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So WHERE did Joseph go — WHERE did he finally stop and do the Work of YEHOVAH God?

Researcher George Jowett notes:

How many of the disciples were with him [JOSEPH] during HIS SHORT STAY IN GAUL it is difficult to say. It is amazing how nonchalantly the records deal with this important matter. Various existing records agree in part with the Baronius record [Annales Ecclesiastici, vol. I, p.327], naming among the occupants of the castaway boat Mary Magdalene, Martha, the handmaiden Marcella, Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead, and Maximin the man whose sight Jesus restored. Then non-committally the report read, ‘AND OTHERS.’ — The Drama of the Lost Disciples, p.63.

A number of records state that PHILIP (one of the 12 disciples) was included in the phrase “and others.” There is a wealth of uncontested testimony proving that Philip went to Gaul where he received Joseph when he arrived at Marseilles, and APPOINTED HIM APOSTLE TO BRITAIN! It is well known that a great number of converts had left Palestine during the Saulian persecution — very probably on ships belonging to Joseph. Philip was one of them.

Not long after Joseph’s arrival in southern France, a British delegation arrived at Marseilles to greet him and extend an invitation for him to return with them to Britain. The delegation was sent by KING ARVIRAGUS and, through them, he offered Joseph lands, a safe haven and protection against Roman persecution. “Arviragus was prince of the noble SILURES OF BRITAIN, in the Dukedom of Cornwall. He was the son of King Cunobelinus, THE CYMBELINE OF SHAKESPEARE FAME, and cousin to the renowned British warrior-patriot, CARADOC, whom the Romans named CARACTACUS. Together they represented the ROYAL SILURIAN DYNASTY, the most powerful warrior kingdom in Britain, FROM WHOM THE TUDOR KINGS AND QUEENS OF ENGLAND HAD THEIR DESCENT” (The Drama of the Lost Disciples, p.68).

Joseph gladly accepted the British invitation and made ready to embark for Britain with a specially chosen group of companions. Philip, it is reported, consecrated Joseph in the year 36, and from then on Joseph of Arimathea became known as “THE APOSTLE TO BRITAIN.”

Without a doubt Joseph was attracted to the Sacred Isle of AVALON for reasons other than the opportunity to preach the gospel to the people of Britain. Evidently ARVIRAGUS AND JOSEPH WERE WELL KNOWN TO EACH OTHER prior to the delegation’s invitation, and

this is quite believable when we realize Joseph more than likely acquired many friends in the south of Britain during the years he looked after his mining interests in Cornwall and Somerset.

After leaving their friends behind in the Rhone Valley, Joseph and his new group of companions — twelve in all — headed along the great northern road to the north coast of France. We can retrace their journey step by step. From the city of Marseilles up the Rhone River as far as Arles or farther; then a journey of thirty days across Gaul, through the country of the Lemovices to the seacoast of Brittany; the stopover at Limoges; the arrival in Brittany at either Vannes or Morlaix and, finally, four days' sailing across the English Channel to Cornwall. Legend relates that after reaching the coast of Brittany, Joseph and his eleven fellow-travelers sailed from Morlaix to FALMOUTH in England. From here they continued on to Cornwall.

If we turn to the poem *Mort d'Arthur*, we find mentioned that Joseph, his son Josephes and the rest of the group arrived at a place called "SARRAS." In book xiii, cap.10 the narrative goes on to say that the "SARACENS" (of Sarras) under King Tolleme la Feintes were fighting against the Britons under King Evelake. Evidently King Evelake was a local leader belonging to one of the provinces of Britain, and the Saracen (Tolleme) "which was...a rich king and a mighty [one]," is related as marching to meet him, and the encounter seems to have taken place on the British side of the Channel. "Moreover — and this is of further interest — King Tolleme the 'Saracen' is said to have been the 'cousin of King Evelake, so that although they were at war with each other and apparently of different nationality, ties of marriage had taken place between the 'Saracens' and the ancestors of King Evelake" (*The Coming of the Saints*, pp.149-150).

Are not these "SARACENS" under the leadership of the wealthy King Tolleme none other than the JEWISH TIN WORKERS of Cornwall? We have already seen that the Jews of Cornwall "appear to have called themselves or were called by the Britons of Cornwall 'SARACENS.'"

The narrative in the poem goes on to say that the "Saracens" turned a deaf ear to the message of Joseph and his companions, however King Evelake and the Britons were kindly disposed towards him and were more or less won over by the teaching of Joseph and his son. Isn't that interesting?

From Cornwall two traditional routes are found in the legends of Glastonbury tracing Joseph and his group to their final destination. One tradition has the little group traveling OVERLAND from Cornwall to Avalon while, according to the other legend, "the refugees sailed around the southern tip of England, passing what is today known as 'Land's End.' Then following the west coast, they sailed northward to the Severn Sea. From there they entered the estuaries of the rivers Parrot and Brue. Following the River Brue eastward, they arrived at a little cluster of islands about twelve miles inland from the coast, JOSEPH'S

DESTINATION WAS THE ISLE OF AVALON, suitable as a quiet retreat...[and] a place they knew had already been hallowed by the presence of their Master [the Messiah]" (The Traditions of Glastonbury, pp.38-39).

The Royal Welcome

When Joseph and his companions arrived at Avalon, they were met by King Guiderius and his brother ARVIRAGUS — who was a king of the royal Silures of Britain. As we have seen, Joseph and Arviragus were old friends and, as a result of this friendship, the king gave Joseph and his companions TWELVE HIDES OF LAND — a hide for each disciple. Since each hide represented 160 acres, the sum total of the grant was 1,920 acres. It is an interesting fact that in the last century, when the United States of America was expanding westward, grants of land were given to settlers— 160 acres per person or family!

E. Raymond Capt writes about this grant of land to the refugees from the East:

King Arviragus is recorded as having granted to Joseph and his followers, “twelve hides” of land, tax free, in “Yniswitrin,” described as a marshy tract — afterwards called the “Isle of Avalon.” Confirmation of this Royal Charter is found in the official DOMESDAY BOOK of Britain (A.D. 1086) which states: “The Domus Dei, in the great monastery of Glastonbury, called the Secret of the Lord. This Glastonbury Church possesses, in its own villa XII hides of land which have never paid tax.” (Domesday Survey folio p.249b.) This notable act of the King gave the recipients many British concessions, including the right of citizenship with its privileges of freedom to pass unmolested from one district to another in time of war. [This “right” proved invaluable in the later preaching of the gospel to the British.] The grant was given to them as “Judean refugees.” (Quidam advanae — ‘certain strangers’ — old Latin. In Later Latin, “Culdich” or Anglicised, “Culdees.”) — The Traditions of Glastonbury, p.41.

At first, according to William of Malmsebury, Arviragus and his subjects were not receptive to the Gospel message preached by Joseph and his companions:

In the year of our Lord, 63 [actually, it was earlier], twelve holy missionaries, with Joseph of Arimathea (who had buried the Lord) at their head, came over to Britain, preaching the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. **THE KING OF THE COUNTRY AND HIS SUBJECTS REFUSED TO BECOME PROSELYTES TO THEIR TEACHING**, but in consideration that they had come a long journey, and being somewhat pleased with their soberness of life and unexceptional behaviour, the king, at their petition, gave them for their habitation a certain island bordering on this region, covered with trees and bramble bushes and surrounded by marshes, called Ynis-wytrin. — Written 1126 A.D. from “the writings of the ancients” which he found at Glastonbury Abbey.

Afterwards, however, Arviragus must have become converted because Hardyng’s Chronicle (a fifteenth-century writing based upon much earlier works) gives the following passage about Joseph and Arviragus:

Joseph converted this King Arviragus
By his preaching to know ye laws divine
And baptised him as write hath Nennius
The chronicler in Britain tongue full fyne
And to Christian laws made him incline.

With the gift of the twelve hides of land came the PROTECTION Arviragus offered against intrusion by the legions of Rome. During the middle of the first-century A.D. the countryside on both sides of the Severn was held by the British in comparative security, being OUTSIDE the main lines of Roman conquest.

It is a remarkable fact that despite the bitter determination of the Roman Empire to persecute, uproot and destroy everything that was Christian in Britain — despite the pillaging and burning of monasteries, churches and libraries by Roman, Saxon, Dane and Norman — not once was the sanctity of Avalon defiled. These are the lands which Roman writers referred to as “territory inaccessible to the Roman where Christ is taught.”

Behind the wall of protection formed by Arviragus and his Silurian warriors Joseph, and the disciples of the Messiah who frequently visited the area, were safe from harm, and free to preach and teach the Kingdom of YEHOVAH God to the local inhabitants.

After they received title to the land, the little band built homes for themselves out of wattle and daub — following the practice of the Celts who inhabited the area. The abbey records, quoted by William Malmsebury, show that Joseph and his companions also built a meeting-place: “These holy men built a chapel of the form that had been shown them. The walls were of osiers wattled together.” From research undertaken by the late F. Bligh Bond, F.R.I.B.A. (member of the Somerset Archaeological Society and formerly director of excavations at Glastonbury Abbey) this meeting-place constructed by Joseph and his men was circular, having a diameter of 25 feet, with the twelve huts of Joseph and his companions forming a circle around it. All the buildings were evidently enclosed in a circular stockade to keep out wild animals. The center building, or the meeting-place, may have incorporated or covered the earlier structure built by the Messiah when he was at Glastonbury.

Although Malmsebury describes the wattle meeting-place as “rude and misshapen,” its wall was without a doubt built in the custom of the day — timbered pillars and framework, doubly wattled inside and out. The roof was thatched with reeds. as author Capt notes, “often painted or washed with lime, these wattle buildings withstood the most severe weather.” Even castles of the day were built of the same material. Giraldus Cambrensis, speaking of Pembroke Castle wrote: “Arnulphus de Montgomery, in the days of Henry I (A.D. 1068-1135) built a small castle of twigs and slight turf.” According to Ovid in *Faesti ad Fest Roma*, the primitive Capital of Rome was of similar construction.

Spreading the Gospel

This little settlement on the Isle of Avalon soon became the center of a missionary effort that spread throughout the land and across the English Channel into Europe. Joseph wasted no time in proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of YEHOVAH God to all who would listen.

In examining the early records there does not appear to have been any national or general acceptance of YEHOVAH's Truth in Britain for over a hundred years after Joseph arrived — although the gospel was preached in foreign countries by MANSUETUS, BEATUS and MARCELLUS during the intervening century. Mansuetus (also known as St. Mansuy), an Irish or Caledonian Briton, became founder of a Church of YEHOVAH God at Toul in Lorraine, and his death is placed at 89 A.D. This is confirmed by a second-century Christian sarcophagus discovered at Malaincourt in Lorraine, which bears an inscription indicating that it was the tomb of one of Mansuetus' friends who accompanied him from Britain (*Acta Sanctorum, Supplement, vol. i, pp.313, 343, 349*).

Suetonius Beatus is said by the old records to have been converted in Britain, baptized by Barnabas, a companion of Aristobulus, and to have afterwards become the Apostle of the Helvetians (Swiss). He died at Under Seven in Helvetia, 110 A.D. This is validated by local traditions and the cave of Beatus on the borders of Lake Thun. Beatus is remembered in the area as a British missionary, and the site of his first meeting-place is still shown. The district around Interlaken, "Unterseen" and Beatenberg is full of old traditions regarding him.

Marcellus, the first British martyr, founded churches at Tongres and Triers, and is said to have been martyred in 166 A.D.

These three men are remembered as BRITISH MISSIONARIES, and it is difficult to believe that they would have wandered about on the other side of the Channel preaching the gospel if their own country had meanwhile remained ignorant of the Truth. There is little doubt that the British historian Gildas was right in picturing the Britons as very slow in receiving the Truth — even though it was brought to them in the very earliest years. And those in whom the gospel message took root in the area of Glastonbury, naturally turned to those who were ready to receive their message, even at the cost of long journeys to distant cities and to far countries.

The Vetusta Ecclesia of Glastonbury remained as a witness for the Truth of YEHOVAH God; but it was not until the year of the great persecution at Lyons and Vienne in Gaul (177 A.D.) that we find any indication of a widespread Christianity in Britain.

It appears that it was toward the end of the second century that YEHOVAH's Truth received its main impetus, and that up to that time its progress had been slow. "From the writings that have come down to us it may reasonably be gathered that FEW CONVERTS

were made by the original missionaries, but that their holy lives (and possibly descendants) had kept the memory of their religion green and fragrant, and that the Church of Glastonbury still remained a monument of their devotion” (The Coming of the Saints, p. 160).

From this time forward the Church of YEHOVAH God in Britain must have grown rapidly, for at the end of the third century and the beginning of the next (300-305), when the great DIOCLETION PERSECUTION had begun, a GREAT NUMBER of British Christians (according to Gildas) suffered for the Truth — among them Alban, Amphibalus, Julius, Aaron, Stephanus and Socrates.

About this time, even the JEWS OF CORNWALL accepted the Truth of YEHOVAH God! Records show that Kelvius, son of Solomon, DUKE OF CORNWALL, not only accepted Christianity but became a minister; and a man by the name of Moses — said to be British, but presumably of some HEBREW relationship — became an APOSTLE TO THE “SARACENS”!

Entering His Rest

No apostle, not even Paul, led a life more filled with high purpose, enterprise and achievement than did Joseph the uncle of the Messiah! In spite of the many sorrows that had darkened his life, Joseph’s personal triumphs in spreading the teachings of the Messiah, from Avalon to the far reaches of the British Isles and across the Channel into Europe, far outweighed the tragedies he had shared and witnessed. He saw his British friends meet and shatter the legions of Rome — pushing back all that Rome could muster. During these years in which the soil of Britain became saturated with the blood of friend and foe alike, not once did the foot of a Roman soldier penetrate the protective line of British warriors that guarded the secrets of Avalon. This incredible defense was carried out under the dual leadership of the Pendragon Caradoc (Caractacus) and King Arviragus.

Joseph witnessed the British defeat at Brandon and the treacherous betrayal of Caractacus into captivity with all his royal family, followed by the Roman pardon of the British king. He saw the slaughter of the defenseless and the atrocious massacre at Menai — which led to the revolt of the British Queen Boadicea and the torching of Roman London, Colchester and St. Albans with over 80,000 Roman deaths. “Through it all there was a continuous flow of converts aflame with the fire of the Gospel, spreading from Avalon into the land and camp of the enemy, valorously defiant. The martyrdom of Aristobulus and Simon Zelotes in Britain must have wrung his heart, but the...mission of St. Paul in Wales with the royal British must have soared his stalwart heart” (The Drama of the Lost Disciples, pp. 228-229).

Joseph lived to see all but one of the original apostles of the Messiah go to their rest. James, the brother of John, had been put to the sword by Herod in 64 A.D. And James, the brother of Jesus, was hurled down from a pinnacle of the Temple to his death in 69 A.D. Only John outlived Joseph. Evidently, he was one of the very few apostles and disciples of the Messiah to die a natural death at the advanced old age of 101.

Fifty-two years after Joseph had tenderly placed the body of his nephew Yeshua into his own personal tomb, this intrepid man of YEHOVAH God passed into history on JULY 27, 82 A.D. Loving hands and heavy hearts laid Joseph to rest among the Christian company that had preceded him — near to the little wattle meeting-place which he and his companions had built over forty years before when they arrived on British soil.

Cressy, in his Church History of Brittany, wrote: “Joseph was buried near the little wattle church he built.” Melchin, who wrote circa 560 A.D., recorded: “The disciples...died in succession and were buried in the cemetery [on the Isle of Avalon]. Among them, Joseph of Marmore, named of Arimathea, receives perpetual sleep, and he lies in linea bifurcata near the south corner of the oratorio, which is built of hurdles [wattles]” (Quoted by John of Glastonbury).

According to George F. Jowett, on the stone lid of the sarcophagus in which his bones were later buried, under the initials of Joseph of Arimathea, are inscribed these immortal words: “Ad Brittanos veni post Christum Sepelivi. Docui. Quievi.” (To the Britons I came after I buried the Christ. I taught, I have entered my rest.) “In these few simple words are contained more tragedy, romance, and drama than in any other inscription ever written; words so characteristic of all the faithful Apostles of Christ, seeking no self-justification, merely a simple record of a duty performed” (Ibid., p. 229).

Maelgwyn of Avalon — writing about 450 A.D. — describes the place of burial in these words:

Joseph of Arimathea, the NOBLE DECURION, received his everlasting rest with his eleven associates in the Isle of Avalon. He lies in the southern angle of the bifurcated line of the Oratorium of the Adorable Virgin.

Long before the era of Maelgwyn, a magnificent abbey had been constructed over the original site — enclosing the wattle house of the Messiah in lead for its preservation, along with relics of Christians past. All the early and later authorities, such as John of Teignmouth, Leland, Hearne and Morgan, refer to the SAME RESTING PLACE of Joseph as cited by Maelgwyn; and seldom do they fail to quote the inscription as it appeared on Joseph’s tomb.

The erudite Archbishop Ussher refers to William of Malmesbury as “our chief historian.” Leland and others call William “an elegant, learned, and faithful historian.” William lived in the famous Glastonbury Abbey on two different occasions in order to complete his

outstanding manuscript. At that time, before the great fire of 1184, all the ancient records and manuscripts were in existence and at his disposal. He also CONFIRMS the time and place of Joseph's death and burial.

Archbishop Ussher, himself a historian of great repute, writes in his carefully detailed work of "St. Joseph's burial in the bifurcated line next to the corner of St. Mary's Chapel and of the silver and white cruets containing the sweat and blood of Christ buried with him."

The remains of Joseph of Arimathea lay undisturbed until 1345 A.D. During this year one JOHN BLOOM of London was given permission by King Edward III to dig for the body of Joseph — provided he first receive the consent of the Abbot and the monks of Glastonbury. When this was duly granted, John Bloom located and RECOVERED THE REMAINS of Joseph. R. de Boston, a monk in the Lincolnshire Monastery, simply recorded: "The bodies of Joseph of Arimathea and his companions were found in Glastonbury."

Archbishop Ussher, in his book, provides a copy of the license, copied from the royal archives in the Tower of London, given by Edward III in 1345, to John Bloom of London, with the right to excavate the body of Joseph underneath the enclosure of the monastery. Ussher also records that the body of Joseph was found exactly where all had stated it rested. The license was signed by King Edward on June 8, 1345. Ussher also quotes from the "Record of the burial of St. Joseph and his companions," from The Great Register of the Monks of Glaston.

Another reference to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea at Glastonbury is presented by Lionel Smithett Lewis, who spent most of his 86 years searching the archives for information about Joseph at Avalon. He writes:

The body of St. Joseph, whose burial at the wattle church of St. Mary was recorded by Maelgwyn of Avalon, writing about A.D. 450, lay undisturbed till the year 1345, when Edward III gave his licence to John Bloom of London to dig for the body if the Abbot and monks permitted, and just as the discovery of the bones of King Arthur at Glastonbury in 1190 were recorded in far-away Essex by the monk Ralph de Coggeshall, so in a far-away monastery in 1367 we find a monk recording that "the bodies of Joseph of Arimathea and his companions were found at Glastonbury."

The remains of St. Joseph were put in a silver casket which could be raised at will from a stone sarcophagus, the base of a shrine to which the frequent pilgrimage was made. This stone altar tomb, the base of the shrine, like the Holy Thorn, survived the Reformation. Lewis continues:

Holinshed, in his "Chronicle," A.D. 1577, speaks of St. Joseph's sepulchre as being still at Glastonbury, and the learned John Ray in his "Itinerary" records that on June 2, 1662, "We saw Joseph of Arimathea's tomb and chapel at the end of the church." As we have seen, the

Holy Thorn was cut down in the Great Rebellion. The aftermath of the same period saw the altar tomb of St. Joseph leave its shrine. During the Commonwealth a Nonconformist divine was put in as incumbent of the Parish Church. In 1662 this interloper was turned out and a Churchman instituted. It was that very same year, in which by God's Providence John Ray came to Glastonbury and saw the tomb in the ruined chapel. Later in the year, tradition says, from fear of Puritanical fanaticism like that which destroyed the Holy Thorn, silently, hastily at night, the altar tomb was removed from the ruined shrine in St. Mary's Chapel at the Abbey, and placed in the churchyard of the Parish Church for protection outside of the East end of St. Mary's Chapel in that Church. There it remained till the AUTUMN OF 1928, when loving hands brought it reverently into the Church, and placed it in the ancient St. Katherine's Chapel, the North Transept.

Moreover, there is a plinth inside to receive the silver ark with the Saint's remains. A glass top was put on the tomb that all generations might see what was found. — Glastonbury, the Mother of Saints.

It was Lewis himself who discovered Joseph's Altar Tomb that had been buried in the churchyard for some 266 years. One autumn day (in 1928), while walking by the ancient cemetery, Mr. Lewis stubbed his toe on a stone object protruding from the ground — evidently lifted out of the ground by frost. Upon excavation, the stone object turned out to be Joseph's long lost tomb.

Today the stone sarcophagus shows evidence of having been wrenched from its original resting place — the work evidently being done by some strong metal lever or bar. According to E. Raymond Capt, "the silver casket (containing the bones of St. Joseph) allegedly reposing in the tomb are missing. However, the sarcophagus contains a "plinth" or base, which would have held such a casket" (Traditions of Glastonbury, p.94).

The Line of Pharez in Britain

Although Joseph and his companions did not see any great number of people converted to the Truth of YEHOVAH God during their years in Britain, YEHOVAH's MAIN PURPOSE for leading Joseph to the Isle of Avalon was accomplished! THE LINE OF PHAREZ, to which Joseph belonged as uncle of the Messiah, was TRANSFERRED TO BRITAIN (in his own person) — which was already long the home of the line of Zarah! At a later date, the TWO LINES MERGED, thus healing the breach.

Brutus, descended from the Trojans of Troy — who in turn were descended from Zarah — arrived in Britain in approximately 1100 B.C. His line, strengthened over the centuries by the invading Saxons and Normans, and eventually merging with the Milesian branch of the line of Zarah in Ireland, has ruled the British Isles ever since without any major interruption.

During the time of King Zedekiah of Judah, it is claimed that Jeremiah the Prophet brought a daughter of Zedekiah to Ireland— where she supposedly married into the line of Zarah. However, there is NO RECORD whatsoever in the ancient annals of Ireland, Scotland, Wales or England that makes mention of this ever occurring!

Various groups, including the British-Israelites and a number of the Churches of YEHOVAH God, still cling to this erroneous tradition, completely OVERLOOKING the role Joseph of Arimathea played when he arrived in Britain during the first century of our era. That Joseph was met by a reigning king of the Zarah line when he stepped ashore in Britain should tell us something right there! YEHOVAH God was directing the affairs of His people Israel in the islands of the sea, to bring about the healing of the breach and the fulfillment of Genesis 49:10, which says: “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes...”

Centuries earlier, King David of Israel visited Ireland and established his throne there under the Irish name of Ollamh Fodhla. However his line, after 137 years, apparently came to an abrupt close when a rival royal house of the line of Zarah took the throne by force. As far as history and tradition is concerned, the line of Pharez in Ireland disappeared with Oilíoll — the last king of David’s line (934-918 B.C.).

Therefore, as a thorough search of the ancient records shows, it was JOSEPH — not Jeremiah — who planted the Davidic line of Pharez in the British Isles! Centuries later, in the time of the famous King Arthur of the Round Table, THE TWO LINES MERGED AND THE BREACH WAS HEALED!!

The story of Joseph of Arimathea, filled with adventure, drama, tragedy and immense courage, has long been overlooked by the Churches of YEHOVAH God. This fearless man of YEHOVAH rightfully belongs at the leading edge of the missionary effort to spread the Word of YEHOVAH God to all nations. He stands shoulder-to-shoulder with Paul, Peter and the others who left their indelible footprints in the far reaches of the Roman Empire and beyond.

Hope of Israel Ministries — Taking the Lead in the Search for Truth!

Shalom

Joseph F Dumond

www.sightedmoon.com

Write to admin@sightedmoon.com