

A Question Answered

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Courtesy: Thy Kingdom Come

QUESTION: How long have British-Israelites been expounding their views of Biblical interpretation?

Knowledge of the identity of Anglo-Saxon, Celtic and related kinsfolk as peoples descended from the Northern House of ancient Israel has been passed down from generation to generation. Throughout our history there have been those who held prominent and authoritative positions of leadership who have given witness to their understanding of this relationship.

I. The Venerable Bede, who died in 735 A.D., writing in the opening pages of his *The Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, states of the origin of the Picts living in what is now Scotland: "The nation of the Picts, from Scythia, as is reported, putting to sea, in a few long ships, were driven by the winds beyond the shores of Britain, and arrived on the northern coast of Ireland...". Their subsequent meeting with the Scots who occupied the area, and consequent movement of the Picts into Scotland are then related by Bede in succeeding pages. But the significance of those Picts should not be allowed to be lost. Scythia was that land to the north of the ancient Northern House of

Israel had departed, via the "Pass of the Israelites", through the Caucasus Mountains.

II. King Alfred the Great died about the year 900 A.D.:

Dr. Courtenay James, M.A., B.D., Ph.D., in his *Hebrew and English*, describes King Alfred the Great in these words: "His Hebraic mind is clearly revealed in the Code of Laws which he prepared with the co-operation of his Parliament (Witenagemot - which remotely was the fore-runner of our present Cabinet).

"The *Book of Dooms* ('Dom-Boc', now in the British Museum) was compiled by Alfred and reveals unmistakably the innate Hebrew cast of the British mind. This is shown not only in the type of language employed but in the ideas of legislation and jurisprudence. Alfred boldly introduced the Decalogue into his laws, and considerable portions of the Mosaic system contained in the three chapters which follow the Decalogue".

One of Alfred's laws in the *Book of Dooms* (Dooms-day Book) reads: "Vex thou not strangers in the land, for ye were formerly strangers in the land of the Egyptians". Surely a Christian King of a non-Israelitish

people would have adapted these words by excising the last part of the sentence if he was only copying the moral strictures out of the Biblical account. The fact that he included reference to the British as having formerly been strangers in the land of the Egyptians must inform us that he knew that these words also applied to the British people whom he governed as they were descendants of Israel to whom alone these words would be appropriate.

III. *The Scottish Declaration of Arbroath*, probably the most ancient and valuable historical document of Scotland, written and sealed by King Robert the Bruce and some twenty Scottish nobles assembled in Parliament, 6th April, 1320, and addressed to Pope John XXII, describes in its introductory passage the nation of the Scots "which passing from the greater Scythia through the Mediterranean Sea and Pillars of Hercules, and sojourning in Spain among the most savage tribes through a long course of time, could nowhere be subjugated by any people however barbarous; and coming thence one thousand two hundred years after the outgoing of the people of Israel, they by many victories and infinite toil, acquired for themselves the possessions in the West which they now hold..."

Mention of the Old Testament Exodus of ancient Israel in this context would be entirely inappropriate were

it not that the Scottish parliament was aware of the Israelitish origin of their nation. But further, by implication, the Pope must also have known, for the whole thrust of the passage was to remind the Pope of the history of the Scots from ancient times and their historic claim to national independence.

IV. According to a commemorative article in *The Banner of Israel* of January 17, 1877, a notable allusion to our origins was given five hundred years previous to that, in 1377.

The heir of the British crown, Edward the Black Prince, had died the previous year, and now, with the death of Edward III, heirship passed to the Black Prince's son. I shall quote a relevant passage of the article. "At this crisis, Richard of Bordeaux, Prince of Wales and Heir-Apparent, was introduced to the Parliament sitting in 1377 (the year of the King's death), the Bishop of St. David's. The speech made by that Prelate on the occasion was a remarkable one..."

The article proceeds to inform us: "Addressing the House, the Diocesan of St. David's said, in the quaint language of that day: 'And so you may embrace your noble King with the arms of your perfect love since he has sent you him whom you longed for. And after your King embrace with love as perfect, my Lord the Prince, who is here present (I save him!), whom you so ardently desired, and at now seeing whom

may repeat your Nunc Dimittis; for there is through him that peace over Israel which the Scriptures name - Israel being the heritage of God, and that heritage being also - England! For good truth, I believe that God could never have honoured this country by victories such as had given glory to Israel, had He not intended it for His heritage also!" Thus spoke the Bishop of St. David's to Parliament in 1377!

V. A letter, still extant, written by Sir Francis Drake to John Fox, the martyrologist, uses the term Israel in substitution for the name "England", in a context which demonstrates that both of these eminent Elizabethans were, as were others of that day, entirely familiar with the claim that England was Israel and thought nothing of casually substituting the name "Israel" for "England" in their correspondence.

The letter, preserved, no doubt, because Fox died before receiving it, is now among the Harleian Manuscripts and contains the prayer that "God may be glorified, His church, our Queen and country preserved; the enemies of truth vanquished, and that we may have continual peace in Israel".

VI. Another Elizabethan, the famous topographer, John Norden, in the dedication of *Speculum Britanniae* to Elizabeth concludes with the words: "Powerful protector of the doubted faith of the Messiah. The

Most Comfortable Nursing Mother of Israel of God in the British Isles".

VII. The eminent Archbishop Cranmer, preaching the sermon at the Coronation of Edward VI, said: "Your Majesty is God's vice regent and Christ's vicar within your own dominions, and to see, with your predecessor Josias, God truly worshipped and idolatry destroyed...". Josiah was a king of Judah, and descendant of King David. (2 Chron. 34:2.) The Archbishop would certainly not have referred to Josias as an ancestor of Edward VI unless he was certain of his facts.

Archbishop Cranmer was largely responsible for the first *Prayer Book* of 1548, and the second in 1552, which reflect his knowledge of the Israelitish ancestry of his people. Is this, perhaps, an unpublicised motivation of those who would ease that *Prayer Book* out of circulation today? Do they want to eradicate the evidence within it of our Israelitish heritage, as they did with *Cruden's Concordance*?

VIII. In the midst of the preface of the first edition of his *Concordance*, dated in London, June 11, 1761, the compiler and author, Alexander Cruden, in addressing that work to King George III, demonstrates his knowledge of our origins distinctly and, by implication, the sharing of that knowledge by the King himself. Cruden's actual words are these: "May the great God be the guide of your life, and direct and prosper you,

that it may be said by the present and future ages, that King George III hath been a Hezekiah to our British Israel".

It is no wonder that those who don't like to admit our relationship with ancient Israel have seen to it that this one page preface has been excized from all subsequent editions. I am thankful to have been granted permission, personally, to photograph this page from a copy of the first edition.

IX. Queen Victoria insisted that the special prayers for 20 June, marking the date of her accession to the Throne, should be retained. One such prayer ends: "And that these blessings may be continued in after ages, let there never be one wanting in her house to succeed her in the government of this United Kingdom, that our posterity may see her children's children and peace upon Israel. So we that are thy people, and sheep of thy pasture, shall give thee thanks for ever, and will always be shewing forth thy praise from generation to generation. Amen."

● "Modern education rejects and excludes from the curriculum of necessary studies the whole religious tradition of the West. It abandons and neglects as no longer necessary the study of the whole classical heritage of the great works of great men. Thus there is an enormous vacuum where until a few decades ago there was the substance of education."

- Alfred Noyes in The Edge of the Abyss (1944)

Surely the references to "We who are thy people" in the same passage which uses the term "United Kingdom" interchangeably with "Israel" should alert us to Queen Victoria's knowledge of our identity!

So I perceive that it is only the egalitarian churchmen of our own day, and others who, for ulterior purposes would deny us the evidences of our past, who are refusing to accept this identity of the British and related kinsfolk with ancient Israel. Throughout our long history, the knowledge has, from generation to generation, shown itself.

In the years leading up to the formal establishment of a unifying organization called The British-Israel World Federation in 1920, there were many groups of Bible students who held to the theme that the British nation and kindred peoples were descended from Israel of old. The id is not a new fad! It is not imaginative. There are also indicative roots in heraldry from ancient days, supportive of our contention.