



"Don't worry about what you do not understand. ... Worry about what you do understand in the Bible but do not live by."

—Corrie ten Boom

04-Feb-05

Is British-Israelism Racist?

A fairly common accusation leveled at believers of British-Israelism (the belief that the [lost ten tribes](#) of Israel can be found among the Anglo-Saxon peoples of Northwestern Europe, North America, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand) is that it is a fundamentally racist idea. It is understandable that some would leap to this conclusion, considering that such modern Israelites could lay claim to being "God's chosen people" and heirs to the spectacular physical promises [God](#) made to Abraham. Not a long step away is the seemingly logical conclusion that other ethnic groups just do not measure up, and those of a weak and prejudicial nature could carry this to the point of snubbing, abusing, or persecuting individuals of these supposedly lesser ethnicities.

Sadly, some advocates of British-Israelism have done just this, shining a bad light on other believers who do not share their racially motivated hatred and violence. Among these are fringe groups linked to the Identity Movement and Aryan and Neo-Nazi factions. These wrongheaded toughs take out their spite predominantly on blacks and Jews, but also on Asians, Hispanics, and generally anyone who is not as pureblooded as the skinheads declare they themselves are.

Their anti-Semitism is ironic in the fact that Jews are just as much Israelites as they claim to be. How do they justify this? By asserting that the Jews are not who they say they are! They maintain that there is precious little Jewish blood in modern Jewry and that they are instead descended from either Esau or Ashkenaz, son of Gomer, son of Japheth (thus, the "real" reason they are called Ashkenazi Jews), or that they have been totally mongrelized due to their worldwide conspiracy to control everything from banking to industry to government. They lean heavily on the fraudulent *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, and they even subvert Scripture to their cause (for instance, the book of Obadiah and [Revelation 2:9; 3:9](#)), granting them an air of legitimacy, which in reality is a total sham.

However, the irrationality of a handful of kooks does not - or should not - malign the majority of sincere believers who base their understanding and practice on true biblical principles. God Himself gives Israelites little room to take excessive pride in their election and certainly no permission to abuse and persecute other peoples. His reasons for His choice of Israel are listed in [Deuteronomy 7:6-8](#):

For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. The LORD did not set His [love](#) on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

God did not choose Israel because of anything they had going for them - in fact, they were a small, insignificant people. He chose them because He loved them, and that love has its basis in His relationship with Abraham, [Isaac](#), and Jacob. Most Israelites have lucked into God's blessing, as it were, by being born of Israelite stock; they have done nothing to deserve what God has bountifully given. Their receipt of the blessings is based solely on God fulfilling the promises He made to the Patriarchs.

However, it carries a price: They are bound by their "lucky birth" to be a model nation to the rest of [the world](#) of God's way of life. In this regard, Israel has largely failed, and thus God has given them up to war, exile, perversity, and forgetfulness. Today, the vast majority of Israelites have no idea who they are and what God requires of them. Those who do know understand that this knowledge does not exalt them over other people but burdens them with heavy responsibilities to live according to God's commands. Notice [Deuteronomy 10:12-16](#):

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes which I command you today for your good? Indeed heaven and the highest heavens belong to the LORD your God, also the earth with all that is in it. The LORD delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as it is this day. Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.

Because of Israel's rejection of God, He is now working with select individuals whom He calls, makes a New Covenant with, and converts to His way of life. To these He gives His Spirit, and they become His witnesses among the nations. But God is not finished with the Israelites, and it is mainly to them that [the gospel](#) of the [Kingdom of God](#) is preached as a witness against them (see [Matthew 10:5-7](#)). When [Jesus](#) returns and sets up His Kingdom, He will require Israel to fulfill the job they originally covenanted with Him to do (see, for example, [Ezekiel 44:10-14](#)). Then they will truly know that with great gifts come great responsibilities, not superiority.

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

Are You an Israelite?

by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

Most of ancient Israel, because of their rebellious hardened hearts, did not incur God's favor. With the stakes so much higher in the New Covenant, we need to soberly reflect on the consequences of their negative behavior, determining not to emulate them. Paradoxically, being an Israelite spiritually is something to overcome. Like our ancient forebears, we can't assume that our identity exempts us from overcoming our carnal nature. Three pitfalls we need to overcome are: (1) the proclivity to murmur and complain (2) the willingness to be misled, and (3) being prone to test, or tempt God.

From the Archives: Featured Article

Like a Silly Dove

by Staff

The author comments on his impressions of Britain during a recent visit to his homeland. Ephraim, like silly dove, is indeed going down the road God predicted in the Bible.

If you would like to subscribe to the C.G.G. Weekly newsletter, please visit our [Email Subscriptions page](#).
