

# Appendix 11c: Joseph of Arimathea and the Line of Nathan-The Throne of Britain: Its Biblical Origin and Future

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## Twelve hides of land

We may also notice that Joseph's religious commission appears to have obtained substantial favor with the British authorities: "King Arviragus [whichever king he actually was] is recorded as having granted to Joseph and his followers, 'twelve hides' of land (about 1900 acres), tax free, in 'Ynis-witrin' ["Isle of Glass"—i.e., Glastonbury] . . ." Confirmation of this Royal Charter is found in the official Domesday Book of Britain [the national survey commissioned by William the Conqueror] (A.D. 1086 which states: ' . . . This Glastonbury Church possesses, in its own villa XII hides of land which have never paid tax" (Domesday Survey folio p. 249b)" (Capt, p. 41).

It could well be that this granting of territory is when the "interpolated" date of A.D. 63 actually applied to. Perhaps Joseph and his company had settled in the Glastonbury area upon their arrival in 37 but weren't actually given the land there until this later time. Or perhaps Joseph had come on his own or with just a few people in 37, went back to the Holy Land, and came back with others at this later time of 63. In the intervening years, Rome would have invaded the island again starting in 43, as we've already seen. This would frankly have been a good reason to leave Britain. But amazingly, the Romans were stopped from conquering the western extremes of Britain by Boudicca's rebellion of 61. The rebellion also freed the part of the island where Glastonbury was from Roman dominion—and the area continued under British sovereignty, then, for almost two decades. It is interesting to note that the year 63, when the land grant to Joseph is supposed to have occurred, came just two years after the rebellion. Historian Geoffrey Ashe, who is rather skeptical of the Joseph legends, admits regarding the story of Joseph and his company settling at Glastonbury in Somerset: "What is so piquant is that whoever started the tale should have hit so neatly on a time when a British chief may actually have been holding central Somerset, and able to give the wanderers a haven. Until the Cadbury hillfort [nearby, thought by some to later be the Camelot of Arthur] was excavated, there was no evidence for unconquered Britons in that area so long after the [Roman] invasion. A linkage of legends may be hinted at in the fact that Bran appears, as Bron or Brons, accompanying Joseph in romances of the Holy Grail. These stories, and the passage in Gildas, all seem to be hovering round a notion that there were Christians in Britain—very few, with no serious impact—in the immediate post-Boudicca phase" (Kings and Queens of Early Britain, 1982, 1990, p. 45).

Yet they might have had quite an impact. Though disputed, the nation may have been heavily Christianized within a few decades by what was likely the same royal family in the person of King Lucius—and, if that's so, likely due in part to groundwork laid at Glastonbury. Of course, we don't know how faithful to the truth the later converts would have been. In that regard, it is

interesting to note what happened 500 years later when the Roman Catholic priest Augustine came to “convert” the British, who still held to their own form of Christianity.

The Anglo-Saxon historian Bede, himself a Catholic, wrote regarding the year 603: “Now the Britons did not keep Easter [Latin Pascha, i.e., Passover] at the correct time but between the fourteenth and twentieth days of the moon . . . Furthermore, certain other of their customs were at variance with the universal practice of the Church. But despite protracted discussions, neither the prayers, advice, or censures of Augustine and his companions could obtain the compliance of the Britons, who stubbornly preferred their own customs to those in universal use among Christian [i.e., Catholic] Churches” (A History of the English Church and People, 731, Book 2, chap. 1; compare chap. 19; Book 3, chap. 25 translated by Leo Sherley-Price, 1955).

Bede then describes how the British started to make an about-face after Augustine supposedly performed a miracle of healing—yet kept holding to their old ways. In any case, the practice described above appears to have been derived, at least in part, from the original apostles, who observed the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread from the 14th to the 21st day of the first month of the Hebrew calendar (see Leviticus 23:4-8; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8; and our free booklet God’s Holy Day Plan). Considering the apostasy that enveloped most of the Christian world by the second century, Britain’s isolated continuance in such early Church practices adds to the strong likelihood that the gospel was preached in the island by some of Christ’s early followers.

### **Other references**

Thus, with such prevalent traditions surrounding Joseph of Arimathea’s presence in southern England in the first century A.D., and numerous corroborating factors, it seems quite probable—though we may not be able to know the specifics of what happened—that he really was there.

There are numerous sources available that provide even further corroborative evidence to that effect. A few are given here, some that have already been cited. Please bear in mind that a recommendation of outside sources for further study is not an endorsement of all that is contained within these sources. Indeed there are statements in the referenced material with which we would strongly disagree. Nevertheless, the following items do contain valuable and pertinent information on the subject at hand and also refer to other sources:

- Richard W. Morgan, St. Paul in Britain, 1860, 1984 (available to order from [www.artisanpublishers.com](http://www.artisanpublishers.com) or [www.britishisrael.co.uk/booklist.htm](http://www.britishisrael.co.uk/booklist.htm))
- E. Raymond Capt, Traditions of Glastonbury, 1987 (available to order from [www.artisanpublishers.com](http://www.artisanpublishers.com) or [www.britishisrael.co.uk/booklist.htm](http://www.britishisrael.co.uk/booklist.htm))

- Herman L. Hoeh, “Where Did the Twelve Apostles Go?” (on-line at [www.british-israel.ca/Where.htm](http://www.british-israel.ca/Where.htm)).
- Robert Jones, Joseph of Arimathea: Biblical and Legendary Accounts, 1997 (on-line at [www.sundayschoolcourses.com/joseph/joscont.htm](http://www.sundayschoolcourses.com/joseph/joscont.htm))
- Arthur Eedle, “Amazing Historical Evidence,” The Prophetic Telegraph, No. 76 (on-line at [www.oxleigh.freeseve.co.uk/pt76.htm](http://www.oxleigh.freeseve.co.uk/pt76.htm))
- Arthur Eedle, “The Tin Islands,” The Prophetic Telegraph, No. 77 (on-line at [www.oxleigh.freeseve.co.uk/pt77.htm](http://www.oxleigh.freeseve.co.uk/pt77.htm))
- John Keyser, “Joseph of Arimathea and David’s Throne in Britain,” Hope of Israel Ministries (on-line at [hope-of-israel.org/i000111a.htm](http://hope-of-israel.org/i000111a.htm)).
- W.M.H. Milner, The Royal House of Britain: An Enduring Dynasty, 1902, 1964 (available to order from [www.britishisrael.co.uk/booklist.htm](http://www.britishisrael.co.uk/booklist.htm))

### **Joseph founds dynasties?**

What, then, does all of this have to do with the throne of David? How does it actually relate to the British monarchy? Consider that Joseph’s proclamation of the gospel would have included the fact that Jesus was of the royal line of David—and, if Joseph were Jesus’ great uncle, the British would have understood him to be royalty as well. Indeed, from their prior dealings with this merchant prince, it is possible that the British kings already knew as much. They at least surely recognized him as a noble of great importance. In their eyes, this would have made him and his family candidates for intermarriage with British royalty.

In that light, it is remarkable to find in the grail stories that Joseph founded a line of kings. Most of the information in these stories is certainly fictitious—but there are probably some kernels of truth imbedded within them, as again is often the case with legends. Around 1212, Robert de Borron wrote in his work Joseph of Arimathea that Jesus appeared to Joseph and gave him the “secrets of the Savior,” which were only to be shared with the “family” of the grail. This is obviously fictional, but this “family” is prevalent in the stories. “Later, as Joseph is dying, the voice of the Holy Spirit speaks to him, telling him that he has established a lineage which will continue until, in a far-off time, one will come who shall achieve the Grail. This is [the Arthurian knight] Perceval” (John Matthews, King Arthur and the Grail Quest: Myth and Vision from Celtic Times to the Present, 1994, p. 127).

“In this same text we find reference to Joseph’s brother, Brons, who receives the name of ‘The Rich Fisherman’ after he feeds the company of the Grail from a single fish—a clearly enough

reference to the miracle of the loaves and fishes from biblical tradition. Interestingly, of course, Brons is a name which derives from Bran” (p. 89, emphasis added). Joseph is seen to be brother—at least related—to the British king Bran.

A slightly earlier work about Perceval, called *Parzival*, “was composed by a Bavarian knight named Wolfram von Eschenbach c. 1207 . . . [It] is vastly elaborated and threaded through with a huge and mysterious symbolic structure involving numerology and a precise organization of the chapters so that the story spirals inward to the centre . . . and outward again to the end. Much ink has been spilled in attempts to crack Wolfram’s ‘code’ and arrive at a deeper, more esoteric meaning within” (p. 114).

In Wolfram’s story, the “grail” is not a cup but a mysterious stone, which sustains its guardians—the lineage of the mystical grail family (pp. 128-130). Commenting on *Parzifal*, John Matthews, an acknowledged expert on Arthurian traditions, states: “Wolfram here [in a particular passage] seems to be speaking of a physical succession, perhaps even of an elite body of people who are bred to serve the Grail in a wholly calculated way. He also indicates that the disposition of the Grail lineage is a secret known only to the angels” (p. 130). A little later, the collection of Arthurian stories referred to as the *Vulgate Cycle* was published. In an introduction to its first book, *History of the Holy Grail*, “the focus of attention shifts rapidly from Joseph of Arimathea to his son Josephus and thence to a converted pagan prince named Nasciens. In a lengthy adventure, the latter finds himself on an island. A ship appears on which are a rich bed, a golden crown and sword of magnificent workmanship. Documents explain that these had once belonged to the biblical King David . . . The ship had been constructed by Solomon” (Matthews, p. 99). Again, this is clearly fictional—but the references to David and Solomon should pique our interest.

### **Secrets and corruptions**

In Wolfram’s *Parzifal*, the grail guardians are referred to as the “Templiesen,” which many have seen as a reference to the medieval Knights Templar, who ruled Jerusalem during the Crusades and established a network of castles throughout Europe. Though there is no actual proof, it is widely believed that Wolfram himself was a Templar and that he was hiding secret Templar knowledge in his work. Further, many identify the Templars as the source of Scottish Freemasonry. In that regard it is perhaps significant that most kings of Scotland and England have apparently been Masons and that one of the traditional Masonic beliefs is that the house of David was transferred to northwest Europe from the Holy Land, as noted in Algernon Herbert’s *Britannia After the Romans* (1849).

Some actually accuse the Masons of deceptively originating the idea of supposed connections between the house of David and the British monarchy. But although they may have recognized it early, they clearly did not manufacture all the evidence in this regard, which stands on its own merit. We certainly do not look to the Masons as the source of our beliefs on this matter. Rather, we look first and foremost to Scripture and then to secular history and widespread tradition, which support the link.

Anyway, with Wolfram's story as background, some have concluded that the "holy grail" of Christ's blood, represented by a stone, is actually the bloodline of David through the family of Jesus—from which the lineage of British kings has sprung. In fact, some have even argued that this royal bloodline came through Jesus Himself, whom they claim did not die on the cross but married Mary Magdalene and fathered children by her (the premise for the popular 1982 book *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* by Michael Baigent, Henry Lincoln and Richard Leigh). This teaching is, of course, contrary to Scripture and utterly nefarious—flying in the face of the whole purpose and plan of God.

Yet it could be a terrible corruption of something true and factual—as false doctrine often is. Perhaps the bloodline of David was transferred to Europe through Jesus' extended family and not Jesus Himself. Certainly we have seen evidence that the Solomonic line was transferred to Ireland at the time of Jeremiah. But this other transfer would involve the line of David's son Nathan. It should be noted that the royal transfer could not have come through Christ's brothers for, while they were of the line of both Solomon and Nathan, their lineage from Jeconiah through their father Joseph—which Jesus did not share—prevented them or their descendants from ruling (compare Matthew 1:6-16; Jeremiah 22:24-30). But other family on their mother's side would have sufficed—including Joseph of Arimathea.

To examine this possibility, we turn to the last source in our list above, *The Royal House of Britain: An Enduring Dynasty* by Milner. He mentions that King Arthur was descended from Arviragus (p. 28). It should be pointed out that Arthur has not been clearly identified historically. However, it is well accepted in scholarship that he actually existed as a British ruler of the fifth or sixth century—following the end of Roman rule. Since tribal leadership was maintained even during the period of the Romans, it is quite likely that Arthur was descended from the dynasties of the early Roman period.

Citing another source, Milner also notes: "We find in John of Glastonbury [mentioned earlier],' writes . . . W[alter] W. Skeat, in his *Joseph of Arimathea, or, The Romance of the Holy Grail* [1871], 'some verses and a couple of genealogies shewing King Arthur's descent [on his mother's side] from Joseph, which I here subjoin. "Helaius, nepos [nephew or grandson of] Joseph, genuit [begot] Josue. Josue genuit Aminadab . . . [and so on to Arthur].'" The second genealogy derives the husband of Arthur's sister from a 'Petrus' who was 'consanguineus [blood-related to] Joseph ab Armathia.' These independent lists prove [or at least help to substantiate] that Joseph did start dynasties in Britain. And here it may be noted that the original meaning of the Latin 'nepos' is not nephew but 'grandson'—see White and Riddle's *Latin Dictionary*, 1880 [as well as *The Classical Latin Dictionary*, 1941]" (pp. 28-29, footnote). Notice Joseph's supposed grandson Helaius in the genealogy. He seems to be synonymous with the Helias le Grose (Heli the Great) of the medieval romances. Geoffrey of Monmouth, in his *History of the Kings of Britain*, gave the name Heli to the father of Cassivelaunos, the British king at the time of Julius Caesar (Book 3, chap. 20). Yet this person was too early to have been a grandson of Joseph of Arimathea. Old Welsh tales mention a Beli the Great—whom many consider synonymous with Geoffrey's Heli.

## British relations to Mary?

Notice what historian Geoffrey Ashe says: “Medieval texts . . . such as the collection of Welsh tales called the Mabinogion, have preserved a fair amount [of Celtic mythical tradition] . . . Welsh legend, for instance, introduces Beli son of Manogan, a reputed ancestor of several royal families. Beli has no real relationship to chronology [in Ashe’s estimation]. He appears as king of Britain in the fourth century A.D., as a brother-in-law of the Virgin Mary, as the grandfather of another hero—Bran—who [it is supposed] must be earlier than that. But his name recalls Geoffrey’s Belinus [an earlier ruler], and there is solid evidence for a Celtic god called Belenus who is the common original” (p. 23). However, it should be noted that the Celtic root Bel just means “Lord”—as with the Hebrew Baal. Therefore, this could easily be a title for a ruler.

The relationship to Mary should certainly grab our attention. As should the mention of Bran—whom we have seen repeatedly associated with Joseph of Arimathea. Milner refers to an exhaustive work from 1900 called *The Welsh People*, by Oxford University professor John Rhys and David Brynmor Jones (still published).

He states: “To return now to Bran. The authors of *The Welsh People* above referred to cite the Mabinogion (a collection of old Welsh tales), as calling Bran ‘the son of Llyr (Lear) and Penardim, daughter of Beli, son of Mynogan.’ Penardim, however, they show to have been Beli’s sister and Beli the son of—not ‘Mynogan,’ but ‘The words translated ‘son of Mynogan’ were not to be found in the original of the Mabinogi,’ having been introduced by a subsequent hand, the actual words having been Beli maur, map Aun, An, or Anau, which occurs as Beli mabr m. Anna in one of the Pedigrees in Jesus College, MS. 20, supposed to be of the thirteenth century’—that is—‘Beli the great, Son of Anna’” (p. 27).

Rhys and Brynmor Jones translated another Welsh statement from the records as follows: “That Anna used to be said by the men of Egypt to be cousin to the Virgin Mary” (p. 27). This statement, they remark, is also made in the pedigree of Owen, son of Howel the Good: “Amalech, who was the son of Beli the Great, and Anna his [Beli’s] mother who was said to be cousin of the virgin Mary, mother of our Lord Jesus Christ” (translated from p. 27). Owen son of Howel is a reference to the Welsh king Owain (died 988), son of Hywel (916-950). From Owain descended the Tudor kings of England and, by multiple lineages, the present Queen Elizabeth (Patrick Montague-Smith, *The Royal Line of Succession with Genealogical Tables*, Pitkin, 1968, p. 23).

“This genealogy of Owen up to Anna is incorporated in the *Annales Cambriae* [The Annals of Cambria, i.e., of Wales] . . . published by the authority of the Lords Commissioners of H.M. Treasury (Longmans, 1860), under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. In the same place is recorded the pedigree of Owen’s mother, Elen, up to Constantine the Great and his Royal British mother, the Empress Helena, who on further research proves to have been eighth in descent from Bran the Blessed, son of Lear—and Penardim, sister of Beli, whose mother was Anna, ‘cousin of the Virgin Mary’” (Milner, pp. 27-28).

## Sorting out lineages

Now how could this Anna have been cousin to Mary? One answer is: If she were the daughter of Joseph of Arimathea. This would have made Beli the grandson of Joseph. The grandson of Joseph is referred to in the other genealogies as Heli—truly fascinating considering that the name of Joseph’s brother, Mary’s father, was Heli. Milner suggests that it may have been a family name.

This Beli would have been too late to be the one who fathered Cassivelaunos. In fact he even seems too late to be the uncle of Bran, as Milner and his sources suggest. This seems rather difficult to work into the little chronological understanding of the period we have—as it requires Joseph to have been unreasonably old even at the time of Christ’s death.

Perhaps the truth is that Anna was not the mother but the wife of Beli. The pedigree of Owen above could even be read that way: “Amalech, who was the son of Beli the Great, and Anna his [that is, Amalech’s] mother, who was said to be cousin of the virgin Mary.” Beli’s daughter Penardim may not have been the same one that married Lear—as the name Penardim means “Head Highest” and could have been a generic title for high queen. There are many possibilities.

Yet if there is any truth to this, it would seem to require that Joseph’s daughter married into the British royal family long prior to Christ’s death—perhaps closer to the time of Christ’s birth, in the early days of Joseph’s travels to Britain. It could even be that his daughter being royalty in Britain is what brought Joseph back to Britain seeking refuge in time of persecution. And perhaps this is what gained him such favor with the British rulers as we have seen.

We should also consider Joseph’s previously mentioned son, also named Joseph or Josephus. He too, if genuinely historical, seems to have been involved in founding dynasties. In any case, it is certainly possible that the Davidic bloodline of Nathan passed into the British royal lineage at this point—especially when we consider that the Romans conducted a purge of David’s house late in the first century, which no doubt prompted many Davidic descendants to flee to outlying areas of the Empire (see Appendix **12: “The Attempt to Destroy David’s Lineage”**).

## The Cerdic connection

Around 500 years later, the Angles and Saxons invaded the island and pushed the original Celtic British into its western recesses. People often see no dynastic continuity from the British to the Saxons. But there may have been. The question centers on a person named Cerdic (died 534). “Cerdic, the Saxon Chieftain who founded the Kingdom of Wessex, was also the virtual founder of the British Monarchy [or at least the English monarchy]” (Montague-Smith, p. 6).

Geoffrey Ashe explains: “The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland grew around England, which grew around Wessex, and the House of Windsor is still descended

from the West Saxon kings, through all interminglings of Scandinavians, Normans, Welsh, Scots, and Germans. Elizabeth II's first Wessex ancestor is Cerdic, who landed on the shore of Southampton Water with a grown-up son and five shiploads of followers. So says the AngloSaxon Chronicle, putting the event in 495. In other words, the Queen's pedigree goes back to someone whose life overlapped Arthur's.

“As history the Chronicle's early West Saxon entries carry even less weight than most, and the early line of West Saxon kings is dubious. But the founder, Cerdic, is certainly real, because no Saxon court genealogist would have invented him. His name is not Saxon at all but British [Celtic]. It appears in various forms, one of them being Ceredig [whence derives Cardigan], the name borne by the Clyde rulers, so that it was definitely a royal name among fifth-century Britons. Cerdic of Wessex may have had Saxon blood, seeing that Saxons accepted him as a leader; but he seems to have reckoned himself a Briton, because he gave his son a Celtic name too, Cynric” (The Discovery of King Arthur, 1985, pp. 196-197).

Ashe rejects Cerdic's Saxon pedigree, which names his father as Elesa (p. 198). However, he does offer the possibility of British-Saxon intermarriage. Perhaps Cerdic, the son of British nobility, married the daughter of the Saxon Elesa. Another source states concerning Cerdic's son:

“Cynric is a hybrid name; half British, half Saxon, suggesting he was of mixed blood . . . [Here] we see the distinguishing name affix ‘Cyn,’ as in Cynglas (Cuneglasus [whom some have reckoned as Arthur or closely related to Arthur]) and Cynfawr (Cunomoris [ruler of southwest Britain at the time]). Since ‘Cyn’ is the Welsh version of the Latin ‘Cun,’ this is further indication that Cynric was a member of the Cunedda family [ruling Wales and southwest Britain during that period], very possibly a relative of Cunomoris . . . It appears to have been common practice at the time to seal an alliance between Saxon and Briton families by marriage” (Graham Phillips and Martin Keatman, King Arthur: The True Story, 1992, pp. 148-149). Thus, like the various rulers of Wales, the pedigree of the first West Saxon rulers, from which all English monarchs have sprung, may also go back to Anna the cousin of Mary and possibly other members of Christ's immediate family.

### **David's house in Europe**

Indeed, there is another means of descent that could perhaps have made this possible. It is the fact that the lineage of Elesa, mentioned above, is traced back just eight generations to Woden or Odin (Montague-Smith, p. 5)—a genealogy often considered legendary but likely true. Though reckoned as a god, Odin was evidently an actual person of the second or third century descended from the Trojan line of Zerah-Judah—and from him descended many of the royal houses of Europe, including all those that have combined to produce the modern British royal family (see **Appendix 10: “The Family of Odin”**).

Milner mentions an ancient manuscript he and others inspected when it lay in the possession of the Herald's College of London—now called the College of Arms. “It is called on the back of

the binding ‘Pedigree of the Saxon Kings’” (p. 25). Milner explains that in this manuscript, “Frea, the wife of Odin, figures apparently as the daughter of Cadwallader, son of [early British] King Lucius, himself descended from Anna. Should this mean that she—Frea—was a daughter of that house, it follows that, through their mother, all the lines of Odin come from David. It is a fact, recorded by several early church historians, that Lucius left his kingly throne in Britain and became the evangelist of Switzerland and Bavaria. Frea might well have been his daughter or grand-daughter, settled in Central Europe, at the epoch of Odin’s historic march into the West” (p. 35).

We should also consider the possibility that the line of David became intertwined with the Zerah line at an even earlier point, as ancient Armenia’s rulers claimed descent from David and Solomon (see **Appendix 4: “The Colchis Connection”**).

In any event, it is entirely possible that not only from Zerah but even from David have the various royal families of Europe descended. Indeed, it would seem to be true anyway due to the intermarriage that we know took place in later ages between the British royal family and the royalty of other European nations. This is quite remarkable. It would even seem to give new insight to God’s punishment upon David for his great sin against God—wherein he committed adultery and murder (2 Samuel 11). God told him: “Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house” (12:10). Certainly this was true in David’s own lifetime. But it has also been true in the ages since. Europe has been wracked by war for centuries, its kings battling against each other over every reason imaginable—and these kings, we now learn, are all of the house of David. What a sad footnote to include in our picture of the glorious legacy of David’s throne.

It should serve as a warning of the devastating and often long-lasting consequences of sin. Finally, then, we have seen elsewhere how the Davidic line of Solomon (of Perez) was, in the days of Jeremiah, fused with Milesian royal line of Calcol (of Zerah). Now we see that the Davidic line of Nathan (of Perez) was, in the days of Joseph of Arimathea, very possibly fused with the line of the early British kings descended from Brutus, himself of the Trojan royal house of Darda (of Zerah). The Davidic lineage of Nathan was, it seems, doubly fused with the line of Zerah at the time of Odin. Finally, all these strands later became intertwined through a vast sea of intermarriages. Indeed, the lines had fused long before the dominant throne of David’s line was transferred from Scotland to Ireland.

Thus, it would appear that Queen Elizabeth and her family are many times over the descendants of Solomon and Nathan. But in the end, at the return of Jesus Christ, the Solomonic element in the throne will terminate. Solomon’s line will no longer be perpetuated. Rather, Jesus Christ, born of the line of Nathan and not of Solomon, will sit on the throne thereafter—to reign in glory forever and ever. The human corruption and infighting that has plagued David’s house will at long last be over. For Jesus Christ will enforce peace throughout all nations. What a wonderful world awaits.