

THE FIRST OPEN CHURCH, FOLLOWERS OF “THE WAY”

Part One, By: Jeffrey Crosby

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Introduction by Clifton A. Emahiser: Jeffrey Crosby has been in prison for some time on a dubious charge where he has helped me a great deal by serving as one of my proofreaders. Previously, I had published an article for Jeffrey entitled *Unveiling The Fears And Denials Behind “The Passion Of The Christ”*. Crosby has now sent me several drafts on the topic above. After about six weeks of scanning four of his typewritten manuscripts into word processor documents, I came to the realization that an introduction would be in order. E. Raymond Capt has written a booklet entitled *The Traditions Of Glastonbury* on this same subject. Not only did Capt write a booklet, but he also produced a 53 minute movie by the same title which he later transferred to a VCR format. With this introduction, we'll start this subject where E. Raymond Capt started his movie by asking a very significant question that William Blake asked in his poem that was later put to music and became a hymn sung in Britain as well as some of her company of nations thusly:

“And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the Holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?
And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among those dark Satanic mills?
Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds unfold!
Bring me my Chariot of Fire!
I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till I have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land .”

So with this same question Blake asked during his lifetime (1757-1827), Jeffrey Crosby will attempt to bring to light the facts of the story on this subject in this series. But before we get to Jeffrey, there is another story that I would like to share which has a great relevance to this very same topic. Strange as it may seem, this very same poem of William Blake “And did those feet in ancient time Walk upon England’s mountains green? ...” was sung on Public Television near the turn of the millennium. It was at one of those fundraising extravaganzas so often carried on by them, and telecast in the Toledo, Ohio area over WGTE TV30. Normally, I care very little for anything that is broadcast over the television, but I believe this exhibition of talent was an exception to the rule, for it revealed several truisms of Bible history in comparison to our present time.

This telecast brought to public view the very gifted soprano voice of Charlotte Church, a teenager at the time. My own evaluation is that Charlotte is the very best soprano singer I have ever heard, and during her appearance she claimed to have Welsh roots. She is a very beautiful and talented young Israelite lady. This musical program was called “Charlotte Church, live from Jerusalem”. So here was this very lovely, talented Israelite teenager being accompanied by Israeli (Rev. 2:9 & 3:9) musicians, or the very epitome of Genesis 3:15, or the “seed of the woman vs. the seed of the serpent”. You could say a sheep among wolves! Charlotte may have had some of her own British musicians, but many were only aliens historically proselyted to Judaism calling themselves “Israelis”, including an Israeli bagpipe player by the name of Uri Myles who accompanied her on her song, “Last Rose of the Summer”.

In all, Charlotte’s repertoire included: Jerusalem, aka (Did Those Feet In Ancient Time Walk Upon England’s Mountains Green); La Pastorella; Last Rose of the Summer; O Mio Babbino Caro; The Lord’s Prayer; Guide Me O Thou Great Redeemer; Ave Maria; Plaisir d’ Amour; Pie Jesu; and, The Holy City. On “Pie Jesu”, Charlotte was accompanied by a Kenite-jewess by the name of Marina Blumen (a borrowed German name), whose voice was horrible in comparison to Charlotte’s cultured voice; Charlotte reputedly “sang with the voice of an angel”.

In light of all of this, Christ’s own words must be cited at Matt. 21:43: **“Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”** Was the British Isles, finally ruled by England that nation? We must remember that the prophet Jeremiah declared that old Jerusalem, once broken, would never rise again, at Jeremiah 19:1-11. And they were finally broken by the Romans in 70 A.D., never to be established again! The relevance in all of this is the fact that we have an Israelite lady in Charlotte Church from the “nation bringing forth the fruits thereof” singing to those of “The kingdom of God shall be taken from you”.

The Assyrians under three emperors, Tiglath Pileser, Shalmaneser and Sargon II made three forays into the northern house of Israel, removing them from Samaria, never to return again. Then the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib made a foray into Judaea, taking all the Judahites captive, leaving only Jerusalem untouched. Then the neo-Babylonian emperor under Nebuchadnezzar finally removed all of Jerusalem to

Babylon, with only 42,360 returning 70 years later. This small remnant of Judahites, Benjamites and a smattering of Levites, (plus some later proselyted Kenite-Edomite-Canaanites) represented this nearly extinct “kingdom of God” which would be removed by the Romans and given to another “nation”! **It behooves us, therefore, to identify that nation!**

But that is no easy task, as Andrew Gray well stated on page 3 of his *The Origin And Early History Of Christianity In Britain*: “The very early history of the British Church has been involved in some obscurity by the destruction of many of the ancient records; and yet quite enough can be gathered from the history of these remote times to serve our purpose – probably quite as much as can be obtained in support of any contemporaneous event of secular history.”

I would add to Andrew Gray’s statement here that the records of the British Celtic Church is very similar to the records of the ancestry of Yahshua Christ, as when the Edomites came into power in Judaea under the Herodian family, they burned all the records of the Judaeans, and the writers of the four Gospels had to piece together the ancestry the best they could by memory and private records by such persons as could witness to Christ’s family line” (Eusebius’ 1.7). So with this series by Jeffrey Crosby, he will present all the evidence that can be gleaned on the subject, and the reader will have to examine this evidence to their own satisfaction, *Clifton A. Emahiser*. Now to Jeffrey Crosby:

I was driven by the Spirit to tell the story of the very first church that was established outside of Palestine, or the Holy Land, after the passion of Yahshua the Christ. The story takes us to the “Isles far away”, the British Isles, and those individuals, such as Joseph of Arimathea and a band of Messiah’s followers, and those after whom are of the kindred lineage of scattered Israel’s elect across Western Europe who would, under any and all circumstances, not only found the first above ground place of worship to Christ, but be willing to lay down their very lives, against all odds, so as to spread the truth of the risen Messiah of Israel.

This is the first in a series of brochures which will walk through the early history of the ecclesia, the true church body of worshippers and teachers, apostles and ambassadors of our Messiah. This is a critical review of a book written by George F. Jowett entitled *The Drama Of The Lost Disciples*, copyright by Covenant Publishing Company Limited, 121 Low Etherly, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham DL14 OHA. The story that Jowett tells is excellent, but it is necessary to point out any discrepancies that may be contrary to other records that are available to us, and that is what we shall do here. More than just a gloss of the history of the early church in the British Isles, Gaul, and Rome, we will look at the body of that church, those that made it happen by devoting their lives to such a cause.

The story begins when Yahshua was a young man, between the ages of twelve and thirty years old, which the scriptures are silent about. The only record we have is recorded in the Gospels when He was at the Temple during the Feast of the Passover at about the age of twelve, when He was lecturing to the learned Rabbis on sacred law

and writ. The last account is found in Luke 2:52, **“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”** It is from there until He became thirty years old and began His ministry that many questions arise regarding His life, the ‘missing years’. E. Raymond Capt M.A., A.I.A., F.S.A. Scot, in his book *The Traditions of Glastonbury*, of the Archaeological Institute of America (hereafter TG) notes distinct implications that these missing eighteen years were not spent in Palestine.

At Luke 4:16-22 it says, **“And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up ... and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him ... And they said, Is not this Joseph’s son?”** Although we know from scripture that Yahshua grew up in Nazareth, He was not recognized by the community, even questioning His identity.

In Matthew, at 13:55, 56 they asked, **“Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things?”** One must question why Yahshua was such a stranger to the locals, who knew His entire family members by name.

Another passage is found at Matthew 17:24-25 where it says, **“And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute *money* came to Peter, and said, Doth not your Master pay tribute? He saith, Yes.”** Now we know from scripture that Christ spent much of His time during His ministry in Capernaum, which is described as His “own city” (Matt. 9:1 and Mark 2:1). Yet here the tax collectors are inquiring about Yahshua’s liability to the ‘strangers tax’ levied only on foreign visitors. You would think a customs officer from Capernaum would recognize a local resident of Capernaum. Nor was this a Temple tax, as the authorities were uncertain of His nationality, in which He automatically would have been liable to pay the Temple tax with a Jewish shekel, without question. But He paid with a Greek coin (stater) which He provided. It is obvious that He was absent from Palestine for a considerable time.

When Yahshua did appear before His first cousin John, the Baptist seems to barely recognize Him, when finally John exclaims, John 1:29, **“Behold the Lamb of God!”** You would think, Yahshua living in Nazareth all those years, that John would more easily recognize his first cousin after thirty years. Then later, John sent two of his disciples to inquire of Him, Matt. 11:3, **“Are you he who should come or look we for another?”** It appears that the two had not met in years, no matter what the circumstances.

Another incident which suggests that Yahshua was absent from His homeland is found at John 1:45-48, where Philip finds Nathaniel and tells him that they have found the Christ that Moses and the prophets wrote about, **“... Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathaniel said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?”** When Nathaniel finally did go with Philip, and Yahshua made recognition of him, Nathaniel questioned how Yahshua would know him. As Capt says, “Now the facts are clear that Nathaniel lived in Cana of Galilee, which is located about five miles from the city of Nazareth. If Christ had lived so close to him for eighteen years, it seems

strange that Nathaniel would not have known Him ... Would the very Son of God have no effect for eighteen years upon the community in which He dwelt?"

In light of all this, and the unaccounted for years of His life, legends exist that claim that Christ traveled to great distances, particularly with His great uncle, Joseph of Arimathea. The religious teachers of India assert that He dwelt among them studying for three years before moving on to Tibet. Indian ancient religious books record Him visiting Nepal, a Himalayan kingdom. Other traditions later take Yahshua to Egypt. But the most persistent traditions, with an abundance of evidence, places the teenage Yahshua on the mystical Isle of Avalon, in the Somerset county town of Glastonbury, England.

The story takes us to Jerusalem, with the arrest of Yahshua on the night before His execution on the cross. It was the Preparation Day before the killing of the Passover lamb and Feast of Unleavened. Contrary to most people's understanding of Yahshua's arrest, and which the scriptures are quite clear about, it was not the Romans who were responsible for His arrest, but rather the members of the Sanhedrin court, the heads of the theocracy that reigned over the people of Jerusalem at that time. The Sanhedrin already knew the identity of Yahshua, who He was. His teachings were the biggest threat to their government that they had ever encountered. But in order for them to arrest Him, under their laws, they required a citizen to identify Him to make it legal. Thus enters Judas. But the arrest was executed by Sanhedrin priest guards. The historian Josephus attests that the Temple priests could make arrests lawfully. The ethnarchs and their appointees certainly did have such authority. They just could not execute capital offenses, which power belonged only to the Roman court which ruled over Judea, and could only be carried out through a Roman authority complaint, which in this case was not. This was late at night, unlawful for both the Sanhedrin court to hold special session, and illegal under Roman law after sunset, particularly with a capital offense which could end in execution.

Those who presided over the fraudulent trial were Caiaphas and his father-in-law Annas, the reigning high priest of Judaism who represented the powerful, despotic families of the Sadducees. This was a clear case of the hatred that existed, since the fall of Adam-kind in the Garden of Eden, between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, the Holy seed versus Satan's children (Gen. 3:15).

None of the Sadducees believed in any resurrection or afterlife. Jowett states in his book, hereafter cited as TDLD, that of the seventy-one members of the legislative body of the Sanhedrin, dominated by the Sadducees over the Pharisees, forty voted for a dismissal of the case (ibid., p.14). Yet it should be noted that Jowett does not cite any source for his polling numbers of the Sanhedrin. But because this was not a capital crime, we do know from scripture that Caiaphas, illegally, then charged Yahshua Christ with treason, which then demanded, by law, the intervention of the Roman Procurator, Pontius Pilate.

To most, including most Bible scholars, Joseph of Arimathea is remembered as the rich man who took the body of Christ from the cross and placed it in his private sepulchre (John 39:42), hearing nothing more of him after the Ascension of Christ.

The Bible indicates that Joseph, aside from being wealthy, was a **“good man and a just”**. He was a disciple of Yahshua and a man of social distinction and official rank, **“an honorable counselor”** (Luke 23:50). He was obviously a member of the Sanhedrin himself, for scripture says that he **“... had not consented to the counsel and deed of [the Sanhedrin] ...”**, (Luke 23:51).

“Other early historical manuscripts refer to him as “Joseph de Marmore” of Arimathea. “Mar” is an Eastern term for lord, and “more” or “mawe” signifies “great”. Thus the title would mean, “the Great Lord Joseph of Arimathea,” a title in keeping with his birth as a prince of the House of David” (TG, p. 19).

Joseph of Arimathea, the great uncle of Yahshua, was the one man whom the Sadducees dared not oppose, for many reasons which will be discussed. After Christ “gave up the ghost” on the cross that somber evening, it was this Joseph, along with Nicodemus, who took Christ Yahshua from the cross and provided the linens and the tomb for His burial.

Just a footnote on Nicodemus, quoting from *The Ensign Message*, United Kingdom, Volume 11 No.4, Oct-Dec. 2009 (Hereafter EM): “An oriental M.S.S, known as *The Gospel of Nicodemus* was thought by Tischendorf to be ‘early second century’ and by Dr. Rendel Harris to be ‘very early’, states that Joseph of Arimathea suffered persecution. This indicates that Nicodemus (the Pharisee ruler and convert of John 3:1-10 and 7:50) did not hear or learn by any means of Joseph’s [later] departure from Palestine because of persecution and of his settling in Britain. (parenthesis mine)

“Nicodemus was, like his friend Joseph, a secret disciple and a rich man, but showed courage in protesting against the condemnation of Jesus without giving [H]im a hearing. The final reference is in John 19:39, where he is said to have brought a lavish gift of spices to anoint the body of Jesus. Nothing more is known of him beyond a large number of legends. His identification with the wealthy and generous Naqdimon ben Gorion of the Talmud is uncertain” (ibid, p. 34).

Joseph was the family protector of Yahshua Christ, and the family guardian of blessed Mary, mother of Christ, a so-to-speak underground apostle of Christ in Judaea. A footnote in Jowett’s book (TDLD), on page 15(3), states ‘St. Joseph has the same word applied to him as to St. John the Evangelist – paranympnos – or attendant to the Blessed Virgin’ – Rev. L. Smithett Lewis, *St. Joseph of Arimathea at Glastonbury* (quoting John of Glastonbury), p. 42; also: see *The Magna Glastoniensia Tabula*, with the same appointed references of title.

There is reason to believe that Joseph of Arimathea was not present at the final trial of Jesus ... “[but] Joseph believed in the validity of all Jesus taught and ultimately suffered for” (*Gospel of Nicodemus*, 9:5-11). But for these reasons, he being the family guardian and a member of high standing within the Sanhedrin and communities at home and abroad, was the reason why Joseph could claim the body of Christ so easily. Under the law, he was the next closest family member after Mary. Joseph would soon thereafter become the apostle to Britain, some five hundred and sixty years prior to St. Augustine (of Roman Catholicism) on English soil. It would be Joseph, plus twelve of

his own apostles with him, who would erect the first Christian church as a place of worship above ground.

Joseph was known as a wealthy tin miner in Cornwall who owned his own fleet of cargo ships. He is referred to in Latin (which appears to be a Roman title) as “Decurio”, the designation for his official title over mining, precisely “Nobilis Decurio”, the minister of mines. As a member of the Sanhedrin, which ruled Roman Judaea, he was also a member of the provincial Roman senate. Joseph owned a palatial home in Jerusalem, as well as a country residence in Arimathea (today’s Ramallah) located 8 miles north of Jerusalem.

Reader, check out all of this evidence for yourself!

Jeffrey Crosby