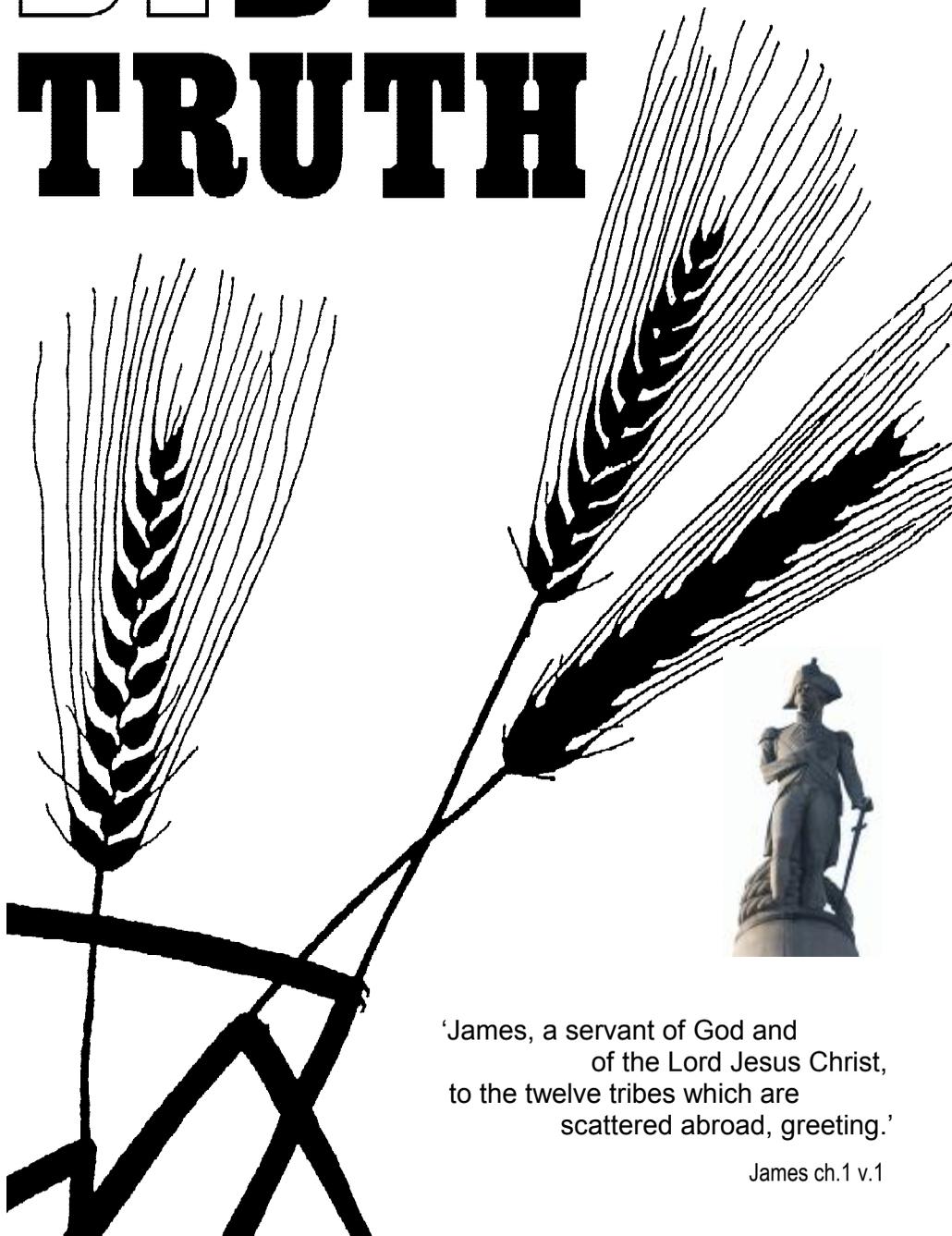


# BIBLE TRUTH

No. 276  
October/December  
2014



‘James, a servant of God and  
of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
to the twelve tribes which are  
scattered abroad, greeting.’

James ch.1 v.1



# ‘His Own Received Him Not’

The Significance of John ch.1 v.11

by Pastor Jory Steven Brooks, CBIA

The Gospel of John says this.

‘He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.’

John ch.1 vv 10-13

The verse (eleven) underlined above has long been a source of confusion, and the *Bible Knowledge Commentary* calls it ‘one of the saddest verses of the Bible’. It must therefore also gain our attention as a truly significant verse of the Bible! Just who is the Apostle John speaking of?

There is disagreement even among scholars as to who ‘His own’ are in the passage. Some translations take it to mean his own family. The *Goodspeed* translation says, ‘He came to his home, and his own family did not welcome him’. The *Ferrar Fenton* Translation is similar: ‘He came to his own home, but his own family did not welcome him’. One problem with this idea is that by tradition Christ’s brother James was a believer, and is also thought to be the writer of the Epistle of James. If so, it could not be said that His entire family rejected Him. In addition, we are not given any indication in the Scriptures that Jesus’ parents rejected His Messiahship after His ministry began at the age of thirty. In fact the presence of Jesus’ mother at the crucifixion, instead could indicate otherwise.

Another view is that it applied to the entire nation of Israel. Dispensationalists use this interpretation as the foundation for their teaching on the non-existence of the kingdom of God during the Church Age. Israel rejected Christ and His offer of the kingdom, they say, and so it is in abeyance.

However, the Scriptures in both the Gospels and the Book of Acts show that great multitudes did in fact accept Christ.

‘And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.’  
Matthew ch.19 v.2

‘And when the people were gathered thick together,..’  
Luke ch.11 v.29

‘Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.’  
Acts ch.2 vv 41-42

‘Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.’  
Acts ch.4 v.4

‘And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,’  
Acts ch.5 v.27

‘And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.’  
Acts ch.6 v.1

Still another view is that ‘His own’ in verse eleven refers back to the subject of verse ten, the whole world. *The Amplified Version* says, ‘He came to that which belonged to Him [to His own — His domain, creation, things, world], and they who were His own did not receive Him and did not welcome Him’. *The Believer's Bible Commentary* says, ‘In a general sense, this might refer to all mankind, and it is true that most of mankind rejected Him’. John Calvin says, ‘This passage also has received various explanations. For some think that the Evangelist speaks of the whole world indiscriminately; and certainly there is no part of the world which the Son of God may not lawfully claim as his own property ... for the whole human race was his own inheritance’. It seems more likely, however, that ‘His own’ in verse eleven is a specific, smaller subset of ‘the world’ in verse ten. *Vincent's Word Studies* agrees and says that verse eleven is ‘Not a repetition of John ch.1 v.10’. If that is the case, who again could they be?

The true answer, I believe, requires an understanding of the two houses of Israel, Ephraim and Judah, and their differing Biblical prophecies. This has long been at the foundation of British-Israel belief going back to the founder of the movement, John Wilson, in the 1840's. There is available a Scripture chart developed by Wilson, as true today as when he wrote it, showing that Ephraim was to fulfil Biblical prophecies of the acceptance of the Messiah and spread of the Gospel, as in the book of Isaiah.

‘And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.’

Isaiah ch.49 v.6

Conversely, Judah was to fulfil the prophecies of the rejection and death of the Messiah, as in the suffering servant prophecy in Isaiah ch.53. These prophecies of acceptance and rejection seem at first to be at odds and even contradictory to one another, yet both were necessary in the plan of God. Christ had to be put to death for the sins of the world, and His Gospel had to be proclaimed throughout the earth. The rejection role was fulfilled by Judas Iscariot and others of the tribe and house of Judah, and the evangelism by Ephraim, the ten tribes of the House of Israel. In absence of a better phrase, I coined the term, ‘prophetic crosscurrents’ for these seemingly contradictory Biblical prophecies.

Years ago, I talked with a Jewish rabbi and asked him why he did not believe in Christ, especially when so many prophecies of the coming Messiah were fulfilled by Him. The rabbi said, ‘Well, you know that the Messiah was to come as a conquering David, and you must admit that Christ did not fulfil those prophecies. He died. He failed. So He could not be the Messiah’. Unfortunately, the average Christian would be utterly unable to answer such an argument, as I discovered in conversations later with others. As a test, I asked several people I worked with to tell me how they would answer the rabbi. Everyone I talked to was speechless, and had no answer for the rabbinical argument. A couple of people finally told me that the rabbi's statement was unanswerable!

Of course, the true answer is that the Messiah fulfils the myriad of prophecies in not one, but two comings to earth. Just as important, a number of Biblical scholars recognise the significance of the two houses of Israel and their relation to the two comings of Christ. His

first coming to die for sin is called his 'Joseph coming', which recognises the prophetic implication of the Patriarch Joseph's cloak being smeared with blood of which we read in Genesis.

'And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood;'

Genesis ch.37 v.31

This act by Joseph's brothers, led by Judah, prefigured the tribe of Judah's guilt in the events of Christ's death. Messiah's second coming as the 'Conquering David' at the end of the age is referred to as His 'Judah coming', which ties in with the prophetic emblem of the Lion of Judah. This double Israel symbolism of Joseph and Judah recognises not only the divided ministry of the Messiah, but the importance of each of Israel's two houses in carrying out the fulfilment of the Messianic prophecies. Joseph was the father of Ephraim, who in turn gave his name to his covenant descendants, the House of Israel.

The 'Conquering David' prophecies were not to be fulfilled until His Second Coming. In misunderstanding this, both the rabbi and my Christian acquaintances also revealed a complete lack of understanding of Israel's two houses and their distinct prophetic destinies. The House of Israel accepted Christ, including the tribe of Benjamin in Canaan (a Joseph tribe), while the House of Judah rejected him at the crucifixion and especially in the person of Judas Iscariot, Christ's betrayer. The two houses of Israel were used of God for cross-purposes: Judah performed the needed task of rejecting and crucifying our Lord so that he could be a sacrifice for sin to give us eternal life through faith in Him. Ephraim-Israel has been fulfilling the prophetic missionary purpose of carrying the Gospel to the ends of the earth, a task that prepares the way for Christ's Millennial kingdom that will be set up at His Second Coming.

'And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.'

Isaiah ch.49 v.6

This is basic, foundational British-Israel teaching, and although we seldom realise it, is important in understanding Messianic prophecies of the return of Christ.

Yet the mainstream Church ignorantly rejects our message, prating the nonsense that all of Israel rejected Christ, and the falsehood that the only Israelites to be found in the world today practice Judaism. In so doing, they weaken the faith of believers who thereby cannot counter doubters, undermine the Messianic prophecies, and reject truths which uphold the certainty of the Scriptures. The proclamation of the British-Israel message was never more important than in our present time of doubt and despair!

Let us look at a prominent objection to our teaching that the House of Judah rejected Christ while the House of Israel (Joseph-Ephraim's descendants) accepted the Gospel. Among Christ's twelve apostles, eleven were Galileans who believed in Christ and carried the Gospel throughout the known world after the crucifixion. Judas Iscariot rejected Christ and was of the tribe of Judah. Some people claim that Judas was an Edomite, but that definitely was not the case. Firstly, his name 'Judas' indicates a man of the tribe of Judah. Secondly, his surname 'Iscariot' or 'Ish' (man) of 'Kerioth' indicates that his home was in the town of Kerioth in Judah. Thirdly, the Old Testament law established that only a priest could slay the sacrificial lamb. A Roman or a foreigner was not authorised to do this! In the types and shadows of the Scriptures, Christ was our sacrificial lamb slain for sin and could only be slain by the hand of the priesthood of the nation of Judah.

How do we know that the other eleven apostles were of the tribe of Benjamin? Simply because we are told that they were Galileans, and Galilee lay to the north of Judah, an area settled by Benjamin after the Babylonian captivity. We read of the location of their post-captivity dwellings in the book of Nehemiah.

'The children also of Benjamin from Geba dwelt at Michmash, and Aija, and Bethel, and in their villages.'

Nehemiah ch.11 v.31

The *Pulpit Commentary* states, 'All three places were in the near vicinity of Bethel' which was located north of Jerusalem in the territory of Benjamin.

The eleven apostles are several times referred to as Galilaeans.

'... Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaeon.'

Luke ch.22 v.59

‘And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?’

Acts ch.2 v.7

The tribe of Benjamin was a Joseph tribe of the House of Israel that was loaned to the House of Judah.

‘And unto his son [i.e. Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, king of Judah] will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.’

1 Kings ch.11 v.36

Benjamin's prophetic destiny was to be a light, which foreshadowed both their tribe's eager reception of the Gospel as well as the eleven faithful ‘Galilean’ Benjaminite apostles who carried the light of Christ throughout the known world.

It seems clear, therefore, that Christ's ‘own’ who ‘received Him not’ were those of his own tribe of Judah, who fulfilled the prophetic mandate that Messiah must die for the sins of the world. Members of this tribe were so antagonistic to Christ that we read,

‘After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him’.

John ch.7 v.1

The reason Christ walked in Galilee was because the tribe of Benjamin that dwelled there were very open to the Gospel, as clearly seen in a number of passages: Matthew ch.19 v.2; Luke ch.11 v.29; ch.12 v.1; ch.14 v.25; John ch.12 vv 17-19. The popular idea today that all of Israel rejected Christ is plainly refuted by Scripture. Instead, there is in the Biblical account a great tribal division between the peoples of Judah and Benjamin in their acceptance or rejection of the Gospel. The false teaching that the only Israelites in the world are those practising Judaism and rejecting Christ is at the heart of much of the misunderstanding concerning God's purposes in the earth today.