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"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1:16.

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IS BRITISH-ISRAELISM SCRIPTURAL?

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, April 28th, 1940

(Stenographically Reported)

"Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"

I begin the discussion of the subject announced for this evening as I have begun the discussion of other contentious subjects, with an apology which is an explanation.

A pastor, in the scriptural sense, is not a mere church official, the leader of an organization, or a business executive: a pastor is a shepherd of a flock, and as such he is also a teacher. "He gave some pastors and teachers." A pastor should exercise his pastoral office by faithfully teaching the people the word of the Lord. As a shepherd, he must carefully watch over the flock. It is his duty to protect them from their natural foes; and, at the same time, to lead them in good pastures where they will be fed, that they may grow up into Christ. One who is a mere hireling and not a shepherd will not care much about the flock, but those who are given by the ascended Lord to His church to be pastors should emulate the divine Pastor, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. When the Lord Jesus summed up His life's ministry in His great prayer in the seventeenth of John, He said, "I have given them thy word." That is the minister's commission, to give people the word of God.

I find myself in full agreement with the British-Israel position thus far, when in one of their official publications they say, "We believe in the infallibility of the holy Bible from Genesis to Revelation." I have the profoundest respect for people who believe the Bible to be the word of God. We may not always agree as to our interpretation, but we are agreed in respect to its authority. In this place, the Bible is the supreme court of appeal. But I would go farther and say, it is the *only* court of appeal. If we assume the Bible to be true, it must be in accord with truth, everywhere; for it is axiomatic that truth never contradicts itself. Therefore the truth of the Bible will find confirmation in all true history, and in the dicta of science, in so far as they are demonstrated to be true; and in Christian experience. But we do not believe the Bible because of these confirmations

from without. They supply interesting and instructive collateral evidence of the truth; but we believe the Bible independently of any such collateral evidence: for the Bible stands alone as the transparent, self-demonstrable Word of God.

The Bible, therefore, is not only the rule of faith and practice: it is the *only* rule of faith and practice. So we begin, I trust, at a point of agreement.

I want to distinguish between the Scriptures themselves and all interpreters and interpretations of Scripture. The Bible is itself infallible, but I know of no human interpreter who is infallible. Therefore in all such disputed questions as this, I say what I always say: I do not ask you to accept my dictum, I want you to be like the Berean Christians, and search the Scriptures to see whether these things be so. If to-night I should question some interpretations of Scripture, please do not charge me with impugning the authority of Scripture itself. All questions of faith must be brought to the Scripture and settled by the Scripture alone.

That is the distinctive principle of Protestantism; and I think you will find, on examination, that nearly all heresies—or, if you do not like that word, departures from the truth—whether of ancient or of the present time, consist of one of two things: either the Bible-minus—as our Modernists friends would treat it, cutting it to pieces and deleting some parts of it; or the Bible-plus. You have that in Roman Catholicism. The Bible, plus the Church's interpretation. You have it in Christian Science, the Bible plus Mrs. Eddy's, "Key to the Scripture". You have it in Mormonism, the Bible plus "The Book of Mormon".

I wish I could be sure that that is not true of British-Israelism, but I am not quite sure; for it does seem to me that in the teaching of some it is the Bible-plus the doubtful interpretations and alleged authority of the pyramid, of profane history, and of supposed arche-

ological science. For myself, I will have nothing to do with any religious authority outside the divinely-inspired, infallible, and therefore supremely authoritative Word of the living God. If you appeal to another court than the Bible, that must be your responsibility, and it is not likely that we shall be able to reach an agreement. But I have always the profoundest respect for anyone, or for any company of people who recognize the Bible as their sole religious authority—as I hope they would have for me—whether in my view they are mistaken in their interpretations or I in their view should be mistaken; and in such case we ought to find common ground in that we bring all our controversies to the one court; and if we sincerely desire to know the will of God, I have little doubt that ultimately, as we are found in the unity of the Spirit, we shall come into the unity of the faith.

The next question is, *How shall we interpret the Scriptures?* My subject this evening is a very large one, and I have no hope of compassing it all. I can only touch a few elementary things, a few foundation principles; and perhaps we shall return to it at a later date. But I raise the question, How shall we interpret the Scriptures? Is there any general principle of interpretation in the Scriptures themselves by which we may be guided? Does the Bible really interpret itself? The Bible consists of the Old and New Testaments. Are they independent of each other? Is either of greater authority than the other? Or are they of equal authority, and therefore mutually complementary and corroborative?

I give you my position. To me, the Bible is one Book, one and indivisible. Genesis is as truly inspired of the Holy Ghost as the Gospels. Revelation is as truly the word of God as any other book; and even though I may not be able to understand many of its tremendous sayings as yet, I believe it to be the inspired word of God just as truly as any other part of Scripture.

What, then, is the theme of the Bible? What is it about? Is it salvation, primarily? Is the Bible identical with the gospel? Is that the theme of the Bible? Is the Bible an historical record? Is it designed to teach us history? And what of its prophecies? Are they predictive? Do they foretell as well as forthtell? Is it the story of Israel after the flesh, or of those who are now called the Jews? Is the Bible given to us to teach us about the Church, about the Gentiles? I believe all and much more than this are included. But they are all incidental to the principal Theme, which is Jesus Christ, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever".

I read a story years ago with which many of you are familiar, of a little boy playing with a pile of blocks on the floor. His father wanted him to learn the geography of his country, and had given him a map of the United States cut up into blocks. The little boy's task was to get all the blocks together so as to have a complete map of the country to which he belonged. But he often got California mixed with New York, and Texas with the Dakotas. The little chap did not know his geography well enough to put the blocks together.

He turned a block over, and found on it the eye of a man. Then he turned all the blocks upside down, and there was no map at all. But he discovered another eye, and presently a nose, a mouth, two ears, then hair—and gradually he put together the image of a man. The man was George Washington. He completed the picture, and being a wise little boy, he got a big card and slipped it

under the blocks, got another and put it on top, and said, "Daddy, come and help me turn this over." And when it was turned over, there was the map of the United States! When he got George Washington in his proper place, the map of the United States was complete.

We can never know what the Bible teaches until Jesus Christ is assigned to His proper place. Salvation? Yes. The gospel? Yes. Israel? The Jew? The Church? The Gentile? Yes; they are all there. But they will all be brought into proper relation to each other as Christ is put first. The whole Bible, I contend, from the beginning to the end—not the New Testament only, but the whole Bible—is the record which God has given to us of His Son. I have said it a thousand times: you cannot have Genesis without Jesus, and you cannot have Jesus without Genesis. He is in every book, and only as we assign Him His proper place shall we be able to interpret it.

What is that proper place? Let me quote to you the opening verses of John's Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." Or again, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down"—on an earthly throne? On a throne in Jerusalem? In a coronation chair with Jacob's stone underneath it?—"sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance, obtained a more excellent name than they." Therefore we must make Jesus Christ the standard of our interpretations.

When then is the relation of the two Testaments? The New Testament fulfils the Old, as Joseph Parker was wont to say, as the noonday fulfils the dawn: especially in respect to Jesus Christ our Lord.

I must pass over the many passages which I should like to quote contained in the Gospels which record the literal fulfilment of the many prophecies relating to Him, in the days of His flesh, showing how the Old Testament was fulfilled in the events of His life. I refer rather to His own express teaching, that He came "not to destroy the law, or the prophets. . . . but to fulfil." Again and again in one way or another, He taught that all things that were written in the law and the prophets and in the psalms concerning Him, must be fulfilled. Hence the cross at the place called Calvary, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets". "Thinkest thou not", said He in the garden, "that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" He declined to call for the legions of angels, in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

It is familiar to everyone who knows his Bible, that at the cross, in His resurrection, and in His ascension, the Scriptures of the Old Testament found their fulfilment. He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also,

that the Lord God might dwell among them. On all these things, I assume, we are agreed.

But now I ask another question. *Are there Old Testament prophecies which are entirely independent of any New Testament interpretation?* In the divine, prophetic, scheme of things, may we safely assume that at any point the New Testament is a mere parenthesis over-arched by some prophetic purpose which must or may be understood entirely apart from and independently of the New Testament? My own answer to these questions is in the negative. The New Testament is the culmination, the climax, of the revelation of the divine purpose, and that climax is reached in Jesus Christ our Lord. He "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." Therefore the revelation of God in Christ is the ultimate word; and all revelations which preceded that Full-orbed Disclosure of the divine purpose must be interpreted in the light that shines from the face of Jesus Christ.

Paul in the second of Corinthians speaks of the veil which was upon the face of Moses. Moses was representative of the old covenant, of the Old Testament. When he came down from the mount, he had to put a veil on his face because of the reflected glory due to his converse with God in the heavenlies. And Paul says that in the reading of the Old Testament that veil is still upon the faces of some, "which veil is done away in Christ . . . we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." So that the mysteries of the Old Testament are unveiled, not in secular history—that may be in part corroborative, but such mysteries as there may be in the Old Testament are unveiled in the face of Christ; and in the light which shines from His face, we are to interpret the Old Testament.

The Bible may be believed without external confirmation, but I lay it down as axiomatic—had I time to take any of these principles and nurse it, and pursue my argument, I think I could establish it by many citations of Scriptural proof—that *no interpretation of the Old Testament can be correct which is not confirmed and established either implicitly or explicitly by the New Testament.* That principle must be applied, not only to the theory of British Israelism: it must be applied, also to all millennial and other theories too. No interpretation of the Old Testament can be true that does not find its confirmation and establishment in the teaching of the New Testament.

That being true, let me proceed to an examination of *a few of the main suppositions of the British-Israel hypothesis.* Do not misunderstand me. In so saying, I do not for the moment deny its truth. Its advocates speak of "British-Israel truth". I do not speak of "British-Israel truth" because I am approaching it now as a religious hypothesis, which has yet to be proved to be true. I do not mean that others have not proved it, but we are attempting to examine it in the light of Scripture for ourselves.

What are some of the main contentions? I had a pamphlet put in my hands which I left on my desk, but I know what it teaches. God made promise to Abraham that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed; that his seed should be more numerous than the stars in the heavens, or the sands of the seashore. There are some people who are especially concerned about ten

tribes, and some others who are particularly concerned about two. I once remarked what I now repeat: I do not know that there is much difference between having ten tribes on the brain or two tribes.

The Jews are not a prolific race, and the promise was given to Abraham that his seed should be as numerous as the stars. If you confine that promise to Benjamin and Judah, you have a problem on your hands to establish it. Our B.I. friends tell us that that explains the multiplication of the population of an island of five and a half millions in three or four centuries, to a population of nearly five hundred million within the British Empire; and if you add the United States, alleged to represent the tribe of Manasseh, I believe you have six hundred millions and over. Of course, not all in the British Empire are Anglo-Saxons. But whether you expect the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham of an innumerable seed through two tribes or twelve—keep in mind they are to be numberless as the sands.

You remember how Jacob's name was changed to Israel, the prince; how Jacob had twelve sons, who were therefore the children of Israel, the children of Jacob. You remember too that Joseph went down into Egypt, and there had two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Manasseh was the older, but when Jacob pronounced a blessing upon them, he crossed his hands and put his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, and his left hand upon Manasseh, and so he blessed them, putting the younger before the older, declaring that in Ephraim should Israel be blessed, saying, "God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh". Levi, when they came up out of Egypt, was separated from the other tribes, which were thirteen, Joseph being represented by the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh—Levi was separated and dedicated to the priesthood. When they, settled in the promised land, they were all given a lot, a possession; but Levi was given no portion, but was entitled to receive a tenth from the others as he ministered to the Lord in the priest's office. Ultimately the kingdom was established under Saul. David was the second king; Solomon was the third, Rehoboam, Solomon's son, was the fourth; and under Rehoboam the kingdom was divided. Ten tribes broke away, and elected Jeroboam the son of Nebat as their king. Judah and Benjamin remained faithful to the house of David, as did also Levi; and Jerusalem continued to be their capital; while the ten tribes set up their kingdom in the north, with Samaria as their capital. Thereafter there were two kingdoms, the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

Jeroboam introduced idolatry, and every succeeding king walked "in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin", until at last idolatry destroyed the nation. You remember how Hosea is heard prophetically to cry, "Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off." The ten-tribed kingdom was carried away captive into Assyria; and years later—it depends upon what chronology you accept—one hundred and thirty-three years later or thereabout, Judah followed the way of her sister-nation, and was carried captive to Babylon, where she remained seventy years; and at the end of the seventy years returned to Jerusalem. But the ten tribes, as a national entity, never returned. They went to Assyria; they are spoken of by our British-Israelism friends as the ten "lost" tribes. Those whom we now speak of as Jews are said to belong to the tribes of Benjamin and Judah only.

Our B.I. friends go farther; and inasmuch as the ten tribes are alleged to have been "lost", they look and profess to find them together somewhere. They find—or think they find—historical corroboration of the theory that the ten tribes gradually made their way by various treks to the British Isles, and that we who come from Britain, are really the heirs of the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and that that is the explanation of the British Empire. They expect to see the British Empire used, because it is ancient Israel, as God's instrument for the wellbeing of the world. They tell us that King George is a lineal descendant of King David, and that the Irish branch of the Danites brought with them Jacob's stone which is under the coronation chair—I have seen it often, and touched it—the stone on which, allegedly, Jacob laid his head, is now under the chair where Britain's Kings are crowned. And so the Lord God of heaven Who said, "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest", must needs use this bit of wood with a bit of stone under it, for a throne as having some place in the chain of prophetic fulfilment!

It is an interesting theory, but *Is there anything in the Bible to teach us to look for ten "lost" tribes?* The people of Israel were carried to Assyria in seven hundred and twenty-one B.C. or thereabout; Judah, to Babylon about five hundred and eighty-eight B.C. Israel was carried away captive about one hundred and thirty-three years before Judah; and from the time of Israel's carrying away into Assyria and the return of the tribes from the Babylonian captivity, there must have elapsed a period of two hundred or more years. That is to say, if you view the period of Israel's history from 721 B.C. when they were taken to Assyria, to the time of Judah's return from Babylon, you are viewing a period in the life of the ancient people longer than the history of the United States since the Revolutionary War. America was a continental country, with a small population at the time of the Revolutionary War. In a lesser time than that which elapsed from the Assyrian captivity to the return of the Jews from Babylon, the United States has grown to a nation of one hundred and thirty millions of people.

What became of the ten tribes? Are we to assume that there was some providential order which kept them together for a short time like so many sheep, and thereafter so ordered their migrations that some by one route and some by another, all arrived in Britain, their settlement being completed with the Norman Conquest, and that therefore Genesis has been fulfilled by the growth of the British Empire and by the American War of Independence, which set up a daughter-nation, identified as Manasseh?

What then became of the ten tribes during this period of nearly two hundred years? And what changes had taken place in the territory to which the ten tribes had been taken captive? The Babylonian Empire had succeeded the Assyrian, and Babylon took the place of Ninevah, and the region over which Nebuchadnezzar now bore rule was the very region over which Shalmaneser and Sargon reigned before him, only somewhat extended.

In the twenty-third chapter of Second Kings, verse twenty-nine, the king of Babylon is called "the king of Assyria." That is to say, the migration we are accustomed to speak of as the Babylonian captivity carried the tribes of Benjamin and Judah to a territory in which the areas

to which the captives from the Northern kingdom had been exiled, were included; so that the tribes had every opportunity of mingling together in the lands of their exile. And that is precisely what the Scripture says they did. In Second Chronicles eleven-sixteen we read that even at the time of the division of the kingdom "out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers. So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah." Thus the kingdom of Rehoboam included many who came "out of all the tribes of Israel." By which we may understand that many were too loyal to Jerusalem, and to the house of David, to follow after Jeroboam.

Then once more, during the reign of Asa, king of Judah, as recorded in Second Chronicles, fifteen: nine to fifteen, we are told that "he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him. So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem . . . and they entered into a covenant to seek Jehovah God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul."

It may further be pointed out that Cyrus and Darius I., as shown in Ezra IV. 5; V. 13; and VI. 22, are called indifferently, by the sacred historians, by the titles of "king of Persia", and "king of Babylon", and "king of Assyria". When one considers the growth of the United States of America from very small beginnings to a population of one hundred and thirty millions in a hundred and sixty years, one can form some idea of what may easily have occurred in the coming together of the twelve tribes in the lands of their exile in two hundred years, especially if it be remembered that the territory represented by the two exiles was very limited, and all but identical.

Once more. *Our British-Israelism advocates insist that when the Bible speaks of the Jews it never means Israel in general, but only the house of Judah.* Have they read the Book of Esther? Have they considered that the territory of Ahasuerus stretched "from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces"? Have they observed that Haman, who is described as "the Jews' enemy . . . sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai"? Were these people scattered throughout the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, of the house of Judah exclusively?

A careful reading of the Book of Esther will surely suggest that something more than the house of Judah is represented in the people who are called Jews.

Will you follow me as I read a few scriptures. I recommend you to study the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Both are of post-exilic date. Ezra is a record of the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem; Nehemiah, of the rebuilding of Jerusalem itself. These two books relate to Israel's, or Judah's, post-exilic history.

Writers on the British-Israel contention always insist that "the Bible never confuses ten-tribed Israel with Judah;" that when the Bible means the ten tribes, it says, "Israel", and when it means the two tribes, it uses the term, "Judah". I do not so say, but I am prepared to proceed to my examination on the basis of their own oft-repeated declaration.

What have we in the second chapter of Ezra? As I

read please keep this "B.I." distinction between "Israel" and "Judah" in mind. "Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away from Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city"—then follows a list of names, which I omit, not because I cannot pronounce them, as some of you do, but because you would not remember them! At the end of that verse it says, "The number of the men of the people of Israel." I am taking the "B.I." position that whenever the Bible says, "Israel", it means Israel. Notwithstanding, when the tale is told of those who returned to Jerusalem, while there were men of Judah and Benjamin, and Levites also, this is said to be "the number of the men of the people of Israel."

I now read the fifty-ninth verse: "These were they which went up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsa, Cherub, Addan, and Immer: but they could not shew their father's house, and their seed, whether they were of Israel." Judah also was of Israel, there is no doubt about that. I would not press a verse like that, only I am taking my British-Israelite friends at their word, when they say that the Bible never says "Israel" without meaning Israel. I think it often says *Israel* when it means *Judah*; but these, whether of the ten tribes or the two, were unable to show their genealogical table, whether they were actually of the seed of Israel.

Then the seventieth verse: "So the priests, and the Levites, and some of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities." Make a note of that, you "B.I.'s" "All Israel in their cities"!

In the third chapter: "When the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God."

In chapter six, verses sixteen to twenty-two: "And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy, and offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses. And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month. For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, WHICH WERE COME AGAIN OUT OF CAPTIVITY, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the Lord God of Israel, did eat, and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the Lord had made them joyful, and TURNED THE HEART OF THE KING OF ASSYRIA UNTO THEM, TO STRENGTHEN THEIR HANDS IN THE WORK OF THE HOUSE OF GOD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL."

Chapter seven: twenty-seven: "Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem: and hath extended mercy unto me before the king, and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me, and I GATHERED TOGETHER OUT OF ISRAEL CHIEF MEN TO GO UP WITH ME."

Chapter eight: thirty-five: "Also the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, offered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel, twelve bullocks for all Israel, ninety and six rams, seventy and seven lambs, twelve he goats for a sin offering: all this was a burnt offering unto the Lord."

Chapter ten: one: "Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, THERE ASSEMBLED UNTO HIM OUT OF ISRAEL A VERY GREAT CONGREGATION OF MEN AND WOMEN AND CHILDREN: for the people wept very sore."

And mind, I am holding my British-Israelite friends to their declaration that the Bible, when it says, "Israel", always means Israel, and never exclusively Judah.

Let us look now at Nehemiah one: six: "Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, FOR THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL THY SERVANTS, AND CONFESS THE SINS OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned." Two: ten: "When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man TO SEEK THE WELFARE OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL." Chapter seven: seven: "The number, I say, OF THE MEN OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL was this."

They were not "lost": they had returned to Jerusalem; and Nehemiah was counting them. Again in the sixty-first verse: "These were they which went up also from Tel-melah, Tel-haresha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer: but they could not shew their father's house, nor their seed, whether they were of Israel." (A recurrence of the verse already quoted from Ezra.) In the seventy-third verse: "So the priests, and the Levites, and the porters, and the singers, and some of the people, and the Nethinims, AND ALL ISRAEL, DWELT IN THEIR CITIES; and when the seventh month came, THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WERE IN THEIR CITIES." Chapter eleven: twenty: "And THE RESIDUE OF ISRAEL, of the priests, and the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance." Twelve: forty-seven: "AND ALL ISRAEL IN THE DAYS OF ZERUBBABEL, AND IN THE DAYS OF NEHEMIAH, gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and they sanctified holy things unto the Levites; and the Levites sanctified them unto the children of Aaron." Thirteen: three: "How it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that THEY SEPARATED FROM ISRAEL ALL THE MIXED MULTITUDE."

Surely it is apparent that among the tribes that returned, and had a part in the rebuilding of the temple, and in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, there were great numbers that belonged to all the tribes, for again and again "all Israel" are said to have been represented.

WHAT ABOUT ISRAEL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT? I venture the assertion,—and I challenge my "B.I." friends

who know their Bible to controvert the statement. The pamphlet I had put into my hand this morning was entitled, "a challenge to thinking men". Without being unduly immodest, I lay some claim to being a thinking man; I accept the challenge, and I say to my B.I. friends, that *from the first verse of Matthew to the last verse of Revelation, you cannot name a solitary passage which, by any sort of interpretation, can be made to suggest that ten tribes were "lost," and could not be found anywhere.* The New Testament says absolutely nothing about the "lost" ten tribes, and in order to be a disciple of British-Israelism, you must abandon your New Testament. You cannot hold it and the New Testament together. Nor, for that matter, the Old Testament either. I shall presently proceed to the proof of that statement.

In only one place in the New Testament is "the house of Judah" specifically mentioned, and in that instance it is mentioned in conjunction with the house of Israel. Hebrews eight: eight: "For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." They are both included, and that is the only reference to "the house of Judah" in the New Testament; but there are many, many references to Israel. ("Judah" is mentioned in the genealogical tables in Matthew and Luke; our Lord is said to have "sprung out of Judah", in Hebrews; and Judah is mentioned twice in Revelation.) I can refer to only a few of them.

"I have not found so great faith," said the Lord Jesus, "no, not in Israel," when he referred to Israel in contradistinction to the Gentiles.

Did He mean the "lost" ten tribes? I do not think so. "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Did He refer to the ten tribes only? When He spoke of a period of "regeneration", whatever that may mean, He said, "Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." When they took Him to the cross, what did they say? I know it was written over the cross, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." But the mockers said, "If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him." Did His enemies mean that He had been called King of the "lost" ten tribes? They thought of Israel, not as represented by two tribes, but of all the tribes of Israel. Having been brought back, the remnants at least, merged in a nation after the captivity. Or again in another gospel: "Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross."

John the Baptist in the first chapter of Luke is said to have been "in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel." Did he shew himself to the ten "lost" tribes? If so, must not John the Baptist, according to "B.I." have gone even to Ireland? And Simeon, the old man in the temple, was waiting—for what? "For the consolation of Israel." Was he consoled by news of the arrival of their vanguard in the distant isles of the sea? When He took the Saviour in his arms, he said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." When the two on the Emmaus road talked with the Stranger when their hearts burned within them, and told the story of Jesus of Nazareth, they said, "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." Did they mean by "Israel" the ten "lost" tribes? They used the general

term. And when Nathanael came to Jesus, and Jesus said, "Behold"—listen: "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." Did He mean a member of one of the ten "lost" tribes? Said Nathanael, "Whence knowest thou me?" "Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel"—did he mean by Israel the "lost" tribes? Peter on the day of Pentecost addressed the assembled people in these words, "Ye men of Israel"—he included them all as "men of Israel". They came from many places mentioned in Acts 2:5-11, and include "Jews and proselytes", yet Peter called them "men of Israel". Then he led them to the great climax of his address as he said, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Did Peter mean, "Let all the ten 'lost' tribes know assuredly"? It is said of Christ that He was exalted "to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Even our "B.I." friends will not insist that repentance and forgiveness are restricted to the ten tribes. But they insist, "The Bible never confuses ten-tribed Israel with Judah."

When Paul was brought to trial, he said, "For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." What was "the hope of Israel"? What was the question in dispute? The resurrection of the dead—not the establishment of the British Empire. But he was bound "for the hope of Israel". Paul, in the tenth chapter of Romans, says, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." In the last verse of the same chapter, "To Israel he saith, All day long have I stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." Are not the terms "Jews" and "Israel" used, interchangeably in Romans nine? Does "all Israel" in chapter eleven mean ten tribes or twelve? Paul in the twenty-sixth of Acts said: "Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come." He did not say, "Two of us we know, but we do not know where the ten are"—"Our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come."

James addressed his epistle, not to two, nor to ten, but "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad."

Now we are told that *the British people are the heirs of the promise made to Abraham.* That is a very flattering hypothesis. Go to any village where there are five hundred people, and you will find somewhere among them an aristocracy, a few who are superior. How we love to boast of a little drop of blue blood! Mine is red! Ordinary red! Any doctrine of racial superiority is dangerous.

What shall be said of *the idea of a temporal kingdom?* I recommend you to study the epistle to the Galatians—and of Romans too. Those chapters which have often been called a parenthesis—the ninth, tenth, and eleventh of Romans. You will find that the promise made to Abraham was made to Christ: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." The blessing of the Lord was to come on the seed of Abraham through Christ, and only through Christ. To the Galatians, Paul says, "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"

My dear friends, there are to-day several forms of

Judaized Christianity. British-Israelism is Judaized Christianity—JUDAIZED spelled in capitals, Christianity spelled in any type you like. There are many British-Israelite friends who have the firmest faith in Christ as their personal Saviour, and who teach the necessity of faith in the atoning blood, and regeneration by the Holy Ghost: notwithstanding, I believe the system is fraught with the gravest sort of danger.

Paul said to the Galatians, "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." "The children of the promise are counted for the seed." The promise that the seed of Abraham should outnumber the stars and the sands upon the seashore, finds its fulfilment, not in Israel after the flesh—two tribes, or ten tribes, or twelve: "Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable." And John saw "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues"; and they all sang the song of Moses and of the Lamb; and they all ascribed glory to Him Who died in their room and stead, a vast spiritual host saved by grace, regenerated by the Spirit, washed in the blood, made heirs of glory through faith in Jesus Christ. But what are we asked to believe? "Having by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high"—yet some would tell me that my glorious Lord is going to step down from that throne to a material throne in Jerusalem and reign over a temporal Jerusalem. Is it conceivable that He who weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance, and can of the very stones raise up children unto Abraham, is interested in the preservation of a boulder on which Jacob is alleged to have slept for a pillow? I do not believe it. Such assumptions seem to me to be utterly childish.

There is another thing. I am as proud of my British blood as anyone—and it is all British. Who can tell what Britain is? One man preaching to a congregation like this said, "You are just a lot of mongrels." I am as proud of my British birth and lineage as anyone. Those of you who suffer the infliction of my occasional bursts of patriotism, know I shall never be shot for want of loyalty to the flag! But I am persuaded that that emphasis upon any kind of racial superiority is contrary both to the letter and the spirit of the gospel of the grace of God.

For what did Jesus Christ come? He came that He might break down "the middle wall of partition between us", between Jew and Gentile, "to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace." In Jesus Christ "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all." I shall never get to heaven because I was born in dear old England. I shall get there because, by God's abounding grace, this poor sinner was born again. I delight to believe that no matter who we are or whence we have come, or what our record, "this man—the Man, Christ Jesus—receiveth sinners".

Many advocates of so-called British-Israelism believe that. Some of them are among the dearest friends I have ever had; but I am persuaded that in respect to the British-Israel theory they stand on unscriptural ground. Nor have I ever seen any of them benefited by believing it, but many who seem to have been injured.

What is wrong with the world to-day? We have heard of Hitler's nonsense of the superiority of the "Aryan" race. From every point of view it is sheer unmitigated nonsense, but nonsense of a very vicious character.

There is something in blood. If you came into this world with clean blood, thank God. If you came into this world inheriting worthy qualities from your parents, be humbled by it, and thank God for it. Do not get on stilts and strut around, boasting of your superiority. Whether a man is red, or yellow, or black, or white: the grace of God is sufficient to save him. The multitude up yonder will be of all nations and peoples and tongues all of whom are washed in the blood.

Someone will say, "What then is the explanation of the British Empire?" It cannot be found in our natural birth, I am sure of that. I will take second place to no one in my admiration of the British Empire. I belong to it! "Britains never shall be slaves."

An American says Hitler is winning! Hitler is not winning. Hitler is already defeated. Britain rules the waves, and no nation who had the mastery of the sea was ever defeated. What is the explanation of the British Empire? Do not look for it in blood. Queen Victoria was asked for the explanation of the British Empire, and she pointed to the Bible. You do not need to trace your lineage back to Abraham to explain why. God has been pleased to make the British Empire His instrument. He has been pleased to make it a centre of light and holy influence that has reached all parts of the world. But He has been pleased to use us, not on natural but on spiritual grounds. If you assume it is on natural grounds, you are mistaken, my friend. Proud of being British? So am I! Notwithstanding, I marvel that God has used us. It is of His mercy that we are not consumed. We did well just now to sing Kipling's hymn:—

"For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord!"

But we are not the only ones who have been used of God. He has been pleased to use black men and yellow men and red men, as well as white men. He used Luther. I plead this evening for a spiritual interpretation of the Word of God. "Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" It would be a great descent, it seems to me, an immeasurable descent for the Son of God to come from Heaven's Throne forever established in the heavens to take the highest seat that earth could provide. Let us rather claim the blessing of Abraham through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord.

"Wide as the world is His command,
Vast as eternity His love;
Firm as a rock His truth shall stand
When rolling years have ceased to move."

BRITISH-ISRAELISM IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE

This week's sermon brings this popular cult into the light of Scripture. We believe all matters of religious faith should be weighed in scriptural balances. Anything that is true can most clearly be proved and established by the Bible itself. On the other hand, the tenets of any religious cult that is contrary to the teaching of

God's Word may most easily be refuted by the Word of God itself.

British-Israelism claims it is based upon the teaching of Scripture; and that its teachings are corroborated by secular history, by archeology, and especially by the prophetic indications of the great pyramid. Even suppose the pyramid to have a prophetic voice, and suppose also a true key to its interpretation has been found, there is not one in a million competent to understand what the pyramid is alleged to teach, even among those who call themselves believers in British-Israelism, and who refer to the alleged predictions of the pyramid in support of their view.

Again, there is not one in a million who has firsthand knowledge of the subject. They accept and repeat what supposed experts have told them. It is therefore obviously impossible to discuss British-Israelism on the basis of pyramidal predictions. In that direction, everything is purely hypothetical, and final decision is impossible.

The same is true of an appeal to secular history, or to the alleged discoveries of archeology. Final authority does not reside in either of these realms; for, interesting as the dicta of these two sources of information may be, in neither direction can you find truth unmixed with error. To bring one's case into either court is to submit the issue to a jury of judges, not one of whom is infallible. Therefore unanimity can never be found. The best one could hope for is a mere majority verdict.

We pronounce no opinion as to which side of the British-Israel question would be supported by a majority vote of archeological and historical judges, although we ourselves also have an opinion!

If we try to settle the British-Israelism question by sending people to great libraries, to examine volumes on ancient and mediaeval history, we shall get no nearer to finality than we can to the man in the moon. Therefore we throw down the gauntlet to our British-Israel friends, and challenge them to discuss their theories on the basis of the teaching of Scripture alone.

Whatever may be said of the alleged confirmations from the other sources to which we have referred, it must be admitted that if British-Israelism is true, it can be proved from the Bible. If it cannot be established by scriptural proof, the theory can have no religious value to anyone to whom the Bible, as the Word of God, is the only rule of faith and practice.

We earnestly commend to our readers the principle of this procedure in respect to all religious matters: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

THE COST OF NORWAY'S NEUTRALITY

While Finland was bravely fighting for her life, the Allied Powers asked permission of Norway and Sweden to send troops to her aid through their territory. Determined to remain neutral, and blindly assuming the possibility of thus keeping out of Hitler's clutches, both powers refused permission. By sheer force of numbers, heroic Finland was at last overwhelmed.

In due course the most brilliant pupil and imitator in the art of lying the devil ever graduated, landed his forces in Norway, and all but possessed the whole country, while official Norway was asleep. There is perhaps no more difficult coast in the world than that of Norway

on which to land troops. The Allied Powers have made a magnificent beginning, but faced with topographical and climatic difficulties, the task of dispossessing the Nazis must, of necessity, be very slow. The difficulties faced by the armed forces of the Allies in Norway cannot be appraised by the mere study of maps; and it will be our wisdom not to presume to judge of the progress of the campaign apart from official reports. Such reports are likely to be meagre and inconclusive for some time.

There seems to be a disposition on the part of some people to expect to be able to sit at their radios and hear reports of the progress of the war just as some enthusiasts listen to the reports of hockey and football matches, in which the play of every player is described moment by moment; and when such reports are not forthcoming they allow themselves to imagine the worst. Let us be patient. It is not the British way to write their heroism in the future tense.

After the murder of Gordon at Khartum, it seemed for a long time that we had lost the Soudan. Sir Herbert Kitchener was sent out, and there buried himself. For years there was little to report, and Kitchener was not "in the news". Then one fine day Britain awoke to read that Khartum was in British hands. A railway had been slowly and carefully built up to its gates, and with one great smash at last Gordon was avenged.

It would be well for the nerves of the people if so-called military experts would cease their guesses about the progress of the campaign in Norway. Let us leave it to the armed forces of the Allies. We shall have good news in due course—and we shall be able to enjoy the news better if meanwhile we give our imaginations a vacation, and try to possess our souls in patience.

A MILLION DOLLARS FOR HITLER'S CAPTURE

The press informs us to-day that Samuel Harden Church, President of the Carnegie Institute, in behalf of a group of Pittsburgh residents, announced that a reward of a million dollars in cash would be given to the person or group who will deliver Adolf Hitler "alive, unwounded and unhurt" into the custody of the League of Nations; and this "for trial before a high court of justice for his crimes against the peace and dignity of the world."

The principle of the proposal is not new. We made it in these pages, facetiously of course, long ago; only we think our suggestion was better, that a price should be put on Hitler's head for delivery "dead or alive". There is no possibility of being mistaken as to Hitler's guilt. A liar, a robber, and a murderer of the deepest dye, it would be quite safe to shoot him on sight if that were possible.

But this proposal from Pittsburgh is typically significant of the attitude of many people in the United States, although we are thankful to say, not by any means of all Americans. There are some who are willing to pay other people to arrest and destroy Hitler; but who seem wholly unprepared to accept the risk of attempting the job themselves. While there are still other Americans who generously consent to Hitler's being stopped and destroyed by any who are willing to pay cash for, and themselves to carry to the field of battle, such weapons as are necessary to his destruction. They are willing also, by their own statements, that such European defenders of

America's liberties shall be permitted to add to the investment of their cash and their hard labour of carrying involved in the war, the investment of their life's blood as well.

It would be a cheap way out of the difficulty, to pay a million dollars reward for Hitler's head. Canada alone could well afford to pay half a billion dollars reward for such a capture; and, if such capture were feasible, a public loan to raise the money in this country of a population of eleven millions would be subscribed within a few hours.

A little while ago we heard a great deal about "gestures". The word having been worked so hard, however, seems now to have been allowed a vacation. We call it back into service to remark that this million dollar reward "gesture" is rather a good idea: it affords some people an opportunity of safely telling Hitler that they do not like him, while being sure that it will cost them nothing to say so!

A GENEROUS WORD FROM LONDON

In many of the exchanges which come to us week by week THE GOSPEL WITNESS is frequently quoted. In some instances sermons and editorials are reproduced *in extenso*. For such extensions of our ministry we are always most grateful; but we seldom refer to such journalistic compliments, and have not often felt free to reproduce the kindly appreciative words which often accompany such reproductions.

We may, however, be excused for daring to reproduce the very generous—not to say extravagant—estimate of the value of these pages by Dr. J. A. Hutton, Editor of *The British Weekly* in his *Watchman* page in the issue of April 11th. We are subjected to such contemptuous criticisms by purblind humanistic rimless cyphers who inexplicably prune themselves upon their fancied intellectual superiority to an evangelicalism that is as remote from their understanding as is the most distant and indistinct stellar light to the eye which peers through a boy's ten cent spy-glass reversed, that a commendatory word from such a man as Dr. Hutton, is most comforting.

But one thing more. This editor eschews the name "Fundamentalist" because of its frequent association with the vagaries of so many wild and ultra-spiritual cults which are as offensive to reason as they are contrary to Scripture. We prefer to be known as a plain, old-fashioned, unadjectived evangelical. Here follows Dr. Hutton's article:

"FROM AMERICA

THERE is no more sustaining ingredient to my spirit for one's arduous life in these days than the issue of *The Gospel Witness* which reaches me from Toronto week by week. *The Gospel Witness* is edited by Dr. T. T. Shields, Pastor of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, in that city. Not only does Dr. Shields edit this resolute paper: he almost writes it. For myself in these days I cannot have too much of him. He is indeed a Fundamentalist, a designation which is used disparagingly of those who differ very profoundly from men like Dr. Shields on the doctrine of Holy Scripture and on doctrine generally. For myself, far from having any quarrel with Dr. Shields' doctrinal utterances in these vivid, uncompromising, passionate weekly sermons of his, I have evidence that I agree with him; for I envy the decisiveness and force which in his case such a doctrinal intransigence compels and sustains and illustrates so convincingly.

Preachers in these days are a feeble folk who have not found a Rock for their feet which "establishes their goings". In these days humanism fails; for we are caught in its net. We need and must have access to a

Power not "mixed up with us" (a poet's phrase). Or as another poet put it:—

"Unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how poor a thing is man!"

Or as someone must have been the first to observe, though we have all of us found the saying a very useful one, saving many a sermon: No man can raise himself by pulling at his own shoe-straps.

It was doubtless against all such subjectivism and mere excitement of ourselves that St. Paul, as one who had tried such a way and perhaps was even disposed to such a way, recommended and proclaimed another—what he described as "My Gospel of the glory of the Blessed God."

"A GENIUS FOR TEXTS

DR. SHIELDS appears to me to know the text of the whole Bible, in the King James' Version, off by heart.

In the shifting phases in the moods of men, and in the shifting scene which the world presents, this great preacher knows, and gives the impression that it had long been familiar to him, a verse, a group of consecutive verses, which fits precisely the main mood or event of the very hour.

Take this as illustrative. In *The Gospel Witness* of March 14th the title of the Sermon is "Beware of Peace!" Dr. Shields finds the very text. It is not a mere pretext, something which sounds like the real thing. It is exegetically and in its context the real thing, altogether free from cleverness or guile. Here it is:—

"Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people."—(1 Kings XX:42).

Certainly this is a new point of view; that there may be a stage and crisis in events when we might take such action as would spoil something which God had in view.

—From *The British Weekly*, April 11th.

THE UNAMENDED BOOK THAT IS CONTEMPORARY WITH EVERY AGE

In the beginning of our ministry, we read several volumes of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, some of them preached before he was twenty-one. We remember how they seemed to us to reflect, even in detail, the wealth of a worldwide and life-long experience. We marvelled that so young a man was able to speak as one who seemed to have touched human life in every stage of mental development, in every stratum of society, and who spoke a universal language which found men everywhere. We wondered that a man so young could speak with authority to all classes of men of mature minds, even to those whose shoulders were bent with years. In our simplicity, we then attributed it to Spurgeon's amazing versatility.

A few years later, perhaps five or six, when the age of thirty still seemed far away, we were invited by a pastor in a country place to visit a village blacksmith, whom the pastor said was an extraordinary man. He was perhaps from forty to forty-five years of age; as a Christian, he was a little over three years old, having been converted about three years before.

At the time of his conversion this man did not know the alphabet, but he became immediately possessed with a passionate desire to read the Bible. He got his little girl who was attending the country school, to teach him to read. In a short time he abandoned the child's school-books, and used the Bible as his reader. Such words as he could not understand, he spelled aloud to the little girl, who told him as well as she could what they meant. What a blessing it was to him that our English translators had used the simplest, if the most beautiful of words!

When I met him, this blacksmith had read the whole Bible through a score of times, and the New Testament forty times. He had never read anything else. I found, in conversation, that his mind responded instantly to the profoundest suggestions. His mental storehouse had not been crammed with information, but his mind had learned to think; and it seemed to me that any problem—individual, social, or national—which might be submitted to him, his mind could take hold of, and intelligently deal with it.

Here was another phenomenon for which we sought an explanation, and we soon found it: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." We further understood both Spurgeon and the village blacksmith as we read: "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts."

The word of the Lord is a stethoscope that will enable one to hear the world's heart-beat; a clinical thermometer, which will register the degrees of its fevers; a mirror in which the world's history passes in procession; a radio which records the groans of this anguished creation, and broadcasts from Heaven the Divine Physician's prescriptions of Grace for the healing of all its ills—"O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day."

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM

By Rev. W. Gordon Brown, M.A.

Notes to Chapter I.

HISTORY

1844

By 1818 William Millar had set 1843 as the date of the second coming of Christ, later changing to 1844. This he obtained by supposing, first, that the "two thousand and three hundred evenings mornings" of Daniel 8:14 mean twenty-three hundred years; second, that the twenty-three hundred years were the length of time "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem" mentioned in Daniel 9:25; third, that this commandment was the decree of Ezra 7:11-26; fourth, that the Artaxerxes was Artaxerxes I. Longimanus, and that the decree was issued in 457 B.C. (Some give 458 B.C.).

Statistics

The following table shows recent growth and present strength of the Seventh-Day Adventist denomination, now claiming "a little over 500,000" members.

	1926	1931	1938
Churches		7,021	8,570
Membership at home and abroad	261,834	336,046	469,951
Workers at home and abroad	17,946	21,607	28,084
Countries, islands and island groups where Adventists are working	126	141	387
Languages used	256	455	766
Publishing houses and branches	—	68	79
Per capita giving (world average)	—	\$32.84	\$27.96
Value of denominational property	\$48,053,317.33	\$54,114,844.52	\$60,343,978.04

During 1936-1938 "188 languages have been entered by some representative of this message. This is an average of one practically every five days during the three years" (*Year Book*).

Chapter II.

THE FOLLY OF DATE-SETTING

The Adventists whom we are now discussing stand before the world as the great example of the folly of date-setting for the second coming.

Mr. Millar's attempt is NOTHING NEW IN THE WORLD.

Using the numerical significance of a name, it was once estimated that the Roman Empire would last 948 years; Rome being founded according to tradition in 753 B.C., the end would come in 195 A.D. (Alexander Stewart, *Christianity, Communism, Adventism*, 1932, p. 9).

The apocryphal II. Esdras (i.e., Ezra) 14:10-12 says "the world hath lost his youth, and the times begin to wax old. For the world is divided into twelve parts, and the ten parts of it are gone already, and half of a tenth part: and there maineth that which is after the half of the tenth part." Using the later Jewish estimate of the age of the world, we should have the end of the whole twelve parts about 900 A.D.

The great Augustine (354-430 A.D.) taught that the Catholic Church in its empirical form was the kingdom of Christ. Its duration from the beginning of the gospel was the "binding of Satan" and the thousand years (Revelation 20:2). Hence came "wide-spread fear and terror prior to the close of the year 999" (Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 10).

At the time of that "one long disaster", the Crusades, many thought the time of the end had come. Joachim of Floris proclaimed the expectation of the Millennium in the twelfth century, Franciscan spiritualists from the thirteenth to the fifteenth also. So did the Hussites in the fourteenth century. The man who had burned Huss was the anti-Christ!

Julius Africanus, a Byzantine church father, gave millennial expectations a great hold in Byzantium. On his authority there and in large circles in Russia the second coming of Christ was expected in the year of the world 7000, according to the Jewish reckoning that was 1492 Anno Domini. The great events of that year were the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and the discovery of America by Columbus.

In 1534 John of Leyden said at Münster that the Millennium was at hand.

The noble Menno Simons, father of the "Mennonites", wrote: "We learn from the Scriptures and from experience find that the predictions of the prophets, Christ and of the apostles, concerning the terrible oppression, misery, want, persecution, danger, anxiety, and false doctrines, in these latter times is being accomplished to its full measure, Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; 2 Timothy 3; 2 Peter 2; Jude 1, and this so powerfully that unless the merciful Father graciously shortens these days no flesh

shall be saved" (*Works*, published by Elkhart 1871, p. 13). "These latter times", "accomplished to its full measure"—but Menno died in 1561 A.D., nearly four centuries ago!

Even the great commentator, J. A. Bengel (1687-1752), influenced by Vitrina on the Apocalypse, fixed "upon 1836 as the year when a great catastrophe would befall the kingdom of evil,—a catastrophe still delayed" (J. Ker, *Lectures on the History of Preaching*, 1889, p. 228). Dr. John Cumming, a Presbyterian preacher who could attract crowds to Exeter Hall, London, England, entitled one of his lectures "1867" and said: "I have shown that the best and ablest Christian students are all agreed that 1867 is an era fraught with gigantic issues, that some think it is the commencement of the millennial rest; others think it is the destruction of all the errors whose roots are struck deep into our world, and the universal spread of the empire of the Prince of Peace" (*The Great Tribulation*, Second Series, 1860, pp. 21f.). William Irving (1792-1834) held that the French Revolution and other disturbances of his day were "the signs of the coming of the end" and "that the day of the Lord was at hand" (*A Narrative of Events*, an anonymous work giving the history of the Irvingites, 1885, pp. 2, 4).

Who has not heard of M. Baxter's *40 Future Wonders of Scripture Prophecy*, 50 pictures, maps and diagrams (1866; we refer to the 11th ed., 1903, which marked the 110th thousand)? One scarcely can think himself irreverent when he is forced to laugh at a physical representation of a dragon with seven crowned heads, ears like rabbits, a forked tail, feet like an ostrich, wings like a Miltonic devil, and from all seven heads pouring forth a stream which forms a river to drown a star-crowned woman (13th wonder, p. xxxiii), and much more of the like! This book, once so widely circulated, announced the "end of the age on April 23, 1908". But that was in the eighth edition of 1894, and that would hardly do for the eleventh edition of 1903, so it declared the "end of the age" would come "with the Jewish Passover Week's Last Day, on May 2, 1929, or April 2, 1931" (p. 447).

This book was published at a time when the Adventists themselves were still setting dates. They prophesied "1843, 1844, 1850, 1857, 1863, 1877, 1896, and on till we are dizzy counting" (J. V. Coombs, *Religious Delusions*, 4th edition, p. 23). Other dates set for the coming include 1861, 1881, 1883, 1888, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1900, 1905 (S. G. Ayres, *Jesus Christ our Lord*, a bibliography, 1906).

Now we are nearer our own time, and what a crop of dates twentieth century palms have grown! Dr. Gratton Guinness said that the latest possible date for the termination of the "seven times" (Leviticus 26:24, supposedly 2520 years) of the Gentiles would be 1923 A.D., and that it would be marked by "the establishment of the Kingdom of God, the overthrow of Babylon and the Beast and the Second Advent of Christ" (*The Approaching End of the Age*, 8th edition, p. 463).

About 1925 I was tortured by a friend who preached for us on an anniversary occasion, and practically said that the great pyramid of Egypt showed that Christ would come that year. The following Sunday my evening text was: "In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 24:44)!

British Israelites declared that the final drama of this age would begin in 1934 (supplement to *The National*

Message, February, 1931, p. 49). A writer of theirs in *The Globe*, January 1, 1935, referred to "our first newspaper message issued under date January 31st, 1933, that date, according to the great prophet and writer on the Great Pyramid, David Davidson, signifying the conception of the Kingdom of God on earth." But Mr. Davidson must have changed, we dare not suppose the pyramid of old Cheops at last did! Elsewhere we were told: "1936 is the latest date by Scripture prophecy," says Mr. Davidson in his book, *The Great Pyramid, Its Divine Message*. He said that the Great Tribulation would last from May, 1928, to September, 1936. We have not yet seen his latest shift and the shift of his followers with him!

A. E. Ware in *Some Last Hour Reflections*, announced 1934 as the "probable date of the Second Advent to the earth of the Lord Jesus Christ and the final deliverance of Judah from Gentile yoke. Battle of Armageddon. Defeat of the armies of the Antichrist."

Here is an advertisement from a Toronto newspaper: "There is Bible proof that Christ's coming and the judgment of all men will be not later than Feb. 14, 1936 . . . This is the final warning." But we remember that the Mr. H. R. Varney, who gave it, put his milk bottle out the night before!

A friend advertised his new book, *Shall We Ever Write 1937?* The magazine called *Revelation* published an article, "Gog and God and 1937?" A prominent preacher in this city told his large audience that prophecy did not go past 1934, but he is still preaching. Such teachers surpass the wisest!

"There was a man in our town
And he was wondrous wise;
He could unscram scrambled eggs,
And uncus custard pies."

Alas, alas, that men do not learn from experience if they will not learn from history; alas, that they do not learn from history if they will not learn from Scripture, the folly of such human charting of the divine calendar ahead of time.

Seventh-Day Adventists and many with them have not yet learned their lesson, however, for they say that the coming of Christ is "imminent and will occur in this generation" (A. L. Baker, pamphlet on *What Do Seventh-Day Adventists Believe?*, p. 4). The reference, of course, is to Mark 13:30 parallel to Matthew 24:34: "This generation shall not pass away till all these things be accomplished." The interpretation given is that the generation which sees the beginning of the signs of the second advent, will see the event itself. "The almost complete fulfillment of various lines of prophecy, particularly those found in the books of Daniel and the Revelation, with existing conditions in the physical, social, industrial, political, and religious worlds, indicates that Christ's coming is near, even at the doors" (*Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-Day Adventists*, number 20). These men think, then, they belong to the generation which has seen the beginning of the signs, and therefore they belong to the company who will see the descending Lord; so the coming is "imminent and will occur in this generation."

But consider the phrase "this generation". It is not uncommon in the New Testament. We list for reference all its other occurrences in their probable chronological order: Matthew 11:16; Luke 7:31; Matthew 12:41f., 45; Mark 8:12, 38; Luke 11:29-32, 11:50f., 17:25; Acts

2:40; Hebrews 3:10. Anyone who will take the trouble to turn to these references one after another will know that "this generation" means the people living at the time of the speaker or writer. Obviously, then, when in His great Eschatological Discourse Jesus spoke of "this generation", He meant the people of His own day; His reference of accomplishment was to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D., while many of those who had heard the teachings of Jesus Christ were still alive.

The second coming of Christ "will occur in this generation": Adventists have been saying that for a century. We have to-day the great grand-children of the people who said it once. How long is a generation?

Surely such folly as this cannot be committed by those who believe the Bible to be the Word of God and who accept the sayings of our Lord Jesus as final! Ah, but it is. Yet the man who can read the discourse on the Mount of Olives, in which Jesus set forth last things, and not see that it says plainly that THE TIME OF THE SECOND COMING is entirely UNKNOWN, has quite missed the point of that sermon. Our Lord there declared that neither men, nor angels, nor He Himself knew the day, nor the hour, nor the season of the *parousia* (Mark 13:32f., 35 and parallels; Matthew 24:44; 25:13, 19; Acts 1:7; cf. Luke 12:40, 46; etc.); and that therefore His disciples should "watch at every season" (Luke 21:36). True, Jesus rebuked the religious leaders of His day for not knowing the signs of their times (Matthew 16:3; Luke 12:56), but in this He made no reference whatever to the second coming (cf. 1 Chronicles 12:23, 32). Let no one who studies Seventh-Day Adventism fail to learn afresh the folly of seeking to know that which was, by His self-emptying (Philippians 2:7), hidden from the Lord Jesus.

Bible School Lesson Outline

OLIVE L. CLARK, Ph.D. (Tor.)

Vol. 4 Second Quarter Lesson 19 May 12th, 1940

CHRIST AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER

Lesson Text: Matthew 19.

Golden Text: "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible"—Matthew 19:26.

I. The Family Relationship—verses 1 to 12. Read also Mk. 10:1-12.

As Christ returned from Galilee in the north to Judaea in the south He was met by the needy populace, who came to Him to be taught and to be healed. The Pharisees also were present to ask questions, not for the purpose of gaining information, but for the purpose of testing the Teacher, and entrapping Him, if possible (Mk. 12:13; Lk. 11:53, 54).

Their questions concerned the legal grounds for separation of man and wife, but our Lord emphasized the Scriptural reasons for a life-long union (Eph. 5:31). The Word of the Lord is our authoritative guide in all matters of practice, as well as doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21). In quoting from the Book of Genesis our Lord gave His imprimatur to the account of creation as given in that Book (Gen. 1:27; 2:7), and to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch in His reference to the law (Deut. 24:1-4). We may safely believe His Word, though all the critics in the world assail its dependability.

Moses did not command the writing of a bill of divorce, but merely permitted it, because of the hardness of the hearts of the people. That was not God's highest will for them. Christ declared that there was only one cause for separation.

In view of possible difficulties the disciples wondered whether marriage was expedient. Some have not the capacity to know and to act upon the Scriptural teaching regard-

ing marriage. People may abstain from marriage because of natural disqualifications, because of the actions of others, or for various other reasons, but each individual is to be free to decide his own duty in the matter (1 Cor. 7:7, 24-35; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; Heb. 13:4).

II. The Children Received—verses 13 to 15. Read also Mk. 10:13-16; Lk. 18:15-17.

The Lord was pleased when the children were brought to Him, but displeased when the disciples attempted to restrain the parents. He laid His hands upon the children, and prayed for them (Gen. 48:14; Num. 27:18, 19; Matt. 9:18; Acts 6:6; 13:3). He loves the little ones, and would have them come to Him, that He may bless them and save them (Matt. 18:14).

The Kingdom is composed of child-like persons, of those who are believing, confiding, trustful and obedient (Matt. 18:3; Mk. 10:14; Lk. 18:16).

III. The Great Refusal—verses 16 to 26. Read also Mk. 10:17-27; Lk. 18:18-27.

Many would follow the young ruler in his declaration that Christ was good, but not all are willing to acknowledge that He is God. Those who would be saved must confess Him as Lord, as well as Saviour (Rom. 10:9, 10).

Eternal life is not an attainment to be gained by good works, or an inheritance to be bestowed like wealth (John 6:27-29; Tit. 3:5). Christ taught the young man that if he would depend upon the law for salvation, he must be wholly obedient to its every provision (Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:12; Jas. 2:10). In reality, the ruler proved that he was unable to live up to the very first commandment (Exod. 20:3); gold was his god. If saved at all, we must be saved by grace (Rom. 5:21; 6:23; 11:5, 6; Eph. 2:8-10).

Our Lord loved this young man, evidently one of exemplary character, who had run eagerly to ask Him the way of life (Mk. 10:17). He was not far from the Kingdom (Mk. 12:34), yet he refused to pay the price of entrance therein, and went away grieved. We wonder whether this young man later turned to the Lord.

Riches may be the means of blessing or they may be a curse. It is more difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom than for a poor man because of the prevailing tendency to trust in riches (Matt. 13:22; 1 Tim. 6:5-19). Yet wealth need not be a hindrance, for God is able to give grace so that men may use their possessions to enhance His glory.

IV. The Fitting Reward—verses 27 to 30. Read also Mk. 10:28-31; Lk. 18:28-30.

The mind of Peter was occupied with his own position and ambition. His eyes were upon the reward which he might expect because he, unlike the young ruler, had been willing to forsake all and follow Christ (Matt. 4:18-20). Our Lord included all His disciples in the promise of a sure reward for their suffering in His name (Mk. 10:30; Lk. 22:24-30; Rev. 3:21; 20:4). God will not be in debt to any man; no mortal can equal Him in loving or giving (John 3:16).

Spiritual pride is not becoming. We should not seek to advance our own interests at the expense of others (Phil. 2:4-10). God will exalt the humble, but He will put down those who are great in their own eyes (Matt. 20:16; 24:28; Mk. 10:31; Lk. 18:30; 14:11; 18:14).

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