

The Political Influence of the British-Israel Movement in the Nineteenth Century.

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Introduction

On 9th December 1917, Jerusalem fell to the British and in an interview with the Evening Standard, in 1920, Max Nordau, cofounder of the Zionist Movement, in 1897, held ‘*we thought that the Messiah would be an individual, but I feel now as if it were a collective entity, and that its name might be the British Nation*’.¹ This one statement vindicated just under 80 years of campaigning for the *British-Israel* movement, not an Anglo-Jewish organisation as one might expect but a movement that believed the British were the “chosen race”, not the Jews and believed the return to Palestine of the British and Jews together would bring about the Second Coming. Despite the plethora of primary documentation, very little has been written on the role of this movement in the nineteenth century. Throughout Anglo-Zionist literature and biographies of great Victorian statesmen there is little or no mention of this movement, which according to the *Jewish Encyclopedia* (1901) had over 2 million adherents. Despite an extensive press and books, they didn’t quite make it into mainstream politics as an organisation, However, some of their members were very influential and included some of the Royal Family. From their literal interpretation of Hebrew scripture within an predominantly Anglican umbrella, they certainly thought they knew where the country was going so perhaps that took away their incentive for power. What I have tried to do in this long essay is to assess from a snapshot of 19th century British-Israel publications how they reacted to and tried to influence the political world. How they manipulated biblical prophecy into a “we told you so” result, how British-Israel attempted to show that the writings and addresses of public men bore undersigned testimony to the contentions of their movement offering ‘blind’ evidence and how, strangely, after 80 years of campaigning they were very nearly proved right.

.Altholz defines British-Israel as a variety of British nationalism buttressed by biblical references with all the attributes of a religious movement except religion.² The predominate idea of the British-Israel movement was that Great Britain was the home of one or all lost tribes of Israel implying that the inhabitants were God’s Chosen People. It’s prime source of appeal, to advocates, was that it sought to affirm biblical prophecy directed specifically to the Anglo-Saxon race and a unique covenant, with God, marking out the elite nature of that race. Against a background of British ascendancy, over the course of the nineteenth century, into the largest empire in recorded history, the concept of being a ‘chosen people’ was attractive. This was fuelled by new ideas of evolution and racial superiority imbuing British society with a duty to spread a superior culture, system and way of life to less developed societies epitomized in Rudyard Kipling’s *White Man’s Burden*. The Royal Geographical Society had claimed, in 1891, that ‘*On the topmost round of the ladder stands the Anglo-Saxon*’ an opinion supported by Gladstone’s assertion that ‘*Our race constitutes a kind of universal church in Politics*’.³ Rooting British-Israel in the Christian concept and placing monarchic authority in the House of David, the movement became attractive and a cause of concern to the ecclesiastical authorities. The *Church Quarterly* noted ‘*it remains absolutely unintelligible to outsiders, who regard with a wonder mixed with disdain its arguments and its conclusions alike yet it seems to exercise over a continually*

¹ Helen Bouverie, Countess of Radnor, *Notes and Queries on the Origin of British-Israel*, 2nd edtn. (London:, Marshall, 1925), p. 16 & p. 62.

² Josef L Altholz, *The Religious Press in Britain, 1760-1900*, (London: Greenwood, 1989), p. 130.

³ Rev. T.R Howlett, *Anglo-Israel, The Jewish Problem and Supplement*, 4th edtn. (Philadelphia: Howlett, 1892), p. 131.

widening circle of adherents a considerable attraction."⁴ and John Henry Newman, cited 'fear that the Church of England stood in danger of being taken over by the Christian Israel Identity movement' as one of his reasons for leaving the Anglican Church.⁵

British-Israelism provided the theological justification for the British Empire through the concept of 'birthright'. This was established through the prophecy that Abraham's descendants would be an invincible great nation, numerous as the dust of the earth, including multiple nations based in a isle of land that would control the earth. The descent of the ten tribes of Israel into idolatry and banishment into the wilderness, as God's punishment, provided the impetus for British-Israel to follow them to the British Isles. A combination of literal interpretation of Old Testament Scriptures and legendary history underpinned belief that the British were the spiritual and biological heirs of Abraham and the Royal family was directly descended from the David line of the tribe of Judah. This implied both the British Empire and Church of England were modern manifestations of the Kingdom of God justifying the British, as God's chosen people, rule of the earth.

The popularity of the British-Israel movement is very difficult to enumerate with the late 1890's membership of the *Anglo-Israel Association*, in Britain, hovering around only 300 contrasting with the estimate of 2 million worldwide adherents in *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (1901).⁶ The composition of the Anglo-Israel Association was described as clergy of diverse ranks and shades of opinion - high, low, broad, and nonconformists, soldiers, doctors, lawyers, magistrates, company-directors, missionaries and connecting history to the Scriptures drew British-Israel a large audience from the respectable and influential Victorian middle classes. Amongst them the eminent Sharon Turner author of *History of England from the earliest period to the Norman Conquest* (1799 - 1805) and Charles Piazzi Smyth, Royal Astronomer of Scotland, who in *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid* (1865) asserted that the Great Pyramid was constructed in British Imperial measures later disproved by his disciple Sir Flinders Petrie.⁷ Follower Rev. FRA. Glover compiled the genealogical chart of Queen Victoria, Colonel John Cox Gawler the Keeper of the Crown Jewels wrote for *Life From The Dead* at its inception, in 1873 and Dr. George Moore, author of *The Lost Tribes, or Saxons of the East and West* went on to found the *Anglo-Israel Association*, in 1879, with Viscount Folkestone MP and Grand Master of the Wiltshire Freemasons, as president. Senior military followers included First Sea Lord Admiral Jacky Fisher, the architect of many 20th century naval principles.

John Wilson

The father of the Victorian British-Israel movement was John Wilson author of *Our Israelitish Origin* (1840) based on Sharon Turner's influential work *A History of the Anglo-Saxon Peoples* (1799-1805), which traced the Anglo-Saxon tribes back through Europe to the Balkans, Crimea and Caucasus.⁸ A phrenologist and evangelist, Wilson's combination of these chronicles with Hebrew Scriptures was a remarkable and unique feature of his British-Israel theory. Wilson's first British-Israel London meeting, in 1841, was presided over by the newly enthroned Bishop Alexander of Jerusalem and he went on to publish *The Millennium and Phrenology Consistent with Reason and Revelation* (1842), *Book of Inheritance* (1846), *Tracts on Israel* (1847), *Questions On Our Israelitish Origin* (1847), *Forty Reasons for Resisting the Removal of the Jewish Disabilities* (1848), *Treasury Harmony* (1849), *A Vindication of Christ's Character as a Prophet* (1851), an Index to the *Treasury Harmony* (1855), *Apocalypse* (1855), *Mission of Elijah* (1861).⁹ Between 1863 and 1864, he continued his studies in Scriptural phrenology, giving lessons and characters (genetic origins) and writing on the subject in the *Brighton Gazette* culminating with his last work, in 1870, *The Migrations of the English People*, which, like his first, was upon the subject of Israel.

⁴ A. Watcher, *Christ in Joseph: A Reply To "Anglo-Israelism" in The Church Quarterly Review July, 1880*, (London: Rivingtons, 1880), p. 5.

⁵ Patience Strong, *Someone had to say it*, (London: Bachman & Turner, 1986), p. 86.

⁶ Isidor Singer, *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, (London: Funk & Wagnalls, 1901-1906), Vol. I, pp. 600-601.

⁷ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1975, pp. 17-18.

⁸ John Wilson, *Lectures on Our Israelitish Origin*, (London: Nisbet, 1876), p. 176.

⁹ John Wilson, *Lectures on Our Israelitish Origin*, (London: Nisbet, 1876), p. 427.

Edward Hine

Wilson was succeeded by banker Edward Hine who lectured for several years in the British Isles, later touring America for about three years. His first book to be published was *Seventeen Positive Identifications of the English Nation with the Lost House of Israel* (1870) dedicated to WE Gladstone (by permission), a touch of irony as Hine was an opponent of Gladstone's policies.¹⁰ This was swiftly followed by *The English Nation Identified with the Lost House of Israel by Twenty-seven Identifications* (1871) (100,000 copies sold).¹¹ These were soon increased to *Forty-seven Identifications* (1874) selling 177,000 copies.¹² It is probably no coincidence that Hine published his first pamphlet in the year of John Wilson's death, 1870, as he fundamentally disagreed with Wilson in that:

'He seeks to identify England with the tribe of Ephraim only, believing the modern nations, North-West of Europe, to be the other tribes; a view in which I perceive some little difficulty, but really so far as our nation is concerned, it makes not the slightest difference, for whether we are only a part, and that part the most favoured tribe, or whether we compose the whole of the tribes, it is equally vital to us.'¹³

Unfortunately, Hine appears to have got carried away with his own success, discarded Wilson and proclaimed 'The world-wide renowned Forty-seven Identifications. The vastly popular work gave the inspiration to all identity writers of the present day. There is scarcely a trustworthy identity-thought put forward by others, but what has been borrowed from this book.'¹⁴

George Gawler

George Gawler and later his son John Cox Gawler, were both prominent members of the British-Israel movement and George was the influential link to the Jewish restorationists movement and senior Anglo-Jewry. George Gawler was a Colonel at Waterloo, governor of Australia, Keeper of the Crown Jewels, advocate of restoring Jews to their homeland and prolific author in the British-Israel press writing for *Life From The Dead* from its' birth in 1873.¹⁵ Author of *Tranquillisation of Syria and the East* (1845) he asserted that encouraging a loyal Jewish population in Palestine the communications and trade, in the East, would be protected. He accompanied Montefiore on his trip to Palestine in 1849 and in 1852 helped form the *Association for Promoting Jewish settlement in Palestine*. His son John Cox Gawler published a blueprint for settlement in 1874 and in 1878, which Jewish settlers used, with funds from Edmund Rothschild, to establish a successful colony in Palestine

The Royal Family

It is difficult to discern the involvement in British-Israel of the Royal Family. Certainly Queen Victoria was aware of it's existence, Queen Mary's mother was an acolyte and Princess Alice of Athlone was a patron until her death in 1935.¹⁶ In Victoria's reign, contact between the two spheres appears to have only incidental with no sustained communication between the two. A petition to Queen Victoria dated 4th April 1844 for payment of a debt to Mr John Finlayson consistently dishonoured by three Lord Chancellors included 'we entreat Your Majesty...to command immediate measures be taken, to restore your bretheren the Hebrews...the descendents of the Ten Tribes of Israel, as detailed in the Seven Trumpets and seven Vials...herewith sent your Majesty...The present administration, as descendants, ought to be the first to

¹⁰ Edward Hine, *Memoirs, and a selection of letters from the correspondence of Edward Hine (born 1825, died 1891)*, (London: Banks, 1909), p. 12.

¹¹ *Life From The Dead*, 1873, Vol. I, p. 3.

¹² Rev. BW Savile, *The Anglo-Israel Theory and the Alleged Advent of Christ in 1882*, (London: Longmans, 1882), p. 6.

¹³ Edward Hine, *The English Nation Identified with the Lost House of Israel by Twenty-Seven Identifications*, (Manchester: Heywood, 1870), p. iii.

¹⁴ Rev. BW Savile, *The Anglo-Israel Theory and the Alleged Advent of Christ in 1882*, (London: Longmans, 1882), p. 7.

¹⁵ *Life From The Dead*, 1873, Vol. I, p. 19.

¹⁶ *The Covenant People*, 1910/1911, No. 196-211, p. 124.

promote to the utmost of their power the restoration of their bretheren, God's people - the invisible as well the visible Hebrews - to land of their forefathers in Syria.' ¹⁷ In 1876, *The Banner of Israel* proudly announced that both Queen Victoria and HRH Princess Louise had both accepted copies of *Our Israelitish Origin*, by John Wilson.¹⁸ On the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, in 1897, the British-Israel Association presented an illuminated parchment stating 'It is the profound belief of your Memorialists that the high and pre-eminent position allowed by the British Nation and Empire under Your Majesty's long and prosperous reign will ever continue and increase by virtue of our Abrahamic Descent, we being the chosen people of God, as daily proclaimed in our National Church Service' and further referred to the Queen as 'The Royal Lion of Judah'. Coronation congratulations to Edward VII included the hope 'that your Reign may witness the Federation of the Anglo-Saxon Race by consolidating the ties which unite the Colonies with the Mother Country'.

British Israel Organisations and Press

The British-Israel movement only achieved organisational status from the 1870s onwards in a melee of rival groups and amalgamations. In 1875, the *British-Israel Association* and the *Anglo-Israel Association* were formed followed by the *British-Israel Conference Association*, in 1876, the *Metropolitan Anglo-Israel Association*, in 1879, and *The British-Israel Identity Corporation*, in 1880. Amalgamation under The Earl of Dysart led to *The British-Israel Association* in 1886, which mutated to the *Imperial British-Israel Association*, in 1908 and finally the *British Israel World Federation*, in 1922.¹⁹

The British-Israel press followed a similar evolutionary pattern. The first periodical *The Time of the End* started in 1843 but ceased publication after a couple of years and after a gap of some twenty years in 1866 the monthly magazine *The Watchmen of Ephraim* appeared until 1868. Another short gap was followed by monthly publication, *Life from the Dead* (1873); *Leading the Nation to Glory* (1875), which was afterward renamed *The Glory Leader* (1875). The periodical *Israel's Identity Standard* commenced publication in 1876 followed by a weekly publication named *The British-Israel and Judah Prophetic Messenger and Universal News*, 1880, which later was renamed *The Messenger*, and later still changed its name once more to *The Covenant People*. The principle, *The Banner of Israel* (1877) became the weekly journal of Anglo-Israelites throughout the world supporting the worldwide propagation of the British-Israel message with the *Anglo-Israel Distribution Fund* founded in 1881.²⁰ This journal, together with *The Covenant People*, was incorporated in *The National Message*, which came into circulation two years after the inauguration of the British-Israel World Federation (1921).

The Teutonic Argument

There arose, however, a major difference of opinion in the 1870's over the Teutonic origin of the Anglo-Saxons. There were two views as to the relationship between the Germans and British-Israel; either the British race, alone, was identified with the Tribes of Israel (Hine) or they included the landed German race with the British being Ephraim (Wilson).²¹ A case could be made that the Germans were a 'company of nations' and competed with the British for the chieftainship of nations and the debate raged well into the 20th century until the defeat of Germany in the Great War. It appeared to some British-Israel that wherever there was an English Colony, there were Germans. Protestant Germans kept the Sabbath better than the British and helped the British win at Culloden, Boyne and Waterloo and helped in the start of the Bishopric of Jerusalem. The Royal family could be traced back not only through Scotland and Ireland but also Germany.

¹⁷ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 96.

¹⁸ *The Standard of Israel*, 1876, Vol II, p. 87.

¹⁹ Helen Bouverie, Countess of Radnor, *Notes and Queries on the Origin of British-Israel*, 2nd edtn. (London:, Marshall, 1925), p. 11.

²⁰ Helen Bouverie, Countess of Radnor, *Notes and Queries on the Origin of British-Israel*, 2nd edtn. (London:, Marshall, 1925), p. 12.

²¹ *The Standard of Israel*, 1876, Vol II, p. 100.

Advocators of the non-Teutonic Hine theory maintained Prussia and later Germany ‘swarmed’ Britain’s possessions because they had none of their own.²² Hine maintained that the Ten Tribes of Israel were included within the British race excluding the Continental Teutonic nations and the opinion, held by some, that they did include Teutonic was the reason why Identity had made no progress.²³ Rev. AH Sayce, reinforced this opinion in a speech to the Anthropological Institute, in 1875, when he maintained that despite the presence of German words in the English language ‘*if language is the test of social contact, it might be asserted with equal precision that it is not a test of race.*’²⁴ Referring to the followers of the late John Wilson, who maintained that the Germans, Dutch, Belgians, Danes and Norwegians formed the Teutonic tribes of Israel, he asserted they were wrong as it was only the British who operated the Imperial weights and measures system.

To Teutonics, German colonisation was proof that Germany was part of Israel - Gad - noting that the Germans ‘attached’ themselves to British colonies. Countering speculation that the new Germany, from 1870, was an ocean power holding a colonial empire and war was inevitable, it was pointed out that if Germany (and even France) was part of Israel the outlook would be peace.²⁵ However, it was conceded that the German annexation policy, e.g. the north coast of New Guinea in 1884,²⁶ was causing concern and German colonial aspirations eventually became one of the issues which forced the topic of confederation of the British Empire to the front of British-Israel commentary at the beginning of the 20th century.

In particular, the *Standard of Israel*, mouthpiece of *The Anglo-Israel Association* criticised Hine’s ‘absurd’ Anglian or anti-Teutonic Theory in which he sought to distribute the several tribes amongst the different social classes of the nation.²⁷ Hine had identified the Ten Tribes as being together in Britain in that Ephraim were the drunkards and ritualists, Reuben the farmers, Dan the mariners, Zebulan the lawyers and writers, Asher the soldiers etc.²⁸ They declared that the Germans spread God’s word through the many missionaries of the Moravian churches and drew attention to the pettiness of condemning a nation because it differed in national commercial arrangements of weights and measures i.e. metric. Teutonics queried how Hine managed to identify the ‘*cursed mark of the beast*’ with the metric system pointing out that Sharon Turner, on whom both sides depended, spoke of the Teutonic stock of Europe.²⁹ On 2^d April 1866 Professor Piazzi Smyth of the Royal Society of Edinburgh gave an account of his measurements of the Great Pyramid concluding that whatever it’s subsequent use it was originally constructed as a standard for Imperial weights and measures.³⁰ British-Israel advocated against the French metrical agitators arguing that because of the size of the Empire the Imperial system was better.³¹ Not only that, but adoption of the metric system was expensive and as the Imperial system was part of Identity with Israel, MP’s advocating adoption of the French metric system were evil.³² In fact it was the Astronomer Royal Piazzi Smyth, who in 1870, decided that as the Prussian King had adopted the Metric System they were not Israel.³³ Quoting Sharon Turner, Teutonics pointed out the Anglo-Saxons were not of German origin. The fact that they passed through the region now known Germany did not constitute them Germans.

²² Edward Hine, *The English Nation Identified with the Lost House of Israel by Twenty-Seven Identifications*, (Manchester: Heywood, 1870), p. iii.

²³ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, pp. 327-328.

²⁴ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. II, pp. 232.

²⁵ *Banner of Israel*, 1885, p. 48.

²⁶ *Banner of Israel*, 1885, p. 49.

²⁷ *The Standard of Israel, 1876, Vol. II, p. 101.*

²⁸ Edward Hine, *The English Nation Identified with the Lost House of Israel by Twenty-Seven Identifications*, (Manchester: Heywood, 1870), p. v.

²⁹ *The Standard of Israel, 1876, Vol II, p. 103-4.*

³⁰ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, Vol. I, p. 232.

³¹ *Life From The Dead*, 1873, Vol. I, p. 21.

³² *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 188.

³³ Edward Hine, *The English Nation Identified with the Lost House of Israel by Twenty-Seven Identifications*, (Manchester: Heywood, 1870), p. 96.

Further Anthropological Debates

Anthropological arguments were not confined to the Teutonic Question and went on to include both philological and phrenological debates as to the origin of British-Israel. Much of the 'historical' justification of British-Israel theories were based on John Wilson's 1840 tome *Lectures on Our Israelite Origin*. Wilson argued that similarities between aspects of British and Hebrew language/institutions were more than coincidental. British-Israel contended that many European geographic names were Hebrew in origin for example the Danube, Danzig and Denmark were areas through which the tribe of Dan migrated, hence several of the tribes could be traced in their migration to the British Isles - their promised land. British-Israel further noted the similarity between British and Hebrew Laws indicating the British were of Shemitic origin based on barrister J.P. Yeatman's *History of Common Law*.³⁴

Anthropologists, in objecting to the British-Israel argument, maintained that a community of language did not imply a community of race and that language was only an index to contact between tribes. They were mistaken in their accusations as John Wilson never maintained that language was an indication of racial origin 'The use of German by the Russian Jews does not prove that are of the same race as the Germans; it merely indicated their previous sojourn in Germany'³⁵. Bishop Titcomb agreed and maintained a philological proof of Hebrew in the English language 'English Jews speak English; German Jews, German, and so on. Is not then knowledge of Hebrew alone reservedly reason of their faith in Scripture.'³⁶ However, Dr James Andrew, in his *Hebrew Dictionary and Grammar* (1823) maintained 'The dispersion and incorporation of the Ten Tribes of Israel amongst the Assyrian and other northern nations, accounts most satisfactorily for the numerous traces of the Hebrew language that still remain amongst the languages of Europe'.³⁷ Hebrew need not have turned into Anglo-Saxon but simply have dropped out of use with intermarriage obliterating physiological traits.

In 1876, The London Anthropological Society invited Edward Hine to present a paper on the British-Israel movement which was met with ridicule.³⁸ The Society rested its objections on the opinion that much of Identity rested on bible prophecy and that it was '*impossible for any scientific Society to bring prophecy to bear on the discussion of a purely scientific question*'.³⁹ British-Israel occasionally generated seemingly negative evidence such as alcohol abuse and a short anonymous article in *The Standard of Israel* listed drunkenness as a characteristic of the British race and observing that that Ephraim was noted for drinking in Isaiah's time with 'A woe is pronounced upon the drunkards of Ephraim' (Isaiah 28:1). However, the subsequent passage, 'The drunkards of Ephraim are to be trodden down and destroyed' (Isaiah 28:3) led the author to query as to why Christians and those concerned for the welfare of the nation did not relinquish liquor.⁴⁰ The anthropologists maintained that his Identity of drunkenness with Israel could be applied to other nations, however Hine denied, untruthfully, ever using this form of identity.⁴¹

It was maintained that Identity with Israel fulfilled a social, political and defence function when 'the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away' (*Isa. 35:10*)⁴² Socially, this was interpreted that the return to Palestine would lead to the abolition of sorrow saving the country a fortune. In the case of drink, Hine believed the Temperance Societies had failed but God did not require total abstinence.⁴³ Politically, money would be saved on defence costs in that '*five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight*' (Leviticus 26:8) was proved when only ten British men under Sir John Glover

³⁴ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 86.

³⁵ John Wilson, *Lectures on Our Israelitish Origin*, (London: Nisbet, 1876), p. 184.

³⁶ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 36.

³⁷ John Wilson, *Lectures on Our Israelitish Origin*, (London: Nisbet, 1876), p. 190.

³⁸ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 6.

³⁹ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 17.

⁴⁰ *The Standard of Israel*, 1875, p. 10.

⁴¹ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 8.

⁴² *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 293.

⁴³ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 295.

defeated the Ashanti.⁴⁴ Israel's return shall be peaceful 'Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid' (Jer. Xxx.10).⁴⁵ A.L. Lewis, Honorary Secretary of the London Anthropological Society alleged that the promoters of British-Israel 'advocate the reduction of the sums spent on national defences, as of the number of men maintained for that purpose, on the ground that we, being Israel, cannot be conquered.'⁴⁶

Edward Hine also insisted the skulls of Englishmen were similar to Jews but dissimilar to Germans and other Gentiles, a point with which the society disagreed 'Thus saith Mr Hine, 'the Jews have two legs and Englishmen have two legs, therefore Englishmen are Jews! What nonsense!'⁴⁷ However Hine had never said the English were Jews he was only repeating John Wilson Christian phrenological view that:

'The educated Jewish and English heads are of the same general form; and what is far from being the case among several branches of the Caucasian family, they are the very largest possessing any pretension to beauty.' and 'many among us bear the peculiar features of the race even more prominently than the Jews - beauty, activity, integrity and progress'.⁴⁸

However, despite this extensive debate, British-Israel was more than happy to quote a 1917 excerpt from the Daily Express on the phrenology of Prussian officials 'They have the shaven head of the criminal, the prognathous or undershot jaw of the recidivist, the crooked mouth of cruelty, and generally an expression of crude animalism.'⁴⁹

Church of England

The British-Israel movement crossed denominational lines but was predominantly Anglican but despite an anchor in the Church of England, British-Israel appealed across multi-denominational Protestantism. The key to this was its literal interpretation of the Old Testament in stressing its identity with the British Empire, as opposed to divisive spiritual interpretations. The *Church Quarterly* criticised this in that the movement 'is found to weaken the hold of practical religion over its adherents without giving them anything in its place'⁵⁰ and 'Like Good Templarism, Plymouth Bretherenism or Freemasonry, it is a quasi-religion and, once accepted, is looked upon as the most important of all religious truths.'⁵¹ An argument countered by British-Israel, which insisted that the knowledge of being one of God's chosen people reinforced their Christianity and supported by the influential Bishop Titcomb maintained that the Reformation liturgy, drawing heavily on the Hebrew Old Testament, was granted by God to British-Israel and that the re-iteration of the Ten Commandments on Sundays and Holy days was peculiar to Anglicans and in 1897, Dr Potter, archbishop of York, had pleaded at the Lambeth Conference for a more definite union between the branches of the 'Church of Anglo-Saxon Christians'.

It is ironic that a proposal, to strengthen kinship between Anglicans and Lutherans, originated with the King of Prussia, Frederic William IV., who sent the Chevalier Bunsen to England in the summer of 1841, as a special envoy. Bunsen, Prince Albert, Lord Shaftesbury, Archbishop of Canterbury Howley and Bishop of London Blomfield founded a Protestant bishopric in Jerusalem consecrated by English bishops and exercising jurisdiction over both England and German Protestants, which was carried into effect by 1841 Act of Parliament.⁵² The first bishop Michael Solomon Alexander was a converted rabbi. The Jerusalem bishopric caused a stir amongst Tractarian churchmen and John Henry Newman described it as one of 'three blows which broke me', leading to his departure from the Church of England. In 1845, Newman

⁴⁴ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 260.

⁴⁵ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 247.

⁴⁶ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 314.

⁴⁷ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 10.

⁴⁸ John Wilson, *Lectures on Our Israelitish Origin*, (London: Nisbet, 1876), p. 284.

⁴⁹ *Banner of Israel*, 1917, p. 407.

⁵⁰ A. Watcher, *Christ in Joseph: A Reply To "Anglo-Israelism" in The Church Quarterly Review July, 1880*, (London: Rivingtons, 1880), p. 25.

⁵¹ Anon., 'Anglo-Israelism', *The Church Quarterly Review*, Vol. X (1880), pp. 319-337.

⁵² David Newsome, *The Parting of Friends: The Wilberforces and Henry Manning*, (Michigan: Eerdmaas, 1993), p. 289.

cited his 'fear that the Church of England stood in danger of being taken over by the Christian Israel Identity movement'⁵³ as one of his reasons for leaving the Anglican Church to embrace Roman Catholicism. Bishop Titcomb asserted that some believed Protestantism and Catholicism were more a matter of race than belief but he himself did not believe it was a question of ethnology. But Titcomb did maintain that the only nations yielding to the Protestant faith were Teutonic and according to Jeremiah iii, Israel during her 'converted' state would commence a meagre return of a few of her sons to Palestine alluding to the accomplishment by the establishment of the Jerusalem Bishopric on Mount Zion under the protectorate of England and Germany.⁵⁴

However, despite a significant clerical membership, it was admitted, by British-Israel in 1880, that British-Israel was reviled by the clergy, as a whole.⁵⁵ Bishop Beckles regretted that the clergy, in general, did not give the subject the study it deserved. In fact, in replying to a particularly critical article in *The Church Quarterly Review*, British-Israel asserted 'The clergy generally seem to have the happy knack of reading Holy Scriptures with their brains in their pockets, and their eyes in their commentaries'.⁵⁶ In the *Church Times*, of 12th June 1885, British-Israel was compared to the Mormons in what and declared to be the latest development of "Chosen Peopleism" a phenomenon which has 'perpetually appeared and re-appeared in the world, but always with disastrous results' dismissing British-Israel as a religious equivalent of craving for aristocratic distinction.⁵⁷

British-Israel maintained that observation of the Sabbath was an identifying feature not only of the Anglican faith but also of British-Israel. Edward Hine vigorously opposed John Stuart Mill's opinion that 'it was only strictly binding on the Jews' on the basis that the Jews were part of Israel and Britain *was* Israel.⁵⁸ The Reverend J. Tomlin asserted the national observation of the Sabbath was a characteristic distinction of Great Britain compared to continental nations, both Protestant and Catholic. The Sabbath question invariably spilled over into the Teutonic question and a letter to the *St James Gazette*, of 11th May 1885, by Prince Bismarck was taken as proof of that Germans were not Israel:

'I must say that when I was in England I always had a painful and uncomfortable impression of the English Sunday; and I was always glad when it was over. I am sure, too, that many Englishmen had the same feeling about it for they...were overjoyed when Monday dawned...thank God that we live not under the yoke of an English Sunday.'⁵⁹

Attempts to reverse this had been thwarted by both *The Lord's Day Observance Society* and the Conservative government.⁶⁰ In 1855, a bill restricting Sunday trading was presented to Parliament and already irritated by the previous year's act restricting Sunday drinking hours, on three Sundays in June and July the working classes demonstrated in Hyde Park. Karl Marx, who was present, thought that the English revolution had begun. British-Israel was adamant about keeping the Sabbath special, unlike on the continent and Robert Morrell's *The National Sunday League*, who argued that on the Continent innocent Sunday amusement and recreation did not lead to more Sunday labour than existed without them in England. In fact, France's legalising of labour on the Sabbath, in 1880, was judged by British-Israel to be a rebellion against God.⁶¹

Catholics

A key objection to the Catholic church was the 1829 Roman Catholic Act, which many British-Israelites

⁵³ Patience Strong *Someone had to say it*, (London: Bachman & Turner, 1986), p.86.

⁵⁴ *The Nations Glory Leader*, 1876, Vol. III, p.196.

⁵⁵ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 272.

⁵⁶ A. Watcher, *Christ in Joseph: A Reply To "Anglo-Israelism" in The Church Quarterly Review July, 1880*, (London: Rivingtons, 1880), p. 27.

⁵⁷ *Banner of Israel*, 1885, p. 291.

⁵⁸ *Life From The Dead*, 1873, Vol. I, p. 33.

⁵⁹ *Banner of Israel*, 1885, p. 242.

⁶⁰ *The Banner of Israel*, 1875, p. 76.

⁶¹ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 54.

saw as allowing papal power back into legislature⁶². Opponents maintained emancipation contradicted the King's oath to 'maintain to the utmost of his power the Protestant Reformed religion established by Law' and were further inflamed by Edward VII's visit to western Ireland, where he passed under banners proclaiming 'Welcome to the Friends of the Pope'.⁶³ John Wilson saw a strong connection between religion and politics citing the defeat of papal supporters in the Italian unification wars, the defeat of Catholic Austria at the hands of the Protestant Prussia and in 1867 went as far as claiming the Pope was the anti-Christ.⁶⁴ British-Israel considered the Jesuits to be the main agents of Rome in Britain alleging that Catholics were restricted by Papal infallibility, as against the free thought of Protestants, which had enabled the progress of protestant nations since the Reformation.⁶⁵ Latin nations were devoid of morality as criminals were protected by the confession process⁶⁶ and Edward Hine regarded nuns as 'silly women' with cross appendages round their necks and priests were 'feminine men'.⁶⁷

The re-establishment, by Pope Pius IX, of the English Catholic hierarchy, was to the liberals an extension of full religious liberty but to others it was a sign that the Church of England was in retreat before the Catholic Church. Disraeli had opined that Rome was infiltrating all levels of British society and the presence in Parliament, in 1906, of 83 catholic MPs confirmed to many British Israelites that the papacy was not a religion but a colossal political system.⁶⁸ Paranoia about the intentions of the Catholic Church may well have been justified and British-Israel reminded readers of the danger, in 1880, quoting a lengthy sermon from Cardinal Manning's address to the 3rd Provincial Council of Westminster.

This 19th century will make a great epoch in the history of the Church...It is good for us to be here in England. It is yours, right reverend fathers, to subjugate and to subdue, to bend and break the will of an imperial race, the will which, as of Rome of old, rules over nation and people, invisible and inflexible...You have a great commission to fulfill, and great is the prize for which you strive. Surely a soldier's eye and a soldier's heart...Protestantism weakened in England, it is paralysed everywhere; conquered in England, it is conquered throughout the world; once overthrown here, all is but a war of detail.⁶⁹

However, fourteen years later, in 1884, at the annual Meeting for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, Manning stated 'I therefore believe, that, in these latter days, the great British Empire has been built up, not by us, but for us.', which heartened British-Israel immensely.⁷⁰ This concern was again reflected by British-Israel in its alarm at Catholic Lord Ripon's appointment as Viceroy of India in 1880, 'All we can say to that is, that his lordship is a very poor convert to Rome if he does not use his great influence to the very utmost to serve his church.'⁷¹ This fear was fuelled by Lord Hartington's announcement in the Commons, in 1880, that it was up to Lord Ripon to decide if the 'Gates of India' - Kandahar - were to be relinquished after acquitting them at the Treaty of Gandamah. The Reverend H. Tristram of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge met with Daourd Pasha, Governor of the Lebanon, a Christian as stipulated by the Great powers after the 1860 murders. The governor had published a large work on the history of Teutonic stock and attributed the present liberties of England to the malign influence of the Roman Catholics on the continent, which British-Israel eagerly recorded.⁷²

It was not only in England that British-Israel felt the Vatican was undermining the Protestant faith. The Bishop of Jerusalem, in 1866, remarked that evangelisation of the natives of Palestine was failing due to the unwillingness of the Turkish authorities to tolerate Protestants and that the Catholics were gaining the upper hand.⁷³ Quoting an un-named provincial journal, in 1876, Rome, under Pius IX, was allegedly going

⁶² *The British Ecclesia*, p. 149.

⁶³ *The British Ecclesia*, p. 149.

⁶⁴ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, Vol. I, p. 484.

⁶⁵ *Life From The Dead*, 1873, Vol. I, pp. 36-37.

⁶⁶ *Life From The Dead*, 1873, Vol. I, p. 102.

⁶⁷ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 184.

⁶⁸ *The British Ecclesia*, p. 149.

⁶⁹ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 237.

⁷⁰ JH Titcomb, *A Message to the Church from the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Robert Banks, 1887), p. 85.

⁷¹ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 260.

⁷² *Watchmen of Ephraim*, Vol. I, p. 461.

⁷³ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, Vol. I, p. 131.

to make Palestine a Roman Catholic province in a deal with the Turks. And a 'whip' was going round leading Roman Catholics to raise capital to attract emigrants from European Catholic countries. British-Israel acknowledged that they did not know the truth of the story but it was contrary to biblical prophecy and therefore the work of Satan.⁷⁴ John Wilson, saw this as an opportunity rather than a threat and noting the derth of Protestants stated 'parties are so well balanced as regards Jews, Latins, Greeks, Armenians, Syrians, Arabs, and Turks, that there is no mediating powers so well adapted for promoting peace in the land as the English.' However, he added a cautionary note that Britain should not selfishly take political and commercial advantage of Palestine.

As the twentieth century approached the Great War, this anti-Catholicism increasingly mutated into anti-German propaganda. Publications such as *British Ecclesia* and *British-Israel Ecclesia* sought out any perceived link between the Kaiser and The Vatican. Ironically, the editor E.T. Wiseman was a relative of Cardinal Wiseman but foremost a self-publicist in the Edward Hine mould. Adherents believed in the notion of 'British Hebrews' claiming decent from the ancient British Church apostolically planted at Glastonbury in AD 35 succeeding from the Jewish church, as opposed to Rome, and advocating the re-establishment of the Sabbath on Saturdays.⁷⁵ Wiseman even authored his own bible, which George V was petitioned to authorise, in 1911 but rejected by Herbert Asquith.⁷⁶ However the readers of *British Ecclesia* were not without humour as one reader noted the editor had sent him a British-Israel postcard '*printed in Austria*'.⁷⁷ The conflation of German territorial expansion with the Vatican was, to British-Israel, justified. With Cardinal Manning's assertion in *The Tablet*, of January 24, 1874 that in order to restore Papal power, a mighty European war would have to take place, which would '*exceed in horrors*' and British-Israel alleged that priests confessed their sympathy with Germany and directing their efforts towards weakening the country in order to prepare for the success of a German invasion.⁷⁸

Jews

In racial terms, this concept of "chosen people" appeared to put British-Israel at odds with the Jewish community. Nothing was further from the truth. To British-Israel, every Jew was an Israelite but every Israelite was not a Jew. Israel referred to the larger northern kingdom of ten tribes, whilst Jew referred to the smaller southern kingdom of Judah. John Wilson writing on the restoration of the Jews, in 1866, maintained it was desirable for Palestimne to be occupied by 'a friendly people; having all the advantages of European enlightenment; with whom we can have important commercial relations; and who may open up new markets for our manufacturers, and give an impetus to civilization all over the East.' However, he maintained that repentance and faith were pre-requisites of a happy restoration 'whilst continuing in the same mind as they were when cast out of the Lord's inheritance about eighteen centuries ago, the Jews cannot without fearful disaster, be received back there into power and possession.'⁷⁹ However, he noted that although the world had begun to participate in Christian kindness for Jews others thought that they had been too eager in their pecuniary interests among the Gentiles and should be restored quickly to their homeland.⁸⁰

John Wilson made contradictory statements on this subject maintaining that the Jews should be converted to Christianity but not necessarily before the Second Coming. In 1900, SJ Deutschberger, a converted Jew and head of 'The Industrial Mission to the Jews' became General Secretary of the British-Israel Association.⁸¹ In 1874, there was an allegation by one Rev. John Wilkinson of Mildmay Mission To The Jews that British-Israel had reduced contribution for conversion work by thousands of pounds.⁸² According to *The Times* every conversion from Judaism cost the *Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews* at

⁷⁴ *The Nations Glory Leader*, 1877, Vol. IV, p. 176.

⁷⁵ *The British-Israel Ecclesia*, 1910, p. 559.

⁷⁶ *The British-Israel Ecclesia*, 1911, pp. 27-28.

⁷⁷ *The British Ecclesia*, 1906, p. 212.

⁷⁸ *Vigilant, The Great war and The Secret Enemies in Our Midst*, (London: Banks, 1915), pp. 4-6.

⁷⁹ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, Vol. I, p. 158.

⁸⁰ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, Vol. I, p. 159.

⁸¹ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, 1867/8, Vol. II, p. 209.

⁸² *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 126.

least £2000.⁸³ However, it had not always been an acrimonious relationship as a pillar of the “London Jew’s Society”, William Marsh, had alluded that he found several points of British-Israel convincing, at a public meeting in Leamington, in 1840, and had also subscribed to *The Time of the End Prophetic Witness*, in 1844.⁸⁴

British-Israel needed a Jewish state in Palestine for theological reasons but it didn’t necessarily mean they liked the Jews. In 1874, Hine reported that certain Christian churches have suggested that a trickle of Jews in Palestine represented the scriptural return of Israel to their land⁸⁵. Hine dismissed these Jews as ‘a miserable lot - may fairly be discarded as beggars; men without soul, without spirit; content to degrade their nationality by being satisfied to live upon the charity.’ and emphasised they must return **with** Israel. Further, Hine advocated that Jewish venture capitalists, such as Rothschild’s and Montefiores, purchase and invest in Palestinian land but acknowledged this was currently hindered by Turkish rule.⁸⁶ However, Hine did predict that the safety protection of Britain’s routes to India, would force her to take a deeper interest in Palestine.⁸⁷

The Anglo-Jewish community reflected British-Israel’s policy on Palestine and the *Jewish Chronicle* forecast that Palestine was to be the trading centre between East and West, and trading suited the Jews. However, they were afraid Russia wanted Palestine and proposed that as England was the only country that looked favourably on the Jews, England should aid settlement in Palestine.⁸⁸ The leader in the *Jewish Chronicle*, of 20th August 1875, stating ‘*Think only of Palestine under the mild sceptre of Queen Victoria, of the Union Jack waving from the top of Mount Zion*’ was reflected in British-Israel as support for their opinion that as the Turkish Empire crumbled, England must rule Palestine as the French, Germans and Russians must not be allowed to hinder access to India.⁸⁹ i.e. This would fulfil the biblical prophecy that ‘*In these days the House of Judah shall walk to the House of Israel, and they shall come together out of the Land of the North to the land that I have given to their fathers for an inheritance.*’ (Jer. iii. 18).⁹⁰ However, the Anglo-Jewish community, whilst acknowledging the Ten Tribes, did not exhibit a reciprocal opinions that the British were part of Israel. The *Jewish Chronicle*, on 2nd May 1879, stated ‘The fate of the Lost Ten Tribes is a mystery which has a peculiar fascination for some minds...The Scriptures speak of a future Restoration of Israel...The problem, then, is reduced to the simplest form. The Ten Tribes are certainly in existence. All that has to be done is to discover which people represent them.’

British-Israel often berated the inability of the Anglican and Non-conforming ministries to see the Scriptural distinction between Israel and Judah and speculated that the sympathy between Jews and Britain was an ethnic instinct remarking on the current Master of the Rolls, Sir George Jessel, being an unconverted Jew ‘The Lord loves the Jews! Christian Israelites, bear that in mind!’.⁹¹ This was reflected by the Anglo-Jewish community in an article in *The Jewish Chronicle*, on 28th April 1876, referred to Jewish feeling towards Britain on the dissolution of the Turkish Empire and the prospects of the English ruling Palestine

‘*England has given so many proofs of her feeling towards the Jewish people that they could not wish to see the land of their forefathers under safer keeping than that of Great Britain...And if the English are not the bretheren of the Jews according to the flesh, as is contended by those who maintain that the Anglo-Saxons are descended from the Ten tribes, they certainly act towards them as kinsmen in spirit and feeling.*’⁹²

Palestinian Jewish feeling, towards Britain was again reflected in a prayer drawn up by leading Jewish

⁸³ Cannon Fremantle, *Reply to Objections to the Israelitish Origin of the Anglo-Saxon People at the Anniversary Meeting of the London society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews May 1875*, (London: Guest, 1876), p. 19.

⁸⁴ John Wilson, *Lectures on Our Israelitish Origin*, (London: Nisbet, 1876), p. 427 & 430.

⁸⁵ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 294.

⁸⁶ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. II, p. 6-7.

⁸⁷ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 347.

⁸⁸ *Life From The Dead*, 1875, Vol. IV, p. 17.

⁸⁹ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1875, pp.297-298.

⁹⁰ EN Dixon, *The Divine Plan in the Government of the World proved by the Great European War*, 2nd. edtn. (London: Imperial British-Israel Association, 1919), p. 18.

⁹¹ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 283.

⁹² *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 233.

Rabbis in Jerusalem at the Synagogue of Beth Jacob, in that 'the English nation who protect and shield thy people Israel from oppression - O Lord, this great people have sent their chosen mighty men to fight a just war and to promote equality and equity to all her people alike.'

Some British-Israel, such as Rev. Thomas Howlett, were against the Palestine answer maintaining that the Scriptures were against both colonisation and assimilation. In his view, the Jews and Anglo-Saxons had a racial affinity, whilst most nations regarded them as aliens. His objections to re-settlement in Palestine as a nation were that Palestine was part of Turkey and coveted by Russia; both of which were anti-Jewish, and the days of the small independent nation were over. He maintained that intelligent, wealthy and influential Jews were opposed to colonisation schemes as they preferred existing world business centres hence the British Empire and the USA were the Promised Land. Assimilation was unworkable as separation was the speciality of the Jew.⁹³ Citizenship with the Anglo-Saxon was the destiny of the Jew and this would be accomplished by the restoration of the Israelitish nation.⁹⁴

British-Israel brought attention to the poor treatment of Jews outside Britain, especially Russia, reasoning that those outside Britain did not identify with the house of Israel.⁹⁵ An anti-Semitic petition was circulated in Germany, in 1880, claiming

'the fruits of Christian labour are harvested by the Jews.' It was claimed in the Romanian Parliament 'that the true difficulty in the way of allowing the Jews the equal rights, which were stipulated in the treaty of Berlin, was the certainty entertained by the Roumanians and Servian that if the Jews were thus given an equal chance they would gradually oust the peasantry till they possessed the whole land.'⁹⁶

The Examiner, on 4th June 1891, declared of the Russian pogroms 'This persecution is known to spring from a purely commercial source - from the jealousy with which the native Russians have seen the many interests of the Empire slowly centering themselves about the banking houses of certain wealthy and industrious Jews.'⁹⁷ James Blaine, Secretary of State of the United States echoed this opinion in a state paper to the Court of St James

'No student of history need be reminded of the lesson taught by the persecution of the Jews in Central Europe and in the Spanish peninsula. There, as in Russia to-day, the Hebrew fared better in business than his neighbour; then as now, his economy and patient industry bred capital, bred envy, and envy persecution, and persecution disaffection and social separation.'⁹⁸

Bishop Titcomb had no trouble in applying British-Israel to this situation remarking on the influx of Jews from Germany, Romania and Russia '*Is not Great Britain marked out among the nations as the most interested in promoting the temporal and spiritual welfare of the Jews.*'⁹⁹ Further noting that a British Church occupied Mount Zion, the Palestine Exploration Society had mapped out the Holy Land and Britain was the only country taking an active interest in a Jewish homeland. According to Titcomb Britain was the only country in Christendom with missions for the conversion of the Jews.¹⁰⁰

This sympathy with the troubles of the Jews was, however, at odds with the British-Israel stance on Jewish Disability. John Wilson, surprisingly, objected to the removal of Jewish disabilities maintaining that foreign unbelieving pauper Jews, who were migratory by nature, would be encouraged to come to

⁹³ Rev. T.R Howlett, *Anglo-Israel, The Jewish Problem and Supplement*, 4th edtn. (Philadelphia: Howlett, 1892), p. 151.

⁹⁴ Rev. T.R Howlett, *Anglo-Israel, The Jewish Problem and Supplement*, 4th edtn. (Philadelphia: Howlett, 1892), p. 153.

⁹⁵ *Life From The Dead*, 1873, Vol. I, p. 44.

⁹⁶ Rev. T.R Howlett, *Anglo-Israel, The Jewish Problem and Supplement*, 4th edtn. (Philadelphia: Howlett, 1892), p. 138.

⁹⁷ Rev. T.R Howlett, *Anglo-Israel, The Jewish Problem and Supplement*, 4th edtn. (Philadelphia: Howlett, 1892), p. 137.

⁹⁸ Rev. T.R Howlett, *Anglo-Israel, The Jewish Problem and Supplement*, 4th edtn. (Philadelphia: Howlett, 1892), p. 138.

⁹⁹ JH Titcomb, *A Message to the Church from the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Robert Banks, 1887), pp. 108-109.

¹⁰⁰ JH Titcomb, *A Message to the Church from the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Robert Banks, 1887), p. 109.

England.¹⁰¹ 'Let us use all kind and honest hospitality to the homeless wanderer; but let us not without due consideration; throw into his hand the keys of the citadel.'¹⁰² Wils on maintained that such was the history of the Jews that they could not be depended on to put the nation's interests before their own and although Britain had placed the worldwide Jewish race under it's protection, the country did not want to be responsible for the mischief Jews occasioned when they achieved political power. Wilson stated 'It would be quite unfair on the Jew to expect to be treated with the same confidence and esteem as the Christian'¹⁰³ and consequently there were no good grounds to suggest they were fit to legislate for the most important empire on the earth. Credit was given for producing and transmitting the Scriptures in the past, but currently Jews did neither hence 'we are willing to do what we can for the true good of the Jew, but we earnestly deprecate the sacrificing, for even his sake, the honour and welfare of the State, the interests of the whole human race.'¹⁰⁴ Wilson even went as far as putting them in the same class as catholics insisting that 'the Jewish Rabbi and the Romish Priest virtually conspire to crush the Evangelical Christian.'¹⁰⁵ noting that the two races who put Jesus to death were the Jews and Romans.

The British-Israel position on Jewish Disability mirrored the reaction of the Protestant community in general. Sir Robert Inglis, an influential figure in the Anglican Church, opposed the admission of Jews to Parliament as he had earlier with Roman Catholics and Non-Conformists and was supported by Shaftesbury who whilst supporting Jewish emigration to Palestine to fuel his Evangelical ambitions did not champion their political rights. It is ironic that in 1902, British-Israel claimed of the Queen 'Under her the Jews have emerged from obscurity and repression into the full enjoyment of all the rights and privileges of British citizenship.' It was Disraeli, icon of British-Israel who was the most prominent political figure in the fight for Jewish equality and despite the the Jewish Disabilities Bill being passed in 1847, it was consistently thrown out until 1858, when he saw his friend Lionel de Rothschild take his seat.¹⁰⁶

Domestic Politics

British-Israel was not ostensibly a political movement but it was inevitable that any association that interpreted Biblical prophecy against the background of actual historic, real-time and future events would attempt to influence, take credit or comment on the relevance of those events. Primarily an Anglican organisation, it was inevitable that British-Israel would contribute to political issues concerning the Jews, Catholics and Palestine. In essence, the character of movement was pro-Conservative, Imperialist and anti-Home Rule divided only by the Teutonic theory¹⁰⁷. British-Israel did have followers in both legislative houses, however, limited by significant elected representation it promoted, through various publications, those influential public figures who blindly reflected it's own theologically driven policies and prophecies. It is only in from the 1870's that the British-Israel press really started to roll enabling commentary on their domestic political stance.

Prior to the 1874 General Election, Edward Hine asserted, that the British-Israel movement had 'no motive to endeavour to operate any influence, in a political sense', however, in the same year, Hine appealed for representatives in Parliament and stressed the importance of selecting MPs indoctrinated by British-Israel philosophy.¹⁰⁸ There was is no record of how successful his campaign was but in the event the

¹⁰¹ John Wilson, *Forty Reasons for Resisting the Removal of the Jewish Disabilities*, (London: Wothein & MacIntosh, 1853), p. 5.

¹⁰² John Wilson, *Forty Reasons for Resisting the Removal of the Jewish Disabilities*, (London: Wothein & MacIntosh, 1853), p. 6.

¹⁰³ John Wilson, *Forty Reasons for Resisting the Removal of the Jewish Disabilities*, (London: Wothein & MacIntosh, 1853), p. 10.

¹⁰⁴ John Wilson, *Forty Reasons for Resisting the Removal of the Jewish Disabilities*, (London: Wothein & MacIntosh, 1853), p. 16.

¹⁰⁵ John Wilson, *Forty Reasons for Resisting the Removal of the Jewish Disabilities*, (London: Wothein & MacIntosh, 1853), p. 18.

¹⁰⁶ Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered*, (London: Praeger, 1995), p. 58.

¹⁰⁷ *Life From the Dead, 1880*, Vol VIII, p. 140.

¹⁰⁸ *Life From The Dead, 1874*, Vol. I, p. 154.

Conservatives, under Disraeli, won with a majority of 52 seats which pleased the British-Israel pundits. Hine was not alone and Viscount Folkestone, president of the Metropolitan Anglo-Israel Association and MP, asserted, in 1880, 'I am sure that this association, in the course of time...will assume a very prominent position in the history of the nation. I have no doubt but that it will exercise a great influence on the policy, both home and foreign of our future governments.'¹⁰⁹ This 1880 election did, however, indicate the low influence of British-Israel in the hustings. Despite pleading its non-political stance, British-Israel backed Disraeli British-Israel encouraged the nation (Israel) to support the party that would achieve God's destiny for the nation asking 'if Britain wanted to see the achievements of Disraeli - the Eastern question, Berlin Treaty - and the proposed protectorate of Asiatic Turkey, acquisition of Cyprus and the Holy Land reversed?'¹¹⁰ The Liberals, under Gladstone, won by a majority of 176 seats but true to form they found biblical prophecy to cover the non-Imperial policies of Gladstone 'Come, My people, enter those into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.' (Isa. 16:20) to mark Britain's withdrawal from expansion. It followed that British-Israel did not expect Liberals to have long enough in power to affect foreign policies.

Post 1880 election, British-Israel were gladdened to hear the Liberals intended maintaining the empire but deplored its repudiation of further colonial annexations therefore not fulfilling Britain's destiny to rule the world.¹¹¹ Sure enough the appropriate biblical prophecy was found 'And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him' (Daniel 7:27). The subject of the federation of the empire was becoming increasingly the subject of national concern and British-Israel believed this was the aim of Disraeli's future policy gleefully quoting on the subject from arch-enemy the ultra-radical quarterly *The Westminster Review* 'the organ of Bentham, of Charles Buller and of John Stuart Mill; the organ pre-eminently of pure philosophic Radicalism' article *Imperium et Libertus* opposing Gladstone.¹¹² However, again British-Israel were at pains to point out that their politics were not party politics but Israelite and Bible politics seeking enlargement of the Empire with England at the centre intimating cheekily *The Westminster Review* had copied British-Israel articles.¹¹³ Unfortunately, Gladstone was of the opinion that Saville (editor of *The Banner of Israel*) was labouring under 'almost a delusion'.¹¹⁴

The judgement of the national mood appeared to be correct and pre-General Election, in 1885, British-Israel was worried that Gladstone had been going 'to scuttle out' of Egypt and yield to French pressure 'We hardly imagine the people of this country will give up and allow all their interests to be bartered away and ruined because Mr Gladstone is the Prime Minister of their choice; for being without policy, that statesman seems content to let Israel's blood flow in torrents.'¹¹⁵ Sarcastically, they referred to Gladstone's plan to as an attempt to restore Britain, in Europe, to 'perfect independence' classing it as a contest between 'the iron will of the Liberal leader and that of the God of Israel' and asked for the electorate to vote for God fearing men.¹¹⁶ In fact the French had expected the British monarchy to collapse with the Sudan fiasco and threatened invasion of India by Russia but a comment in *Revue Politique et Litteraire* credited the British Empire as being more solid than was generally suppose a point taken up by British-Israel as proof of God's guarantee.¹¹⁷ A great question of 1885 was as to whether the government intended to disestablish the Church of England. There was strong Non-conformist pressure to do so as they regarded it as the papacy in disguise but Hine was against disestablishment of the church maintaining it was a barrier against Rome that dissention was causing splits in the church hence any notion of 'religious equality' was anti-scriptural.¹¹⁸ However, he missed the point

¹⁰⁹ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 269.

¹¹⁰ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 117.

¹¹¹ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 6.

¹¹² *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 69.

¹¹³ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 69.

¹¹⁴ Rev. BW Saville, *The Anglo-Israel Theory and the Alleged Advent of Christ in 1882*, (London: Longmans, 1882), p. 9.

¹¹⁵ *Banner of Israel*, 1885, p. 62.

¹¹⁶ *Banner of Israel*, 1885, p. 407.

¹¹⁷ *Banner of Israel*, 1885, p. 343.

¹¹⁸ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 158.

as Gladstone's hint at disestablishment of the Church of England was as a result of its recent orations being a 'hotbed of Toryism'¹¹⁹. The Liberals clung to power with the Irish nationalists holding the balance of power but upbeat as ever, British-Israel asserted Home Rule was out of the question as it was not in Biblical prophecy.¹²⁰

It was over the Irish question and Home Rule that British-Israel exhibited a particularly ugly side of its' racial politics. The Irish were allegedly, the descendants of Canaanites (Phoenicians). According to biblical prophecy, if the children of Israel did not drive them out 'then it shall come to pass that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.' (Numbers 33:55).¹²¹ In 1879, *Era*, noted in its "Topic of the Week" column that 'It is Ireland that is the thorn in the side of England at the present moment, and the attitude of Mr Parnell and his agitating friends is disgusting the patrons of this warm-hearted and impulsive nation'.¹²² British-Israel accused Gladstone of disestablishing the Irish Church to appease the Catholics, who were southern Irish and descendants of Canaanites, enemies of Israel, unlike those Irish in the North, who were descended from the tribe of Dan and persecuting Protestants while allowing Home Rulers to go free.¹²³ Home rule was identified with these Canaanites and the British were troubled by them 'because of the sins of our forefathers in not exterminating them from their land as God commanded in time of old'.¹²⁴ The Irish, by God's instruction should be 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' and governed by a superior people as he saw nothing to justify their ambition to be an independent race and 'they are simply to occupy the position held by Aborigines of all other colonies, that of being doomed by the will of God gradually to die out'.¹²⁵ In fact, rather callously, the small famine in Ireland in 1880 was attributed by British-Israel to have fallen just on those of Phoenician origin and Catholics as opposed to Israel.¹²⁶ In 1914, it came as a surprise to British-Israel that 'distressful' Ireland was Britain's largest provisioner but still managed to pour scorn on the Irish by implying that if she shunned Home rule she could increase this.

Foreign Politics

Ireland aside, Palestine was the apex of the British-Israel geographical agenda due to the Biblical prophecy 'Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates' (Genesis 15:18).¹²⁷ British-Israel believed that promises to Israel, as contracted with Judah, must be fulfilled before the second coming.¹²⁸ The key biblical passage indicated that Palestine would be shared with the Jews and 'In these day the house of Judah shall walk to or with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.' (Jer. iii. 18, 19.) A question here arises as to how the whole Anglo-Saxon race was to fit in Palestine? Well British-Israel answers this with the Biblical text 'one of a city and two of a family' (Jer. 3:14) and goes no further which is rather perplexing, however John Wilson did suggest that Palestine would be more a missionary station than a complete decampment from the British Isles.

The British were proponents of mass Jewish re-Settlement in Palestine and along with the rest of Europe had eyed the political importance of the area since the break way of Mehmet Ali from Sultan Mahmud II in 1830. Return initially was to be facilitated by missionary conversion as British-Israel maintained that the Bible belonged to Israel and Anglo-Saxons had been the most successful at spreading the word. John Wilson was instrumental in the establishment of an Anglo-Syria School in Beirut and with the conceding of religious liberty, by the Turks in 1866, *The Palestine Christian Union Mission* to the Arabs was formed

¹¹⁹ *Banner of Israel*, 1885, p. 438.

¹²⁰ *Banner of Israel*, 1885, p. 513.

¹²¹ A. Watcher, *Christ in Joseph: A Reply To "Anglo-Israelism" in The Church Quarterly Review July, 1880*, (London: Rivingtons, 1880), p. 8.

¹²² *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 91.

¹²³ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 181.

¹²⁴ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 185.

¹²⁵ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 186.

¹²⁶ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 80.

¹²⁷ John Wilson, *Lectures on Our Israelitish Origin*, (London: Nisbet, 1876), p. 13.

¹²⁸ Anthony Noel Denny, *The Case for British-Israel*, (London: Covenant, 1922), p. 1.

under the presidency of Shaftesbury.¹²⁹ This might lead one to assume that Lord Shaftesbury was a member of British-Israel but as British-Israel admitted, in 1885, Shaftesbury was not well acquainted with British-Israel.¹³⁰ John Lowthias, a farmer and ardent British-Israel, went to Beirut in 1843 noting the under cultivation and from 1847 established an experimental farm and twenty schools.¹³¹ In 1859, Major J.S. Phillips, had presented a paper before the *British Association of Science* proposing resettlement of the descendants of Israel in the promised land, Syria, with boundaries biblical boundaries. 'This remarkable peninsula ... will be found to be most exactly and suitably placed to enable them to fulfil their high destiny to all the nations of the earth, and to become the centre of all lands, the praise and hearts of the whole earth'. Syria was to be cut into portions for each tribe, with Jerusalem kept separate, and a railway built from Antioch to the Persian Gulf forming the most direct route from England through Europe, Palestine and India to Australia.¹³² British-Israel agreed with this railway maintaining that friends from India and England could meet in Syria which would promote settlement noting that the French were building the Suez canal.¹³³ Accordingly, British-Israel fitted in the predictions of the prophet Nahum ii 3-4 'The chariots flash with the fire of steel in the day of his preparation and the firtrees are shaken terribly..The chariots rage in the streets, they jostle one against another in the broad ways..the appearance of them is like torches...they run like lightnings'.

In 1876, archaeologist Sir Charles Warren claimed 'The position of Palestine will some day be of much importance to us as a nation, and the sooner we make a footing in the place the better.' and proposed transforming Palestine into an autonomous, and eventually Zionist state to prevent it falling into French or Russian hands during the decline of the Ottoman Empire as laid out in his pamphlet *The Land of Promise or Turkey's Guarantee* (1875). The Palestine Exploration Fund had calculated the land could support a population of 15 million against the current ½ million and Warren argued that the re-introduction of the Jews would counter corrupt Turkish rule. Warren's first choice to rule Palestine under an international charter company was...the United States.¹³⁴ However, there were rivals.

An Imperial Hatti issued by the Turkish Government in 1867 inviting foreigners to settle in their Asiatic and European Province and in 1873 the Palestine Restoration Fund was founded to buy vacant land in Palestine. British-Israel noted, in 1867, an article in *The Scotsman* reporting a colony of 156 Americans, belonging to the 'Church of the Messiah' had settled in Jaffa claiming they were members of the tribe of Ephraim.¹³⁵

Her Majesty's Consul in the Ottoman Empire, in 1867, reported that since the time of the reforms the general position of Christians had never been better enjoying the same protections and privileges as the Muslims and British-Israel applauded the fact that Christians could now buy property.¹³⁶ In 1867, British-Israel reported problems with the Muslims caused by Eastern Churches in that 'if they went into Greek churches they saw saint-worship and picture-kissing; and if they entered the Romish Churches, they saw woman-worship and image worship. So they returned to their simple mosques perfectly satisfied that these people were far behind themselves in their religion.'¹³⁷ In contrast, The Church Missionary Society used simple worship, which was far more appreciated by Muslims. However, there were problems.

The Hatti Scheriff was not carried out in Turkish dominions. Consuls used their influence to evade the law. Converts had to be removed and given a new name with the guarantee for religious liberty being only nominal. e.g A Christian convert bought some land and was protected by law but the Muslim who sold him the land had his throat cut.¹³⁸ In the event, in 1866, *The Palestine Christian Union Mission to the Arabs* formed presided over by the Earl of Shaftesbury. Unfortunately, it was a lot of inter-sect rivalry and British-Israel condemned Society of St Joseph mission to Palestine, despite being certified by the

¹²⁹ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, Vol. I, p. 230.

¹³⁰ *Banner of Israel*, 1885, p. 468.

¹³¹ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, Vol. I, p. 320.

¹³² *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 165.

¹³³ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, Vol. I, p. 12.

¹³⁴ Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered*, (London: Praeger, 1995), p. 99 & 113-114.

¹³⁵ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, Vol. II, p. 96.

¹³⁶ *The Watchmen of Ephraim*, 1867/8, Vol. II, p. 418.

¹³⁷ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, 1867/8, Vol. II, p. 274.

¹³⁸ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, 1867/8, Vol. II, p. 276.

Archbishop of Canterbury as an Anglican minister, also held a letter from Archbishop Manning.¹³⁹ The *American Bible Society* fared no better. In Hamath, the Greek bishops threatened to excommunicate anyone who dealt with missionaries. Progress was slow and between 1856 and 1867, Protestant churches increased from only three to six. 'all religious sects are so numerous and so well organised, that every stands in an attitude of defence and antagonism'.¹⁴⁰ There is no doubt that irrespective of religious differences, missionary schools were well thought of as in the case of British Syrian Schools under the auspices of one Madame Bowen Thompson 'We present our thanks to Madame Bowen Thompson for her zeal and earnestness in promoting the good of our country.' stated the *Beyrout Arabic Newspaper*, 29 June 1867.¹⁴¹

Arthur Stanley, Dean of Westminster, author of *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with Their History*, accompanied the prince of Wales on his tour of the East, in 1862. In 1865, the Palestine Exploration Fund was founded as a result to attempt to validate biblical history - an invaluable asset to British-Israel's literal reading of the Hebrew Scriptures. The most significant aspect of Dean Stanley's contribution to the Palestine Exploration Fund and its work, aside from his role in its foundation, was his commitment, with Sir George Grove, to a scientific approach. He also insisted that it be non-religious and non-political, and his efforts to bring into the founding Committee not only representatives of all three major branches of the Church of England (High Church, Evangelicals, and Broad Church), representatives of the Catholic and Jewish communities within Britain. However, most of the members were fans of Judaeo-Christian tradition hoping the excavations would validate the bible and Dr William Thomson, Archbishop of York, on addressing the fund stated 'Our reason for turning to Palestine is that Palestine is our country. I have used that expression before and I refuse to adopt any other.'¹⁴² British-Israel supported the Palestine Exploration Fund in the hope it would reveal the Ark of the Covenant.

Apart from being the holiest place on earth, Palestine was a geographical junction between East and West and a natural focal point for the empire with the Suez canal, the road to India and oil fields. Palestine was captured from the Ottomans by Mehmet Ali, in 1830, but he was allied to France on whom he depended for political, military and economic advisors.¹⁴³ Edom, in biblical prophecy, was represented as being in possession of the Holy places before the return of Israel. John Wilson had equated Edom with Spain as several cities were named after dukes or cities of Edom (which he thought might account for bitter religious rivalries) but now Turkey governed all the Holy sites in the middle-east, Muslim included, and British-Israel equated Edom with the Ottoman empire hence the deposition of the Sultan could only be actioned by anglo-saxon Israel in the form of England and America 'I will inflict vengeance upon Edom by the hand of My people Israel' (eze. 25:14).¹⁴⁴ In 1902, noting the stormy political situation in the Balkans exasperating the Turkish, British-Israel declared on Palestine 'The land must be cleansed, and the intruder turned out of it, to allow of the return of the People of Zion' and , in 1905, after experiencing revolutionary unrest in Albania and Macedonia equated the Turkish with the descendants of the Assyrians.

In return France received territorial concessions with an eye on the Red sea and routes to India. The Russians were also interested in Palestine and allied themselves to the Ottomans. Gog in Ezekial had an eye for invading Palestine hence British-Israel associated this prophecy with Russia and the political Eastern Question of the late 1890's was whether Russia or England would have Constantinople after the disintegration of Turkey. British-Israel applauded the Japanese defeat of Russia, in 1904, attributing this to the Anglo-Japanese alliance and contradictorily, deemed the 1907 Anglo-Russian convention for determining operating borders a monument us agreement. British-Israel had the answer in 'Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies' (Genesis 22.17).

"The Gates" were very important to British-Israel and Constantinople was the most important gate. Possession of the gates meant power to the British Empire. In 1919, British-Israelite Admiral Lord Fisher

¹³⁹ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, 1867/8, Vol. II, p. 277.

¹⁴⁰ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, 1867/8, Vol. II, p. 361.

¹⁴¹ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, 1867/8, Vol. II, p. 406.

¹⁴² Barbara Tuckman, *Bible and Sword*, (London: Redman, 1957), p. 1.

¹⁴³ Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered*, (London: Praeger, 1995), p.10.

¹⁴⁴ John Wilson, *Lectures on Our Israelitish Origin*, (London: Nisbet, 1876), p. 109.

said ‘Do you know that there are five keys to the world - the Straits of Dover, the Straits of Gibraltar, the Suez Canal, the Straits of Malacca, and the Cape of Good Hope? And every one of these keys we hold.’¹⁴⁵ The Channel Islands kept a check on the French. Gibraltar seized from the Spanish in 1704 guarded the entrance to the Mediterranean. Malta captured from Napoleon in 1800 stood halfway between Gibraltar and Port Said. The gates to the Red Sea - Aden and Perim - were acquired in 1856 and 1839 respectively. Cyprus was rented from the Turkish and was the Gate to Suez, Port Said and Palestine. Possession of the gate of Constantinople would prevent the Russian Black Sea fleet entering the Mediterranean. ‘Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession’ (Psalm ii.8). Hence, in 1839, Britain extended diplomatic protection to all 10,000 Jews living in the Turkish province of Syria. On the Jewish side, Sir Moses Montefiore was also taking a great interest in Palestine.¹⁴⁶ Montefiore believed that Palestine was under-exploited making it a rich opportunity for a Jewish homeland. He agreed with the new British Consul William Young to introduce gradual assistance to the Jews so as not to arouse the suspicion of the Turks and Egyptians. He received the backing of the British government but was only able to obtain vague promises from Mehmet Ali. Unfortunately, in 1839, war broke out between the Egyptians and Turks with the French backed Turks capturing Beirut.¹⁴⁷ Lord Shaftesbury had put events in motion with the establishment of a British Consulate in Jerusalem, in 1838, reflecting the concern of restorationists with development of their doctrine and its application to political realities.¹⁴⁸ Philo-Judaism was a strong element of Evangelicalism with its desire to assist Jewish return to Palestine, convert them to Christianity and bring about the second coming of Christ following the conversion of Jews to Christianity. Coincidentally, Shaftesbury’s mother-in-law was the wife of Lord Palmerston and on assuming the Premiership, Palmerston asked Shaftesbury to select appropriate clerics for Bishopsrics. This was the perfect opportunity for Shaftesbury to establish his Evangelical master plan and duly recorded in his 1838 diaries that he had persuaded Palmerston to appoint Britain’s first diplomat to Palestine.¹⁴⁹ Shaftesbury reasoned that if Britain established herself in Palestine, as the Jew’s political and military protector, immigration would begin eventually spawning the Second Coming but first he had to sell his plan politically to Palmerston.

However, French territorial ambitions under the aggressive Adolphe Thiers stalled. On the French rivalry for Palestine, British-Israel maintained, in 1866, that they did not wish to contend with any country for the selfish appropriation of Palestine but if the opportunity arose Britain should take it.¹⁵⁰ An alliance of Britain, Russia, Prussia and Austria demanded the withdrawal of Mehmet Ali from Syria or they would back the Turks. The French king sacked Thiers and Egypt withdrew. In return for Britain’s assistance in retaining Syria, the Turkish government lifted its restriction on Jewish immigration to Palestine. Unfortunately Palmerston fell at the 1841 General Election and it appeared that Shaftesbury’s plans were stalled. However, his successor Peel agreed to a new Anglican Episcopal seat in Jerusalem.

The first Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem was Michael Solomon Alexander, a converted Jew but unfortunately, in 1842, Peel forbade British Consul Young from assisting Bishop Alexander with any of his Jewish schemes and significantly, for the Evangelical Shaftesbury, British Diplomatic protection would only be extended to Jews but excluded those that converted to Christianity.¹⁵¹ Contemporaneously, the removal of the French threat led to a lapse in the Turkish immigration policy and the expected mass emigration did not take place except for a few people to the Montefiore colonies and mass emigration, when it did take place was directed toward Europe and America.

Disraeli’s acquisition of the Suez Canal and Cyprus between 1874-78 made physical conquest of Palestine inevitable. British-Israel applauded the government’s bold stroke in acquiring half the shares in the Suez

¹⁴⁵ EN Dixon, *The Divine Plan in the Government of the World proved by the Great European War*, 2nd. edtn. (London: Imperial British-Israel Association, 1919), p. 13.

¹⁴⁶ Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered*, (London: Praeger, 1995), p.11.

¹⁴⁷ Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered*, (London: Praeger, 1995), p. 15.

¹⁴⁸ Barbara Tuckman, *Bible and Sword*, (London: Redman, 1957), p.

¹⁴⁹ Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered*, (London: Praeger, 1995), p. 9.

¹⁵⁰ *Watchmen of Ephraim*, Vol. I, p. 39.

¹⁵¹ Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered*, (London: Praeger, 1995), p. 19.

canal proclaiming it as the beginning of the restoration movement and an Act of God.¹⁵² The Suez Canal shortened the sea trip to India by 5000 miles and part fulfilled biblical prophecy 'in the same day the Lord made a Covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this Land, from the River of Egypt into the great river, the river Euphrates'. Disraeli was also worshipped by British-Israel as a God in that his surname '*Of Israel*' was seen as fulfilment of 'One shall say, I [am] the LORD'S; and another shall call [himself] by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe [with] his hand unto the LORD, and surname [himself] by the name of Israel'.¹⁵³ In 1875, Lionel de Rothschild supplied Disraeli with the £4 million to purchase the Khedive of Egypt's controlling shares in the Suez Canal Company.¹⁵⁴ However, there was one problem here in that Biblical prophecy maintained of Ephraim 'He shall not return to Egypt.'; a fact I only found one reference to in British-Israel literature.¹⁵⁵ Hine remarked on the coincidence that at a time, national identity with Israel, Benjamin Disraeli was selected as Prime Minister and

'I have faith to look upon this man as one specially raised by God as a deliverer for our nation' and 'under the auspices of a Premier, of Jewish or Israelitish origin, and raised, we cannot but believe, to his high and influential position by Divine Providence to exert a prominent influence on the coming events.'^{156,157}

His prophetic feelings were backed up by staff writer Harrison Oxley in 'We identify Benjamin Disraeli, Esq., as one called in a most distinguished manner to lead the Nation to glory, and by the Identity, we see clearly how Judah and Israel became united, how Palestine comes into the possession of the British Nation.'¹⁵⁸ However, Disraeli did not seem to agree with this and embarrassingly declared the American nation 'to be more like that of ancient Israel under the judges than any other of history.'

In 1875, in preparation for the formation of a Palestine Colonization Fund, members of the society met the Turkish Ambassador. The gravitas of this fund was reflected in the delegation that approached the Turkish Ambassador, at its inception. The more prominent members included Colonel Gawler, Jacob Montefiore, Bishop Titcomb, Lord Shaftsbury, The Lord Mayor of London and two MPs A. Kinnaird & F. Walpole.¹⁵⁹ One offshoot of *The Anglo-Israel Association* was *The International Universal Alliance* whose purpose was 'to secure the neutralisation of Palestine under the guarantee of the great Powers, with the view of assuring the security of Christian and Israelitish populations'.¹⁶⁰ This was a significant link with the Jewish community in that a prominent member was Sir Moses Montefiore, occasional president of the Board of Deputies, who initiated the subordinate *Palestine Committee of the Universal Alliance*. This sub-organisation drew up plans for emigration schemes promoting the colonization of Palestine, Syria and neighbouring countries and with the support of the German *Colony of the Society of the Temple* channelled funds through a *Palestine Colonization Fund* to a society established at Premisl, Galicia.¹⁶¹ Although not a member of British-Israel, to their regret, in his obituary it was said 'He was a Prince of the House of Judah, but he belonged properly to the House of Israel'.¹⁶² In the 1870s, Rishon le Zion and other colonies were set up near Lake Tiberias at the initiative of the French branch of the Rothschilds.¹⁶³ In 1875, Sir Moses Montefiore travelled to Palestine to arrange for additional purchases of land after Palestine Exploration Fund maps showed large areas of economically unexploited fertile land.¹⁶⁴

In 1880, British-Israel announced that the British had just Secured Cyprus and Suez so a protectorate

¹⁵² *Life From The Dead*, 1875, Vol. III, pp. 91-92.

¹⁵³ T Ernest Hillt, *What is the Reason: Some 43 Pertinent Questions for all Britishers with One Answer*, (London: Covenant, 1927), Q. 32.

¹⁵⁴ Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered*, (London: Praeger, 1995), p. 55.

¹⁵⁵ John Wilson, *Lectures on Our Israelitish Origin*, (London: Nisbet, 1876), p. 145.

¹⁵⁶ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. I, p. 159-160.

¹⁵⁷ *Life From The Dead*, 1874, Vol. II, p. 7.

¹⁵⁸ *Life From The Dead*, 1875, Vol. III, p. 154.

¹⁵⁹ *The Standard of Israel*, February 1876, p. 53.

¹⁶⁰ *The Standard of Israel*, August 1875, p. 65.

¹⁶¹ *The Standard of Israel*, February 1876, p. 43.

¹⁶² *Banner of Israel*, 1885, p. 324.

¹⁶³ Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered*, (London: Praeger, 1995), p. 88.

¹⁶⁴ Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered*, (London: Praeger, 1995), p. 88.

would only be a matter of time.¹⁶⁵ Disraeli's Anglo-Turkish Convention handing over Cyprus to the British in return for a military alliance against Russia was again paralleled with biblical prophecy that Israel would return to the Holy Land. However, British-Israel maintained that the only way to convince unbelievers in Britain was by stressing the pecuniary, national and commercial advantages of this return. They supported this notion quoting the editorial of the *Bristol Times and Mirror*, of 10 December 1879, stating that the Tigris Valley was one of the greatest potential markets to manufacturers of the North and Midlands and an article in *The Times*, of 10 December 1879, pointing out that the recent blocking of the Suez Canal by a grounded steamer illustrated the need for alternative overland routes to the East.¹⁶⁶

British Industrialist, Edward Cazalet, asserted in *The Jewish Chronicle*, that Palestine could only be recovered by the introduction of a Jewish ruling class as the present Arabs and Turks were ineffectual. He maintained England should create conditions under which Jews would migrate to Palestine under their own accord by establishing a British protectorate and building a Euphrates Valley Railway to provide initial employment. The establishment of a British protectorate would provide an attractive alternative to the then trend of migration of East European Jewry to America 'Nobody who has any knowledge of the Jewish character, can for a moment doubt that if the Jews were restored to their country, under an English protectorate, they would prove true to our nation, and that Syria would become as firmly united to England as if it were peopled by our own countrymen.'¹⁶⁷ These sentiments also had the approval of the Americans, whose President Harrison stated 'The immigration of these people to the United States - many other countries being closed to them - is largely increasing, and is likely to assume proportions which make it difficult to find homes and employment for them, and to seriously affect the labour market.'¹⁶⁸

British-Israel maintained that British Imperialism was a direct result of Gladstone's Home Rule policy, which was viewed as sign of weakness in that electors had to choose between Britain existing as an Empire or falling to pieces by a series of secessions. In 1880, British-Israel commentating on foreign policy asked 'Shall the colonies be retained by Israel? Shall the great "company of nations" in federation with the "little island of the North" fulfill their grand destiny as marked out in the Word of God? "Nay", say the Opposition, "federation is a mistake; the greatest injury that might happen to this empire.'¹⁶⁹ Imperialism strengthened ties with the Mother country and British-Israel dived this into Political and Biblical. Under Biblical Imperialism, Britain's appointed destiny was to annex regions of the world in fulfillment of Biblical covenant such as Palestine. Judah had been employed for this purpose in that a Jew, Disraeli, had purchased the Suez canal shares and a Jew, Rothschild, had financed the acquisition. Political Imperialism involved conquering of states that menaced Britain's interests and the next on the list was "Gog" - Russia.

Bishop Titcomb of Rangoon was bishop to the Anglican clergy and congregation in Northern and Central Europe.¹⁷⁰ An evangelical Christian, he believed the bible prophecies seeing a powerful regenerated Ephraim restoring Judah to Palestine in that the British Empire was the fifth great empire forecast in the book of Daniel.¹⁷¹ In a somewhat perverse comparison, the Rev. H Read, American Nonconformist and author of *The Hand of God in History* stated 'We cannot but discern the hand of God, which has given such a decided supremacy. England is the Rome of the day'.¹⁷² He was dismissive of the rival Great powers labelling Russia as anti-Semitic, France as a declining anti-Semitic empire, Germany with no foreign empire and with both France and Germany not honouring the Sabbath but 'are given up to fetes, racing, concerts and

¹⁶⁵ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 90.

¹⁶⁶ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, IV, p. 56.

¹⁶⁷ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 90.

¹⁶⁸ Rev. T.R Howlett, *Anglo-Israel, The Jewish Problem and Supplement*, 4th edtn. (Philadelphia: Howlett, 1892), p. 157.

¹⁶⁹ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 117.

¹⁷⁰ Rev. Allen T Edwards, *A Consecrated Life: Memoir of the Right Rev. Bishop Titcomb, D.D.*, (London: Robert Banks, 1887), p. i

¹⁷¹ JH Titcomb, *A Message to the Church from the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Robert Banks, 1887), p. 75.

¹⁷² JH Titcomb, *A Message to the Church from the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Robert Banks, 1887), p. 87.

theatres'.¹⁷³

British-Israel referred to Salisbury's election, in 1900' as a thoroughly Imperial party and attributed election victory to Joseph Chamberlain, whose role as Colonial secretary, had struck blows against Home rule and Kruger's Boers, and proof that electors wanted an extension of the Empire. In fact British-Israel displayed intense relief that, in their opinion, the two greatest disasters of modern times - the handing of Transvaal to the Boers and the abandonment of Sudan - were now behind the country. The establishment, in 1907, of a permanent annual Imperial Conference was seen as part fulfillment of the prophecy of 'Company of Nations' and attributed to the enterprise 'the chosen race' topped by the inauguration of Empire Day in 1909.

In order to fulfil biblical prophecy, British-Israel wished to see unification of the colonies under the security of a United Empire of Great Britain. In this respect they were buoyed by the 1897 Federal Convention of Australia to unify the antipodean colonies based on successes in Canada. As with Disraeli, they used an influential individual as a symbolic vehicle for their Imperial aspirations - Joseph Chamberlain. Speaking at the Royal Colonial Institute, in 1897, 'As regards the self-governing Colonies, we no longer talk of them as dependencies...We think of them and we speak of them as part of ourselves, as part of the British Empire.' They applauded him for acting 'honourably, generously and nobly' to the defeated Boers and opined that South Africa would bloom under Britain as had other lands brought under subjection. A subject they reminded Edward VII, on his coronation 'that your Reign may witness the Federation of the Anglo-Saxon Race by consolidating the ties which unite the Colonies with the Mother Country.' Joseph Chamberlain had great sympathy with the Jewish Community. He promoted the aims of Zionism aiding Herzl's project to found a Jewish settlement between Egypt and Palestine securing an offer from the British government for a Zionist colony in East Africa and in particular appealing to British-Israel through his aversion to Home Rule. In an obituary to Joseph Chamberlain, 'the missionary of Empire', British-Israel proclaimed 'He leaves, indeed, to British-Israelites, an imperishable memory, an endearing influence, and an instructive message.' Joseph Chamberlain was praised for pushing the confederation of Empire toward a "Company of Nations".

Crete, Arabia and Palestine, at the end of the nineteenth century were struggling for independence from Turkey and British-Israel was at pains to advocate respect for his Muslim subjects quoting a select pilgrimage to Mecca where Sheik ul Islam stood before the Beit-Ulla (Tabernacle of God) and prayed aloud 'that the scourge of Turkey might be quickly removed from them, even if it were by the English taking over the guardianship of Mecca and Medina'. Lord Shaftesbury noted at a meeting of *The Turkish Mission Society*, in 1879, 'God in His providence had given to Anglo-Saxon Christians everywhere in a remarkable manner the confidence of the Mahomedan world'.¹⁷⁴ Conversely, British-Israel also saw Turkey as an ally, at the same time in that the Muslims had given confidence to the English over the other Great powers as when the Ameer of Afghanistan had declared war on England and Turkey had sided with Britain.¹⁷⁵

Then there was the Germans, another candidate empire for the 'company of nations'. Hine argued against the newly united Germany as part of Israel maintaining 'those who talk of German Protestantism as if it were identical with the Christianity of Christ, betray an ignorance of facts which in these days of travel and a prolific press is altogether unaccountable'.¹⁷⁶ This reflected an article in *The Times*, of 3rd December 1875, commenting that the German Protestant church was dying from an apathy exhibited by both the state and the congregation.¹⁷⁷ However, in *Forty Seven Identifications*, did admit 'The Germans are not our enemies, and there is evidence to show that they could not become our enemies'.¹⁷⁸ The ceding of Heligoland to the Germans was of great importance to their maritime power, however, British-Israel maintained they were no more entitled to it than any other part of Asia, Europe or Africa and as Germany had acquired Alsace Lorraine from France,

¹⁷³ JH Titcomb, *A Message to the Church from the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Robert Banks, 1887), p. 79.

¹⁷⁴ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 78.

¹⁷⁵ *Banner of Israel*, 1880, Vol. IV, p. 77.

¹⁷⁶ *Life From The Dead*, 1875, Vol. III, p. 33.

¹⁷⁷ *Life From The Dead*, 1875, Vol. III, p. 36.

¹⁷⁸ *Banner of Israel*, 1917, p. 296.

we should seek their restoration before considering Heligoland. ‘Possession of the residue of Denmark, followed by that of Holland, would be more so; and if Yorkshire were thrown in, the rejoicing excitement of the German mind would become so excessive as to prove perilous.’¹⁷⁹ Thomas Cook, in a letter to *The Times* in 1877, noted the movement of the Jerusalem Jews, out of the old quarter, into tenements erected by the ‘societies’. He also noted the Germans were increasingly colonising Jerusalem but antagonising the Turks by organising volunteer military corps, using Turkish effigies for rifle practise and organising cruises off Jaffa...in gunboats. He noted only three English families residing in Jerusalem.¹⁸⁰

There was concern in British-Israel about the influence of the Pan-Germanic movement inspired by the writings of Heinrich von Treitschke, which wanted to combine under one government all the German speaking people of the continent. His contemporary, Frederic Nietzsche was also perceived to have fuelled the development of German ambition since the German campaigns of 1870. British-Israel was able to attack Nietzsche’s imperial influences through his weakness on the theological argument in that he believed the world was without any moral goal, the purpose of a race should be effected by intellectuals, not God and Christianity was ‘the greatest of all conceivable corruptions’. In 1892, *Ein Deutches Weltreich* was published and the Pan-Germanic League, formed in 1894, displayed open hostility toward Great Britain with the intention of overthrowing the British Empire. This was not unfounded, as in 1914, picking up the British-Israel thread Kaiser Wilhelm II addressed his troops with ‘Remember that the German people are the chosen of God. On me, as German Emperor, the Spirit of God has descended. I am His weapon, His sword and His Viceregent. Woe to the disobedient.’ British-Israel had of course accused the Kaiser in the past of being descended from the Assyrians, intial prisoners of the Ten Tribes in the seventh century BC and their opinion was re-inforced by Professor L. Paton, of Hartford Theological Seminary in *Hibbert Journal*, October 1916, in which he compared Assyrians to Germans in their empire ambitions.¹⁸¹

Zionism

The advent of the Zionist movement one would have thought would have been heartily welcomed by British-Israel, however this was not the case. British-Israel regarded the Zionist Congress at Basle as an example of man’s effort to bring about a fulfilment of prophecy whilst forgetful of all the prophecy implied. In this British-Israel considered Zionists had erred in their intention of the House of Judah to repossess the land by purchase holding it on suffrage for a nation of millions yet failing to take into account Ephraim-Israel. Hertzl intended, with the aid of the Baron Hirsch charities, to send expeditions to Palestine to find desirable land, which could be purchased from the Turks. This plan not only attracted criticism from British-Israel but also from *The Times*, who found it difficult to believe that thousands of comfortable and respected Jews would abandon Europe for an experimental state. Hirsch was of the opinion that ‘The only means of improving their conditions is to transfer them to other countries, where they may enjoy the same rights as the people among whom they live. They will then cease to be pariahs and become citizens. What is going on in Russia to-day may be the prelude to this beneficent transformation.’

The Balfour Declaration was the finale of nearly a century of pro-active interaction between the Jewish community and British society and Kobler contends that the ‘*British Movement for the Restoration of Israel is in fact one of the rare instances of the continuous interest shown by one nation in the destiny of another people*’ with Polowetzky asserting that the Balfour Declaration ‘*represented the culmination of half a century of active preoccupation with Jewish culture among British political and intellectual elites*’.¹⁸² At the beginning of 1917, *The Banner of Israel*, asserted that the Great war had evidenced Identity with offshoots of the empire no longer colonies in the old meaning but a ‘*company of nations*’ and would result in giving the Jews a foot in Palestine, in 1917, with an end to the Turkish blight.¹⁸³ On 8th November 1917, Lord Rothschild petitioned Balfour for the restoration of the old Jewish homeland in Palestine to which Balfour replied ‘*His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national*

¹⁷⁹ *Leading the Nation to Glory*, 1876, Vol. II, p. 278.

¹⁸⁰ *The Nations Glory Leader*, 1877, Vol. IV, pp. 128-131.

¹⁸¹ *Banner of Israel*, 1917, p. 17.

¹⁸² Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered*, (London: Praeger, 1995), introduction.

¹⁸³ *Banner of Israel*, 1917, p. 5.

*home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object.*¹⁸⁴

This produced a very unexpected reaction from British-Israel. They maintained that wealthy Jews would remain in England and the Palestinian state would only appeal to poor downtrodden Jews.¹⁸⁵ Despite what the religious press might say, British-Israel maintained the homeland would not be the God appointed restoration of the Scriptures but a political one 'I shall make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all; and shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all' (Eze. Xxxvii 16-28).¹⁸⁶ It supported this argument by objecting to Israel Zangwill's concept of Zionism in that it only concerned the nation of the Jews not all Israel.¹⁸⁷ British-Israel maintained that despite all Jews being Zionists in their reverence for Palestine, for over a hundred years, the political strivings of the Jews had been to complete civil and political assimilation in their nations. Re-nationalisation of Jews might have a negative effect of labelling the Jews as strangers in their native lands undermining their hard-won positions as citizens and nationals of those lands.¹⁸⁸ Weizmann, president of the English Zionist Federation, maintained this was the chief ground for creation of a Jewish homeland. He maintained that the Jew was and always would be an alien in other countries his '*efforts to assimilate himself to his surroundings deceive nobody but himself*'. Gaster agreed declaring no Jew could ever be an Englishman '*The claim to be Englishmen of the Jewish persuasion - that is, English by nationality and Jewish by faith - is an absolute self-delusion*'.¹⁸⁹

Conclusion

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¹⁸⁴ EN Dixon, *The Divine Plan in the Government of the World proved by the Great European War*, 2nd. edtn. (London: Imperial British-Israel Association, 1919), p. 19.

¹⁸⁵ *Banner of Israel*, 1917, p. 401.

¹⁸⁶ *Banner of Israel*, 1917, p. 402.

¹⁸⁷ *Banner of Israel*, 1917, p. 409.

¹⁸⁸ *Banner of Israel*, 1917, p. 413.

¹⁸⁹ *Banner of Israel*, 1917, p. 414.

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