, no farming work could be done. The idle labor may as well have been put to a purpose such as

building a pyramid! How did they move the stones? Archaeology has shown that sledges were used. In the Egyptian tomb of Djehutihotea, at El- Bersheh, there is an inscription showing how sledges were used to move the heavy loads. Henri Chevrier, a French architect, showed that a sledge with a six ton weight could be moved by six men! Ramps were used to get the higher stones in place. The ramps can still be seen at the unfinished pyramid of King Sekhem-khet at Saqqara.¹¹⁵ Nothing mystical about it.

Some Pyramidologists suggest that the Pyramid is set so accurately to North,

9.3 NORTHERLY ORIENTATION

Egyptians could not have aligned it. But the Chephren pyramid is aligned as well as Cheops. The Bent and Mycerinus pyramids are aligned only slightly less accurately, being smaller.¹¹⁶ The Egyptian accuracy in aligning buildings was clever, but not supernatural. According to a relief in the Sun-temple of Niuserre, the king would observe the stars of the Great Bear constellation. When the stars first rose on the northern horizon, a priest, impersonating the god Thoth, and using an instrument called a 'merkhet', would mark the position. The point on the horizon where the sun set would also be marked. By bisecting the angle of a rising and setting star, true north could easily be

found.¹¹⁷ So, the accurate orientation of Cheops does not mean that God must have built it.

Pyramidologists often refer to ‘Pyramid Inches’ and make all sorts of mathematical computations within the Pyramid using them. In discussing ‘Pyramid Inches’, we must remember that they were invented by Smyth, and are a completely *artificial* unit. Egyptians actually measured using a ‘Royal Cubit’ (20.62 inches), which was 7 ‘palms’, or 28 ‘digits’.¹¹⁸ The Pyramid Inch, rather, was derived from a casing stone that Smyth unearthed. The stone measured slightly more than 25 British Inches. Smyth concluded that this length was the ‘sacred cubit’. One twenty-fifth of this width was his ‘Pyramid Inch’. One source says, “Many years later a number of other casing stones were dug up. They had entirely different widths. By that time, however, the Pyramid inch had become so firmly established in the literature of Pyramidology that devotees merely shrugged and admitted that the first casing stone just ‘happened’ to be a cubit wide”.¹¹⁹ Also, many measurements are fictitious. Edwards, one of the greatest Egyptologists of all time, gives these measurements: descending passage until the ascending passage, 60 feet; ascending passage until the Grand Gallery, 129 feet; and Grand Gallery, 153 feet.¹²⁰ Compare these

9.4 THE PYRAMID INCH

measurements with those in Pyramidology books, and you will find that many passages have conveniently shrunk or stretched!

9.5 PI IN STONE

Smyth also points out that a circle with radius of the height of Cheops has a circumference equal to the perimeter of the base. This intriguing fact has puzzled many Egyptologists in the past, and is a genuine argument. While most pyramids rise to an angle of about 52° , Cheops is peculiarly close to the special angle ($51^\circ 52'$) which leads to the ratio $\frac{1}{2}$ Pi.¹²¹ How is this accuracy explained? The answer Kurt Mendelsohn gives is quite simple. The Egyptians measured vertical distances, in Royal Cubits, by a hanging rope. However, they measured long horizontal distances by counting the revolutions of a rolling drum with a circumference of a Royal Cubit. He notes, "In this way they would have arrived at the transcendental number = 3.141... without realizing it ... the Egyptian architects never did anything more sophisticated than to build pyramids according to simple gradients of 4:1 and 3:1!"¹²² So, again, nothing mystical about this special measurement.

We have seen that the Pyramid of Cheops cannot be the 'Lord's Altar in the midst of Egypt'. It is a pagan tomb, in the

The British-Israel Myth

midst of other pagan tombs. While we respect the effort Egyptian builders put into the Pyramid, we must not confuse their buildings with God's work. Look at the sea, or the stars, or a flower. God's creations make are infinitely better than the Pyramid of Cheops.

God's Word is a "lamp to [our] feet and a light to [our] path," (Psalms 119:105) and was given so that we might be "equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:17). So there is no unfulfilled need that the Great Pyramid with its measurements might serve. We can even begin to deceive ourselves when we move beyond scripture. As Martin Gardner writes, "The ability of the mind to fool itself by an unconscious 'fudging' on the facts - an overemphasis here and under emphasis there - is far greater than most people realize. The literature of Pyramidology stands as a permanent and pathetic tribute to that ability".¹²³

Another interesting side teaching to British-Israel is the two-part creation story. It

10 PRE-ADAMIC RACES

is not found in all of the British-Israel books, but it is worth looking at. According to a British-Israel pamphlet, ‘Was Adam the first man?’, Genesis 1 and 2 describe “two quite distinct creations of man”.¹²⁴ In other words, there were people before Adam. However, the usual understanding of Genesis 1 and 2 is that they describe the same event: “Chapter 1 may be understood as creation from God’s perspective; it is ‘the big picture’, an overview of the whole [while] Chapter 2 views the more important aspects from man’s perspective”.¹²⁵

A simple reading of Genesis shows problems in the idea that Adam was not the first man. For example, Genesis 3:20 describes Adam’s wife, Eve, as the “mother of *all* living” (therefore the first woman). It is also clear that there was a first man. Acts 17:26 reads, “From *one* ancestor he made all nations” (NRSV). Other translators put it in different words, “He created all the people of the world from one man, Adam” (Living Bible); “From one ancestor he has created every race of men” (Phillips Modern English); “he made from one every nation of men” (RSV); “From the one man he created all races of men” (TEV);

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“From one man he made every nation of men” (NIV). Unfortunately, the King James Version puts the verse in an ambiguous way (based on a faulty manuscript reading). If Adam and Eve are both described as the first ancestors, then the whole argument fails. Genealogies found throughout the Scriptures show that the first man was Adam. No pre-Adamic peoples are mentioned.

The final word on the matter should rest with Christ himself. In Matthew 19:4,5 while describing marriage, he says: “have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?” Notice how in the same sentence, Jesus refers to both Genesis 1 (verse 27b) and Genesis 2 (verse 24). Obviously, by combining Genesis 1 and 2 in this way, he did not consider them to be separate, contradictory accounts.

Any confusion is cleared up when we remember that the Hebrew word for ‘man’ is ‘Adam’. So, Genesis 1:26 reads “Let us make humankind [Hebrew, ‘Adam’] in our image”. Then Genesis 2:7 reads “God formed man [Hebrew, ‘Adam’] from the dust”. And so it becomes clearer that the two accounts describe the same event.

The doctrine of British-Israelism, besides being

unscriptural, has other implications. I have noted that some acts of terrorism in the United States can be blamed on the Christian Identity movement, with its British-Israel foundations. This is because the teaching sometimes carries with it a presumption that some Anglo-Saxon governments are not fulfilling their responsibilities to the laws of God. The teaching is also inherently racist.

British-Israelism is often used as a foundation for

racism, often against Jews. *The Jewish Encyclopedia* says, “The Anglo-Israelite theory has of recent years been connected with the persecution of the Jews, in which the Anglo-Israelites see further confirmation of their position by carrying out of the threats prophesied against Judah”.¹²⁶ For example, the British-Israel book *Jacob versus Esau* says “Esau’s seed has been identified as the dominant section of modern Jewry. This Godless and materialistic group is now organizing its worldwide resources for what will be Esau’s last bid to destroy his brother, bring down the Davidic throne, usurp the birthright and so, he thinks, remove all obstacles to his domination of the whole

11 CONCLUSION

11.1 RACISM

earth”.¹²⁷ *Today, Tomorrow and the Great Beyond* even says that the ‘Jewish nose’ is a curse given to them for disobedience to God.¹²⁸

This bigotry is unknown in scripture. Peter said of the Lord, “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him” (Acts 10:34-35). For this reason, the Lord will save those “from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages” (Revelation 7:9). The unscriptural racism shown by some British-Israelite authors

is unacceptable and unscriptural.

11.2 KING JAMES ONLY

The teaching also influences a choice of Bible versions. It is ironic in a sense that the British-Israel teaching can really only be defended by many mistranslations in the King James Version of the Bible, but it is said that the teaching proves that the King James Version is the only true English Bible.

Because the *King James Version* (‘KJV’) is believed to have been authorized by “a direct descendant of King David”, it is believed that “the blessings of the Author” are in this version of the Scriptures only.¹²⁹ The KJV is, with the occasional use of an Amplified Bible, the only ‘approved’ Scripture in many British-

Israel church meetings. While with good reason the KJV has been called one of the “noblest monuments of English prose”, it has serious problems.

A good translation relies on three things: (1) good original-language manuscripts; (2) accurate rendering of that text; and (3) a good readability of the text.

The Greek text on which the KJV is based is the Greek *New Testament* published by Catholic Robert Estienne (or ‘Stephanus’) in 1550. Stephanus’ *New Testament* was based on a small collection of ‘Byzantine’ manuscripts, none predating the year 1200 C.E.. Actually, his version of Revelation was based primarily on a Latin, rather than Greek, text! However, since that time, much better manuscripts have become available.

One recent discovery, known as the Vatican Manuscript 1209, was found in storage at the Vatican, and displayed in 1889-1890. It dates to the fourth century C.E.. Another is the Sinaitic Manuscript, first discovered in a monastery at Mount Sinai in 1844. It also dates to the fourth century C.E.. Another recent discovery is the Alexandrine Manuscript, which dates to the first half of the fifth century C.E.. These three are known collectively as the Alexandrian manuscripts. It is safer to use the oldest manuscripts, as copying errors can alter the text over time.

The British-Israel Myth

The poor quality of the texts on which the KJV is based is one of its most serious deficiencies. That is why scholars, including mathematician Dr. Ivan Panin (often quoted by British-Israel organizations), used the more accurate *Westcott and Hort* Greek text.¹³⁰

We have already read in this article various mistranslations that have given rise to the British-Israel error. If the KJV did not incorrectly translate Israel's dwelling place as "islands", and make Israel's crest a "unicorn", British-Israelites wouldn't have much support for their theory. There are other clear errors in the translation of the original languages in the KJV. For example, Deuteronomy 8:9 in the KJV says that the hills of Canaan contained "brass". Brass is an artificial composite and cannot be found in nature. While the Church of England translators did the best they could for their time, great improvements have been made in the accurate rendering of the original languages.

The original Greek manuscripts of the Scriptures were written by the prophets in Koine Greek, or 'common Greek'. It was the every-day language used by fishers, tax-collectors and carpenters. The original writers could have written in Attic Greek, which was the academic language of the day. But they chose something everyone could understand. In contrast, many words and phrases in the KJV are difficult to understand. Some

obsolete words could be improved: “beguile” should be “judge against you” (Colossians 2:18); “betimes” should be “early”, (Proverbs 13:24); “bruit” should be “a rumor” (Jeremiah 10:22); “conversation” should be “conduct” (Philippians 2:27); “husbandman” should be “farmer, rancher” (James 5:7); “meet” should be “fitting, proper” (Matthew 3:8); “rain” should be “teach” (Hosea 10:12); “sprinkle” should be to “astonish, startle” (Isaiah 52:15); and “tarry” should be “wait” (Luke 24:49).

Leading theological scholar Dr. Bruce Metzger has said:

The Bible carries its full message, not to those who regard it simply as a noble literary heritage of the past or who wish to use it to enhance political purposes and advance otherwise desirable goals, but to all persons and communities who read it so that they may discern and understand what God is saying to them. That message must not be disguised in phrases that are no longer clear, or hidden under words that have changed or lost their meaning; it must be presented in language that is direct and plain and meaningful to people today.¹³¹

There is nothing wrong with reading a *King James Version*. However, it is wrong to use the KJV as a basis for doctrine where correct readings are important.

As a third point, British-

11.3 FALSE PROPHECY

Israelism influences end-time beliefs. One British-Israel writer put it this way:

From the very beginning ... our understanding of Bible Prophecy has been greatly influenced by identifying the descendants of Abraham with the Anglo-Saxon Celtic people of the modern world. To us, this is the foundation of Bible prophecy ... These are fundamental beliefs of the Revival Fellowship and are very different to most of Pentecost, who do not show any interest in the realisation of these promises to King David.¹³²

British-Israel proponents have a tendency to set dates.¹³³ Firstly, many seem to mix Jehovah's Witness views of Daniel 4 with British-Israelism in prophesying that 1917 marks the end of the "time of the gentiles".¹³⁴ This 1917 'generation' will see the coming of the Son of Man.¹³⁵ One British-Israel (Revival Centre) pamphlet *What time is it?* says, "At one minute past midnight (17th Sept 2001) His Majesty the Lord Jesus Christ will rule out of Zion. Are you ready?" This kind of date-setting doesn't follow the Lord's words in Acts 1:7: "it is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority".

There is no historical or Scriptural reason for saying that the British peoples are the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel.



11.4 A FINAL OBSERVATION ON BRITISH- ISRAELISM

As *The Encyclopedia Britannica* says, “The theory [of British-Israelism] ... rests on premises which are deemed by scholars - both theological and anthropological - to be utterly unsound”.¹³⁶ It is a dangerous doctrine leading on to racism, ‘*King James only*’ philosophies, and distorted end-time thinking.

I am convinced that God doesn’t care about black or white – our race, the outside! He looks at the heart... The apostle Peter said about the Lord, “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him” (Acts 10:34-35). No longer is the gospel about *race*, it is now about *grace*! The claims of British-Israelism are burnt up in the intense and powerful light of the Grace of our God.

If you have been caught up in the ‘fables and endless genealogies’ of the British-Israel teaching, I would encourage you to prayerfully pause and reconsider. Check the facts. Ask for God’s guidance. Determine to completely commit yourself to his truth. Put your life solely in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ, and embark on his incredible journey set before you.

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² James Ridgeway, *Freedom Writer Magazine*, July/August 1997.

³ See *The Jewish Encyclopedia*. 1901. Vol.1, page 600.

⁴ James Ridgeway, *Freedom Writer Magazine*, July/August 1997.

⁵ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 June 2003.

⁶ *The Encyclopedia Britannica*. 11th edn. 1910. Vol.II, page 31.

⁷ *Time Magazine*, 28 Sep.1953, p.5.

⁸ *The British Encyclopedia (Illustrated)*. 1933. Vol.6, pages 578-579.

⁹ David MacDonald, History Department, Illinois State University. Personal correspondence, 12 September 1998.

¹⁰ Simeon is sometimes said to have been encompassed by Judah.

¹¹ Also Leviticus 26:27-35; Deuteronomy 4:25-31, 40; 8:19-20; 28:36-37, 62-68; Isaiah 6:8-13; Jeremiah 1:13-15; 5:14-18; 6:11-12, 22-26; 7:32-34; 8:1-3; 9:13-16; 10:17-22; 12:14-17; 13:20-27; 17:4; 20:4-6; Ezekiel 7:21-26; 16:59-62; 44:5-9; Micah 4:10; and Amos 9:4, 9, 10.

¹² Pritchard, J. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*. 1950 edn. Page 284-5. Or, more correctly, his successor, Sargon II deported them. The Northern Tribes probably had a population of over a million, if we consider that at the Exodus they had 600,000 men (Exodus 12:37). Many from Israel

fled to Judah in the wake of Jeroboam's oppression and survived the exile (2 Chronicles 11:13-16; 15:8-9; 34:9; 35:17-18). *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*. 1991. Page 414 says, "After the fall of Samaria many refugees from the Northern Kingdom migrated south and settled in Judah, including Jerusalem. The increase in population of Jerusalem accounts for the expansion of Jerusalem westward at that time". This is incompatible with the British-Israel concept of all the Israelites being exiled, and is good enough proof against any mass 'Lost Tribes'. Although I have not argued along those lines in this article, it is addressed in the Worldwide Church of God Study Paper titled 'United States and Britain in Prophecy'. November, 1995. Pages 8-16.

¹³ See *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*. 15th edn. 1994. Vol.11, page 628.

¹⁴ *Encyclopedia Judaica*. 1971. Vol.15, page 1006.

¹⁵ id, Vol.4, page 1381.

¹⁶ id, page 1410.

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¹⁸ Armstrong, Herbert. *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*. 1980. Page 70.

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²⁰ *Encyclopedia Judaica*.. 1971. Vol.6, page 1036.

²¹ Thanks to a contribution by David Williams in respect to these scriptures.

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- ²² *Time Magazine*. September 28, 1953. Page 5.
- ²³ *The Jewish Encyclopedia*. 1901. Vol.1, page 600 (I have changed the Scripture references from Roman numerals to Arabic, for convenience).
- ²⁴ *The Jewish Encyclopedia*. 1901. Vol.1, page 601.
- ²⁵ Almost all modern versions agree with this rendering.
- ²⁶ taped interview with Troy Waller (CARM Ministries), 1994.
- ²⁷ 15th ed., vol.12, p.129.
- ²⁸ 'From the White House of the USA'. *Revival Times* (distributed by the Revival Fellowship). No.1. Win.-Sum.'96. Page 10.
- ²⁹ Distributed by the Revival Centre groups in Australia.
- ³⁰ *Jacob versus Esau*. 1989. Page 57.
- ³¹ This interpretation was provided by Paul Longfield, Australian director of Christian Friends of Israel, P.O. Box 219, Caloundra, Queensland, 4551.
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- ³³ Harris, Leo. *Great Britain America And – You!* 1942. Page 13.
- ³⁴ Nankivell, J. *Jacob versus Esau*. 1989. Page 57.
- ³⁵ Worldwide Church of God Study Paper, *United States and Britain in Prophecy*. November, 1995. Page 6.

³⁶ The area of Canaan, with Jerusalem was the particular focus: 1 Kings 8:48; 2 Chronicles 6:25; 6:38; Jeremiah 3:18; 7:7; 16:15; 24:6; 27:22; 25:5; 30:3; 31:23; 32:22 & 37; 50:19; Ezekiel 12:17; 20:42; 36:28; 37:25; Joel 2:32; Amos 9:14; Zeceariah 8:3; 8:8; 9:13&23

³⁷ Payne, N.I.E., *British-Israel Deception Exposed* (195?), page 69.

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⁴⁰ Worldwide Church of God Study Paper, *United States and Britain in Prophecy*. November, 1995. Page 3.

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⁴⁴ Nennius. *British History*, §10. Translation by Morris, J. 1980; also Hanning, R. *The Vision of History in Early Britain*. 1966. Page 105.

⁴⁵ Hanning, R. *The Vision of History in Early Britain*. 1966. Page 103.

⁴⁶ 1982. Page 26.

⁴⁷ Worldwide Church of God Study Paper, *United States and Britain in Prophecy*. November, 1995. Page 3.

⁴⁸ ‘America and Britain in Prophecy’. Global Church of God. 1996. Page 25.

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- ⁸⁶ *id.* Page 135.
- ⁸⁷ Encyclopedia Britannica, 15th edition. 1974. Volume 15, page 352.
- ⁸⁸ Geipel, J. *The Europeans: An Ethno-Historical Survey*. 1969. Pages 30-31.
- ⁸⁹ Encyclopedia Britannica, 15th edition. 1974. Volume 15, page 355.
- ⁹⁰ Geipel, J. *The Europeans: An Ethno-Historical Survey*. 1969. Page 185.
- ⁹¹ Personal correspondence, 12 September 1998.
- ⁹² *The Jewish Encyclopedia*. 1901. Vol.1, page 601.

93 1969, p. 20

⁹⁴ *The Jewish Encyclopedia*. 1901. Vol.1, page 601.

⁹⁵ Lounsbury, T. *History of the English Language*. 1906. Pages 1, 12-13. Square brackets mine.

⁹⁶ Kathleen Hubbard assistant professor of linguistics at the University of California, San Diego, webpage “Everything you ever wanted to know about Proto-Indo-European (and the comparative method), but were afraid to ask!” (www.utexas.edu)

⁹⁷ MacNeil, R. *The Story of English*. 1986. Page 51.

⁹⁸ Dr David Sprunger, English Department, Concordia College webpage (www.cord.edu)

⁹⁹ Baugh, A. *A History of the English Language*. 1978 (3rd ed.). Page 37ff.

¹⁰⁰ id. Page 38-39.

¹⁰¹ Haarmann, H. ‘Contact Linguistics, Archaeology and Ethnogenetics’, *The Journal of Indo-European Studies*, Volume 22, Number 3 & 4, Fall / Winter 1994. Page 269.

¹⁰² Personal correspondence with Steven Schaufele, 15 May 1998.

¹⁰³ Personal correspondence with Dr. Ronald Cosper, 16 May 1998.

¹⁰⁴ Some of his research (from correspondence) I have reproduced verbatim in this section.

¹⁰⁵ Distributed by the Revival Centres in Australia.

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- ¹⁰⁶ Mendelssohn, K. *The Riddle of the Pyramids*. 1974. Page 201.
- ¹⁰⁷ id. Page 206.
- ¹⁰⁸ id. Page 206.
- ¹⁰⁹ Gardner, M. *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science*. 1957 edn. Page 176.
- ¹¹⁰ Mendelssohn, K. *The Riddle of the Pyramids*. 1974. Page 208-209.
- ¹¹¹ Vos, H.F. *Archaeology in Bible Lands*. 1977. Page 232; see also Edwards, I. *The Pyramids of Egypt*. 1988 revision, page 114.
- ¹¹² Edwards, I. *The Pyramids of Egypt*. 1988 revision. Page 111.
- ¹¹³ Mendelssohn, K. *The Riddle of the Pyramids*. 1974, page 207-208.
- ¹¹⁴ Fakhry, A. *The Pyramids*. 1961. Pages 123-124.
- ¹¹⁵ Edwards, I. *The Pyramids of Egypt*. 1988 revision, pages 251-252.
- ¹¹⁶ id, page 243.
- ¹¹⁷ id, page 244.
- ¹¹⁸ id, page 242.
- ¹¹⁹ Gardner, M. *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science*. 1957 edn., pages 176-177.
- ¹²⁰ Edwards, I. *The Pyramids of Egypt*. 1988 revision, pages 101 - 103.
- ¹²¹ Mendelssohn, K. *The Riddle of the Pyramids*. 1974., page 64.
- ¹²² id., page 73.

¹²³ Gardner, M. *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science*. 1957 edn., page 184.

¹²⁴ A pamphlet printed by the Australian Revival Centres.

¹²⁵ *Creation Ex Nihilo* magazine 18:4, p.44.

¹²⁶ 1901. Vol.1, page 601.

¹²⁷ Nankivell, J. 1989. Page 87.

¹²⁸ Fox, J. 1948. Page 76.

¹²⁹ 'King James I & The Bible'. Newcastle Revival Centre pamphlet. Circa 1990.

¹³⁰ Even the Revival Centre booklet by Col. Durrant, J. *Bible Numerics - Numbers Don't Lie - The Bible is True*. Page 9 says, "the New Testament books are in the order given by Westcott and Hort, whose version is regarded the most reliable".

¹³¹ Preface to the *New Revised Standard Version* of the Bible.

¹³² Ps. Duncan, J. 'The Revival Fellowship - Why We Are Different'. *Revival Times*. No.2. Sum-Win.'96. Pages 5-6.

¹³³ For a critique, see Martin Gardner's *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science*. Worldwide Church of God Study Paper, 'How Anglo-Israelism Entered the Churches of God'. November, 1995. Pages 9-10.

¹³⁴ Revival Centre Publications. *Bible Prophecy for Today*. Page 11. This interpretation was first suggested by Andrew Dugger, editor of *The Bible Advocate*. The original Hebrew probably really refers to a

punishment of seven-fold intensity, rather than a duration of seven times (as the word 'times' is not in the Hebrew text).

¹³⁵ Fox, J. *Today, Tomorrow and the Great Beyond*. 1948 edn. Pages 183-190.

¹³⁶ *The Encyclopedia Britannica*. 11th edn. 1910. Vol.II, page 31.