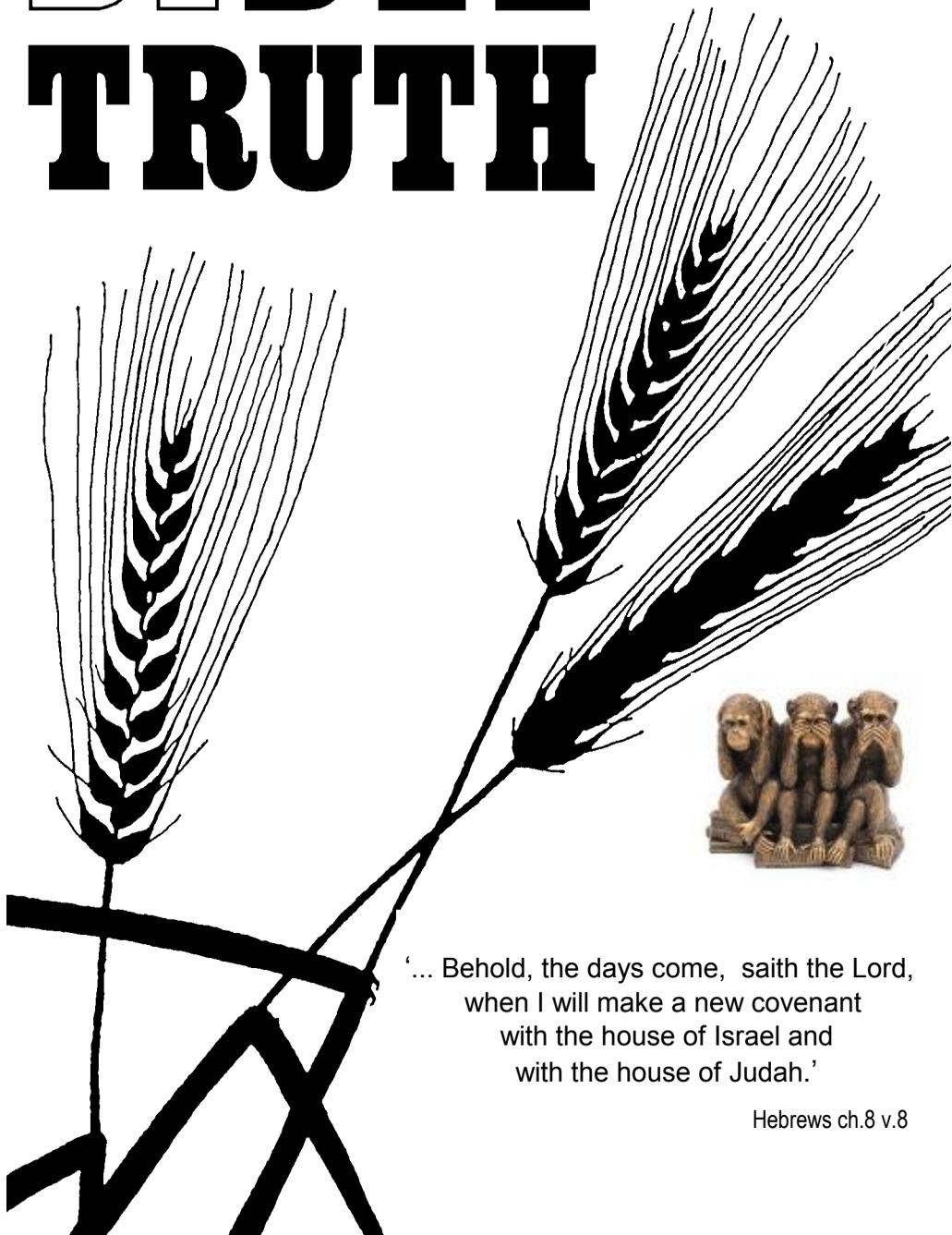


# BIBLE TRUTH

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‘... 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.’

Hebrews ch.8 v.8

# *The Old Testament Roots of Celtic Mythology*

## **FOUNDATIONS OF DRUIDISM IN THE BIBLE**

**By Pastor Dr Jory Brooks**



The mythology of Druidism is said to have been brought to England in ancient times by Hu Gadarn Hysicion, who came from the east with a party of colonists and built Stonehenge. Who were these Eastern colonists? Historians tell us that Phoenician-speaking peoples colonized the British Isles in early times. The Israelites, a seafaring people, spoke a Phoenician dialect, and the early history of these two peoples is intertwined. The Bible speaks of Israelites sending ‘ships to Tarshish’, or Spain, and Solomon’s navy sailed with the Phoenicians on their trade and colonizing expeditions.

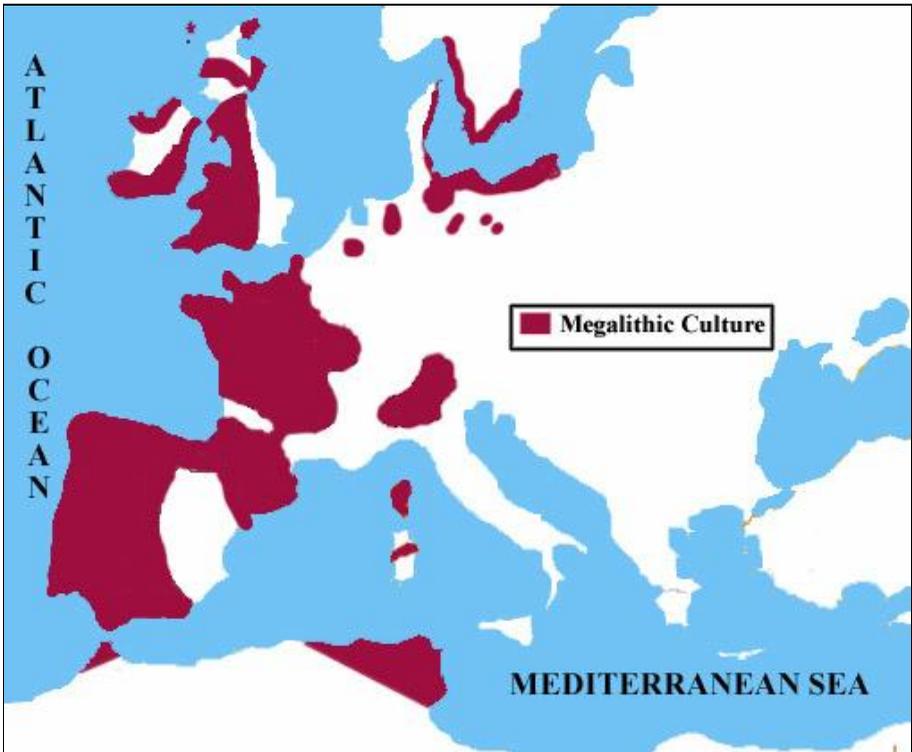
‘For the king’s ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.’

2 Chronicles ch.9 v.21

‘Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee.’

Isaiah ch.60 v.9

Phoenician-speaking peoples, including Israelites, colonized Spain and Britain in ancient times, mining ores such as silver, iron, tin, and lead, as we document in our tract, *Ancient Hebrew Sea Migrations*. The Druidic religion of early Britain and Ireland should therefore exhibit signs of both Hebrew and Phoenician origins.



## HEBREW RELIGION

Celtic scholar, John Daniel, in his book, *The Druidic Idea of God*, lists the Druidic terms for the Deity and their meaning as follows.

CELI	THE INVISIBLE ONE
IOR	THE ETERNAL
DUW	COMMONLY TRANSLATED AS GOD; LITERALLY AS HE WHO WILLS
RHEEN	ALL-PERVADING SPIRIT
PERYL	AUTHOR OF EXISTENCE
DOFYDD	GOVERNOR
DEON	DISTRIBUTOR
YR HEN DDIHENYDD	ETERNALLY ANCIENT ONE, OR 'ANCIENT OF DAYS'

Mr. Daniels remarks,

‘Nobody can fail to see in these terms a similarity to the common phraseology of the Christian Church ... There is such perfect consonance between these [Celtic] appellations of the Deity and those of Biblical theology, that it is strange anyone should so fail to see it ...’.

The Druidic Idea of God p.4

‘I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. ... I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. ... Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.’

Daniel ch.7 vv 9,13 & 22

Daniels also points out that the Celtic name for the Deity was IAO, pronounced, ‘Yah-o’, which is virtually identical to the Hebrew name for God, ‘Yah’ or ‘Yahu’. In early alphabets, letters represented ideas. In Hebrew, ‘aleph’ the first letter, stood for an ox; ‘bet’ symbolised a house, ‘gimel’ was a camel, ‘dalet’ a door, and so on. Similarly, in Celtic the letter ‘I’ stood for the future, ‘A’ represented the present and ‘O’ stood for the past (ibid pp 16-17). Thus, the Druidic name for God, ‘IAO’ literally meant ‘the Everliving’, a being in existence past, present, and future. This is the exact definition given by scholars for the name of the Hebrew God, ‘Yahu’ or ‘Yahweh’. In fact, the *Ferrar Fenton Bible* consistently translates the name of God as ‘the Everliving’. The identity of the Celtic and Hebrew Deities is obvious, for,

‘... there can hardly be a question that the three letters were originally no other name than IAO, the Latinized form... of the Hebrew [Yah or Yahu]; and that such was the rendering of that name, we have the authority of several ancient writers. Diodorus Siculus says it was related amongst the Jews, that Moses attributed the framing of the laws to the God called IAO and Theodoret states that God was by the Jews called IAO’.

Ibid p.12

In addition, the Druidic ‘IAO’ was called the ‘Unutterable Name’, again identical to the Hebrew, ‘Yah’. Daniels also states the following.

‘So to the Druids there was a secret name for the Deity, which was unutterable (‘Aflafar’) to all but the most privileged of their

order, and was symbolized by the three Bardic characters representing the vowels IAO'.

ibid p.11

With such close resemblances between the Celtic and the Hebrew Deity, it is not surprising that England was converted without the shedding of a single drop of blood. There is no record of martyrdom for any early Christian missionary, and it has been truly said that Druidism was only accepting a fuller, better revelation through the adoption of Christianity!

The Druidic priests, like the Levitical priests of the Bible, were exempt from military service. The Druidic and Levitical priests were both divided into three classes. Even the Druidic ceremonial robes remind one of the Mosaic priests, with their breastplates of gold and jewels. The Druidic rituals, like the Old Testament Levitical, included the sacrifice of sheep, oxen, and goats, but no idol worship.



#### *DRUIDIC JEWEL*

*This jewel supposed to have been the breastplate of an archdruid, was found near the neck of a skeleton, on opening a barrow at Kingston, Bareham Down near Canterbury.*

*It is made of gold, encrusted with garnets and turquoises and measures 3½ inches in diameter.*

In the Bible, the prophet Jeremiah instructed scattered Israel to do the following.

‘Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities.’

Jeremiah ch.31 v.21

Thus we find a trail of unhewn stone monuments, called dolmens, menhirs, and cromlechs, leading from Palestine across Europe, and into the British Isles, where they were used in worship by the Druidic priests.



Neolithic standing stones (Menee) erected by the pre-Celts prior to 2,500 BC, at Carnac beside the Gulf of Morbihan on the south coast of Brittany near the medieval town of Vannes.



**SPINSTERS ROCK**  
A NEOLITHIC BURIAL CHAMBER ERECTED  
AROUND 3500-2500 B.C.  
THE CHAMBER PROBABLY CONTAINED MANY  
BURIALS AND WOULD ORIGINALLY HAVE BEEN  
COVERED BY A LONG EARTHEN MOUND.  
THE STONES FELL DOWN IN 1862 AND WERE  
RE-ERECTED IN THE SAME YEAR.  
TRADITIONALLY THE MONUMENT WAS  
ERECTED BY THREE SPINSTERS  
ONE MORNING BEFORE BREAKFAST.

Spinster's Rock cromlech is located on the northern slopes of Dartmoor between Chagford and Drewsteignton

'And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon.'

Genesis ch.35 v.14

In England, according to Isabel Hill Elder's book, *Celt, Druid, and Culdee*, each stone monument was called a 'Si'on' in the ancient Celtic language. The similarity between this and the Hebrew word 'Zion', meaning a stone fortress, is striking. Truly, these are additional witnesses to the identity of the House of Israel in the world today.

## **BAAL WORSHIP**

But the religious customs of the Covenant people became corrupted with the religion of the Phoenician Canaanites. The Prophet Elijah's challenge of the Hebrew priests of Baal is one of the most moving Bible accounts (see I Kings ch.18 vv 18-40). The Bible indicates that at one time the majority of Hebrew priests and people followed the rituals of Baal worship. Noted 19th century antiquarian, Sir William Betham, made an exhaustive study of the ancient Celtic peoples, and states this in his book, *The Gael and Cimbri*.

'Baal... has the precise meaning in Gaelic as in Phoenician -- the lord of heaven.'

Ibid p. 226

Many customs hearken back to Palestine, as well. Even the cakes which the idolatrous Jews, in imitation of the Phoenicians, made in honour of the Queen of Heaven are still the most popular cake in Ireland under the old name of the 'barn-brack', or 'speckled cake'. Ancient customs and rituals are persistent among mankind, and therefore provide tangible evidence of a people's origins, even where no written proof survives. Betham comments,

'Thus we see at this day, fires lighted up in Ireland, on the eve of the summer solstice and the equinoxes, to the Phoenician god, Baal, and even called Baal's fire, baaltinnes, though the object of veneration be forgotten ...' .

Ibid p. 222-223

In addition, archaeological proof points to a Hebrew-Phoenician origin of the Britons and Irish. Betham relates, 'On an altar-stone, dug up near Kirby Thore, in Westmorland, is this inscription'.

'DEO BEL ATUCADRO LIB[ERUM] VOTUM. FECIT IOLUS.'

The text translates as follows.

'To the god Baal, the friend of man, lolus made his free vow.'

Numerous other stone altars to Phoenician gods, which have been discovered in Britain, Ireland, and Gaul, are discussed and

translated in Betham's work. Some of the principal finds include altar-stones found in Northumbria and other parts of Britain. He states that these ancient monuments to 'Baal, by the ancient British ... are unanswerable evidences of the identity of the people of the two islands i.e. Britain and Ireland and Gaul, which the most unwilling and incredulous cavalier etymologies, can scarcely refuse to receive as conclusive. It proves more, for it shows an identity of the deities of the Celtæ and the [Hebrew]-Phoenicians' (see pp 228-229).

Numerous other parallels exist between Celtic and Hebrew-Canaanite worship, including mystic well-worship, worship of sacred stones, and the veneration of the autumnal equinoxes. In fact, both the Canaanites and Celts practiced autumnal sacrifices to Baal, which the Celts called, 'Baal-tinnes', as previously mentioned.

## **AVEN**

Aven was another of the deities of the Phoenician Canaanites, and temples to this god were called, 'Beth-Aven' or 'house of Aven'. The idolatrous Israelites also had adopted worship of this false god, as we read in the following.

'Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend; and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Bethaven, nor swear, The LORD liveth. For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer: now the LORD will feed them as a lamb in a large place. Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.'

Hosea ch.4 v 15-17

Israelite worship of this god was so pervasive, that the prophet Isaiah used the word, 'Aven', to signify an idol in general.

'... he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol.'

Isaiah ch.66 v.3

All idols are vanity, and Aven itself came to have a secondary meaning of vanity. Since this so-called god was no god at all, the idolaters were literally worshipping nothing! The Apostle Paul picks up on this theme.

'... we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.'

I Corinthians ch.8 v.4

There are five rivers Avon in Britain, of which three pass through Gloucestershire, where Celtic worship of this god was centered. In the same English district is an old town named Avening. The 'ing' suffix means the place of, so Avening is the place of Aven. Historian Samuel Lysons, in *Our British Ancestors* writes,

'The worship at Beth-Aven, in Canaan, and that of Avening in Gloucestershire, and that of Aven, Heliopolis, or Baal bec, were all identical. The stone altars, the high place, the calves' bones discovered there, mark the similarity'.

Ibid 123

## **MOLOCH AND CHIUN**

The Canaanite god and goddess, Moloch and Chiun, are mentioned in connection with Israel's worship by the prophet Amos.

'But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves. Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the LORD, whose name is The God of hosts.'

Amos ch.5 vv 26-27

At Windmill Hill, near Avebury in Wiltshire, England, there are evidences of Druidical worship, but no windmill. 'Win' is the Celtic word for 'eye', and 'Win-Melk' is the 'eye of Moloch'. Dr Maurice, in *Indian Antiquities* writes,

'the Druids worshipped the sun under the title of Moloch, so we are certain that worship was derived to them from their Eastern ancestors'.

The British towns Melch-bourne in Bedfordshire, and Melc-combe in Dorset, both retain evidence of the worship of Moloch in early times.

Similarly, the goddess Chiun was worshipped by the idolatrous Canaanites and the Israelites who followed their custom. Chiun was the moon goddess, and was considered so important that she was called the Queen of Heaven. In fact, it is from this word 'Chiun', that we derive our English word queen. The Prophet Jeremiah mentions worship of this goddess several times. He laments Israel's worship of her, saying,

'The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger'.

Jeremiah ch.7 v.18 (See also Jeremiah ch. 44 vv 17-25)

The goddess Chiun had her adherents in Britain also, as seen in the name of the famous king, Cuno-bel-inus, whose name combines the worship of both Chiun and Bel. Similarly, Chiun is seen in the early British names Cunedag, Cingetorix, Conan, and Maglo-cunus.

## **SUN WORSHIP: AL**

The Hebrew word, 'Al' signifies the sun and is equivalent to the Phoenician 'Hal', the Greek 'Halios', Babylonian 'Il', and Celto-British 'Heaul'. Mallet's *Northern Antiquities* states,

'All Celtic nations have been accustomed to the worship of the sun ... It was a custom that everywhere prevailed in ancient times to celebrate a feast at the winter solstice, by which men testified their joy at seeing this great luminary return again to this part of the heavens. This was the greatest solemnity of the year. They called it, in many places, Yole or Yuul, from the word Hiaul, which even at this day signifies the sun in the languages of the Bas-Bretagne and Cornwall'.

vol.2, p.68

Christmas is still called Yule. A Christmas holiday beer 'Ale', may be from the same root. Holly and Holy come from the word 'heaul' meaning 'to hallow', to 'deem sacred', with roots to the Hebrew 'El' which means 'God'. The German words 'heilig' and 'ale' mean 'to swear', to call on the name of God. The words 'all', 'whole', and 'heal', may be related to this.

The Hebrew name for the sun appears in many places in Britain with names beginning with 'Al', 'Ai', 'Ayl', 'Hal', 'Hayl' and the like. There are many examples, including Albury, Albourne, Alcester, Alby, Althorp, Alton, Allington, Allerton, Alford, Allenby, Alsop, and dozens more.

## **AUN OR ON**

In Genesis we read the following.

'And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.'

Genesis ch.41 v.45

Again in Genesis we are told,

'And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him'.

Genesis ch.46 v.20 (See also ch.41 v.50)

The word 'On' signifies the sun and is derived from the Hebrew 'Aun', Assyrian 'Anu', Babylonian 'Aunu', Celto-British 'On', and the Greek 'On'. The ancient Celtic poet, Taliesin, is quoted in Davies' *British Druids* as saying,

'Even the sovereign On, the ancient, the generous feeder'. p.527

Historian George Rawlinson states,

'Aunu signified 'the god', and was no doubt in use among the primitive Babylonians from the very earliest times'.

Herodotus, Essay x, vol.1, p. 591

Who was this Asenath, the daughter of Potipherah the priest of On, whom the Biblical patriarch Joseph married? It is popular teaching today to say because Asenath dwelled in Egypt, that therefore Joseph married a Negro. But the fact that her family were sun-worshippers worshipping On, the Semitic sun-god, is proof positive of a Semitic identity.

It is from this word, 'On' that we derive the Latin 'annus', meaning a year, from the annual solar revolution and the English, 'annual'. Samuel Lysons states,

'That Aven and On were the same, is shown by the Greek translation of Beth-aven as 'the house of On'. Heliopolis in Egypt was at different periods called Ain, Aven, and On. Possibly our word Evening, Dutch 'Avond' and German 'Abend' may represent Aven, as the declining sun'.

ibid., pp 238-239

British place-names showing early sun-worship include Ansley, Anston, Anslow, Ancoats, Ancaster (Caer An), Ancroft, Anford, Anwick, Avon, Avening, Arran, and many others. Concerning this last location, a circle of Druidic stones with a cromlech in the centre at Arran indicates sun worship.

## **FURTHER EVIDENCES**

British antiquarian, Aylett Sammes, writing in 1676, noted that 'the customs, religion, idols, offices, and dignities of the ancient Britons are all clearly Phoenician'. John Pinkerton, in his *Enquiry Into The History Of Scotland* (1789), also states that Druidism was directly descended from the Phoenicians, while British antiquarian William Stukely, in the book *Stonehenge*, believed that it had the marks of Israelite worship and culture.

Stukely pointed out Old Testament references to oaks, which gave these trees symbolic or mystical attributes. Abraham's altar of sacrifice was prepared by the oak of Moreh.

'And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.'

Genesis ch.12 vv 6-7

'They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks ...'

Hosea ch.4 v.13

The importance of worship under oaks in Druidism is well known. Modern Celtic scholar, John King, in his book, *The Celtic Druids' Year*, adds, 'The Hebrew word for oak also means oath, and there is evidence that the oak signified a burial place. The golden calf or bull worshipped as an idol by the Israelites has its counterpart in the Druidical image of the god Hu Gadarn, or Hu the Mighty, who, like Noah, survived the deluge and first brought the skill of ploughing to mankind. Dibbuks, demons and lesser deities, some of which might seem to correlate to Celtic spiritual figures, have been pushed into the background by contemporary Judaism' (p.26). Thus the Hebrew connection is little-known but factual.

Perhaps we can do no better in summing up our study than to quote the venerable Sir William Betham, 'The connection of this [Hebrew-Canaanite] worship with the historical traditions of the Pagan Irish is so evident, and so extensive, that it ... strongly illustrates the [Biblical] account of the progress of population from the plains of Sennaar [i.e. in the Middle-East] to the western extremities of Europe ...' (p. 242). This is obvious, for no one but God's people exhibited the peculiar mix of true and false religion seen in the early Celts.