

MERITS & SHORTCOMINGS OF BRITISH-ISRAEL, Part #14

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This is the 14th critical review of the beliefs collectively known as British-Israel, and as with the first thirteen, we will address statements which W.H. Poole made in his book entitled *Anglo-Israel Or, The British Nation: The Lost Tribes Of Israel* (hereinafter *A-I/BN*). The purpose of this series is to confirm such a belief system where it is correct and to give constructive criticism where it is in error. With this paper we will explore more of Poole's conclusions on topics he addresses and we'll evaluate whether they are valid or flawed. We will start this session by quoting Poole on page 61, on the subject of Tara, where we left off in part #13:

"TARA." (continued)

"In those early times much of the history of the nation was written in [the] poems of the country. As might be expected, the introduction of an Eastern princess became an inspiring theme. I cannot now quote from them, though there is much of interest in many of those I have on hand.

"Who has not heard 'The Harp that [was] once in Tara's Hall?'

"When a land rejects her legends
Sees but falsehood in the past,
And its people view their sires,
In the light of fools, or liars,
'Tis a sign of its decline,
And its splendors cannot last,
Branches, that but blight their roots
Yield no sap for lasting fruits.'

"In Ireland, county Fermanagh, four miles below Enniskillen there is a lake called Lough Erin. In this lake there is an Island, called Davenish, on which there is a round tower; connected with the tower is a very ancient cemetery. In that cemetery there are very ancient monuments, and in one corner of the cemetery there is a tomb hewn out of a solid rock. That tomb has from time immemorial been called '*Jeremiah's tomb.*' A gentleman, living in this city, says, 'I have seen that tomb hundreds of times.'

"It is well known to historians that, for centuries, Ireland was the university for all Europe. There are, however, so many who do not know it, and who are not willing to admit the facts about the musical and literary character of Ireland at those times, I will

quote from two or three impartial testimonies. Sir James McIntosh, says, 'The Irish nation possesses genuine history several centuries more ancient than any other European nation possesses in its present spoken language.

"A UNIVERSITY.

"Dr. Johnson said, 'Ireland was at those times the school of the West, the quiet habitation of sanctity and learning.'

"Lord Lyttletun said, 'Most of the lights, which, in times past – times of thick darkness, cast their beams over Europe proceeded from Ireland.'

"Mosheim says, 'Ireland supplied Gaul, Germany and Italy, with their scholars, and professionals.'

"Camden says, 'At that time the Saxons flocked from all quarters to Ireland, which was a mart of literature.' It is recorded as a mark of respect to many of the great ones; 'He was sent to Ireland to be educated.'

"Julius Caesar says, 'The learned Druids were taught in the Irish schools, and the youth from Galli were sent over there to finish their education.' He further says, 'Persons who desire to acquire a more extensive knowledge repair to Britain for information;' and if Britain taught Gaul; where did they acquire their knowledge? and from whence came the tribes of Dani, Simeni, and Gad of Hebrew origin, of whom we read so much?"

William Finck's critique: "I do NOT find these comments in Caesar's books!
Back to Poole:

"Sir James Ware says, 'The English Saxons received their education from schools then planted in Ireland.'

"Fred. Jos. Spencer says, 'We can understand why Ireland was once the light of the world. She was once the sanctuary and the asylum of knowledge, the protectress of the feeble, and the university of the nations'."

"THE ISLES ADDRESSED.

"Now, if God sent his Israel over to 'the Isles of the West;' the dispersed and the preserved of Israel to the far off isles, to the Isles of Tarshish, we will, most probably, have some intimation of his care over them. If he planted that new nation, he will certainly show them kindness, and speak words of comfort to them. Have we any near, or remote evidence that he has done so? Listen."

My critique: Repeating, it is difficult to identify any particular place as "Tarshish" in the Bible.

William Finck's comment: "To me Tarshish is clearly the Tartessus of southern Spain, mentioned by Herodotus and others." Back to Poole:

"Isaiah lxxi, 5, 'The isles shall wait upon me, and upon my arm shall they trust.' Israel is always safe trusting on that arm.'

"When Eastern Europe and Western Asia were in their death throes, it was comforting to hear him say:–

"Isaiah xxiii, 2, 'Be still ye inhabitants of the Isles, thou whom the merchants of Sidon that pass over the sea, have replenished.' The same people that carried on trade with Tyre and Sidon are here addressed.

“Jeremiah xxxi, 10, ‘Hear the word of the Lord, ye nations, and declare it in the farthest off Isles.’ Yes! where are those to be found?

“‘To the Isles he will repay a recompense,’ Isaiah lxxix, 18.

“‘The Isles saw it and feared and the ends of the earth were afraid.’

“Isaiah lxxix, 19, ‘So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the West.’

“‘Keep silence before me O Islands!’ Isaiah xli, 1.

“‘They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing aloud from the sea.’

“‘Wherefore glorify the God of Israel in the Isles of the Sea.’ Isles of the sea is often read Isles of the West. They must be worshippers of Israel’s God who are here addressed. ‘Listen; O ye Islands! and hearken ye people from afar!’ (from Yarish land).

“‘Let them declare his praise in the Islands.’ It was most becoming that they should.

“‘Sing unto the Lord a new song and his praise from the ends of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, the Isles and the inhabitants thereof,’ Isaiah xlii, 10.

“God says, of Israel, ‘I will set his dominion in the sea, and his right hand (the emblem of power) in the floods.’ To whom has God given the dominion of the seas?

“What people are here addressed as having an Island home, and trusting on God, and glorifying him? Has God forgotten the tree of his own right hand planting? To what race and to what people does he speak in all those allusions?

My critique: I have to agree with Poole concerning “the Isles of the sea”, as it would be difficult to identify anyone other than the inhabitants Britain. Back to Poole:

“F. Tennyson, Esq., says, ‘It has come to light within the past few years that the Anglo-Saxon race are really and truly those ten tribes of Israel carried away some seven centuries and a half before Christ; and deported by the king of Assyria to the country of the Medes, and non-apparent from that time to this; but who undoubtedly migrated northwest, and finally settled in the British Isles. The astonishing and multifarious evidences of this fact have already filled volumes. I may say this much, that the British people, or the Saxon race have literally fulfilled all the great promises made by God to Abraham; which were never realized in Palestine. In reading the works you must not expect a polished style; look for facts, which I defy any man to explain away’.”

My critique: Here, again, Poole forgets about the other two tribes of Israel that were taken into captivity, so typical of British-Israel! Back to Poole:

“TILE PROMISES.

“We will now note some of those promises to Abraham, to Jacob and to Joseph, and enquire for their fulfilment in grand facts as Tennyson says.

“‘1. God promises that his Israel shall be as the stars in heaven for multitude and as the sand upon the sea shore, etc. These promises are repeated several times, on down to the latest prophets. They were first given to Abraham on Mount Moriah; this marvellous multiplicity of increase may be sought for after the death of Christ, not before. Genesis lxxviii, 16, ‘They shall grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth’; the margin reads, ‘as fishes grow.’ Well, how do fishes multiply? not by twos, or tens, but by shoals, or colonies. There is no nation that has at all approximated to a fulfilment of these promises but our own’.”

My critique: Here, Tennyson and Poole became nearsighted to their own nation, which is understandable, as at their time America had not as yet become a foremost nation in its own right! Back to Poole:

“Mr. Axon, a celebrated statistician, shows, ‘That while the great European nations take from 120 to 555 years to double their population, the Anglo-Saxon – taking the mean of the whole race – doubles every 41 years with a lower death rate than any other.’

“The British nation is now the wealthiest, greatest, most powerful nation on the face of the whole earth, having an inconceivable multitudinous people, possessing one half of the habitable globe, and ruling, by her mild sway, one fourth of the whole world’s population. The tree the Lord planted, ‘Has taken root downward and borne fruit, upward, and all fowl of every wing come to the shadow of its branches’.”

My critique: The “fowl of every wing” is nothing to brag about, as it includes the non-Adamic races, as also “a cage of every unclean and hateful bird” alluded to at Rev. 18:2! Back to Poole:

“COMPANY OF NATIONS.

“2. God promises that he would make Israel ‘a nation and a company of nations,’ that ‘his seed should become a multitude of nations,’ that ‘ye shall possess nations greater and mightier than yourselves,’ that ‘people shall serve thee, and nations shall bow down to thee.’ – Deuteronomy ii, 23.

“Can these promises find a fulfilment in the Nestorians, Abyssinians, Mexicans, Peruvians, or our North American Indians? Every intelligent man says, No! In not one of them; but, in our own Queen’s dominions, they are all fulfilled. See the company of nations in our own Canada, best and brightest gem in the crown of Her Majesty, a crown of many diadems: in the states of Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, South African States, Transvaal, Fiji Island, and in the sixteen heathen nations of India, with her thirty-six languages, and 250 millions of people, and in Afghanistan and Persia, that must soon be ours.

“In this family of nations, too, I claim the United States of America, for they are ours, though politically independent of us; in the great family, in the great and glorious brotherhood of our nations they are all one. And if these United States should only agree in their foreign policy with us, we could then say to all the nations of the earth: ‘Put up thy sword and learn war no more.’ The Saxon race, now, if so disposed, could issue a mandate that there should be war no more.”

My critique: It is not if the United States should agree with Britain’s foreign policy, but rather if both United States and Britain should agree with Yahweh’s foreign policy! Back to Poole:

“THE MOTHER NATION.

“3. God said to Israel [sic Abraham], ‘I will bless thee [sic her] and make thee [sic she shall be] the [sic a] mother of many [sic does not say ‘many’] nations; kings of peoples [sic people] shall come [sic be] of thee [sic her].’ Genesis, xvii, 16. ...”

My interruption: Poole has just twisted Gen. 17:16 nearly out of shape! Back to Poole:

“... A mother nation must have children, young nations growing up to strength and vigour and national life. Where do we find such a mother nation? In France? No! France has a few colonies but she does not succeed in multiplying her children, all her American colonies have sought a Saxon home. Spain makes a very poor mother, not even a good step-mother. Italy, no! worse and worse; the nearer you get to the vatican, the less chance for motherhood; the pope and cardinals and monks and nuns may dress like grandmothers, and have very long pockets, but they are very poor mothers. Austria, no! Russia, no! Russia tried to colonize, but she could not, and she sold the small patch she had away north of us, to our enterprising cousins on which to build an ice-house, or something. But Great Britain has a flourishing family of sixty colonies, young nations, stalwart boys, with brain, and heart, and soul, and well developed muscle. There is that grand old mother of nations, fat and flourishing; loved by all her sons, and loved most by those who know her best. May her shadow never grow less!”

“SPIRITUAL ISRAEL.’

“I hear another objection from a dear friend of mine, who grows warm and noisy about what he calls ‘Spiritual Israel,’ and he says, that, ‘We, in claiming a literal fulfilment of certain promises made to Abraham and his seed, do dishonour to ‘Spiritual Israel.’ I have, however, never been able to persuade him to point out a single passage in the word of God, where his favourite term is used. He might as well fret and fume about Spiritual Jacob, or Spiritual Esau, or Spiritual Joseph. The fact is, the term has no place in the Scriptures. It is a piece of foreign metal. We read of ‘children of Abraham,’ ‘believers in Christ,’ ‘sons of God,’ the ‘faithful,’ ‘children of God,’ ‘righteous,’ of ‘children of the light,’ ‘citizens of God,’ of the ‘family of God,’ but Spiritual Israel we don’t find in the book.

“That term sounds very much like one that a wealthy gentleman often uses. He says, that he belongs to the ‘invisible church.’ It is a very cheap church, certainly; there is no house to build or keep in order, no minister to support, no parsonage to furnish, and no poor members who have a claim on him. All his doings for God and community are invisible; no one ever saw him do the handsome thing. He never lets his left hand know what his right hand does; because neither hand ever does anything. He belongs, he says, to an invisible church.

“Israelite is a generic term used to express the covenant people of God. A patronymic term expressing the name of our forefather Israel; one who descended from Jacob as an Israelite.

“A Gentile may become a Christian, and inherit the blessings of grace on earth and glory in heaven; but he cannot become an Israelite. A man may be an Israelite and be a lost sinner, or he may be an Israelite by birth, and a Christian by the new-birth unto righteousness, which is, to me, the highest style of man, that would, in the estimate of Jesus, constitute him an ‘Israelite indeed,’ as was Nathanael.

My critique: Only Israelites can be Christians! *C.A.E.*

“While rejoicing in our spiritual blessings and special privileges promised to Israel, we must not overlook the temporal. In that memorable promise of God to Abraham we have a trinity of blessings.

“In that one there is a tri-partite division :–

“1. His seed should be a great nation and they should inherit the land of Canaan.

“2. He should be the progenitor of the coming ‘YAVEH’ – Jesus.

“3. He should be the father of many nations, of multitudes of peoples; they should possess the ends of the earth, and the gates of their enemies, Genesis xxii, 17.

“Now all that was included in these promises was transmitted to Isaac, and to Jacob, and to the twelve tribes. The first promise was literally fulfilled. The second also was literally made good, even to the most minute particulars of His life and labours, His death and resurrection.

“Now, the third promise must be as truly and literally fulfilled as the first and second. Just at this point, we have set up a mystical, figurative, symbolical system of interpretation, that claims to spiritualize the remainder of those promises. Upon whose authority are we to spiritualize one of the three, taking the other two literally? The literal is the natural, and the figurative the exceptional method of interpretation. There are some passages which admit of a two-fold application, but we should first see if a promise will admit of a literal, before we seek for a figurative application.

“If the first two were literally fulfilled we may reasonably look for the third to be literal. If the prophecy regarding the captivity and dispersion were literal, we may safely look for the prophecy regarding the restoration to be literal. If the curses are literal, I claim that the blessings will be literal also. If the past is literal, so will [be] the future. If you spiritualize Israel in the xix ch. of Isaiah you are bound to spiritualize Assyria and Egypt and Edom and Moab. Deal fairly and justly all [a]round. If you make a Christian Church of Israel, what will you do with Noph and Zoan? If you spiritualize Israel you must try and do the same with Judah.

“It is recorded of a circuit in a certain Conference that the people were far from being united, and that they used to quarrel with each other, and with their minister, so that it was not an easy matter to find a minister willing to go to that charge. A volunteer was at last found; he arrived in due time, and at the first service, gave out the 310 hymn [???,

“‘Into a world of ruffians sent,
I walk on hostile ground,
While human bears on slaughter bent,
And ravening wolves surround.’

“That man must have had a wonderful penchant for spiritualizing.

“They tell us of an aged Gaelic commentator who spiritualized the tabernacle and its furniture, &c. When he came to the snuffers and the snuff-dish he found that he had a hard nut to crack; however, being an ingenious ‘bodie,’ and having proved that the ministers were the light of the Church, he easily saw how the deacons and elders, whose office and duty it was to see after the stipend, and who were often found to nip and cut, and pinch and squeeze and trim down the income, could be made to represent the snuffers. So he applied his figure by saying, that many a good man had been effectually snuffed out by these ecclesiastical lamp-dressers.

“Before we pass on, I will propose a few of those promises as a specimen for our expositors, who love that method of interpretation. Genesis xlviii, 19, ‘Manasseh shall be great, but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become Millo-ha-Goyim.’ [?A multitude of nations?]

“Isaiah xlix, 1:– ‘Listen, O Isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far... 8... to inherit the desolate places, to make the desolate cities to be inhabited.’

“Isaiah liv, 1:– ‘Sing, O barren, thou *that* didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou *that* didst not travail with child: for more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes. For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles [sic heathen’s territory], and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.’

“I will make thee the mother of many nations, and kings shall come out of thee. [Gen. 17:16]

“Thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow. [Deut. 15:6]

“Thy seed shall possess the gates of his enemies.

“The streets of Jerusalem shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets, Zech. viii, 5.

“Deuteronomy xxxii, 30:– ‘One of you shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.’

“Exodus xxiii, 27:– ‘I will make all thine enemies turn their backs upon thee.’

“Isaiah xli, 12:– ‘They that war against Israel shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought for I am with thee.’

“Jeremiah li, 19:– ‘The portion of Jacob *is* not like them; for he *is* the former of all things: and *Israel* *is* the rod of his inheritance: the Lord of hosts *is* his name, Thou *art* my battle axe *and* weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms. And with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider.’

“You will need the Duke of Wellington to help you to spiritualize these.”

With this part #14, the merits of British-Israel outweigh their shortcomings.