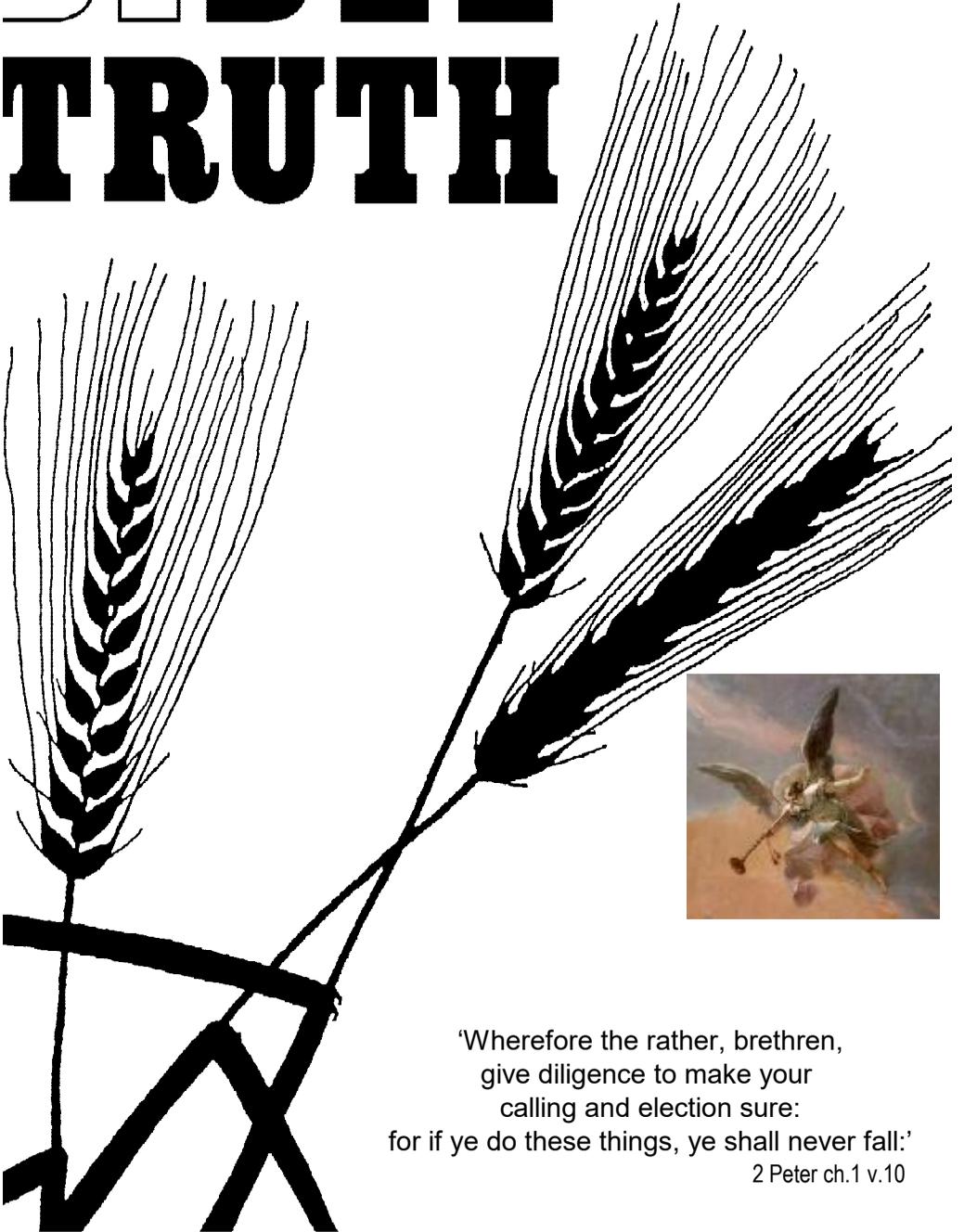


# BIBLE TRUTH

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'Wherefore the rather, brethren,  
give diligence to make your  
calling and election sure:  
for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:'

2 Peter ch.1 v.10

# The Apostles And The Lost Sheep

## A Key That Unlocks The Bible

by Pastor Jory Steven Brooks, CBIA



Was the ministry of our Lord's twelve apostles limited to the 'lost sheep of the House of Israel'? Evangelical theologian Eric Baker in the journal of The Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest [U.S.] Biblical Societies (vol. 23; 2003), insists that is the case. His study entitled, *Going Only to the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel*, states (p.81),

'This passage [Matthew ch.10 vv 5-6] is a definitive passage; it is a key that unlocks the book'.

Often ignored by most Christians, these important verses read,

'These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'

Author Baker states (p.84) ,

'This passage in Matthew 10 ... was for the twelve, and the great commission was for other disciples, besides the twelve mentioned in Matthew 10'.

In other words, the commission to proclaim the Gospel to the world as a whole belonged to Paul and the other evangelists, while the original twelve apostles were specifically commanded to minister only to the House of Israel. This is in line with the Scriptures that inform us that Paul was divinely ordained to preach the Gospel to all nations (Acts ch.9 v.15), a much different mandate than what the original twelve apostles were given. Theologian Eric Baker pointed out that (p.86),

‘This viewpoint keeps the commands separate, removing any conflict’.

Some would say that the command to go to the lost sheep of the House of Israel was only a temporary command which was soon overturned, but Baker explains (pp. 87-88),

‘Since both Matthew [chapters] 10 and 28 are presented in the same book by the same evangelist with no indication, evidence, or reference to a change in the mission of the disciples, the understanding of Matthew 10 as a temporary restriction in contrast to Matthew 28 must be dismissed ... The consistency within the text of Matthew, as well as the support from the rest of the Canon, and the agreement with the Jewish understanding of the time all give this understanding of Matthew 10 solid foundation ... Jesus and the twelve went to the Jews [i.e. House of Israel]. These words need to be understood to whom they were addressed ...’.

This brings up an interesting and important question. If the original twelve apostles were commanded to proclaim the Gospel only to ‘the lost sheep of the House of Israel’ (Matthew ch.10 v.6), where did they then go in order to fulfil their commission? If we examine the locations in which these twelve early apostles carried out their evangelization, we can identify the House of Israel.

The classic study on this subject was a book written by Dr William Steuart McBirnie entitled, *The Search For The Twelve Apostles*, first published in 1973 by Tyndale House, a respected evangelical publisher. In this interesting (but now out-of-print) book, McBirnie lays out his in-depth research on the subject. McBirnie states (p.210),

‘There is a long and widespread tradition which links several of the apostolic figures to Great Britain ... we will show that this was by no means unreasonable’.

Although the church of Rome lays claim to Peter, calling him the first pope, McBirnie quotes a learned source who states,

‘In Corinth [Greece] the memory of Peter was closely associated with that of Paul by the bishop Dionysius’.

*The Christian Centuries* by Jean Danielou, p.51

Quoting British-Israel historian George F. Jowett's study, *Drama Of The Lost Disciples*, which McBirnie calls an 'exhaustive ... study of early Christianity', (p.58) we learn that,

'Peter fled directly to Britain. This is affirmed by Cornelius Lapidus in his work *Argumentum Epistolae St. Pauli ad Romanos*, in which he answers the question as to why St. Paul does not salute St. Peter in his Epistle to the Romans. He replies: "Peter, banished with the rest of the Jews from Rome, by the edict of Claudius, was absent in Britain"'.

Author McBirnie quotes George F. Jowett at length.

'Peter, acting as a freelance missionary, stemming from Avalon, preached in Britain during the Caradoc-Claudian war. While in Britain he became well acquainted with the members of the two branches of the Royal Silurian House of Arviragus and Caractacus. He knew the children of Caractacus years before they went into Roman captivity. Years after, when the British family became well established in Rome, he was naturally attracted to the home of the Pudens at the Palatium Britannicum ... There is plenty of evidence to show that Peter visited Britain and Gaul several times during his lifetime, his last visit to Britain taking place shortly before his final arrest and crucifixion in Nero's circus at Rome ... Of his visits to Britain we have the corroboration of Eusebius Pamphili, AD 306, whom Simon Metaphrastes quotes as saying, "St. Peter to have been in Britain as well as in Rome"'.

Further proof of Peter's sojourn in Britain was brought to the light of day in recent times when an ancient time-worn monument was excavated at Whithorn. It is a rough-hewn stone standing 4 feet high by 15 inches wide. On the face of this tablet is an inscription that reads: "Locvs Sancti Petri Apvstoli" or "The Place of St. Peter the Apostle"'.

McBirnie pp 58-59

The Apostle Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland. McBirnie declares (p. 80),

'There are some impressive traditions about the later ministry of Andrew. One, recorded by Eusebius (HE III, 1, 1) is that he went to Scythia ... in the area around the Black Sea ... According to the *Martyrdom of St. Andrew* he was stoned and crucified in Scythia'.

Interestingly, the *Scottish Declaration of Independence* of AD 1320 states that the ancestors of the Scots 'journeyed from Greater Scythia', which may provide the link between the Apostle Andrew and Scotland.

'James of Zebedee is the subject of the book, *The Great Pilgrimage of the Middle Ages* by Helmut Nell, which quotes historian Sir Thomas Kendrick: "In the early ninth century, perhaps somewhere about the year 810, three bodies, believed to be those of the apostle, St. James the Greater, and two of his disciples, were found in the far-north-western corner of Spain by Teodomir, Bishop of Iria Flavia ... the Bollandists accepted as a fact that the Apostle had conducted a mission to Spain during his lifetime ... and Spain's renowned ecclesiastical historian, Enrique Florez, agreed with their verdict, and Benedict XIV endorsed it"'.  
(McBirnie, pp 94-96)

J.W. Taylor, in *The Coming of the Saints* states,

Now, there are some very old traditions, reaching back to the earliest centuries ... In these St. James is represented as a distant traveller in the West in the very earliest years after Christ, and as a missionary pioneer in Sardinia and in Spain'.  
(*ibid.*, p.99)

The Apostle Philip, according to McBirnie is,

'The only Apostle whom tradition associates with France ... Isidore, Archbishop of Seville, AD 600-636, whom Dr. William Smith's *A Dictionary of Christian Biography* ... calls "undoubtedly the greatest man of his time in the Church of Spain... a voluminous writer of great learning..." wrote thus: "Philip of the city Bethsaida, whence also came Peter, preached Christ to the Gauls, and brought barbarous and neighbouring nations, seated in darkness and close to the swelling ocean, to the light of knowledge and port of faith" (*ibid.* pp. 126-127). The Apostle Bartholomew laboured in the area around the south end of the Caspian Sea ... The place of his death, called in New Testament times Albanopolis, is now Derbend. This was the sea gate through which the wild horsemen of the Steppes (Scythians) ... later rode down upon civilised communities'.  
(*ibid.* pp 139-140)

This was the Caucasus Mountain gateway for early European tribes, including Parthians and Scythians, who entered Europe from the Mid-East.

Matthew is associated with Parthia according to Paulinus of Nola, an area which is also known as Asiatic Ethiopia. St. Ambrose referred to it as 'Persia' (ibid. pp 176-177). It is an area south of the Caspian Sea which had been settled with exiled Israelites according to author Steven Collins in his interesting book, *Parthia*.

### **Simon Zealotes preached in Britain.**

'Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople and Byzantine historian, AD 758-829, wrote (book II, c. 40): "Simon, born in Cana of Galilee ... taught to the Occidental Sea, and the Isles called Britanniae". ... the Greek church celebrates St. Simon's Day on May 10, and supports the statements of his having preached and been martyred in Britain (*Annales Ecclesiastici*, AD 44).' (ibid, pp .212-213)

Jude Thaddeus preached in Mesopotamia as well as Persia (Parthia) and suffered martyrdom in Syria.

James, Son of Alphaeus, was stoned to death by the Jews in Jerusalem, according to a study by E.A. Wallis Budgen (p.193).

### **The Apostle Thomas is associated with India and the East.**

The above overview of McBirnie's book does not do justice to the tremendous amount of historical material he gathered in 312 well-researched pages. There is indeed much more supporting evidence presented concerning each apostle. It is unfortunate that McBirnie's work is out-of-print, but several of the books upon which he based his study have been reprinted and are available from CBIA.

What is particularly interesting is that with the exception of traditions concerning the Apostle Thomas, most of the other apostles were associated with ministries to Europe, including Britain and Gaul. (Even the Parthians migrated to Europe after the fall of their empire, as documented in Steven Collins' book, *Parthia*.) It is very doubtful that this is all by accident or happenstance, but rather part of the Divine Plan in which the Master, Jesus Christ, sent His apostles to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, as He so clearly stated in Matthew ch.10 vv 5-6. It is also not by accident that these same peoples so willingly accepted the Gospel invitation and became in truth, Christendom, or Christ's kingdom on earth.

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