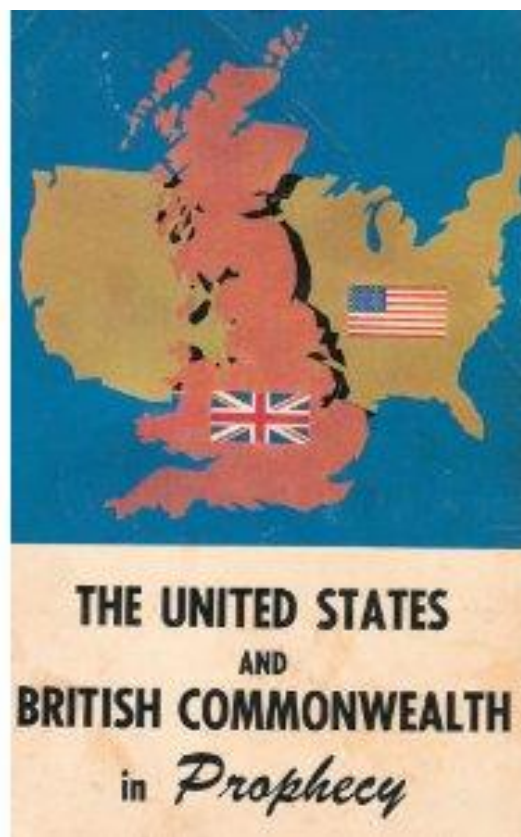


How the Israel Identity Truth entered the Church of God

Research Notes by C. M. White
Version 2.3





How the Israel Identity Truth entered the Church of God

Authored by Craig Martin White.

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- *Notes on the Third Resurrection Doctrine in the Church of God*

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Our purpose and desire is to foster Biblical, historical and related studies that strengthen the Church of God's message & mission and provides further support to its traditional doctrinal positions.

Introduction

By way of background, I first heard of this doctrine 'floating around' as a child having been mentioned by some people 'around the traps.'

This included my Uncle Ron Martin (Mum's brother) who first heard the World Tomorrow broadcast in 1956 and Uncle Harry Hart, a Scottish migrant to South Africa.

I was curious initially listening to these ideas. In 1973 I read Herbert W Armstrong's book *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy* (1967 edition) but was a little dubious, however I then began to see how it was true and started to pursue my own research on the subject. This included contacting the British-Israel World Federation in England and their associates in South Africa, and reading articles and books opposed to the doctrine to ascertain the truth.

We migrated from South Africa to England in 1976 and to Australia in 1977 where I corresponded with the British-Israel World Federation in Sydney. I visited their offices many times and they together with others, some key information was provided. There was also a preponderance of correspondence with the BIWF in England and many similar organisations across the world, in particular the United States and Canada. Over the years scores of books and articles were devoured wherein I sifted through these vast amounts of materials.

The truth prevailed, but I did see that by critiquing this (or any doctrine), one can fine-tune or improve upon it by making necessary adjustments. By continuing any misunderstandings, silly traditions or errors, one perpetuates problems and we draw unnecessary criticism. Better to have humility and correct errors than find ourselves subject to ridicule.

Many years later the Worldwide Church of God that I was a member of (having been receiving its literature and listening to its radio broadcast in 1972) fell into apostasy and dropped this doctrine. Other similar groups were already taking up the gauntlet and published materials on the Israel identity truth.

The group which I decided to join in May 1995 was the United Church of God which continued this truth, publishing its own volume, magazine articles and broadcast television programmes about it.

Despite this doctrine having been scattered among a number of groups, it is now unstoppable and will continue despite attempts to deride or undermine it from internal factions.

Gradual acceptance of the Israel Identity Truth by the Church of God

One book I read early on in my research was *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright* by John Harden Allen (1847-1930). Allen was an evangelist who promoted this message primarily on the American West Coast and especially Pasadena, where he died.

It was clear to me that Herbert Armstrong utilised this book for his own, given the similar structure and wording. Utilisation, let's be clear, is not the same as plagiarism (though it could be argued that Herbert Armstrong should have referenced this work).

However, Mr Armstrong gave a number of Bible studies on the Pauline epistles, including a series on Galatians in 1980 which I heard myself and took notes of. In it he stated:

"It's true that I had read one or two other writings, and that book of J.H. Allen on the truth about the lost Ten Tribes ... I examined this so-called Anglo-Israel theory, But I checked it very carefully with the Bible, and I only believed what I saw in the Bible. I didn't believe and I threw out a lot of what they had." (Galatians 5 & 6) [emphasis mine]

From that statement one can see that Herbert Armstrong was a sifter of information – taking the good and leaving out the errors. And he also took this doctrine to new levels of understanding, marketing it and spreading it far and wide as never before.

Others joined his team whom added vital new information such as Raymond F McNair, Herman L Hoeh, Robert Boraker and Gene Hogberg among others.

Note the following from the *Ambassador College Correspondence Course*, Lesson 53 "Reaching the World With Power!":

"Certain strong families [in the late 1800s] provided the Church of God a tenuous continuity. These came to be located mainly in Missouri, Oklahoma and Oregon. Some of them retained a knowledge of God's Holy Days **and the identity of modern Israel.**" (p. 11) [emphasis mine]

To demonstrate how this doctrine was beginning to find its way into the Church of God (though not prominently) I offer the following sources and information.

Of interest to the Church of God is that a conference to unify the Millerite Adventists was held at Albany in April 1845.

The major doctrinal issues that were discussed included whether the prophecies related to Israel (including the Jews) would literally come to pass prior to Christ's return or whether the prophecies were spiritual. Joseph Marsh of the Age to Come Adventist faction was adamant that the prophecies were literal. Marsh apparently held to the British-Israel teaching:

"Marsh reprinted in the *Advent Harbinger* selections from Literalist works. **He opened his columns to Storrs, who promoted therein a book on British Israelism**, teaching the inheritance of Palestine by the supposed British descendants of the ten tribes along with a Jewish Judah.[63] But that doctrine does not appear to have been a major issue in the age-to-come controversy."
[Footnote 63 reads: Marsh, *Advent Harbinger*, n.s. 2: 12. June 29, 1850. **Extracts were printed in the Harbinger from this book (*Our Israelitish Origin, by an Englishman, John Wilson*)**, for example on p. 21, July 6, 1850."] (Julia Neuffer, *A historical review of early non-Sabbatarian Adventists' dispute over Israel in prophecy (1844-1850)*, pp. 74-76) [emphasis mine]

It not well known that George Storrs believed in British-Israelism, but the various Second Adventists and successors, in the main, were not interested in the concept. However, if Storrs recommended a book or concept, he was so well-esteemed, people would follow up and read the book, if possible. It is very likely that he had some influence upon Church of God people in addition to the British-Israel doctrine, as they read books on this subject as a result of his recommendation. Why would they not read other materials he recommended, such as on the *fair chance*?

"Early in 1850 "a friend recently from England" gave Storrs a copy of John Wilson's *Our Israelitish Origin: Lectures on Ancient Israel, and the Israelitish Origin of the*

Modern Nations of Europe, first published in 1840 and newly reissued in 1850. Storrs was impressed and introduced the matter to his readers in the March issue. Later that year he republished the book. The premise was that the Lost Tribes of Israel were the founding race of most European nations, particularly of the English. Others from the Literalist community would take up the belief. John Henry Paton, sometime associate of Russell and Barbour, would find the idea attractive, entering into a correspondence with Andrew Jukes whose brand of Universalism and restitution appealed to him. Jukes views are found in his *Second Death and the Restitution of all Things*. Jukes and others saw England as the "land of Ephraim" and America as "the land of Manasseh." (B. Schulz, *A Separate Identity*, p. 125)¹

Storrs further wrote the following in an article "God's Promise and Oath to Abraham":

1. God has promised, and confirmed it with an oath, that in Abraham and his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
2. This promise and oath is to be understood in the literal sense of the words in which it is made.
3. This promise and oath is not yet fulfilled in its fullness.
4. Therefore, there is to be an age, or 'ages to come,' in which fulfillment will be perfectly accomplished." (*The Herald of Life and the Coming Kingdom*, 26 April 1871).

Later, in the General Conference of the Church of God group, various doctrines began to enter which either became officially sanctioned or gained some prominence. For example, in an 1884 edition of *The Advent and Sabbath Advocate*, Brother Ellsworth promoted British-Israelism but came under attack from a senior church minister, Brinkerhoff, who tried to fend off the entrance of this doctrine into the Church in a response in *The Advent and Sabbath Advocate*, 9 December 1884.

An article by Albert Rusk appeared in *The Bible Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom* (14 May 1907):

"About 16 years ago, I had a pleasant correspondence with brother Albert Smith of Leicester, England. I carefully read all of the periodical sent me on the Anglo-Israel question and now have thousands of pages of books on the subject. My investigations was, I believe, as thorough as could be made at the time and was sufficient to satisfy me that it is by far the most reasonable theory I have ever seen advanced." (p. 290)

In *A History of the Seventh Day Church of God*, Richard Nickels reveals that in the early 1900s men such as R. K. Walker, Frank Walker², S. S. Davison, and Roy Davison were already teaching it (p. 251).

¹ For instance, Joseph Marsh (of the Christian Connection) published the *Advent Harbinger*. In the 29 June and 6 July 1850 editions he published an article by Storrs which contained extracts from Wilson's book.

Note also: "Thus, Millerism helped set the stage for the introduction of Anglo-Israelism into the United States. That would explain how George Storrs, a former Millerite, came to recommend *Our Israelitish Origins*. It may also be one reason why the book sold well in this country" (R. Orr, *Anglo-Israelism and The United States & Britain in Prophecy*, pp. 41-2).

² "Walker held unique views on "British-Israelism." In 1971, he told me, "I believe a lot with Brother Armstrong." However, he held a different view believing that the United States was Ephraim, the younger and greater nation. The Ten Tribes were never united with the Jews; they continued to exist as the Celtic and Teutonic peoples of Europe and America, and scattered through the earth. And that they will remain separate until they become one nation, when the two sticks are put back together (Ezekiel 37:15-28). "Joseph is not dead," Walker stated, "he still cares for his brethren [referring to the over five million Jews in the U.S. alone]. America is co-mingled with Israelites. God has used the Israelite nations to carry the gospel."

Walker was not the only one in the Church of God who believed in British-Israelism. In 1971, Walker estimated that in the Meridian group, 1/2 to 2/3 of the people leaned to British-Israelism. Claude Ellis (singer on the original "World Tomorrow" radio broadcast, who later returned to Meridian) and the Palmers believed in Anglo-Israelism. Even though the Denver Group puts out articles against it, some of their people nevertheless hold to this idea.

Roy Davison even wrote the following in the *Bible Advocate*:

“The subject of ‘Anglo Israel’ and kindred thoughts in regard to the twelve tribes is quite well advanced in these last days. However it is not a new thought with the Church of God, for amongst our people it has held a prominent part in the message for many years.” (14 March 1938, p. 11)

Wayne Cole (a pioneer Ambassador College student) revealed the following to me in an e-mail:

“**Both my paternal and maternal grandparents were Sabbath keepers and both accepted the "British Israel" teachings in the early 1900s**, though I do not know the actual history. I believe the 1917 reference may have been that my dad was baptised at the age of 18 in 1917. On the maternal side of my family, one of my mother's uncles was a Sabbath keeping minister in the early 1900s. His name was **Merritt Dickenson**. I do not think he was ever aligned with COG7 but worked as an independent, itinerant minister in western Oklahoma.” (31 May 2008) [emphasis mine]³

Merritt Dickinson (mentioned above) published a booklet titled *The Final Gathering of the Children of Israel*, based on one of the articles in the *Bible Advocate*.

“It just so happens that Dickinson was practically a next door neighbor of Ellen and James White in Michigan. Merritt Dickinson married Ida Nichols, an SDA colporteur (seller of religious books). Ida may have been the daughter of the famous SDA minister J.H. Nichols, who preached the first Sabbath sermon west of the Rocky Mountains, at Santa Rosa, California, in 1862. Apparently through self-study, Dickinson came to believe in Anglo-Israelism. In 1912, Dugger admitted to Dickinson that his Anglo-Israel ideas were true, but said that he couldn't get anywhere preaching that doctrine. **In 1919, Dickinson published a series of articles in *The Bible Advocate*, later published as a tract, which stated that England is Ephraim, and the United States is Manasseh.**” (RC Nickels, “Church of God (Adventist),” *Sabbath History*, July 1996, pp. 4-5) [emphasis mine]

Nickels' reports that although Dugger apparently conceded to Merritt that the British-Israel belief was true, he decided against preaching it (*History of the Seventh Day Church of God*, p. 143):

“Through self-study, Merritt Dickinson came to believe in Anglo-Israelism. He reportedly read the book, *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright*. Leroy, Merritt and their mother went to Jerusalem for three years, 1898-1900, and along the trip,

Frank Walker's father, R.K. Walker, believed this doctrine, as did Rich. Roy Davison, a noted Church of God (Seventh Day) leader of the twentieth century, was a strong believer in Anglo-Israelism.

Before 1942, Frank Walker was convicted to this belief through self-study and literature, while he was in Wisconsin. The Church of God, Frank recalled, taught that the U.S. would defend the Jews at Armageddon against Russia. The passage in Zechariah 9:13-15 convinced him. He believed that the Israelites would battle against the Gentiles at Armageddon. Another believer in some form of British-Israelism was Ziegler, whose paper, "The Torch of Israel," was issued from Washington, D.C. His attempts to work with Eyer failed.

For twenty years, Frank Walker published a little paper called, "God's Watchman," covering prophecy, the Sabbath, and Anglo-Israel views. A special 26-page edition, "Hope of Israel," covers the United States in Prophecy.” (R. C. Nickels, “Frank Walker Tribute (1902-1997),” *The Sabbath Sentinel*, Jan-Feb 1998).

³ Herman L Hoeh in a sermon on church history delivered on 14 March 1953 at Pasadena, California, stated:

- The holy days were kept by a few in the Church of God with headquarters in Stanberry, Missouri and had some understanding of these days
- Mentioned that Wayne Cole's uncle on his mother's side held to the 'British-Israel' doctrine

The reader can listen to the sermon [here](#). The information declared above commences around 16:30 minutes.

stopped off at London and saw the Stone of Scone.⁴ After the trip they settled in Oklahoma. By now, they were observing the Sabbath by themselves. By 1912, Merritt was preaching, holding meetings in Oklahoma. It was that year that A.N. Dugger had a street conversation with Merritt as recalled by his niece. Dugger stated: "You can preach about that (Anglo-Israelism) if you want to, and there may be some truth to it; but you can't get anywhere with the people while preaching that." Merritt Dickinson replied: "You admit it is the truth, but you won't preach it." This discouraged Dickinson about the Church of God. He later turned down ordination and a minister's license, because he refused to be tied down and muzzled. Yet in the General Conference Report on Ministers in 1923, M.N. Dickinson is listed as an ordained, recognized and credentialed minister, next to A.N. Dugger."

A further source states:

"Through the efforts of Merritt Dickinson, who had read and accepted the arguments in Allen, *Anglo-Israel thought entered the Church of God (Seventh Day)*." (*Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America*, p. 53)⁵

In June 2024 I finally came to view the articles by Dickinson – they did not contain much information, but are an important link in the history of doctrinal development in the Church of God. The articles appeared in *The Bible Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom*, 11 Nov 1919, pp. 726-27; 18 Nov 1919, pp. 736-39; 25 Nov 1919, pp. 753-54; 2 Dec 1919, pp. 769-771. It was advertised 18 Nov 1919, p. 752; 25 Nov 1919, p. 768; 2 Dec 1919, p. 784 and 9 Nov 1919, p. 800.

The seeds were being sown, but they needed watering and for someone to calibrate, market and spread this truth, taking it across the world in a powerful, Biblical message. A lively vine was required to do so.

Herbert W Armstrong and the Israel Identity Doctrine

Mr Armstrong somehow came across this doctrine and read John Harden Allen's book *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright* – probably due to it being discussed and written about at that time. He wrote a letter to the Runcorn's about the subject. The reader may be aware that Emma Runcorn was the lady whom brought the Sabbath understanding to Mrs Loma Armstrong in 1926.

"Now as my mind works on this subject, it appears thus: The theory is that England and the U.S. are descendants of Joseph. The Jews are the descendants of Judah, and possibly also of Benjamin and Levi. If we have them located, then where are the other eight tribes? Why, why not right here in the U.S., mixed, thru immigration and inter-marriage between different races? They would all be of the white race. We have married and intermarried with other white races, but not with Negroes, Japs, or Chinese, or Indians ...

Now if my theory is worth anything, it is this: Salvation is for all the world who will come to Jesus and accept it, regardless of race. But the special blessings, many of which I believe are to pertain to the next world, promised Israel, are for that one blood race alone." (*Armstrong to Mr. and Mrs. Runcorn*, 28 February 1928)

⁴ Herbert Armstrong refers to the Stone in a letter to Basil Wolverton, 11 Feb 1947: "We've both seen, and touched the stone LIAFAIL, in the coronation chair at Westminster Abbey, over which all kings are crowned, and said to be Jacob's pillar-stone." (p. 11)

⁵ Some background information to the introduction of the British-Israel doctrine into the Church of God by HWA may be found on pages 25-28, 34-36 of David Barrett's book *The Fragmentation of a Sect*.

The *Bible Advocate* published articles on pyramidology in the Spring of 1927. Mr Armstrong's letter was forwarded to the author by the periodical. The author, Reverend Lincoln McConnell lived in St Petersburg, Florida and was pastor of the First Baptist Church (referred to above).⁶

He responded as below:

"... I advise you, if you want the REAL THING in the way of proof to send to the A.A. Beauchamp Pub. Co., 603 Boylston Street, Boston., Mass. and get Davidson's great book on The Great Pyramid ...

I must say that if you really want to KNOW your Bible you will have to get the books on "Anglo-Israel" ... You will never know the real truth the BOOK is teaching without this key. This sounds radical perhaps, but you will see when you study it that it's simple truth" (*McConnell to Armstrong*, 3 June 1927)

In a "Personal from the Editor" column in the *Good News* magazine makes mention of this contact:

"Also, even during the initial six-months' study before baptism, a minister in Florida I had contacted by mail, wrote saying that unless I knew of the identity of the United States and the British as the Birthright people of Israel - heading the so-called "Lost Ten Tribes," I was IGNORANT! So I obtained all the literature I could find on the subject, comparing every point with the Bible. I found many errors - errors in every book or pamphlet I could find on the subject. But what I did find in the Bible PROVED our identity. This was the needed KEY to unlock all the prophecies!" (*Good News*, August 1969, p. 4)

Mr Armstrong, having read Allen's book, made contact with Beauchamp to receive his opinion about it (Allen had his classic work published in 1917 by A. A. Beauchamp) in a letter dated 28 March 1928. This is Beauchamp's response:

"You ask my opinion as to the most dependable book on the Israel theory? I have always thought myself that *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright* was the best book." (*A. A. Beauchamp to Armstrong*, 5 April 1928).

Around that time Mr Armstrong wrote to one of the leading men in the Church, Andrew Dugger, letting him know that he was planning to write manuscripts on evolution and another dealing with British-Israelism.

Dugger's response is dated 26 February 1929 wherein he acknowledges receipt of Mr Armstrong's manuscript *What is the Third Angel's Message?* which was later re-hashed and re-titled *United and States and Britain in Prophecy*:

"I feel that we are entering into a new era for the message and that it is going to take on new life. In fact the time for the message is now here which I have long contended it would be when the events of the last few weeks came to pass."

In a further response Dugger wrote as follows:

"Your manuscripts ... will be read with pleasure" (*Dugger to Armstrong*, 20 April 1928).

⁶ Sometime in the late 1970s or early 1980s a minister (I cannot recall, but that was probably Raymond F McNair), mentioned in a sermon about a Protestant minister in addition to Allen whom Mr Armstrong corresponded with on the 'lost' tribes of Israel whom was based in Florida.

In his third letter dated 28 July 1929, Dugger wrote:

“I have seen no work near its equal in clearness and completeness. You surely are right, and while I cannot use it in the paper at the present you may be assured that your labor has surely not been in vane. There is a purpose in your having gone into this matter so deeply right at this time which it is not difficult for me to fully see through, and you will hear more from these truths and the light herein revealed later.”

The entirety of Dugger’s responses may be found in two **appendices** at the rear of this document.

In any event, Mr Armstrong was perplexed by all of this and noted in his *Autobiography*:

“Did this Church accept and proclaim this vital new truth — the key that unlocks the doors to all prophecy? Here was the key to understanding of one third of the whole Bible. But this Church refused then to accept it or preach it or publish it ... though their leader frankly confessed it was truth and a revelation from God!

Yet here was the Church which appeared to have *more truth*, and *less error* than any other ... Truly, this was bewildering!” (*Autobiography of Herbert W Armstrong (vol. 1)*, p. 346)

Perplexed, but not defeated. He ploughed on and reaped the rewards of a huge outreach proclaiming the Israel message. He reached millions with this truth – indeed it is estimated that at least 5 million copies of *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* (in its various editions) were published and distributed around the world.

On 4 May 1928 Mr Armstrong responded to Beauchamp:

“I wonder if there is not a real need, as well as a ready market, for a new book on the Anglo-Israel subject? ... I have read very little, as yet, of the book by Discipulus. However, judging from what little I have had an opportunity to read, I do not believe this book as sound and authoritative as the one by Allen.

The book I have in mind **would follow, in great measure, the line of thought and proof offered by Allen**. I would endeavor to keep it as dependable and as sound in its arguments as Allen’s. But the ground covered by Allen would be covered in boiled-down form, condensed where possible ... The book would be written, moreover, in an entirely different style ...

If you believe there is a need and a market for such a book, and you would care to consider the possibility of undertaking to publish it, then I should like to go into the matter further and in more detail with you.” (Armstrong to Beauchamp, 4 May 1928). [emphasis mine]

Concerning the other book on evolution, Mr Armstrong stated:

“But am afraid the publishing house in question [ie Church of God (seventh day)] is not equipped to turn out as up-to-date and attractive a job as I feel will be necessary.”

Beauchamp’s response is as follows:

“Your letter of May 4 at hand. In reply will say that I am quite sure that I would not be interested in publishing the book on evolution and as for the one on Israel I would not offer a great deal of encouragement. There have been three or four books on

that subject brought out the last year, and I am now at work on the manuscript of one by the author of *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright*, which I expect to publish some time during the fall." (*Beauchamp to Armstrong*, 9 May 1928).

Mr Armstrong continued his researches and a Church of God elder, A.H. Stith of Idaho put him in touch with S.S. Davison of Oklahoma who possessed literature by Alfuc Davison (Armstrong's letter to Davison, 26 September 1928). (Stith founded the Church of God at Meridian, Idaho in 1923 and the Davison's had been ministers in the Church of God clear back to the late 1800s)

As a result of his further research, Mr Armstrong wrote to Andrew Dugger again about it (*Armstrong to Dugger*, 1 January 1929), who responded that this new information would be welcomed (*Dugger to Armstrong*, 22 January 1929).

There are further correspondences that throw light on the matter.

In a letter dated 11 April 1937 to Church of God (the one based in Salem, West Virginia) leader, Andrew Dugger he stated:

"I know God has called me to His ministry ... I know He has fitted me specially for the radio work ..." (p. 1)

"Brother Dugger, SOMETHING HAS BEEN WRONG with the Church of God. It has not GONE FORWARD with the P O W E R it should. Why? There is a REASON! ...

"WHY have we been declaring the Third Angel's Message with such a pitifully weak whisper? ...

"The Church of God IS AT THE CROSSROADS!" (p. 3)

"... I sent you the manuscript of a complete book I had written on the ISRAEL question then entitled "The Third Angel's Message." I believe (and which book, re-written, is now being published, incidentally), and I repeatedly wrote you asking "AM I RIGHT on this question ... [you replied] saying I surely WAS RIGHT, and that you say a purpose in the Lord revealing this truth to me at this time. Yet nothing was ever done with this truth...

"This has become a Church stand, I believe, not merely your personal stand - - but I have become convinced from these several incidents that you have taken the stand that we must CLOSE THE DOOR to advancing light and truth, or to purging out any possible error in present teachings...

"But the Church has come to a CRISIS, and its fate will be decided in about five weeks ... **So I beg of you - - I plead with you, IN JESUS NAME**, for the sake of the Church, for the sake of the souls, for your own person sake, will you not now COME OUT BOLDLY WITH THE STAND THAT THE CHURCH WILL **KEEP THE DOORS OPEN TO ADVANCING LIGHT AND TRUTH?**" (p. 3) [emphasis mine]

He then goes on to say that Dugger did not "fully accept the conclusion [due to not preaching it] that the white English speaking people are the true HOUSE OF ISRAEL, as your letter written on the train that night surely indicated you DID accept ..." (p. 4)

He then makes a startling and prophetic statement that the Church was holding to a policy "of **the CLOSED DOOR.**" (p. 4) [emphasis mine]

For those who have read other communications of mine and the Bible study on *Amazing Temple Symbolism Found in Revelation Chapter 3*, I show that a door was opened to Herbert Armstrong of truth that if subsequently adopted by the leadership of that day, would have led to the doors of evangelism swinging wide open. The two major truths rejected by the Church of God in the main during the 1930s, despite the urging of Herbert Armstrong, were chiefly the Holy Days and secondarily the truth about where Israel is located today. The adoption of these two truths led Mr Armstrong into ever further truths and understandings.

It is unlikely (but I may be wrong) that Mr Armstrong knew that the “doors” he was referring to were so prophetic (Rev 3:8) – and for that time period.

In several letters he loudly asked for the doors to be kept open and not shut; but they did not listen to what the spirit was saying to the Churches, and especially the sixth phase of the Work. It therefore fell to Mr Armstrong, in faith, to proclaim those two fundamental truths.

Three months later he wrote to Church of God elder, John Kiesz, the following concerning the manuscript he sent to Dugger on the ‘lost’ tribes of Israel:

“As long as ten years ago, I had submitted some things to Dugger which he wrote and acknowledged to be TRUTH - - acknowledging he was preaching error, and yet refusing to change it and accept the truth and confess the error to the brethren, on the grounds they would not all accept the truth, and the truth might split the church, and so we had better go along with a stand he admitted to be false.” (July 1937, p. 1)

It appears that Mr Dugger continued to believe this doctrine until he died, but did not preach on it. In a booklet *The Ten Lost Tribes of Israel. Not Lost but Found* (c.1970), he wrote:

“There is evidence, however, of the “Anglo-Saxon” people being one of the tribes of Israel which subject we have looked into very carefully, but many people carry this entirely too far, becoming extremists on the question” (p. 1)

He goes on to critique those views within British-Israelism which he disagrees with or are too extreme.

It is clear that Mr Armstrong also read *The Destiny of Britain and America* by Lt. Col. Mackendrick whom he wrote to:

“I am writing you for two reasons: I am going to point out what I believe to be a slight error in your argument ... and I feel that a great message based on this Israel truth has been revealed to me which must be powerfully broadcasted to the whole world without delay.” (*Armstrong to Mackendrick*, 4 March 1929).

By 1990, just four years after Mr Armstrong’s death, the Worldwide Church of God (now Grace Church International) withdrew the *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* from circulation ostensibly as part of a review, but we all knew the doctrine was now dropped.

The following May (1991) a survey was sent to the ministry asking for input on the doctrine.⁷

In 1995 Ralph Orr’s article denouncing the doctrine was published (“United States and Britain in Prophecy,” *Worldwide News*, 19 Dec 1995, pp. 3-9).

⁷ You can find the survey online [here](#).

Mr Orr was commissioned to undertake research on the origin of this doctrine in the Church (*Anglo-Israelism and The United States and Britain in Prophecy*). The first edition published in 1996 (*How Anglo-Israelism Entered Seventh-day Churches of God*) was mainly an explanation of its origin but as Orr's work evolved over the years it became increasingly anti-British-Israelism until it became a sizable document published by the GCI. Nevertheless, it contained some valuable information (ie the letters) which I utilised above in this document.

Despite his desperate attempts, Orr does not come even remotely close to disproving the doctrine.

Extracts from *What is the Third Angel's Message?*

Unfortunately, access to Mr Armstrong's *What Is the Third Angel's Message?* (or other original papers) is not permitted by the Grace Church International (GCI) and it forms part of their collection of his works, letters and such like. Some parts of that collection are available online [here](#). However, some extracts from the manuscript are available below:

"If you are wondering what all this early history of the beginnings of Israel has to do with the Sabbath, the Mark of the Beast, the call to "Come out of her, my people," and the Third Angel's Message, you will see, I am sure, before we are finished. The connection is very, very vital." (*What Is the Third Angel's Message?* p. 43).

What difference does it make? Unless we know our identity as Israel, we cannot understand the mighty personal warning which the Almighty has published in every English Bible to every individual Israelite ...

Just as surely as it was given to God's holy prophets to foretell 2,500 years ago that in the year 1917 A.D. the Army and Air forces of the British throne should take Jerusalem...so he has revealed thru those same prophets what is yet to take place before all things are fulfilled ...

These things could never be understood except thru a knowledge of Israel's twentieth-century identity. For instance, the book of Ezekiel is addressed primarily to the United States and Great Britain, and to those of our present generation. In it are recorded events destined to take place within the NEXT SEVEN OR EIGHT YEARS." (pp. 146D–146E).

"Many of these so-called "Minor" Prophets contain a most solemn personal, individual warning to every one of us — a part, if you please, of "the Third Angel's Message," — which has never been understood or preached." (p. 146F)

"Russia, too, is destined to play a tremendous part in these closing days.... Russian is gaining control in China. She hopes to gain it in Japan, by fomenting race-prejudice against White, or Western, or, if you please, Israelitish, power, dominance and civilization ... She is now bending Herculean efforts to foment unrest among the populous and ignorant Negroes of our South, painting herself as their champion against what she tells them is the tyranny and oppression of our country." (pp. 146G–146H)

"Why didn't the apostle Paul, sent to the Gentiles, more openly and definitely teach observance of the seventh day? Why have the eyes of such great men of God as Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Moody, Finney, Cartwright, et al., been blinded to this truth? Why did not the Holy Spirit lead these men into this truth, when they unquestionably were men filled with the Holy Spirit?" (p. 196)

"Israel was blinded in part, until the end of the times of the Gentiles (1917-1936) ... and in the case of those individuals who repented, and returned to the true God, and

accepted salvation, God winked at this blindness ...

That is why Dwight L. Moody was blinded to the Sabbath truth! That is why Luther, Calvin, Wesley, and all these great latter-day men of God were blinded to this truth! Israel was blinded to it until the fullness of the Times of the Gentiles (Rom. 11:25), because God did not desire the House of Israel to be identified or known by the world until then.

This too disposes with that question: What about my parents and grandparents...who knew nothing about the Sabbath? Were they saved? The answer is now plain.... If these people had accepted Jesus Christ and his sacrifice...if they were willingly obedient to God so far as they had light or knowledge to be obedient, then God winked at their blindness in part. They were not held responsible for that which they did not know.” (pp. 209–10)

“We are ready to explain it, the true Third Angel’s Message — the last, final warning Message which God is going to shout to a complacent, tradition-loving, self-seeking world before the falling of the Seven Last Plagues and the re-opening of the final terrible War Tribulation which is destined to culminate in the Battle of Armageddon in the year 1936 — this true Third Angel’s Message is, after all, just one more last and final warning from Almighty God ...

In these closing chapters, God has placed this final eleventh-hour warning in his word. And in these closing chapters we shall examine this very definite, specific, last-minute warning, just as the Bible has it, for this very present generation.” (pp. 237–38)

“This third and last stage of the Gospel is, simply, the gospel of the kingdom. It is this gospel which is to be preached to all the world just before the “end” comes. It is a warning not to worship the beast or the image of the beast, nor to have his mark, and it has something to do with keeping the commands of God.” (p. 245)

“Just as the tendencies of the times required, in the apostles’ day, that the grace aspect of the gospel be stressed, so now the tendencies of the times require that the obedience aspect be stressed.” (ibid)

Perhaps GCI will permit the manuscript to be scanned and made available for researchers sometime in the future. After all, it claims that it is not a closed, frightened, control-freak church.

In footnote 45 Orr explains:

“The surviving manuscript shows evidence that it has been edited. Pages 1–19[a] have been typed on a different, obviously newer typewriter, than the rest of the manuscript. **The book title for these pages is *The Real Truth About Israel*.** Based on a comparison of the manuscript with other writings of Armstrong from the late 1920s, it is my judgment that the surviving first 19 pages represent a rewriting of the original text. Pages 19[b] onward have been typed on a much poorer quality typewriter. The themes of these pages are those with which Armstrong concerned himself in the late ‘20s. The title of the book for this older section is *What is the Third Angel’s Message?* The entire manuscript, as it now exists in its rewritten form, is document 8850 of the Herbert W. Armstrong Papers [HWAP] collection of the Worldwide Church of God. Correspondence that shed light on the development of the manuscript include documents 828, 829, 849, 850, 884, 931, 2559. Many addition letters of Armstrong’s from 1929 deal with Anglo-Israelism and its relationship to the Third Angel’s Message. [Since first writing this footnote, the original 19 pages of Armstrong’s manuscript have been discovered among

uncatalogued papers of the Herbert W. Armstrong Papers collection confirming the general observations made above.]" [emphasis mine]

Various editions of the US & Britain in Prophecy

Mr Armstrong's writing on the subject evolved and matured over time, resulting in various editions and editing.

- *What is the Third Angel's Message? [The Real Truth about Israel]*
- The Truth about Israel (published in the *Plain Truth*, May-June, 1938)
- The Truth about Israel (*Plain Truth*, July-Aug, 1938)
- The United States in Prophecy (pt 1) (*Plain Truth*, Aug-Sept, 1940)
- The United States in Prophecy (pt 2) (*Plain Truth*, Nov-Dec, 1940)
- The United States in Prophecy (pt 3) (*Plain Truth*, May-June, 1941)
- The United States in Prophecy (pt 4) (*Plain Truth*, Sept-Oct, 1941)
- The United States in Prophecy (pt 5) (*Plain Truth*, March-April, 1942)
- *Bible Study Quarterly. The Truth about Israel* (1940s)
- *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* (1948)
- *The United States and the British Commonwealth in Prophecy* (1954)
- *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy* (1967)
- *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy* (1972)
- *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* (booklet version) (c1976)
- *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* (1980)
- *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* (1986)

NB: the *Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*, Lesson 16, "Ancient Israel - "Why God's Chosen People"? 1982 was also on this subject. The above are located online at this [link](#).



Cover for the 1940 edition



Cover for the 1954 edition

Around 1985 the Worldwide Church of God issued a one page history of the various editions of the book:

"The United States and Britain in Prophecy" by Herbert W. Armstrong

"Print History:

(According to the copyright page of the 1985 edition of "The United States and Britain in Prophecy")

First Edition - September 1942
Second Edition - Revised 1943
Third Edition - Revised 1944
Fourth Edition — Revised 1945
Fifth Edition — Revised 1967
Sixth Edition — Revised 1972
Seventh Edition - Revised 1975
Eighth Edition — Revised 1980 - 250,000 copies printed
 Second Printing — 1981 — 250,000 copies printed
 Third Printing - February 1982 - 500,000 copies printed
 Forth Printing - July 1982 — 450,000 copies printed
 Fifth Printing - March 1983 — 350,000 copies printed
 Sixth Printing — January 1984 - 500,000 copies printed
 Seventh Printing - October 1984 - 300,000 copies printed
 Eighth Printing April 1985 - 300,000 copies printed

"Since the first printing of "The United States and Britain in Prophecy" in "1942 more than 4,100,000 copies of the English language version have been distributed worldwide - free of charge."

There was a further, updated edition in 1986.

Continuing this doctrine

Today many Church of God groups have continued this truth, publishing various books and articles on the subject. Among them are the following:

- *America and Britain in Prophecy* (Raymond F McNair, Global Church of God)
- *America and Britain. Their Biblical Origin and Prophetic Destiny* (Christian Biblical Church of God)
- *Europe and America in Prophecy* (Garner Ted Armstrong, Intercontinental Church of God)
- *The Fall and Rise of Britain and America* (Church of the Eternal God, Global Church of God and Church of God, a Christian Fellowship)
- *The Migrations of Israel. History and Purpose* (Church of God, the Eternal)
- *The Origin of Our Western Heritage* (Bethel Church of God)
- *The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy* (United Church of God)
- *The United States, Britain & the Commonwealth in Prophecy* (Church of God, a Worldwide Association)
- *What's Ahead for Britain and America* (Living Church of God)

These are available on line [here](#).

This is in addition to booklets by other groups, articles, websites, Facebook pages, Youtube channels, television programmes and such like. Of course, some Protestant groups subscribe to the doctrine in some form or other and the British-Israel World Federation and associated groups continue to spread the message.

Refer to the **Appendix. A History and Comparison of the Various Editions of The United States and Britain in Prophecy** by Nyal Bartch for further information.

Concluding Remarks

God works in mysterious ways, does He not? Normally it appears that He works quietly and subtly to bring about His will. Other times rather confrontationally which is frightening.

He has been restoring Truth since the mid-1800s, sowing the seeds for doctrines such as British-Israelism, inspiring research, watering the seeds, growing this Truth into a great tree and pruning the branches as we fine-tune and purify what we have learned.

In other words, we need to refresh our research and fix whatever minor problems there may be with the doctrine. But the essence and most details are not in error. Daniel 12:4 comes to mind:

“But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end.
Many shall run to and fro, and **knowledge shall increase.**” (ESV)

This is now an unstoppable doctrine and truth found within so many groups, even though they are scattered and weak. But at least they are getting the message out there.

May we protect this truth as it comes under renewed attack and strive to find ever more evidence for it.

Appendix

Letter from Dugger to Armstrong February 1929

The General Conference of the “Church of God” (Seventh Day)

A.N Dugger, Field Manager
Stanberry, Mo
On Train To Meridian, Miss.

Feb 26, 1929.

Dear Brother Armstrong:

I presume you think I am very neglectful of duty in not answering your letter before this, but it was a long while before your manuscript reached me on the Third Angel’s Message and only the first installment has come to my attention to this time. Likely the balance will be at the office when I arrive home next week. If so I will get at it just as soon as possible and write you again.

I have been very busy for the past three months especially and in fact for the past six months I have been speaking about every night. I just left Ala. yesterday where I spent nine days and spoke sixteen times which with my other work you see is heavy. I am only able to endure by the help of the Lord.

I feel that we are entering into a new era for the message and that it is going to take on new life. In fact the time for the message is now here which I have long contended it would be when the events of the last few weeks came to pass.

With christian love to you and yours.

Your brother in the one faith.
(signed Andrew N Dugger)

[emphasis mine]

Appendix

Letter from Dugger to Armstrong July 1929

The General Conference of the “Church of God” (Seventh Day)

A.N Dugger, Field Manager
Stanberry, Mo
On Train In Arkansas

About 11 P.M. July 28, 1929.

Dear Brother Armstrong:

I am returning from the Arkansas conference, having been on the train since 2 P.M., and have just finished the manuscript on the Third Angel’s Message and British Israel with the illustrations and maps. You have put much work on this and I am impressed to write you now while the matter is fresh on my mind of how it has interested me. I have seen no work near its equal in clearness and completeness. You surely are right, and while I cannot use it in the paper at the **present you may be assured that your labor has surely not been in vane. There is a purpose in your having gone into this matter so deeply right at this time which it is not difficult for me to fully see through, and you will hear more from these truths and the light herein revealed later.**

May the Lord bless you and keep you always humble before Him that He may use you further for His glory is my prayer.

Yours in the one faith and message,
(signed Andrew N Dugger)

[emphasis mine]

Appendix
A History and Comparison of the Various Editions of
The United States and Britain in Prophecy
By: Herbert W. Armstrong (1892-1986)

by Nyal Barch

Mr. Armstrong first came into the truth [1] about the location of the modern tribes of Israel in 1927 during an intensive three-year period of Bible study. He wrote his findings down in an 300 page manuscript that he sent to the headquarters of the Church of God, Seventh Day in Stanberry, Missouri. Andrew Dugger, the head of the church at that time, wrote back six months later to inform Mr. Armstrong that he indeed was correct on his findings, but that they really had no use for the information. [2] After Mr. Armstrong started his own church (the Radio Church of God, later renamed the Worldwide Church of God) in 1933 he set out to start publishing his literature. The Plain Truth Magazine got started in February of 1934 and in 1938 a two-part article [3] entitled "The Truth About Israel" was published. In March of 1941 that same article was published as the first edition of the Bible Study Quarterly. [4] Starting with the August 1940 edition of the Plain Truth, a new five-part [5] article entitled "The United States in Prophecy" was published. In September of 1942 the first edition of "The United States in Prophecy" in booklet form went to the presses (because of unavoidable delays the first print run didn't get finished until November). The initial planned run was 5,000 copies, but the requests were so high, it had to be upped to 15,000. [6] In March of 1944, not even a year and a half later another 25,000 copies of the booklet needed to be printed. [7] As you can see, it was extremely popular right off the bat! In 1945, the fourth edition of the booklet was published.

In June of 1967 the booklet was greatly expanded upon [8] (went from 7 to 14 chapters with a great deal of added material) and renamed to "The United States and British Commonwealth In Prophecy". The next update to the book was in 1972 when Mr. Armstrong set out to correct some errors [9] on dates and times he had written into the 1967 edition. During the brief "liberalization era" of the Church in the mid 70's, the book was reduced to a small, ineffective booklet by those who'd taken charge at headquarters. When Mr. Armstrong took back control of the Church in 1978, he immediately reinstated the full-length edition of the book [10] and then later that year he sent the book to be published as a hardback for distribution to stores nation-wide. [11] It was also right around this time that the book went through it's final rename to "The United States and Britain in Prophecy" (circa 1976-1978). Also starting in 1978 the book was published serially [12] in the Plain Truth Magazine. In 1980 we have the eighth and final edition [13] [14] of the book at a length of 184 pages. From the 1940's to 1986 when Mr. Armstrong died there were over five million requests for this book. This alone should give you some insight as to how important it is. In 1987 the Tkach administration of WCG reduced the book down to a 53-page booklet and then finally took it out of production permanently in 1991. In 1994 the Philadelphia Church of God (which was formed in 1989 as an offshoot from WCG) started reproducing and sending out the 1945 edition of the booklet (since it was never copyrighted by WCG) with a few minor updates and changes. You can, as a matter of fact, still order it from them.

The two major editions of the booklet (1945 & 1980) are widely available on the Internet. Although the 1980 edition is still technically under copyright [15] you can find it on a number of websites. The fair use clause of the US Copyright law (Title 17, Section 107) states that for the purpose of comment, teaching, scholarship or research such material may be used. I feel that the publishing Mr. Armstrong's works on the Internet fits within this law perfectly. The easiest way to tell the two versions apart (as nearly all the websites entitle them the same) is to look at the table of contents and see how many chapters there are. The 1980 edition has 14 while the 1945 edition has only 7.

Footnotes:

[1] Right off to dispel any mis understanding, it is very likely that Mr. Armstrong came to the understanding of the truth of British-Israelism in part by reading J.H. Allen's and G.G. Rupert's material. This was in addition to his many hours of intensive reading and studying of the Bible. It is well known that Mr. Armstrong spent a good amount of time in the Portland Public Library during these 3 years of study, and there he would of had access many BI authors work. Some say that he plagiarized J.H. Allen when writing his booklet, I do not believe this to be true. I have found no evidence that Mr. Armstrong intentionally plagiarized anyone while writing his books.

[2] Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong Volume 1; Ch.20, Pp.361-363 (hard cover edition)

[3] Plain Truth: May 1938 & Jul 1938 Issues

[4] Feb 14, 1941 Co-Worker Letter

[5] Plain Truth: Aug 1940, Nov 1940, May 1941, Sep 1941 & Mar 1942 Issues

[6] Nov 6, 1942 Co-Worker Letter

[7] Mar 9, 1944 Co-Worker Letter

[8] Jun 21, 1967 Co-Worker Letter

[9] February 1972 Tomorrow's World Personal

[10] July 25, 1978 Co-Worker Letter

[11] Sep 25, 1978 Co-Worker Letter

[12] Plain Truth: Oct 1978, Dec 1978, Jan 1979, Feb 1979, Mar 1979, Apr 1979, May 1979, Jun 1979 & Aug 1979 Issues
(Note: I do not yet have these issues of the Plain Truth available for download, I will post them as soon as they are available.)

[13] Print History - copyright page of the 1985 printing of the book

[14] Some printings have an additional 1954 copyright date... I have not been able to find out any information about this date, so I 'm not sure if it's a mis print of 1945 or what, if you have any information, please e-mail me

[15] See my WCG vs. PCG page for information on the court battle the Philadelphia Church of God is in over copyright issues regarding Mr. Armstrong's book "Mystery of the Ages" and some of his other works including US&BiP.

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"For you are a holy people to Jehovah your God. Jehovah your God has chosen you to be a special people to Himself **above all people** that are upon the face of the earth." (Deut 7:6)

"This people that I formed for Myself; they shall declare My praise." (Is 43:21)

"And now if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then **you shall be a peculiar treasure to Me above all the nations;** for all the earth is Mine. (Ex 19:5)

"And you shall be to Me **a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**" (Ex 19:6)

"This people **that I formed for Myself; they shall declare My praise.**" (Is 43:21)

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2)



How the Israel Identity Truth entered the Church of God

C. M. White
GPO Box 864
Sydney
Australia 2001

www.friendsofsabbath.org

A composite graphic with a background of waving American and British flags. On the left, a framed photograph shows an elderly man with glasses, Herbert W. Armstrong, holding a book. To the right of the photo is a book cover with the title 'THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY' by Herbert W. Armstrong. Below the book cover, text reads 'Find this literature and more @ COGToday.com'. The name 'Herbert W Armstrong' is written in large yellow letters at the bottom left of the graphic.