

the cult center of the world. And, just as Sarpi had planned, the corruption of religious belief was vital to the corruption of scientific understanding. A very large reason why Newton's empiricist theories became so widespread, was that they conformed to the new, corrupt theologies; indeed, the English clergy and their colleagues became Newton's greatest popularizers. The one person who fully understood this was the greatest scientist of his day, Gottfried Leibniz. When the Royal Society realized that they must use Newton to destroy Leibniz's influence and began an international defamation campaign, Leibniz responded in a famous series of letters to Newton's friend Dr. Samuel Clarke. It is telling that Leibniz opened what was to be one of the great works of science with the line: "Natural religion itself seems to be declining in England."

British Israel proper

Although the preconditions for British Israelism were rampant in England, the first formal statement of the ideology did not occur until the 1790s, when Richard Brothers, a Royal Navy officer who had fought against America in the Revolutionary War, began to write that England was not just theoretically the New Jerusalem, but that the English

people themselves were descended from the Lost Tribes of Israel, and that they must restore the Temple in Palestine. The time for such theory was not ripe, and Brothers was suspected of being a radical and was ultimately confined to an insane asylum.

Around 1840, however, a decision was made somewhere at the Colonial Office or the East India Company headquarters, to revive Sarpi's old method of religious manipulation, and the next few years would see the rise of two, interrelated cults which would become a major weapon in British foreign policy. First, Irish clergyman John Nelson Darby started publishing texts which, he claimed, decoded the secrets of the Bible and prophetically laid out the fast-approaching Apocalypse. Darby's theories—which we today call "premillennial dispensationism"—had several striking components: 1) the millennial Kingdom of Christ will sweep away all civilization, and the only people saved will be a tiny group of elect who will be raptured physically into the new kingdom; 2) the evil power in the world is "Gog," as identified in Ezekiel, who will sweep down on Israel and begin the end days—Darby confidently identified Gog as Russia; and 3) the End will come only when the Scripture is fulfilled and the Jews return to Israel and rebuild the Temple.

Ye shall know them by their fruits

There are millions of Americans who are now involved in Pentecostal, Charismatic, and Millennialist religious activity—including some who may be reading this right now. Having "good feelings" about those activities is not enough—that can be pure salesmanship. Simply knowing that your group is involved in "good works" is not enough—the New Testament warns against that kind of thinking. There are a lot of wolves in sheep's clothing. These days demand that you look beneath the surface, and find out what are the core beliefs of your congregation. You may be shocked to find that your co-religionists have ideas which make it impossible for them to understand Lyndon LaRouche's article in this issue. Ask your minister, or your priest, or your friends, and find out. Start a fight.

The single-most important test, is what your congregation believes about man being in the image of God. This point is often taken for granted, because the Scripture tells us that God made man and woman in his image, and therefore, if you believe Scripture, you believe that. Not so. Many Protestant denominations believe that Adam and Eve were made in the image of God, but that this image was hopelessly tarnished after their Fall. Therefore, some

say, only the "saved" are truly in the image of God, and the rest of humanity are second-class souls. This kind of thinking often afflicts the person who is loudly opposed to anything that would take a life before birth (theoretically saving an elected soul), but who cannot muster much care for those "lazy" souls that God has apparently abandoned to their fate.

Another important clue to what your congregation really believes, can be found in their understanding of the role of reason in the worship of God. For instance, many people who call themselves Fundamentalists become quite agitated at the mention of Philo, the Jewish philosopher of Alexandria, or the Church Father Augustine. The best-selling Apocalyptics Hal Lindsey and John Walvoord have both written tracts against Philo, because the Platonic philosopher proved that any attempt at Scriptural prophesy was a narcissistic and impious attempt to make God conform to man's schedule. Scripture, said Philo, was a metaphor, subject to a deepening interpretation as man grows in understanding. Augustine usually gets a blast for subscribing to Philo on this and related points.

But, what really perturbs the Apocalyptics is Philo's and Augustine's absolute insistence that worship can never be irrational. As Philo beautifully puts it, God insists that his worshippers offer him only "the first fruits"—and for man, says Philo, that first fruits to be offered must be our creative reason.—*Michael Minnicino*