

The Islands of The Sea

Many of us have wondered about the well-known hymn, "Jerusalem":

"And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green,
And was the Holy lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?"... with obvious reference to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Anyone who has been to Glastonbury, in Somerset, UK, knows the answer. Jesus is there believed to have arrived in Glastonbury with his uncle Joseph of Arimathea, on one of His uncle's trading ships, for he was a wealthy tin merchant, who supplied the Roman army with tin from that region for their bronze weapons, and in those days the sea reached right up to the town. There He is believed to have built the first wattle and Daub church, which was eventually encased and survived for many years.

But where do we see any Bible evidence that points to the British Isles? In fact there are many references, because it is known that Israel, taken away in captivity by the Assyrians in the 700's BC, finally migrated to the north and west, and in the form of the Tribes, settled on the coasts of Europe and in the islands offshore known as Hibernia, Scotia and Britannia. Ephraim largely occupied the islands known today as the UK.

Israel had always had seafaring members, led by the tribe of Dan, who joined with their neighbours the Phoenicians in their far-flung trading in all directions, as well as Asher and Zebulun, and they communicated with these islands in the west which had been colonised by Israelites soon after the Exodus. So, we see such references as Isaiah 24: 14-16, '**Those yonder lift up their voice, they sing for joy; For the majesty of the LORD they shout from the sea: Therefore glorify ye the LORD in the regions of light, Even the name of the LORD, the God of Israel, in the isles of the sea. From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs: 'Glory to the righteous.'**' Isaiah 41:1,5, '**Keep silence before Me, O islands, And let the peoples renew their strength; Let them draw near, then let them speak; Let us come near together to judgment. The isles saw, and feared; The ends of the earth trembled; They drew near, and came**'. JPS Tanakh.

These isles are found 'at the ends of the earth,' or 'the uttermost part of the earth' - the Ultima Thule, as the Roman soldiers shivering on Hadrian's Wall would later call it. These islands then, could not be the familiar islands of the Mediterranean Sea. They are the 'isles of the sea' and 'sea' and 'west' are, in Hebrew, the same word, 3220, so this can equally be translated 'isles of the west', in 'the uttermost parts of the earth.'

There is a time coming when a defeated British remnant will be re-gathered to the Promised Land from the distant lands where they have been held in slavery for their sins, including from these isles to the north and west from Jerusalem, as the Revised Standard Version's Apocrypha has it. Isaiah 11:11,

'**And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the isles of the sea.**'

And Jeremiah 31:8-10, '**Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping,**

and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and **Ephraim** is my firstborn.

Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it **in the isles afar off**, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.

It will be a second Exodus as the remnant of Israel's lost Tribes are gently gathered in by Jesus Christ and His Bride, still traumatised after their shocking experiences of the last seven years. They will come from the isles and as far as Australia, wherever the British have been scattered, Isaiah 49:1,12, 'Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.'

Only then, after war, famine, disease and slavery, will most of the remnant of the British Isles repent, and be allowed into the greatly expanded Promised Land, with their fellow Israelites, to learn the way which results in peace, health, and prosperity, before they at last return to their isles, this time to live by God's Laws. Isaiah 42:4, 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.'

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