

British Israelism

Written by K B Napier
Monday, 09 March 2015 10:37

I will not spend too much time on this subject, because it is an absurdity. All and any absurdity will find a ready buyer: to my amazement, some Christians are buying-in to this particular one.

The idea of British/Anglo Israelism is held by a diverse number of groups and individuals, so it is pan-religious, and perhaps even pan-secular. The theory is simple to define: The people of Western Europe and America are descended (without proof) from the ten lost tribes of Israel. Many who hold to this absurdity also believe that the British royal family are directly descended from King David (also without proof of course). As Wikipedia says "*The tenets of British Israelism contradict modern genetic, linguistic, archaeological and historical evidence.*" However, the very language used by the movement is enough to make us suspicious.

The tribes are thought to be 'lost' because they are not mentioned after the exile in Babylon. Simple things can account for this 'loss' – including the mixing of tribes during captivity, their dispersal after exile, and the general loss of godly intent of all tribes (but see later comment). I find the theories proposed by British Israelism to be ridiculous and without genuine evidences, let alone proofs.

One should note that this movement is associated with 'Christian Restorationism', millenarianism, and Armstrongism (Worldwide Church of God, still going today, but it rejects this particular 'doctrine'). These links should warn readers that the theory is very dubious indeed. The movement now has its headquarters in New Zealand.

In Christian Science, America and Britain are referred to by Mary Baker Eddy as "Anglo-Israel". A small number of offshoot Pentecostals (Bible-Pattern Church Fellowship) also believe this absurdity, as well as certain churches in London. One Christianised group believing the theory, Christian Identity, is racist to the point of Nazism. The latest group to propagate the nonsense is Brit-Am.

This information is sufficient for the time being. A longer treatment may be written later, but I find the early researches I have made of unproven links between Scythians and the tribes to be almost worthless – all based on the principle of "I think"! Some who have looked at the theory say that the 'research' done in support of it is amateurish and poor. They also say that adherents ignore anything in scripture that tends to demolish their claims, and use very poor exegesis on the rest. This is why I think a further study at this time would be of little value. If I

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finally write a longer essay, it will only be to highlight bad teaching.

Appeals to linguistics are similarly criticised as being ridiculous. One claim is the word 'British' comes from two Hebrew words, Berit and Ish. But, these words have other meanings than those given to them by adherents of British Israelism. They also try to say that the word 'Cymry' (a Welsh word) has a Middle Eastern meaning, which is wrong – as one who has researched early Welsh Christianity and origins, I know the word comes from an entirely different source.

British Israelism says there is a difference between the northern kingdom, Judah, and the southern, Israel, claiming that both were separate races. Of course, proper reading and research scotches that claim!

They also claim that all the Israelites were lost to Babylon and afterwards. This is another nonsense. If you read my Bible studies on Daniel, you will find that only the high-born were taken to Babylon – most Israelites remained in Israel, becoming destitute and disillusioned.

There is also the claim that the so-called 'Lost tribes' were living in 'isles', which they interpret as Britain!! But, 'isles' has several possible meanings, from coastal regions to inland countries.

All in all, racial superiority is found in the theory, based on very poor scriptural understanding and much speculation. Needless to say, British Israelism contains a strain of neo-Nazism, and should be avoided, if not dismissed entirely. Many Jewish writers equate the movement with neo-Nazism, especially via the 'Christian Identity' group that continually spreads rumours and lies concerning what a real Jew is, where they are, their disputed place in history and Israel, and so on.

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