FUTURE ISRAEL

Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must be Challenged

"Do not be arrogant toward the branches"

Romans 11:18

by

Barry E. Horner
To be perfectly blunt: I must say the Christians have robbed the Jews! And perhaps what is worse is that this thievery has been encouraged by theologians, pastors, and even Sunday School teachers, where small children are taught to sing the song, "Every promise in the book is mine, every chapter, every verse, every line. . . ."

Every promise in the Scripture in some way benefits Christians, but it's not all promised to Christians. Sometimes the thievery has been inadvertent and as unintentional. Its like thinking that the raincoat hanging in the office closet is yours for wearing home because of unexpected showers. Hopefully, you will discover the raincoat belongs to a fellow worker and you will restore it. It is not as if Christians do not have the greatest promise of God, which is I John 2:25, "And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life".

Barry Horner is a theologian who furnishes evidence of this identity theft and the false claim that the Church inherited all the promises of Israel. Not only that, he demonstrates how that by restoring the election of God or chosen-ness to the Jewish people, the Church is even more blessed.

He shows that the Jewish People are present historical evidence of the Bible's complete trustworthiness. Every living Jewish person, no matter what he believes, no matter what he observes, no matter whether or not he cares, is evidence that the God of the Bible is, and He keeps His Word.

Though Israel might be blinded in part, yet there is a glorious destiny to be fulfilled, and that glorious destiny is a light and a blessing to the Church of today and tomorrow.

Horner's scholarship is impeccable, his reasoning is profound, his revelation of theological anti-Semitism is astounding. His proposal for the solution is based on the integrity of the Scripture and the sovereignty of God. I can’t imagine a more useful book for those who take theology seriously.

Moishe Rosen
The God of Abraham praise, Who reigns enthroned above;  
Ancient of everlasting days, and God of Love;  
Jehovah, great I AM! by earth and Heav’n confessed;  
I bow and bless the sacred Name forever blessed.

The God of Abraham praise, Whose all sufficient grace  
Shall guide me all my happy days, in all my ways.  
He calls a worm His friend, He calls Himself my God!  
And He shall save me to the end, thro’ Jesus’ blood.

He by Himself has sworn; I on His oath depend,  
I shall, on eagle wings upborne, to Heav’n ascend.  
I shall behold His face; I shall His power adore,  
And sing the wonders of His grace forevermore.

The goodly land I see, with peace and plenty bless’d;  
A land of sacred liberty, and endless rest.  
There milk and honey flow, and oil and wine abound,  
And trees of life forever grow with mercy crowned.

There dwells the Lord our King, the Lord our righteousness,  
Triumphant o’er the world and sin, the Prince of peace;  
On Sion’s sacred height His kingdom still maintains,  
And glorious with His saints in light forever reigns.

The God Who reigns on high the great archangels sing,  
And “Holy, holy, holy!” cry, “Almighty King!  
Who was, and is, the same, and evermore shall be:  
Jehovah—Father—great I AM, we worship Thee!”

Before the Savior’s face the ransomed nations bow;  
O’erwhelmed at His almighty grace, forever new:  
He shows His prints of love—they kindle to a flame!  
And sound thro’ all the worlds above the slaughtered Lamb.

The whole triumphant host give thanks to God on high;  
“Hail, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,” they ever cry.  
Hail, Abraham’s God, and mine! (I join the heav’nly lays,)  
All might and majesty are Thine, and endless praise.

- Thomas Olivers

Dedicated to:

Ann, Moishe, David, Ron, Carolyn, Kay, Eddie,  
all encouragers after the spirit of Barnabas.
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PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

In the pilgrimage of a Christian, significant junctures are encountered that bring about a radical change of direction, particularly in the realm of doctrinal course correction, that may be regarded as near-revolutionary. Such was the case when this writer came to a knowledge of a more Reformed doctrinal emphasis, that is biblical, or more precisely, exegetical Calvinism. He will never forget the change of perspective that came about with the reading of Martin Luther’s *Bondage of the Will*; a whole gospel world-view was turned around, even though appreciation still remained for an earlier evangelical heritage that did not agree with the German Reformer’s understanding of human corruption and the sovereign grace of God. Furthermore, having been raised in Methodism, this new doctrinal allegiance became more sympathetic with the Calvinistic foundation of George Whitefield rather than John Wesley’s Arminianism, and as a result fellowship tilted toward those of a more Reformed persuasion. There further came appreciative acquaintance with John Owen and C. H. Spurgeon and Charles Hodge and B. B. Warfield and Loraine Boettner and J. I. Packer and Martyn Lloyd-Jones etcetera, especially by means of *The Banner of Truth Trust* as well as other similar publishers. Consequently there also developed a more heartfelt understanding of the grace of God in the light of man’s thorough sinful pollution, which led to expanding familiarity with Calvinism, more euphemistically referred to as “the doctrines of grace.”

This whole new environment, although incorporating Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Baptist legacies, has presented an admirable unified front. With this aura there has been fervent endorsement of the major historic strands of the Reformation with regard to God, man, sin, and the gospel, and to a lesser degree with regard to the doctrine of the church. However the area of eschatology has revealed a yet lesser degree of unity except that it would be true to say that Augustinian amillennialism has appeared to be the predominant school of prophetic thought, with postmillennialism ranking a respectable second, and premillennialism being relegated to a tolerable third place, provided that it was purged of that much maligned subset, dispensationalism. Certainly amillennialism has been paraded, in the main, as the most historically viable scheme of eschatology having been rooted in the esteemed, fourth century Bishop
of Hippo, as well as the subsequent revered Reformers, and to a lesser and yet more variegated degree, their Puritan successors.

Following this awakening, the writer continued to maintain interest in the prophetic schools of thought while retaining premillennial convictions even though pressure was experienced, especially from amillennialists, to advance to purer Reformed heights that abandoned a carnal, Zionist system that clung to Jewish “weak and bankrupt elemental forces” (Gal. 4:9). Yet while there was firm conviction that biblical Calvinism rested on solid exegetical grounds, there was never the same strength of belief that one’s prophetic convictions needed overturning as well. Certainly many challenging arguments were offered to convince the writer that the premillennial perspective was not in the mainstream of Reformation thought. After all, Augustine had surely dealt chiliasm or millenarism, which he had earlier affirmed, such a crippling blow. There was also the suggestion that as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had certainly witnessed the recovery of the Pauline gospel, so this awakening was to be heeded in terms of a parallel and more reliable scheme of eschatology. In addition there was the inference that since premillennialism was more aligned with the popular tide of Arminianism, then this provided further proof for Calvinists of its lack of validity.

Yet the gnawing conviction remained that the persuasive exegesis that led to biblical, soteriological Calvinism did not necessarily lead to the companion scheme of amillennialism. The reason for this was that such a system was inclined to rely too heavily upon lauded historical currents of belief, the result being that a questionable hermeneutical framework was imposed upon the plain meaning of the biblical text. In other words historic tradition, especially that allied with Wittenberg in Germany, Geneva in Switzerland and Westminster in England, tended to strongly influence exegesis. After all, Martin Luther, John Calvin or John Owen could not possibly be wrong!

More recently a closer study of four books of the Bible has led this writer to now more firmly assert that the basic premillennial model of biblical prophecy, and especially as it relates to ethnic and national Israel, is closest to the truth of Scripture. First there was a study of Zechariah, which postexilic revelation is so permeated with the ultimate triumph of Messiah, along with the nation of Israel, Who ushers in the vindication of God upon this planet at which time Jesus Christ “will become king over all the earth—Yahweh alone, and His
name alone” (Zech. 14:9). I shall never forget the study of David Baron’s commentary on this book which seemed so much more illuminating to the text than that of Calvin. Then a close study of Romans over several years, and particularly chapters 9-11, resulted in an indelible impression that for Paul, the converted Hebrew rabbi, Israel has an ongoing national identity, its unbelief notwithstanding. On the other hand it seemed as if Reformed exegesis, at least upon a prima facie reading of the text, was attempting to avoid the obvious. One particular comment has proved to greatly assist in grasping the thrust of Paul at this juncture. It was that of John McRay, Professor of Old Testament and Archaeology at Wheaton College Graduate School, who, in the introduction to his significant volume, Paul: His Life and Teaching, wrote:

I have tried to ‘put on my first-century glasses,’ look at Paul in his Jewish and Hellenistic world of the Mediterranean, and see him not as a fourth-century church father, a sixteenth-century Protestant reformer, or a twenty-first century evangelical missionary, but as what he was, a first-century Jewish rabbi who accepted Jesus as his Messiah and became an ardent, dedicated Messianic Jew. In this volume I have tried to emphasize that Paul was not the founder of Christianity, that he never ceased to be a Jew, and that Christianity is not a Gentile religion. There has never been a greater advocate of the universal composition of the Christian faith than Paul, who emphatically asserted that in Christ “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28). This means that when people place their trust in Jesus, neither Jews nor Gentiles have to abandon their ancestry, neither males nor females have to abandon their gender, and neither slaves nor free people have to abandon their sociological status. Paul’s central focus in his preaching was that Gentiles do not have to become Jews any more than Jews have to become Gentiles, for as he went on to say, “If you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:29).

This comment has struck a chord that is still resonating. At the same time a study of Hosea for a series of Sunday evening messages,  

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1 Amillennialist Vern S. Poythress has made a significant comment when, in having dialogue with dispensationalists under the auspices of The Evangelical Theological Society, he commented: “Zechariah 14, if read in a straightforward manner, is particularly difficult for an amillennialist. In fact, if I were to defend premillennialism in a debate, I would probably choose Zechariah 14 as a main text.” Grace Theological Journal, V. 10 #2, Fall 1989, p. 159.

2 John McRay, Paul: His Life and Teaching, pp. 11-12.
especially the repeated emphases on the mercy of God triumphing over a persistently adulterous Israel, only confirmed what the other three books were declaring. At that time a man of amillennial convictions recommended to me the commentary of Jeremiah Burroughs on Hosea that I believe he had not studied too closely, and how delightful it was to discover the clear premillennial convictions of this seventeenth century Puritan, including his belief in a glorious future for national Israel. Then more recently a study of Ezekiel, but especially chapters 36-39, has led to the conclusion that this is also such a pivotal passage in terms of the validity of a divine national future for Israel. In particular it is the inability of those of a supercessionist persuasion to deal satisfactorily with the whole of the text here, notwithstanding the supposed justification of broad abstraction on account of Old Covenant and apocalyptic genre, that has further reinforced the concept of Judeo-centric eschatology. To merely treat these chapters in general and idealistic terms whereby regeneration and resurrection themes are derived, according to Patrick Fairbairn and O. Palmer Robertson, is quite unsatisfactory.

However more recently the work of Horatius Bonar titled Prophetic Landmarks has become available which, as a solid and judicious premillennial apology, needs wide distribution. In particular this choice upholder of the doctrines of sovereign grace makes a point of emphasis that this volume intends to take as the pivotal issue with regard to a right perception of prophetic revelation. It concerns the primacy of the nature and destiny of the Jewish people in the whole eschatological scheme of things. He writes:

[T]he prophecies concerning Israel are the key to all the rest. True principles of interpretation, in regard to them, will aid us in disentangling and illustrating all prophecy together. False principles as to them will most thoroughly perplex and overcloud the whole Word of God.3

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This then is a most significant point that will be recommended quite frequently throughout this book. Indeed at this juncture we coin the term “Judeo-centric Eschatology” since it offers such a cohesive basis for the integration of various elements of biblical prophecy, and even more so than the common premillennial recourse to Revelation 20. Mind you, given a right understanding of Israel in relation to the Christian church, an eschatology will nevertheless result that incorporates an essentially premillennial understanding of Revelation 20.

Of course someone is bound to suggest, as if trumping any of the historic prophetic approaches, that when all has been said and done with regard to the three major schools of eschatology, the real, overshadowing central issue concerns the person of Jesus Christ. It is the New Covenant which He has established with His blood, and His present reign at the right hand of the Father, that should dominate our thinking and not some distinctive scheme of prophecy. So Reformed amillennialist George Murray comments: “It is Christ, rather than the Hebrew people, Who is the subject of the Old Testament prophets.”

And of course all of the major schools of prophecy would heartily agree at this point, so that nothing in fact would have been trumped at all. The reason for this is simply that amillennialism, postmillennialism, and premillennialism are all based upon their future perspective of history as it will be climaxed with the second coming or parousia of Jesus Christ that crowns the redemptive work of His first coming. In this sense, Jesus Christ is dearly central to all three perspectives, whatever their disagreements might involve. However, this being said, it must be borne in mind that the Lord Jesus Christ remains the quintessential Jew. We would even dare to say that He has not in the slightest lost His essential Jewishness. However Murray continues: “To be sure, the nation was sovereignly chosen by God as the channel through which His oracles might be given to the world; but God no longer deals with them as a chosen nation.”

How incomplete is the allusion here to Romans 3:2 that ignores Romans 9:4 concerning those who “are [present tense] Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the temple service, and the promises.” For a professing Calvinist, such as Murray, to suggest that Israel has lost its election, is not only astonishing, but

547, an opponent of Bonar, where the author confesses that the topic of “literal Israel” is the most prominent subject in his published discourse.

4 George L. Murray, Millennial Studies, p. 57.

5 Ibid.
also to fly in the face of Paul’s further explanation that, “[r]egarding the gospel, they [unbelieving national Israel, not the remnant] are enemies for your [the Gentiles’] advantage, but regarding election [the election, τὴν ἐκλογὴν, ἐκλογὴ] they [unbelieving national Israel] are loved because of their forefathers [Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob]” (Rom. 11:28). How then can Jesus Christ be exalted when He, “the King of the Jews” (John 19:19), He who declared that “salvation is from the Jews” (John 4:22), yet has His Jewish brethren permanently and nationally defrocked?

Of course the great difficulty here in dealing with this subject is that of maintaining a calm spirit that is respectful of opposing points of view and yet unashamedly presses home the truth without apology. This writer does not hesitate to confess his disturbance at that opinion, especially amongst many Calvinists, though by no means all, which declares that the Jew today, on account of stubborn unbelief, is covenantally and eternally persona non grata in the sight of God. Perhaps most disturbing of all in this regard has been an evident form of theological anti-Judaism amongst a considerable number of those holding to Reformed convictions, and this matter will be documented and addressed with some detail. In conversation, quite a few have, by their derogatory manner, inferred that they would be delighted if the Arabs would push Israel into the Mediterranean Sea, repossess Palestine, and thus vindicate their eschatology!⁶ Suffice to say at this point that the author strongly believes that a true child of God will have a distinctive, persistent love for the Jewish people. This will also be, notwithstanding their unbelief, after the fervent manner of the Apostle Paul, even though he may repeatedly suffer at the hands of their hard heartedness and obstinacy, and at the same time feel great anguish of

⁶ For instance, Stephen Sizer has disparagingly stated that, “the present brutal, repressive racist policies of the State of Israel would suggest another exile on the horizon rather than a restoration.” Whose Promised Land: Israel and Biblical Prophecy Debate between Neil Cornell (CMJ & ITAC) and Stephen Sizer, Guildford Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship, St. John’s, Woking. Surrey, 18th March, 1997. Also consider the haunting intimation of Colin Chapman: “I don’t believe that the State of Israel is ‘of God’ in the sense that it is the fulfillment (or even the preliminary stage in the fulfillment) of all that God promised and predicted in the Old Testament about the future of the land and its people. I would go further and suggest that for Christians to interpret these events simply as the fulfillment of prophecy represents a kind of regression.” Whose Promised Land? (Second Edition), p. 227.
heart. It is significant that when Paul deals with his “countrymen by physical descent” in Romans 9-11, this subject, involving such ultimate national glory, stimulates his passions as do few others.

Many years ago this writer, in conversation with a representative of a leading Reformed publisher, questioned why it had not published any volume in sympathy with premillennialism, even though amillennialism and posmillennialism had been well represented. The response was that the reprint of a premillennial volume by J. C. Ryle was being considered, and so some hope was raised though subsequent years saw it diminish. Later, in correspondence with that same person, further enquiry was made but no encouragement was received that a book from a premillennial perspective might arise. Hence this volume is dedicated to the elucidation of the premillennial perspective, especially as it focuses on National Israel, that has been ignored, belittled and distorted in Calvinistic, Reformed, and Sovereign Grace circles.

A most important matter that needs to be clarified at this juncture concerns the crucial distinction that must be appreciated between the overriding significance of Israel in the Word of God and relatively lesser matters of eschatological concern, as with regard to the antichrist, the great tribulation, the rapture, etc. The nature and role of Israel in the Bible, in both Testaments, is transcendentally more important than the aforementioned details, though they may necessarily call for serious consideration of lesser proportions. Furthermore, with regard to Israel we are not dealing with a doctrinal emphasis that has little relationship with significant Christian ethics. Quite to the contrary, as our study will unquestionably prove, the wrong perception of Israel and the Jew by Christians, biblically speaking, has produced consequences of horrific proportions during the history of the Christian church in all of its strands. Such a shameful legacy, perpetuated during the illustrious Reformation and onwards, remains undiminished, largely unconfessed, and still prevalent in substantial degrees up to the present within a Calvinist, Reformed, and Sovereign Grace environment. The reader who is disturbed by such a charge is simply asked to hold back judgment until the following evidence is weighed. Hence this unethical consequence will be pressed home in succeeding chapters. While the process may be painful, nevertheless it is hoped

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7 Refer to Patrick Fairbairn, *The Interpretation of Prophecy*; William Grier, *The Momentous Event*; Iain Murray, *The Puritan Hope*; Cornelis P. Venema, *The Promise of the Future*. All four authors offer their strongest opposition to premillennialism.
that the end result will be the fruit of genuine repentance evidenced by heartfelt love for God’s “beloved enemies” (Rom. 11:28), they being every Christian’s kinsmen through faith in Abraham’s God (Gal. 3:29). If a Christian’s eschatology produces an indifference, detachment, even antagonism towards things Jewish, though there continues to be manifest unbelief and carnality within national Israel, there is most likely something fundamentally wrong with that eschatological expression. True doctrine, rightly comprehended, does not produce bad attitudes, especially that which is so obviously un-Pauline. It ought to be a shame for any professing Christian to lack that apostolic compassion for the Jew which never diminished, even when Paul eventually reached Rome (Acts 28:17-22). Hence where this unsavory attitude prevails, even with a mere facade of token respect for the Jewish people, there is need for a return with freshness to the only final source that can resolve an issue having such profound moral implications, that is to the objective, truthful, inscribed Word of God.

The major part of this book contends for the present and future hope of national Israel according to theological synthesis based upon biblical exegesis that receives particular focus in Chapter Ten: Israel - and a Romans 11 Synthesis. Here exposition deals with Romans 11:1-32, Galatians 6:16, Ephesians 2:11-22, Philippians 3:2-3, Hebrews 8:7-13, and I Peter 2:9-10. Also Chapter Nine and Chapter Eleven deal with Scripture in some detail. In addition a number of appendices are included that underpin the overall theological argument.

Concerning terminology, a word of explanation is necessary. Instead of the common emotive term of “anti-Semitism” being employed, which is often qualified as either racial or theological, the more specific “anti-Judaism” is mainly used. Nevertheless even anti-Judaism needs explication. Here it is intended to refer to classic anti-Judaism, that is opposition to the biblical legacy of Torah mediated through Abraham and Moses rather than opposition to the Rabbinic and Talmudic accretions that Jesus Christ so vigorously opposed, though doubtless some overlap will nevertheless be involved. The use of “anti-Zionism” will more narrowly focus on opposition to the recent establishment of the nation of modern Israel. With regard to the Augustinian legacy of Israel’s displacement by the Christian church as the new spiritual Israel, the accepted terms of “replacement theology” and “supercessionism” will be used interchangeably. Some authors vigorously renounce association with these designations, and often attempt to argue against their validity. Nevertheless, for all of such verbal ducking and weaving by those who in reality are...
supercessionists, they are unable to obscure obvious identification with the same essential anti-Judaic spirit which substitute concepts such as “progression,” “transference,” and “fulfillment” convey.

In a nutshell then, the issue here concerns whether Israel, incorporating individuality, nationality and territory, has a future according to the mind of Abraham’s God. It is certain that great ethical consequences are at stake here, and not mere eschatological speculation. Consider the comment of Reformed theologian, Herman Ridderbos.

The church, then, as the people of the New Covenant has taken the place of Israel, and national Israel is nothing other than the empty shell from which the pearl has been removed and which has lost its function in the history of redemption.8

We would suggest that the illustration here, in being representative of much Reformed opinion, is quite inappropriate in that it alludes to Judaism and national Israel as matter only worthy of being discarded. So the issue of supercessionism is not something to be taken lightly or merely academically. When a scholar and exegete of the stature of C. E. B. Cranfield so movingly and publicly repents of his former belief that the church has replaced Israel, then none ought to exclude themselves from hearing the call to seriously review this matter and the vital issues that are involved. He wrote in his commentary concerning Romans 9-11:

And I confess with shame to having also myself used in print on more than one occasion this language of the replacement of Israel by the Church.

It is only where the church persists in refusing to learn this message [of Romans 9-11], where it secretly—perhaps unconsciously—believes that its own existence is based on human achievement, and so fails to understand God’s mercy to itself, that it is unable to believe in God’s mercy for still unbelieving Israel, and so entertains the ugly and unscriptural notion that God has cast off His people Israel and simply replaced it by the Christian Church. These three chapters emphatically forbid us to speak of the Church as having once and for all taken the place of the Jewish people.9

Yes, longstanding, historic error dies hard. However come now, let us Scripturally, prayerfully and soberly reason together.

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8 Herman Ridderbos, Paul An Outline of His Theology, p. 354345.
9 C. E. B. Cranfield, The Epistle to the Romans, II, 448, n. 2; 448.
Chapter One

ISRAEL – and Christian anti-Judaism
in contrast

It is frequently lost sight of today that Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, was decidedly pro-Israel in his ministry. This should not surprise us since the Lord declared to Ananias that he “is My chosen instrument to carry My name before the Gentiles kings, and the sons of Israel” (Acts 9:15). Furthermore it is clear from Romans 9-11 that the present status and future destiny of unbelieving national Israel in general, apart from a remnant of Jewish Christians, was a matter of passionate, unrelenting, even primary concern for Paul. He especially seems to have considered it necessary that Gentile Christians at Rome should be addressed, not simply on account of their predominance, but more particularly because of their tendency to be arrogant toward Jewish believers (Rom. 11:18-20). Paul’s concerns included the need of clarification with regard to whether the promises of God to national Israel have now been nullified. In other words, has national Israel so sinned away the grace of God that it is, now and forever, persona non grata in His sight? Hence, is there a future destiny for national Israel, as perhaps a minority of Jewish believers at Rome might talk about with persistence? Or is Jewishness now a matter of receding concern in the present since it will certainly have no future validity? Do believing Gentiles have any ongoing responsibilities toward unbelieving national Israel that include acknowledgement of a distinct covenantal future? To these questions the Apostle responds that “the promises still belong” to Israel, 9:4, that “the Word of God has not failed” to the promised seed of Abraham, 9:6-8, that “God has not rejected His people,” 11:1-2, that Israel “has not stumbled so as to be beyond divine recovery,” 11:11, that Gentile Christians are to humbly, respectfully regard unbelieving Jews with “fear,” 11:20, so that, as a consequence, eventually “all Israel will be saved,” 11:26.

It is unfortunately true that over 1900 years of Church history have not witnessed the eventual resolution of these problems as proposed by Paul, and especially at a practical level, however clarifying he may have intended to be. In the same vein then, it might well be asked, “Has the Christian church learned anything in this regard, but
especially in ethical terms concerning its treatment of unbelieving Jews over many centuries according to Paul’s injunction (Rom. 11:18-20)?” In spite of voluminous Christian study of these questions, the evidence culled from past centuries would tend to indicate abysmal failure, particularly in terms of the shameful record of Christianity’s consistently disgraceful treatment of the Jew. And further, this well attested reputation cannot possibly be divorced from the horrific record of anti-Judaism which erupted during the twentieth century.

However, even in this twenty-first century, the controversy still rages on with seeming fresh awakening. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, as well as the reclamation of Old Jerusalem by the Jews in 1967, has only appeared to exacerbate the conflict whereby such terms as “Zionism” and “a Palestinian State” have become highly emotive epithets for fiercely opposing causes. Even within conservative evangelical Christendom, while there has been substantial support for the nation of Israel, according to biblical presuppositions and identification as Christian Zionism, nevertheless a vociferous segment has made known its case which opposes any acknowledgment whereby God continues to have present covenantal interest in His ancient people, especially in a national and territorial sense. Along with this reaction there has usually been the expression of sympathy for the beleaguered Palestinian people, particularly in terms of their being deprived of land and respect by the rapacious Israelis. As a result, a growing literary response from some Christians has challenged the very legitimacy of Israel’s existence, but particularly at a biblical and societal level. Much of this has suggested that the complex of issues revolves around the need of justice for the Palestinians on account of their suffering at the hands of Jewish injustice. Allied to this belief has been the conviction that a compromise resolution must be brokered for the parties in conflict, that is, the establishment of a Palestinian State alongside of or within Israel, such as by means of a so-called “Road Map” proposal, that would establish relative social rest and calm that has so far eluded the Middle East over the centuries.

As a result, opposition to Christian Zionism in biblical and covenantal terms has elicited the counter-charge of “theological anti-Judaism” from those who support the cause of national Israel, even though the Jews remain in general unbelief. Hence the polarizing result has been a defensive loyalty expressed by Christian Zionists in the face of harsh criticism of national Israel by Christian sympathizers with the Palestinian and Arab cause. These anti-Zionist Christians usually
espouse an Augustinian, homogenous eschatology that would absorb and supplant all former Jewish distinctions. Furthermore, this conflict has particularly manifested itself within much of conservative evangelical Christendom. Thus there are those Christians who maintain that Israel has a national and territorial eschatological future according to God’s covenantal purposes, and in particular a mass conversion at the end of this age. However there are also those who hold to an anti-Judaic belief whereby it is denied that modern Israel has any eschatological future in national and territorial terms. And it is the proposal of this book that the former of these two theses is the more biblically and morally correct. Further, it is also this writer’s opinion that such a difference is not merely a theological one that we can calmly agree to disagree over, as if divorced from any behavioral accountability. The reason is that the pro-Judaic perspective involves a vital ethical element, demonstrated throughout Church history, which is inextricably bound to the theological construct that we hope to demonstrate both exegetically and historically. However, to begin with we consider these two opposing eschatological perspectives from the viewpoint of specific historic examples concerning biblical interpretation.

TWO CASES CONCERNING NATIONAL ISRAEL, WITHOUT A DISTINCTIVE ESCHATOLOGICAL HOPE, ARE NOW CONSIDERED

In both instances here it becomes evident that at best there is cool toleration of the Jew and certainly an absence of that Pauline passion which the Apostle maintained throughout his missionary endeavors. Whatever the terminology that is used concerning this perspective, whether replacement theology, supercessionism, transference theology, or absorbtionism, they all amount to the same basic denigration of the Jew and ultimately national Israel in the present Christian dispensation. More evidence in this regard will follow in subsequent chapters.

Aurelius Augustine

The monumental contribution of this fourth century Church Father of North Africa in the realm of eschatology cannot be exaggerated. It is not simply a question of his prevailing dominance over chiliasm whereby the church in his present world was esteemed as the true earthly representation of the heavenly city of God in anticipation of heavenly consummation; it is the fact that his teaching concerning the future of the Jews, in relation to the church triumphant on earth, both
saved them from total decimation and preserved them for intentional humiliation. This was a major feature of Augustine’s famous, yet obviously mistaken, interpretation of Psalm 59:11, “Do not kill them [the Jews]; otherwise, my people will forget. By Your power, make them homeless wanderers.” So he concluded:

But it was not enough that he [God] should say, “Slay them not, lest they should at last forget Thy law,” unless he had also added, “Disperse them;” because if they had only been in their own land with that testimony of the Scriptures, and not everywhere, certainly the Church which is everywhere could not have had them as witnesses among all nations to the prophecies which were sent before concerning Christ.¹

However the result of his seeming tolerant exposition here was what James Carroll describes as a double-edged sword:

On one side, against Chrysostom and even Ambrose, it requires an end to all violent assaults against synagogues, Jewish property, and Jewish persons. . . . On the other side, Augustine’s relatively benign attitude toward Jews is rooted still in assumptions of supercessionism that would prove to be deadly. The “Witness” prescription attributed to him—Let them survive but not thrive!—would underlie the destructive ambivalence that marked Catholic attitudes toward Jews from then on. Ultimately history would show that such double-edged ambivalence is impossible to maintain without disastrous consequences. For a thousand years, the compulsively repeated pattern of that ambivalence would show in bishops and popes protecting Jews—but from expressly Christian mobs that wanted to kill Jews because of what bishops and popes had taught about Jews. Such a teaching which wants it both ways was bound to fail, as would become evident at every point in history when Jews presumed, whether economically or culturally or both, to even think of thriving. This is the legacy that haunts the Catholic Church into the twenty-first century, a perverse legacy from which, despite the twentieth-century’s jolts, the Church is not yet free.²

Consequently the Augustinian legacy was the necessary keeping of the Jews as dispersed, disgraced and depressed, except for the hope of their individual conversion, or until their national conversion at the end of

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¹ Augustine, The City of God, XVIII, 46. It is tragic that such obvious misinterpretation of this passage should have become so influential over the centuries that followed. Plainly, in Psalm 59:11, David [the Jew] is interceding for his enemies when he declares, “Do not kill them; . . . By Your power, make them homeless wanderers,” and not the Jews as a nation.

² James Carroll. Constantine’s Sword, pp. 218-219.
this age when they would then become absorbed into the one true, holy, catholic, apostolic church. Hence, such a scattered preservation in no way anticipated any distinctive eschatological hope for the Jew. Rather for Augustine, in Romans 11,

some Jews have believed in Christ, and they are the remnant of the natural olive and fulfillment of the divine promises to historical Israel. . . . The “Israel” that will ultimately be saved are the predestined elect, drawn into a unity out of Jews and Gentiles. . . . Judaism is simply relegated to the latter [non-elect] category, and its status in salvation-history assigned to the pre-Christian past.³

So the Christian can take to himself the name of Israelite since it has been forfeited by the Jews who, having lost their birthright, are now to be named Esau. Augustine comments on Psalm 114:3:

For if we hold with a firm heart the grace of God which hath been given us, we are Israel, the seed of Abraham. . . . Let therefore no Christian consider himself alien to the name of Israel. . . . The Christian people then is rather Israel. . . . But that multitude of Jews, which was deservedly reprobated for its perfidy, for the pleasures of the flesh sold their birthright, so that they belonged not to Jacob, but rather to Esau.⁴

The effect then of this teaching upon subsequent centuries was profound, as Carroll has pointed out. So Jeremy Cohen confirms:

Augustine of Hippo bequeathed so much to western civilization that one need hardly wonder if this bequest included his ideas on Jews and Judaism. Indeed, modern students of Jewish-Christian relations typically attribute the theological foundations of the medieval church’s Jewish policy to Augustine, referring as a matter of course to the legacies and principles of Augustinian anti-Judaism.⁵


⁵ Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law*, p. 19. This is a significant study of not only Augustine’s foundational contribution toward theological anti-Judaism, but also the widespread embrace in varying degrees of this legacy, through to the thirteenth century, by means of Gregory the Great, Isidore of Seville, Agobard of Lyon, Anselm of Canterbury, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Thomas Aquinas.
Hence the eschatology of Augustine, as it relates to Israel as having played out over centuries of church history, is not something that any Christian ought to boast in thoughtlessly. Rather it gives ground for serious criticism of its underlying doctrinal premises. This legacy of Augustine is certainly unbiblical in its ethical outworking and thus un-Pauline. Consequently it rightly gives justification for repudiation of that basic supercessionist theology which has flowed from these historic beginnings. A better and more pro-Judaic eschatology is needed, and this we believe to be rooted in the full canvas of Scripture when rightly exegeted.

**John Calvin**

The contribution of this sixteenth century reformer of Geneva to the emergence of sixteenth century western civilization in Europe, as well as the Reformed movement within Christianity, was truly monumental. And this being the case, it should not surprise us that his indebtedness to Augustine, not unlike that of Luther, is substantial, witness the profusion of almost adoring references in his *Institutes Of The Christian Religion*. Thus according to the editor of the *Battles* edition of this work:

Calvin may be said to stand at the culmination of the later Augustinianism. He actually incorporates in his treatment of man and of salvation so many typical passages from Augustine that his doctrine seems here entirely continuous with that of his great African predecessor.6

With regard to the Jews and Israel, there is an attitude of tolerance, similar to that of Augustine which is void of any distinctive, covenantal, passionate eschatological acknowledgment. So Paul Johnson explains that:

Jean Calvin . . . was more well disposed towards Jews [than Luther], partly because he tended to agree with them on the question of lending at interest; he reported Jewish arguments objectively in his writings and was even accused by his Lutheran enemies, of being a Judaizer. None the less, Jews were expelled from Calvinist cities and the Calvinist Palatinate.7

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Like Augustine, Calvin taught that the Christian church had become the new spiritual Israel, the amalgam of Jew and Gentile, whereby past ethnic identity had become null and void. So he comments on Romans 11:26, where Paul declares, “And in this way all Israel will be saved”:

Many understand this of the Jewish people, as though Paul had said, that religion would again be restored among them as before: but I extend the word Israel to all the people of God, according to this meaning, “When the Gentiles shall come in, the Jews also shall return [as an accumulating remnant] from their defection to the obedience of faith; and thus shall be completed the salvation of the whole Israel of God, which must be gathered from both; and yet in such a way that the Jews shall obtain the first place [at the commencement of the Church], being as it were the first-born in God’s family.” This interpretation seems to me the most suitable, because Paul intended here to set forth the completion of the kingdom of Christ, which is by no means to be confined to the Jews, but is to include the whole world. The same manner of speaking we find in Galatians 6:16. The Israel of God is what he calls the Church, gathered alike from Jews and Gentiles.8

By way of further illustration of Calvin’s understanding of the future of national Israel, we turn to a significant Old Testament passage, Hosea 1:10-11, concerning the promised restoration of national Israel. Here we read:

10 Yet the number of the Israelites will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or counted. And in the place where they were told: You are not My people, they will be called: Sons of the living God. 11 And the Judeans and the Israelites will be gathered together. They will appoint for themselves one single ruler, and go up from the land. For the day of Jezreel will be great.

Concerning this passage Calvin typically comments:

[For so long a time has passed away since their [the sons of Israel’s] exile, and dejected and broken, they dwell at this day in mountains and in other desert places; at least many of them are in the mountains of Armenia, some are in Media and Chaldea; in short, throughout the whole of the East. And since there has been no restoration of this people, it is certain that this prophecy ought not to be restricted to seed according to the flesh. For there was a prescribed time for the Jews, when the Lord purposed to restore them to their country; and, at the end of seventy years, a free return was granted them by Cyrus. Then Hosea speaks not here of the kingdom of Israel, but of

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8 John Calvin, Romans. Christian Classics Ethereal Library, Internet sourced.
the Church, which was to be restored by a return, composed both of Jews and of Gentiles.9

Further consider the promise of Jeremiah 32:37-41.

37 I [the LORD God] am about to gather them from all the lands where I have banished them in My wrath, rage, and great fury; and I will return them to this place and make them live in safety. 38 They will be My people, and I will be their God. 39 I will give them one heart and one way so that for their good and for the good of their descendants after them, they will fear Me always. 40 I will make with them an everlasting covenant: I will never turn away from doing good to them; and I will put fear of Me in their hearts so they will never again turn away from Me. 41 I will rejoice over them [My people Israel] to do what is good to them, and I will plant them faithfully in this land with all My mind and heart.

To this Calvin responds:

We now then understand what the Prophet means when he compares to a plantation the restoration of the people after their return from exile. We know, indeed, that the people from that time had not been banished, and that the Temple had ever stood, though the faithful had been pressed down with many troubles; but this was only a type of a plantation. We must therefore necessarily pass on to Christ, in order to have a complete fulfillment of this promise. . . . Let us then know that the Church was planted in Judea, for it remained to the time of Christ. And as Christ has pulled down the wall of partition, so that there is now no difference between Jews and Gentiles, God plants us now in the holy land, when he grafts us into the body of Christ.10

Here then is clearly displayed, in these instances, the fruit of a subjective, impositional hermeneutic that appears to be more presuppositionally than exegetically driven. It is as if a leap was taken away from the plain meaning of the text right into Augustine’s supercessionist lap. And our chief concern in this regard is that such a course, in these instances, is historically shown to be fraught with shameful results concerning the treatment of the Jews. And this being the case, according to history and exegesis, we seriously question the validity of the doctrine that undergirds this legacy.

9 John Calvin, Twelve Minor Prophets, Christian Classics Ethereal Library, Internet sourced.

10 John Calvin, Jeremiah, Christian Classics Ethereal Library, Internet sourced.
In both instances it becomes evident that here is passionate concern for the Jew much more after the manner of that which the Apostle Paul evidenced. Here is warm-hearted, Judeo-centric eschatology at its best that so obviously commends itself. More evidence in this regard will follow in subsequent chapters.

Horatius Bonar

While Horatius Bonar is better known today as a nineteenth century hymn writer, yet his overall ministry in Scotland was of far greater dimensions, both practical and scholarly, especially with regard to his preaching and writing. He participated in a remarkable moving of the Spirit of God in Scotland that involved Thomas Chalmers, William C. Burns and Robert Murray M’Cheyne. He also joined a Mission of Enquiry to the Jews in 1839 in which he, along with his brother Andrew and M’Cheyne, toured the Holy Land for the purpose of reporting their findings back to the Church of Scotland. Another related concern of Bonar, which is also reflected in his prolific hymn writing, was a considerable interest in prophetic events, particularly from a premillennial perspective. He edited The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy (1849-1873). In 1847 he published Prophetic Landmarks, Containing Data for Helping to Determine the Question of Christ’s Premillennial Advent, which went to at least five editions. Here then are some pertinent comments from his Judeo-centric writings that concern such a heartfelt love for the Jewish people.

To begin with Bonar declares:

Let us speak reverently of the Jew. Let us not misjudge him by present appearances. He is not what he once was, nor what he yet shall be.

Let us speak reverently of the Jew. We have much cause to do so. What, though all Christendom, both of the East and West, has for nearly eighteen centuries treated him as the offscouring of the race? What though Mohammed has taught his followers to revile and persecute the sons of Abraham? What though one Roman emperor after another sought to exterminate them as thorns and briars? What though Cicero speaks sneeringly of Jewish gold (aurum Judaicum), and tells us that “their religious rites were at variance with the splendor of the Roman empire?” and Horace, of the credulity of the Jew Apella and of the circumcised Jews? and Petronius, of their worship of a “porcinum numen”—a swine divinity,
and their bondage to Sabbath fasts? Pliny, of the Jews as a nation famous for its contempt of the gods (gens contumelia numinum insignis)? Martial, of the recuti-torum Judæorum—the circumcised Jews? Juvenal, of them as traffickers in dreams, worshippers of the clouds, contemners of the Roman laws? Tacitus, of their stubborn superstition and unbridled lust? What though our own great poet has caricatured the nation, and called the Jew a villain with a smiling cheek,—and made one of the ingredients of his hellish caldron to be the “liver of a blaspheming Jew?” What though he has been the scornful theme of the ballad-monger as the devourer of Christian flesh? What though he is to this day a wanderer, a sufferer, an outcast? What though he inhabit the narrow Juden-Strasse of Frankfurt, or the Old Jewry of London, or the poor Zion-quarter of Jerusalem, or be pent up in the Ghetto of Rome?

Nay, what though he may have a grasping hand, and a soul shut up against the world,—a world that has done nothing but wrong and revile him? What though he may inherit the crookedness of his father Jacob, instead of the nobility of Abraham, or the simple gentleness of Isaac?

Still let us speak reverently of the Jew,—if not for what he is, at least for what he was, and what he shall be, when the Redeemer shall come to Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob [Isa. 59:20; cf. Rom. 11:26].

In him we see the development of God’s great purpose as to the woman’s seed, the representative of a long line of kings and prophets, the kinsmen of Him who is the Word made flesh. It was a Jew who sat on one of the most exalted thrones of the earth; it is a Jew who now sits upon the throne of heaven. It was a Jew who wrought such miracles once on our earth, who spoke such gracious words. It was a Jew who said, “Come unto me and I will give you rest;” and a Jew who said, “Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me.” It was Jewish blood that was shed on Calvary; it was a Jew who bore our sins in His own body on the tree. It was a Jew who died, and was buried, and rose again. It is a Jew who liveth to intercede for us, who is to come in glory and majesty as earthly judge and monarch. It is a Jew who is our Prophet, our Priest, our King.

Let us, then, speak reverently of the Jew, whatever his present degradation may be. Just as we tread reverently the level platform of Moriah, where once stood the holy house where Jehovah was worshipped; so let us tread the ground where they dwell whose are the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and of whom, concerning the flesh, Christ came. That temple hill is not what it was. The beautiful house is gone, and not one stone is left upon another. The seventeen sieges of Jerusalem, like so many storms rolling the waves of every sea over it, have left few memorials of the old magnificence. The Mosque of the Moslems covers the spot of the altar of burnt-offering; the foot of the Moslem defiles the sacred courts; the Muezzin, from the neighboring minaret, screams out the name of Allah, instead of Jehovah; and the Koran is chanted instead of the Psalms of
David. But still the ground is felt to be sacred; the bare rock on which you tread is not common rock; the massive stones built here and there into the wall are witnesses of other days; and the whole scene gathers round it such associations as, in spite of the rubbish, and desolation, and ruin, and pollution, fill you irresistibly with awe. The Moslem fabulists tell you that the stones of which the mosque is built still retain the odor of the musk in which they were originally steeped; but there is a holier fragrance there, transporting you back to yet older times, and recalling not only David and Solomon, but Him who said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again.” The same Moslem fabulist will tell you, or show you, the imprint of the prophet’s foot upon the sacred rock; but there are, to you, visible everywhere, I may say, the imprints of a holier footstep, that of him who, somewhere on that flat rock where you are now walking, stood and cried in the last and great day of the feast, “If any man thirst, let Him come to Me and drink.”

So it is with the Jew,—I mean the whole Jewish nation. There are indelible memories connected with them, which will ever, to anyone who believes in the Bible, prevent them from being contemned; nay, will cast around them a nobility and a dignity which no other nation has possessed or can attain to. To Him in whose purposes they occupy so large a space, they are still “beloved for their fathers’ sake” [Rom. 11:28]. Of them, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. 11

Then Bonar boldly confesses:

I am one of those who believe in Israel’s restoration and conversion; who receive it as a future certainty, that all Israel shall be gathered, and that all Israel shall be saved. As I believe in Israel’s present degradation, so do I believe in Israel’s coming glory and preeminence. I believe that God’s purpose regarding our world can only be understood by understanding God’s purpose as to Israel. I believe that all human calculations as to the earth’s future, whether political or scientific, or philosophical or religious, must be failures, if not taking for their data or basis God’s great purpose regarding the latter-day standing of Israel. I believe that it is not possible to enter God’s mind regarding the destiny of man, without taking as our key or our guide His mind regarding the ancient nation—that nation whose history, so far from being ended, or nearly ended, is only about to begin. And if any one may superciliously ask, What can the Jews have to do with the world’s history?—may we not correctly philosophize on that coming history, and take the bearing of the world’s course, leaving Israel out of the consideration altogether? We say, nay; but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Art thou the framer of the earth’s strange annals,

either past or future? Art thou the creator of those events which make up these annals, or the producer of those latent springs or seeds of which these arise?

He only to whom the future belongs can reveal it. He only can announce the principles on which that future is to be developed. And if He set Israel as the great nation of the future, and Jerusalem as the great metropolis of earth, who are we, that, with our philosophy of science, we should set aside the divine arrangements, and substitute for them a theory of man? Human guesses of the future are the most uncertain of all uncertainties; and human hopes, built upon these guesses, are sure to turn out the most disappointing, if not the most disastrous, of all failures.

I believe that the sons of Abraham are to re-inherit Palestine, and that the forfeitd fertility will yet return to that land; that the wilderness and the solitary places shall be glad for them, and the desert will rejoice and blossom as the rose. I believe that, meanwhile, Israel shall not only be wanderers, but that everywhere only a remnant, a small remnant, shall be saved; and that it is for the gathering in of this remnant that our missionaries go forth. I believe that these times of ours (as also all the times of the four monarchies [Dan. 2]) are the times of the Gentiles; and that Jerusalem and Israel shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. I believe that, with the filling up of these times of the Gentile pre-eminence, and the completion of what the apostle calls the fullness of the Gentiles, will be the signal for the judgments which are to usher in the crisis of earth’s history, and the deliverance of Israel, and the long-expected kingdom.

How the Jew, so long in abeyance, shall resume pre-eminence, I do not know; but that he shall do so, seems written plainly enough in the prophetic Word. How Jewish history shall once more emerge into its old place of grandeur and miracle, and how it shall unwind from itself the bright future of all nations, I know not. But so it is fore-written, “What shall be the reconciling of them be, but life from the dead?” [Rom. 11:15] “Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit” [Isa. 27:6].

How refreshingly different is the attitude here from that of Augustine and Calvin. Undergirding this teaching is not the eschatological blending of national Israel into mere shadowy insignificance and obscurity, but rather the acknowledgment that while grace has blessed the Gentiles in a grand manner, so too will that same grace of God, according to the same sovereign purpose, ultimately bless the Jewish people in a most climactic and triumphant sense. This is something to
rejoice about and not surprisingly Bonar has penned a hymn in this vein.

Forgotten! No; that cannot be,
    All other names may pass away;
But thine, My Israel, shall remain
    In everlasting memory.

Forgotten! No; that cannot be,
    The oath of Him who cannot lie
Is on thy city and thy land,
    An oath to all eternity.

Forgotten of the Lord thy God!
    No, Israel, no, that cannot be,
He chose thee in the days of old
    And still His favor rests on thee.¹³

C. H. Spurgeon

As a contemporary of Bonar, and certainly one who held Augustine and Calvin in high esteem, nevertheless this pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London did not embrace their essentially Catholic eschatology. Rather Spurgeon maintained a fervent interest in the Jewish people and particularly their being reached with the gospel. Preaching on Ezekiel 24:26 he plainly declares:

Not long shall it be ere they [the Jews] shall come—shall come from distant lands, where’er they rest or roam; and she who has been the off-scouring of all things, whose name has been a proverb and a bye-word, shall become the glory of all lands. Dejected Zion shall raise her head, shaking herself from dust, and darkness, and the dead. Then shall the Lord feed his people, and make them and the places round about his hill a blessing. I think we do not attach sufficient importance to the restoration of the Jews. We do not think enough of it. But certainly, if there is anything promised in the Bible it is this. I imagine that you cannot read the Bible without seeing clearly that there is to be an actual restoration of the children of Israel. “Thither they shall go up; they shall come with weeping unto Zion, and with supplications unto Jerusalem.” May that happy day soon come! For when the Jews are restored, then the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in; and as soon as they return, then Jesus will come upon Mount Zion to reign with his ancients gloriously, and the halcyon days of the Millennium shall

¹³ Lamp & Light Hymns, p. 64.
then dawn; we shall then know every man to be a brother and a friend; Christ shall rule with universal sway.\textsuperscript{14}

Speaking on Ezekiel 37:1-10 at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in aid of funds for the \textit{British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel amongst the Jews}, Spurgeon declared:

This vision has been used, from the time of Jerome onwards, as a description of the resurrection, and certainly it may be so accommodated with much effect. . . . But while this interpretation of the vision may be very proper as an accommodation, it must be quite evident to any thinking person that this is not the meaning of the passage. There is no allusion made by Ezekiel to the resurrection, and such topic would have been quite apart from the design of the prophet’s speech. I believe he was no more thinking of the resurrection of the dead than of the building of St. Peter’s at Rome, or the emigration of the Pilgrim Fathers. . . .

The meaning of our text, as opened up by the context, is most evidently, if words mean anything, first, that there shall be a political restoration of the Jews to their own land and to their own nationality; and then, secondly, there is in the text, and in the context, a most plain declaration, that there shall be a spiritual restoration, a conversion in fact, of the tribes of Israel. . . . Israel is now blotted out from the map of nations; her sons are scattered far and wide; her daughters mourn beside all the rivers of the earth. Her sacred song is hushed; no king reigns in Jerusalem; she bringeth forth no governors among her tribes. But she is to be restored; she is to be restored “as from the dead.” When her own sons have given up all hope of her, then is God to appear for her. She is to be re-organized; her scattered bones are to be brought together. There will be a native government again; there will again be the form of a body politic; a state shall be incorporated, and a king shall reign. Israel has now become alienated from her own land. Her sons, though they can never forget the sacred dust of Palestine, yet die at a hopeless distance from her consecrated shores. But it shall not be so forever, for her sons shall again rejoice in her: her land shall be called Beulah, for as a young man marrieth a virgin so shall her sons marry her. “I will place you in your own land,” is God’s promise to them. They shall again walk upon her mountains, shall once more sit under her vines and rejoice under her fig-trees. And they are also to be re-united. There shall not be two, nor ten, nor twelve, but one—one Israel praising one God, serving one king, and that one king the Son of David, the descended Messiah. They are to have a national prosperity which shall make them famous; nay, so glorious shall they be that Egypt, and Tyre, and Greece,

\textsuperscript{14} C. H. Spurgeon, \textit{Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit}, I, No. 28, p. 382, Ages Software.
and Rome, shall all forget their glory in the greater splendor of the throne of David. . . .

If there be meaning in words this must be the meaning of this chapter. I wish never to learn the art of tearing God’s meaning out of his own words. If there be anything clear and plain, the literal sense and meaning of this passage—a meaning not to be spirited or spiritualized away—must be evident that both the two and the ten tribes of Israel are to be restored to their own land, and that a king is to rule over them.15

Hence we plainly see that a very different meaning is derived from the Old Testament with regard to national Israel than that of Augustine and Calvin. Indeed, when we return to Jeremiah 32:41, it is obvious that Spurgeon’s understanding of this passage is fundamentally different from that of Calvin which we previously referenced.

We cannot help looking for the restoration of the scattered Israelites to the land which God has given to them by a covenant of salt: we also look for the time when they shall believe in the Messiah whom they have rejected, and shall rejoice in Jesus of Nazareth, whom to-day they despise. There is great encouragement in prophecy to those who work among the seed of Israel; and it is greatly needed, for of all mission fields it has been commonly represented to be one of the most barren, and upon the work the utmost ridicule has been poured. God has, therefore, supplied our faith with encouragements larger than we have in almost any other direction of service. Let those who believe work on! Those who believe not may give it up. They shall not have the honor of having helped to gather together the ancient nation to which our Lord himself belonged; for be it never forgotten that Jesus was a Jew.16

Here then we especially draw attention to the more literal interpretation of Bonar and Spurgeon when compared with Augustine and Calvin. But also, with the aid of centuries of hindsight along with the present state of the Middle East at our finger tips, we frankly declare the approach of Bonar and Spurgeon toward the sacred text to be much closer to the truth, that is the intended meaning of God’s inspired Word. Although Augustine’s renowned allegorical hermeneutic was not entirely cast aside by Calvin, at least in this eschatological scenario, nevertheless the Geneva reformer did far more consistently and accurately exegete the sacred text as a whole than did his mentor.

15 Ibid., X, No. 582, pp. 533, 536-537.
16 C. H. Spurgeon, Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, XXXIV, No. 2036, p. 545, Ages Software.
However, we reiterate the principle that the doctrines deduced by these opposing schools of eschatology, the one being Judeo-centric, the other Judeo-eccentric, are not without profound ethical consequences. On the one hand, Judeo-centricity, as represented by Bonar and Spurgeon, exalts in the national seed of Abraham and its promised, fulfilled, territorial glory through sovereign covenant grace. Consequently it esteems that seed, according to Paul’s exhortation in Romans 11:18-20, because it remains “beloved for the sake of the fathers” (Rom. 11:28). On the other hand, Judeo-eccentricity, as represented by Augustine and Calvin, dismisses the national seed of Abraham beyond the perimeter of the Kingdom of God, except for the condescending inclusion of “a remnant according to God’s gracious choice” (Rom. 11:5), that has no ultimate, divine, national, territorial validity. Augustine and Calvin were at best tolerant of the Jews; Bonar and Spurgeon were deeply affectionate toward the Jews. Which of these parties approximates the attitude of Paul toward his “kinsmen according to the flesh” (Rom. 9:3), and what is it about the doctrine they embrace that produces their kindly disposition? The answers to these questions are abundantly clear and are especially significant with regard to the prosperity of Jewish evangelism in this present age.
Chapter Two

ISRAEL – and centuries of Christian anti-Judaism

While Augustine and Calvin are representative of a predominant Catholic and Reformed heritage concerning Jewish/Christian relations, which spans seventeen centuries of Church history, a more detailed panorama of this era now needs to be surveyed. The necessity here of studying this relationship is born out by the astonishing ignorance that abides today concerning the legacy of Christian anti-Judaism, and contributing to this void is the frequent absence of reference to this dark legacy in works dealing with Church history. From the outset it should be understood that frankly, here we have the record of a conflict fraught with uncomfortable truth, especially with regard to the violation of Christian ethics on the part of Christians. Those who are quick to react with skepticism at such a claim, are simply asked to reserve their judgment at this point while at the same time retaining openness to a concert of opinion in this field, coming from both Christian and non-Christian sources. They are also invited to refer to Appendix E – An Annotated Bibliography on Jewish–Christian Relations in Church History. Here a broad spectrum of writings will provide a better understanding of how Christians have treated Jews throughout Church history, and particularly with regard to the underlying, driving eschatology. Here is a vital matter in this turbulent twenty-first century that needs to be not only acknowledged but also studied so that a genuine attitude of repentance might result.

This writer has encountered numerous Christians who simply do not want to face this unsavory historic record. Certainly they have offered token acknowledgment of the problem while at the same time retaining a firm commitment to Augustinian eschatology in this regard. Further

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1 A recent volume, Roger E. Olson, The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition & Reform. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 652 pp., has not so much as a mention of “Israel,” “Judaism,” or “Jews” in its subject index. The same is true for older works such as Otto W. Heik, A History of Christian Thought, 2 vols., and William Cunningham, Historical Theology, 2 vols.
they have frequently retreated to the claim that Scripture alone is
the basis of their eschatology, and as a consequence they have strenuously
asserted a willingness to contend strictly according to the biblical text.
Now this we have gladly assented to do, but only provided it is agreed
that our derived doctrine, being “sound” (II Tim. 4:3), that is spiritually
nourishing and fruitful, is also expected to be productive of a godly
Christian lifestyle. We insist that there is a necessary connection here
whereby sound doctrine or teaching ought to “promote godliness” (I
Tim. 6:3). And how then shall we discover the practical outworking of
Christian doctrine? By resorting to a comprehensive study of Church
history since here is the real expression of Christian truth, that is
resultant behavior, warts and all.

We may well delight to consider the fruit of the eighteenth century
evangelical awakening in England and America under Whitefield,
Wesley, and Edwards, and rightly so. For as Bready has concluded in
his doctoral research, here, in contrast with the bloody revolution in
France, “was the true nursing mother of the spirit and character values
that have created and sustained Free Institutions throughout the
English-speaking world.”2 Here authentic gospel doctrine was
productive of gospel righteousness in the lives of multitudes on a
national scale. However, this being so, we cannot then ignore the
historic corrupt fruit of supercessionist or replacement theology while
at the same time maintaining loyalty to the alleged biblical ground of
that teaching. Good doctrine produces good fruit, not bad fruit; bad
doctrine produces bad fruit, not good fruit (Matt. 7:17-20). Hence the
history of supercessionist or replacement theology cannot be swept
aside, as distasteful as confrontation with this reality would seem,
especially since the overwhelming testimony will inevitably lead one
to question the viability of the underlying eschatology. There is a real
sense in which history is the proving ground of revealed truth by which
it stamps either an ethical or unethical validation upon various
doctrinal foundations. Those who avoid such relationships, that is the
inevitability of truth being productive of ethical consequences, end up
conferring upon mankind error and its unethical consequences

2 J. Wesley Bready, England: Before and After Wesley, pp. 13, 205,
When Jesus Christ declared to Peter, “I will build My church [assembly]” (Matt. 16:18), this quintessential Jew appointed twelve Jews as foundation blocks for His new spiritual edifice or church (Eph. 2:19-22). In the upper room, these same twelve Jews listened to Jesus’ promise of the new covenant (Luke 22:20) which, the following day, was cut by means of His crucifixion before a Jerusalem multitude that also was essentially Jewish. At Pentecost, these same foundation stones were supernaturally identified before a Jewish throng (Acts 1:26-2:4) after which thousands of Jews were added to this new covenant fellowship. As a result this Jerusalem assembly of Christian believers became the mother congregation that increasingly gathered around her a host of Jewish spiritual children. Immediate tension then developed between the Jewish Synagogue and the expanding Jewish Church, the result being “severe persecution [that] broke out against the church in Jerusalem [by the likes of Saul], and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the land of Judea and Samaria” (Acts 8:1).

Then with the inclusion of hybrid Jewish Christians from Samaria (Acts 8:4-17) and Gentile Christians from Caesarea (Acts 10:1-48) into Christ’s new fold, the seeds of dissension were sown even within His own disciples, that is until Peter made explanation at Jerusalem of God’s new revelation to him. What a joyous occasion resulted from the decision of the Council of Jerusalem in C. 50 A.D. when it was concluded, with the full agreement of Peter and Paul, that the Gentile Christians of Antioch in the north did not have to submit to the distinctive Judaism that the Jewish Christians conformed to in Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-31). However, while this concord between Jewish and Gentile Christians continued for approximately eighty-five years, it did not last. Eusebius tells us that the fifteen succeeding bishops of Jerusalem were all Jewish, that is up to 135 A.D.\(^3\) Up to this point, the mother church was revered by her children; then the tide began to turn bringing about devastating results. To begin with, the essentially Jewish church at Jerusalem had suffered withering persecution, dispersal and impoverishment at the hands of militant Judaism. Nevertheless, the daughter fellowship at Antioch thrived under Paul and Barnabas with the accomplishment of far reaching missionary expansion in the Gentile world.

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\(^3\) Eusebius, *Church History*, IV, 5.
On the other hand, in rebelling against Rome, Jerusalem Judaism suffered considerable destruction, hence humiliation, under Titus in 69-70 A.D. The temple being desecrated, burned, and leveled, many hundreds of thousands of Jews, who had gathered for the Passover season, were slaughtered while a remnant fled to Babylonia, Egypt, North Africa, and relatives in the Diaspora. Surely Christ’s prophetic declaration would have been called to mind by the Christians of that time, namely that “Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Luke 21:24). Here this divine role reversal had now begun to play out in a manner that ought not to be opposed. Now the mother Jewish church would be trodden down for an indefinite period, and her latter Gentile children would begin to assert themselves to the point of maternal neglect, even denigration of their Jewish parentage. Then in 135 A.D., the messianic claims of Bar Kokhba resulted in climactic humiliation whereby Emperor Hadrian slaughtered a further 580,000 Jews, destroyed 985 towns, expelled the remainder from Jerusalem, prohibited circumcision and Sabbath observance, erected a temple to Jupiter on the Temple mound, renamed the city as Aelia Capitolina after himself and the land as Syria Palestina, that is Palestine, or Philistia. As a result, now the mother church became thoroughly scattered abroad and humiliated. Now she was associated with national Israel’s desolation and judgment while prominent centers of Gentile Christianity, such as at Alexandria, Caesarea, Ephesus and Rome, inclusive of a Jewish remnant, were thriving. The stage was now set for the arrogant self-assertion of the reconciled Gentile prodigal children of the far country over the weakened seed of the impoverished Jewish elder brethren! So, for Christianity in its early stages, the real debate was never between Christians and Jews but among Christians. Eventually the anti-Jewish side won. Its ideology became normative, not just for subsequent Christianity and Western culture but, through the formation of the New Testament, for our perception of earlier Christianity as well. The voice of the losing side fell silent.

5 John G. Gager, The Origins Of Anti-Semitism, p. 269. We reject the idea of anti-Judaism as being inherent in the formation of the canon, although the New Testament was certainly misused in the promotion of anti-Judaism.
Because of Bar Kokhba’s messianic claims, Christianity offered no support for the Judaism inherent in this uprising. At the same time, the expulsion of Jews from Jerusalem by Hadrian necessitated the appointment of the first Gentile bishop over the mother church. Consequently the scene was set for increase in Gentile dominance. Hence subsequent to this demise of Judaism through Roman oppression and its ascribed shame at having put to death its Messiah, now Gentile Christianity increasingly asserted itself, especially in the midst of a necessary apologetic environment. Whereas the Gentiles had originally understood themselves as having been engrafted into the blessings of Abrahamic Judaism, now they asserted transference of formerly promised blessings to the church as the new, superceding, spiritual Israel. James Parkes indicates:

"Little by little the Church was read back into the whole of Old Testament history, and Christian history was shown to be older than Jewish history in that it dated from the creation, and not from Sinai, or even Abraham."6

Such a hermeneutical shift from the more literal Palestinian Judaic tradition to dominant allegorical interpretation, as thought to be more “spiritual” according to Origen of Alexandria and Justin Martyr,7 resulted in the repudiation of supposed carnal, Judaistic conclusions, and thus any future national identity. Hence following years of development, it was eventually believed that Israel had been replaced or superceded; this emerging emphasis was formally recognized, as if a “capstone,”8 by Justin at Ephesus in his Dialogue with Trypho, c. AD 160. Here, for the first time in extant literature, he plainly spoke of the church as being the new spiritual Israel, as well as the new custodian of Scripture.9

6 James Parkes, The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue, p. 100. The attitude described here is not unlike the contemporary supercessionist claim that, according to the prototype of Eden, the land of Israel, as promised to Abraham, is now transcended by the more encompassing land of the whole earth. Refer to O. Palmer, The Israel of God, pp. 3-31; Stephen Sizer, Christian Zionism, pp. 164, 260-261.
9 Peter Richardson, Israel in the Apostolic Church, p. 1.
The pre-Constantinian era, to the End of the Third Century

While the status of Judaism was receding within Christianity, Judaising groups, not unlike those which Paul had opposed (Acts 15:1-5; Gal. 5:2-4, 12), remained a serious irritant. There were radical and conservative groups of Jewish Christians, such as the pro-Judaic Elkasaites, Ebionites and Cerinthians, that aroused vigorous orthodox apologetic responses which consequently took on a strong anti-Judaic tone. For Irenaeus of Lyons, the Jews had been disinherited from the grace of God. With Tertullian of Carthage, anti-Judaism permeated every aspect of his thought; the Jews were the very anti-type of true virtue and so embodied the principle of obsolescence. For Hippolytus of Rome, the Jews will not be bound to four hundred and thirty years servitude in Egypt, or seventy years in Babylonia, for their plight will last forever. In continuity of thought, Cyprian of Carthage similarly argued that the Jews had been replaced by the Christians; consequently he demanded that they all be expelled from his diocese at the point of the sword. Hence Parkes points out that Justin, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Cyprian, and Origen deserve special mention at this juncture, that is prior to the infamous fourth century.

They thus represent not only geographically but also in their trainings an astonishingly varied range of interests. Their different writings are of capital importance for the development throughout the Church of the absolute condemnation of the Jews which is characteristic of the patristic literature as a whole.

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10 Terrance Callan, *Forgetting the Root*, pp. 44-47.
11 Parkes, *Conflict of the Church and Synagogue*, p. 106.
14 Callan, *Forgetting the Root*, p. 95.
16 Parkes, *Conflict of the Church and Synagogue*, p. 72.
Israel – and centuries of Christian anti-Judaism

The Constantinian era, to the End of the Fourth Century

The development of anti-Judaism or the Adversus Judaeos genre, now further intensifies. Parkes continues: “The Jew as he is encountered in the pages of fourth-century writers is not a human being at all. He is a ‘monster’, a theological abstraction, of superhuman cunning and malice, and more than superhuman blindness.” So we enter this century via Eusebius, the acknowledged ‘Father of Church History,’ follower in the steps of Origen, who in c. 315 became Bishop of Caesarea. Not surprisingly he also believed that the Church was the ‘new Israel’ which replaced the Jews. Further, he so lionized the Emperor Constantine upon the union of Empire and Church that his biographical writing in this regard became more adulation and eulogy than objective factual record. Most significant at this time was the legislation that Constantine effected concerning the Jews. It was made a crime to convert to Judaism. A Jew who circumcised his non-Jewish slave was subject to the death penalty, as was also the case if he married a Christian woman employed in the imperial factories. Thus the Christian state, more militantly than ever, asserted itself against the synagogue. However it is important at this juncture to appreciate how the inheritance of anti-Judaism thus far became not only the established teaching of the Christian Empire, but also the base upon which an even more virulent strain was cultivated by means of four pillars of the church whose legacy remains with us today, namely Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, and Augustine, all contemporaries.

Ambrose of Milan, eloquent preacher and opponent of Arianism, had declared that the Jewish synagogue was “a house of impiety, a receptacle of folly, which God himself has condemned.” Not surprisingly, he praised the burning of a synagogue which he himself had orchestrated. When the Emperor Theodosius commanded that the bishop rebuild the synagogue, Ambrose defiantly remonstrated against this judgment causing the civil ruler to back down. Jerome of Bethlehem’s most notable achievement was his translation of the Latin

17 Ibid., p. 158.
18 James Carroll, Constantine’s Sword, pp. 173-174; Dan Gruber, The Church and the Jews, pp. 14-16.
19 Parkes, Conflict of the Church and Synagogue, pp. 179-180.
Vulgate version of the Bible which dominated the church until modern times. He was the only Church Father really conversant with Hebrew and rabbinic thought, though this knowledge the better enabled him to express both ridicule and disgust concerning the behavior of the Jews. Jerome had as much contempt for Judeo-Christians as the Jews themselves.\(^{21}\) Influenced by asceticism, he was convinced that “there was no place for Jews. He was now and for evermore the ‘carnal’, ‘lewd’ and ‘materialistic Jew.’\(^{22}\) Chrysostom of Antioch, the “golden-mouthed” expositor, nevertheless became the most notorious and rabid proponent of anti-Judaism in his generation. In a series of eight *Homilies Against the Jews*, his tirade knows no limits. James Parkes writes:

> There is no sneer too mean, no gibe to bitter for him to fling at the Jewish people. No text is too remote to be able to be twisted to their confusion, no argument is too casuistical, no blasphemy too startling for him to employ. . . . On the strength of Psalm 106:37, he states that they ‘sacrificed their sons and daughters to devils: they outraged nature; and overthrew from their foundations the laws of relationship. They are become worse than the wild beasts, and for no reason at all, with their own hands they murder their own offspring, to worship the avenging devils who are the foes of our life. . . . The synagogues of the Jews are the homes of idolatry and devils, even though they have no images in them. They are worse even than heathen circuses. . . . I hate the Jews for they have the law and they insult it.\(^{23}\)

Thus Daniel Goldhagen’s definitive study of the Holocaust, especially in terms of focus upon “ordinary Germans,” is painfully correct when he concludes:

> John Chrysostom, a pivotal Church Father whose theology and teachings had lasting import, preached about Jews in terms that would become the stock-in-trade of Christian anti-Jewish teachings and rhetoric, which would condemn the Jews to live in a Christian Europe that despised and feared them. . . . John, an influential theologian, is but an early example of the Christian world’s essential relationship to Jews, which was to endure well into modernity. . . . The very definition of what it meant to be a Christian entailed a thoroughgoing and visceral hostility to Jews, just as it did to evil,

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\(^{23}\) Parkes, *Conflict of the Church and Synagogue*, pp. 163-164, 166.
and to the devil. It is no surprise that medieval Christians came to see Jews as agents of both.24

Augustine of Hippo, although seemingly more temperate than his mentor Ambrose, nevertheless, as we have already seen (pp. 19-22), bequeathed a supremely dominant and enduring anti-Judaic legacy. This was divine consignment of the Jew to universal abandonment through the mediation of the church, the result being a wandering, homeless, rejected and accursed race, incurably carnal, blind to spiritual truth, perfidious, faithless and apostate. Their crime of deicide was one of cosmic proportions which merited permanent exile and subordination to Christianity. Israel, the older son, must be made to ‘serve’ the Church, the younger son (Gen. 25:23), which is the true heir and rightful owner of the Divine Promises enunciated in the Old Testament. Not only Cain, but also Hagar, Ishmael and Esau denote the Jews who have been rejected, while their contrasting pairs, Abel, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob, represent the election of the Church.25

Not surprisingly, the church councils of this period reflected the consensus of the Church Fathers. In 306 AD the Council of Elvira in Spain banned all community contact between Spanish Christians and the ‘evil’ Hebrews. Especially prohibited was marriage between Christians and Jews, except where the Jew was willing to be converted. The Council of Nicea in 325 AD, called by Constantine to settle the controversy of Arianism, continued the efforts of the early Church to dissociate Christianity from Judaism by deciding that Easter would no longer be determined by or celebrated during Passover. “For it is unbecoming beyond measure that on this holiest of festivals we should follow the customs of the Jews. Henceforth let us have nothing in common with this odious people.”26

THE MEDIAEVAL PERIOD

The subsequent thousand years was not without its times when the Jews, notwithstanding their unbelief, were protected and tolerated, if not respected, by civil and religious Christian leaders. Nevertheless, as

26 Grosser and Halperin, Causes and Effects of Anti-Semitism, pp. 58, 77.
the Reformation period drew near, the overall attitude of Christendom increasingly hardened.

The Old Catholic Early Period, to Gregory the Great, 604 A.D.

Whereas the Old Catholic Church had been led by a plurality of bishops, now the bishop of Rome achieved primacy and established an imperial church, while the civil rulership of the empire had been moved to Constantinople. Thus Pope Gregory the Great (540-604) became the revered agent of consolidation who, following in the steps of Augustine, established the theological foundation of the Middle Ages until Thomas Aquinas bequeathed his *Summa Theologica*. While expressly forbidding the forced conversion of Jews, yet Gregory also sanctioned Augustine’s tolerance requiring subjection with misery. On the one hand there were his flowery denunciations of the Jews’ diabolical perversity and detestable characteristics; on the other hand he could rebuke a bishop who had been physically carrying out these denunciations, by calling for love, charity and justice in winning them to Christianity. Thus, while Gregory attempted to forge a balanced policy, nevertheless he harbored no love for the Jews.28

The Monastic Middle Period, to the Final Crusade, 1270 AD.

Occupied with barbarian assaults upon Europe, the pope of Rome strengthened his influence through the conversion and devotion of Clovis, the Germanic king (496), and his conquest of Gaul. In Spain, the industrious Isidore, Archbishop of Seville (560-636), castigated the Jews more harshly than did his mentor Augustine. Zealous for their conversion, yet he believed they did not belong in a properly integrated Christian kingdom. Such a belief became influential during the centuries to come.29 The conquest of Spain and Portugal by the Arab Moors (711) resulted in a relatively improved situation for the Jews in that region where they received better treatment under non-Christian governments. Muslim expulsion from Spain, following Charles

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27 John B. Y. Hood asserts that concerning the Jews and Judaism, Augustine’s ideas on these matters “dominated the medieval debate.” *Aquinas and the Jews*, p. 10.


Martel’s victory at Tours (732), paved the way for the reign of Charlemagne (768-814), in which the status of Jews again improved in their obtaining of Jewish rights.\textsuperscript{30} However, Agobard, Archbishop of Lyon (779-840), subsequently attacked the Jews with vigor similar to that of Chrysostom; thus he proposed that Christians should not fraternize with the unclean and corrupt synagogue, as if seated with a whore.\textsuperscript{31} In England, the scholastic Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1033-1109), was a saint whose love for humanity did not exclude the children of Israel, even though he appeared to regard them as pagan; such genuine concern was rare in those times. However his moderation here never renounced the Augustinian standard of the Jews as a biblical witness of divinely imposed degradation.\textsuperscript{32} Then in 1095 A.D., Pope Urban II initiated the first Crusade, and an era of eight campaigns that concluded in 1270 AD. The Holy Land and sacred sites were to be delivered from pagan infidels. En route via Europe, on this first tour the barbarous crusaders, incited by priests such as Peter the Hermit, offered Jews baptism or death. At Mainz several hundred Jews were killed followed by a service of thanksgiving. The capture of Jerusalem in 1099 A.D. resulted in the burning of a synagogue filled with Jews.\textsuperscript{33} Abelard of Paris (1079-1142), a father of dawning scholasticism and follower of Jewish and Arabic learning, became a lone defender of the Jews. He was the only leader in the Middle Ages who ventured to attack openly the anti-Jewish tradition of Christendom.\textsuperscript{34} Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), encouraged a second Crusade; while being critical of the killing of Jews during the first Crusade, he nevertheless characterized them as bestial descendants of the Devil and murderers from the beginning of time.\textsuperscript{35} Because of supposed unorthodoxy and the minimizing of Jewish culpability, Abelard was ruined by the

\textsuperscript{30} Dan Cohn-Sherbok, \textit{Anti-Semitism: A History}, p. 64.

\textsuperscript{31} Friedrich Heer, \textit{God’s First Love}; p. 61-62; Clark M. Williamson, \textit{Has God Rejected His People}? p. 113.


\textsuperscript{33} Clark M. Williamson, \textit{Has God Rejected His People}? p. 113-114.

\textsuperscript{34} Hay, \textit{Thy Brother’s Blood}, p. 67; Heer, God’s First Love, pp. 68, 76.

\textsuperscript{35} Grosser and Halperin, \textit{Causes and Effects of Anti-Semitism}, p. 106.
persecutions of Bernard who also sought the assistance of Pope Innocent II in this pursuit, though they were eventually reconciled.36

However at the entrance of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) on to the religious stage of Europe, he but “served as a major conduit of the traditional Christian view of the Jews for some seven hundred years.”37 Like Augustine he believed in a future salvation of the Jews, according to Romans 11, that would lead to absorption into the Christian Church. So we now survey a period when the Catholic Church and Christian state reached the peak of their united power. Yet the Jewish people were to be plunged into new depths of oppression and misery by the scourge of anti-Semitic hysteria.38 It should be understood that at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), at which the dogma of transubstantiation was canonized, baptized Jews were forbidden to practice Jewish customs; Jews were forbidden to appear in public at Easter time and were barred from public office; they were to wear a distinguishing badge. The Council of Canterbury in England (1222) affirmed these same prohibitions.39 Thus in responding to an enquiry from a duchess as to compliance with these church decrees, we are told of Aquinas:

In the matter of distinctive Jewish dress, however, Thomas deemed the issue an easy one (plana est responsio); the recent decision of the Fourth Lateran Council that the Jews wear an identifying sign must be observed, especially because biblical law itself commands them to place distinctive fringes on their cloaks. . . . [Thus] the provisions of De regimine Iudaeorum [the enquiry of the Duchess] proceed directly from the two basic premises of Augustinian doctrine and its applications in canon law: First, the sin of the Jews has resulted in their consignment to perpetual servitude in Christendom; second, no Christian ruler may deprive them of that which they require to live as Jews under his rule.40

How tragic it is when history repeats itself since from 1941 onwards, a standard feature of German Nazi occupation policy around Europe was to force Jews to wear the degrading yellow stars and badges.41

Israel – and centuries of Christian anti-Judaism

The Renaissance Late Period, to the Fall of Monasticism, 1517 AD.

While the three hundred years that preceded the Reformation saw a scholastic, artistic and literary revival as reflected in Colet, Moore, Bacon, Chaucer and Caxton in Britain, along with Aquinas, Boccaccio, Dante, Leonardo da Vinci, Machiavelli, Michaelangelo, Raphael, Erasmus and Guttenberg in Europe, at the same time the Jewish community became increasingly oppressed through several movements. Monasticism, at the forefront of this trend, had always known zealotry, however with the increasing influence of the more recently formed mendicant Dominican and Franciscan orders, which focused on preaching for conversion, they became the most implacable religious adversaries of the Jews in the late Middle Ages. This ferocity became inquisitorial and included book burnings, especially the Talmud.42

Then there developed, beyond suppression and humiliation of the Jew, a greater emphasis upon mass expulsion, just one step away from extermination. Britain initiated this move when Edward I, having first confiscated the Jew’s assets, expelled them all in 1290 until over three hundred and fifty years later when they were able to return under Oliver Cromwell, though even then with qualified scrutiny.43 Not until the middle of the nineteenth century would they obtain full citizenship in Great Britain. Jews were also expelled from France in 1306 and again in 1394. Having become prosperous in Spain, after subjection to the Inquisition, they were then all expelled in 1492; in fleeing to Portugal, these Jews met the same fate there. Justification for this racial eviction was necessary consignment of the Jew to wandering on account of deicide and obduracy in unbelief.44

Furthermore, new forms of vilification were injected. The blood libel accusation, originating in Norwich, England, in 1144, charged the Jews with infanticide for the purpose of the slain child’s blood being used to make matzos, the unleavened bread used in celebration of the Passover. Perpetuation of this horrendous accusation, although repudiated by

44 Clark M. Williamson, Has God Rejected His People? p. 117-118.
Emperor and Pope, led to many centuries of such slander that resulted in numerous efforts at extermination. There was also the charge of wafer desecration, which is abuse of Christ as present in the offering of the Mass; this was claimed to be a recapitulation of the Jew’s abusive treatment of Christ as recorded in Scripture. For this, many Jews were hounded to death, undoubtedly with the encouragement of a zealous priesthood.

So that by the time we enter the sixteenth century, we can easily identify a pervasive, smoldering anti-Judaic legacy throughout Britain and Europe. Hence the great question concerns whether the religious awakening about to erupt at that time, that is the laying of the very foundation of western society, would be able to cleanse the emerging modern world of this dark, insidious, shameful inheritance.

THE 16TH CENTURY REFORMATION PERIOD

The fact that Martin Luther was a devoted Augustinian monk should help us appreciate the antecedents of his blatant anti-Judaic tirades that climaxed his momentous life. His last sermon, preached several days before his death, pleaded that all Jews should be expelled from Germany. Notwithstanding Luther’s earlier hopes that the Jews would believe in Jesus as the Christ and become incorporated within the church, his later vitriolic denunciations, on account of their obstinate unbelief even up to the time of his death, are such that Lutheran scholar Jaroslav Pelikan has frankly declared,

that the time has come for those who study Luther and admire him to acknowledge, more unequivocally and less pugnaciously than they have, that on this issue Luther’s [anti-Judaic] thought and language are simply beyond defense.

Yes, as difficult as it is to digest, spiritual giants, to whom we become eternally indebted, can nevertheless act in a pigmy manner! On the other hand John Calvin, as we have seen more moderate than Luther, nevertheless was rooted in the same essential Augustinian legacy.

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While not going out of his way to harass Jews, he was content to keep them out of Geneva and repeat traditional anti-Judaic statements.\textsuperscript{48}

Even so, Reformation Europe certainly experienced gospel and ecclesiastical emancipation at this time, which was undoubtedly stimulated by the surging printed page of the Bible; yet the synagogue continued to experience vigorous anti-Judaism. Furthermore, Spanish Marranos or “pigs,” the fruit of the Inquisition, those Jews having converted to Christianity under duress while remaining Jewish at heart, continued to be hounded. This was especially the case in Spain, so that for many refuge was sought in Portugal, Salonica, and Turkey. Poland also offered a degree of protection in Eastern Europe in attracting emigrants streaming away from oppression in the west, yet with the result that anti-Judaism also began to erupt there as well.\textsuperscript{49} In 1562 the Polish Diet (Legislative Assembly) confirmed previous anti-Jewish legislation. Jews were to dress differently from Christians; they were prohibited from owning Christian serfs or domestics and from holding public office.\textsuperscript{50} However it is well to remember that this development was more a matter of resurgence within awakened Europe, of recapitulation with a modern flair rather than the origination of a movement. For as Heiko Oberman has pointed out in his definitive analysis:

Hatred of the Jews was not an invention of the sixteenth century. It was an inherited assumption. Far from acquitting the age of Renaissance and Reformation, we should recognize that this same age which so consciously scrutinized the medieval traditions simultaneously passed on, with new strength, whatever withstood the test of inspection.\textsuperscript{51}

However with the ideological thrust of the Counter-Reformation waning, the expanding mercantile and financial character of Europe at this time provided opportunity for initiative to thrive. Thus the Jews were thrust into the very center of the European economy in which capitalism began to displace feudalism, and cash became the accepted currency rather than produce. In this new atmosphere, sophisticated Jews were welcomed on their merits, at least for some time until anti-Judaic reaction fomented yet again, especially in Eastern Europe.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{48} Williamson, \textit{Has God Rejected His People}? pp. 102-103.
\textsuperscript{50} Grosser and Halperin, \textit{Causes and Effects of Anti-Semitism}, p. 167.
\textsuperscript{51} Heiko A. Oberman, \textit{The Roots of Anti-Semitism}, p. xi.
\textsuperscript{52} Johnson, \textit{History of the Jews}, pp. 249-52
The 17th Century Puritan Period

The growing influence of Protestantism now appeared to bode well for the European Jew in terms of much greater esteem being offered than Augustinian tolerance normally allowed. Furthermore the Puritanism of England in particular, at the advent of freedom for popular publishing that the interregnum government of Cromwell allowed, suddenly deluged the country with eschatological speculation. This inevitably raised the specter of the salvation of the Jews and their future national destiny. At the same time a series of events originating from Eastern Europe gave further impetus to the arousal of Judaism in Britain. In 1648, savage slaughter of Ukrainian Jews was instigated by Russian Cossacks upon their refusal to convert to the Orthodox faith.

Killing was accompanied by barbarous tortures; the victims were flayed alive, split asunder, clubbed to death, roasted on coals, or scalded with boiling water. Even infants at the breast were not spared. The most terrible cruelty was shown toward the Jews. Scrolls of the Law were taken out of the synagogues by the Cossacks who danced on them while drinking whiskey. After this Jews were laid upon them and butchered without mercy.

The result was the flight of refugees seeking safety in the west, so that this surge troubled a Jewish scholar in Amsterdam, Manasseh ben Israel, who feared Dutch reprisals at such an influx. Consequently, taking advantage of the more sympathetic parliament of Cromwell that had displaced the English royalists, in 1655 he personally visited London and petitioned the Lord Protector for a repeal of long standing laws forbidding Jewish entry into England. Following characteristic English delay and subtlety, citizenship for Jews was in time allowed, eventually resulting in Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. A further consequence was the enabling of immigration as well to America by means of which American Jewry was born. However the ramifications of this more open policy was an England, with increasingly awakened eschatological interest, that would eventually take the lead amongst the nations of the world in the establishment of the modern State of Israel.

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However as the seventeenth century closed, emerging modernity did not bring about a reduction in overall Judaphobia. Certainly some of Reformed convictions, such as Philipp Melanchthon, Justas Jonas, Andreas Osiander, and Theodore Beza, toned down Luther’s shrill emphasis. Further, the Lutheran Pietistic movement originating with Jacob Spener (1635-1705), in reacting to sterile dogmatic orthodoxy, resulted in a mild millenarian eschatology which in turn aligned with a more kindly attitude toward the Jews. From this there developed a pro-Semitic premillennial Lutheran strain that continued through Bengel, Zahn, Delitzsch, Godet, Auberlen, and on to America through Seiss, Schmucker, and Peters. However, these convictions were not widely shared, especially in mainstream Lutheranism; throughout Europe Jews were viewed with contempt and hostility. To be sure many with a Reformed heritage, along with numerous Puritans, expressed a heartfelt interest in the conversion of the Jews, even a climactic ingathering in a more national sense. Yet this hope usually envisaged incorporation into the church with the loss of individual, national, and territorial identity. Hence, as Cohn-Sherbok puts the matter quite plainly:

The early modern period thus witnessed the continuation of the long tradition of Christian anti-Semitism alongside a growing awareness of the need to improve the position of Jewry. Voices were ranging on different sides of this debate by leading figures of the Reformation. Yet even those Reformers who encouraged their coreligionists to adopt a more positive attitude towards the Jewish community shared many of the prejudices of previous ages. Basing themselves on Scripture, they prayed for the Jews’ eventual conversion to the true faith. In this way, they hoped for the eventual elimination of the Jewish race, an aspiration shared centuries later by the Nazis, who sought to accomplish the same end but through very different means.

This approach was not unlike that which Napoleon later proposed, namely that the remedy concerning these objectionable people lay in the abolition of Jewry by dissolving it into Christianity.

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57 Ibid., p. 162.
58 Ibid., p. 182.
The 18th Century Evangelical Period

While Britain experienced the Evangelical Awakening under Whitefield and Wesley, America experienced the Great Awakening under Whitefield and Edwards. Also Germany experienced the Pietistic and Moravian revival under Spenner, Francke, and Zinzendorf, while France endured bloody revolution along with “rational enlightenment”! A scientific awakening was also under way, launched by Newtonian physics, which had paved the way for the coming industrial revolution. On the other hand Jewish intelligentsia had been made to seem backward and obscurantist. Thus Jews appeared to educated Christians, or even uneducated ones, as figures of contempt and derision, dressed in funny clothes, imprisoned in ancient and ludicrous superstitions, as remote and isolated from modern society as one of the lost tribes. The Gentiles knew nothing, and cared less about Jewish scholarship. Even the apologetic of Moses Mendelssohn for the existence of God was alleged to have been demolished by Immanuel Kant, who denigrated Jewish religion and derided the Jews as a nation of usurers.

In 1740 the Russians wanted to either convert the Jews or expel them. The threat of expulsion was thought of as an incentive for the Jews to embrace the Greek Orthodox faith. In 1747 Pope Benedict XIV issued a papal bull which asserted that Jewish children over the age of seven could be baptized against the will of their parents. Then at the commencement of the reign of anti-Semitic pope Pius VI (1775-1799), there was published his Edict on the Jews that led directly to forced baptisms as well as abductions from Jewish parents. Further, Jews were obliged by law to listen to contemptuous and insulting sermons. In 1787 an Austrian law compelled Jews to adopt German-sounding first and family names, many of which translated into insults.

However, a significant step in Jewish emancipation was taken when in 1791, over one hundred years after the emancipation established in England, the French National Assembly abrogated all anti-Jewish laws, the result being that Louis XVI also proclaimed full equality for the Jews. The preceding debate had suggested that, not unlike the rationale

of much twentieth century anti-Judaic eschatology: “The Jews should be denied everything as a nation but granted everything as individuals,”⁶³ that is they should be allowed individuality without nationality or territory.

Even so, this legislative ideal did not become permanently established in societal expression within France, and indeed Europe as a whole. Once Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo in 1815, there was to be a vehement reaction against Jewish emancipation. In Italy Jews would be forced to live in ghettos and deprived of their rights. German Jewry would be treated similarly. In Frankfurt Jews would also be forced to live in the ghetto, and in Lübeck a total expulsion did take place. Hence, paradoxically, the French quest to emancipate the Jews eventually led to regression toward previous attitudes concerning both Jewry and the Jewish faith.⁶⁴

THE 19TH CENTURY GENTILE MISSIONARY PERIOD

If the dismal clouds of Jewish oppression during the early eighteenth century had then briefly parted for a period to let in the light of emancipation through legislative enlightenment and democratic ideals, the nineteenth century eventually saw a pall of darkness roll in once again, initially in ideological terms. This gathering gloom over Europe foreshadowed a horrendous storm upon the eye of which the Jews would find themselves impaled, with their oppressors first being called the proponents of “anti-Semitism” by Wilhelm Marr in Hamburg in 1879. The ideological mix of this period, which tended to avow both humanistic and eschatological optimism, included emerging social Darwinism, socialism, fascism, free market capitalism, liberal Christianity, along with the inherited legacies of deism and rationalism. Even evangelical Christianity, especially within Anglicanism, with its great missionary thrust emanating through the vast resources of the British Empire, expressed considerable eschatological hope, except that popular, optimistic postmillennialism began to be eclipsed by apocalyptic premillennialism, from which there emerged new and

⁶³ Ibid., p. 306.
enthusiastic support for Jewish projects and belief in the restoration of the Jews to their own land.\textsuperscript{65}

However, in the world of literature, politics, philosophy, theology, and music, opposition to Jewry became identified with much of high European culture. For Voltaire, Jews are “our masters and our enemies . . . whom we detest [and are] the most abominable people in the world.” Fichte (a disciple of Kant) believed that the expulsion of the Jews was the only means of protecting the German nation. Goethe poetically caricatured the Jews’ shabby commercial dealings. Feuerbach considered the Jew to be crassly materialistic. Nietzsche believed that “the extinction of many types of people is just as desirable as any form of reproduction.” Wagner warned the King of Bavaria: “I regard the Jewish race as the born enemy of pure humanity and everything that is noble in it.”\textsuperscript{66} Thus the intellectual tone of Europe gave anti-Judaism a new respectability. As religion lost ground to science, anti-Judaism became in part scientific. No longer based solely on religious belief, which inherited trait had in no way diminished, this new version of anti-Judaism became respectable and acceptable to the center of the western world. Even a story from Grimm’s German \textit{Fairy Tales} titled “The Jew in the Bush” had as its main character a cheating, thieving Jew who winds up on the gallows. In 1823 Pope Leo XII reestablished the ghetto in Rome, which had been opened by the Napoleonic armies during the occupation of Italy, and ordered the revival of forced conversion sermons on the Sabbath. In 1870, despite the opposition of Pope Pius IX, this same Roman ghetto was formally and finally abolished so that Jews were granted equal rights in Italy.

In 1844 Karl Marx published his \textit{On the Jewish Question}, in which he wrote: “Out of its entrails bourgeois society continually creates Jews. . . . Emancipation from huckstering and from money, and consequently from practical, real Judaism, would be the self-emancipation of our era.” In 1880 a new anti-Judaic campaign was launched in Berlin which gathered 250,000 signatures on a petition that was submitted to Chancellor Bismark.\textsuperscript{67} Now a complex anti-Judaic movement

\textsuperscript{65} Nigel Scotland, \textit{Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age}, pp. 172-178.

\textsuperscript{66} Cohn-Sherbok, \textit{Anti-Semitism: A History}, pp. 149, 168, 172, 206, 208, 212.

developed in Germany, indeed in Europe, involving an intensely rabid ideology that gathered support from pseudo intellectual commitment to eugenics. Based on the arrogant belief that all high cultures were created by Aryans, it was deemed desirable that the state should uphold purity in this regard. Thus the impurity of Judaism must necessarily be removed. Here the philosophic foundation of the Holocaust became entrenched a generation before its actual outworking in German history. However the religious community did not exclude itself from participation in this burgeoning movement. In the 1780’s, Adolf Stoecker, chaplain to the imperial court in Berlin, founded the Christian Socialist Workers’ Party, which adopted anti-Judaism as a central feature of its platform. As an influential church historian and theologian at this time, Adolf Harnack’s rejection of the Old Testament, being a variant form of Marcionism, was a primary instance of classical anti-Jewish theology. Then later Gerhard Kittel, first editor of the highly regarded Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, in attempting to deal with the Jewish question, not only rejected assimilation and mixed marriage, but also chose the alternative of the ghetto for separated, non participatory national “guests.”

Of course this heightening of anti-Judaism was not confined to Germany, even if it seemed primarily to incubate there. In 1890 the National Anti-Semitic League of France was formed in Paris under the presidency of Edouard Drumont, a Catholic socialist. In stridently taking to the streets, Nazi style, this movement sought the support of the masses. In November 1891 a bill ordering the expulsion of the Jews from France received thirty-two votes in the Chamber of Deputies. Then in 1892 the Dreyfus Affair erupted as an international incident in which a Jewish Captain Dreyfus was charged with treason due to his alleged betrayal of a secret French memo to a German Colonel. Found guilty and exiled to Devil’s Island, Dreyfus was eventually pardoned, then exonerated, though not before much exacerbation of the whole anti-Judaic conflict. Hence, with the further uprising of anti-Judaism in Russia and Poland, it was not so surprising that Theodor Herzl was moved to publish his monumental Der Judenstaat, The Jewish State, in 1896. He had personally witnessed the outcry of a mob shouting “Death to the Jews,” when Dreyfus was stripped of his rank. Having

68 Cohn-Sherbok, Anti-Semitism: A History, pp. 204-213.
69 Ibid., p. 215.
become distressed at the European cauldron of anti-Judaism that continued to boil, he came to the conclusion that the only solution for the wandering Jew would be the establishment of a Jewish homeland.71

THE 20-21ST CENTURY JEWISH MISSIONARY PERIOD

It may seem paradoxical that the period which saw anti-Judaism reach an unprecedented climax, that is from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, was the same period that also witnessed the most energetic effort since Pentecost for the proclamation of the Christian gospel to the Jewish people through numerous missionary agencies. However, our concern at this juncture remains the attitude of Christianity in central Europe toward this rising tide of Jewish hatred that reached immense proportions by 1933 and subsequently engulfed the western world in unspeakable and degrading horror. For it was on January 30, 1933 when Hitler assumed the office of German Chancellor. By this means he was enabled, through the agency of the Nazis, to employ national aversion to Jewry as a catalyst in his campaign for racial cleansing. From then on, no public institutionalized support existed in Germany for any view of Jews other than the one long dominant in Germany, now given extreme expression in a relentless and obsessive Nazi campaign for Jewish elimination.72

However, even more horrifying was the manifest, extensive moral bankruptcy of the German churches, Protestant and Catholic alike, at that time. During the Weimar Republic from 1919 onwards, 70 to 80 percent of Protestant pastors had allied themselves with the anti-Judaic German National People’s Party, and their hostile anti-Judaism had permeated the Protestant press, with its millions of readers, even before the Nazis were voted into power. These religious weeklies, which were devoted to the edification of their readers and to the cultivation of Christian piety, preached that the Jews were “the natural enemies of the Christian-national tradition.” Of course this religious thrust could only arise through the authorization of the Church’s religious leadership. One such Lutheran pastor, Bishop Otto Dibelius, writes in a letter in 1933 that he has been “always an anti-Semite. One cannot fail to appreciate that in all of the corrosive manifestations of modern civilization Jewry plays a leading role.” A German Evangelical pastor

72 Goldhagen, Hitler’s Willing Executioners, pp. 87, 106.
and historian observed that Bishop Dibelius’ anti-Semitic sentiments were “well nigh representative of German Christendom in the beginning of 1933.” Although at the highest levels of the German Catholic Church there was private dissent from aspects of Nazi doctrine, the Catholic Church as an institution remained thoroughly and publicly anti-Semitic. While some Church leaders in German-occupied Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and France, openly condemned the Jewish persecution and slaughter, the German religious leadership left the Jews to their fates, or even contributed to the eliminationist persecution. By way of contrast, protestant theologian and martyr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, had written to a friend just before Hitler came to power that, concerning the treatment of the Jews, “the most sensible people have lost their heads and their entire Bible.”

If Germany was the crucible centered on the tableau of western and eastern Europe when the most vile racial atrocity in human history was perpetrated upon the Jewish people, then other nations, especially France, Poland and Russia, intimately nestled close to this decadent Teutonic ideology and consequently fomented the same evil agenda. However, as we have already pointed out, the thread of this problem is traceable back over numerous centuries, through the main corridors of Christian history, both Catholic and Protestant, to the second century when Justin Martyr, thence Ambrose, Chrysostom, Augustine, Jerome, and on through Gregory the Great, established dominant supercessionist theology. This is no extreme claim, but simply the stark unsavory reality of Church history. Clark Williamson puts it this way:

All the literature one reads on the final solution leaves the clear impression that the pervasiveness of classical Christian anti-Jewish theology was a significant factor in the success of Hitler’s program. Where it did not directly contribute to support for Hitler’s policies—and it often did—it created an apathy toward Jews that was equally decisive in permitting the Holocaust. The great majority of the German people did not actively support or actively oppose Hitler; they were merely indifferent.

Perhaps no better contemporary proof of this disastrous theological heritage being still with us could be found than in the astonishing awakening that dawned upon Melanie Phillips, a Jewish columnist with the London Daily Mail, in 2002. She reports of attending a discussion

73 Ibid., pp. 107-109, 111.
74 Clark M. Williamson, Has God Rejected His People? p. 134.
group between Jews and Christians concerning the Churches’ increasing hostility toward Israel. However, the surprise came when it was openly confessed by Christians present that,

the Churches’ hostility had nothing to do with Israel’s behavior towards the Palestinians. This was merely an excuse. The real reason for the growing antipathy, according to the Christians at that meeting, was the ancient hatred of Jews rooted deep in Christian theology and now on widespread display once again. A doctrine going back to the early Church fathers, suppressed after the Holocaust, had been revived under the influence of the Middle East conflict. This doctrine is called replacement theology. In essence, it says that the Jews have been replaced by the Christians in God’s favor, and so all God’s promises to the Jews, including the land of Israel, have been inherited by Christianity.75

The full text of this article can be read in Appendix D - Melanie Phillips on Replacement Theology. However, if the preceding panoramic thrust of history has not been sufficiently grasped, and there is hesitation in embracing Melanie Phillips’ report, then the reader is now simply invited to consider the evidence of Chapter Three and Chapter Four that follow. Here we will see in full bloom the supercessionism of much modern Christianity within both the United States of America and the United Kingdom, and especially that form which has a Reformed garb.

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Chapter Three

ISRAEL – and contemporary examples of Christian anti-Judaism in the US

INTRODUCTION

FIVE examples of contemporary anti-Judaism at a scholarly level within conservative Christianity in the United States that reflect a Reformed heritage are as follows. They are Albertus Pieters, Loraine Boettner, Gary Burge, O Palmer Robertson, and An Open Letter to Evangelicals signed by a number of scholars, pastors, and Christian leaders. While these anti-Judaic voices are in the main Presbyterian, in Chapter Four the emphasis will chiefly focus upon scholarly Anglican anti-Judaic voices in the United Kingdom.

ALBERTUS PIETERS

Albertus Pieters (1897-1987), former Professor of Bible and Missions at Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan, associated with the Reformed Church in America, is undoubtedly an esteemed and widely quoted representative of classic Reformed theology, especially its European formulation. He is often quoted by Calvinists who espouse an Augustinian eschatology, and especially his volume, The Seed of Abraham. The following quotations are mostly drawn from this work and plainly indicate an unapologetic, anti-Judaic spirit.

So it was in the matter of the Jews. God willed that after the institution of the New Covenant there should no longer be any Jewish people in the world—yet here they are! That is a fact—a very sad fact, brought about by their wicked rebellion against God; but is it not monstrous to hold that by reason of this wickedness the said undesired and undesirable group are now heirs to the many exceedingly precious promises of God? Shall we be accused of anti-Semitism, because we speak thus of the Jews? We have not spoken so harshly as the apostle Paul, who knew them intimately and loved them passionately. He said of them:

For ye, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus, for ye also suffered the same things of your own countrymen even as they did of the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove out us, and please not God, and are contrary to
all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, to fill up their sins always: but the wrath of God is come upon them to the uttermost (I Thess. 2:14-16).

How is it possible to believe that there are still prophecies of divine grace to be fulfilled in a group upon which the wrath of God has come “to the uttermost”? Some years ago, in a conference, I heard a brother minister say: “God is through with the Jews.” At the time, this statement startled me, and I thought it extreme, but the more I study the Scriptures the more it seems to me he certainly was right. And, after all, was he saying anything more than the Lord Jesus Christ said, addressing the unbelieving Jewish people through the symbolism of the barren fig tree: “Let there be no fruit from thee henceforward forever?” (Matthew 21:19). If, as some think, the Jews will some day again be a great evangelizing agency, will there not be much fruit from them? But Christ said there would be none, and St. Paul said that the wrath of God is come upon them to the uttermost.

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1 The assumption here that such condemnation by Paul was irrevocably applicable to ethnic Israel as a whole, and thus this people was beyond being termed “beloved enemies” (Rom. 11:28), is erroneous. The context, and especially I Thessalonians 2:14, indicate that what the Apostle had in mind concerned that distinctive Jewish opposition which he had encountered in Judea, but particularly Jerusalem, and now was reportedly in Thessalonica. Recall that when Paul found it necessary to leave Thessalonica due to violent Jewish opposition, after his first visit there, on moving south to Berea he immediately commenced to witness, as was his pattern, at the local synagogue (Acts 17:1-12), hardly evidencing ethnic Jewish abandonment. The same generalization with regard to Israel as a “synagogue of Satan” (Rev. 2:9; 3:9) also fails to acknowledge that these charges concerned the localities of Smyrna and Philadelphia rather than a comprehensive ethnic application. Refer to Donald A. Hagner, “Paul’s Quarrel with Judaism,” Anti-Semitism and Early Christianity, eds. Evans and Hagner, pp. 130-136.

2 The cursing of the fig tree that had only leaves and no fruit, representative of prospective judgment upon Israel (Jer. 5:15-17; Joel 1:5-7, 12), took place on the Monday morning of Passion Week, that is following the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday. The curse was not symbolic of the nation itself as a total ethnic entity, but the present and subsequent corrupt generations, as Matthew 21:42-43 confirms. However, in Matthew 23:37-39 weeping Jesus indicates that an eventual change of heart will come to Jerusalem, hence national Israel. The same point is made in Deuteronomy 31:14-22 and Joshua 23:16 concerning Israel’s future disobedience and dispersal in judgment. Yet Deuteronomy 30:1-10 gives assurance that after this dispersal, the Lord will bring about Israel’s return to the land and regeneration!
In saying that God “is through with the Jews”, we mean of course, that this group, maintained in existence as a separate community by the rejection of Christ and by insisting upon the ordinances that He has abolished, has no part, and can have no part in the great redemptive enterprise which God began in the call of Abraham, made known by the prophets, and is now carrying out through the New Covenant Israel. Individuals are always welcome to take refuge in Christ by faith, and for every soul that does it there will not only be joy in heaven in the presence of the angels of God, but also in every Christian heart on earth. For such conversions we should zealously and lovingly labor; but for the group as such there is no place in the kingdom of God, nor can there be any unfulfilled prophecy of divine blessing which they may inherit. God is through with the Jews. A Jew must first cease to be a Jew and become a Christian before God can use him.

There are at present people in the world who are called, and who call themselves, “The Jews”. They claim that they are the continuation of ancient Israel, and are the “Seed of Abraham” to whom the divine promises were made, and to whom they are to be fulfilled. The claim is conceded by many earnest Christian people who believe that they find in the Bible very important prophecies that must some day be fulfilled in this company who are called “The Jews”, who worship in the synagogue and adhere to the Talmud.

How could the Jews be held together and continue to be a “peculiar people” [without a temple, a country, a government]? Only by preserving in all possible rigidity the ordinances handed down from the fathers, with regard to eating and drinking, trimming or shaving the beard, observing fasts and feasts, circumcision, Sabbath keeping on the seventh day of the week, synagogue worship, prohibition of intermarriage, etc., etc. These things must henceforth be their life; for if these were lost all was lost, and they must expect speedily to be absorbed in the mass of the population around them.

This was therefore their program—the exact opposite to that of Christ—and in this unholy endeavor they were only too successful, with the result that untold calamities were brought down upon themselves and upon the whole world. Ignorant that their separateness from the rest of the world was in the divine purpose temporary, they strove to render it permanent. Thus that which had been in itself good and holy became through their error a source of poison in the life of the world; and “The Jew” became the great persistent international problem.

The visible Christian Church being now the New Covenant Israel, those whom we call “The Jews” are outsiders, cut off branches, having no more connection with either promises or prophecies than any Gentile group.3

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[T]hose now called “Jews,” . . . have . . . no prophetic destiny, except a continuance of their present sad and bitter state, so long as they continue disobedient and unbelieving. They will not always so continue. St. Paul assures us that in time to come they will again be grafted into the olive tree. That, however, will give them no prophetic future as a separate group. They will then also lose their distinct existence by absorption into the Christian Church. The closed book of Israel’s history will not be reopened.4

How utterly un-Pauline is this theologically anti-Judaic diatribe. It savors of being bitter, not just tart. The whole tone here is so unworthy of any Christian who glories in being saved by a Jew (John 4:22). So much needs to be said in response, though we forbear at this point. Except that it will be noticed how Pieters expresses a desire for the salvation of the Jews, though with the result that all taint of Jewishness will be lost. This is not unlike Augustine, Vos, John Murray, and a host of Reformed commentators, all of whom, while deftly describing a mass conversion of the Jews at the climax of the church age, are careful to avoid associating this with the perpetuation of national and territorial Judaism.5 Here Pieters is simply more open and honest about his eschatology. He tolerates a token, nominal individuality while vehemently repudiating ethnic individuality, nationality and territory in covenantal terms. Can such an obviously so unsavory emphasis be the fruit of a sound eschatology?

LORAINE BOETTNER

Lorraine Boettner (1901-1990), a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary and also a member of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, was a twentieth century scholar of classic Reformed convictions. His volume The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination has had considerable influence, and rightly so, for it is an excellent presentation of the doctrines of sovereign grace. However it is in this same author’s book

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5 It is significant that in John Murray’s commentary on Romans 11:11-32, while he writes of “ethnic Israel” and “the restoration of Israel” and “the conversion of Israel” and “the fullness of Israel” and “the recovery of Israel” and “the blessing of Israel” and “the salvation of Israel” in relation to “the mass of Israel,” there is never any reference to the “nation of Israel” or the likes of Ezekiel 36-37 since these would then implicate the “land” as being integral to such terminology. Romans, II, pp. 75-103.
Israel – and Christian anti-Judaism in the US

The Millennium⁶ that we find, not only the most emphatic and categorical expressions of supercessionism, but also declarations with regard to the destiny of the Jews that are so obviously slanted as to reflect explicit theological anti-Judaism. Let the reader judge for himself with regard to the following quotations.

[W]hile the Jews no longer occupy a place of special favor in the divine plan, this does not mean that God has cast them off. Nothing has been taken from the Jews as individuals. Only the external forms have been abolished. The blessings and privileges of salvation which they enjoyed during the Old Testament dispensation have been magnified and heightened and extended to all nations and races alike. After the Jews had forfeited their rights as a chosen nation, or, to put it more accurately, after God had completed His purpose with the Jews as a separate people, they continued to have the privileges of full and free salvation individually.

The Old Testament era was the times of the Jews. The New Testament era is the times of the Gentiles. Judaism is a thing of the past. It is a glorious memory, despite its limitations and its failings. But it can never be revived. The assumption there is to be a national conversion of the Jews at the Second coming of Christ, after the close of “the times of the Gentiles,” and that they are to evangelize the world in a seven year period, is entirely unwarranted. . . . [There is] no room for a revival of Judaism, nor for a Jewish era of any kind. But it does leave room for the conversion of Jews as individuals along with individuals from all other national groups.

With the establishment of the Christian Church Judaism should have made a smooth and willing transition into Christianity, and should thereby have disappeared as the flower falls away before the developing fruit. Its continued existence as a bitter rival and enemy of the Christian Church after the time of Christ, and particularly its revival after the judgment of God had fallen on it so heavily in the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersal of the people in 70 A.D., was sinful.

Furthermore, this revived Judaism built again the middle wall of partition [cf. Eph. 2:14] and so made it possible to perpetuate through the centuries the distinction between Jews and Gentiles. The continuance of this bitterly anti-Christian racial Group has brought no good to themselves, and there has been strife and antagonism in practically every nation where they have gone. They have not been a happy people. One only need think of the pogroms in Russia, the ghettos of eastern Europe, the many restrictions and persecutions that they have suffered in Italy, Spain, Poland, and other countries, and in our own day the campaign of extermination waged against

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them in Germany by Hitler. At the present time we see this problem in a particularly aggravated form in the Near East, where the recently established nation of Israel has ruthlessly displaced an Arab population and seeks to expand further into surrounding regions, some 900,000 Arabs in refugee camps around the borders of Israel being one of the chief continuing causes of bitterness. . . . Israel is not a self-sustaining nation, and her existence to date has been heavily subsidized by American money and equipment—much of it undoubtedly having been given for the purpose of influencing the Jewish vote in this country. . . . The mere fact that these people are Jews does not in itself give them any more moral or legal right to Palestine than to the United States or any other part of the world. . . . It may seem harsh to say that, “God is through with the Jews.” But the fact of the matter is that He is through with them as a unified national group.

This does not mean, of course, that the Jews will never go back to Palestine—as indeed some of them have already established the nation of Israel, a little less than 2 million out of an estimated world Jewish population of 12 million now being in that country. But it does mean that as any of them go back they do so entirely on their own, apart from any covenanted purpose to that end and entirely outside of Scripture prophecy. No Scripture blessing is promised for a project of that kind.

Surely there is an overall tenor here, so antithetical to that of Paul, which in itself indicates there is something fundamentally wrong with the doctrine that produces such a response. Particularly objectionable is the segment, utterly void of compassion, that suggests that the Jews were responsible for the misery they have endured over the centuries. For a professing Christian, surely the attitude here is plainly objectionable and odious. There is not the slightest mention of widespread anti-Judaism throughout the centuries of the Christian Church and western society that calls for shameful confession. The problem is chiefly that of the Jew; he has become a blot on society. There is even the intimation that Christians in particular were, to a considerable extent, justified in their campaigns of ostracism concerning the perfidious, Christ-killing Jew. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, a Jewish Christian, rightly expresses his distress here as follows:

According to Boettner, the Jews are totally to blame for their history of persecution. The problem is not with the Gentiles’ attitude toward the Jews, but with the Jews failure to disappear. The solution is that the Jews should cease to be Jews, and by so doing will make a great contribution to the world. It is the Jewish failure to assimilate that has produced tragic results,

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7 Ibid., pp. 312, 313, 314, 319, 321.
both for the Jews and “for the world at large.” This is theological anti-Semitism with a vengeance!\(^8\)

It is interesting to note that, in support of his overall contention here concerning Israel, Boettner approvingly quotes at length from *The Seed of Abraham* by Albertus Pieters, previously referenced in this chapter. Pieters further writes that, following the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, the subsequent Jewish lineage was comprised of illegitimate usurpers. Thus,

> their program [turned out to be] the exact opposite of Christ, and in this unholy endeavor they were only too successful, with the result that untold calamities were brought down upon themselves and upon the whole world. Ignorant that their separateness from the rest of the world was in the divine purpose temporary, they strove to render it permanent. Thus that which had been in itself good and holy became through their error a source of poison in the life of the world; and “The Jew” became the great persistent international problem.\(^9\)

Here then is a reflection of the same derogatory attitude as that of Boettner, in which Judaism is esteemed as “a source of poison in the life of the world,” a “great persistent international problem.” For a professing Christian, such an attitude is quite outrageous. It is full of Gentile arrogance, namely that the problems of the suffering Jew are essentially those of his own making. Again, one is forced to conclude that if this deplorable attitude is the fruit of a certain doctrinal system, then there must be something fundamentally wrong with the originating body of teaching.

Furthermore, in Franklin Littell’s *The Crucifixion of the Jews*, in also expressing dismay concerning this same portion of Boettner’s mean expression of supercessionist theology, he perceptively comments:

> At first blush, this looks like a simple dehydrated statement of the displacement myth. The revealing phrase is, however, this: “Nothing has been taken from the Jews as individuals.” This formula does not derive from ancient teachers and synods of the church; it is precisely the dogma of the Enlightenment. “Everything to the Jew as an individual; nothing to the Jews as a people.”\(^10\)

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Littell is absolutely correct. Refer to the debate in the French National Assembly of 1791, referenced on page 52. Though perhaps we might add to his assertion a modification. “Everything to the Jew as an individual under persecution; nothing to the Jew as a people in blessing.” Here then is the unveiling of a common form of duplicity amongst a number of Reformed Christian scholars, and indeed Evangelicals more broadly speaking. On the one hand they will declare that there presently abides in this Christian dispensation, “a remnant according to God’s gracious choice” (Rom. 11:5), that is Christians who are to be designated as Jewish, sans national and territorial claims. They will also confess that there are individual non-Christians today who are to be nominated as “Jews” in some worldly social sense. On the other hand, as with Pieters, Boettner, and as we shall also see with Gary Burge, O. Palmer Robertson and the signatories of An Open Letter to Evangelicals, subsequently in this chapter, there is yet for these “Jews” no nation, no land, no covenant relationship in any sense that abides according to the original promise made to Abraham. That, they claim, has been permanently done away with. In other words, for authors such as Boettner, the use of the term “Jew” is really a hoax. He is quite frank in this regard, even though he continues to speak of “Jews” in the parlance of modern society.

We should point out further that those who today popularly are called “Jews” are in reality not Jews at all. Legitimate Judaism as it existed in the Old Testament era was of divine origin and had a very definite content of religious and civil laws, priesthood, ritual, sacrifices, temple, Sabbath, etc. But with the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the people in A.D. 70, that system was effectively destroyed. It has since not been practiced anywhere in the world.\(^\text{11}\)

There is an honesty here that is breathtaking, even chilling, and unfortunately lacking in the writings of others who obviously hold the same doctrinal convictions that are inherent in replacement theology. In other words, some, like Boettner, confess their belief at this point quite candidly, while many others, in holding an identical point of view, yet declare it with a more subtle touch. Even so, they are

\(^{11}\text{Boettner, Millennium, p. 381. Of course Paul continues to maintain his Jewishness (Acts 21:39; 22:3; Rom. 11:1), though Boettner would respond that these affirmations were also before A. D. 70. How convenient and yet utterly void of support! There is not the slightest indication, as in Luke 21:24, that such a disqualification took place; in fact Romans 11:25-28 declares quite the opposite on account of the Israelites’ “forefathers”!}
essentially all saying the same thing. We might even ask them if this alleged ethnic deception adds any degree of justification for the mistreatment of the Jews? So we strenuously maintain that this shameful attitude, so blatantly confessed, clearly betrays a most un-Pauline disposition. It also causes us to see this as history tragically repeating itself after centuries of Jewish disqualification by arrogant Gentiles.

Hence our resultant practical concern here is with regard to the contemporary Jew who is alleged to have no status in the sight of God of any kind, that is, according to Pieters and Boettner, apart from the more subtle terminology in the same vein on the part of many others. Consequently, will such a conviction with regard to the “Jew” be productive of a certain biblical ethical behavior toward him, especially if this “Jew” nevertheless claims a national identity that includes an historic claim to Palestine? The answer is obvious, particularly as centuries of Church history up to the present have plainly illustrated. The preceding quotations very much parallel that doctrine which resulted in the shameful behavior of the past. The conclusion here is inescapable. Therefore, do devotees of replacement theology, as representatively set forth thus far, enthusiastically involve themselves in distinctive missionary outreach toward the Jews, according to the Pauline model? In witnessing to the “Jew,” would they present to them the declarations of Boettner and Pieters? Further, would they encourage the establishment in Israel of Christian churches that proclaim this teaching concerning the “poisonous” influence of Judaism?

GARY BURGE

As professor of New Testament at Wheaton College Graduate School, Gary Burge has aligned himself with the pro-Palestinian and anti-Judaic movement that vociferously opposes the modern State of Israel, otherwise derided as unjust, carnal Zionism. Along with Don Wagner and Stephen Sizer, he spoke at the 2004 Friends of Sabeel-North America, Voice of the Palestinian Christians conference, www.fosna.org, having the theme, Challenging Christian Zionism. Here liberation theology was dominant along with the welcome presence of terrorist Yasar Arafat. Burge is also on the board of Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding, www.emeu.net, which, notwithstanding it name, tilts toward non-evangelical ecumenism, especially that which is eastern, supercessionist, and anti-Judaic. On the web site of Challenging Christian Zionism, Christians committed to Biblical Justice, www.christianzionism.org, along with articles by Don
Wagner and Stephen Sizer, Burge writes on *Christian Zionism, Evangelicals and Israel*. In particular we note his comment:

> But the most important critique - and here I think we discover the Achilles’ heel - is that Christian Zionism is committed to what I term a “territorial religion.” It assumes that God’s interests are focused on a land, a locale, a place. From a NT perspective, the land is holy by reference to what transpired there in history. But it no longer has an intrinsic part to play in God’s program for the world. This is what Stephen pointed to in his speech in Acts 7. The land and the temple are now secondary. God wishes to reveal himself to the entire world. And this insight cost Stephen his life.¹²

However, it is difficult to avoid the penchant here for a more Gnostic form of spirituality which so abhors the inclusion of materiality and the alleged inferiority of carnal territory. Be this as it may, biblical Christianity and consummate redemption is founded upon spiritual materiality in space, time, and history upon planet earth (Zech. 14:9-11; John 1:14; Acts 3:20-21; I John 1:1-3), in which divine condescension the Christian rejoices. Stephen’s concern was not the need to “de-materialize,” “spiritualize” and “universalize” the promise to Abraham concerning the land, but rather focus on the coming of Messiah whose presence would certainly transcend the interim “holy place and the law; . . . this place [the Temple] and . . . the customs that Moses handed down” (Acts 6:13-14). The “land and the temple” are not abrogated in parallel as Burge suggests. It is the Old covenant that Stephen challenged, not the land promise intrinsic to the Abrahamic Covenant. Refer to *Chapter Nine: Israel - and the Inheritance of the Land through Abraham*

Further pro-Palestinian and anti-Israel indications concerning Burge are his being on the Advisory Board of *The Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation*, www.hcef.org, as well as his favorable review of Sizer’s *Christian Zionism: Road Map to Armageddon?* on *Friends of Al-Aqsa*, www.aqsa.org.uk.

The most significant writing of Burge concerning the issue at hand is his *Whose Land? Whose Promise? What Christians Are Not Being Told about Israel and the Palestinians*, 286 pp. While the style is temperate, the overall thrust is uncompromisingly supercessionist, anti-Judaic and pro-Palestinian. From a graphic point of view, the front cover photograph says it all. Here is a young Palestinian boy, David-

like, about to throw a stone at a gargantuan, Goliath-like Israeli tank that is armed to the teeth. In ignoring centuries of the wandering, down-trodden, despised Jew, here the pitiable Palestinians are portrayed as the unjustly treated underdogs in the face of such a rapacious, heartless and devouring foe. However, from a textual point of view, the author succinctly opines in his preface as follows.

I will argue that even if Christian theologians reject the position that modern Israel inherits the land promised to Abraham (thanks to a new covenant that abrogates the old), this should not diminish the church’s respect for Judaism nor the rights of the Jewish people to live in the land of Israel.¹³

Let us look at four aspects of this statement which the subsequent text considers in detail.

The Abrogation of the Abrahamic Land Promise by Christian Theologians

Obviously Burge is one of those theologians who believes that while the land was promised to Abraham in such clear, repeated, unilateral and covenantal terms, yet since the advent of the Christian era, this truth no longer has any validity. For this reason the weight of this emphatically revealed truth needs to be emphasized by means of quoting the initial biblical reference and then listing the subsequent, related references that all incorporate confidence in the inviolate character of the land promise made to Abraham. “⁴The LORD said to Abram: ‘Go out from your land, your relatives, and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.’ . . . ⁵He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated, and the people he had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, ⁶Abram passed through the land to the site of Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷But the LORD appeared to Abram and said, ‘I will give this land to your offspring.’ So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.” (Gen. 12:1, 5-7; cf. 13:14-15, 17; 15:7, 18; 17:8; 24:7; 26:3; 28:4, 13-15; 35:12; 48:3-4, 21; 50:24; Exod. 3:15-17; 6:3-4, 8; 13:5, 11; 32:13; 33:1; Lev. 26:42; Num. 11:12; 14:23; 32:11; Deut. 1:8, 21, 35; 4:1; 6:3, 10, 18, 23; 9:5, 27-28; 10:11; 11:9, 21; 12:1; 19:8; 26:3, 15; 27:3; 28:11; 30:5, 20; 31:7, 20; 34:4; Josh. 1:6; 18:3; 21:43-44; Judg. 2:1; I Kgs. 8:34, 40, 48; 14:15; 1

In the light of such weighty evidence in the forgoing, it is astonishing to find Burge’s comment as follows concerning Genesis 12:1-3, as if grasping at straws: “Strikingly, this promise fails to mention the land. Virtually every scholar who studies the passage notes that this omission is peculiar.” Nevertheless he admits to the clear promise of the land in 13:14-17, then suggests again that the promise is omitted in 15:1-6, and finally affirms that the land is formally covenanted in 15:18-21. Significantly the emphatic unilateral character of this last reference, in which God alone passes between the cut animal pieces while Abraham is put to sleep, is totally ignored. However, according to Burge, the fundamental reason for the abrogation of the land covenant with Abraham is its alleged conditionality. There is nothing new here since this is the most common reason given for such land nullification by supercessionists. However it is especially surprising when found in the Calvinist argumentation of Boettner, Fairbairn, Hendriksen, Mauro, Pieters, and Riddlebarger, etc. Consequently the inevitable question that must then be asked is this. “If the land promise in the Abrahamic Covenant was conditional, that is based upon an unspecified degree of obedience, then does the same principle of conditionality equally apply to the fulfillment of other aspects of the Abrahamic covenant, and particularly the resultant New Covenant?” If it is claimed in response that the Abrahamic Covenant has distinctive conditional and unconditional elements, we would reply that such an attempted covenantal bifurcation is exegetically untenable and indicates a fundamental doctrinal weakness perhaps, born of desperation.

Nevertheless Burge claims that in the New Testament record, the land is to be newly focused through the advent of Jesus, the result being redefinition and reinterpretation.

14 Ibid., p. 69. von Rad is referenced as one example. The fine point being made is that in 12:1, the land is to be “shown” to Abraham, but is not here promised! The Jewish Study Bible does not describe this point as if a curiosity. Rather it comments concerning 12:1-3, “The twin themes of land and progeny inform the rest of the Torah;” concerning 15:1-6, 7-20, “This falls into two sections, the first (vv. 1-6) focused on God’s promise to provide Abram with an heir who will be his own son, and the second (vv. 7-20) on God’s covenanted pledge to redeem Abram’s descendants from enslavement abroad and to give them a land,” pp. 30, 35.
Christ is the reality behind all earthbound promises . . . land is rejected as the aim of faith; . . . land is spiritualized as meaning something else; . . . the promise is historicized in Jesus, a man who lives in the land. . . . Whatever the “land” meant in the Old Testament, whatever the promise contained, this now belongs to Christians. . . . The land was a metaphor, a symbol of a greater place beyond the soil of Canaan.  

Primary support for this subjective extrapolation is acknowledged to be W. D. Davies, considered in more detail in Chapter Nine: Israel - and the Inheritance of the Land through Abraham. However repetition of the following acknowledgment of this author is sufficient to indicate the uncertain ground, especially argument based upon alleged silence, which such a speculative edifice rests upon. So Davies writes:

Because the logic of Paul’s understanding of Abraham and his personalization of the fulfillment of the promise “in Christ” demanded the deterritorializing of the promise, salvation was not now bound to the Jewish people centered in the land and living according to the Law: it was “located” not in a place, but in persons in whom grace and faith had their writ. By personalizing the promise “in Christ” Paul universalized it. For Paul, Christ had gathered up the promise into the singularity of his own person, In this way, “the territory” promised was transformed into and fulfilled by the life “in Christ.” All this is not made explicit, because Paul did not directly apply himself to the question of the land, but it is implied [emphasis added]. In the Christological logic of Paul, the land, like the Law, particular and provisional, had become irrelevant.  

Here is Gentile exegesis come to full bloom that at the same time excludes any Jewish Christian perspective such as is surely inherent in the writings of converted Rabbi Paul (Rom. 8:18-21; 11:26). Surely this same Jewish Christian perspective was in Peter’s mind when he preached eschatologically of the return of Jesus Christ to inaugurate “the times of the restoration of all things, which God spoke about by the mouth of His holy prophets from the beginning” (Acts 3: 21). However for Davies and Burge, belief that the land of Abrahamic Judaism should find recognition in Christianity is demeaned in terms of being territorial “irrelevance.” Thus by means of a Gentile, spiritualizing hermeneutic, anti-Judaism is inevitably cultivated in principle, and history has repeatedly, shamefully demonstrated the outworking of this process by means of the disenfranchisement of the Jew. However we suggest that for the Apostles, especially in consultation at the

15 Ibid., pp. 176-177, 179.
Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15), such “deteriorialization” was unthinkable. The reason it was not foremost in their writings was preoccupation with a divinely appointed evangelistic mandate, within the window of the “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24).

The Abrogation of the Abrahamic Land Promise by the Supplanting New Covenant

Here Burge makes an assertion with regard to the new covenant that we believe to be fundamentally in error. While with many theologians he rejects the belief “that modern Israel inherits the land promised to Abraham,” at the same time he affirms his proof for this to be the fact of “a new covenant that abrogates the old.” Now in terms of the original promise of that new covenant, it obviously abrogates the old Mosaic covenant, not the Abrahamic covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:7-13). Certainly the Mosaic covenant, as an interim administration, was imposed upon the ongoing Abrahamic administration that had already been established for 430 years. Just prior to the institution of the Mosaic covenant, Moses was instructed, “I will bring you to the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD” (Exod. 6:8). Then up to the time of the actual establishment of the Mosaic covenant, including its renewal because of Israel’s disobedience, possession of the promised land remained as a certain hope (Exod. 12:23-25; 13:11; 20:12; 33:1). With this in mind, Paul affirmed, as a fundamental gospel principle, that “the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise” (Gal. 3:17).

An especially egregious example of how this principle of nullification of the Abrahamic covenant plays out in Burge’s supercessionism concerns his questioning of Father George Makhlouf, a parish priest of St. George’s Greek Orthodox Church in Ramallah, Israel.

I asked . . . , “How can you argue with the Israeli claim to own this land since God gave it to the Jews in the Old Testament? Israeli Jews have inherited the promises to Abraham, have they not?” . . . “The church,” he began, “has inherited the promises of Israel. The church is actually the new Israel. What Abraham was promised, Christians now possess because they are Abraham’s true spiritual children just as the New Testament teaches.”

Burge then makes a most revealing comment that appears to be utterly void of a sense of church history, warts and all.

The Greek Orthodox tradition of Father George has been consistent in defending this view throughout the centuries. From the earliest years, the Middle Eastern churches have claimed the promises of the Old Testament for their own. This concept shows up in Orthodox icons. Churches display beautiful pictures (or icons) of Old Testament stories whose truths have now been swept up by the Christian tradition and “baptized” with new meaning.18

What fails to be acknowledged here, in all of its shameful ugliness, is the fact that this “sweeping” process involved an Augustinian anti-Judaic heritage that later enveloped both the eastern church and the western church. If there is an appeal to church tradition here, that is “the earliest years,” as if this might provide added weight of argument, then going back even further to Jerome, Chrysostom, Ambrose and Augustine, only heightens the degree of disgrace that this supercessionist tradition provides which then flowed on through subsequent centuries.

In this regard, it is further significant, though not altogether surprising, that one chapter of Burge’s book is devoted to twelve biographical vignettes of Palestinian or Arab Christians under the title of “Living Stones in the Land.” However a number of these individuals align with Eastern Orthodoxy and there is every indication that all are committed to supercessionist, anti-Judaic theology.

One more instance of how this anti-Judaic spirit, in evacuating the Abrahamic covenant of its Jewish essence, works out as a theology of Jewish disenfranchisement, is as follows. Burge writes:

Jesus’ emphasis on the kingdom of God gave him every opportunity to talk about land and inheritance, but he refused. The kingdom of Israel did not capture his interest [Burge’s own emphasis!]. He preferred to talk about “the kingdom of God” or the “kingdom of heaven.” . . . [His disciples’] minds were on political restoration, but for Jesus, God’s kingdom was fundamentally God’s reign over the lives of men and women—not an empire, not a political kingdom with borders and armies. The kingdom was fundamentally a spiritual idea, a spiritual experience that transcended any particular place or time or land. People who took pride in their possession

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18 Ibid., p. 168.
of land or city as the trophy of their spirituality would find themselves in opposition to Jesus’ message.\textsuperscript{19}

While agreeing in principle with the final comment that yet ignores the biblical concept of spiritual materiality, the simple answer to this overall voiding of Jewish national significance in Jesus’ ministry is a consideration of His most clearly expressed Jewishness (Matt. 10:5-7; 15:24; John 4:22). All the exegetical juggling in the world cannot evade the Judeo-centric eschatological significance of Jesus’ words of encouragement to His disciples: “I assure you: In the Messianic age [cf. Acts 3:20-21], you who have followed Me will also sit on 12 thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel” (Matt 19:28). The New Jerusalem also upholds this perpetuated Jewishness (Rev. 21:10-14).

However, to also imply that the terms “the kingdom of God” and the “kingdom of heaven” are somehow purposely employed in the New Testament so as to circumvent consideration of Jewish nationalism, is strange indeed, especially if these terms are traced to their Old Testament, Hebrew roots. It is undoubtedly true that Jesus repudiated much of the perverse Jewish nationalism of His time. However we reject the suggestion that He also renounced the Jewish eschatological vision of the Old Testament by means of neo-Platonic dualism, reinterpretation and supercession. Refer to Chapter Eight: Israel - and the Harmony of Spiritual Materiality. On the one hand we agree that the salvation and sanctification of the human soul is more important than the salvation and sanctification of the Land of Israel. However, on the other hand we strenuously repudiate the idea that the salvation and sanctification of the soul in the New Testament nullifies the importance of the salvation and sanctification of the human body. This concept the New Testament emphatically repudiates as heresy. Hence we reject here the implied Gnostic spirit whereby the Land is regarded as eschatologically insignificant.

The Necessity of Christian Respect for Judaism

In rejecting the land promise of the Abrahamic covenant, somehow Burge wants to eat his supercessionist cake and yet conceal this consumption by means of subtle linguistic accommodation. Consequently he maintains that, “this [nullification of the land promise given to Abraham] should not diminish the church’s respect for

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., pp. 172-173.
Judaism.” But what of Judaism’s respect for Christianity, and that with evangelistic outreach to the Jews in mind? In other words, while Burge believes that the land in which Israel presently dwells has no biblical, covenantal significance, this should not diminish the church’s respect for contemporary Judaism, and even its national and territorial manifestation. It is as if a victim of larceny should nevertheless respect the fawning manner of his assailant. Of course, the key question here that Burge needs to answer concerns his definition of “Judaism.” And it seems quite clear that for him, being a Jew today is not a genuine, divine, covenantal relationship even in the flesh, but more the employment of accepted social nomenclature that fits within the worldly national parameters of our time. It is granted that this author acknowledges, according to Romans 11:28-29, that,

[if] Judaism remains—even in its brokenness—a people with a unique future, a people still to be redeemed, then it follows that they currently have a place of honor even in their unbelief. . . . Judaism has rejected the new covenant. Nevertheless, even in this disobedience, these broken branches still possess an incomparable place in history. . . . For the sake of their history, for the sake of the promises made to their ancestors [Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob], God will retain a place for Jews in history. In their present condition of unbelief, they deserve honor. And when they accept Christ, be it now or in the future, their brokenness will be restored.20

Now on the surface, this may appear to be a commendable explanation. However, we suggest it is in fact the deft use of language whereby Burge’s real belief is, for a moment concealed. Even Augustine could align himself with this plasticity of expression. Notice that Burge writes this way while plainly believing that the land promise, repeatedly confirmed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has been nullified. However, the devious intent here surfaces when Burge sums up his actual meaning.

Some Christians think that unbelieving Israel still lives today as heirs to Abraham’s promises, that Christ’s new covenant did not bring about an epoch-changing shift among God’s people. But as we have seen, this view neglects much of Paul’s teaching in Galatians and Romans about Christians as Abraham’s heirs. . . . Father George of Ramallah would tell us [according to his supercessionism plainly referenced on p. 48] that the question “Who owns the land?” is not so simple. The answer is not just a matter of pointing to the promises of Abraham, identifying modern Israel as heirs to those promises, and then theologically justifying the Israeli land

20 Ibid., p. 187.
Israel – and Christian anti-Judaism in the US

claim. On the contrary, Christian theology demands that the true recipients of these promises will be found in the Christian church. Perhaps the church alone receives these promises.21

Here is the reason why it is hardly to be expected that the Jew of today would respond at this juncture, “Thank you very much, Mr. Burge!” The reason is that he would quickly appreciate the shallow patronage on one hand that is being employed to obfuscate on the other hand supercessionist anti-Judaism. Here is simply that Augustinian tolerance of the Jew which in reality is a foil for temporal sufferance.

The Rights of the Jewish People to Live in the Land of Israel

In the same vein we are told that the Christian church should also uphold “the rights of the Jewish people to live in the land of Israel [Palestine].” Hence another vital question arises here that Burge should seriously consider. It concerns discovery of the exact nature of these stated “rights” that he appears to uphold by means of which Israel could be said to live justly and peaceably in “the land of Israel.” In the light of the author’s confessed belief in the invalidation of the Abrahamic covenant insofar as the land promise is concerned, it can only be concluded that some more secular judicial standard is intended, and not divine decree. He appears to be simply making a concession to the status quo. Should he have written a century ago, there would have been no encouragement whatsoever concerning the Zionist hope of that time concerning a return to the Land of Israel. Most likely the United Nations mandate of 1948 is in Burge’s mind, and of course the borders stipulated at that time, or perhaps some similar definitions. But there is absolutely no reason for believing that an inviolate biblical covenant is understood to be the basis of such a territorial hope. So the inhabitation of Israel in the Land today would simply be at the mercy of worldly pragmatism, the tempestuous forum of the nations, a most ungodly assembly if ever there was one, and not the Word of God. But further, Burge seems to suggest, this agenda ought also to be swayed by the counsel of the mainline Christian churches, hardly a proven ally of the Jew in centuries past!

It is fascinating here that, on the one hand, Burge condescendingly admits, and ever so briefly, “[b]y comparison with other states in the Middle East, that Israel is an exemplar of moderation, civility, and

21 Ibid., p. 188.
freedom.” He admits that in comparison with a specific instance of savage Syrian brutality which drew little dissent, “Israel has not participated in this sort of wholesale massacre.” Nevertheless, there then follows an extensive litany of accusations against Israel concerning apartheid, discrimination, land and water seizure, village and home destruction, abuse of human rights, and religious compromise. Doubtless some of these charges may be accurate, and some may find new light shed on them through explanation by the Israelis. However there is not the slightest mention here of complicity in the Palestinian cause by the Arab states, so stridently anti-Judaic, nor the vehement Palestinian opposition to Israel’s very existence, and even the concerted supersessionism of the mainstream Palestinian Christians. We agree with Burge when he writes:

I am convinced that if the prophets of the Old Testament were to visit Tel Aviv or Jerusalem today, their words would be harsh and unremitting. Strangely enough, just as in the Bible, their authority would likely go unrecognized, and like Jeremiah, they would be imprisoned by the Israeli Defense Forces as a security risk.  

Yes, Christian missionary agencies that focus on the Hebrew people are also well aware of frequent, aggressive opposition by the Jews, even as Paul experienced. However, they also continue to wondrously see the hand of God hovering over this disobedient people and thus agree with the apostle that, notwithstanding centuries of rebellion and related suffering, they remain “loved because of their forefathers” (Rom. 11:28). That is, God’s present covenantal interest is rooted in the original promise given to Abraham that included the Land (Gen. 12:1-3, 7; 13:14-17; 15:18-21). But, in the light of Israel’s incessant unbelief, how could this forbearance of God be possible? The answer is simply in terms of the glorious truth of sovereign covenant grace that the likes of Burge, as well as Chapman and Sizer, would doubtless claim for themselves after the manner of Ephesians 2:8-9, and yet deny for Israel since, as Burge erroneously proposes, “possession of the land is tied to obedience to the covenant.”  

In other words, Israel loses its inheritance because of disobedience while the Christian inherits this inheritance, spiritually speaking, strictly by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ!

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22 Ibid., p. 132.
23 Ibid., p. 136.
24 Ibid., p. 163.
This conditional perspective, common among Christian supercessionists, calls for possession of the land based upon obedience and dispossession based upon disobedience, obviously recalling the Mosaic promise of either blessing or cursing for Israel based upon obedience or disobedience to the law (Deut. 11:26-28). So Burge references a number of Old Testament passages that certainly detail the promise of severe discipline for Israel, in relation to the land, on account of various forms of ungodliness. He strongly suggests that for these repeated transgressions, Israel has been disinherit ed from its blessings while the Christian church has inherited these same essential blessings by way of supercession or transference. However, the only problem here is that so many other passages of promise in the Old Testament speak of God’s ultimate triumph, through grace, over Israel’s sin, even as is the case in the saving of any sinner. So Burge either ignores or minimizes or relegates to past fulfillment these Bible passages. Consider the following Scriptural references that are said to condemn the nation of Israel’s present ungodliness, causing it permanently to have become person non grata in God’s sight.

_Deuteronomy 4:25-27_,

_yet reference to vs. 28-31 is omitted._

_Deuteronomy 8:17-19_,

_also consider similar warning in 28:15-68, yet reference to 30:1-14 (esp. v. 6) is omitted._

_Isaiah 1:16-17; 5:1-7_,

_yet references to 2:2-4; 11:1-16; 27:2-13; 35:1-10; 41:8-16; 43:1-7; 49:14-26; 62:1-5 are omitted._

_Jeremiah 3:19-20; 7:5-7_,

_also consider similar warning in 12:7-13, yet references to 30:1-31:40; 33:1-26; also Ezekiel 36-37, are omitted._

_Hosea 9:2-3_,

_yet references to 3:4-5; 11:8-11; 14:1-17 are omitted._

_Amos 4:1-2_,

_yet reference to 9:11-15 is omitted._

_Micah 2:1-3_,

_yet references to 4:1-8; 7:7-20 are omitted._

25 Ibid., p. 74.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid., pp. 101-102.
29 Ibid., p. 100.
30 Ibid.
The reader is strongly encouraged to read the additional references included here that Burge does not draw attention to in the main. Time and time again they indicate the triumph of sovereign grace over the sin of Israel, even as Paul describes with regard to the Christian in Romans 5:20. Yes, the sins of Israel bring severe punishment, but not covenantal abandonment. Of course Burge is all too aware of these references, some of which he merely footnotes. However, unlike the prophets who often portray these passages so climactically and triumphantly, he treats them as almost some bothersome and now outmoded appendage. Notwithstanding the eschatological glory that stands out here, Burge also reveals his hand at this juncture when he explains that: “Of course, these predictions did come true.” In other words, it is the period of the post-exilic return of Israel and on to the first coming of Christ, that swallows up and nullifies the eschatological glory that appears to be so plain here (cf. Ezek. 36-37; Zech. 14).

To sum up then, and with reference to Ezekiel 47:22-23 where the eschatological temple is concerned, and Burge rightly references the necessity here for Israel to provide an inheritance for an alien remnant. However it also needs to be pointed out that it is clearly and contextually the responsibility of that same alien remnant to acknowledge that the Land of Israel does covenantally belong to Israel. If today the Palestinians were to acknowledge this and the Israelis were to hear it and be convinced that it is true, there is every possibility that, upon sitting down in conference, a peaceable resolution to present problems might emerge. Yet even if the Palestinians were genuinely so inclined, is it conceivable that the surrounding Arab/Moslem states would readily invest their cooperation?

O. PALMER ROBERTSON

O. Palmer Robertson is Principal of African Bible College, Uganda, Professor of Theology at African Bible College, Malawi, and Visiting Professor at Knox Theological Seminary, Florida. He is best known for his significant volume *The Christ of the Covenants*, which is a contemporary presentation of Reformed covenant theology from a

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31 Ibid., pp. 99-100.
32 Ibid., p. 103, n.12.
33 Ibid., p. 104.
34 Ibid.
conservative perspective. More recently he has authored *The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*, published in 2000, which also provides a contemporary Reformed perspective that is essentially updated Augustinianism. While Robertson’s tone is to some degree more moderate than that of Pieters and Boettner, nevertheless his overall regard for national Israel could hardly be called friendly, that is in a Pauline manner. Even the tokenism offered is sparse indeed when compared with his more frequent harsh regard for the Jews and the modern State of Israel. For instance we read: “Clearly the plight of the Jews after the horrors of the Holocaust must be fully appreciated. Yet the tragic circumstances of the residents of the land displaced during the twentieth century must also be appreciated.” 35 Then is attached a near half page footnote that focuses on an instance of alleged Jewish brutality toward Palestinians in 1948 according to Naim Ateek in his *A Palestinian Theology of Liberation*. 36 On the other hand there is no mention of the savage assault by the surrounding Arab states upon Israel the day following the establishment of the State of Israel according to the United Nations charter, also in 1948. The tilt of sympathy, here and elsewhere, cannot be avoided. Further antipathy by this author toward the modern Jewish state and sympathy for the Palestinians, is found in a series of depreciative references to Golda Meir, Theodor Herzl, David Ben-Gurion, and Joseph Weitz, all drawn from Colin Chapman’s anti-Judaic *Whose Promised Land?* 37 The bias here is unmistakably clear.

It is highly significant that the title which Robertson employs, *The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*, is followed by chapter titles that are all prefaced with “The Israel of God—.” Hence, like an edifice built upon an inverted pyramid, the author indicates that his case is based upon one major text, namely Galatians 6:16, for this is the only reference where the expression “Israel of God” is found in the New Testament. Therefore it is not surprising that Robertson’s substantial study of this verse occupies considerably more space than most other Scripture passages referenced in his book. 38 Of course the reason is obvious since this unique reference is made to be the essential

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36 Ibid., p. 28.
37 Ibid., pp. 47-48. For further consideration of Chapman in this regard, refer to Chapter 4.
38 Ibid., pp. 39-45.
proof of Robertson’s case, namely that the Christian Church, that is the New Testament people of God, are described here as the spiritual “Israel of God.” Therefore if his interpretation here is shown to be in error, as we believe it to be, then so much of his book is seriously brought into question. Nevertheless, in spite of the contrary opinions of F. F. Bruce, G. C. Berkouwer, Hans Dieter Betz, James Dunn, Ernest De Witt Burton, and A. T. Hanson, etc., he bravely writes:

The only explanation of Paul’s phrase “the Israel of God” that satisfies the context as well as the grammar of the passage [is that it describes] . . . the new community within humanity brought into existence by the cross of Christ in its uniting of Jews and Gentiles into one new people of God.39

In response, simply let the reader consider more detailed evidence of the tenuoussness of Robertson’s opinion referenced in Chapter Ten: Israel – and a Romans 11 Synthesis.

However, we now focus on how this author first speaks out of one side of his mouth in asserting the Christian Church to be the new spiritual Israel whereby former national and territorial identity, according to covenantal determination, has been eliminated. Then we hear him speaking from the other side of his mouth in disclaiming belief in “replacement theology,” that is when defined as bare substitution that has little connectedness.

[Jesus] is not, as some suppose, replacing Israel with the church. But he is reconstituting Israel in a way that makes it suitable for the new covenant. From this point on, it is not that the church takes the place of Israel, but that a renewed Israel of God is being formed by the shaping of the church. This kingdom will reach beyond the limits of the Israel of the old covenant.40

How shall this come about? Concerning national Israel, as a result of its rejection of the Messiah,

[1]he solemn consequences of this rejection find expression in the words of Jesus: “The kingdom shall be taken away from you and given to a people bearing the fruit of it” (Matt. 21:43). Israel as a nation would no more be able to claim that they possessed the kingdom of God in a way that was distinct from other nations. Yet the people of the new covenant would still be designated as Israel, “the Israel of God.” This new covenant people

39 Ibid., p. 43.
40 Palmer Robertson, Israel of God, p. 118.
would be formed around the core of twelve Israelites who were chosen to constitute the ongoing Israel of God.\textsuperscript{41}

How discouraging this is for the enquiring Jew! The Christian Church takes the name of Israel and leaves everything else behind as worthless Jewish fables and shadows! This is not reconstitution; it is the prodigal son attempting to disinherit the elder brother and claim his title. To suggest that old Israel, having Jewish individuality, nationality and territory is “reconstituted” so that the original distinctive Jewishness is reformed, but not replaced, is to play with words while at the same time retaining an eliminationist agenda. It is to subtly deal with the “Jewish problem,” even as Napoleon suggested, through “the abolition of Jewry by dissolving it into Christianity” (see page 49). The reality is that such absorption into a homogenous body in fact results in the elimination of distinctive Jewish individuality, nationality and territory. That this is so is proved by the attitude of Robertson when he gets down to the reality concerning the Jew, the nation and the Land of Israel today. Here a dismissive attitude is clearly evident. For instance we further read,

Only two references to “Jews” and three references to “Israel” are found in the book of Revelation. Though few in number, these references shed some light on the role of Israel in the coming of the kingdom. . . . This absence of a distinctive role for Israel in the coming of the consummate kingdom of Messiah characterizes the whole book of Revelation. Nowhere in this book are the Jewish people described as having a distinctive part in this kingdom. . . . The land of the Bible . . . is not to be regarded as having continuing significance in the realm of redemption other than its function as a teaching model. . . . The future manifestations of the messianic kingdom of Christ cannot include a distinctively Jewish aspect that would distinguish the peoples and practices of Jewish believers from their Gentile counterparts. . . . The future messianic kingdom will embrace equally the whole of the newly created cosmos, and will not experience a special manifestation of any sort in the region of the “promised land.” . . . [A] day should not be anticipated in which Christ’s kingdom will manifest Jewish distinctives either by its location in “the land,” or by its constituency, or by its distinctively Jewish practices.\textsuperscript{42}

Here is where Robertson’s repudiation of replacement theology is not believable, while a simmering anti-Judaism is quite apparent. With due

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 121. Here is yet another instance of the misuse of Matthew 21:43 that ignores Christ’s subsequent lament turning to hope (Matt. 23:37-39).

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., pp. 153, 165, 194, 195.
regard concerning the absurdity of the above comment concerning Revelation, how strange it is that the New Jerusalem descending from heaven gives prominent recognition to twenty four descendants of Abraham, “the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel” and “the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (Rev. 21:2, 12, 14)!

Nevertheless, an area in which we would agree with Robertson concerns his writing that, “[t]his new covenant people would be formed around the core of twelve Israelites who were chosen to constitute the ongoing Israel of God.” However we would also maintain that those twelve apostles, in retaining their historic Jewishness, constituted “a [Jewish] remnant according to God’s gracious choice” (Rom. 11:5) that passionately anticipated the restoration and regeneration of national Israel. For Peter, one of these apostles, declared before the Jewish Sanhedrin and high priest that concerning Jesus Christ: “God exalted this man to His right hand as ruler and Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31). Now the meaning of “Israel” here does not need to be reinterpreted, even as C. H. Spurgeon makes plain at this juncture.

Israel as a nation will yet acknowledge her blessed Prince and Savior. During many centuries, the chosen people, who were of old so highly favored above all other nations on the face of the earth, have been scattered and peeled, oppressed and persecuted, until sometimes it seemed as if they must be utterly destroyed; yet they shall be restored to their own land, which again shall be a land flowing with milk and honey. Then, when their hearts are turned to Messiah the Prince, and they look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn over their sin in so long rejecting him, the fullness of the Gentiles shall also come, and Jew and Gentile alike shall rejoice in Christ their Savior. In taking such a text as this, I think it is right always to give first the actual meaning of the passage before using it in any other way.43

How then does Robertson understand national Israel’s permanent disqualification from the land? There is his reference to Christ’s words, “the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing its fruit” (Matt. 21:43), even though there is no mention here of permanent divine abandonment, as is subsequently proved (Matt. 23:37-39). However, frequently Robertson identifies the land with the temporary, conditional old Mosaic covenant and

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consequently their mutual abrogation at the advent of the new covenant. Thus he writes that,

The possession of the land under the old covenant was not an end in itself, but fit instead among the shadows, types, and prophecies that were characteristic of the old covenant in its presentation of redemptive truth. Just as the tabernacle was never intended to be a settled item in the plan of redemption but was to point to Christ’s tabernacling among his people (cf. John 1:14, and just as the sacrificial system could never atone for sins but could only foreshadow the offering of the Son of God (Heb. 9:23-26), so in a similar manner Abraham received the promise of the land but never experienced the blessing of its full possession. In this way, the patriarch learned to look forward to “the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (Heb. 11:10).44

Here we believe that another fundamental error of this author comes to the fore. It is his incorporation of the Land promise into the conditional, temporal Mosaic covenant. There is great confusion here.45 Certainly the whole tabernacle order was merely a temporal shadow of the substance yet to be embodied in Christ. However the promise of the Land was according to the unconditional, everlasting terms of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 15:1-21) that were revealed 430 years before the giving of the law, and thus cannot be annulled. (Gal. 3:17). The Land of Israel was not a mere shadow as Robertson would like to have us believe. When Abraham first entered Canaan from Haran, the Land was thoroughly pagan. For this reason, his hope was in the cleansing and regeneration of the Land that would eventually result when the holiness of heaven would descend upon it, including Messiah, subsequent to its possession by the twelve tribes of Israel. For further evidence of the abiding nature of the land, refer to Chapter Nine: Israel – and the Inheritance of the Land through Abraham.

In a concluding summary of Robertson’s theology of Israel, twelve propositions are set forth that attempt to repudiate, with considerable emphasis, the common premillennial belief in a distinctive new covenant, eschatological future for ethnic and national Israel.46 It will

44 Ibid., p. 13.
45 Robertson makes the same mistake when he writes that circumcision was also “an old covenant institution,” and incorrectly invokes Galatians 5:2, in fact addressed to Gentile Christians concerning Judaisers, to suggest that what was in reality an Abrahamic Covenant rite is now invalid, even for the Jewish Christian. Ibid., p. 31.
46 Ibid., pp. 193-196.
be noted that the wording of these propositions needs careful consideration since often there is a lack of clarification, a subtle turn of expression, as well as the avoidance of some pertinent issues. We select the most significant of these for more detailed analysis.

Proposition #2: The modern Jewish state is not a part of the messianic kingdom of Jesus Christ. Even though it may be affirmed that this particular civil government came into being under the sovereignty of the God of the Bible, it would be a denial of Jesus’ affirmation that his kingdom is “not of this world order” (John 18:36) to assert that this government is a part of his messianic kingdom. To be honest, this writer knows of few premillennialists who would declare that the modern state of Israel is presently part of the messianic kingdom of Jesus Christ other than in a potential sense. Though they would certainly believe that such a blessed economy will emerge at the second coming of the Son of God. However, there are two related questions that must be faced here. First, is the land of Palestine today still a valid part of God’s promise to the national seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, irrespective of present unbelief or whether a number of Jews, large or small, inhabits it? One fundamental reason, among many, why this covenant promise abides is Paul’s declaration, obviously in the present tense, that “the promises” still belong to the Israelites (Rom. 9:4). To suggest that this expression excludes “the land,” would be quite unthinkable according to the Apostle’s use of accepted Hebrew parlance. Second, does God have any present covenantal regard for unbelieving, carnal, national, ethnic Israel in the present? While a more complete positive answer is given in Chapter Eleven: Israel - as God’s Beloved Enemy, it is sufficient here to refer to Romans 11:28 where it is plain that God continues to have a covenantal interest in unbelieving Israel in the present. Robertson, in being aware of the problem here, attempts to identify those “loved because of their forefathers” as elect Jews, not unbelieving Israel in a national sense.47 However, while amillennialist Lenski is of a similar interpretation, the overwhelming opinion of most commentators is that, as Barrett concludes, “[t]hey [Israel] are the race [emphasis added] whom God elected to be his peculiar people, and their election rests in no way upon their merits or achievements.”48 Thus, the positive answer

47 Ibid., pp. 189-190.
to both of the questions raised leads to the conclusion that while there cannot be absolute certainty with regard to eschatological fulfillment in the present, yet the contemporary state of Israel, and especially its possession of Jerusalem, suggests a high degree of probability that eschatological fulfillment is in process before our very eyes.

Moreover, although Robertson concedes, as a Calvinist, that there is the operation of God’s sovereignty in the establishment of the state of Israel, this is obviously an inclusive understanding with regard to His general dominion over all of creation; hence this would nevertheless exclude any divine, particular, sovereign, covenantal, national interest. Furthermore, he sees no distinctive involvement by God in the seeming secular process by which the European Zionist movement resulted in the rebirth of the state of Israel since such involvement would violate the principle of John 18:36. Nevertheless, in this regard reference should be made to David Larsen’s Jews, Gentiles, & The Church, in which he documents the historic development of Zionism that was substantially secular, nevertheless often directed and permeated by Christian sympathy, investment and biblical presuppositions. Consider that,

[w]hile doubtless there were complex motives of self-interest on the part of Great Britain, [Chaim] Weizmann stoutly maintained in his memoirs that the sincere Christian beliefs of Balfour, Lloyd-George, and Jan Christian Smuts were more responsible than anything else for the new opening for the Jews in Palestine.49

Also refer to the catalog of providential circumstances mentioned in pages 152-157. Concerning the broad principle of John 18:36, where Jesus declared, “My kingdom does not have its origin here,” certainly no premillennialist would assert that the present day nation of Israel is in fact a manifestation of the kingdom of God.50 Having said this, it ought not to be implied then that, because of the present secularity and unbelief of Israel, therefore God has no vested, particular, covenantal, loving interest in His people, as if a father had given up on his prodigal son. Quite to the contrary, in the biblical parable surely the father lovingly follows the course of his son even when he is defiling himself

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49 David L. Larsen, Jews, Gentiles & The Church, p. 182; cf. pp. 131-221.
50 In John 18:36 where Jesus addresses Pontius Pilate, He is contrasting the holiness of His potential kingdom administration with the pervasive unholliness of the world order in which the Roman legate rules. There is no thought here of the non-material spirituality of Jesus’ kingdom.
Proposition #3: It cannot be established from Scripture that the birth of the modern state of Israel is a prophetic precursor to the mass conversion of Jewish people. Doubtless in absolute terms this is correct even as it cannot be certainly proved that Robertson’s denial of such an apocalyptic return and conversion of the Diaspora is correct. With the Word of God concerning eschatological events, at best we are dealing with cautious probability, so let each Christian be persuaded as he carefully studies Scripture. Theoretically, present day Israel might be so assailed by the Arabs that it finds itself pushed into the Mediterranean Sea. This would in no way invalidate the premillennial hope, such as is portrayed in Ezekiel 36-37, though some anti-Judaic amillennialists might conceal an inward smile at such a tragic event. In such a situation they would also probably confess God’s hand at work in judgment upon Israel while denying His hand would ever bring consummate blessing! Nevertheless, C. H. Spurgeon, Bishop J. C. Ryle, and Horatius Bonar did have such a premillennial hope concerning national Israel well before there was any aroused prospect in Europe of a possible Jewish state in Israel. However, by way of contrast, consider the rather imprudent prognostication of Philip Mauro who wrote that should Jerusalem “come into Jewish hands again” during the “times of the Gentiles,” then “the prophecies would have been falsified and the entire New Testament discredited.”51 The pity is

51 Philip Mauro, The Gospel of the Kingdom, Chapter Twelve, Internet sourced. In Chapter Fourteen, commenting on Zionism up to 1927, Mauro
that he is not now able to provide an explanation of present circumstances, though the temper of his writings suggests that like some, he would simply deny any activity or national purpose of God, whatsoever, in the present state of Israel.

Proposition #4: *The land of the Bible served in a typological role as a model of the consummate realization of the purposes of God for his redeemed people that encompasses the whole of the cosmos. Because of the inherently limited scope of the land of the Bible, it is not to be regarded as having continuing significance in the realm of redemption other than its function as a teaching model. This matter is dealt with more fully in Chapter Nine: Israel – and the Inheritance of the Land through Abraham.* However at this juncture, consider C. H. Spurgeon’s understanding of Ezekiel 37:1-10. By way of summary, the famous preacher is well aware that

this vision has been used, from the time of Jerome onwards, as a description of the resurrection. . . . [However] there is no allusion made by Ezekiel to the resurrection, and such topic would have been quite apart from the design of the prophet’s speech. I believe he was no more thinking of the resurrection of the dead than of the building of St. Peter’s at Rome, or the emigration of the Pilgrim Fathers. That topic is altogether foreign to the subject in hand, and could not by any possibility have crept into the prophet’s mind. He was talking about the people of Israel, and prophesying concerning them. . . . The meaning of our text, as opened up by the context, is most evidently, if words mean anything, first, that there shall be a political restoration of the Jews to their own land and to their own nationality; and then, secondly, there is in the text, and in the context, a most plain declaration, that there shall be a spiritual restoration, a conversion in fact, of the tribes of Israel.52

Now by way of contrast, consider Robertson’s explanation of this same passage in which we begin to see that there is nothing really new. His eschatological understanding of Ezekiel, quite apart from any immediate return of Israel after the Babylonian exile, is essentially a revamped interpretation that employs the resurrection motif while

suggests that despite the Balfour Declaration, Zionism is a shabby movement in decline. But how times have changed, and will continue to change.

categorically excluding national Israel’s resurrection to life through regeneration.

This perspective [moving from shadow to reality] provides insight into the return to the land as described by Ezekiel and the other prophets. In the nature of things, these writers could only employ images with which they and their hearers were familiar. So they spoke of a return to the geographical land of Israel. Indeed there was a return to this land, though hardly on the scale prophesied by Ezekiel. But in the context of the realities of the new covenant, this land must be understood in terms of the newly created cosmos about which the apostle Paul speaks in Romans. The whole universe (which is “the land” from a new covenant perspective) groans in travail, waiting for the redemption that will come with the resurrection of the bodies of the redeemed (Rom. 8:22-23). The return to paradise in the framework of the new covenant does not involve merely a return to the shadowy forms of the old covenant. It means the rejuvenation of the entire earth. By this renewal of the entire creation, the old covenant’s promise of land finds its new covenant realization.53

We would agree here with the prophetic vision that Romans 8:22-33 presents and at the same time anticipates the future glorious Messianic kingdom which will manifest Christ’s reign from Jerusalem over Jew and Gentile. However we would vigorously disagree with that mystical, indeed contorted incorporation of the land into the new cosmos in such a way that all territorial identity of Israel is lost. Thus we return to two basic problems here. First there is a seeming unwillingness to accept that in the future blessed state there could possibly be a unity with diversity, that is regenerate Jews and Gentiles in blissful subjection to the reign of Christ. Second, there is the basic fallacy that the land, as a mere shadow, is rooted in the old or temporal Mosaic covenant. Yet again we have been told that the land represents “a return to the shadowy forms of the old covenant.” However we would strongly reassert that the land is rooted in the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:1, 5-7; 13:14-15, 17; 15:7-21), and as such is not limited by the temporal character of the Mosaic economy. God’s fundamental dealing with Israel after redemption from Egypt continued to be based upon the Abrahamic covenant that continued to anticipate its inherent promise of the land (Exod. 3:6-8, 15-17; 6:1-9; 12:25; 13:5; 32:13-14; 33:1-3; Lev. 20:24; 33:1-3; Num. 13:27).

Proposition #5: Rather than understanding predictions about the “return” of “Israel” to the “land” in terms of a geopolitical re-

establishment of the state of Israel, these prophecies are more properly interpreted as finding consummate fulfillment at the “restoration of all things” that will accompany the resurrection of believers at the return of Christ (Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:22-23). No premillennialist perceives the present “geopolitical re-establishment of the state of Israel” in a consummate sense. It is a precursor of that “regeneration, palingenesia” (Acts 3:21) and redemption of the created order (Romans 8:22-23) in which saved national Israel will gloriously participate. However, this does not mean that we walk blindly through this world as if historic events have little significance. Surely not only the continued increasing material and military strength of national Israel, obtained in the face of seeming insuperable opposition, but particularly its possession of Old Jerusalem after a hiatus of over 2,100 years, has troubled those of Reformed Augustinian convictions. There are published instances of their wrestling with these events since they tend to conflict with standard supercessionist explanations.

Proposition #7: No worship practices that place Jewish believers in a category different from Gentile believers can be a legitimate worship-form among the redeemed people of God. Is this to suggest that the worship of the Gentile church at Antioch had an identical form when compared with that of the mother Jewish church at Jerusalem? If a church that is predominantly Jewish should desire to remember the Lord Jesus by means of a Seder while a predominantly Gentile church should simply employ the Lords’ Table, who is to say that one order is more biblical than the other? If a church that is predominantly Jewish desires to initiate its children of Jewish parents and Jewish converts into Messianic Judaism by means of circumcision, where is the clear teaching in the New Testament that indicates that such a signification has been voided? How is it possible for the council of Jerusalem’s decision (Acts 15:1-35) to be construed as teaching the abolition of circumcision for the Jewish Christian?

Proposition #9: The future manifestation of the messianic kingdom of Christ cannot include a distinctively Jewish aspect that would distinguish the peoples and practices of Jewish believers from their Gentile counterparts. This is a purely arbitrary statement which betrays a Gentile mindset. In effect Robertson is saying that while the Gentile can worship in a pure Gentile manner, and the inference is that this will be the future messianic standard, on the other hand the Jew cannot incorporate distinctive Jewish aspects that are not appropriate for the
Gentile. After all, this would be unfair for the Gentile. But how is it fair for the Jew to have to conform to Gentile worship?

AN OPEN LETTER TO EVANGELICALS

Theological anti-Judaism, as distinguished from racial anti-Judaism, may be defined as the biblically derived conclusion that contemporary Judaism, especially its national and territorial representations, has no present and future covenantal legitimacy in the mind of God. Whatever present ethnic claims are made concerning Jewishness, such a perspective asserts the disenfranchisement of God’s ancient people by means of the superceding new covenant of Hebrews 8:7-13. Many of Reformed convictions, upon hearing confessions of pro-Judaism, especially sympathy for the modern state of Israel and related eschatological matters, usually respond with disparaging epithets that at the same time are intended to commend a more enlightened, spiritual historic eschatology. At worst, such theological anti-Judaism extends to abusive and contemptuous regard for carnal dispensationalism and worldly premillennialism. It is further protested that present day Judaism, in terms of its political alignment with Zionism, has unjustly oppressed and displaced the Palestinians who have been domiciled in the land “from time immemorial.”

While theological anti-Judaism is based upon biblical and religious convictions about the Jew, and racial anti-Judaism is based upon antipathy toward social, cultural and ethnic characteristics inherent in the Jew, it cannot be denied that rabid interest in the former is capable of giving birth to the ethos of the latter. In this regard the legacy of God’s servant, Martin Luther, is sufficient proof of this point.

We readily allow that those committed to the preceding scenario evidence differing degrees of disapproval concerning national Israel, though the doctrinal underpinning of these expressions is essentially Augustinian. One more recent, definitive expression of the repudiation of distinctive covenantal Jewish identity in the sight of God has been published on the web site of Knox Theological Seminary, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. There, on the page headed “The Wittenberg

54 This expression is derived from the acclaimed, controversial study by Joan Peters, From Time Immemorial, The Origins of the Arab-Jewish Conflict Over Palestine, p. 4. This is essential reading reviewed in Appendix E.

55 Paul Lawrence Rose, German Question/Jewish Question: Revolutionary Antisemitism from Kant to Wagner, 397 pp.
Door,” is featured, An Open Letter to Evangelicals and Other Interested Parties: The People of God, the Land of Israel, and the Impartiality of the Gospel.\textsuperscript{56} Here is a contemporary, anti-Judaic portrayal of the status, in fact non-status of Israel and the Jew today. Its denial of individual, national, and territorial Judaism in the sight of God calls for vigorous repudiation on account of explicit theological supercessionism. Hence there now follows a critique that is interspersed between the italicized text of this Open Letter. One wonders if the symbolic panoply employed at this web site, concerning Martin Luther’s historic forum of protest being the door of the Castle Church at Wittenberg in 1517, is also intended to represent alignment with the German reformer’s eschatology, and especially the sordid, shameful anti-Judaism that so stained the conclusion of such an eventful and momentous life. No disassociation in this regard appears to be mentioned.

It should also be appreciated that notable signatories to this Open Letter include Drs. Richard B. Gaffin, Michael S. Horton, Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., Robert L. Reymond, O. Palmer Robertson, R. C. Sproul, Cornelius P. Venema, and Bruce K. Waltke, all of whom are not only prolific in terms of scholarly books published that espouse conservative Reformed theology, but also convictions deeply rooted in Augustinian and historic Presbyterian covenantalism.

\textit{An Open Letter to Evangelicals and Other Interested Parties: The People of God, the Land of Israel, and the Impartiality of the Gospel}

\textit{Recently a number of leaders in the Protestant community of the United States have urged the endorsement of far-reaching and unilateral political commitments to the people and land of Israel in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, citing Holy Scripture as the basis for those commitments. To strengthen their endorsement, several of these leaders have also insisted that they speak on behalf of the seventy million people who constitute the American evangelical community.}

Since the exact circumstances concerning the claim made by these Protestant leaders is not referenced, it is not possible or really necessary to make further comment. However it is asserted that indeed

\textsuperscript{56} http://www.knoxseminary.org/Prospective/Faculty/WittenbergDoor/ (as at 1/3/2005).
a large proportion of the American evangelical community would generally agree with the “endorsement of far-reaching and unilateral political commitments to the people and land of Israel in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,” notwithstanding pervasive unbelief. By way of contrast, this Open Letter tends to oppose the people and land of Israel.

It is good and necessary for evangelical leaders to speak out on the great moral issues of our day in obedience to Christ’s call for his disciples to be salt and light in the world (Matt. 5:13-16). It is quite another thing, however, when leaders call for commitments that are based upon a serious misreading of Holy Scripture. In such instances, it is good and necessary for other evangelical leaders to speak out as well. We do so here in the hope that we may contribute to the cause of the Lord Christ, apart from whom there can never be true and lasting peace in the world (John 14:27).

Quite to the contrary, we believe that the historic, Reformational eschatological repudiation of Israel is based upon a Gentilic, Augustinian and Roman Catholic tradition more than clear exegesis, and as such wrongly filters Scripture through this doctrinal grid. To the contrary, it could hardly be said that the ethical fruit of this eschatology has contributed toward “true and lasting peace in the world.” The record of history shamefully indicates quite the opposite result.

At the heart of the political commitments in question are two fatally flawed propositions. First, some are teaching that God’s alleged favor toward Israel today is based upon ethnic descent rather than upon the grace of Christ alone, as proclaimed in the Gospel. Second, others are teaching that the Bible’s promises concerning the land are fulfilled in a special political region or “Holy Land,” perpetually set apart by God for one ethnic group alone. As a result of these false claims, large segments of the evangelical community, our fellow citizens, and our government are being misled with regard to the Bible’s teachings regarding the people of God, the land of Israel, and the impartiality of the Gospel.

While it is heartily agreed that God’s saving favor is not based upon ethnic descent, any more than gender or learning, but rather grace through faith alone, it is assuredly alleged that, as in the past, so in the future God does have a distinctive, ongoing, covenantal regard for Israel after the flesh as “beloved enemies” (Rom. 11:28). Reformational exegesis is particularly vulnerable with regard to the present relevance of this climactic verse. Refer to Chapter Eleven: Israel - as
God's Beloved Enemy. If God can retain such gracious for the nation of Israel, and Paul certainly did to the end of his ministry, then so ought the Gentile, engrafted wild olive branches.

However, the view espoused here in the *Open Letter* is far more representative of arrogant wild olive branches that are the subject of Paul’s rebuke (Rom. 11:17-20). Of course, as Ezekiel 36-37 plainly indicates, according to the sovereignty of God’s covenant grace, national Israel after the flesh will become Israel after the Spirit. And indeed is not this the same essential experience of any Christian in terms of biblical conversion? Yes, as with the persuasion of Jonathan Edwards, Horatius Bonar, J. C. Ryle, and C. H. Spurgeon, etc., we do believe that in grace God covenantally endowed the nation of Israel with the land in perpetuity so that ultimately it will be populated by those Hebrews who have authentically believed in Jesus as their Messiah. As with the aforementioned representatives, we do not believe that such a prospect in any way compromises the purity of the gospel. With both respect and loving regard for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, we believe that the Reformed eschatology of this *Open Letter* is misled with regard to the Bible’s teaching, and that its ethical legacy in this matter concerning the Jew, according to Church history, is practical proof that this is so. Both Christian and unbelieving Jews will readily confirm this painfully sad truth. Hence, to what extent are the signatories of this letter involved in evangelism and church planting in Israel while at the same time making plain or “open” the doctrinal convictions of this *Open Letter*?

In what follows, we make our convictions public. We do so acknowledging the genuine evangelical faith of many who will not agree with us. Knowing that we may incur their disfavor, we are nevertheless constrained by Scripture and by conscience to publish the following propositions for the cause of Christ and truth.

It is good and commendable for conscience to be invoked here. Let every believer be guided by this principle, no matter what the cost. But conscience is very much enlivened by knowledge of the truth. So we ask that the history of the doctrine here espoused be studied in depth, especially its ethical outworking, since it is strenuously maintained that the record of Augustinian eschatology over the centuries with regard to Israel is shameful and unworthy of further loyalty. Even the Roman Catholic Church has more recently responded with some expressions of repentance. Refer to *Appendix E: An Annotated Bibliography on Jewish-Christian Relations*. Nevertheless historic tradition, however
tainted, dies hard, although a return to the priority of fresh exegesis can emancipate. At the Reformation, this principle was certainly proved soteriologically, and to a lesser degree ecclesiologically, but not eschatologically.

1. The Gospel offers eternal life in heaven to Jews and Gentiles alike as a free gift in Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:23). Eternal life in heaven is not earned or deserved, nor is it based upon ethnic descent or natural birth (Luke 3:8; Eph. 2:8-9).

To this declaration we give happy yet qualified assent. Eternal life is solely according to God’s free grace which comes to earth from heaven for all who truly believe. Of course there is eternal life for the inhabitants of heaven, though it will also come to this earth in a consummate eschatological sense, even as Hoekema, Strimple, Venema, and Waldron maintain. Refer to Chapter Eight: Israel - and the Harmony of Spiritual Materiality.

2. All human beings, Jews and Gentiles alike, are sinners (Rom. 3:22-23), and, as such, they are under God’s judgment of death (Rom. 6:23). Because God’s standard is perfect obedience and all are sinners, it is impossible for anyone to gain temporal peace or eternal life by his own efforts. Moreover, apart from Christ, there is no special divine favor upon any member of any ethnic group; nor, apart from Christ, is there any divine promise of an earthly land or a heavenly inheritance to anyone, whether Jew or Gentile (Rom. 3:9-10). To teach or imply otherwise is nothing less than to compromise the Gospel itself.

Yes, to the Jews Jesus declared that, “if you do not believe that I am He [the divine Son of God], you will die in your sins” (John 8:24). Yes, savingly “apart from Christ, there is no special divine favor upon any member of any ethnic group.” However, this in no way invalidates God’s present regard for Israel after the flesh that will ultimately result in Israel after the Spirit (Rom. 11:12, 15, 24-28). Paul maintains an evangelistic thrust “first to the Jew, and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16), while also warning of “affliction and distress for every human being who does evil, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek” (Rom. 2:9). Here is the incorporation of both priority for the Jew and at the same time impartiality for Jew and Gentile. Similarly with regard to the covenantly promised land, its consummate eschatological realization with regenerate Israel as its holy inhabitant, it will be grounded upon the redemption that the Holy Seed (Jesus Christ) of Abraham has accomplished. In this regard, this Messianic Savior will reign from
Jerusalem over Israel in the Land and the surrounding nations (Ezek. 37:21-28; Zech. 14:4, 9-11). Again, in no way is this to suggest that this working of God’s saving grace is compromised.

3. God, the Creator of all mankind, is merciful and takes no pleasure in punishing sinners (Ezek. 18:23, 32). Yet God is also holy and just and must punish sin (Exod. 34:7). Therefore, to satisfy both his justice and his mercy, God has appointed one way of salvation for all, whether Jew or Gentile, in Jesus Christ alone (Acts 4:12; John 14:6).

Without qualification, we join in upholding the glory of God’s one gospel that saves both Jew and Gentile according to His elective grace through faith alone. However, just as the saved male and female retain their gender identity following conversion, so the Jew and Gentile retain their ethnic identity. Absolute homogeneity is not a logical necessity, as distinctive giftedness in the church indicates. The oneness of God incorporates distinctive triunity. Even heaven is populated by the redeemed as well as holy angels having various ranks!

4. Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully man (John 1:1, 14), came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. 1:15). In his death upon the cross, Jesus was the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world, of Jew and of Gentile alike. The death of Jesus forever fulfilled and eternally ended the sacrifices of the Jewish temple (Heb. 9:11-12; 10:11-12). All who would worship God, whether Jew or Gentile, must now come to him in spirit and truth through Jesus Christ alone. The worship of God is no longer identified with any specific earthly sanctuary. He receives worship only through Jesus Christ, the eternal and heavenly Temple (John 4:21, 23; 2:19-21).

The terms of the gospel are well stated here and with them we are in full agreement. Further, this new covenant established through Jesus Christ’s atoning death, in abrogating the Mosaic and Aaronic aspects of worship, specifically the sacrifices such as by the blood of bulls and goats, has primarily been made with Israel, into which stock the Gentiles are grafted (Jer. 31:27-34; Rom. 11:17). While “the worship of God is no longer identified with any specific earthly sanctuary” (John 4:21-24) in the present, this in no way negates the eschatological prospect of Jesus Christ being personally worshipped from Jerusalem, even in association with the temple portrayed in Ezekiel 40-48. He being personally and gloriously present in that future kingdom, there is a sense in which such worship will have a local focus, while at the same time being universally spiritual. At that time, worship will not be
confined to the heavenly realm; rather true spiritual worship will have come to earth.

5. To as many as receive and rest upon Christ alone through faith alone, to Jews and Gentiles alike, God gives eternal life in his heavenly inheritance (Rom. 1:16; John 1:12-13).

Again we give ready assent to this gospel declaration. Of course both the Jew and Gentile retain their divinely appointed ethnic distinction even as they individually receive differing spiritual gifts, which diversity is incorporated within the unity of the one people of God. However, their “heavenly inheritance” is not some amorphous, ethereal existence, but rather the visitation of “the holy city, [the] new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven [to earth] from God” (Rev. 5:10; 21:2) in which Jew and Gentile are destined to participate.

6. The inheritance promises that God gave to Abraham were made effective through Christ, Abraham’s True Seed (Gal. 3:16). These promises were not and cannot be made effective through sinful man’s keeping of God’s law (Rom. 4:13). Rather, the promise of an inheritance is made to those only who have faith in Jesus, the True Heir of Abraham. All spiritual benefits are derived from Jesus, and apart from him there is no participation in the promises (Gal. 3:7, 26-29). Since Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the Abrahamic Covenant, all who bless him and his people will be blessed of God, and all who curse him and his people will be cursed of God (Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:7-8). These promises do not apply to any particular ethnic group (Gal. 3:22; Matt. 21:43), but to the church of Jesus Christ, the true Israel (Rom. 2:28-29; Phil. 3:3). The people of God, whether the church of Israel in the wilderness in the Old Testament (Acts 7:38) or the Israel of God among the Gentile Galatians in the New Testament (Gal. 6:16), are one body who through Jesus will receive the promise of the heavenly city, the everlasting Zion (Heb. 13:14; Phil. 3:20; II Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:9-14; Heb. 11:39-40). This heavenly inheritance has been the expectation of the people of God in all ages (Heb. 11:13-16; 12:22-24).

Here we part company in a number of areas, but particularly with some ingenious exposition that seems more doctrinally than textually driven. To begin with consider: “Since Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the Abrahamic Covenant, all who bless him and his people will be blessed of God, and all who curse him and his people will be cursed of God. These promises do not apply to any particular ethnic group, but to the church of Jesus Christ, the true Israel.” While Jesus Christ is never
declared to be the mediator of the Abrahamic covenant, let us grant the
nuance of the assumption here. Nevertheless, the promise of Genesis
12:3 is not made to Christ as the mediator, but to Abraham, and this
Scripture overwhelmingly affirms. Further, the seed of Abraham
having application to Christ according to Galatians 3:16, this in no way
invalidates the “seed” of Genesis 12:1-3 being the nation of Israel
anymore than does “seed” in Genesis 13:15; 17:7. The exegetical
reason is that God says to Abraham, your “descendants [seed]” shall be
as the innumerable stars of heaven (Gen. 15:5). These references
clearly refer to the nation of Israel, and not exclusively Christ as an
individual. Paul’s employment of Midrash, distinctive Jewish,
applicatory interpretation, incorporates Christ as the root of promised
blessing without at all denying the obvious promise of national
blessing, the plurality of “Abraham’s descendants [seed], heirs
according to the promise” (Gal. 3:29).57 Plainly the terms of the
curse/blessing in Genesis 12:2-3 principally refer to the national seed
here, notwithstanding the attempted textual manipulation which betrays
a difficulty that the obvious sense presents. To be sure, Christ is the
ground of covenant blessing, but this does not nullify national blessing
as is plainly indicated. Further evidence of this fallacious methodology
is the desperate attempt here, according to standard Augustinian and
Catholic practice, to conclude that “the church of Jesus Christ, [is] the
true Israel,” because Jesus said that “the kingdom of God will be taken
away from you and given to a people producing the fruit of it” (Matt.
21:43). But here it is “the chief priests and the elders of the people”
(Matt. 21:23) who are addressed, though not with any indication that
permanent disenfranchisement was intended in a national sense, as
Matthew 23:37-39 and Romans 11 make abundantly clear. Indeed, the
twelve pillars of this new “people producing fruit” were all Jews, even
as the new First Church of Jerusalem was Jewish. Also refer to
Chapter Ten: Israel - and a Romans 11 Synthesis concerning Galatians
6:18.

7. Jesus taught that his resurrection was the raising of the True Temple
of Israel (John 2:19-21). He has replaced the priesthood, sacrifices,
and sanctuary of Israel by fulfilling them in his own glorious priestly
ministry and by offering, once and for all, his sacrifice for the world,

57 David Stern, Jewish New Testament Commentary, p. 549. Difficult as this
passage is, few commentators take such a narrow line here whereby
unconditional blessing to Israel as a nation is eliminated from the original
promise given to Abraham.
that is, for both Jew and Gentile (Heb. 8:1-6; cf. 4:15-5:10; 6:13-10:18). Believers from all nations are now being built up through him into this Third Temple (Eph. 2:19-22; I Pet. 2:4-6), the church that Jesus promised to build (Matt. 16:18; Heb. 3:5-6).

That the priesthood of Jesus has gloriously superceded the Aaronic priesthood incorporated within the Mosaic covenant, is unquestionably true. However this in no way has eliminated the essential character of distinctive Jewishness since, as Jeremiah 31:27-34 indicates, the “new covenant,” while abrogating the old covenant that was added following Israel’s redemption out of Egypt, is made with “the house of Israel and the house of Judah,” not the church. Further Jesus as the superceding, incarnate spiritual “Temple” in no way negates the spiritual materiality of the eschatological temple from which Jesus Christ will reign (Zech. Isa. 2:2-4; 56:6-7; Ezek. 40-43; Mic. 4:1-5; Zech. 6:12-15), unless one understands this prospect in purely abstract, ethereal terms which a number of more recent amillennialists have rejected. Thus Ezekiel was told concerning a future Temple into which “the glory of the Lord entered, . . . ‘Son of man, this [Temple] is the place of My throne and the place for the soles of My feet, where I will dwell among the Israelites forever’” (Ezek. 43:4, 7). We believe this future temple, situated in Jerusalem, will accommodate the enthroned Temple Jesus.

8. Simon Peter spoke of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus in conjunction with the final judgment and the punishment of sinners (II Pet. 3:10-13). Instructively, this same Simon Peter, the Apostle to the Circumcision (Gal. 2:7), says nothing about the restoration of the kingdom to Israel in the land of Palestine (cf. Acts 1:6-7). Instead, as his readers contemplate the promise of Jesus’ Second Coming, he fixes their hope upon the new heavens and the new earth, in which righteousness dwells (II Pet. 3:13).

Undoubtedly it is right to presume that Peter was at the forefront of the question raised by the eleven disciples, “Lord, at this time are You restoring the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). The restoration of Israel as declared by the prophets, which concept here surely incorporates the land, is a given which Jesus does not contradict; His concern is chiefly a matter of timing. As to Peter’s understanding of II Peter 3:13, this

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58 This raises the question of the interpretation of Ezekiel 40-48. While not denying difficulties here which any interpreter of this passage faces, detailed exegesis does not suit those who merely abstract general principles from the text.
being a quotation of Isaiah 65:17; 66:22, we believe the language here parallels “the restoration of all things, which God spoke about by the mouth of His holy prophets from the beginning” (Acts 3:21). When this kingdom of Messiah is consummated, then “all your people [Israel] will be righteous; they will possess the land forever” (Isa. 60:21). Not for a moment would the mother church in Jerusalem have understood this promise in some esoteric sense.

9. The entitlement of any one ethnic or religious group to territory in the Middle East called the “Holy Land” cannot be supported by Scripture. In fact, the land promises specific to Israel in the Old Testament were fulfilled under Joshua (Josh. 21:43-45). The New Testament speaks clearly and prophetically about the destruction of the second temple in A.D. 70 (Matt. 24:1-2; cf. Mark 13:1-2; Luke 21:20-24). No New Testament writer foresees a regathering of ethnic Israel in the land, as did the prophets of the Old Testament after the destruction of the first temple in 586 B.C. (Luke 21:24). Moreover, the land promises of the Old Covenant are consistently and deliberately expanded in the New Testament to show the universal dominion of Jesus (Exod. 20:12; Eph. 6:2-3; Gen. 12:1, cf. Rom. 4:13; Ps. 37:11; Matt. 5:5; Ps. 2:7-8), who reigns from heaven upon the throne of David, inviting all the nations through the Gospel of Grace to partake of his universal and everlasting dominion (Acts 2:29-32).

While presumably the signatories would believe in Israel’s past entitlement to the Holy Land according to the terms of the Abrahamic Covenant as indicated in the Old Testament, we assume they are here referring to the modern day territorial possession of the State of Israel. However we believe that the preceding reference to Isaiah 60:21, among numerous other instances, is a promise that has in no way been abrogated, any more than the preceding glorious pledges of Isaiah 60:15-20. Concerning Joshua 21:43-45, to begin with this passage does not in any way speak of temporal possession. However, if, as seems to be claimed here, possession of the land relates to the time of Joshua, then why do we find so many of the prophets describing a future possession of the land in most concrete terms? Concerning Exodus 20:12 and Ephesians 6:2-3, typical Gentilic, exclusionary, either/or exegesis, wrongly assumes that Paul’s applicatory, more general reference to the fifth commandment nullifies the specific land reference (Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16). We have elsewhere dealt with the Hebrew Christian’s free use of the Old Testament, such as in Hebrews, that in no way invalidates the literal meaning of the text. The same
point applies to the quotation of Psalm 37:11, where the literal promise concerning the land still stands, yet in Matthew 5:5 this truth is quoted in a more applicatory sense. \(^{59}\) Refer to Chapter Seven: Israel - and Christian anti-Judaic Hermeneutics. Concerning Genesis 12:1, cf. Romans 4:13, it is incorrect to suggest that “the land promises of the Old Covenant are consistently and deliberately expanded in the New Testament to show the universal dominion of Jesus.” That Abraham would be “the heir of the world” was not expansion, but fulfillment of that which was originally promised, namely that “all the peoples of the earth will be blessed through you” (Gen. 12:3). Yet again, this unity with the Lord Jesus reigning over all does not exclude the diversity of Israel and the nations being under His dominion, as the original promise plainly distinguishes. In the same vein concerning Psalm 2:7-8, the fact that the Father declares to the Lord Jesus that to Him will be given “the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession,” in no way invalidates the diversity that this future holy ecumenicity will incorporate.

10. Bad Christian theology regarding the “Holy Land” contributed to the tragic cruelty of the Crusades in the Middle Ages. Lamentably, bad Christian theology is today attributing to secular Israel a divine mandate to conquer and hold Palestine, with the consequence that the Palestinian people are marginalized and regarded as virtual “Canaanites” (Deut. 20:16-18; cf. Lev. 27:28-29). This doctrine is both contrary to the teaching of the New Testament and a violation of the Gospel mandate (Matt. 28:19). In addition, this theology puts those Christians who are urging the violent seizure and occupation of Palestinian land in moral jeopardy of their own bloodguiltiness. Are we as Christians not called to pray for and work for peace, warning both parties to this conflict that those who live by the sword will die by the sword? (Matt. 26:52). Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ can bring both temporal reconciliation and the hope of an eternal and heavenly inheritance to the Israeli and the Palestinian. Only through Jesus Christ can anyone know peace on earth.

When one considers what the Crusades in the Middle Ages were about, it becomes quite astonishing that such an argument as this is offered. To begin with, it was the “bad Christian theology” of establishment Gentile Christianity that moved the armies of Western Europe to

militarily attempt a recovery from Islam of the Land of Israel, more familiarly regarded as the Christian Holy Land. We can be sure that there was no intent here to enable the dispersed Jews to return to their land; such a concept was unthinkable. Moreover, how disgraceful was the resultant persecution of the Jews by crusader bands traveling through Europe en route to the Holy Land so as to recapture Christian holy sites. “The leader of the First Crusade, Godfrey Bouillon, who had sworn to avenge the blood of Christ on Israel and ‘leave no single member of the Jewish race alive’, burnt the synagogue of Jerusalem to the ground, with all the Jews inside.”60 Here was the outworking of supercessionist theology that is rightly to be associated more with essential Augustinian, Medieval, and Reformed eschatology. There is simply no connection between the fundamental idea of the Crusades and the subsequent belief, especially resurrected during the seventeenth century, concerning the Jews’ present and future covenantal claims to the promised Land involving ultimate inhabitation by regenerated national Israel under Christ. This latter mentioned hope is the consummation of the “gospel mandate,” not its violation.

Contrary to what the Open Letter suggests, in 1948 the state of Israel was reestablished through international assignment, not “conquest.” However, particularly objectionable at this juncture is the obvious further bias that excoriates Israel’s treatment of the pitiful, downtrodden, deprived Palestinians, the “violent seizure and occupation of Palestinian land,” as if it were, in Old Testament terms, heartlessly attempting to eliminate the Canaanites. The bias here is unabashed, though none the less offensive. Here is abhorrent theological anti-Judaism that is void of sympathy for the Jew, who presently occupies less than one percent of the middle-eastern Arab world, which at the same time is so obviously un-Pauline. Further in this regard consult Appendix E: An Annotated bibliography on Jewish-Christian Relations where From Time Immemorial, The Origins of the Arab-Jewish Conflict Over Palestine by Joan Peters is referenced.61 Here then this Open Letter plainly reveals the accusatory attitude, born of an Augustinian heritage which was similarly associated with the

61 Consider: “[T]here have been as many Jewish refugees who fled or were expelled from the Arab countries as there are Arab refugees from Israel, and that the Jews left of necessity and in flight from danger. . . . The Jews who fled Arab countries left assets behind in the Arab world greater than those the Arabs left in Israel.” From Time Immemorial, p. 25.
Israel – and Christian anti-Judaism in the US

The aforementioned anti-Judaic Crusades, that at the same time is presently represented in Reformed supercessionism. Yes, beyond question, “Only through Jesus Christ can anyone know peace on earth.” But when an eschatology is centered, according to historic confession, in this same Christ and yet is productive of centuries of scandalous behavior and demeaning attitudes toward the Jew, even as is here reflected in the Open Letter, then there needs to be further “Reformation” amongst many who so fervently proclaim their indebtedness to Reformed eschatology.

The promised Messianic kingdom of Jesus Christ has been inaugurated. Its advent marks the focal point of human history. This kingdom of the Messiah is continuing to realize its fullness as believing Jews and Gentiles are added to the community of the redeemed in every generation. The same kingdom will be manifested in its final and eternal form with the return of Christ the King in all his glory.

We do not disagree with the essential thrust of what is here stated, though Scripture is much more specific concerning these matters. However it is debatable if the inauguration of Jesus Christ’s Messianic kingdom should take primacy over its consummation (I Cor. 15:23-28). Both natural and wild olive branches are being engrafted into the natural, Abrahamic olive tree so as to become partakers of the promise made with “the forefathers” (Rom. 11:5, 17-18, 28), except that until the conclusion of the times of the Gentiles, Jewish Christians constitute a remnant. However such participation does not eliminate present and future individuality. Then will come for ethnic Israel “their full number,” that is “life from the dead” for Israel, when “all Israel [as a nation] will be saved” (Rom. 11:12, 15, 26) at the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ with great glory. This is basic to the climactic optimism of Romans 11, and not so difficult to comprehend, as most Hebrew Christians will testify, except that one attempt to filter this truth through the presupposition of a Gentilic or an Augustinian grid.

Of all the nations, the Jewish people played the primary role in the coming of the Messianic kingdom. New Testament Scripture declares that to them were given the oracles of God (Rom. 3:2), the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises (Rom. 9:3-4). Theirs are the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and from them, according to the flesh, came Christ (Rom. 9:5). Salvation is, indeed, of the Jews (John 4:22). While affirming the Scriptural teaching that there is no salvation outside of Christ, Christians should acknowledge with heartfelt sorrow and grief the
frequent oppression of the Jews in history, sometimes tragically done in the name of the cross.

This token acknowledgment of the significant role of the Jews up to the time of the first coming of Jesus Christ will not suffice. The reason is that while at this juncture there is a perfunctory giving with one hand, yet there is overall a more vigorous taking away with the other, namely the denial in perpetuity of Jewish individuality, nationality, and territory. The suggestion here of widespread oppression of the Jews in general that included some modest participation by Christianity is in fact both evasion and distortion of a most unpalatable truth. It is that since the ascendancy of Gentile dominion within Christianity, this sway has resulted in a major anti-Judaic thrust, born of replacement theology, which has not yet abated. Refer to Appendix E: An Annotated Bibliography on Jewish-Christian Relations. As a result, much of Christianity has endeavored to justify this Gentilic reign by means of supercessionism, even as is further indicated here by a subtle misuse of Scripture. We quote: “Of all the nations, the Jewish people played the primary role in the coming of the Messianic kingdom. New Testament Scripture declares that to them were given the oracles of God (Romans 3:2), the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises” (Rom. 9:3-4). Now in Romans 3:2, it is true that the oracles of God were given (aorist) to the Jews. However Romans 9:3-4 does not translate according to the same aoristic sense. Rather this passage clearly declares that Paul regarded his brethren in the flesh as presently Israelites, “who are Israelites,” hoitines eisin Israelitai, and that presently to them, even in their unbelief, there belongs “the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the temple service, and the promises.” Thomas Schreiner confirms this point: “The present tense verb (eisin, they are) indicates that the Jews still “are” Israelites and that all the blessings named still belong to them.” In other words, Paul here confirms that, in the mystery of God’s dealings with national Israel in the flesh in unbelief, nevertheless He maintains a present covenant interest in them, even as “beloved enemies” (Rom. 11:28). This being so, it is only right to understand this recognition in individual, national, and territorial terms.

62 Thomas R. Schreiner, Romans, p. 485. Similarly Moo, Romans, p. 560; Käsemann, Romans, p. 258; though Murray misses the point when he indicates that “they were ‘Israelites’” Romans, II, p. 4.
But what are we to make of the unbelief of Israel? Has their unbelief made the faithfulness of God without effect for them? (Rom. 3:1-4). No, God has not completely rejected the people of Israel (Rom. 11:1 cf. Rom. 11:2-10), and we join the apostle Paul in his earnest prayer for the salvation of his Jewish kinsmen according to the flesh (Rom. 9:1-3). There always has been and always will be a remnant that is saved (Rom. 11:5). While not all Israel will experience the blessing of participation in the Messianic kingdom (Rom. 9:6), yet Jews who do come to faith in Christ will share in his reign throughout the present age and into eternity. In addition, it is not as though the rejection of some in Israel for unbelief serves no purpose. On the contrary, because they were broken off in unbelief, the Gospel has gone to the Gentiles, who now, through faith, partake of the blessings to the fathers and join with believing Jews to constitute the true Israel of God, the church of Jesus Christ (Rom. 11:11-18).

The pejorative, utilitarian, anticlimactic tone here, “God has not completely rejected the people of Israel,” betrays a reluctance to come to grips with Paul’s exuberant, climactic expectation of Israel’s national conversion in Romans 11, as is the obvious meaning with even a prima facie reading of this passage. How patronizingly gratifying it is to learn that, after all, the Jews have served a useful purpose! To sense the mood of the theological anti-Judaism in the whole of this Open Letter, and then read that, nevertheless, “we join the apostle Paul in his earnest prayer for the salvation of his Jewish kinsmen according to the flesh,” is not to be impressed since this same prayerful concern was also expressed by Ambrose, Augustine, Chrysostom, and Luther, etc. Tragically, and not surprisingly in view of their deplorable attitudes, their petitions were not answered in a positive and comprehensive sense. However, “to join the apostle Paul” authentically in this matter is surely to imbibe his passionate interest in the Jew, which never flagged. But then what is meant here by the term “Jew,” when it appears to have been evacuated of its obvious biblical meaning, so that only the shell of social convenience remains? Could any of the signatories of this Open Letter happily involve themselves in church planting in Israel today while at the same time, without compromise, making plain the gospel and presenting it in the framework of Jewish disqualification here presented? But there is further obfuscation in this regard when it is stated that, “Jews who do come to faith in Christ will share in his reign throughout the present age and into eternity.” Again, what exactly is meant here by the term “Jew”? Is this really an honest declaration, for the teaching of the Open Letter is in fact that upon
conversion the saved Jew loses his individual, national, and territorial Jewishness; in reality, according to Reformed Augustinianism, Judaism is finished. Some might attempt to avoid this problem by maintaining a temporary, quasi individuality for the Jewish Christian, though the aspects of nationality and territory would nevertheless be strenuously denied. This being the case, then the language used here has the character of ambiguity and generality about it that fails to honestly reveal the real eschatological agenda.

The present secular state of Israel, however, is not an authentic or prophetic realization of the Messianic kingdom of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, a day should not be anticipated in which Christ's kingdom will manifest Jewish distinctives, whether by its location in "the land," by its constituency, or by its ceremonial institutions and practices. Instead, this present age will come to a climactic conclusion with the arrival of the final, eternal phase of the kingdom of the Messiah. At that time, all eyes, even of those who pierced him, will see the King in his glory (Rev. 1:7). Every knee will bow, and every tongue will declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:9-11). The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever (Rev. 11:15).

Here is the harsh reality of theological anti-Judaism, the bottom line so to speak. The obvious and unavoidable conclusion then is that the present State of Israel is not of God; rather it is spiritually illegitimate if not fraudulent. Biblical Judaism, covenantally speaking, is passé. But nevertheless, "We love the Jews," is the hollow cry of the signatories of the Open Letter! How strange it is for those of a Reformed persuasion who, while giving considerable place to the movements of God in human history, yet prefer to ignore the remarkable series of events, involving significant Christian participation, whereby the modern State of Israel came into being. How difficult it must be for these same people to brush aside the remarkable victories of the War of Independence of 1948, the Six Day War of 1967, and especially the reclamation of Old Jerusalem after 2,100 years of being "trampled under foot by the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). However, theological systems, while showing signs of becoming increasingly fractured because of historical enlightenment, nevertheless are not easily surrendered. Granted that Israel remains in unbelief, even so this in no way alters the fundamental issue of the ongoing legitimacy of the Land in covenantal terms. Allowing for the worst of all scenarios, should
Israel – and Christian anti-Judaism in the US

Israel yet again be expelled from the land according to Arab and Gentile hegemony, even so this would in no way effect the abiding legitimacy of the land promise. However one suspects that those who affirm modern Israel’s present illegitimacy in the sight of God would, at such a tragic occasion, more assertively declare this expulsion to be the will of God!

In light of the grand prophetic expectation of the New Testament, we urge our evangelical brothers and sisters to return to the proclamation of the free offer of Christ’s grace in the Gospel to all the children of Abraham, to pray for peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and to promise all humanitarian sympathy and practical support for those on both sides who are suffering in this current vicious cycle of atrocity and displacement. We also invite those Christian educators and pastors who share our convictions on the people of God, the land of Israel, and the impartiality of the Gospel to join their names with ours as signatories to this open letter.

Advent In the Year of our Lord 2002

Soli Deo Gloria

The inference here that we who are of a pro-Judaic persuasion are distracted from gospel proclamation has no more validity to it than the inference that those who are of a theologically anti-Judaic persuasion are more whole-heartedly committed to proclamation of the gospel. Let us put aside such empty posturing. However, we do believe that faithful evangelism with regard to the Jew, as well as the Palestinian, will inevitably have associated with it an ethical quality which commends the truth proclaimed. Further, we are convinced that the manner of our gospel preaching to the Jew in particular will have a loving Pauline tone about it, even a special place as was his custom. In these two realms, we believe the evidence is conspicuous with regard to the lack in general that many Christians of Reformed convictions manifest. It may not sit well with those who staunchly identify themselves as Protestants, nevertheless it remains true at the present that, for all of its departure from the essential truth of the Bible, the Roman Catholic Church has more recently evidenced certain changes with regard to appreciation of the Jew and Judaism, however imperfectly and of debatable motivation, than those who glory in a Reformed heritage.
Chapter Four

ISRAEL – and contemporary examples of Christian anti-Judaism in the UK

INTRODUCTION

In 1983, an Anglican clergyman and scholar named Colin Chapman published a book titled *Whose Promised Land?* in which he vigorously assailed biblical associations with the modern State of Israel. He also clearly asserted that pro-Judaic supporters today, in being pejoratively labeled as Christian Zionists, were unsympathetic to the injustice allegedly inflicted upon the Palestinian cause by Israel. Though in constantly beating a drum in his cry for justice for the Palestinians, any similarly impassioned demand for justice with regard to centuries of inhumanity suffered by the Jews was merely referenced at a token level. The bias of the author was plain to read. For instance he wrote:

I do have problems with the original vision of many Zionists to establish a Jewish homeland or a state in Palestine which would be exclusively or near-exclusively Jewish. . . . I feel bound to conclude that the promise of the land to Abraham and his descendants ‘as an everlasting possession’ does not give the Jews a divine right to possess the land for all time. . . . I don’t believe that the State of Israel is ‘of God’ in the sense that it is the fulfillment (or even a preliminary stage in the fulfillment) of all that God promised and predicted in the Old Testament about the future of the land and its people. . . . I would go further and suggest that for Christians to interpret these events simply as the fulfillment of prophecy represents a kind of regression. . . . Could it be that God is challenging the whole Jewish people to think again about their destiny as a people? What is the whole enterprise of settling Jews in the land and setting up a Jewish state doing to the soul of Judaism? Did God really intend that they should be ‘a peculiar people’ for ever and ever? Is there no alternative to the choice between traditional orthodox Judaism, assimilation and Zionism? Is there no other way by which the Jews can live securely among the nations without ceasing to be Jews?1

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There is a chilling inference in the concluding three sentences here, in spite of the author’s unconvincing protestation that he is not anti-Judaic. Moreover, after four editions of this book, the most recent being in 2002, it remains essentially unchanged in its anti-Judaic style. Furthermore, surprisingly, indeed incomprehensibly, it now incorporates in Appendix 3, without the slightest critical comment, “The Covenant of Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement,” which includes the following:

Hamas is for Muslims who favor Jihad. . . . Hamas aims for every inch of Palestine. . . . No part of it should be given up. . . . Hamas is opposed to initiatives, peaceful solutions and international conferences. Jihad is the only solution. . . . Enemy (i.e. Jews) responsible for the French Revolution, the Communist Revolution, etc. Allies of enemy: Freemasons, Rotary, Capitalist West, Communist East. Enemy caused the First and Second World Wars, etc. . . . Arab and Islamic countries should assist the anti-Zionist struggle.2

Whether this addition has Freudian intimations or not, it does seem unjust that Israel’s Proclamation of Independence of May 14, 1948 was also not included, as with the following:

The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and national identity was formed. Here they achieved independence and created a culture of national and universal significance. Here they wrote and gave the Bible to the world.

Exiled from the Land of Israel the Jewish people remained faithful to it in all the countries of their dispersion, never ceasing to pray and hope for their return and the restoration of their national freedom.

Impelled by this historic association, Jews strove throughout the centuries to go back to the land of their fathers and regain their statehood. In recent decades they returned in their masses. They reclaimed the wilderness, revived their language, built cities and villages, and established a vigorous and ever-growing community, with its own economic and cultural life. They sought peace, yet were prepared to defend themselves. They brought the blessings of progress to all inhabitants of the country and looked forward to sovereign independence.3

However Chapman’s tilt continues in his writing when he suggests that Israel may have fomented the formation of hard line terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, the result being that

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3 Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, The Israel-Arab Reader, p. 81.
“distrust and despair have driven them to violence”! Unquestionably there is a tolerant note here, a degree of justification for the savagery of indiscriminate suicidal bombings that even employ children! The inference is that understanding of such terrorist groups is needed rather than a military response!4

In the whole of Chapman’s most recent edition, particularly with regard to his sources, it is obvious that a doctrinal camaraderie has developed over the last twenty years amongst a number of Anglican scholars in England who reciprocate in their essential support of a supercessionist, if not theological, anti-Judaic agenda. Consider the inclusion in various ways of the likes of N. T. Wright, being the most prominent by reputation, also Stephen Sizer, Steve Motyer, Peter Walker, and Kenneth Cragg. Here is a coterie of Anglican scholars who have in common an amillennial, essentially Augustinian eschatology that plays out in a repudiation of the contemporary divine validity of National Israel. To begin with N. T. Wright, now Bishop of Durham and formerly Canon Theologian of Westminster Abbey, is highly influential in Chapman’s volume, as well as the writings of Walker. Furthermore Chapman also makes considerable reference to Sizer as well as Motyer and Wright. Moreover Stephen Sizer, as Vicar of Christ Church, Virginia Water, Surrey, recently published his PhD thesis under the title of Christian Zionism. It is basically similar in thrust to that of Chapman in vigorously opposing any association with the modern State of Israel based upon a premillennial, restorationist eschatology. However his emphasis is more concerned with a historical analysis of Christian Zionism, especially its alleged dispensational roots. Nevertheless he writes expressing particular indebtedness to Chapman, as well as Motyer, Walker, and also Presbyterian Palmer Robertson, who himself references Chapman and Walker in his Israel of God! As the saying goes, even in this realm of Anglican and Reformed theological kinship, “What goes around comes around!”

In addition, Motyer was editorially and sympathetically involved in the latest edition of Whose Promised Land? He himself has published Israel in the Plan of God, while in 2003 he presented a paper to the Evangelical Alliance titled “Israel in God’s Plan” in which he broadly defined himself as “replacementist,” except that he suggested that it is Jesus who replaces Israel. Then there is Peter Walker, a lecturer at Wycliffe Hall Oxford, whose writings have focused on Jerusalem and

the land of Israel. He also references Wright, Chapman, and Motyer, and concludes, with his preceding associates, that the land and related Zionist hopes have been absorbed into one people through Christ in fulfillment of God’s universal purpose for the world. Finally Bishop Kenneth Cragg, a former Assistant Bishop of Jerusalem and specialist in Christian-Muslim relations, is warmly quoted by Chapman and Sizer. Cragg’s Islamophilic bias is also referenced by Bat Ye’or who relates how he “criticized the European Kings and the popes for not having cooperated with the invading Muslim armies, a surrender which would have amounted to collaboration with their own demise.”

The in-grown relationships here go on and on. Hence to avoid repetition, we will now consider a number of emphases upon which these authors offer general agreement, whether dependently or independently. Certainly it is true that all of them tend toward supercessionist, anti-Judaic antipathies with regard to modern Israel and, at the same time, pro-Arab, Moslem, and Palestinian sympathies. The doctrinal kinship here certainly confirms the religious dimensions that are detailed in the warnings of Bat Ye’or in her *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis*, and Melanie Phillips in her *Londonistan*.

**LAW PRECEDES GRACE**

In varying degrees the aforementioned Christian authors would readily confess to doctrinal alignment with a broad Anglican, Protestant and Reformed heritage. This would also mean belief in salvation by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ, which is inevitably to result in the growth of manifest gracious and godly living. This being so, it is astonishing to behold these very same people regressing into a denial of this truth in so far as God’s promised dealings with Israel in the Old Testament are concerned. For instance Sizer is critical of the fact that virtually all Christian Zionists insist that the Abrahamic covenant remains unconditional, whereas,

subsequent references to the land in Scripture stress that humility and meekness rather than “chosenness” became a precondition for inheriting or remaining in the land, whereas arrogance or oppression were legitimate grounds for exile. For example, the psalmist explains, ‘But the meek will

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inherit the land and enjoy great peace’ (Ps. 37:11). . . . The ethical requirements for continued occupancy are clearly outlined in the Law.7

So we conclude here from Sizer that it is obedience to Torah that establishes participation in the Abrahamic Covenant for the Jew, in particular the land promises, while this is exactly antithetical to the very heart of the Christian gospel, especially as it is confessed according to Reformed teaching. Many of Reformed convictions resort to this inconsistent belief, as is further detailed in Chapter Nine: Israel – and the Inheritance of the Land through Abraham. Does Sizer know anything about “chosenness” according to sovereign grace himself? Does he accept the priority of his election and subsequent saving response of sola fide in relation to consequent good works (Eph. 2:8-10)? If so, then he nevertheless denies the sovereignty of grace, inherent in the election of Israel through Abraham, while claiming it for himself! But perhaps Sizer is indeed proposing that we do have a different gospel standard represented in the Old Testament in contrast with that of the New Testament, at least with regard to the salvation of Israel. Perish the thought, though it is simply amazing to note further how Sizer then leads us to consider the ethical demands of the prophet Ezekiel in 33:25-29 concerning Israel being guilty of bloodshed and abominable things that threaten with the prospect of desolation and exclusion from the land. As a result he comments:

On the basis of sober warnings such as this, the question may legitimately be asked whether, due to its present expansionist policies, the State of Israel might not expect another exile rather than a restoration.8

Aside from the graceless intimation that Sizer here expresses, after the manner of the prophet Habakkuk (Hab. 1:2-4), for the judgment of modern Israel, his avoidance of the subsequent glorious truth of Ezekiel 34-37 is so obviously dismissive of the ultimate triumph of God’s saving power.9 The very essential truth of these chapters is that the sovereign grace of God will ultimately bring about the regeneration of Israel. Then, “22I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel, and one king will rule over all of them. They will

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7 Stephen Sizer, Christian Zionism, p. 163.
8 Ibid., pp. 163-164.
9 Sizer only refers critically to the “futuristic” views of Christian Zionists concerning these chapters without any explanation whatsoever. Ibid., pp. 40, 154-156. At a guess he probably follows Motyer and Robertson who merely abstract the concepts of regeneration and resurrection.
no longer be two nations and no longer will be divided into two kingdoms. They will not defile themselves any more with their idols, their detestable things, and all their transgressions. I will save them from all their apostasies by which they sinned, and I will cleanse them. Then they will be My people, and I will be their God” (Ezek. 37:22-23). Here, and in many other instances, Sizer appears to long for the heavy hand of God to judge the Nation of Israel, whereas God promises eventual national salvation, not on account of obedience but rather issuing in obedience. Sizer is eager for the law of God to thrash Israel, in contradistinction to Habakkuk who nevertheless eventually cried out, “In wrath, remember mercy” (Hab. 3:2). God declares that He will eventually restore His people according to sovereign grace. Sizer’s problem here is exactly the same as that of Philip Mauro who was so soundly corrected by Samuel Wilkinson. Refer to Appendix C: God’s Dealing with Israel - Law or Grace?

At this juncture it is interesting to consider also Chapman’s own brief explanation concerning Ezekiel 36-37 which he designates as “a favorite hunting ground for students of prophecy.” In terms of twisting and turning to avoid the obvious meaning at any cost, lest his whole eschatological edifice should come tumbling down, the following explanation is simply astonishing. Instead of a literal interpretation,

[1]he alternative is to try to interpret the language of the vision and translate it into a message which was relevant to the original hearers and is relevant to anyone who wants to listen today. . . . It is hard to think that a prophet would be given a message to his people in the eighth century BC which related to events that would not take place until the twentieth or twenty-first centuries.11

It is difficult to avoid the recognition of a skeptical spirit here, especially that which lurks beneath what is “hard to think” of according to Chapman’s understanding. Yet it was Daniel who declared that “I heard but did not understand,” at which he was then told that “the words [of prophetic revelation] are secret and sealed until the time of the end” (Dan. 12:8-9). Hence Daniel, along with his contemporary audience was not expected to understand everything that

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10 Sizer further writes, “the present brutal, repressive racist policies of the State of Israel would suggest another exile on the horizon rather than a restoration.” Whose Promised Land: Israel and Biblical Prophecy, p. 6, http://www.christchurch-virgiiniawater.co.uk/articles/debate.html.

had been immediately revealed. Consequently, according to Chapman, what then was the meaning for Ezekiel’s immediate audience that would reach through the centuries for us today? He quotes approvingly from John Goldingay, Professor of Old Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary, as follows:

[W]hen Ezekiel declared that such and such a return to the land or such and such a battle was to take place, he was not announcing events scheduled for two and a half millennia after his day. He was addressing and bringing God’s word to people in his own day, warning them of calamities and promising them blessings that could come about in their day. He was not revealing a timetable or fixture list of events that had to unfold over thousands of years; he was bringing a specific message to a particular context. A fulfillment in 1948 of a prophecy given to Ezekiel to people who lived in the 580s BC is thus nonsense: it is not a fulfillment of promises and warnings that were part of God’s relationship with those people. Prophets did sometimes speak about the End of all things, but there are relatively few of these prophecies.12

So a literal understanding of Ezekiel 36-37 is “nonsense”? If this is where Chapman and Sizer’s eschatology leads them; if this is the fruit of their exegesis of Ezekiel 36-37, then we can only conclude that its taste is most unpalatable and its ingestion most unhealthy. Our God does indeed prophesy of revelatory, cataclysmic and climactic events that may be either imminent or generations away, even as the Son of God plainly indicated in Matthew 26:13. Are we talking of the same God here?

COVENANTALISM

Stephen Sizer explains that the purpose of his book,

has been to make a case for a covenantalist approach to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict by focusing on and critiquing its antithesis, namely dispensational Christian Zionism. A covenantalist recognizes, for example, that the Bible consistently teaches that God has only ever had one people throughout history—those who share the faith of Abraham, whether Jews or Gentiles—and one means of atonement, the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ in our place. Based on passages such as Romans 9-11, covenantalists recognize the Jewish people are loved by God, have fulfilled a unique role in history leading to the truth of Christianity and pray that one day all Jews

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will come to recognize Jesus as their Messiah. Covenantalism affirms that the church is Israel renewed and restored in Christ but now enlarged to embrace people of all nations. . . . Unlike Christian Zionism, covenantalism finds it unnecessary to justify or sacralize the State of Israel through tenuous biblical and theological arguments. It also distances itself from those who seek to impose a predetermined and apocalyptic agenda on the people of the Middle East.13

Actually, there is nothing distinctively “covenantal” in this definition when compared with differing eschatological opinions. Premillennial or Judeo-centric eschatology is very much “covenantal.” It would be more accurate to speak here of an “Augustinian approach to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.” Perhaps the most galling comment here is the patronizing expression that “covenantalists recognize the Jewish people are loved by God, have fulfilled a unique role in history leading to the truth of Christianity and pray that one day all Jews will come to recognize Jesus as their Messiah.” But Chrysostom and Ambrose and Augustine would say the same thing while, like Sizer, denying the modern Jew of divine individuality, nationality and territory. Most Jewish Christians who have read Sizer’s writings are certain to be put off by the whole deceptive tenor here that really is a cover for an anti-Judaic agenda. What exactly does he mean here by “Jews”? At best there is the allowance of token, temporal individuality, sans nationality and territory, that is until the “Jews” have been absorbed into the one, homogenous people of God. What is meant by the ingratiating comment that “the Jewish people are loved by God, have fulfilled a unique role in history leading to the truth of Christianity, and pray that all Jews will come to recognize Jesus as their Messiah”? It sounds as though the Jews should say, “Thank you very much Mr. Sizer, for your recognition of a past national existence that has fulfilled its usefulness.” How touching is Mr. Sizer’s prayer that Jews become saved through their Messiah to the end that they might then forfeit their national Jewishness. But “No,” protests Mr. Sizer. “They simply have to understand that they have really become spiritually fulfilled Jews,” as with any believer in Jesus. However, Mr. Sizer, who are you, a Gentile Christian, to tell a Jewish Christian he has been reconstituted, as if the church at Antioch in a similar manner lorded it over the church at Jerusalem? This is exactly what Paul warns about in Romans 11:18 when he exhorts the Gentile believers at Rome: “Do not brag that you are better than those branches. But if you [Gentile believers] do brag—

13 Sizer, Christian Zionism, pp. 261, 263.
you do not sustain the root, but the root sustains you.” To suggest “that the church is Israel renewed and restored in Christ but now enlarged to embrace people of all nations” is to fiddle with the language of the New Testament that in reality nowhere declares that the church is Israel renewed. This fictional extrapolation is in reality warmed over Augustinianism, and in the light of such an indecent eschatological legacy that Sizer and his associates so obviously embody, more fully described in Chapter Two: Israel - and centuries of Christian anti-Judaism, this is nothing to boast in!

ROMANS II

The understanding of Romans 11:26, “and in this way all Israel will be saved,” is often regarded as being fraught with controversy. This being true it is not surprising that there is vigorous debate over the three main conflicting interpretations concerning the identification of “all Israel.”

14 Though we would suggest more often than not there runs here the current of a problem that reaches much deeper than textual nuances might suggest. The doctrine of salvation also has been associated with controversy of historic proportions. However for the evangelical Christian who is convinced that the redemption of a human soul is by means of the pure gospel of free grace personally embraced through faith alone in Christ (Rom. 3:22-24), he is not in the slightest shaken in his faith when controversy and a plethora of interpretations swirl all around him. Ask Hebrew Christians concerning their prima facie understanding of the Hebrew Christian Paul in Romans 11:26, and their response will usually be common agreement that the eschatological conversion of national Israel is envisaged. On the other hand ask a Gentile Christian the same question, especially one who has assimilated the Augustinian/Catholic/Reformed doctrinal heritage of centuries in this regard, and he will probably reject that prima facie understanding commonly embraced by Hebrew Christians. The reason is that having assimilated the traditional supercessionist teaching that transfers the blessings of Israel to the Christian Church, then that body of truth is unconsciously imposed upon the text of Romans in such a way that no national future for Israel is considered a possibility.

14 “All Israel” refers either to, 1. the people of God that comprises Jew and Gentile, or 2. the remnant of Romans 11:5 that gradually accumulates over the centuries and remains a remnant, or 3. the nation of Israel that will be saved climactically, en masse, at the end of this age.
For instance, consider R. C. H. Lenski’s approach to Romans 11. As a classic conservative Lutheran scholar, he clearly wishes to avoid any suggestion that Paul has a future hope for national Israel. In his comment on Romans 11:10 he writes:

To this day ‘Jew’ is an opprobrious epithet even in our best countries. Read their long history. The sum of that history is not the fact that the Jews innocently suffered these centuries of woe; it is that they have ever brought these woes upon themselves anew. Ever they keep acting as an irritant among the nations. . . . They crucified their own Christ; to this day their hatred of the crucified stamps them more than anything else as ‘Jews’; their segregation is of their own choosing. The more they retain the character of ‘Jews,’ the more does this appear; and during the long centuries this their character made them the irritant they have been. . . . ‘forever’ (dia pantos) does not sound like a future conversion of the Jews.15

The tone here is obviously anti-Judaic and definitely not Pauline. Hence it is not so surprising when Lenski interprets “all Israel” in v. 26 as the accumulating total of the elect remnant in conjunction with vs. 5, 7. In this interpretation, which minimizes any national eschatological hope for the Jew, Lenski’s anti-Judaic conviction finds solace.

Hence perception of Romans 11, focused through historic doctrinal tradition that is supercessionist, inevitably leads to the search for an alternative understanding to that of a prima facie understanding of v. 26. Thus according to this perception it must be that the meaning of Romans 11 is somehow not what it first appears to declare. Hence it is the interpretation of “all Israel” as an anticlimactic, cumulative Jewish Christian remnant that especially fits the bill here for those who are theologically anti-Judaic. And in this regard both Chapman and Sizer in particular appear to follow a common cause, that is an understanding which tends to repudiate an eschatological national future for Israel in Romans 11. In other words, like Lenski, the understanding of “all Israel” in Romans 11:26 as a cumulative Jewish Christian remnant, by its very nature, obviates the possibility of an eschatological hope for the nation of Israel. That is, if one were to believe in this Jewish Christian remnant, that accumulates over centuries of church history, as the “all Israel” of Romans 11:26, then it would wholly exclude an eschatological hope for the salvation of national Israel. As a consequence, only a remnant would be saved and nothing more. That this is the predominant understanding with regard to the Anglican

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15 R. C. H. Lenski, Romans, p. 691.
scholars and authors heretofore mentioned will now be indicated in more detail, particularly in terms of their interactive agreement.

Now concerning Romans 11, we especially focus on Chapman and Sizer, except that Chapman indicates considerable exegetical reliance upon N. T. Wright while Sizer confesses indebtedness to Chapman, also Holwerda, Motyer, Robertson, and Venema. Hence in terms of this predominant, cumulative Jewish Christian remnant interpretation of “all Israel,” we now zero in on the exegesis of Wright in this regard since his writings appear to be have become particularly influential.16

It is not uncommon for those of Chapman’s persuasion to first declare, as he does, echoing Wright, that,

[i]t is never appropriate for Christians to think that Christianity has “taken the place of Israel”. This idea, which is sometimes described as “supercessionism” and sometimes as “Replacement Theology”, finds no support in the New Testament.17

However at this juncture the aide of Wright is mustered whereby it is asserted:

From the earliest evidence, Christians regarded themselves as a new family, directly descended from the family of Israel, but now transformed. . . . Those who now belonged to Jesus’ people were not identical with ethnic Israel, since Israel’s history had reached its intended fulfillment [emphasis added]; they claimed to be the continuation of Israel in a new situation, able to draw freely on Israel-images [emphasis added] to express their self-identity, able to read Israel’s scriptures (through the lens of Messiah and spirit) and apply them to their own life. They were thrust out by that claim, and that reading, to fulfill Israel’s vocation on behalf of the world.18

Then Chapman concludes with regard to a matter that seems to be of such pressing concern for him.

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16 This is not meant to ignore the differing minority view of Venema who appears to believe, as with Hodge, Murray and Vos, that there will be an eschatological conversion of national Israel resulting in absorption into the church, and thus nullification of any ultimate national hope for Israel.


There is no suggestion that they [Jewish and Gentile Christians] believed it was important for Jews to express their distinctive identity through having a Jewish state in the land.\textsuperscript{19}

Here we can only conclude that to avoid the stigma associated with replacement and supercessionist theology, that is of Israel being robbed of its inheritance by means of a Gentile takeover, there is a more deft employment of language. Instead of “replacement” and “supercession” we have substituted here the concept of “fulfillment” whereby an attempt is made to carry over more subtly Israel’s covenant privileges to the homogenous “people of Jesus.” Of course the end result is still the same, as Chapman is so intent on upholding, and that being Israel’s national and territorial disqualification. So in a similar vein Wright elsewhere describes “transference” in Romans 11 whereby Paul

\[\text{has systematically transferred}\] the privileges and attributes of ‘Israel’ to the Messiah and his people. It is therefore greatly preferable to take ‘all Israel’ in v. 26 as a typically Pauline polemical \textit{redefinition} \textsuperscript{20}, as in Galatians 6:16.

Concerning Paul’s supposed “redefinition” of “Israel” in Galatians 6:16, being recourse to what is today regarded as a minority interpretation, refer to \textit{Chapter Ten: Israel - and a Romans 11 Synthesis}. However by way of summary concerning Wright’s interpretation of Romans 11 here, hence that of Chapman and Sizer, the end result is that Jewish identity, nationality and territory are all absorbed into the Christian church. Yet this is said not to be “replacement theology” or “supercessionism”? Ask any Jewish Christian and see whether he is now placated. Without any doubt, what we do have here is the outworking of classic Augustinianism in modern dress. This being the case, it is not so surprising that as the centuries have witnessed resultant shameful anti-Judaism issuing from this doctrinal heritage, so the revamping of this doctrine by Chapman and Sizer is likewise productive of a new strain of virulent anti-Judaism.

Hence, in the light of the foregoing, what could Paul possibly have had in mind when in Romans 11:26 he appears so enthusiastically to assert that “all Israel will be saved”? While Wright admits that his alignment here is with a minority interpretation, he also finds a degree of refuge in Käseman’s belief that, “the text [of Romans] has a central concern

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{20} N. T. Wright, \textit{The Climax of the Covenant}, p. 25.
\end{itemize}
and a remarkable inner logic that may no longer be entirely comprehensible to us.”21 However those of a Judeo-centric persuasion find such a retreat to agnosticism as being quite unnecessary. So Wright believes that “it remains God’s will that the present ‘remnant’ of believing Jews might be enlarged by the process of ‘jealousy,’”22 that is by means of cumulative incorporation into the church as the people of God over the centuries of church history. In other words, as a remnant, a small number of Jews is progressively being saved alongside of the mass of Gentiles also being saved; in this manner “all Israel will be saved.” In his exposition, Wright makes no mention of the temporal sequence that v. 25 indicates whereby Israel’s hardening is to be “until” [achri] the full number of the Gentiles has come in,23 or the fact that denial of a temporal meaning concerning houtōs, v. 26, ignores the temporal reference in context here, as the temporal reference to houtōs in 11:4-5 well indicates, or the implications of the future rather than the present tense of “will be saved.”24 Of course with Wright there is no suggestion here that “all Israel” retains divinely recognized Jewish national and territorial identity since individual “Jews” have become absorbed into the one people of God in which new economy former ethnic distinctions have no validity. However consider the vital point that Matt. Waymeyer points out, namely that the “they” of Romans 11:28, being unbelieving national Israel, is identical to the national “them” of v. 27, which is identical to “Jacob” of v. 26, which is identical to national or “all Israel” of v. 26, which is therefore not a mere remnant.25 Overall, the most unsatisfactory aspect of this interpretation concerns the fact that a “cumulative Jewish

21 Ibid., pp. 246-247.
22 Ibid., p. 250.
23 O. Palmer Robertson admits: “Initially it might seem that the word ‘until’ (achris hou) implies that the hardening of Israel will stop after the full number of the Gentiles has been realized.” Israel of God, p. 177.
24 Refer to Chapter Ten: Israel – and a Romans 11 Synthesis, as well as Moo’s comprehensive study in which he concludes “that houtōs, while not having a temporal meaning, has a temporal reference: for the manner in which all Israel is saved involves a process that unfolds in definite stages,” Romans, p. 720. In this regard, also consider that with houtōs commencing Romans 11:5, it is with temporal reference to the past of v. 4 and “the present time” of v. 5.
Christian remnant” is so obviously anticlimactic. It stands out toward the conclusion of Romans 11, especially vs. 25-36, that Paul anticipates such an enthralling climax concerning Israel's ultimate destiny. To suggest that “all Israel” is the aggregate of a relatively small number of converted Jews gleaned from the centuries of Church history is to fly in the face of Paul’s enthusiastic hope. Obviously the Apostle anticipates that more than a remnant will be saved. The remnant is certainly the guarantee of God’s continued covenant faithfulness over the centuries, but Israel’s conversion in terms of the “full number/acceptance/full number,” vs. 12, 15, 25-26, is what He ultimately longs for. Whereas it is easy to discern from Chapman and Sizer that at all costs they desire to eliminate any prospect for national Israel and thus suggest that Paul does not really mean what he appears to say. In this regard Romans 11 remains an enormous problem from which even N. T. Wright cannot satisfactorily deliver them.

HEAVEN WITHOUT EARTH

While the question of spiritual materiality is dealt with in Chapter Eight: Israel - and the Harmony of Spiritual Materiality in greater detail, at this juncture it is appropriate to consider how both Chapman and Sizer raise the question of the carnality of Christian Zionism and its contrast with what they perceive to be the spirituality of the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Yes, there is cause for complaint here concerning those who portray eschatology in terms of sensationalist, materialistic pop-prophecy. Though it would be better, and probably more effectual, if such criticism were to come from those who evidence a genuine and heartfelt love for the Jewish people, who, while remaining enemies of the gospel are at the same time beloved by God because of His fidelity to the Abrahamic covenant (Rom. 11:28). However for Chapman and Sizer there remains such an ardent repudiation of the present nation of Israel on account of its alleged, well earned, divine New Testament nullification. Furthermore, they would claim that Christian justification for the renunciation of modern Israel’s racist militancy is especially warranted because of unbelief, secularity, extreme military defense of its borders, as well as the unjust mistreatment and displacement of many Palestinians within its domain. So for Chapman and Sizer, in the place of an earthly eschatological hope for Jerusalem within the Land of Israel is a heavenly redefinition whereby below and above, material and spiritual dichotomies are proposed. A particular cluster of
references is then appealed to, especially Galatians 4:25-26 and Hebrews 11:10, 16; 12:22-23. At stake here is the vital matter of hermeneutics, involving principles of Scripture interpretation, which Chapter 7: Israel - and Christian anti-Judaic Hermeneutics deals with. Also refer to Chapter 8: Israel: - and the Harmony of Spiritual Materiality, Chapter 9 Israel: - and the Inheritance of the Land through Abraham, and Chapter 10: Israel – and a Romans 11 Synthesis. Nevertheless, it is sufficient at this juncture to understand that for Sizer, Jerusalem, as the capital of Israel, no longer has any historic, earthly role of divine, biblical significance. Rather,

[The New Testament . . . knows nothing of a preoccupation with a nationalistic and materialistic earthly Jerusalem, let alone Zionism as it exists today. . . . Jesus explained further, saying, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.” (John 18:36). . . . Christians are told instead to inhabit Jerusalem by faith and look forward to the heavenly Jerusalem. . . . Paul takes a promise originally referring to the earthly Jerusalem [Gal. 4:26] and applies it to the Jerusalem above, which is the home of all who believe in Jesus Christ.”

In other words, it is asserted that the Christian anticipates a nebulous, ethereal, non-material, Platonic higher level of existence in the economy of heaven above. However we believe that the Lord Jesus Christ did anticipate an earthly Jerusalem of spiritual materiality which would gloriously supplant the carnal materiality of Jerusalem that He wept over. Furthermore He declared that the present Jerusalem was about to be left desolate in judgment. Yet the strong inference is that this humiliation would eventually yield to a glorious reversal of circumstances since Jesus continued: “For I tell you, you will never see Me again until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’” (Matt. 23:38-39). So in this regard Alford describes

[Th]at day, the subject of all prophecy, when your [Jerusalem’s] repentant people shall turn with true and loyal Hosannas and blessings to greet “Him whom they have pierced;” (Deut. 4:30-31; Hos. 3:4-5; Zech. 12:10; 14:8-11). Stier well remarks, “He who reads not this in the prophets, reads not yet the prophets aright.”

Hence, when Paul writes of “the Jerusalem above,” he is not indicating that the Jerusalem below has been forever discarded for some abstract,

amorphous Jerusalem, but rather that eschatological transformation of Zion whereby the holiness of heaven will have come down to regenerate the earthly Jerusalem, the result being, as John Milton describes it, a time when,

Earth be chang’d to Heav’n, and Heav’n to Earth, 
One Kingdom, Joy and Union without end.28

Then will have come to pass “the regeneration [palingenesia] when the Son of Man will sit in His glorious throne” (Matt. 19:28; cf. Acts 3:21), which we believe to be that place, that new Jerusalem, from where Jesus Christ will reign with heavenly glory upon earth (Jer. 3:17; Ezek. 43:7; Zech. 6:12-13).

UNITY WITHOUT DIVERSITY

One of the most fundamental errors of Chapman and Sizer concerns an oft-repeated logical fallacy, namely that because it is God’s design that the redeemed of all ages become one in Christ Jesus, then this excludes the possibility of any diversity happily existing within this unity. While the matter concerning the land of Israel is dealt with in more detail in Chapter Nine: Israel – and the Inheritance of the Land through Abraham, it is notable that both Chapman and Sizer suggest that it is the paradise of Eden that leads to the promised land flowing with milk and honey and ultimately the whole world as inherited by Abraham (Rom. 4:13). It seems that this concept is derived from O. Palmer Robertson who references Chris Wright, although N. T. Wright makes the same point and expresses indebtedness to W. D. Davies.29 Whatever the source of this concept, the argument runs that because redemption in Christ eventually encompasses the whole earth as the new promised land, so to speak, the Old Testament boundaries of the land of Israel have become inconsequential. In other words, a new, transcendent unity has eliminated the possibility of diversity incorporating Israel and the Gentile nations. So Chapman quotes Wright as follows:

He [Jesus] had not come to rehabilitate the symbol of the holy land, but to subsume it within a different fulfillment of the kingdom, which would embrace the whole creation. . . . Jesus spent his whole ministry redefining what the kingdom meant. He refused to give up the symbolic language of

28 John Milton, Paradise Lost, vii, 190-191.
the kingdom, but filled it with such new content that . . . he powerfully subverted Jewish expectations.30

Sizer makes the same point, except that in caustically denouncing the literal hermeneutic of Christian Zionism which, it is alleged, “provides a theological endorsement for racial segregation, apartheid and war [within the contemporary State of Israel],” at the same time he invokes Palmer Robertson to describe a new covenant perspective.

In the process of redemptive history, a dramatic movement has been made from type to reality, from shadow to substance. The land which once was the specific locale of God’s redemptive working served well within the old covenant as a picture of Paradise lost and promised. Now, however, in the era of new-covenant fulfillment, the land has been expanded to encompass the cosmos. . . . In this age of fulfillment, therefore, a retrogression to the limited forms of the old covenant must be neither expected or promoted. Reality must not give way to shadow.31

In response, the fundamental error of identifying the promised land with the bilateral Mosaic covenant rather than the unilateral Abrahamic covenant is once again most prominent, though dealt with in more detail in Chapter Nine: Israel – and the Inheritance of the Land through Abraham. Adding to the confusion here is the ignoring of the fact that the new covenant was directly made with “the house of Israel and with the house of Judah” (Jer. 31:31-34), and only indirectly with the church. Though of course Romans 11 makes it clear that the Gentiles, as wild olive branches, are grafted into the Abrahamic natural olive tree so that they might become partakers of new covenant blessings. Furthermore, in Chapman, Wright, Sizer and Robertson wrongly identifying the land with the shadowy nature of the Mosaic covenant, they also ignore the fact that Jeremiah 31, where the new covenant supercedes the old, is further described in Jeremiah 32:40-41, 44. Here it is “an everlasting covenant” including God’s promise that He “will plant them [Israel] faithfully in this land with all My mind and heart, . . . because I will restore their fortunes.” Plainly the land is part of the inheritance of the new covenant (cf. Ezek. 36:24-28; 37:1-14).

However, to return to the original point of disagreement, let us happily assert our agreement with the glorious truth that awaits all of the people of God, namely the universal, sole reign of His Son over this universe when, “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord’s glory, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14; cf. Isa. 11:9; Zech. 14:9). This being so, then how is it necessary that this heavenly economy upon earth will be strictly and indistinguishably homogenous? Could angels then endure such a distinct existence? If there is economic and personal diversity within the triunity of the one true and living God, and His church manifests the diversity of giftedness within that one body, then how is it not to be expected, with the personal, distinguishable presence of Moses, Elijah, David, and Paul etc., that there will also be an ethnic, national and territorial diversity within the perfect ecumenicity of that kingdom? And this being so, then how will it faintly be inconsistent with the gospel when the nation of redeemed Israel will distinctively reign with the redeemed gentile nations while manifesting a diversity within the perfect unity of the kingdom of Christ?

**ANTI-JUDAIC TONE**

All of the foregoing considered, with regard to noticeable eschatological interdependence amongst many Anglican authors, yet it must also be seen to subsume under a distinctive tone that perhaps, above all else, betrays a fundamental weakness, that is an opposing attitude or anti-Judaic, even envious spirit. Call it tone, mood, or literary manner, nevertheless it is as unmistakable as a pervasive sense of sharp disagreement and tension that disrupts a family relationship. And in this instance, rather than there being a tolerant and kindly attitude toward the Jewish people, and especially the modern Nation of Israel in particular, there is evident animosity and resentment which these same Jewish people quickly sense. And why not, for at stake is their very distinctive Jewish existence which, they are told, has been forever forfeited! Consider Steve Motyer’s illustration of how he perceives Christian understanding of the Old Testament radically transcending that of orthodox Judaism. “It’s more like a group of aliens meeting a Rolls Royce for the first time, when previously all they have seen is the Reader’s Digest Guide to Car Maintenance.”

words, we have here pseudo Marcionism whereby the whole framework of Judaism is belittled and done away with, not simply the Old Covenant. Of course on the one hand there is sufferance, that is an artificial, grudging tokenism of the worst kind that tolerates a Jewish Christian being called “Jewish,” at least in a nominal social sense, even though his ultimate future will be the total loss of his Jewishness. On the other hand the Jewish Christian’s divine nationality and territory are vehemently denied. Consequently, whereas racial anti-Judaism in the twentieth century culminated in a process of physical elimination, the extermination of Jews, theological anti-Judaism in the twenty-first century culminates in identity elimination, the extermination of Jewishness in the name of Jesus the Jew!

With this in mind we again consider both Chapman and Sizer, principally because they have themselves staked out prominent positions in their intentional campaigning against “Christian Zionism” as they broadly nominate it. To begin with it is obvious that in sympathizing with the cause of Palestinian Christians, Palestinian Arabs and Moslem Arabs overall, Chapman takes issue with Jewish Christians and their supporters, and especially as enthusiastically represented in America. Hence we have already catalogued on page 106 explicit, distasteful expressions of his aversion to modern Israel. The sour aura is simply unmistakable, and we seriously question whether it finds the remotest reflection in the apostolic mood concerning the Jew, but especially that of Paul. Refer to Chapter Eleven: Israel - as God’s Beloved Enemy, and Chapter Twelve: Israel - in Need of the Prodigal Gentiles’ Love.

Perhaps even more vociferous in this regard is Sizer who has also identified with the cause of Palestinian Christians, Palestinian Arabs and Moslem Arabs overall. In so doing his tilt is heavily against biblical restorationism while, like Chapman, he is happy to embrace the extremely critical, leftist/liberal, anti-Judaic views of Noam Chomsky, Norman Finkelstein, and Grace Halsall, et al. Further, although identifying with the evangelical wing of the Church of England, nevertheless he happily associates as well with the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) and its opposition to the modern State of Israel. The official web site of MECC explains that:

The Middle East Council of Churches (M.E.C.C.) is a fellowship of churches relating itself to the main stream of the modern ecumenical
movement, the same which gave birth to the World Council and other regional ecumenical councils throughout the world.\(^{33}\)

Consequently Sizer also invokes the declaration of MECC that Christian Zionism represents “a heretical interpretation of Scripture,”\(^{34}\) while further bolstering his tirade by claiming the agreement of John Stott that it is “biblically anathema.”\(^{35}\) Hence we are told that the Christian Zionist provides a theological endorsement for racial segregation, apartheid and war [on the part of modern Israel]. This is diametrically opposed to the inclusive theology of justice, peace and reconciliation which lie at the heart of the new covenant. . . . [T]he present brutal, repressive and racist policies of the State of Israel would suggest exile on the horizon rather than a restoration. . . . Israel is a materialistic society, an apartheid state practicing repressive and dehumanizing measures against the Palestinians in flagrant disregard of the United Nations and UN declaration of human rights.\(^{36}\)

Here also, not only is tone revealing but also language that resonates with the verbal mantras of liberation theology and baptized Marxism, as with the charges here of “[Israel’s brutal, repressive] racial segregation, apartheid and war [that] . . . is diametrically opposed to the inclusive theology of justice, peace and reconciliation.” But furthermore, when an approach to the oracles of God, that are so thoroughly Jewish and uphold a Jewish Savior, yet so demeans the Jewish people and their nation, however unbelieving Israel may presently be, there has got to be something fundamentally wrong with the underlying eschatology. In no way do we excuse aspects of Christian Zionism that may at times express prophetic carnality. Nor do we necessarily excuse the errors of National Israel after the flesh, for, enemies though they presently be in Christ, we do love them for the sake of the fathers, and thus the land that remains their inheritance. Hence in this pro-Judaic scenario there remains, openly and

\(^{33}\) Internet sourced; http://www.mecchurches.org.

\(^{34}\) Sizer, *Christian Zionism*, pp. 22, 259.

\(^{35}\) Ibid., pp. 22, 261, referencing Donald Wagner. In this regard, we would much prefer the eschatology of Bishop J. C. Ryle who, in being in firm disagreement with Stott, yet expresses himself with far more grace.

unashamedly confessed, affectionate respect for the Jew, being absent in the likes of Chapman and Sizer, after the manner that Paul encourages in Romans 9:1-5. And the reason for this is the fundamental underpinning of God’s eschatological hope for ethnic, national and territorial Israel as delineated in the Old and New Testaments. The reality is that a supercessionist theology is productive of an offensive demeanor with regard to the Jews, that is anti-Judaism, and church history is the terrible, unavoidable proof that this is so. We grant that Chapman does attempt to deal with the matter of anti-Judaism, though to be frank it is quite inadequate in its selectivity and the shallowness of its assessment in nominal terms. However where he fails most is at the root of the matter, for while referencing the anti-Judaism of Chrysostom, Augustine, Aquinas and Luther, he completely neglects to deal with the underlying doctrinal cause. Should he have done so he would have been forced to see a reflection of the essence of his own supercessionist views.

However there is also another area of “tone” that needs to be considered that again Chapman well represents. It concerns his wrestling with the ancient conquest of the land of Canaan under Joshua. Here the tone is one of necessary accommodation, even with regard to the moral purposes of God. Hence in all of this section one senses a relentless attempt to nullify modern Israel’s “illicit” present possession of the land while attempting to confront ancient Israel’s questionable militant capture of the land. Hence the biblical account is skeptically addressed as follows.

Is it conceivable that a God of love could actually have ordered the Israelites to engage in what we today would call “ethnic cleansing”? . . . One way of resolving the problem is to see these stories simply as a Jewish interpretation of their history. Since they believed that they were “the chosen people” who enjoyed a special relationship with God, they wrote their history in such a way as to justify their ideas about their special status and their superiority over other people. The Old Testament should therefore be seen as a very ethnocentric interpretation of Israelite history.

Chapman makes not the slightest attempt to repudiate this warped regard for the Old Testament record in terms of its divinely inspired character. These “stories” as “Jewish [very ethnocentric] interpretation” which “Israel believed” is avoidance of the cleansing of

38 Ibid., p. 120.
Canaan being plainly attributed to explicit divine mandate in Scripture. Instead Chapman retreats to cultural, subjective accommodation, that is the employment of a mistaken view, it would seem, of progressive revelation, hermeneutics, indeed inspiration. However, sadly this assessment does not allow us to stop at a misuse of interpretive method, and go no further. Rather we also learn here of the employment of the misuse of theological method by means of which the disqualification of the modern State of Israel is accomplished. This appears to be Chapman’s overriding concern, and Scripture is not allowed to get in the way. Thus we read:

No doubt we would all want to say that by the standards of today many of the actions of Joshua and the Children of Israel in the conquest of the land were evil and should never be held up as an example for people to follow today. . . . Anyone, therefore, who sees Christ as the fullest possible revelation of what God is like and of the kind of moral standards that God sets for human beings, will see many of the actions of Joshua as very wrong and abhorrent. But if, as the biblical account suggests, God was involved in the conquest of the land under Joshua, it was because he had to work within a particular cultural and religious context, revealing gradually as much new truth as people were able to grasp. Given the level of culture and religion at the time, God’s revelation of a new way had to be gradual. He had to work within a culture that practiced ethnic cleansing as something that was acceptable, in order ultimately to change the culture from within by exposing this evil in its true light and showing the human race a better way.39

It is not difficult to sense some fancy theological footwork going on here which has a specific, controlling agenda in mind, that is condemnation of the present Jewish occupation of Israel. To do this, somehow Joshua’s campaigns of “ethnic cleansing” must be accommodated, as if God turns a blind cultural eye upon this “shameful but vital stage, one that was not to be repeated, and need never be repeated.”40 However, the fallacy of this reasoning is exposed when we are then told:

So those who see Jesus as the climax of God’s revelation to the human race can never imagine him acting in the way that Joshua did. It is inconceivable

39 Ibid., pp. 121, 124-125.
40 Ibid., p. 125.
that Jesus would have taken up weapons to attack the Romans in the way that Joshua attacked the Canaanites.\footnote{Ibid.}

Oh really? Of course Jesus made it plain that His first coming was to save and not judge (John 12:47). Even then His wrath occasionally erupted (Matt. 21:12-13; 23:1-33). But this in no way alters the fact that at His second coming He will indeed “judge the world in righteousness” (Acts 17:31), that is with “flaming fire dealing out retribution to those who do not know God” (II Thess. 1:7-8), at which time men and women will call for “the rocks to fall on them and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb” (Rev. 6:16). For this reason, progress of revelation does not involve divine advance from moral tolerance of immoral ethnic cleansing to its moral condemnation, otherwise God’s holy consistency is compromised. Rather progress of revelation does lead us from the moral rightness of Joshua’s campaigns according to divine mandate in an earthly sphere to the moral rightness of Jesus Christ’s campaign against sin in the human soul by means of justification and judgment.

In conclusion, the anti-Judaic tone here, particularly in the writings of Chapman and Sizer, betrays a deep-seated drive to nullify, at all costs, any biblical validity claimed for the Jew and the modern State of Israel. Should this theological end be accomplished, then the cause of the Palestinians and Arabs could be pursued on a strictly secular, egalitarian basis due to the elimination of supposed biblical claims. However we strenuously maintain that God, according to the good pleasure of His will, continues to regard Israel after the flesh with favor according to elective grace that streams through His distinctive covenantal regard for the Jews as “beloved enemies” (Rom. 11:28). From a Christian perspective, election presupposes divine, particular saving purpose directed toward sinful individuals (Rom. 5:8). However we maintain that God’s elective regard for Israel rests upon the same essential gracious basis. Hence one wonders how Chapman and Sizer cope with the priority that Paul continuously gave to the Jew throughout his ministry to the Gentiles (Rom. 1:16; 2:9-10; cf. Chapter 10: Israel - and a Romans 11 Synthesis), though no explanation is given. Was this divine racism? Of course such a perspective is in no way intended to justify every military initiative of the State of Israel any more than the indiscriminate terrorism of the Arab/Palestinian intifada. Nevertheless, we do believe that the loving Pauline tone of

\footnote{Ibid.}
distinctive regard for the Jew, even in unbelief, finds its antithesis in
the anti-Judaic tone of Chapman and Sizer which so obviously
conflicts with the Apostle’s indefatigable interest.

Furthermore, Chapman and Sizer plainly regard with disfavor the
considerable role that Britain and America have played in the
formation, maintenance and prosperity of the State of Israel. Seeming
to have more the spirit of Sanballat and Tobiah, they are obviously
displeased that anyone should “seek the welfare of the Sons of Israel”
(Neh. 2:10). Again the biased tone here is unmistakable. Chapman and
Sizer appear to wish that modern Israel had never been established
because it was a wholly carnal endeavor to begin with without any
biblical justification. Hence it is not surprising to find intimations of
their desire that this development should be reversed. There is constant
niggling against the present support that America supplies. Yet should
this nullification scenario prevail, who can tell what horror might then
result in terms of Arab attempts at the fulfillment of their stated goal,
namely the ethnic cleansing of Palestine. That Sizer has such a hope
lurking at the back of his mind is evident when he suggests the
possibility of “another exile on the horizon rather than a restoration.”

Is this wishful thinking? The tone here certainly suggests preference
for the severe condemnation of the law to fall upon Israel, quite apart
from any prospect of grace; on the other hand grace certainly ought to
be showered upon the Palestinians by means of substantial land
reclamation.

Overall, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Chapman and Sizer
have an intractable, theological aversion to modern Judaism and the
State of Israel. Whether there is consideration of the land, Jerusalem, or
even the Old Testament, at best we have here a legacy of shadows that,
while remaining memorable, is yet hardly of substantial importance.
What counts is the absorption, indeed reformation of these figures and
patterns into the reality of Jesus Christ. Hence there is a relentless
effort to nullify Jewish identity, nationality and territory, except where
these terms are reinterpreted according to a New Testament and
ecclesiological hermeneutic. However, notwithstanding a subtle
appropriation of Jewish terminology, a token portrayal of interest in
Jews as individuals, and the beguiling claim of being christocentric, we
reemphasize the belief that this whole approach is nothing more than a

revision of historic Augustinian eschatology. As such, we also believe it is not only biblically and theologically flawed but also ethically wanting as a consequence. In particular, we believe that the focus on being exclusively christocentric in fact necessitates a dual rather than a singular hermeneutic. That is, first there is the need of interpreting the Christ of the New Testament by means of a literal, grammatical, historical, contextual hermeneutic; then this derived New Testament interpretation becomes a second hermeneutic that is foisted upon the Old Testament. The result is, as Willem VanGemeren perceptively states,

the “new” Reformed hermeneutic is no longer “the Old is in the New revealed and the New is in the Old concealed,” but rather “the Old is by the New restricted and the New is on the Old inflicted.”

Next we look at the issue of Zionism in greater detail, both historically and with regard to a Christian perspective. Then in Chapter Six and Chapter Seven we will concentrate on this vital matter of hermeneutics as it relates to the interpretation of the Old Testament in the light of the New Testament, but especially with regard to Israel.

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Chapter Five

ISRAEL – and Christian encounter with Zionism

The preceding indications of Christian anti-Judaism, as a centuries old Augustinian thrust that continues to manifest itself in contemporary supercessionist theology, at the same time have resulted in an almost axiomatic association. It is that denigration of modern Judaism, but especially its national and territorial Zionist aspirations, go hand in hand with sympathy for the cause of the Arab states, being predominantly Moslem, and particularly a national Palestinian agenda. One only has to read Naim Ateek, Colin Chapman, Kenneth Cragg, Stephen Sizer, Gary Burge and Donald Wagner, and this result becomes abundantly evident. It is not simply that their theology is Augustinian whereby the Christian Church is the new spiritual Israel, and it is decidedly that, but rather they plainly side with and regularly conference with both Christian and Moslem Palestinians while at the same time incessantly censuring modern Israel at every hand. All are guilty of a nominal, minimalist regard for Israel, based more upon pragmatic, status quo social standards rather than abiding biblical principles. For instance there will be acceptance of the need for Israel to have a national home somewhere, perhaps according to the 1948 borders established by the United Nations. However this is merely a concession to the existing state of affairs that usually abides more passionately with Arab and Moslem demands that ultimately have in mind the total elimination of National Israel from Palestine.

A classic example of the forgoing is the 5th International Sabeel Conference held in Jerusalem, 2004, directed by Naim Ateek, the

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1 In this volume there has been minimal reference made to Donald E. Wagner, professor of religion and Middle Eastern studies at North Park University in Chicago, also director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. However his supercessionist, anti-Judaic bent is plainly evident, especially in his Anxious for Armageddon and Dying in the Land of Promise: Palestine and Palestinian Christianity from Pentecost to 2000. Not surprisingly, Stephen Sizer confesses his indebtedness to Wagner for inspiration in Christian Zionism, p. 14,
theme being “Challenging Christian Zionism: Theology, Politics, and the Palestine-Israel Conflict.” The featured speaker was Stephen Sizer while other presenters included Donald Wagner and Gary Burge. Terrorist Yasser Arafat also made an appearance! The whole aura here was incessantly anti-Judaic and pro-palestinian, with the official Sabeel Conference Statement declaring:

Christian Zionism is a modern theological and political movement that embraces the most extreme ideological positions of Zionism, thereby becoming detrimental to a just peace within Palestine and Israel. The Christian Zionist program provides a worldview where the Gospel is identified with the ideology of empire, colonialism, and militarism. In its extreme form, it places an emphasis on apocalyptic events leading to the end of history rather than living Christ’s love and justice today. We also repudiate the more insidious form of Christian Zionism pervasive in the mainline churches that remains silent in the face of the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Therefore, we categorically reject Christian Zionist doctrines as a false teaching that undermines the biblical message of love, mercy, and justice.2

Not unrelated to his attitude, by way of Arab association, is the comment of David Shipler:

For the Arabs, the word “Zionism” has an ugly connotation that stirs up deep revulsion and dread, with overtones as heavy as those that “communism” carries for many Americans. “‘Zionist,’ in Arabic is like ‘Nazi,’ one Arab explained. “Since I was a child I have heard that the word Zionist is the worst. I didn’t understand the meaning of it, I just thought Zionist was like criminal, thief, killer.3

Nevertheless “Zion” remains a noble biblical term, especially since: “The LORD of hosts says this: I am extremely jealous for Zion; I am jealous for her with great wrath.” (Zech. 8:2). But further: “The Liberator will come from Zion; He will turn away godlessness from Jacob” (Rom. 11:26). So what is this “Zionism” as a historic development that is especially derided in its Christian manifestation?

THE FOUNDATION OF ZIONISM

Upon David becoming king over all Israel, we are told that: “The king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites [Caananites]

3 David K. Shipler, Arab and Jew, p. 70.
who had inhabited the land. . . . Yet David did capture the stronghold of Zion, the city of David” (II Sam. 5:6-7). More specifically, it was a citadel on the south-eastern hill within Jerusalem (Ps. 2:6), being most suitable for fortified defense against enemies. Here David’s palace was also built. Supremely it was “the city of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel” (Isa. 60:14). Later the title Zion incorporated the adjoining Temple region (Ps. 20:2), then Jerusalem overall (Isa. 10:12). This Zion then became acknowledged as the capital of the Land of Israel ( Isa. 66:8; Joel 2:18, 21; Zech. 2:10-12). Even after the War of Independence in 1948, for nineteen years Arab Jordan did not allow Jews from Israel to have access to the Old City of Jerusalem. However, prior to the Six-Day War of 1967 when Israel eventually captured the Old City of Jerusalem, it had not been freely inhabited by the Jews since the Maccabean/Hasmonean revolt against the Selucids. There came about at that time, over 2,100 years ago, the cleansing and rededication of the Temple in 164 B.C., after which Jerusalem was captured by Pompey of Rome in 63 B.C. Subsequently the Land of Israel continued to be heavily populated by Jews until the destructions of Jerusalem in 70 AD. by Titus and in 135 A.D. by Emperor Hadrian. Following the resultant biblically prophesied dispersal in judgment (Lev. 26:32-33; Deut. 4:27-28; 28:64-68; Ezek. 22:15; 36:18-20; Zech. 7:14; Luke 21:24), the perennial prayer of the Jews throughout subsequent centuries, and in whatever scattered and downtrodden circumstances they found themselves in, was the prayer at the conclusion of the Passover seder, “Next year in Jerusalem.” Hence this heartfelt religious longing became embodied in the expression “Zionism,” that is the collective Jewish passion for free reestablishment in the Land of Israel as a Jewish nation. Not surprisingly, when the Old City of Jerusalem was recaptured during the Six-Day War in 1967, at the wailing wall Rabbi Goren blew his shofar or ram’s horn trumpet “in Zion” (cf. Jer. 4:5; Joel 2:1, 15) and proclaimed, “I, General Shlomo Goren, chief rabbi of the Israel Defense Forces, have come to this place never to leave it again.”

The Diaspora of Israel

While the scattering of the Jews commenced with their exile from the northern and southern divisions of Israel during the 6th and 8th centuries B.C., yet a remnant left behind in the Land was later joined with the

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4 Michael B. Oren, Six Days of War, p. 246.
relatively small contingent of post-exilic returnees. Following the brief Hasmonean recovery, further stimulus to flee came with the capture of Jerusalem under Pompey, 63 B.C. Even so it was not till the harsh destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, 70 A.D. and Hadrian, 135 A.D. that greater dispersal resulted. Nevertheless here also a remnant remained in the Land, especially in the north, that continued to ebb and flow throughout subsequent centuries.

The Remnant of Israel

While wholly evacuated from Jerusalem, Jews retreated westward to Jaffa, also northward to Galilee as well as many rural villages within Israel, the surprising result being the heightening of literary development and consolidation, including eventual compilation of the Mishnah leading to completion of the Talmud, as well as the strengthening of Synagogue life. In spite of such intense devastation, even Jerusalem eventually saw the return of Jews to its fold, though with recurring episodes of humiliation. However, love for Zion never failed, at home or abroad. Hence in spite of great suffering, there were always returnees who built up the periodically diminishing remnant.

THE EXILE OF ZIONISM

The scattering of Jews following 135 A.D.

Although Emperor Hadrian renamed Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina and the Land of Israel as Syria Palestina, or Palestine, in 135 A.D., we will, in most instances continue to use the more historic “Land of Israel,” and related Hebrew titles. The reason here is more than a matter of ancient semantics. It stems from the fact that, contrary to widespread misunderstanding, as Bernard Lewis explains,

"[f]rom the end of the Jewish state in antiquity to the beginning of British rule, the area now designated by the name Palestine was not a country and had no frontiers, only administrative boundaries; it was a group of provincial subdivisions, by no means always the same, within a larger entity.

With the British conquest in 1917-18 and the subsequent establishment of a mandated territory in the conquered areas, Palestine became the official name of a definite territory for the first time since the Middle Ages. To begin with, this designation was acceptable neither to Jews nor to Arabs. From the Jewish point of view . . . the very associations … were hateful . . . . For Arabs, . . . there was no such thing as a country called Palestine. The
region which the British called Palestine was merely a separated part of a larger whole. For a long time organized and articulate Arab political opinion was virtually unanimous at this point.5

James Parkes makes the same point even more comprehensively:

During all this period of two thousand years, Palestine was not even a name on the political map of the world. It was a portion of a larger province, whether Roman, Byzantine, Arab or Turkish; and its people were never conscious of themselves as a national unit, nor did they ever attempt, as they had done in early and later Israelite days, to form an independent kingdom. During the long period of Islamic rule, with its kaleidoscopic changes of dynasty, no claimant to the throne of the caliphs, or even to a separate identity, ever emerged from the Palestinian population. It was the alternative prey of dynasties ruling from Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo or Istanbul. Only in the twentieth century has it resumed a separate identity, and that by the will of outsiders rather than of the majority of its own population; and the result has been conflict, uncertainty and one of the most delicate and difficult problems of modern international politics.6

Furthermore, granted that successive possession of the Land of Israel was by Roman, Byzantium, Islam, Crusader, Mamluk, Ottoman, and British invasion, this in no way invalidated the covenanted bestowal of this territory upon the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Nevertheless, the scattered people of Israel not only suffered this judgment from God as promised, but also endured such discipline throughout the four corners of the earth.

Jerusalem under Roman dominion, 135 A.D. – 330 A.D.

The savage suppression of nationalism by Rome nevertheless brought a measure of stability, even Herodian glory. Then Jewish born Christianity expanded in parallel with increasing Christian anti-

5 Bernard Lewis, “The Palestinians and the PLO,” Commentary, January, 1975, p. 32-33. Stephen Sizer is either evasive or ignorant of the essential truth here and, without a shred of evidence to the contrary, castigates Dave Hunt who similarly, though more bluntly, states, “There never was a Palestinian people, nation, language, culture, or religion. The claim of descent from a Palestinian people who lived for thousands of years in a land called Palestine is a hoax.” Christian Zionism, pp. 244-245.

6 James Parkes, A History of Palestine from 135 A.D. to Modern Times, p. 13. Indebtedness to this work concerning much that follows is readily acknowledged.
Judaism and Gentile dominance; consequently, to begin with, it fled Jerusalem because of militant Jewish opposition (Acts 8:1). Nevertheless its flourishing influence did much to purge Palestine gradually of imposed Roman paganism. However the growing rift with Judaism became more established until a dominant Gentile church existed in Jerusalem. Notwithstanding the diminished Jewish population, two Roman emperors looked more favorably toward Judaism and Christianity during the Severan Dynasty of 193-235 A.D. Then Emperor Constantine’s embrace of Christianity in 312 A.D. resulted in the construction of churches in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, the region of Hebron, and on the Mount of Olives. At the same time Jews continued to inhabit the Land of Israel, and periodically revolt for the cause of Zion, against continuing iron-fisted imperialism. Nevertheless there was an easing by Rome of some former strictures, such as concerning formerly banned circumcision.7

Jerusalem under Byzantium dominion, 330 A.D. – 640 A.D.

When Constantine is reputed to have seen a vision of a cross in the sky outside the walls of Rome just prior to its conquest in 312 A.D., it included the inscription, “In this [cross], conquer!” After his founding of Constantinople in 330 A.D. as the “New Rome,” it constituted the capital of the Byzantium Empire and therefore became the controlling center of Christianity. Consequently the Eastern Roman Empire administered Palestine until the Arab conquest. While Christian prosperity enhanced Jerusalem, there were no Jewish residents there until the Roman Empress Eudocia (394-460 A.D.) granted permission. Then throughout the Roman Empire the patriarchal House of Hillel was accepted as the supreme authority for the Jewish community. While Jerome of Bethlehem writes of a few Christians and a predominance of Jews, yet by the seventh century the Jewish population of Palestine had dwindled to under 250,000. This decline was paralleled by the intolerance of Judaism, including Samaritans, by Christianity, as evidenced by the legal prohibition of the building of synagogues. The brief Persian invasion of Palestine (611-614 A.D.) involving the massacre of Christians, perhaps aided by Jews in the north having the hope of greater autonomy, resulted however in a short-lived reign. Desolation and ruin became widespread throughout

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the Land. Rome, under Heraclius, then recaptured Palestine in 629 A.D., though now the Jews themselves experienced a bloody massacre. Yet at this very same time, Muhammed conquered Mecca. Then in 640 A.D. he would also capture Caesarea and end Byzantine rule.8

Jerusalem under Islamic dominion, 640 A.D. – 1099 A.D.

Following the conquest of Persia, Syria and Egypt, the Islamist Arabian pall eventually covered all of the Middle East. In Palestine the Christian majority and Jewish minority endured subjection as dhimis whereby they paid heavy taxes, retained their churches and synagogues, but were not allowed to erect new buildings. Their social presence was required to appear subdued, and of course proselytizing was forbidden. In 691 A.D. the Aksa Mosque was built on the Temple area in Jerusalem, becoming the third most holy shrine in Islam. Compared with earlier Eastern Orthodox and Roman oppression, the Jews, though small in numbers, indicated preference for their Arab overlords.

Nevertheless, we have evidence that Jews lived in all parts of the country and on both sides of the Jordan, and that they dwelt in both the towns and villages, practicing both agriculture and various handicrafts. During the seventh and eighth centuries Tiberias continued to be their center; but some Jews began to return to Jerusalem shortly after the Moslem conquest in spite of the fact that in the original negotiations for the surrender of the city, the [Eastern Orthodox] Christians had wished to insist that no Jews should be admitted to it. At first Jews lived in the southern quarter near the Wailing Wall. . . . At some period they purchased the slopes of the Mount of Olives facing the Temple, and there used to be a considerable pilgrimage to this spot at the chief festivals, especially at the Feast of Tabernacles.9

Surely at those times, before the vista of Zion and the Temple Mount, there was a great lament: “There we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. . . . If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget her skill. May my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy” (Ps. 137:1, 5-6). Nevertheless, vigorous spiritual life was productive of the completion of the Jerusalem Talmud as well as the Hebrew Massoretic text of the Old Testament that remains the standard for today.

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9 Ibid., pp. 72-73.
Moslem Arab rule was then from Damascus, nevertheless sectarian conflict, such as between the Shiites and Sunnis, resulted in civil war and instability within Palestine.

It was now but a remote and unimportant province; and though strong rulers might suppress insurrection, yet tribal disorders and Bedouin raids might at any time make life insecure for Muslims as well as Jews and Christians.¹⁰

Now earlier toleration for Moslem rule began to wane. Synagogues and Christian churches were periodically destroyed. Nevertheless an annual mercantile fair still survived in Jerusalem from Byzantine times. At the end of the tenth century, the Fatmid dynasty became the new conqueror of Palestine as well as Syria, it tracing its descent from the daughter of Mohammad. A period of toleration was followed by further destruction of synagogues and churches, even the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which especially aroused animosity in Europe and thus triggered the first crusade. Yet again peace followed, then unrest and the challenge of Turkish invaders. Even Jewish sectarianism became more vigorous with the Babylonian Talmud now supplanting the Jerusalem Talmud. Even so the whole population was beginning to speak Arabic, and certainly a majority residing in Palestine was now Muslim.

Jerusalem under Crusader dominion, 1099 A.D. – 1187 A.D.

The call to crusade for the cause of the Holy Land was instigated by the papacy in response to the Byzantine emperor facing the threat of advancing Seljuk Turks; also there was a desire for more open access by Christians to Palestine. The first crusade captured Jerusalem in 1099 A.D. at which most of the Muslims and Jews in Jerusalem were slaughtered. As a result a medieval structure was imposed including military orders of knights, impressive castles, and prosperous tourism. But neither the Muslims nor the Jews, the representation of the later having already been weakened, were allowed to reside in Jerusalem. Nevertheless both entities thrived in the surrounding regions. However,

[w]hen a brilliant soldier of Kurdish origin, Salah ed-Din (Saladin), came to rule over both Syria and Egypt, the end of the European interlude was inevitable. . . . For the Jews a return or migration to Europe offered no

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 75.
attraction. They stayed, to share and suffer from the disorder which followed the disappearance of the crusader’s feudalism.\textsuperscript{11}

Although the anti-Semitic King Richard I came on a third crusade to rescue the situation, while being within sight of Jerusalem his weakened position led to a truce with Saladin after which he then retreated homeward to England.

Jerusalem under Mamluk dominion, 1187 A.D. -1453 A.D.

A Mamluk was a slave soldier, often a Turk, who converted to Islam and served the the Sunni Ayyubid dynasty of Saladin. They eventually sacked Jerusalem massacring most of the Christians and looting the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. There followed a line of Mamluk sultans that captured the crusader sea ports and the knight’s castles. An attempted Cypriot crusade further ravaged the coast of Syria and Palestine. In revenge the Mamluks closed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for five years. European trade sanctions were ventured but failed. Hence the Land presents a sad picture of decline. Jerusalem became un-walled, though both the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aksa Mosque were adorned and preserved. But Christian churches, along with synagogues, fell into decay or were confiscated. Moslem opposition became more fanatical, leading to imprisonment and torture. Franciscan settlement in Palestine, involving suffering and heroism, led to some gains including land on Mount Zion and the room where the Last Supper of Jesus was reputed to have been held. Their accumulating wealth gained some security through bribery. The Jews endeavored to buy the site of David’s tomb which led to loss for the Franciscans. The Eastern churches also suffered, though heavy taxation impoverished most Christians, as well as the Jews. Though the wealthy amongst the Dispersion became more devoted to support of their brethren in Zion. Some 300 Jewish immigrants settled in Acre on the coast in 1211 A.D.. Then the aged scholar Nachmanides fled Spain and settled in Jerusalem where he revived synagogue life. Many more Jews came from Spain following the persecution of 1391. A further scholar even respected by the Muslims, Obadiah de Bertinoro, arrived in 1488, established a significant rabbinical college in Jerusalem, and testified to tolerable Arab treatment with regard to the Jews. Nevertheless, northern and western areas suffered impoverishment;

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., p. 99.
particularly galling was the Moslem imposition of their shrines upon Jewish Old Testament sites. Hence,

[...] this penetration of Islam into what had previously been Jewish or Christian sites had this justification—or at least explanation: that it is during the Mamluk period that it first becomes possible to speak of the Land as a primarily Muslim country. During the first century and a half of the Arab period the Christian and Jewish communities certainly constituted the majority of the population. . . . But during the Mamluk centuries both Jewish and Christian communities suffered tremendous losses through conditions which made life intolerable. . . . [T]here is nothing improbable in the estimate that the two and a half centuries of their [Mamluk] power cost the country two thirds of its population.12

Jerusalem under Turkish Ottoman Dominion, 1453 -1918

In 1453 Constantinople fell to the siege of King Mehmed, ruler of the Ottoman sultans, who made this prize the capital of his huge Turkish empire that soon included all of the Middle East, yet extended to Greece, Persia and North Africa. The Mamluk Empire was now in full decay. As a result Jerusalem, Gaza, Nablus, Sidon and Beirut now came under the authority of Ottoman Damascus. At this time, in need of a southern fortress, Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566 A.D.) rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, even as they surround the “old city” today. A resultant feudal system, that imposed harsh taxation and even more harsh penalties, experienced initial glory, yet the inherent seeds of corruption and tribal conflict led to progressive decline in a self-fulfilling spiral. Within Palestine, a falling population led to nomadic abuse and in turn greater wasteland, especially when compared with former agricultural prosperity. One debauched and cruel sultan ordered the massacre of all non-Muslim subjects, though intervention by Muslim authorities prevailed. During the seventeenth century several rulers governed more by terror over the regions of Galilee, though in being challenged, the ensuing conflict brought more misery to the Land. During the eighteenth century this tribal conflict continued, which necessitated the extraction of ever larger sums from peasants to finance such conflicts. In one instance, Ramleh, Gaza and Jaffa revolted against this increased tax burden.

In 1770 the Mamluk ruler of Egypt took steps to invade Syria. With some intrigue, he was eventually successful in capturing Damascus.

12 Ibid., pp. 113-114.
Yet on returning to Egypt he was expelled; returning yet again he was seized and killed by a rival. Such was the ceaseless tension of those times in the midst of a most unhappy empire, full of extortion, lacking in security. The ruler of Sidon, “the butcher,” was renowned for his avarice and cruelty. Nevertheless the Turkish reign provided more opportunities for the Jewish than for the Christian population. Some “Marronos” Christians expelled from Spain, that is converts of coercion and convenience, were encouraged to immigrate, though others from Europe also came. Then,

[1]he Jewish community under the Turks passed from a very rapid and brilliant expansion, during which the Land became for a brief while again the center of the whole Jewish world, to almost as rapid and catastrophic decline.13

The cause was not only due to distinction between the Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jewish communities in Palestine, but also the persecution and suffering they endured because of the indifference of Turkish rulers to incessant local conflict. This led to greater poverty and desolation than was experienced under the Mamluks. Even travellers’ accounts testified to the wilderness existence that had now come about.

Certainly eighteenth century Europe had not the slightest interest in securing, let alone enhancing the monolithic Turkish empire. Further, the expansion of Russia and then Great Britain presented a new challenge to the Middle East. Yet a further rising contestant on the horizon concerned the expansionist ambitions of Napoleon Bonaparte, and especially his conquest of Egypt and Syria. Nevertheless he was defeated by Nelson at the Battle of the Nile. Entering coastal Palestine, Napoleon reached as far as Acre, and then was forced to retreat, having never approached Jerusalem. Further retreat to Europe ended in his defeat at Waterloo. Thus the Land sank back into obscurity, including rivalry within the weakening Turkish dominion. A new and independent minded sultan in Egypt, Mehmet Ali, favored the French, drove out the British, and instituted a totalitarian regime. Then, along with his son, Ibrahim, in ambitiously moving northward, he captured Gaza, Jaffa, Jerusalem, Acre and Damascus; then threatening to take Constantinople, Russia came to the rescue and forced an eventual retreat back to Egypt. Nevertheless Egyptian rule had opened Palestine to western visitors, also British and American missionary societies resulting in biblical research. Ibrahim also received consuls in

13 Ibid., pp. 128-129.
Jerusalem, first from Great Britain, then France, Prussia, Sardinia and America. Then a rabbi was recognized for Russian and Austrian Jews. An English bishop was sent out jointly by England and Prussia, as well as a patriarch from Rome, by means of which the interests of Jews and Christians were better suited, even if they did continue to be at unrest with each other. In 1852 the sultan decreed that competing claims to Holy Places be established as the status quo, and at least in this area some peace prevailed.

In 1870, reformer Midhat Pasha established a more representative form of government for the empire, that is a Turkish parliament, but only for some months until the reign commenced of an evil tyrant, Abdul Hamid. Nevertheless his redistribution of Syria, hence the Land, led to the independent territory of Jerusalem. Through his becoming friends with the German Kaiser, Jerusalem sprouted several notable German and Lutheran edifices. Nevertheless Hamid’s oppression led to his overthrow by the idealistic, reforming “Young Turks,” offering centralized government, even for the non-Muslim and non-Turkish population, as well as equal participation in Turkish political life. But the Arabs wanted no such change. Thus with the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, Turkey aligned itself with Germany, this being a decision of momentous importance. Indeed British Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, prophetically declared that “[t]he Turkish empire has committed suicide.” However Jewish Zionist leaders in Europe were well aware of the potential this turn of events presented. Nevertheless Palestine then became in turmoil as many fled.

The majority of the Jewish immigrants of the previous thirty years had either Russian or Romanian nationality, and thousands retired to Egypt, though the bulk of the agricultural settlers stayed on their land. For this reason it is quite inaccurate to base the Jewish percentage of the population on the position when the Balfour Declaration was issued [in 1917]. In 1914 it was approximately thirteen percent.

However in Arab sections of the empire, there was by no means a sense of loyalty toward the disintegrating Turkish empire, and therefore toward Germany that hoped for participation in a jihad, a holy war against Britain. For this reason the Germans failed to win over the Arabs to their cause whereas the British did so by giving assurances of their prospective independence in Syria, Arabia, and

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Mesopotamia, that is except for western Syria. In 1916 the British crossed the Suez Canal against strong Turkish resistance and reach al-Arish. The revolt of desert Arabs, that found British assistance through T. E. Lawrence, was confronted with a scorched earth,

ruthless policy of oppression [by the Turks], which resulted in the deliberate destruction of houses, roads, fruit trees and crops, and the execution or imprisonment of considerable numbers of the population. . . . Nearly all the improvements of the previous fifty years were swept away. When the British entered Judea and Jerusalem they found a land on the brink of starvation, and for the first year of administration the feeding of the population, countrymen as well as townsmen, proved their most urgent task.

Held back at Gaza, General Edmund Allenby took charge of the British Expeditionary Force which led to the rout of the Turks at Beersheba. Taking Jaffa, Allenby finally captured Jerusalem and on December 11, 1917, he marched bareheaded into the historic capital to address a gathering of Moslem, Christian, and Jewish notables on the steps of the Tower of David.

By 1918, the end of Ottoman rule in Palestine at the same time raised the question of settlement, for Britain and France, concerning their recent Middle Eastern conquests. However, in anticipation of the capture of Jerusalem, and the odd prospect of Berlin also making a pro-Zionist declaration, the Balfour Declaration had been composed a month before Allenby’s formal entry into the Holy City, by means of which “the British Government gave the [European] Zionist enterprise formal recognition.” As the Foreign Secretary, Arthur James Balfour, of evangelical stock,

had been nurtured on the Old Testament, and his extensive study of Jewish history had filled him with inner remorse about Christendom’s treatment of the Jews. “They have been exiled, scattered and oppressed,” he told [journalist] Harold Nicholson in 1917. “If we can find them an asylum, a

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safe home, in their native land, then the full flowering of their genius will burst forth and propagate."18

Guided by a draft statement that Balfour solicited from the Zionists, a final compromise declaration was approved, namely:

His Majesty’s government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.19

However, James Parkes makes some very telling comments concerning this historic document that clarify common misunderstanding.

The Balfour Declaration for the first time established a unit called Palestine on the political map. But there were two essential elements in political realism which it could not create. In the first place the Jews, who had through all he centuries clung to their right to settle in the Holy Land, had been so reduced in numbers and importance that they were not a recognized and accepted presence to the rest of the population as were the Christians in Lebanon. In the second place, though the word ‘Arab’ was rapidly coming to be accepted as covering the indigenous inhabitants who spoke Arabic, independently of their religious or ethnic affiliation, there was no such thing historically as a ‘Palestinian Arab,’ and there was no feeling of unity among ‘the Arabs’ of this newly defined area. Hence the unfortunate phrase used to describe the majority of the population in the Declaration—‘the non-Jewish communities’.

The Balfour Declaration did not ‘give Palestine to the Jews’. It recognized that here existed already a historic Jewish right, no to but in the country; and it promised to assist the Jewish people in its development in such a way that the other rights in the country were not endangered. It equally did not ‘give away what belonged not to it but to the Arab people’; for it had already refused to recognize, also on historical grounds, that the Arab claim to be exclusive owners of the country was justified.

So to Britain had fallen a responsibility of momentous proportions. To begin with it seemed to grasp its calling with sharp insight born of its Christian heritage. Sad to say, the noble fulfillment of this vocation seemed to gradually wither. But notwithstanding a degree of apostasy, the guiding Providence would not be detracted from Its vision.

18 Sachar, History of Israel, p. 106.
19 Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, The Israel-Arab Reader, p. 16.
THE BIRTH OF ZIONISM

The preceding historic turn of events also needs to be appreciated in terms of the founding Zionist movement in Europe that opportunely coalesced with the providential leadership in Britain of Lloyd George, Balfour, Allenby, Jan Smuts, etc.

The Shame of European anti-Semitism

The heritage of Augustinian anti-Judaism has been detailed in Chapter Two: Israel - and Centuries of Christian anti-Judaism. Nevertheless its arousal of Zionism during the late nineteenth century is beyond dispute. As already mentioned, Jewish hope of return to the Land had remained undying. Nevertheless the dawning of modern Europe saw a fresh awakening of the Jew for aliyah (the right of return to the Land) in response to new forms of hatred clothed in supposed enlightenment and social revolution. By way of material encouragement there was the philanthropy from England of Sir Moses Montefiore and Edmund de Rothschild in France. There was also Moses Hess in Germany who sought for the establishment of Jewish colonies in Palestine. Then Leon Pinsker in Russia first headed an illegal organization there named Lovers of Zion which encouraged immigration. Most significant was the vision of Lithuanian Eliezer Ben Yehuda who immigrated to Palestine in 1881 with the passionate vision of the establishment there of the Hebrew language in the midst a polyglot population.

The agency of Theodore Herzl

Theodore Herzl (1860-1904) is commonly acknowledged to be the visionary founder of modern political Zionism that led to the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. A secular Jew educated in the high culture of Vienna, Austria, having received a doctorate in law in 1884, Herzl’s confrontation with European anti-Semitism led to the eventual conclusion that the only solution was the establishment of a distinct nation for this distinctive people. His journalistic coverage of the Dreyfus trial in Paris, its blatant revelation of anti-Semitism, especially prompted him in this direction.

At first Herzl would consider any location, though he eventually concluded that only relocation in the land of Israel was a satisfactory solution. His pamphlet, The Jewish State (De Judenstaat), published in 1896, was catalytic in leading to the first Zionist Congress in Basle,
Switzerland, in 1897. As a result, the World Zionist Organization was established with Herzl as its first elected president. Having died in 1904 with his dream unfulfilled, in 1949 his remains were transferred to a mountain in western Jerusalem which became Mount Herzl, and is today a major military cemetery.

Much of Herzl’s remaining time was spent in courting world leaders, both Jewish and non-Jewish, with the goal of enlisting financial and political support for his dream of a Jewish state. Walter Laqueur has written:

He wanted to appeal to the Pope: help us against anti-Semitism and I in turn will lead a great movement amongst the Jews for voluntary and honorable conversion to Christianity. . . . It was pointed out to Herzl that, all other considerations apart, the Pope would never receive him.20

However in 1904 he became acquainted with a Papal Count, B. Lippay, who assured Herzl that should he visit Rome, he could arrange an audience with Pope Pius X. In a short while, such a meeting was arranged, and the following account of this meeting is taken from The Diaries of Theodor Herzl by Marvin Lowenthal. The relevance of the conversation that took place between this secular Jew and a professed world Christian leader, will become obvious.

In an early entry of Herzl’s diary there is an interesting confession in which, at the age of 35, he reflects upon his earlier encounter with Christianity.

At first the Jewish question [of European anti-Semitism] vexed me bitterly. There was perhaps a time when I would have gladly slipped over into some corner of the Christian fold. But, in any case, this was only a faint vagary born of adolescent weakness. For I can say to myself with the honesty demanded by this diary—which would be utterly worthless if I played the hypocrite with myself—that I never thought seriously of becoming baptized or changing my name.1

In the light of this, it would not seem unreasonable to speculate what might have been the effect of Christianity upon Herzl had he grown up in a Gentile Christian society that had seriously taken into account the Apostle Paul’s admonition to “not be arrogant toward the [Jewish] branches [under discipline]; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. . . . Do not be

conceited, but fear” (Rom. 11:18, 20). But further, even as Herzl is now close to his judicial encounter with Jehovah, how better it would have been that a more merciful, Christ-like witness had been conveyed by the supposed vicar of Jesus Christ. How profoundly sad it is that a harsh and most un-Christ-like witness was communicated. So Herzl records in his diary:

Rome. January 26, [1904].

Yesterday I was with the Pope [Pius X]. . . . I arrived ten minutes ahead of time, and without having to wait I was conducted through a number of small reception rooms to the Pope.

He received me standing and held out his hand, which I did not kiss. Lippay had told me I had to do it, but I didn’t. I believe this spoiled my chances with him, for everyone who visits him kneels and at least kisses his hand. This hand kiss had worried me a great deal and I was glad when it was out of the way.

He seated himself in an armchair, a throne for minor affairs, and invited me to sit by his side. He smiled in kindly anticipation. I began:

HERZL: I thank Your Holiness for the favor of granting me this audience. [I begged him to excuse my miserable Italian, but he said:]

POPE: No, Signor Commander, you speak very well.

HERZL: [He is an honest, rough-hewn village priest, to whom Christianity has remained a living thing even in the Vatican. I briefly laid my request before him. But annoyed perhaps by my refusal to kiss his hand, he answered in a stern categorical manner.]

POPE: We are unable to favor this movement [of Zionism]. We cannot prevent the Jews from going to Jerusalem—but we could never sanction it. The ground of Jerusalem, if it were not always sacred, has been sanctified by the life of Jesus Christ. As the head of the Church I cannot answer you otherwise. The Jews have not recognized our Lord, therefore we cannot recognize the Jewish people.

HERZL: [The conflict between Rome and Jerusalem, represented by the one and the other of us, was once again under way. At the outset I tried to be conciliatory. I said my little piece. . . . It didn’t greatly impress him. Jerusalem was not to be placed in Jewish hands.] And its present status, Holy Father?

POPE: I know, it is disagreeable to see the Turks in possession of our Holy Places. We simply have to put up with it. But to sanction the Jewish wish to occupy these sites, that we cannot do.
HERZL: [I said that we based our movement solely on the sufferings of the Jews, and wished to put aside all religious issues].

POPE: Yes, but we, but I as the head of the Catholic Church, cannot do this. One of two things will likely happen. Either the Jews will retain their ancient faith and continue to await the Messiah whom we believe has already appeared—in which case they are denying the divinity of Jesus and we cannot assist them. Or else they will go there with no religion whatever, and then we can have nothing at all to do with them.

The Jewish faith was the foundation of our own, but it has been superseded by the teachings of Christ, and we cannot admit that it still enjoys any validity. The Jews who should have been the first to acknowledge Jesus Christ have not done so to this day.

HERZL: [It was on the tip of my tongue to remark, “It happens in every family: no one believes in his own relative.” But, instead, I said:] Terror and persecution were not precisely the best means for converting the Jews. [His reply had an element of grandeur in its simplicity:] POPE: Our Lord came without power. He came in peace. He persecuted no one. He was abandoned even by his apostles. It was only later that he attained stature. It took three centuries for the Church to evolve. The Jews therefore had plenty of time in which to accept his divinity without duress or pressure. But they chose not to do so, and they have not done it yet.

HERZL: But, Holy Father, the Jews are in a terrible plight. I do not know if Your Holiness is aware of the full extent of their tragedy. We need a land for these harried people.

POPE: Must it be Jerusalem?

HERZL: We are not asking for Jerusalem, but for Palestine—for only the secular land.

21 Here unrelenting supercessionist theology is plainly upheld as the norm of the Roman Catholic Church. Further, this confession, along with the whole tone of the Pope in his meeting with Herzl, indicates the perpetuation of a doctrinal emphasis that has resulted in centuries of degrading behavior toward the Jews.

22 However, this response has the “grandeur” of total avoidance of that which Herzl had intimated, namely that the abusive reputation of Roman Catholicism toward the Jews was unlikely to foster conversion. Further, if, “It took three centuries for the Church to evolve,” it was that very same period of time that it took for the Church to consolidate and launch its thrust of anti-Semitism through the following centuries.
POPE: We cannot be in favor of it.

HERZL: Does Your Holiness know the situation of the Jews?

POPE: Yes, from my days in Mantua, where there are Jews. I have always been in friendly relations with Jews. Only the other evening two Jews were here to see me. There are other bonds than those of religion: social intercourse, for example, and philanthropy. Such bonds we do not refuse to maintain with the Jews. Indeed we also pray for them, that their spirit see the light. This very day the Church is celebrating the feast of an unbeliever who became converted in a miraculous manner—on the road to Damascus. And so if you come to Palestine and settle your people there, we will be ready with churches and priests to baptize all of you.23

HERZL: [At this point Count Lippay had himself announced. The Pope bade him be admitted. The Count kneeled, kissed his hand, and joined in the conversation by telling of our “miraculous” meeting in the Bauer beer-hall at Venice. The miracle was that he had originally intended to stay overnight in Padua, and instead, it turned out that he was given to hear me express the wish to kiss the Holy Father’s foot.

At this the Pope made no movement, for I hadn’t even kissed his hand. Lippay proceeded to tell how I had expiated on the noble qualities of Jesus Christ. The Pope listened, and now and then took a pinch of snuff and sneezed into a big red cotton handkerchief. It is these peasant touches which I like about him best and which most of all compel my respect.

Lippay, it would appear, wanted to account for his introducing me, and perhaps ward off a word of reproach. But the Pope said:]

POPE: On the contrary, I am glad you brought me the Signor Commendatore.

HERZL: [As to the real business, he repeated what he had told me, until he dismissed us:]

POPE: Not possible!

23 This would not have impressed Herzl, especially since he would have been well aware of the notorious kidnapping of a six year old Jewish boy from his home in Bologna, Italy, by the Roman Catholic authorities in 1858. The reason was that since a Gentile nurse had secretly “baptized” Edgardo Mortara as a baby, the Church determined that he had to be brought up under a Roman Catholic environment. The prior Pope Pius IX was deeply complicit in this whole sordid affair that attained to world-wide notoriety. Refer to, David I. Kertzer, The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara.
HERZL: [Lippay stayed on his knees for an unconscionable time and never seemed to tire of kissing his hand. It was apparent that this was what the Pope liked. But on taking leave, I contented myself with shaking his hand warmly and bowing deeply. The audience lasted about twenty-five minutes.

While spending the last hour in the Raphael gallery, I saw a picture of an Emperor kneeling before a seated Pope and receiving the crown from his hands. That’s how Rome wants it.]²⁴

When Chaim Weizman visited Rome in 1922, his several concerned enquiries, up to the level of Cardinal Gaspari, with regard to Vatican opposition to the Zionist movement remained unrelieved.²⁵

THE BRITISH ENCOURAGEMENT OF ZIONISM

During the nineteenth century Great Britain witnessed not only widespread evangelistic and missionary outreach through the agency of Anglican and nonconformist Christianity, but also an intensity of biblical ministry that led to focus on outreach to the Jews with parallel eschatological concern. Consider the formation of the Church Missionary Society (1799, Anglican), the London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews (1809, Anglican), the Free Church of Scotland Jewish Mission, (1840, Presbyterian), and the British Society for the Propagation of the Gospel amongst the Jews (1842, non-denominational).

Providence in British Millennial Fervor

During this same period, historic, pro-Judaic premillennialism and post-millennialism were equally concerned with the future consummation of the age in relation to the glorious personal, bodily return of Jesus Christ. In the main, both perspectives anticipated a climactic mass conversion of Jews along with their restoration as a nation to the Land of Israel. Then there erupted a premillennial subset called dispensationalism, under the leadership of John Nelson Darby and Benjamin Wills Newton, which proposed a more specific formulation of future events with regard to the return of Jesus Christ and the relationship between Israel and the Church. Nevertheless, in all of this there was a Judeo-centric focus that laid a significant foundation

²⁴ Rosenthal, Diaries of Theodor Herzl, pp. 427-430.
²⁵ Chaim Weizmann, Trial and Error, pp. 284-286.
for integration of prophetic bible truth with political events, but especially the secular European Zionist movement. In this regard, and allied with the aforementioned missionary outreach, there was a considerable number of prominent evangelical pastors and leaders who in a variety of ways, and broadly speaking, expressed millennial expectations with regard to the destiny of the Jew and the restoration of national Israel. They included Charles Simeon, Lord Palmerston, the Earl of Shaftsbury, Bishop Edward Bickersteth, British chaplain William Hechler of Vienna, Bishop J. C. Ryle, barrister Lewis Way, Horatius Bonar, C. H. Spurgeon, to name but a few. As the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston had written to the British Ambassador in Constantinople, as early as 1840, so that he might encourage the Sultan to allow the migration of Jews to Palestine.

Providence in British Political Fervor and Beyond

The vastness of the British Empire and its pervasive Christian heritage during the nineteenth century meant that a leavening effect was to be expected at both social and political levels. A biblical mindset was common in all aspects of English life. For this reason, a number of the leaders of the British government, including the military, most naturally approached the question of Palestine, as an appointed charge of the Empire, from a biblical perspective. For instance the entry of victorious General Allenby into Jerusalem was regarded as an awesome event of deep significance. However, now replacement and supercessionist theology tends to disparage this and subsequent events that have resulted in an appointed Jewish homeland. For instance Colin Chapman associates Zionism and its Christian devotees with implicit violence, racial discrimination, American hegemony, and misguided biblical fundamentalism. In a similar vein, Stephen Sizer brings the accusations of colonialism, apartheid, Islamic demonization, and dubious, selective biblical exegesis. Moreover,

the overall consequences of such uncritical support for the State of Israel, especially among American evangelicals who identify with Christian Zionism in larger numbers than in Britain, are inherently and pathologically destructive.

Gary Burge charges modern Israel with discrimination as an exclusivist state, the stealing of land and water, the destruction of homes and villages, human rights abuses, imprisonment and torture, street violence and religious compromise.\(^{28}\)

Not surprisingly, Chapman, Sizer and Burge (refer to Chapter Three and Chapter Four) in varying degrees, attempt to dull the admirable shine of the leadership roles of Lloyd George, Arthur Balfour, and General Allenby, as well as Herzl and Weizmann, especially by means of the attribution of naiveté, secularism, cynicism and intrigue rather than participation in authentic providential, covenantal oversight. However we would point out that many events of that time and onward have indicated surprising circumstances that strongly suggest divine providence, in the midst of great conflict, that is difficult to discount.

The prompting of Herzl to seek for a national home for the Jews due to the persecutory character of Europe, while being essentially secular, yet involved both remarkable circumstances and Christian encouragement. By way of providence, consider the following sequence of events recorded by Martin Gilbert.

The Sixth [Zionist] Congress was held in Basle [August, 1903]. The idea of Uganda instead of Palestine, even as a temporary place of refuge, led to stormy arguments. . . . Herzl worked busily behind the scenes to win over [Max] Nordau and to secure a majority. He succeeded: 295 for the Uganda scheme, 175 against, and 99 abstentions. The Zionist movement was certainly split. . . . Then in July, at the early age of forty-four, Herzl died. He had been worn out by his frenetic, fevered, disputed labors and endless travels. . . . The Uganda scheme was finished; Herzl’s death effectively killed it, and even the British government had lost its enthusiasm.\(^{29}\)

In the same vein, and possibly due to the savage conflict between the British and the Jews toward the end of the Second World War, there then came the death of President Roosevelt on April 12, 1945.

In his last weeks he had turned anti-Zionist, following a meeting with King Ibn Saud after the Yalta Conference. The pro-Zionist presidential assistant, David Niles, later asserted: “There are serious doubts in my mind that Israel would have come into being if Roosevelt had lived.”\(^{30}\)

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\(^{29}\) Martin Gilbert. *Israel*, p. 22.

We have already referenced the fateful alignment of Turkey with Germany and the Axis powers at the commencement of World War I, and the consequence of Britain conquering Ottoman Palestine. This was through the notable instrumentality of General Allenby. But what of providential espionage data he received from the NILI organization, which title in Hebrew stands for, “The Eternal One of Israel Will Not Lie”? under the bravery of Aaron and Sarah Aaronsohn?

“It was very largely the daring work of the young [Aaronsohn] spies . . . ,” wrote Captain Raymond Savage, Allenby’s deputy military secretary, “which enabled the brilliant Field-Marshall to accomplish his undertaking so effectively.”

At the same time in England, consider the Christian encouragement that came from the close acquaintance of Chaim Weizmann, a pivotal successor of Herzl, with

the nation’s political leaders, including Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, and Lord Robert Cecil. His relationship with these men was further strengthened by a vital service he performed for the British Admiralty. In March of 1916, Weizmann was summoned to London to help solve the shortage of acetone, an ingredient in the naval explosive cordite. After two years of laboratory research, he accomplished the task by devising a special fermentation process.

The timing of the issuance of the Balfour Declaration was in itself quite remarkable.

Even twelve months later it would not have been possible. As it was, Weizmann pulled the Zionists through a brief window of opportunity, fated never to open again.

Then consider that shortly after this remarkable event:

In London, Lloyd George and Balfour thought they had taken advantage of the most odious war in human history at least to produce some benefit: to give the Jews a home. When Weizmann lunched with the Prime Minister on Armistice Day he found him reading the Psalms, in tears.

But further, not all of the Zionist leaders were wholly secular. At the critical Paris Peace Conference of 1919, with the Jewish delegation

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31 Sachar, History of Israel, p. 105.
33 Ibid., p. 431.
headed by Weizmann, another of the four representatives, Menachem Ussishkin passionately spoke in Hebrew of the “God of Israel,” on behalf of over one million Jews in Russia, as follows:

Nowhere have we found rest for our weary spirit nor for our aching feet. Persecution, expulsion, cruel riots, unbroken distress—such have been our lot during all these generations in all the countries of the world, and in these very days—when the wielders of the world’s destiny have proclaimed the liberation of the nations, the equality of the nations, and the self-determination of every separate nation—Russian Jewry, which I represent here, is undergoing fresh torrents of murder and rioting the like of which were never known even in the Middle Ages.

For us there is no way out save to receive, under your authority and subject to your supervision, one secure place in the world where we shall be able to renew our own lives and revive the national and cultural tradition which has come down to us from ancient times, and where can that secure spot be save in our historic country? Throughout all these generations we have not ceased to yearn for it, but have prayed the God of Israel for our return thither. Not for a moment have we forsaken our God, our tongue and our culture.

We let ourselves be slain for these possessions of ours rather than betray them. And on this very day I address you in our Hebrew tongue, the tongue of our kings and prophets which we have never forgotten. This tongue is bound up with all our national aspirations. At the beginning of the national revival in the Land of Israel, when we had barely begun our upbuilding work there, even before the war, we devoted our efforts to the revival of our language and our culture.³⁴

Then there was Sir Arthur Wauchope, British High Commissioner, 1931-1938, who was a Bible-reading Scott. In spite of later differences that arose due to the more anti-Mandate policies emanating from London, under his governance Weitzmann attributed to him the greatest overall advance in Palestine.³⁵

But further still, what shall we say of the remarkable preservation of Israel during five major wars, all of which threatened either national extermination or total expulsion from the Land of Israel by means of the surrounding Arab nations? Consider just two of these victories.

³⁴ Gilbert, *Israel*, pp. 41-42.
The War of Independence involved assaults and invasion from surrounding Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, and the Transjordan Arab Legion, which formally commenced on May 15, 1948. This was the day after David Ben-Gurion, who was to become the first Israeli Prime Minister, declared the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine. Early the next morning, that is on May 15, he broadcast to the United States of America; as he spoke, the sound of Egyptian aircraft bombing Tel Aviv could clearly be heard. Furthermore, from the very beginning of this savage conflict, the leadership of the withdrawing British armed forces expressed itself in unequivocally hostile terms about the struggle of the Jewish population. Yet in spite of being disadvantaged in terms of personnel and equipment, victory was obtained by means of innovation and flexibility. Even so, it appeared that the fate of Israel hung precariously in the balance. It was saved by the great and historic leadership of Ben-Gurion leading a nation endowed with a desire to live, and prepared to make every sacrifice to achieve this end.36

The Six Day War was prompted by Egypt’s closure to Israeli shipping, of the Straits of Tiran leading to the Gulf of Aqaba, on May 22, 1967, along with the aggressive posture of the armies of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Iraq. After a stunning pre-emptive attack by the Israeli Air Force upon the Egyptian Air Force, and later in the day the Jordanian Air force, 416 Arab aircraft had been destroyed, 393 of which were destroyed on the ground; 26 Israeli aircraft had been lost in action. The result was Israel’s complete superiority in the air and thus its freedom to support advancing Israeli ground formations. Here was further innovation and daring that surprised the world, let alone the Middle East.37 During the same conflict, consider Major-General Israel Tal’s division pushing through the Sinai wilderness. Egyptians mistook Israeli tanks for their own and allowed Israeli paratroopers to slog through the dunes unmolested.

“Apparently someone in heaven was watching over us,” remarked the commander, Rafael (Rafal) Eytan, after the war, “Every unintended action they took and every unintended action we took always turned out to our advantage.” But Israeli advances were more than a product of luck. Egyptian intelligence had concluded that enemy movements in the sector

were merely diversions for the main axis of attack, opposite Rafah and Khan Yunis.  

THE BRITISH DISCOURAGEMENT OF ZIONISM

There was great euphoria resulting from the Balfour declaration. In 1918, Lord Robert Cecil, a subsequent architect of the League of Nations, declared that: “Our wish is that Arabian countries shall be for the Arabs, Armenia for the Armenians, and Judea for the Jews.” Winston Churchill spoke of “a Jewish State by the banks of the Jordan . . . which might comprise three or four million Jews.” Jan Smuts envisaged the rise of “a great Jewish State.” Balfour added that,

> [t]he notion that Jewish immigration would have to be artificially restricted in order to ensure that the Jews should be a permanent minority never entered into the heads of anyone engaged in framing the policy. That would have been regarded as unjust and as a fraud on the people to whom we were appealing.

Nevertheless the window of opportunity did begin to close. The British Mandate of Palestine concerned territory in the Middle East, including the modern regions of Israel, Jordan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These had formerly belonged to the Ottoman Empire, which the League of Nations entrusted to the United Kingdom for administration in the aftermath of World War I. However, Arab nationalist leaders expressed growing misgivings about a scheme permitting Jews to share even limited consultative authority with Arabs; as a result they boycotted elections. After three failed attempts at arranging some form of Arab and Jewish administrative cooperation, High Commissioner for Palestine, Herbert Samuel, continued from 1923 onward as the first of successive high commissioners who administered with almost total authority, that is until the end of Britain’s tenure in 1948. In 1921, through negotiation with Winston Churchill, that part of Palestine named Transjordan, east of the Jordan, was separated and handed over to the charge of Emir Abdullah from Arabia, who was thus dissuaded from interfering in Syria. In 1950 Transjordan annexed the West Bank, declaring itself now as Jordan, and this with the recognition of the United Kingdom. At this time, Abdullah significantly conferred

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Jordanian citizenship on the population of the West Bank, including the inhabitants of Arab Jerusalem.  

The Expansion of the Jewish National Home – 1920-1935

The ensuing period of twenty-eight years, leading to nationhood, saw great economic advance under British direction, indeed with a disproportionate degree concerning Jewish productivity in that region, along with land purchase, the reclamation of malarial swamps and wilderness, and reforestation. In particular the 1920’s witnessed the beginning of Jewish industry in Palestine with an attitude of near unparalleled vigor. Along with this many Palestinian Arabs also enjoyed unprecedented affluence, although there continued much village poverty. One of the pioneers of this labor intensive, often regimented program was the charismatic Joseph Trumpeldor, a Russian dentist. The commitment he sought was from people to serve at any cost at whatever task Palestine requires. . . . The metal, whatever is needed to forge anything, whatever the national machine will require Is there a wheel lacking? I am that wheel. Nails, screws, a block? Take me. Must the land be dug? I will dig it. If there is shooting to be done, are soldiers needed? I wil enlist. Policemen, doctors, lawyers, teachers, water-carriers? If you please, I am ready to do it all. I am not a person. I am the pure embodiment of service, prepared for everything. I have no ties. I know only one command: Build.

So that by 1930, 57 percent of Jewish land holdings had been either swamp or land never before cultivated. Such industriousness and resultant accomplishment even up to the present, to which the Mamluke and Ottoman empires over the preceding eight hundred years never remotely attained, is something that Christian anti-Judaism is loath to acknowledge. Today, modern Israel has, by far, the highest per capita gross domestic product in all of the countries of the Middle East, and even those that are fabulously oil rich.

So in the 1930’s a new wave of immigration brought additional Jewish citizens and a resurgence of hope to the Land. In 1932 immigration rose to 12,500, then 37,000 in 1933, 45,000 in 1934, and 66,000 in 1935. Between 1932 and 1935 the population of the Jewish settlement in Palestine doubled from 185,000 to 375,000. Indeed the reputation of

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40 Ibid., pp. 126-128, 434.
41 Ibid., pp. 147-148.
the kibbutz movement, as well as capitalist villages, throughout Europe provided a kind of built-in, ongoing dynamism and encouragement for further migration. By the end of the first decade, the Jewish share of contributions to the public revenues totaled approximately 45 percent, and it was the Arabs who benefited most impressively from government expenditures. This expansionism, but preeminently the international interest in encouraging increased migration, resulting in the more rapid enlargement of the Jewish population, inevitably led to growing conflict, indeed sporadic warfare between Jew and Arab. In Britain as well, a cloud of diminished support had come to hover over the Zionist cause. Within the Labor Government of Ramsay McDonald, 1929-1935, Colonial Secretary Sidney Webb, later Lord Passfield, one of the early founders of the Socialist Fabian Society, bluntly told Weizmann that he opposed mass Jewish immigration to Palestine. Not surprisingly, the subsequent Passfield White Paper of 1930 attempted revision of the Mandate, at which Winston Churchill anathematized the document in a heated House of Commons debate.

The Shame of British Appeasement – 1935-1948

However Britain was also faced with a dilemma concerning successful Jewish national growth and dominance on the one hand which, on the other hand, aggravated the Arab population in the direction of rising militancy. In 1935, upon the introduction of the Nuremberg racial laws, Hitler received telegrams of congratulation and praise from all corners of the Arab world. Hardly a German Arabic-language newspaper or magazine appeared in the Middle East without a sharp thrust against the Jews. In 1936 a major Arab revolt arose in Jerusalem, Galilee and Samaria; there was a further revolt on 1937. These uprisings gave birth to the formation of the Haganah defence agency, that received professional training for three years from British Captain Orde Wingate, a devout Christian, which in turn eventually gave rise to the Israeli Defence Forces. At the same time there also resulted economic Arab threatenings that would present a real problem for British industry, especially in the realm of petroleum necessary for an imminent Second World War. Further there was British concern that burgeoning Germany might attract Arab loyalty which, nevertheless, did result through the flight of the Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin el-

42 Ibid., pp. 138-194.
43 Ibid., pp. 171-177.
Husseini, to Iraq, and Hitler’s protection in Germany in 1941. He had already provoked several Arab uprisings in Palestine during 1922-1936. So the unchanging and ever more shrill demand of the Arabs was for the termination of the League of Nations mandate so that independence might be awarded to Palestine in the form of an Arab-dominated state. To the great consternation of British Jewry, and especially Weizmann, the White Paper of Unitarian Neville Chamberlain’s government issued on May 17, 1939, indicated appeasement was in the air. This mood was already evident in terms of Britain’s willingness to yield to Germany’s appetite for Czechoslovakia and Poland, when Chamberlain returned from Munich with the paper thin assurance of “peace for our time,” in September, 1938. 44 Clearly there was revisionism afoot when it was now to be required, by means of a notorious British White Paper, that Jewish immigration be restricted to 10,000 for each of the next five years, plus an overall 25,000 refugees. After this no further Jewish immigration would be permitted without Arab agreement. Further, the sale of land to Jews was to be prohibited immediately. This declaration of British policy was a foreclosure on any subsequent growth for the Jewish National Home. Here was the Chamberlain government’s stringent, newly forged, anti-Zionist mandate.45

During the Second World War, humanity reached its lowest ebb when orchestrated genocide focused on the annihilation of European Jewry. The innauguration of the Holocaust inevitably led to the flight of Jews who attempted various means of reaching Palestine, but especially by ship. The shame of Britain must surely be its closure in general of Palestine to these desperate hordes resulting in thousands perishing, notwithstanding the thrust generated by massacres in Eastern Europe. After some hesitancy in Britain, at the encouragement of Churchill, in 1944, a Jewish brigade was formed which served in Italy and subsequently supplied Haganah. The end result was the service of 30,000 Jews during the war who often bore the shield of David, except when it had to be removed upon entering the Land lest the Arabs might be offended! The number of Arabs also serving the Allied cause was about 12,000, though not all from Palestine. Actually Palestine prospered at this time.

During the three years immediately after the war, waning confidence in British support saw a rise in Jewish terrorism through Haganah, under Ben-Gurion’s direction, and the more radical Irgun, fathered by Vladimir Jabotinsky, mentor of Menachem Begin. Both defence agencies consorted in the blowing up of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, though Ben-Gurion attempted to withdraw. Weizmann objected, but to no avail so that ninety-one were killed, including twenty-eight British, on July 22, 1946. This was the result of 2,718 Jews being arrested in a dawn raid on Haganah, just three weeks before. As a result, the British Government attempted a tripartite division of the Land that was rejected by both Jews and Arabs. Consequently, on February 14, 1947, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin announced that he was handing over the Palestinian problem to the United Nations. Nevertheless bitter conflict between the British and the Jews continued to the end of the relationship. The Jews were prepared to establish their own state, but the Arabs refused to make any such move since they had war plans afoot. Thus the only solution was partition of Palestine according to United Nations investigation and administration. This was agreed to by the General Assembly of the United Nations, with Britain abstaining, on November 29, 1947. Also Haifa was to be opened as a free port for Jewish immigration on February 1, 1948. By March 1948, the whole country was in disorder. Yet by a seeming miracle of providence, and in spite of virulent Arab hatred, on May 14, 1948, in Jerusalem, the State of Israel was inaugurated with Ben-Gurion as its first Prime Minister and Minister of Defence. Even then, that same day, Egyptian aircraft bombed Tel Aviv!

THE RECOVERY OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

The Fledgling State of Israel – 1948-1973

The War of Independence, 1948, immediately tested Jewish ingenuity, flexibility, and tenacity, especially in view of outmoded equipment.

So in the first hectic weeks after the Declaration of the State, I worked almost continuously round the clock at Sde Dov, fitting those little planes with Venturi Tubes and basic night-flying instruments, so that they could be used as bombers, with crude hand-made bombs chucked over the side.

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The role of these little planes, the Austers, Pipers, Fairchilds, in the first crucial weeks before the Czechoslovakian airlift brought Messerschmitts, . . . tends to be overlooked. But they were vital in checking the better equipped enemy’s rapid advances, flying in mail and urgently needed medical supplies to isolated areas. One of those little Austers stood mounted on a plinth outside Sde Dov, in recognition of the role they played. Sadly it was later removed. A great pity, as it put the inequality of resources into perspective [as with Egyptian Spifires] and served as a reminder of the grave danger the new little State was in, in May 1948.48

Nevertheless, after two uneasy truces and an armistice agreement involving territory gains, in 1949 Israel’s control of the Negev was now unquestioned while the State was more substantially established having been forged in the heat of bloody war. Now a reserve army was also created,49 and at the same time membership of Israel in the United Nations was approved.50

The Suez and Sinai conflict of 1956, lasting but a week, was called by one British war strategist as “a work of art.” Precipitated by the incursion of murderous Arab fedayeen, closer ties between Egypt and Syria, and ultimately Egyptian President Nasser’s seizure of the Suez Canal, after six days Israel had overrun Sinai. It was found that standard equipment for Egyptian officers was an Arabic edition of Hitler’s Mein Kampf. After fierce fighting, the capture of Sharm el-Sheikh led to the reopening of the Straits of Tiran. Captured territory was eventually returned subject to United Nations supervision. Continuing economic growth was always under the shadow of surrounding Arab neighbors. Adolph Eichman was captured, tried in 1961 and executed. A heightening of Israel-Syrian border conflict, and Nasser’s Pan-Arabism, were forebodings of Israel being confronted with enlarged threatenings.

The Six Day War of 1967 was “a work of exquisite execution,” in which timing was everything. A coalition of Arab rumblings became louder than ever, especially in view of deceptive confidence based upon reception of large amounts of equipment and weaponry from the Soviet Union. Apart from the summary description on pages 155-156, concerning the spectacular opening thrust, it is well to remember the great risk that was involved for only twelve fighter planes had been left

48 Ibid., pp. 189-190, quoting John Barrard, an overseas volunteer.
49 Herzog, Arab-Israeli Wars, pp. 105-108.
50 Sachar, History of Israel, pp. 315-353.
in Israeli air space: all the rest set out on the mission to destroy Egyptian air power at its source. From another perspective, this was but preliminary, even when added to the capture of the Golan Heights and Sharm el-Sheikh by which access was regained to the Gulf of Akaba. The ultimate, incomparable, yet bloody conquest was that of the Old City of Jerusalem on June 7, 1967. Concerning this event, Reformed theologian, R. C. Sproul, ambivalently makes an interesting comment with regard to Romans 11:26, “And in this way all Israel will be saved.”

I don’t know whether this restoration is going to be sudden or gradual, or even if it is going to follow the return of the Jews to their own land. There is still quite a bit of debate about that. I remember sitting on my porch in Boston in 1967, and watching on television the Jewish soldiers coming into Jerusalem, dropping their weapons and rushing to the Wailing Wall, and weeping and weeping. Immediately I telephoned one of my dear friends, a professor of Old Testament theology, who does not believe that modern day Israel has any significance whatsoever. I asked him, “What do you think now? From 70 AD until 1967, almost 1900 years, Jerusalem has been under the domination and control of Gentiles, and now the Jews have recaptured the city of Jerusalem. Jesus said that Jerusalem will be trodden under foot by the Gentiles, until the fullness of the Gentiles be fulfilled. What’s the significance of that?” He replied, “I am going to have to rethink this situation.” It was indeed startling.

Well, 1967 was many years ago, and we have not seen the restoration of the Jewish nation, although we have seen the greatest concentration on eschatology that the church has ever known. . . . Perhaps it will be another thousand years before the Jews have complete control of Jerusalem. Maybe present arrangements are just a temporary interlude. It is possible that the Arabs will drive the Jews out of Jerusalem and the Jewish people will be put in exile again, and this present attempt to recover the Promised Land will be abortive—who knows? I don’t know what the significance of it all is. But I will tell you this: we should be watching very carefully.

The War of Confrontation and Attrition of 1967-1970 was a “work of endurance,” that is in following shortly after the spectacularly brief Six Day War, it aimed at testing the staying power of the Israeli spirit. It involved three borders, those of Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt. The north Jordan valley area involved the thwarting of a Palestine Liberation Organization and Syrian aided takeover of the Kingdom of Jordan at the instigation of terrorist leader Yasser Arafat. Never was a man less

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51 Gilbert, Israel, pp. 384-395; Herzog, Arab-Israeli Wars, pp. 143-223.
qualified for peace recognition than he. The PLO’s defeat and retreat to Lebanon led to this country’s decimation and later occupation by Syrian forces, and therefore increased northern threatenings to Israel. The third and major front involved periodic conflict along the Suez Canal. Having expelled the Russian military from Egypt, while yet securing further military supplies. Nasser maintained strict observance of the Suez Canal cease-fire, while exchanging spasmodic incursions with Israel. Then there was the Egyptian sinking of the Israeli flagship, the destroyer *Eilat* patrolling a distance from Port Said. In response Israel severely attacked major Egyptian petroleum installations. However, while rigorously training his army, Nasser craftily attempted lulling Israel into a false sense of safety, that is until the surprise Yom Kippur War erupted and caught the Israeli military unawares.

The Yom Kippur War of 1973, was a “work of recovery,” though nevertheless a very costly one at that. There had been indications of enemy build-up early in October of 1973 that were not well heeded. Then at 2: p.m. on Saturday October 6, Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, the holiest day of the year, when the nation was at relative ease and religiously focused, Egypt and Syria simultaneously unleashed a surprise attack upon the south and north of the Land. The onslaught began with 250 warplanes that attacked unsuspecting Israeli fortifications in the Sinai. Some 2,000 guns delivered an artillery barrage involving 10,000 shells that fell on Israeli positions during the first minute. In addition there was the employment of an inventory of 2,000 tanks. Egypt expected 10,000 dead Israelis at the end of the day, though in reality it turned out to be only 208. Syria advanced with 1,400 tanks and recaptured the Golan heights along with the Israeli base on Mount Hermon. Yet by October 8 they yielded again to the Israelis when all lost territory was regained. On October 16, after intense conflict on the east bank of the Suez and in the Sinai involving fierce tank battles, Israeli troops eventually crossed the Suez Canal, humiliated the Egyptian third army of 20,000 and surrounded it by October 21. In spite of Russia’s heavy investment in the region with weaponry, with Israel’s mastery of the air and both sides of the Canal a weakened Egypt agreed to a cease-fire on October 24, brokered between Nixon and Kissinger of the US and Brezhnev of the USSR. So Israel recovered from a critical assault, though the cost was the loss of 2,522 lives, and a sobering investigation that followed.
Chaim Herzog significantly describes this bruising conflict of 1973 as ushering in “a new era of military conflict.” This was certainly true, especially on account of improved Egyptian planning. However at the same time another new era was introduced in terms of President Sadat’s subsequent visit to Jerusalem in 1977 at Prime Minister Begin’s request. At that time there was also his appearance before the Israeli parliament and then the signing of the Camp David Accords in 1978. Nevertheless his assassination by Islamic Jihadists in 1981 upheld the ongoing mood of much of the Arab world which indicated that it was not enthused about rapprochement with the Jews. However putting aside the successive military humiliations of Israel’s neighbors since 1948, the two conflicts of 1967-1973 in particular ushered in a radically new tactic that would call for the engagement of Europe with the Arab cause, and that with considerable enticement. Martin Gilbert makes a perceptive assessment concerning this very same period.

Beyond Egypt the oil-producing Arab states had found a new strength. An oil embargo on those States that supported Israel was followed by the rise of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), dominated by Saudi Arabia, which used its ability to raise oil prices at will, and to raise them to unprecedented heights, to cast the Western economies into chaos. This spawned what came to be known as “petro-dollar diplomacy”, which led to pressure being put on Israel by those States which felt threatened (and were threatened) by a rise in oil prices if they did not act against Israel in the diplomatic arena [emphasis added].

The European Arab and Augustinian Resurgence

Following a succession of wars after independence that in the main were initiated by the surrounding Arab countries and not simply the Palestinian Arabs, the State of Israel found itself more firmly established, both economically and militarily, than ever. This series of conflicts also resulted in the expansion of Israel’s territorial boundaries, though often followed by negotiated cut-backs. In general it appears that the more the Arab nations raged against Israel, the more they lost out to their increasingly industrious and prosperous neighbor. Especially following the 1967 debacle as well as the loss of the Yom Kipur war in 1973, the Arab nations, in licking their wounds, appear to have conceived a new battle plan of a radically different nature. And

53 Herzog, Arab-Israeli Wars, p. 323.
54 Gilbert, Israel, pp. 460-461.
the nature of this change of strategy has evidently had a profound effect upon Europe in general, and as we shall note the United Kingdom in particular, with regard to Israel and Zionism. So we now consider post Second World War Europe from 1973 onwards and its relation to modern Israel and its Arab neighbors, both politically and theologically.

The witness of *Eurabia* by Bat Ye’or.

Fundamental to an understanding of the aforementioned new Arab strategy is a ground-breaking book by historian Bat Ye’or, *Eurabia*, which Sir Martin Gilbert highly commends for repeated reading.

This is a provocative and disturbing book. With all the drama of a master writer, Bat Ye’or presents a wide range of historical and contemporary documents and facts to tell the story of how the European Union is being subverted by Islamic hostility to the very ethics and values of Europe itself. . . . It is also a warning to Europe not to allow the anti-American and anti-Israel pressures to Islam to subvert Europe’s true values.55

By way of summary, Ye’or reveals the transformation of Europe into “Eurabia” as she defines it, a region of dhimmitude or non-Muslim subjection to Islam, having become a cultural and political appendage of the Arab/Muslim world. Eurabia is fundamentally anti-Christian, anti-Western, anti-American, and anti-Semitic. The institution that has been responsible for this transformation, and that continues to propagate its ideological message, is the Euro-Arab Dialogue (EAD), developed by European and Arab politicians and intellectuals over the past thirty years. Since 1967-1973 and the associated succession of military defeats at the hands of Israel, a new strategy was brought into effect by the Arab world that involved an integration of economic, political, cultural and religious elements. In particular it involved the transfer of culture from the Arab world to Europe, but not necessarily, as we shall see, from Europe to the Arab world, and especially with regard to religion. Consider two examples of this proposed Euro-Arab Dialogue. In 1974 at the Sixth Arab Summit Conference in Algiers, which was addressed to Western Europe, Nijmeddin Dajani, the Jordanian minister of industry and justice

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55 Bat Ye’or, *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis*, Outside back cover. Sir Martin Gilbert is himself an acclaimed historian, his magnum opus being the official and definitive biography of Sir Winston Churchill.
underlined the central issue as follows: as much as the Arab side attaches utmost importance to the economic development of their countries and the improvement of the standard of living of the Arab peoples, the Arabs were not ready to let the Dialogue proceed at the expense of the national interests, foremost of which was the Palestinian problem.56

Then in 1975, Dr. Ibrahim A. Obai, Saudi Arabia’s director of the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources,

aptly expressed the spirit of the Dialogue at a 1975 meeting of Euro-Arab Cooperation experts in Amsterdam. “Together as equals, the Europeans and the Arabs can through a ‘strategy of interdependence’ forge ahead to remove the thorn in their sides—the Israeli problem—and attend to the Herculean task ahead of them.” In his statement, “Political Preconditions for Cooperation with Western Europe,” Obaid stressed that for the sake of peace, the European Community should stop all military and economic assistance to Israel and work toward “an Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories foremost of which is Jerusalem.” He affirmed that it was in the interest of Western Europe to attempt to assume a more active role in the Middle East and this would be facilitated, if the PLO were recognized by the European Community as the official representative of the Palestinians. “The Arab-Israeli conflict and the oil problem are not only related but inseparable. Had it not been for the said conflict the oil weapon would not have been unleashed,” he declared.57

However, it is the religious aspect of Ye’or’s work that especially draws our attention. She makes it very clear that the Islamization of Europe in the economic, political and cultural realms brings with it the Arab Moslem desire for the Islamization of Christianity. At the same time this has associated with it an inevitable anti-Judaism and philo-Islamic world view concerning which an increasing number of Christians have indicated considerable sympathy. Ye’or’s evidence here is voluminous, though we especially focus upon individuals she references who have already been mentioned in Chapter Four. More specifically the problem concerns the merging of Christianity with Palestinianism in such a way that the Arab world gradually conquers by stealth.

A full-blown “Palestinian replacement theology” was created and spread throughout Europe, encouraged by EAD pro-PLO indoctrination. The new

56 Ibid., pp. 71-72.
57 Ibid., p. 71. This Arab/European collusion, especially with regard to Arafat’s PLO, is further attested to in David Selbourne, The Losing Battle with Islam, pp. 314, 321.
Arab Jesus unites in his Palestinianism both Muslims and Christians against Israel. . . . “Palestinianism,” the new Eurabian cult, thus conferred a theological value upon Palestinian sufferings. Palestinian victimology—the Jewish victimization of innocent Palestinians—was drummed into the European political conscience through the church institutions, the media, and Eurabian networks. Arab Palestine came to symbolize the crucifixion of Jesus by Jewish evilness. Such was the thesis preached by Kenneth Cragg, the assistant Anglican bishop in Jerusalem from 1970 to 1973.58

Concerning politicians who suggested that Europe needed Islamic spiritual values for its own moral regeneration, that past wars resulted from Europe’s resistance to Islam in the past, the same Bishop Cragg supported such views and also

criticized the European kings and the popes for not having cooperated with the invading Muslim armies, a surrender which would have amounted to collaboration in their own demise.59

It should be recalled that both Chapman and Sizer, also referenced in Chapter Four, happily call upon Cragg in support of their own Islamophile, pro-Palestinian, anti-Judaic bias.60

So Ye’or continues and writes of some scholars who have revived ancient Christian supercessionist writings that held that Jews had lost all rights to their land because of the crucifixion. From the early 1970’s onward a trend developed whereby

Eastern Christian communities were blackmailed and threatened. Any criticism of the pejorative characteristics attributed to Jews by the church fathers—especially those of Augustine and St. Chrysostom—was considered blasphemous by Muslims, since they are echoed in the Qur’an.61

Biblical history that had legitimized Israel became ever more contemptible and discredited, unless purified of its Jewish interpretation by Palestinian Liberation Theology. Its conceiver, canon Naim Ateek, is revered in European Protestant Churches. Theologians aligned on Ateek’s interpretation called for a new Christian reading of the Bible, in line with the Qur’an, that would expel Israel from its biblical identity as well as its

58 Ibid., p. 176.
59 Ibid., p. 189.
61 Bat Ye’or, Eurabia, p. 186.
patrimony. These Christians believe that they would thereby obey God’s will by helping to destroy Israel by whatever means.  

Here then is yet another anti-Judaic, anti-Zionist scholar who Chapman, Sizer and Burge devoutly respect. Here also is a variation of replacement theology that is not so far removed from the Moslem variety whereby Christianity is both preceded by and superceded by Islam. Consider the perspective of Ismail Raji al-Faruqi who taught at the Universities of Chicago and Syracuse, and was a professor in the Department of Religion at Temple University.

Islam precedes Judaism and Christianity and was present at humanity’s birth. Islam recognizes the Hebrew and Christian “prophets,” but only as Muslim prophets. . . . For this reason, the Christian belief that Jesus, the apostles, Jesus’ disciples and Christianity itself are related to Judaism is—according to al-Faruqi—a monumental error. Jesus rebelled against Judaism precisely to restore Islam, his religion. Christianity is an outgrowth of Islam; the Hebrew prophets, Jesus, his mother, his disciples, and apostles were all Muslims who preached Islam. Hence, because Christians belong to the Muslim creed, they cannot settle their relations with the Jews apart from the Muslims.

However strange it may seem, these assertions have been constantly affirmed and proclaimed by the dhimmi Arab Churches and supported in Europe and America by the anti-Zionist trend in the Church and in academia. . . . Above all, al-Faruqi warns that Christian voices allied to Zionism must be silenced.  

Is it any wonder then that the proponents of the broad Arab agenda delight in the supersessionist contributions of the likes of Chapman, Sizer, Burge and Cragg to their cause.

The witness of Londonistan by Melanie Phillips.

Yet further proof of Ye’or’s thesis is her referencing of the London journalist Melanie Phillips, especially her analysis of the dire state of Jewish-Christian relationships in the United Kingdom due to the

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62 Ibid., p. 177.


64 Ye’or, Eurabia, pp. 221-222.
burgeoning yet polarizing influence there of resurgent Islam. As an example, writing under the heading of “The Moral Bankruptcy of the Church of England” Phillips indicates that

Muslim records and texts testify to the usefulness of the Churches’ collaboration in the anti-Israel policy. Now, terrified by Islam, the Churches seek their security by advocating openly an anti-Israel policy.65

However even more to the point is the fact that this “anti-Israel policy” is driven by replacement or supercessionist theology. Lest there be any doubt in this regard, also refer to Appendix D: Melanie Phillips on Replacement Theology. However, in a more recent volume by this same author, Londonistan, Phillips makes the same essential point with far greater emphasis. It is that the Islamization of Europe, and especially London by way of example, has associated with it the intentional Islamization of Christianity, particularly through the encouragement of anti-Israel supercessionism.

One chapter in particular brings this point home. “On Their Knees before Terror” deals with the cringing attitude of British clergy toward the European thrust of Islam, as with regard to the perpetrators of the London bombings of July 7, 2005.

The first instinct of many British clerics was to emphasize and agonize not with the victims of the atrocity but with the community of faith in whose names it had been committed—and to deny that religion had had anything to do with it at all.66

Concerning the origins of this capitulation, Phillips confirms the argumentation of Ne’or.

The real motor behind the [Anglican] Church’s engine of Israeli delegitimization is theology—or, to be more precise, the resurgence of a particular theology that had long been consigned to ignominy. This is “replacement theology,” sometimes known as “supercessionism,” a doctrine going back to the early Church Fathers and stating that all God’s promises to the Jews—including the land of Israel—were forfeit because the Jews had denied the divinity of Christ.

65 Ibid., pp. 267, 346n. 5.
66 Melanie Phillips, Londonistan, pp. 138-139. It is interesting that although this author had previously published in the United Kingdom, like David Selbourne, p. 168n, difficulty concerning British acceptance for both necessitated publication in the United States.
This doctrine lay behind centuries of Christian anti-Jewish hatred until the Holocaust drove it underground. The Vatican officially buried it, affirming the integrity of the Jewish people and recognizing the State of Israel. This was because the Catholic Church faced up to the excruciating role it had played over centuries in dehumanizing and demonizing the Jewish people, a process which had paved the way for the Holocaust. But the Anglican Church to conduct a similar process, leaving unaddressed and unresolved the key issue of how in doctrinal terms it should regard the Jews. The ancient calumny that the Jews were the murderers of God and had denied His love thus still had resonance for Anglicans. So when Arab Christians reinterpreted Scripture in order to delegitimize the Jews’ claim to the land of Israel, this kick-started replacement theology, which roared back into the imaginations, sermons and thinking of the Anglican Church.67

By way of example, there is an appropriate dissection of Naim Ateek, previously referenced, along with his Sabeel Center in Jerusalem, “a source of systematic demonization of the Jewish State.”68 His book Justice and Only Justice inverts history, defames the Jews and sanitizes Arab violence. Real anti-Semitism, says Ateek, is found within the Jewish community in its treatment of the Palestinians. Zionism was a retrogression into the Jew’s primitive past. While asserting belief in Israel’s existence, it is “not based upon divine revelation but on a resolution of the United Nations.”69

Next is an analysis of Colin Chapman, previously referenced. While he may formally condemn anti-Semitism, Phillips writes that his book Whose Promised Land? is a poisonous travesty that uses theology to delegitimize Israel. Chapman’s history grossly downplays the extent of Arab violence against Jews in the decades of Jewish immigration to Palestine before the state of Israel was created. It is absurd for him to claim that no U.S. president could win without Jewish votes. Since American Jews are overwhelmingly Democrats, the victory of Republican presidents must remain, on this theory, a complete mystery.70

Then there follows a critical review of Stephen Sizer, previously referenced, a leading crusader against Christian Zionism. His supercessionism is similar to that of Ateek and Chapman, though he

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67 Ibid., p. 152. We would modify some elements of this statement. However the essential thrust is true.
68 Ibid. p. 152.
69 Ibid., pp. 152-153.
70 Ibid., pp. 154-155.
vociferously asserts that Israel is fundamentally an apartheid state because it is based on race; indeed it is even worse than South Africa. The reason the Israelites were expelled from the land was their breaking of the conditional Mosaic covenant with God. Being more interested in money and power they treated the poor and aliens with contempt. Today’s Jews, it appeared, were no better!

**CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY WITH ZIONISM**

The Christian Zionist feels himself torn in two directions, even as did Paul when he described the unbelieving nation of Israel in his day as God’s “beloved enemy” (Rom. 11:28). There is a dual attitude involved here whereby, on the one hand the modern State of Israel, that is its predominant unbelieving Jewish constituency, is an “enemy” of God because it continues to declare, “We don’t want this man [Jesus Christ] to rule over us!” (Luke 19:14). On the other hand we are told that, at the same time, this identical modern State of Israel along with the diaspora, is “loved because of their forefathers.” This tension is further reflected in Paul’s expressed frustration with the fierce opposition of the Jews that he personally experienced (I Thess. 2:14-16), and yet his tireless loving devotion poured out toward them, come what may (Rom. 9:1-5).

Yet another aspect of this tension also applies with regard to the Christian Zionist’s sympathy for the modern State of Israel, that is this thriving, secular, dynamic nation in the midst of opposing, raging nations. Nevertheless, while identifying with this ongoing travail rooted in spiritual blindness, commiseration is also born of anticipation of the glory, through sovereign, saving, covenantal grace, that shall eventually overtake this same nation as the prophets have repeatedly promised. So there will be a future consummate renovation and manifestation of the Jewish people by means of heaven coming down to earth. Of course the believer in supercessionism plainly offers no such sympathetic affection, only merciless condemnation and ultimate extinction; he does not envisage any eschatological hope for the nation of Israel, especially in view of his pliable use of the Old Testament.

To be sure, there is no place here for dual covenant theology since the evangelistic mandate continues to both encourage faith in Christ and warn the Jewish people, even as from the lips of Jesus when He declared that, “if you do not believe that I am He [the Son of God come from the Father] you will die in your sins” (John 8:18-19, 24).
The Contemporary State of Israel

We have plainly indicated that, notwithstanding Israel’s ongoing rebellion and ungodliness even to date, God retains a deep covenantal interest in His people of the flesh in the same manner that He indicated this loyal love toward Israel as an adulterous people by means of the Prophet Hosea (Hos. 2:14-23; 14:1-9; cf. Mal. 3:6). For this reason we love the modern State of Israel, we weep over it, we desire to proclaim to it, “the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ” (Tit. 2:13), and yet we also anticipate that time when the Lord Jesus will be welcomed by the joyous exclamation of Israel, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord” (Matt. 23:37-39).

However the present status of Israel, its providential existence, its current earthly achievements, its immersion in conflict and consequent ceaseless groanings, have to be carefully and sensitively assessed. We do this making comments, many of which are by no means regarded as absolutes. So in considering current events in the Middle East, and viewing them through the lens of the Word of God, we do this with the perspective of cautious probability. However there are two matters we do believe to be firm and non-negotiable. First, the present, unbelieving, Jewish people and their national manifestation are the object of God’s ongoing, distinct covenantal interest. Second, it is the inviolate promise of God that the Land originally promised to Abraham is a perpetual inheritance of the Jewish people, whether they remain in it or are expelled from it yet again. This is a most fundamental issue that controls any discussion concerning the claims of the Palestinian Arabs and a just settlement of the present problems in that region.

The Israeli/Palestinian Dispute

It needs to be appreciated that the initial and continuing opposition to the nation of Israel subsequent to its founding in 1948 was principally that engineered by the surrounding Arab nations, not the Palestinian Arabs. Yet this animosity was also the result of centuries of hatred having already been poured out upon the Jew. The major Middle Eastern wars against Israel of 1948-1949, 1956, 1967, and 1973 were all primarily instigated by the nations of Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon, and not the Palestinian Arabs. It is the Arab world of the Middle East, holding 97.7% of that sector which, with such virulent hatred, would wholly exclude Israel from the minuscule territory that it occupies, it presently representing .3% of that region.
During the Sinai Campaign of 1956, Israeli Mustang P-51 pilot, Jonathen Etkes crash landed and was captured by the Egyptians. Interrogated and tortured, following release he returned to the wreck of his aircraft after 1967 and commented:

“[T]hey [his captors] were so full of hate. . . . The heart of the problem is the lack of acceptance of Jews here by Arabs,” he declared. “This is the heart of the problem, not the Palestinians.”71

So Bat Ye’or comes to a similar conclusion when she describes a major element of EU policy toward Israel. It concerns the Arab demand to which the EU has submitted: the internationalization of what was essentially a regional conflict. The Israeli/Palestinian dispute could have been settled decades ago by an adjustment of frontiers and the integration of Arab and Jewish refugees by each side in an exchange of populations—in the same way that many other conflicts were resolved throughout the twentieth century [e.g. India and Pakistan]. But the Arab-Israeli conflict has been kept alive by the imposition of unacceptable conditions on Israel and European support for the most radical Arab leaders [such as Yasser Arafat].72

Plainly, it was not until after the 1967 and 1973 wars that there was a call for a separate Palestinian nation adjacent to Israel. The reason is that from 1948 to 1967 the hope of the Arab nations was the defeat and total expulsion of Israel from the Land. But when this hope faded, the alternative strategy was a separate Palestinian territory that was contemplated as a launching pad for further gains, yet never sufficient in itself. This being the case, the proposal of a separate Palestinian state incorporating the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is a hopeless prospect.

It is interesting to recall the early character of Transjordan, it originally being allocated in its larger configuration for inhabitation by the Palestinian Arabs. In 1950 Transjordan annexed the West Bank and then declared itself to be Jordan, and this with the recognition of the United Kingdom. It is significant that, at this time, King Abdullah conferred Jordanian citizenship on the population of the West Bank, including the inhabitants of Arab Old Jerusalem. However in 1967 Jordan was drawn into the Six Day War and as a result lost the West Bank and Old Jerusalem to Israel. Consequently in 1988 Jordan renounced all claims to the West Bank. Nevertheless it should be

71 David K. Shipler, Arab and Jew, p. 27.
72 Bat Ye’or, Eurabia, p. 113.
remembered that West Bank Palestinians were formerly Jordanians. This could have presented a window of opportunity except for the fact that Yasser Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization mudied the waters in 1970 when his Black September uprising against King Hussein in Jordan was ruthlessly put down. As a result Arafat fled to southern Lebanon which he soon took over. Also consider that after the War of Independence armistice of 1949, the Gaza Strip remained under Egyptian control until the 1967 Six Day War. Yet neither Jordan or Egypt have subsequently showed any interest in absorbtion of their Arab Palestinian relatives; rather they have fostered only aggravation for the Jewish people. In the circumstances, Israel must remain strong and vigilant until such time as Arab leadership should turn from its fiercely anti-Judaic ways.

**Christian Zionist Involvement in the Cause of Israel**

Christian Zionists are often challenged concerning any degree of political and material support they might offer to the cause of the Nation of Israel. This criticism frequently suggests that such practical aid leads to a neglect of evangelism. Indeed, Augustinian-like, there is also the intimation that the Jews should be kept in a state of constant humiliation; prosperity and independence would only reinforce their unbelieving ways! How this attitude of the Gentiles would make the Jews jealous, as is Paul’s hope in Romans 11:14, defies understanding, especially when the Apostle rather encourages merciful interest (Rom. 11:18-20), even as is the divine intent (Rom. 11:31-32). However when brought down to a more personal level, such an objection borders on pharisaism that would make even the Good Samaritan blush. Yet on the other hand we are told that practical support for the political and material improvement of the downtrodden Palestinians, often in socialist and neo-Marxist terms, is to be considered ethically noble!

To highlight the problem here, as Christians our desire for the conversion of a dearly loved relative calls for patience and sensitivity to earthly needs that ought to be boundless. Yet would we nevertheless shy away from offering such care, when this dear one is in deep need, since it might distract us from the priority of witnessing to them about the gospel? Yes, the gospel is for the spiritually poor and captive and blind and oppressed (Luke 4:18), and certainly modern Israel qualifies in this regard. But for the Christian to suggest that political and material support should be restricted, is quite outrageous, and is thoroughly condemned in James 2:15-17. This is not to suggest that all
Israeli policy should be blindly supported, as some would suggest though rarely prove. Nevertheless, in spite of the tireless efforts of supercessionists to evacuate Genesis 12:3 of its plain teaching, “I will bless those who bless you, I will curse those who treat you with contempt” (cf. Gen. 27:29; Zech. 2:8), and the Pauline priority of going “first to the Jew” (Rom. 1:16), so we adamantly maintain that the Jew in the flesh is to be treated with a special kindness. And experience undoubtedly proves that this approach is far more likely to gain a respectful hearing.

The Consummate State of Israel

Ultimately Christian Zionism represents a most glorious hope that even Israel after the flesh does not faintly grasp today. Nor can supercessionism, with its hermeneutics of divestment, finally subtract from the eschatological luster that is to come. The reason is that Zion will be the dwelling place of the Lord Jesus Christ, through which entrance gates only the objects of saving grace will enter and behold His glory and praise His name (Ps. 9:11, 14; 102:12-13, 16, 21; Isa. 46:12-13). At that time Israel will weep over its tragic past (Zech. 12:10-14), yet the children of Zion will also rejoice in their King (Ps. 149:2) This city is to be the joy of the whole earth, the city of the great King (Ps. 48:1-2). There will be a reversal of former dispersal and desolation. The wilderness will become like Eden, the desert will become like the garden of the Lord, discomfort will yield to gladness and singing. The scattered will return to Zion with joy while sorrow and sighing will vanish (Isa. 51:3, 11). Then the inhabitants will be told by the Lord, “You are My people” (Isa. 51:3, 11, 16). So evangelists will proclaim to the future heirs of Zion, “Your God reigns!” (Isa. 52:7-8). Then the Lord will roar from Zion in declaration of His being a refuge for His people while they will be reassured of their security under His dominion (Joel 3:16-17, 21). So Zion will become a place of worship, of instruction, and outreach to the nations (Mic. 4:2-3). For this reason Zion will also be called the City of Truth, the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the Holy Mountain (Zech. 8:2-3).

Let Zion’s time of favor come;  
Oh, bring the tribes of Israel home;  
And let our wandering eyes behold  
Gentiles and Jews in Jesus’ fold.

William Shrubsole, 1759-1829
Chapter Six

ISRAEL – and Christian anti-Judaic Hermeneutics in history

In Chapter Three, but particularly Chapter Four, it was alleged by a number of scholars that the disqualification of national Israel, according to the broken terms of the Old Covenant, led to transference, via imagery, of its promised blessings to the New Testament people of God. As a result, a new, distinctive, even apostolic principle of interpretation arose. In simple terms it was the necessity of focusing on the Old Testament text through the clarifying lens of Jesus Christ’s New Testament revelation. The argument runs that because New Testament writers appear to have freely interpreted many passages in the Old Testament revelation christologically and ecclesiologically, then we must employ this same hermeneutical method in interpreting the Old Testament as a whole, and its eschatology as well. In other words, by a process of reinterpretive imposition, the revelation of Jesus Christ has nullified a normative literal understanding of the Old Testament. However, before we take a closer look at this interpretive methodology, really an upgraded Origenistic and Augustinian hermeneutic, some further historical background concerning its origin will prove helpful.

REFORMED CONNECTION WITH ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Numerous Reformed writers have been inclined to boast in the fact that their amillennial eschatology has a long-standing heritage going back to Augustine. They claim, and rightly so, that following the fourth century, subsequent centuries witnessed the overwhelming dominance of their essential prophetic perspective. Thus the illustrious, indeed God-blessed Reformation perpetuated this inherited eschatology, notwithstanding the fact that not only the gospel, but also the doctrine of the church, were subject to considerable, indeed radical change and apostolic recovery at that time. For example, contemporary conservative Reformed writer Kim Riddlebarger make this point most emphatically when He writes of amillennialism as “the historic
Protestant understanding of the millennial age.”¹ And he does it in such a way that one is led to believe that to be Reformed in the fullest sense of that term is to be amillennial. Thus Augustinian eschatology, channeled through Luther, ought to be regarded as the traditional scheme of prophetic revelation, and implicit is Riddlebarger’s belief that the vagaries of premillennialism, repudiated as carnal chiliasm, along with its dispensational subset, should yield to the more historic stream. Thus:

The Protestant orthodox also used the more polemical term chiliasmus crassissimus, “the grossest millennialism,” regarding those who stressed the earthly and Jewish elements of the millennial age, much like contemporary dispensationalists. Most Protestants regard chiliasm as incompatible with Reformation orthodoxy. This may come as a surprise to many American evangelicals, who assume that Bible-believing Christians throughout the centuries have held to premillennialism.²

For the believer of Reformed convictions, there is a strong allegiance to historical roots and continuity, especially insofar as connection with the historic Reformation is concerned, distinctively emanating from Wittenberg, Geneva and Westminster. So we further read:

First given systematic expression by Augustine in his famous City of God, amillennialism developed a distinctive Reformed emphasis. . . . Because amillennialism has its roots deep in historic Christianity, when it comes to comparing amillennialism with dispensationalism, clearly the burden of proof lies with dispensationalists to prove their case. Evangelicals often assume the opposite. It should also be noted that all major thinkers in Christian history have held something akin to the amillennial position (e.g. Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin). This does not mean that amillennialism is true simply because it has historical support within Catholic Christianity and historic Protestantism. Nevertheless this is an impressive point, which is often not considered.³

However, such claims call for a response that clearly exposes, not grounds for boasting, but rather the shameful legacy of historic amillennialism which is in reality the eschatology of Roman Catholicism. We read today from writers such as Chapman, Burge, Palmer Robertson and Sizer, already reviewed, that the Christian Church has, through inheritance, become the New Israel of God.

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¹ Kim Riddlebarger, A Case for Amillennialism, p. 11.
² Ibid., p. 20.
³ Ibid., p. 32.
Nevertheless such language is nothing new according to Roman Catholicism. Consider the following:

1. “In fact, from the beginning of his ministry, the Lord Jesus instituted the Twelve as ‘the seeds of the new Israel and the beginning of the sacred hierarchy.’”

2. “As Israel according to the flesh which wandered in the desert was already called the Church of God (2 Esd. 13:1; cf. Num. 20:4; Deut. 23:1 ff.), so too, the new Israel, which advances in this present era in search of a future and permanent city (cf. Heb. 13:14), is called also the Church of Christ (cf. Mt. 16:18).”

3. “Modern Israel is not the true heir of the biblical Israel, but a secular state. . . . Therefore, the Holy Land and its sacred sites belong to Christianity, the true Israel.”

4. “His [Jesus Christ’s] intention in employing the term [qahal], hitherto used of the Hebrew people viewed as a church, to denote the society He Himself was establishing cannot be mistaken [Matt. 16:18]. It implied the claim that this society now constituted the true people of God, that the Old Covenant was passing away, and that He, the promised Messias, was inaugurating a New Covenant with a New Israel.”

“Hebrew prophecy relates in almost equal proportions to the person and to the work of the Messias. This work was conceived as consisting of the establishment of a kingdom, in which he was to reign over a regenerated Israel. The prophetic writings describe for us with precision many of the characteristics which were to distinguish that kingdom. Christ during His ministry affirmed not only that the prophecies relating to the Messias were fulfilled in His own person, but also that the expected Messianic kingdom was none other than His Church.”

“In the Apostolic teaching the term Church, from the very first, takes the place of the expression Kingdom of God (Acts, 5:11). Where others than the Jews were concerned, the greater suitability of the former name is evident; for Kingdom of God had special reference to Jewish beliefs. But the change of title only emphasizes the social unity of the members. They are the new congregation of Israel -- the theocratic

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4 Catechism of the Catholic Church, Para. 877. (Second Vatican Council, 1992).
However, since the time of Augustine, the amillennial doctrine of the supercession of national Israel by the Christian church has resulted in the vilification of the Jewish people, over the centuries, that has not excluded participation by Reformed individuals and congregations, notwithstanding some notable exceptions. It is interesting to consider that more recently, while within the Roman Catholic Church there has been some sorrowful confession of this tragic heritage (refer to Callan, Carroll, Flannery, Hay, Mussner and Remaud in Appendix E), those of conservative Reformed convictions have appeared to be reluctant to confront the ethical shame of their eschatological roots. Of course the Roman Catholic Church, notwithstanding Nostra Aetate of Vatican II, in which anti-Semitism was denounced, nevertheless continues to maintain that it is the new Israel. Thus the root of the Church of Rome’s problem here has not been excised.

Indeed it is interesting to learn of other Christian denominations that have more recently repudiated anti-Judaism in a confessional sense. As examples, Michael Vlack refers to the Central Board of the Swiss Protestant Church Federation, the Mennonite European Regional Conference, the Synod of the Evangelical Church of the Rhineland, the Texas Conference of Churches, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), though associated with disinvestment concerning Israel, that have issued a variety of high-sounding statements repudiating replacement theology in one form or another. Nevertheless none of these specifically declare agreement with Israel’s

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7 The Catholic Encyclopaedia, 1908, (Internet sourced).
8 “True, the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ (John 19:6): still, what happened in His passion cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures. . . . [T]he Church, mindful of the patrimony she shares with the Jews and moved not by political reasons but by the Gospel's spiritual love, decries hatred, persecutions, displays of anti-Semitism, directed against Jews at any time and by anyone.” October 28, 1965. Documents of Vatican II Council (Internet sourced).
However those of a Reformed persuasion are faced with the embarrassment of alignment with a sordid eschatological lineage (refer to Chapter Two: Israel - and Centuries of Christian anti-Judaism) and the alternative of alignment with divine, uncompromising recognition of National Israel in the present, after the manner of Romans 11:28. This would also involve the recognition of divine acknowledgment of Jewish ethnicity, nationality and territory as being intrinsic to the modern Hebrew people of God, notwithstanding their unbelief. The dilemma then concerns an eschatological vision that inescapably draws close to a broad premillennial perspective with regard to Israel, especially concerning the interpretation of passages such as Ezekiel 36-37, Zechariah 14 and Romans 11. On the other hand there is the disgraceful eschatology that has dominated Augustinian, Roman Catholic and Reformed church history for centuries.

Israel and Judeo-Centric Premillennialism up to the Reformation

The classic eschatological distinction for centuries was between the supercessionism of Augustine, as reflected in his City of God, and chiliasm that was often maligned for its alleged carnality and Judeo-centricity. As will be demonstrated, undoubtedly chiliasm, and subsequent premillennialism, have continued to uphold a closer identity with the perpetuation of the Jewish people as a nation having a distinct eschatological hope. This being so, and in the light of the theological anti-Judaism that flowed forth with dominant influence out of Augustine’s eschatology, it is easier to understand how premillennialism suffered belittlement, Cinderella like, as a consequence. Over the centuries that led up to the Reformation, the commanding influence of classic amillennialism was not a matter of choice according to the free biblical enquiry of Christians in general. During this period, the normative eschatology was upheld by the ecclesiastical powers, according to the lineage of Augustine and Aquinas, and it admirably suited the perpetuation, indeed the consolidation of the Church triumphant on earth as the new Israel that

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was rigidly intolerant of any suggestion of a revived and regenerated old Israel. Thus, upon the dawning of the Reformation,

In the sixteenth century, the rejection of the doctrine of a future terrestrial millennium was so common in Puritanism, and in Protestantism more generally, that it represented a mainstream position at the time. Luther and Melanchthon, Zwingli and Bullinger, and Calvin and Beza repudiated the millenarian doctrine, as did the Elizabethan Anglicans John Bale and John Foxe and their Puritan contemporaries Thomas Cartright and William Perkins. These and other “amillennialists,” as they are often called, either assigned the millennium to a past historical epoch that antedated the supposed corruption of the apostolic church by Roman Catholicism, or saw the millennium as the whole period of the Christian dispensation between the incarnation and the second coming, or regarded the millennium as a purely spiritual condition existing only in heaven or perhaps in the souls of living believers. But in the early to mid-seventeenth century, this amillennialist consensus unraveled as the idea of a future millennium on earth gained popularity, particularly in Reformed circles.10

Only with the advent of printing and the freedom to publish that coalesced during the early seventeenth century did a more independent pastorate result and the people at all stratas find themselves exposed to a revival of more millennial interpretations of Scripture, especially as eventually designated as premillennialism and postmillennialism.

Israel and Judeo-centric Premillennialism Beyond the Reformation

In broad terms, the eschatology of the late sixteenth century perpetuated Augustinianism, the result being that chiliasm continued to be associated with certain extremist segments of Anabaptism. However the seventeenth century introduced an openness to millennial speculation that has continued to the present, though the reason for this eruption and consequent flurry of discussion is a matter that has already been indicated briefly in Chapter Two with regard to Puritanism. At the conclusion of Crawford Gribbens’ published doctoral thesis, he draws attention to the observations of Christopher Hill which prove to be most enlightening. Their significance calls for their being referenced in greater detail at this juncture.

If, as [Christopher] Hill claims, English Calvinism was crumbling in the 1590s, then after the 1640s both strict church discipline and Calvinist theology finally “lost their grip”: “Calvinism broke down when the Revolution established freedom of discussion.” . . . The revolution’s literary implications were also enormous. . . . As Thomas Manton noted in 1655, “The press is an excellent means to scatter knowledge, were it not so often abused. All complain there is enough written, and think that now there should be a stop. Indeed, it were well if in this scribbling age there were some restraint. Useless pamphlets are grown almost as great a mischief as the erroneous and profane.” Hill has noted that, “The collapse of censorship saw a fantastic outpouring of books, pamphlets and newspapers. Before 1640, newspapers were illegal; by 1645 there were 722. Twenty-two books were published in 1640; over 2,000 in 1642. As both sides in the Civil War appealed for support from the ordinary people, the issues at stake had to be discussed. But it went farther than that . . . No old shibboleths were left unchallenged in this unprecedented freedom.” Perhaps Owen had been right in hoping “we might have less writing, and more praying.”

The result was a resurgence of millennialism that continued to be opposed by much of the Anglican, European Reformed and Lutheran establishments. Nevertheless,

[o]n the Continent, the key figures in the transition to millenarianism were two German Reformed theologians, Johann Piscator and Johann Heinrich Alsted; and in England, they were Thomas Brightman and Joseph Mede, an Anglican whose influence on the emergence of Puritan millenarianism was profound.

Thus as eschatological study of Scripture and resultant speculation fomented fresh discovery, two distinctive schools of millennialism emerged and came to the fore. There was premillennialism, which anticipated the future return of Jesus Christ just prior to the commencement of his earthly thousand year reign, and postmillennialism, which anticipated the future earthly thousand year millennium at the end of which Jesus Christ would personally return to earth. However, “the three major eschatological traditions which the Christian church has developed—a-, pre- and postmillennialism—each found expression within the puritan movement.”

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Wilhelmus à Brakel

A further example of a more pro-Judaic, European eschatology that broke forth during the seventeenth century was that expressed by Wilhelmus à Brakel (1635-1711), an esteemed Dutch Reformed theologian who ministered in Rotterdam, Holland, having eschatological views that contrasted with the more standard Augustinian variety. Willem VanGemeren explains that, in objecting to Calvin, Brakel held that,

> [t]he Church could not be identified with the New Israel. When Paul wrote about “all Israel” (Rom. 11:25) he was referring to the nation, and not the totality of the church and national Israel. This rejection of Calvin was also found in Brakel’s contemporaries. Brakel expected all twelve tribes to repent and express faith in Jesus as the Messiah. He also held that the Jews would be privileged to return to their land. The promise of the land is not just a type of the eternal rest or of heaven, rather it is part and parcel with the covenant of grace which God made to and affirmed with Israel. Brakel kept Israel and church together.14

Brakel’s whole tone is also particularly Pauline since it breathes a tenderness that at the same time did not see the necessity of denying Jewish distinctiveness. So he wrote:

> Will the Jewish nation be gathered together again from all the regions of the world and from all the nations of the earth among which they have been dispersed? Will they come to and dwell in Canaan and all the lands promised to Abraham, and will Jerusalem be rebuilt?

> We believe that these events will transpire. We deny, however, that the temple will be rebuilt, and that therein the previous mode of worship will be observed, which prior to Christ’s coming was of a typifying nature and would then be of a reflective nature. We also deny that Israel will then have dominion over the entire world—and other such things which the Jews imagine and some Christians dream about. Rather, they will be an independent republic, governed by a very wise, good-natured, and superb government. Furthermore, Canaan will be extraordinarily fruitful, the inhabitants will be eminently godly, and they will constitute a segment of

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the glorious state of the church during the thousand years prophesied in Revelation 20.\textsuperscript{15}

It is notable that, like Jonathan Edwards referenced in Appendix \textit{E}, for \textit{à Brakel} the unity of the redeemed people of God will yet comprise a diversity, incorporating territory, in which Israel is a distinctive part of the whole. What is also significant concerning \textit{à Brakel}’s belief in the regenerate future of National Israel is his evident loving attitude, without compromise concerning Israel’s unbelief, that is manifest in his consideration of how Christians should respond to the unbelieving Jew. Surely his kindly temperament was the result of his Judeo-centric eschatology. Consider his:

\textit{Various Reasons Given for Focusing upon the Conversion of the Jewish Nation.}

(1) Attentively observe the immutability of the covenant God made with Abraham and his seed. Consider that God, in spite of all their sins and stiffneckedness under it, does not break His promise nor will He permit any of the good words spoken to them to fall to the earth.

(2) Do not despise the Jewish nation. “Boast not against the branches” (Rom. 11:18), the natural branches of that olive tree into which you, as branches of a wild olive tree, have been grafted contrary to nature. “Be not high-minded, but fear” (Rom. 11:20). 1) They have received more than enough contempt from the unconverted. 2) They are in one and the same covenant with Abraham, their father. 3) “They are beloved for the father’s sakes” (Rom. 11:28). Therefore, let there be the love of benevolence toward them. They are the children of the covenant (Acts 3:25). 4) They will once be converted and be a glorious and holy people above all the nations on the face of the earth. Therefore, esteem, honor, and love them.

(3) Have pity upon their state, which is so wretched according to the flesh, being despised and detested among the nations—this is a righteous judgment of God upon them for their rejection of Christ. They hate the Lord Jesus, the true Messiah, with an evil hatred, and are living without the true religion—yes, have a religion which does not even resemble a religion. Nevertheless, they find a wonderful delight in it; thus they live in a state in which they cannot be saved, but have nothing to look forward to but eternal damnation.

\textsuperscript{15} Wilhelmus \textit{à Brakel}, \textit{The Christian’s Reasonable Service}, IV, pp. 530-531. From a premillennial perspective, one does not have to agree with \textit{à Brakel}’s postmillennialism and the common optimism of that “new world” period to nevertheless admire his loyalty to the Scriptures concerning a godly, distinctive and territorial future for national Israel.
(4) Pray for their conversion. How they have prayed for the conversion of the Gentiles! How they rejoiced in the prophecies that one day the Gentiles would be converted! Therefore, you ought to do likewise for their conversion, for you can pray this in faith, since they will certainly be converted.

(5) By way of a holy life show that you are walking in the footsteps of their father Abraham. The life of so many so-called Christians offends them and keeps them from exercising faith in Christ. They do not know, except it be to a very limited extent, that among Christians there are presently many who fear and love Jehovah, the God of Israel. Therefore, manifest the image of Christ by way of a holy walk, so that they may be convicted by it and yet be aroused to jealousy. Occasionally make use of opportunities to speak in a friendly manner with them, making your affection known to them, as well as your anticipation of their restoration in Canaan. Speak to them about the Lord Jesus by the name of Messiah. Speak of the dreadfulness of sin and of eternal damnation to follow upon sin, and show this from the Scriptures of the Old Testament if you are able to do so. Show them that man cannot be justified before God by works, and that all their deeds cannot justify them. Show then from the Old Testament that the Messiah would make satisfaction for sin by His death, reconcile God with man, and convert souls, proving this from Isaiah 53, 61, and Daniel 9. The fact is that in doing so you have done your duty, and it will be a delight to your soul that you have done so. Be very careful not to quarrel, however, thereby giving them an opportunity to slander and grieve you by their diatribe.16

Luther’s Eschatological Legacy

The inheritance from the Augustinian tradition that modern Europe received, notwithstanding the opposition of Melanchthon and others to Luther’s excesses, resulted in the continuance of an eschatology that upheld the essentially anti-Judaic thesis, namely the transference of blessings, formerly promised to Israel, to the Christian church for its fulfillment. As a consequence, the Jew continued to be an offence to western civilization, especially within Europe, a claimant forever disinherited of his Jewishness. And the Catholic, Protestant and Reformed churches gave encouragement to this anti-Judaic course. However the end result was a Germany that, having shaken the world with its call back to biblical Christianity, yet became the shame of the world whereby it caused the name of God to be blasphemed amongst the Jews. Thus Robert Wistrich concludes:

16 Ibid., pp. 534-535.
The German Reformation, under Luther’s guidance, therefore led in a very unfavourable direction for the Jews, when compared with parallel developments in English, Dutch or Swiss Protestantism. The seed of hatred sown by Luther would reach its horrible climax in the Third Reich, when German Protestants showed themselves to be particularly receptive to Nazi anti-Semitism.

Evidence of continuity concerning this eschatological lineage is not difficult to find. Consider a contemporary expression of Luther’s Augustinian anti-Judaism as confessed by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, that is, A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations on The “End Times”, A Study on Eschatology and Millennialism, published in 1989. Here it is stated that, “[t]he eschatology presented in The Lutheran Confessions is clearly amillennialist.”

The whole content of this document adds unqualified support to this statement. Then in an “Excursus Regarding the Jews,” anti-Semitism is nevertheless repudiated while at the same time we are told that, “Martin Luther, in his last sermon, said concerning the attitude of Christians toward the Jewish people, ‘We want to treat them with Christian love and to pray for them, so that they might become converted and would receive the Lord.’” However, what is unsaid here is just as significant, for Williamson also explains that, “Luther’s last sermon, preached a few days before his death, importunately appealed that all Jews be driven from Germany.” Then “The End Times” Report concludes:

Believing Jews, together with Gentiles, constitute the New Israel. In Christ “there is neither Jew nor Greek” (Gal. 3:28). In speaking of the place of Jews within saving history, the Scriptures do not ascribe a political fulfillment to Old Testament texts which deal with the future of “Israel.” The modern Israeli state is not the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. The view of an earthly millennium with the temple rebuilt cannot be substantiated. Quite simply the Scriptures are silent regarding modern political events in the Middle East and any Jewish right to the land there.

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19 Ibid., p. 38.
20 Williamson, Has God Rejected His People? p. 102.
Judgments concerning such matters are therefore not theological questions.21

So, as we have already seen (page 115), the exegesis of Lutheran commentator R. C. H. Lenski follows the same course. In a similar, though more vociferous vein, the eschatology of Herman Otten, editor of the Lutheran Christian News, has been vehemently anti-Judaic in doctrine, and especially so with regard to the modern State of Israel. Yet again, also consider Francis Pieper’s Christian Dogmatics (1953), a standard Missouri Synod work, which is thoroughgoing in its amillennialism. Here theological anti-Judaism plainly rears its head. Pieper opposes the modern State of Israel because its establishment will divert the attention of the Jews from the Gospel which in their dispersion they now hear and are to believe to a future age. This pernicious effect is intensified if this dream of a future “time of the Jews” is made attractive to them by promises of Jewish nationalism, a return to, and possession of, the land of their forefathers, and a rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem, with re-establishment of its elaborate worship. One of the many deplorable consequences of the World War is the promise of the Allies to give Palestine to the Jews as their national home. Instead of repenting of their sins and believing in the Messiah who has come, the Orthodox Jews dream of a return to Palestine and the rebuilding of the Temple with its worship (Zionism), and the Reform Jews envision a spiritual domination of the world by Jewish intellectual superiority and erudition, to be achieved by means of a Jewish university on the Mount of Olives.22

What further proof is needed of the shameful eschatological spirit of Augustine living on in Augustinian Lutheranism? While the Bishop of Hippo rejected the concept of extreme persecution of the Jews, that is elimination, yet he favored their being kept in subjection and impoverishment.23 So Pieper would similarly have them remain as vagabonds for their own spiritual good! The whole spirit of this doctrinal expression is repugnant in the light of Romans 11:18-20.

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23 James Carroll, Constantine’s Sword, p. 385.
By the time of the late seventeenth century, the creedal formulation of Lutheranism, along with its cool dogmatic orthodoxy, had resulted in a nation in spiritual decline which gave birth to the pietistic movement. It was prompted by Philipp Jacob Spener, of Frankfurt and Berlin, he being concerned about the spiritually bleak and parched state of Lutheranism.

The utterly depressed condition of religious life in Germany, the almost universal immorality in the universities, the almost complete destitution of edificatory preaching, and the almost lack of other means of awakening and stimulating spiritual life, remaining unchanged, Spener attempted to bring about a reformation (1666 onward). Personal conversion, even in the case of ministers of the gospel, seems not to have been expected. Baptism, administered in infancy, was supposed to have magical efficacy in procuring salvation; and the partaking of the body and blood of Christ in the Supper was supposed to be a means of grace even in the cases of the most immoral and irreligious.24

While Spener considered himself a dwarf when compared with Luther’s stature, yet he maintained that standing on the shoulders of this giant he was enabled to see further ahead. He was pained when Lutherans spoke evil of Luther’s Reformation, nevertheless he was also insistent on ongoing spiritual reform that believed in the necessity of personal sanctification and piety.25 Joined by A. H. Franke, a new movement grew that included the founding of the University of Halle and a large growing body of pastors. Through Spener’s godson, Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, there developed the Herrnhut community, which was influential in the ministry of John Wesley.

Of particular interest here is the fact that the pietistic movement lead to a more millenarian emphasis which also resulted in greater tolerance toward the Jews. This contrasted with the Augsburg Confession, Article XVII, which condemned those, “who now scatter Jewish opinions, that, before the resurrection of the dead, the godly shall occupy the kingdom of the world, the wicked being every where

suppressed.” Spener evidenced a mild postmillennialism that went hand-in-hand with a stemming of the tide of anti-Semitism in his day.

It has been suggested that Spener, in Frankfurt, treated the Jewish people not only as potential Christians, but also as neighbors assigned by God. . . . [His] forthright and frequent denunciation of the teasing and mobbing of Jewish people on the streets by Christian children caused that malicious practice to occur with less frequency. . . . Spener replied affirmatively to the question, “Can Christian midwives attend Jewish women?” . . . Spener in numerous later opinions advised against expulsion of Jews or abolition of their synagogues. . . . Spener was a promoter of Christian missions to Jews. He himself baptized a number of Jewish converts to Christianity at Frankfurt. He conceded, however, how difficult it was to help these people, now bereft of family and position, to recapture financial security. He, therefore, concluded that reborn Christians could best help in this difficult task by living out their faith in love-filled lives that would make the Gospel attractive to Jews.

As we have already seen with à Brakel, here is further proof that Judeo-centric doctrine, in giving right biblical acknowledgment of the Jew even in unbelief, while having evangelism in mind, is best suited for the production of a loving attitude toward the Jew. Hence a scholarly lineage of Lutheran premillennialists developed that included Bengel, Zahn, Delitzsch, Godet, Aubelen, and Rothe, along with van Osterzee being Dutch Reformed. Thus “American Lutherans were aware of these European theologians. Some Lutherans emigrating to America brought these millennialistic views with them.” They were more likely those having a background of Lutheran pietism. In the United States, three particular Lutherans were influential in the stimulation of premillennialism that was Judeo-centric. They were Samuel Simon Schmucker, Joseph Seiss, and George N. H. Peters.

Reformed Development

However, on a much larger scale, the Reformed movement maintained its allegiance to Augustinian eschatology which especially found authoritative expression in the writings of Francis Turretin (1623-

1687), who studied at Calvin’s Academy in Geneva where he later taught for thirty years. His monumental *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* became the epitome of Reformed doctrine. Not surprisingly his quotations of Augustine are copious, even far exceeding references to Calvin. Consequently Turretin’s eschatology is almost predictable. With regard to the prophetic expectations of Israel’s restoration, that is beyond the return from Babylon,

> the expressions are not to be pressed literally because they are symbolical, not proper; typical, not literal; to be explained spiritually and not carnally. Israel is to be restored, not according to the flesh and letter, but according to the promise and spirit (Rom. 9); the holy city, not Jerusalem, but the church.\(^{30}\)

Certainly there will be a remarkable conversion of the Jews before the end of the world,

> not that all will be converted, but that many will . . . (although we cannot be certain either in what way or when precisely it will take place). . . . But whatever that calling of them shall be, a restitution of the Jewish polity in the land of Canaan is not to be dreamed of. . . . Besides, this polity was to last only until Christ. . . . Finally, if God had wished to restore that polity, he would not have suffered it to be abolished for so long a time (for over sixteen centuries).\(^{31}\)

Of course such a mass incorporation into the church of Christ is to the exclusion of any perpetuation of Jewish identity. Thus in classic Augustinian fashion there is token recognition of Jewish individuality for a time, though any form of a Jewish restoration was considered to be a more gross form of Chiliasm.\(^{32}\) Hence Turretin’s *Institutes* became the central textbook for Systematic Theology in American Ivy League Colleges during the later half of the 18th century. Consequently it is not surprising that the early theologians of Princeton Theological Seminary highly esteemed this most influential legacy, and of course its eschatology.


\(^{31}\) Ibid., III, pp. 587-588.

\(^{32}\) Ibid., III, pp. 574-575.
Charles Hodge agreed with Dr. [Archibald] Alexander that Turretin’s *Institutio Theologiae Elenchicae* was “incomparably the best book as a whole on systematic theology” and continued its use as the principal text.

However: “In 1845 he [Hodge] had changed his classroom method from student recitations on Turretin’s [Latin] text to his own lectures on theological topics.” Nevertheless, it ought not to surprise us that eventually when his magnum opus, *Systematic Theology*, was first published in three volumes in 1872, its replacement of Turretin was more in name than in essential emphasis, as the copious references to his Reformed mentor indicate.

**REFORMED DEVELOPMENT WITH FAIRBAIRN, BAVINCK AND VOS**

This now leads us to consider that, in the eschatological milieu of the western world toward the close of the eighteenth century, a defensive response against resurgent premillennialism came to the fore which resulted in a “new hermeneutic” that actually proved to be nothing more than revamped Augustinianism. Thus VanGemen explains that:

By the end of the nineteenth century amillennialism as an eschatological position had arisen out of the new hermeneutic for which [Patrick] Fairbairn [1805-1874] was a leading spokesman. The writings of Herman Bavinck (1895-1964) [of the Free University of Amsterdam] and Geerhardus Vos (1895-1964) [of Princeton Seminary] are representative of the change. Both theologians interact with chiliasm in affirming that their eschatological position is normative. Both Bavinck and Vos are amillennial in their views and engage in argumentation against premillennialism. . . . Instead of taking the OT language for what it is, Bavinck argues that there lies an eternal truth “in the earthly, sensual forms of the prophecies.” . . . He strongly objects to millennialism as a hermeneutic in which the earthly forms of the OT are understood literally.35

We will now consider these three Reformed scholars in terms of their eschatology with regard to Israel and the all too obvious historic connection with fundamental Augustinianism.

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34 Ibid., II, p. 32.

Born in Hallyburton, Scotland, in 1805, after graduating from the University of Edinburgh in 1826 he tutored at the Orkney Islands and advanced in his study of Hebrew and German. Following his first pastorate in Glasgow, evangelical convictions led to his alignment with the Free Church of Scotland, hence a leading part in organizing the Free Church Presbytery of Haddington. In 1853 he was appointed by the General Assembly to the Chair of Theology in Aberdeen. However when the Free Church College was founded in Glasgow in 1856 Professor Fairbairn became Principal and Professor of Church History and Exegesis there, and presided over the institution till his death in 1874.

Fairbairn (1838-39) versus Fairbairn (1864).

In 1838-39 Fairbairn delivered twelve lectures on, “Future Prospects of the Jews—Restoration to Their Own Land—Universal Conversion to the Faith of Christ.” Here the younger Presbyterian minister of Glasgow presents arguments for a millennial eschatology that envisages a distinct national future and conversion of the Jewish people. In 1864 the older Fairbairn, as Principal of the Presbyterian Free Church College in Glasgow, authored *Fairbairn on Prophecy* in which was included, from an amillennial perspective, “The Prophetical Future of the Jewish People.” Fairbairn’s *The Typology of Scripture* (1852), *Hermeneutical Manual* (1858), and *Commentary on Ezekiel* (1863) are similarly amillennial. In 1950, Albertus Pieters edited a book in which both articles were included under the title, *The Prophetic Prospects of the Jews, or Fairbairn vs. Fairbairn*. The later writing of Fairbairn proposes three views, the Jewish, semi-Jewish, and spiritualistic, the last mentioned being his more recently embraced amillennial perspective, namely “that the proper meaning of the prophecies, in so far as they bear on the future of Israel, is to be made good simply by the conversion of the people [Jews] to the Christian faith, and their participation in the privileges and hopes of the church of Christ.”

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36 Refer to this author’s theological anti-Semitism in *Chapter Three*.

37 Albertus Pieters, *The Prophetic Prospects of the Jews or Fairbairn vs. Fairbairn*, p. 91. Of course this incorporation of Israel into the Church of Christ means that all Jewish identity, whether individual, national, or territorial, has become null and void.
regard for Israel and the Jews which is simply a recapitulation of essential Augustinianism, though filtered through a prism of German scholarship.

We pass by this author’s unwillingness to face the Jewish realities of Matthew 19:28; Luke 21:24; Acts 1:6-7,\(^{38}\) and simply consider his wrestling with the vital question:

[M]ay not the natural Israel in some other respect have the prospect of a separate and peculiar standing in the church? . . . Even when the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ, shall the Jewish nation stand out and apart from the rest? . . . Were it to do so, it would not be a continuation or a renewal of the past, but the introduction of an entirely new principle into the Church of God.\(^{39}\)

Here is no concession such as by David E. Holwerda, professor of New Testament at Calvin Theological Seminary, who, in commencing a study of Romans 9-11, asks the question, “Is there a future for Jewish Israel?” To this he offers the frank confession that, “there is nothing in the Gospels and Acts that either biblically or logically entails an absolute or definitive rejection of Jewish Israel.”\(^{40}\) However Fairbairn is quite unyielding at this juncture. He further explains concerning Israel that,

they were the nation that held the truth, and, as such, stood apart from the idolatrous nations of heathendom. But when that distinction virtually ceased to exist by the mass of the people abandoning the truth, and espousing the corruptions of heathenism, the Lord held the ground of separation to be abolished, and addressed and treated them as heathen (Isa. 1:1-10; Amos 9:7-8; Ezek. 16-23).\(^{41}\)

Yet Fairbairn makes no reference to the fact that ensuing revelation from all three of the prophets he references gives encouragement concerning the vital truth of Paul that “where sin increased, grace abounded all the more” (Rom. 5:20; cf. Isa. 2:1-4; Amos 9:11-15; 38 Fairbairn frequently disparages “literalism.” With the same tone of depreciation he writes of, “Prophetical Literalism Essentially Jewish,” Prophecy, Second Edition, pp. 505-507. Is there an inference here that a true and more figurative biblical hermeneutic, in the realm of eschatology, should be non-Jewish?

39 Ibid., pp. 131, 133-134.
40 David E. Holwerda, Jesus & Israel, One Covenant or Two? p. 150.
41 Pieters, Prophetic Prospects of the Jews, p. 132.
Ezek. 28:25-26; 34, 36-37), namely the triumph of sovereign grace that so many of the likes of Fairbairn acknowledge with regard to the New Covenant dispensation, yet deny for Israel. Though more of this when we subsequently consider Horatius Bonar’s objection to this matter with regard to Fairbairn’s faulty view of conditionality.

Why then cannot the future one people of God yet incorporate a diversity of Jew and Gentile or the nations, as certainly Edwards, Bonar, Ryle, and Spurgeon affirm? Fairbairn explains:

[I]f converted Israelites were still to stand apart from and above them [the remainder of the kingdom], it would not be the same thing that existed under the law, but something essentially different—something foreign even to Judaism; how much more, then, to Christianity?42

Here we simply assert that the essence of Judaism is rooted in the Abrahamic covenant, as signified by circumcision, and not the temporal Mosaic legal covenant. Hence, a future distinctive Hebraic/Judaic distinction would not be essentially different. Granted that there would be new features in this perfected Messianic Judaism, but it is simply not correct to suggest that there could not be variety amongst the people of God. After all, we might ask if angelic beings will also be participants in the future, new glorious order?

Concerning Fairbairn’s regard of the land of promise, we encounter a similar problem. He declares,

that the typical character which attached to the people and the religion of the old covenant, attached also to the inheritance—the land of Canaan; and that the transition to gospel times is represented as effecting the same relative change in respect to this as to the others. . . . The land was, in a manner, the common basis of the people and the worship—the platform on which both stood, and in connection with which the whole of their religious observances, and their national history, might be said to move. To except this, therefore, from the typical territory, and withdraw it from the temporary things which were to pass to something higher and better in Christ, were to suppose an incongruity in the circumstances of ancient Israel, which we cannot conceive to have existed, and could only have led to inextricable confusion. . . . [T]he former relation of the Israelites to the land of Canaan affords no ground for re-occupation by them after their

42 Ibid., p. 134.
conversion to the faith of Christ, no more than for expecting that the handwriting of ordinances shall then be restored. 43

Yet for all of the twisting and turning here, the fact remains that God’s promise of the land was made unilaterally to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 12:1; 15:1-21; 26:2-4; 28:13), and it seems intimated here that Fairbairn is uncomfortably aware of this fact. The reality here is that the multilateral Mosaic covenant was a temporary administration imposed upon Israel (Ps. 147:19-20), which could not nullify that which had been promised to Abraham (Gal. 3:17); it “was added because of transgressions” (Gal. 3:19; cf. Rom. 5:20), and thus could not invalidate the promise of the land. Yes, we agree that Abraham would become “heir of the world” (Rom. 4:13), that the seed of Abraham, being Christ and His seed (Gal. 3:16, 29), would inherit the world. But we reject Fairbairn’s suggestion that this necessarily brings about the nullification of Israel’s future possession of the land, as if it were part of “the handwriting of ordinances” (Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14) that were specifically Mosaic. So again we see here the rigid unwillingness of amillennial doctrine to incorporate diversity within unity. However it is the prophets who repeatedly incorporate the diversity of the land, the prominence of Jerusalem, and the surrounding nations within the unity of the whole redeemed, inhabited earth (Isa. 60:1-4; 62:1-12; Mic. 4:1-5; Hag. 2:1-7; Zech. 14:16-21).

Ezekiel 34, 36-38.

The overall approach of Fairbairn in consideration of the future of national Israel in these classic references is summed up according to a question he raises and subsequent conclusions.

Could the promise of Messiah, and of the affairs connected with his work and kingdom, have been unfolded to the Church [of ancient Israel] beforehand, and with any degree of detail, excepting under the form and shadow of Old Testament relations? We unhesitatingly answer, No; not unless the Spirit had violently controlled the minds of the prophets, and superceded the free exercise of their faculties. . . [This] prophecy . . . bears the natural impress of the time to which it belonged. But if any, determined to hear of nothing but the letter, will still hold by the watchword of literality,—will maintain that as it is a literal Israel that is the subject of promise, a literal Canaan, a literal dispersion, and a literal return from it, such too must be all that is to come,—then, we say, let them carry

43 Ibid., p. 140, 142.
it out, and the shepherd by whom the good is to be accomplished must be the literal David, for David alone is expressly named in the promise; and so the Messiah altogether vanishes from the word of which he is the very heart and center. And there must be no advance in the Divine dispensations, nothing but the formal reproduction of the past. Such is a slavish adherence to the letter; it ends in shutting up the new wine of Messiah’s kingdom in the old bottles of a transitory and provisional economy. . . Thus, as the David of the promise is Christ, so the covenant-people are no longer the Jews distinctively, but the faithful in Christ; and the territory of blessing no longer Canaan, but the region of which Christ is king and lord.

Hence these passages, and thus the human author, although directed by the Holy Spirit, were culturally landlocked, constrained by “the time to which [they] . . . belonged.” To be sure, the tone of the exilic period is to be expected in Ezekiel’s style of communication (Ezek. 1:1-3). But to suggest that God could only present the future of His kingdom strictly within these exilic parameters is to rashly constrain Him and be in conflict with Daniel who was not so restricted, for he “heard but could not understand,” and was further told, “Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time” (Dan. 12:8-9). Here Fairbairn begs the question since the necessity of “violent control of the minds of the prophets” in predicting the future is quite unproven, and indeed an unnecessary restriction of the Divine Will. After all, the vital terms concerning the meaning of “Judah” and “Israel” and “land” and “Jerusalem” and Zion” and “nations” are certainly not restricted by a particular culture. Hence we would suggest that Fairbairn’s attempt to generalize with regard to the promised rapprochement concerning “Judah” and “Israel” (Ezek. 37:15-23) so that it merely represents the result of the resurrection of God’s people whereby “the direct result of this was to unite them to God” borders on the fanciful. We would maintain that “Judah” means “Judah” and “Israel” means “Israel,” so that God “will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king will be king for all of them” (Ezek. 37:22).

Concerning David following his future resurrection, we would first enquire of the amillennialist as to what his distinctive role will be in the future kingdom of God. As with Moses and Elijah, surely he will have great prominence, in which case it is quite likely that he will

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44 Patrick Fairbairn, Ezekiel, p. 385, 388, 421.
indeed be a regent/prince over Israel under the King of kings, Jesus Christ, the “righteous Branch of David” (Jer. 23:5). Hence to suggest that such an understanding results in “Messiah altogether vanishing from the word” is simply absurd. Thus, “My servant David will be a prince among them,” that is “My flock” (Ezek. 34:22-24). However, that this prince is not identical with Christ is indicated by the fact that he offers a sin offering for himself (45:22), and has distinctive sons (46:16-17).

Thus the conclusion of Fairbairn is that at the consummation of the church, peculiar and historic Jewishness will have been done away with, superceded, absorbed into the one people of God, and particularly with regard to any distinction concerning the territory of Israel. In essence, Augustinianism and Catholic eschatology and Fairbairn are in agreement at this point. Thus the good news for the Jew today is that his distinctive Jewishness is divinely passé, a biblical anachronism. Those Christians who believe this will nevertheless declare their desire is that the Jews be saved. But they dare not explain to these same Jews their whole agenda which includes salvation from Jewishness. Yet how this approach flies in the face of Paul’s whole attitude toward the Jews (Rom. 11:28), especially in his evangelistic endeavors, in that he freely confesses that he remains one of them (Acts 21:39; 22:3; Rom. 9:3; 11:1). And surely he does not confess this with a forked tongue!

Ezekiel 40-48.

Interpretations of this concluding and climactic section of Ezekiel are divided into four categories, the last of which is that of Fairbairn and to which we offer a brief critical analysis. A. The **historico-literal** interpretation. B. The **historico-ideal** interpretation. C. The **Jewish-carnal** interpretation. D. The **Christian-spiritual** interpretation. Thus, the whole representation was not intended to find either in Jewish or Christian times an express and formal realization, but was a grand, complicated symbol of the good God had in reserve for his church, especially under the coming dispensation of the gospel. From the Fathers downwards this has been the prevailing view in the Christian church.46

Now we would thoroughly agree with this historic representation, except that “from the Fathers downwards” in reality it describes the

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46 Ibid., pp. 443-444.
eschatology of Augustine and the Roman Catholic Church, namely supercessionism which Fairbairn consistently represents. Would he just as readily accept the gospel declared from “the Fathers downwards” that has been “the prevailing view of the Christian church”? However when Ezekiel is instructed concerning his final vision, “Report everything you see to the house of Israel” (Ezek. 40:4), he was confirming the earlier promise: “When My sanctuary is among them forever, the nations will know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel” (Ezek. 37:28). Thus “Israel” and “the nations” are to become distinct yet complementary, worshipping entities.

In rejecting Fairbairn’s interpretation here, we admit to his consistency with regard to his method of interpreting prophetic Scripture. However, it is at this juncture concerning Ezekiel 40-48, that we see it most clearly in terms of its generalization that so blithely rides over the astonishing particulars in terms of future fulfillment. This is not to suggest that such a grand and glorious vision is easily comprehended. Though it does test our willingness to accept the transcendent glory of God’s future, holy, spiritual materiality. However, it is the “spiritual interpretation” here that is so evidently unspiritual in that it implies an unnecessary verbosity that ends up in justifying any number of vague interpretations, provided one makes an attempt to deal with the particulars. Allow Horatius Bonar to explain better the problem here.

Every word of prophecy is big with meaning. Hence it must be most carefully and exactly interpreted. To attach a general meaning to a whole chapter, as is frequently done, shows not only grievous irreverence for the Divine Word, but much misconception of the real nature of that language in which it is written. Yet such is often the practice of many expositors of prophecy. They will take up a chapter of Isaiah, and tell you that it refers to the future glory of the Christian Church; and that is the one idea which they gather from a whole chapter, or sometimes from a series of chapters. Their system does not admit of interpreting verse by verse and clause by clause, and affixing an exact and definite sense to each. Bring them to this test, and their system gives way. It looks fair and plausible enough, so long as they can persuade you that the whole chapter is one scene, out of which it is merely designed that one grand idea should be extracted; but bring it to the best of minute and precise interpretation, and its nakedness is at once discovered. Many prophecies become in this way a mere waste of words.

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47 In *An Exposition of Ezekiel* by William Greenhill, 40:4 is considered as referencing the Christian church in the extreme. Any distinctive regard for national Israel is wholly absorbed into a Gentile world view.
What might be expressed in one sentence, is beaten out over a whole chapter; nay, sometimes over a whole book.48

These expositors think that there is nothing in prophecy, except that Jew and Gentile are all to be gathered in, and made one in Christ. Prophet after prophet is raised up, vision after vision is given, and yet nothing is declared but this one idea! Every chapter almost of Isaiah foretells something about the future glory of the world; and every chapter presents it to us in some new aspect, opening up new scenes, and pointing out new objects; but, according to the scheme of some, every chapter sets forth the same idea, reiterates the same objects, and depicts the same scenes. Is not this handling the Word of God deceitfully?49

The response of Horatius Bonar.

In Horatius Bonar we have a Scottish contemporary of Fairbairn responding with perceptive vigor and critical enlightenment. In Bonar’s *Prophetic Landmarks*, and *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* which he edited from 1849 to 1873, there are detailed refutations of Fairbairn’s hermeneutic and resultant eschatology, though for the sake of brevity, we give a summary of two significant areas of criticism.

1. All prophecy is, to some degree, conditional.

Classic Reformed theology has commonly distinguished between prophecy that is predestined or certain, and prophecy that is contingent or conditional, usually in harmony with the distinction between God’s decretive will and His preceptive will. Fairbairn addressed this matter in his *Prophecy, viewed in respect to its Distinctive Nature, its Special Function, and Proper Interpretation* (1856), and included a qualifying appendix in the Second Edition (1865). This was doubtless due to the controversial nature of his opinion, that is his alleged departure from the accepted Calvinist stance to that which was more Arminian. In this

48 “The latter chapters of Ezekiel, describing the erection of a certain temple, are involved in so much obscurity, that it seems difficult to arrive at any determinate conclusion respecting the import of this mysterious prophecy. *It is certain that the attempt to spiritualize it produces little besides perplexity and confusion; nor have we any example in Scripture of an allegory so perfectly dark and enigmatic, as it must be confessed to be, on that supposition.*”—Robert Hall, *Works*, IV, p. 405.

regard, Bonar responded in *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* (1858) with marked disagreement concerning this particular item in *Fairbairn on Prophecy*, to which Fairbairn replied with some displeasure in the preface to his *Hermeneutical Manual* (1858).

The heart of Bonar’s concern, as a Calvinist, was Fairbairn’s belief “that there is in all prophecy an element of contingency,”⁵⁰ which consequently yields to a more Arminian perspective. Thus Fairbairn believed that the Second Coming was certainly decreed in a general sense, although circumstances could change in terms of the time of its eventual occurrence. By way of example Bonar makes reference to the following declaration of Fairbairn:

> The prophecies, for example, relating to the second coming of the Lord, . . . may be regarded . . . as protracted beyond what the natural import of the language might have seemed to indicate, on account of the forbearance of God waiting for the conversion of men. . . . Yet when [this Advent is] spoken of, as it often is, of being “near,” of “drawing nigh,” or being “at hand,” while now so many centuries have elapsed without its taking place, we can scarcely help admitting (however we may choose to express it) that some after-respect has been had to moral considerations as influencing the time of the predicted event; in other words, that there has been the operation of a conditional element to the effect of delaying longer than the original predictions might have led us to expect the actual occurrence of the event predicted.⁵¹

Consequently Bonar responds:

> [W]e are at a loss to conceive how it [this quotation] can be reconciled with any theory of predestination whatever. To say that God did not from all eternity decree the time when the Savior should come the second time, is to admit at once the Arminian notion of conditional decrees. . . . Nothing can well be more dishonoring to the Divine Being than to suppose, as Dr. Fairbairn’s words imply, that there was enough in the earlier predictions to warrant an expectation of the advent at a period which has passed by without it; and that “the course of things in the world” has led to the postponement of the Church’s hope.⁵²

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⁵¹ Fairbairn, *Prophecy*, 63-64.

To criticism such as this by Bonar, Fairbairn responded, with seeming irritation:

To divide, as he [Bonar] and his authorities do, between prophecy, considered as equivalent to Divine decrees, and prophecy, as involving matter of commination or promise—the former absolute, the latter conditional—does not satisfy my “exegetical conscience,” and I am afraid never can.\textsuperscript{53}

However a further illustration of Fairbairn’s understanding of conditionality concerns the institution of the Davidic Covenant in II Samuel 7:1-17. Thus we are told:

David himself knew perfectly well, that there was an implied condition, and that the prophecy must be read in connection with the whole plan and purposes of God in the administration of the affairs of His church.\textsuperscript{54}

Though we wonder what conditionality, in any sense, could be understood in the Noachic covenant of Genesis 8:20-9:17. Could in fact an unprecedented surge in human moral decline bring about an unexpected Divine interference in which the seasons fail and a similar universal flood reoccurs? We are not told. However, what interests us most is where this distinctive hermeneutic leads, and we now discover that it very much concerns the destiny of Israel. Fairbairn further explains that,

if the threatened judgments of the prophetic word, then also its promised blessings, are to be regarded, not as primarily and absolutely predictions of coming events, but rather as exhibitions of the Lord’s goodness, prospective indications of his desire and purpose to bless the persons or communities addressed, yet capable of being checked, or even altogether cancelled, in the event of a perverse and rebellious disposition being manifested by men. . . . [T]he Apostle Paul re-announces the principle with special emphasis on this particular branch of its application, when he says, at the close of his reasoning on the case of the Jewish people, “Behold, therefore, the goodness and the severity of God: on them which fell severity, but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise, thou shalt also be cut off” (Rom. 11:22),—that is, the prophetic intimations of future blessing are to be understood as valid only so long as the spiritual relation contemplated in them abides. When that ceases, a new

\textsuperscript{53} Fairbairn, Hermeneutical Manual, p. vii.

\textsuperscript{54} Fairbairn, Prophecy, pp. 64-65.
and different state of things has entered which the promise did not contemplate, and to which it cannot in justice be applied.\footnote{Ibid., p. 75. The third class conditional clause of Romans 11:22, Robertson, \textit{Word Pictures in the New Testament}, IV, p. 397, is defined as being a \textbf{“More Probable Future Condition,”} Dana and Mantey, \textit{Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament}, p. 290.}

In the face of such a disturbing course of reasoning, we would simply respond to Fairbairn with the enquiry as to whether this same conditionality applies to the application of the New Covenant gospel to believing sinners? If it does, then surely the sovereignty of grace has been done away with and in its place has been substituted a subtle form of Galatianism.

2. The unhelpful influence of German scholarship.

It is refreshing to discover a conservative scholar such as Bonar who is not wholly enamored with, even hypnotized by German scholarship, so that both its strengths and weaknesses are clearly distinguished. So he provides the following estimate.

The German style of thought is now widely leavening both Britain and America; and the issue of this is matter for suspicion and fear, in so far as pure Bible exposition is concerned. It is a style entirely self-revolving, in which, as one of their poets has described it, the soul is,

\begin{quote}
\textit{“Chasing its own dream for ever,}
\textit{On through many a distant star;”}
\end{quote}

turning in upon its own actings, instead of out upon God’s; making man’s interior self the great region of research, not God’s manifested self; dealing with spiritual truths as with abstractions or ideas, not as connected with Divine personality and life.

In spite of all the admiration in which it is fashionable to hold German critics, and with the full admission that their researches have not been unrewarded, their system of criticism, as a whole, cannot but be regarded as a failure, if not something worse. Its results have been inconsiderable for good, but vast for evil. Dwelling in the region of their own thoughts, they have lost the power to grasp, and the taste to appreciate the thoughts of God. They may be interpreters of words, but they are not expounders of thought, in so far as Scripture is concerned. In the former they excel, in the latter they fail. They have not brought forth the fullness, the richness, the vastness of Scripture language; they have rather diluted and emptied it. They have taken their own thoughts as their standard in measuring, their
law in interpreting the thoughts of God. Hence, in prophecy, where the language is doubly pregnant with the thoughts and purposes of God, they have totally broken down. Few of their works on prophecy are possessed of much value beyond that of verbal criticism. And it is sad to see their American imitators rapidly coming up to them, if not outstripping them, in the race of irreverence and error.56

Fairbairn has obviously spent much time in studying German theologians and exegetes, and that with considerable reliance. Thus in reviewing *Ezekiel, An Exposition*, Bonar comments: “We must profess our great dislike to the many abstract and German forms of expression employed throughout Mr. Fairbairn’s volume.”57 He further includes in *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* the following correspondence, presumably with some agreement.

You [Bonar] have carefully abstained from saying many things regarding Dr. Fairbairn’s works in general which you might have said, and which are freely ventilated in private among German scholars, viz., that Dr. F. has taken most of his good things, as well as some of his bad things, from German critics. A great part of his *Commentary on Ezekiel* is from Hävernick, as every German scholar knows. His other works are said to be in like manner large debtors to foreign sources. . . . [Signed] A Calvinist.58

While much of German scholarship has been Augustinian and amillennial in its leaning, and especially with regard to Lutheran writings even to this day, it remains to be seen if a direct connection can be made between this and the eschatology of Fairbairn’s later writings.

Herman Bavinck

Born in the town of Hoogeveen in the Netherlands, 1854, he first went to theological school at Kampen, but then moved on to Leiden where he graduated in 1880 having completed a dissertation on Ulrich Zwingli. In 1882 he taught theology at the Theological School of the Christian Reformed Churches, also at Kampen. However in 1902, as Abraham Kuyper left the Free University for a time to take on the

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58 Ibid., X, 1858, p. 410.
Prime Ministership of the Netherlands, he joined the faculty as Professor of Systematic Theology at the Free University of Amsterdam where he served until his death in 1921.

In his massive *Reformed Dogmatics*, and in true Augustinian fashion, Bavinck approaches the whole of the Old Testament as follows.

The spiritualization of the Old Testament, rightly understood, is not an invention of Christian theology but has its beginning in the New Testament itself. The Old Testament in spiritualized form, that is, the Old Testament stripped of its temporal and sensuous form, is the New Testament. . . . All Old Testament concepts shed their external, national-Israelitish meanings and become manifest in their spiritual and eternal sense.59

Further Bavinck declares, with a decidedly anti-Judaic tone, that:

Chiliasm [millennialism] includes the expectation that shortly before the return of Christ a national conversion will occur in Israel, that the Jews will then return to Palestine and from there, under Christ, rule over the nations. . . . Those of the Jews who reject Christ are not really true Jews (Rom. 2:28-29). They are not the “circumcision” but the “mutilation” (Phil. 3:2). They are the irregulars, idle talkers, deceivers, who must be silenced (Tit. 1:10-11). They have killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets as well. They persecute believers, do not please God, and oppose everyone. . . . Real Jews, the true children of Abraham, are those who believe in Christ (Rom. 9:8; Gal. 3:29, etc.). The community of believers has in all respects replaced carnal, national Israel. The Old Testament is fulfilled in the New.60

The salvation of “all Israel” in Romans 11:26, unlike Calvin’s inclusion of converted Jews and Gentiles,

remains a remnant chosen by grace (Rom. 11:5). . . . It is always “a remnant chosen by grace.” . . . [T]here is no room left in Paul’s sketch [in Romans 11] for a national conversion of Israel as the chilists expect. . . . [E]ven if Paul expected a national conversion of Israel at the end, he does not say a word about the return of the Jews to Palestine, about a rebuilding of the city and a temple, about a visible rule of Christ: in his picture of the future there simply is no room for all this.61

Thus Bavinck, as a thoroughgoing supercessionist, reveals his vigorous opposition to restorationist premillennialism, his militant

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60 Ibid., pp. 99, 102.
61 Ibid., pp. 107.
demeanor here being characteristic of the Reformed environment in which he worshipped and was educated. Concerning these strong eschatological convictions, Willem Van Gemeren offers the following critique:

Bavinck’s treatment of his subject exemplifies the amillennial approach toward the prophetic word. On the one hand, he summarizes the teaching of the OT prophets with respect to the future of Israel, which includes the conversion of Israel, the Messiah’s coming, the benefits to be enjoyed by the people of the Messiah including the return from the land of captivity, a restoration of temple and worship, and the Gentiles sharing in the blessings of the kingdom.

Instead of taking the OT language for what it is, Bavinck argues that there lies an eternal truth “in the earthy, sensual, forms of the prophecies.” He strongly objects to millennialism as a hermeneutic in which the earthly forms of the OT are understood literally.62

So Bavinck relentlessly imposes the NT over the OT, resulting in the assembly of Christian believers completely supplanting ethnic Israel. For this reason VanGemeren frankly concludes that,

he sacrifices the OT prophetic hope to a harmonious understanding of the NT, in which the NT passages which hold out a hope for Israel and different exegetical options are either harmonized or not fully considered. The authority of the OT as well as of the NT seems to be sacrificed out of concern for unity, harmony, and systematization.63

What then is the response of Bavinck to the European development of Zionism with which he must have become familiar during his lifespan (1854-1921)?

The question of the Near East is approaching solution, for turkey owes its existence to the mutual jealousies of the great powers. Once Turkey is destroyed there is every chance that Palestine will be assigned to the Jews to whom by rights it belongs. Furthermore, in the hearts of many Jews, as is evident from the Zionism that has emerged in recent years, there is a longing to return to Palestine and to form an independent state there. . . .

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63 Ibid., p. 263.
However we may view these political combinations, the New Testament furnishes not the slightest support for such an expectation.64

Hence, in the light of this classic and influential representation of Reformed, Augustinian eschatology, channeled through Calvin and Turretin, it would be well to contemplate exactly what evangelistic response, with regard to outreach toward the Jews, it might envisage? It certainly does not appear to reflect the pro-Judaic passion and methodology of Paul.

Geerhardus Vos

Since the close of the nineteenth century, probably the most influential and esteemed Reformed scholar in the realm of eschatology, not unrelated to his pioneering studies in biblical theology, would be Geerhardus Vos. That such stature is not overstated will be indicated by the fact that in having already made reference to a variety of Reformed writers, many of these will be found to have placed considerable reliance upon Vos, such as with Hoekema, Riddlebarger, Robertson, Venema, and Waldron. Born at Friesland, the Netherlands, in 1862, he was raised in a Christian Reformed Church manse in Michigan. Later he studied at the Theological School of that denomination in Grand Rapids, then Princeton Seminary, Berlin and Strasburg. As a result came personal exposure to Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck in the Netherlands. Returning to a faculty position in Grand Rapids, he eventually settled back at Princeton Seminary as professor of biblical theology in 1893 until his retirement in 1932. At the outset, it is to be noted that the theological environment of Vos was decidedly intolerant of premillennialism, such as we have already seen with regard to Bavinck,65 the environment of the Christian Reformed Church,66 and to a lesser extent overall, Princeton Theological

64 Bavinck, The Last Things, p. 100.
65 Refer to his, The Last Things : Hope for this World and the Next.
Seminary. In that the Christian Reformed Church was rooted in the Reformed Church of the Netherlands, along with confessional allegiance to the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of the Synod of Dort, there was the conviction that this creidal heritage was incompatible with chiliast beliefs. That Vos himself was vehemently opposed to premillennialism is plainly indicated in his Pauline Eschatology, specifically the chapter “The Question of Chiliasm In Paul,” which includes the following:

Chiliasm has to its credit the astounding readiness it evinces of taking the O.T. Scriptures in a realistic manner, with simple faith, not asking whether the fulfillment of these things is logically conceivable, offering as its sole basis the conviction that to God all things are possible. This attitude is, of course, not attained except through a reckless abuse of the fundamental principles of O.T. exegesis, a perversion invading inevitably the precincts of N.T. exegesis likewise, heedless of the fact that already the O.T. itself points to the spiritualizing of most of the things in question. Apart from accidental features, and broadly speaking, Chiliasm is a daring literalizing and concretizing of the substance of ancient revelation. Due credit should be given for the naïve type of faith such a mentality involves. It is a great pity that from this very point of view premillennialism has not been psychologically studied, so as to ascertain whence in its long, tortuous course through the ages it has acquired such characteristics. Although premillennialism is by no means a local phenomenon, there are evidently certain milieus in which it has found a more fertile soil than elsewhere. In certain countries it comes to meet an eccentric interest in the superficial, visible, curiosity-attracting events in eschatological perspective. The evil is not so much an evil in itself: it is a malformation or over-rank outgrowth drawing to itself a surplusage of religious interest, at the expense of what is more essential and vital in the eschatological sphere. The resulting evil lies largely in the deficit thus caused in the appraisal of other eschatological processes far overshadowing in importance this one feature, at least to the normally-constituted Christian mind.

The virtue of Kromminga’s contribution is that he has alerted us to eschatological possibilities in a manner and on a scale that the Reformed tradition up to now has not taken into account. Most especially an appreciation of Kromminga’s eschatological vision should raise the question by what legitimate rationale can public discussion of it be ecclesiastically prohibited.”

67 David B. Calhoun’s Princeton Seminary refers to a “tolerant dissatisfaction” concerning premillennialism, II, p. 183.

For this writer, it is difficult to recall a more graceless, indeed intellectually arrogant denunciation of an opposing Christian perspective than this. While Richard Gaffin commends the gentle, retiring, pious manner of Vos, such virtue is quite absent here. Furthermore, within this whole chapter by Vos, although numerous European sources are employed in support of his critical analysis, there does not appear to be so much as one reference to a premillennialist of standing. Hence, it is not so surprising that, as VanGemeren has pointed out, that Vos was fearful of any considerations of a future, eschatological conversion of the Jews since then, for chiliasm, a door might ever so slightly be opened for the entrance of this system into Reformed eschatology. Nevertheless, commitment to the exposition of Romans 11 led Vos to yield to what he felt the Apostle Paul incontrovertibly taught, namely a future conversion of Israel *en masse*. So VanGemeren explains:

In his *Dogmatiek* Vos answers the question why it is so difficult to enter into detail on the future conversion of Israel by saying: “Because it has been connected on the one hand with the restoration of the Jews to the Holy Land and on the other hand with the millennial kingdom. . . . The fear existed to encourage chiliasm” (p. 26). Vos affirms, nevertheless, the exegetical ground for the hope in Israel’s conversion. He thinks “that the conversion of Israel is clearly predicted” (p. 27) and bases this conclusion on “all the prophets of the Old Testament who speak of the apostasy and the return of the Jews, particularly Zechariah 12 and Romans 11” (p. 26) . . . . He expects the conversion to be a true spiritual revival, when the Jews have sufficiently been provoked to jealousy . . . by the Gentiles who have found salvation in Jesus Christ. When the fullness of Jewish and Gentile Christians has been achieved, the *parousia* will follow. Vos admits that the chronological connection is implied in the text, but not explicitly stated (p. 88). Though Vos vehemently opposes a premillennial reading of the NT. The exegesis of the text itself forces him to expect a future conversion of the Jews.70

However, like John Murray who confessed to a similar “mass conversion,” Vos is careful not to express belief in any related,

present, covenantal, national Jewish identity, or present covenantal land inheritance rights for Israel in unbelief according to Romans 8:28. Should he do so, he is well aware that he would be crossing over the divide, so to speak, into millennial territory. Nevertheless, in not following this path, his understanding of what constitutes “Jews” by his designation with regard to their mass conversion, in their having individuality but no national or territorial inheritance, is a common weakness of this approach. It is as if Paul, in claiming to be an “Israelite” (Rom. 11:1), nevertheless repudiates national and territorial identity according to divine recognition. Such a bifurcated perspective is quite untenable from a biblical and Hebrew understanding of Jewishness. In this regard, concerning the reticence of Vos at this point to clarify exactly what he means by the term “Jew” in terms of a future mass conversion, consider his article, “Eschatology of the New Testament” which lists two events that will precede the parousia. They are first, the conversion of Israel, and second the coming of the Antichrist. The former event is succinctly referenced in approximately 115 words; the latter event is comprehensively referenced in approximately 2900 words!

Further indication of the reluctance of Vos to give explanation beyond his declaration that “in the future there will be a comprehensive conversion of Israel (Rom. 11:5, 25-32)” is found in an article, “The Second Coming of Our Lord and the Millennium.” It is his contention that Old Testament Jewishness is ultimately superceded by the New Testament kingdom of God. This being so, then distinctive, eschatological, covenantal significance for the nation of Israel and the land has been done away with, whatever conversion of the Jews toward the end of this present age might entail. Vos declares: “The theory [of premillennialism] has its preformation in a certain scheme of Jewish eschatology dating back as far as the New Testament period or even earlier.”

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72 To use Old Testament Scripture for justification of such land and nation legitimacy would involve passages that, using the same hermeneutic, would lead to acknowledgment of a millennial economy in which a distinction is maintained between Jew and Gentile within the one people of God (cf. Ezek. 36-37; Zech. 8, etc.).


74 Ibid., p. 983.

period, any other than a “Jewish eschatology” would be referenced by the early church. However Vos continues:

In Judaism there existed two types of eschatological outlook. There was the ancient national hope which revolved around the destiny of Israel. Alongside of this existed a higher form which had in view the destiny of the creation as a whole. The former has its scene on earth, the latter in a new world, radically different from the present one. Now, in certain of the apocalyptic writings a compromise is effected between these two schemes after this manner, that the carrying out of the one is to follow that of the other, the national earthly hope receiving its fulfillment in a provisional messianic kingdom of limited duration (400 or 1,000 years), to be superceded at the end by the eternal state. It was felt that the eschatology of this world and that of the world to come would not mix, therefore the two were held together on the purely mechanical principle of chronological succession. This Jewish compromise was distinctly due to a lack of spirituality in the circles where it appears.

As stated, the Old Testament avails itself of earthly and eternal forms to convey heavenly and spiritual things. Sincere attachment to the Old Testament Scriptures and a profound conviction of their absolute veracity could and can still underlie a desire to see them in their whole extent literally fulfilled, and since the eternal world offers no scope for this, to create a sphere for such fulfillment in the millennial kingdom. Instead of casting upon such a state of mind the stigma of unspiritualness and narrow-mindedness, we should rather admire the faith-robustness which it unquestionably reveals. None the less, we believe such faith to be a misguided faith.76

Hence, since a millennium would unsatisfactorily result in a mere upgraded universe, “the consummation of this world and the bringing in of the world to come, this and nothing else can at this point effect the necessary change.”77 Thus, by means of a quasi-Platonic/Gnostic hermeneutic, “the world to come” is radically different from “this present world,” especially its transcendence of any earthly Jewish heritage. However, we would suggest that the Bible does indeed describe an upgraded, thoroughly refurbished rather than a supplanted universe, that is a victoriously recovered rather than a new world supplanting that which was defeated by Satan; this is the point of the “restoration/rebirth [παλινγενεσία, palingenesia] of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets” (Acts 3:21), in

76 Ibid., pp. 416-417.
77 Ibid., p. 419.
which purified Judaism will retain a distinctive role as the prophets make very clear. The same point is true with regard to the nature of the future bodily regeneration of the believer. He will receive a changed, glorified body, not that which is wholly new (I Cor. 15:51). As this “corruptible [body] must be clothed with incorruption” (I Cor. 15:53), so this perishing world will be renewed, yet retain essential connection with its original form. Certainly purified Judaism will be a distinctive part of that retained essence. However for Vos, this “world to come” has left behind any Jewish essence. Concerning this present world, he describes how Paul “outlines for us in Romans a program of the uninterrupted progress of the kingdom of God and points as its goal the Christianization of all the nations and the salvation of all Israel.”  

Indiscriminate insistence upon the literal import of prophecy were not merely a weak, but an impossible basis to build chiliasm upon. In point of fact, even the most radical chiliasts discriminate between what they expect and do not expect to see materialized in the millennium. On the ground of the Old Testament alone there is no warrant for such distinction. The prophets proclaim as emphatically the restoration of the temple, the priesthood, and the sacrificial system as they predict the return of the people to Palestine and the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Besides, the serious difficulty arises that the Old Testament ascribes to the fulfillment of these things eternal validity and duration.

The heart of the complaint here is not that of “the return of the people to Palestine and the rebuilding of Jerusalem,” which events are not rooted in the old Mosaic covenant, as clear as these events are prophesied about in the Old Testament. Rather, in mentioning “the restoration of the temple, the priesthood, and the sacrificial system,” the inference chiefly concerns Ezekiel 40-48 and supposed conflict here with the abolishment of the Mosaic sacrificial order according to Hebrews. How Vos interprets this passage is not indicated, though perhaps we can assume he takes a path here similar to Patrick Fairbairn. Be that as it may, spurning a premillennial perspective hardly enlightens us with a positive interpretation of a passage that presents considerable mystery whatever one’s understanding may be.

78 Ibid., p. 420.
79 Ibid., p. 418.
We would simply quote some judicious comments of A. B. Davidson at this juncture concerning Ezekiel 40-48.

We should go very far astray if on the one hand fastening our attention on the natural elements of the picture . . . [these] were [regarded as] mere figures or symbols, meaning nothing but a higher spiritual condition after the restoration [from Babylon], and that the restoration described by Ezekiel is no more than one which might be called natural, and which took place under Zerubbabel and later. Ezekiel of course expects a restoration in the true sense, but it is a restoration which is complete, embracing all the scattered members of Israel, and final, being the entrance of Israel upon its eternal felicity and perfection, and the enjoyment of the full presence of Jehovah in the midst of it. . . .

Consequently we should go equally far astray on the other hand if fastening our attention only on the supernatural parts of Ezekiel's picture, . . . that all this to the prophet’s mind was nothing but a lofty symbolism representing a spiritual perfection to be eventually reached in the Church of God of the Christian age. To put such a meaning on the Temple and its measurement and all the details enumerated by the prophet is to contradict all reason. The Temple is real, for it is the place of Jehovah’s presence upon the earth; the ministers and the ministrations are equally real, for His servants serve him in his Temple. The service of Jehovah by sacrifice and offering is considered to continue when Israel is perfect and the kingdom of the Lord’s even by the greatest prophets (Isa. 19:19, 21; 60:7; 66:20; Jer. 33:18).

There can be no question of the literalness and reality of the things in the prophetic program, whether they are things natural or supernatural, the only question is, What is the main conception expressed?80

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Chapter Seven

ISRAEL – and Christian anti-Judaic hermeneutics

Our concern is now the hermeneutical principle that imposes the New Testament revelation of Jesus Christ upon the Old Testament in such a way that the New Covenant (upper layer) has become the controlling hermeneutic whereby the Old Covenant (lower layer) is christologically reinterpreted. Not only Colin Chapman, Steve Motyer, Stephen Sizer, Peter Walker and N. T. Wright, representing UK Anglicanism, but in addition Anthony Hoekema, William Hendriksen, Hans K. LaRondelle, and O. Palmer Robertson all add further basic scholarly agreement. With variation in tone, nevertheless they all draw upon the same essential Augustinian root whereby the interpretation of the Old Testament canon is by means of focus through the controlling lens of the New Testament. They would all agree with the fundamental hermeneutical approach of Turretin, Fairbairn, Bavinck, and Vos, representing four hundred years of Reformed eschatology. However all of these scholars without exception, this in no way being a matter of coincidence, emphatically assert the covenantal nullification of ethnic, national and territorial Israel.

“But does not this galaxy of Reformed scholars represent a weighty, scholastic fraternal?” Yes, without a doubt we have here a concert of notable, esteemed and influential theologians. Nevertheless we maintain that the eschatological lineage here is not vindicated by resultant, attractive ethical fruit that parallels Paul’s biblical esteem for the Jew. The reason is that the study of centuries of church history has led to the unraveling of closely woven strands of shameful anti-Judaism, be they Lutheran, Anglican, Dutch Reformed, Nonconformist, or Presbyterian, exceptions notwithstanding. But perhaps, it is protested, “Do not these various strands nevertheless present sound hermeneutical reasons for their biblical exegesis?” To answer this we would respond with two further questions. Is it admitted that the root of this sound exegesis takes us back to the esteemed Augustine? Richard Mueller suggests that this is so when he writes:
Reformed theology appears not as a monolithic structure—not, in short, as “Calvinism”—but as a form of Augustinian theology and piety capable of considerable variation in its form and presentation.¹

In this being the case, we further enquire if Augustine’s seminal exegesis of Psalm 59:11, “Do not kill them [the Jews]; otherwise, my people will forget. By Your power, make them homeless wanderers,” whereby he establishes centuries of shameful treatment of the Jewish people (pages 19-22), is representative of his contemporary biblical successors? We would maintain that Augustine was grievously wrong in his exegesis at this point, and in so doing he bequeathed a hermeneutical legacy that has proved to result in dire consequences for the people of Israel. And this being so, we are bold to suggest that the traditional Reformed exegesis at this point is likewise in error since it is grounded upon the same Augustinian root and has resulted in similar Augustinian fruit. The various Reformed strands have similarly humiliated the Jew through tokenism and the denial of ethnicity, nationality and territory according to divine mandate. This being so, we now move to consider the fallacy of the essential Reformed hermeneutic insofar as it is concerned with the eschatology of Israel. Though before doing so there is one significant author in this regard who merits special consideration.

THE HERMENEUTIC OF GEORGE ELDON LADD

We turn to Ladd since he is often upheld today as the quintessential historic premillennialist, though we seriously question his representative status in this regard. Rather it is maintained that earlier premillennialists, being more Judeo-centric, better qualify as being characteristic of historic premillenialism. They would include Joseph A. Seiss, David Baron, Adolph Safir, B. W. Newton, H. Grattan Guinness, J. C. Ryle, C. H. Spurgeon, George Peters, Nathaniel West, Horatius Bonar, etc., and as such were far more historic in the accepted sense of that term when their lineage is traced back at least to the millennial awakening originating in Protestant England and Europe. Concerning Israel, without exception, these latter mentioned authors all upheld the expectation of a distinctive, glorious, prominent, national prospect for Israel in the land under the personal reign of Jesus Christ, and that with the explicit support of numerous passages of Old Testament and New Testament revelation. Theirs was a Judeo-

centricity that qualified them as being far more authentically historic in their premillennialism. On the other hand Ladd has maintained that Revelation 20 explicitly and exegetically provides the sole, albeit conclusive proof from the Bible for the premillennial school of eschatology. When pressed concerning the degree to which the Old Testament gave further support to premillennialism, he responded that it provided none whatsoever! His reason here was that he perceived Old Testament passages that have been commonly understood in millennial terms as finding their fulfillment, not with regard to national Israel’s future glory, but rather the Christian church. This New Covenant community comprised of Jew and Gentile has inherited God’s Old Testament promised blessings as the newly constituted people of God. Consequently he identified at this point with a more Augustinian and Reformed appropriation, by the Christian church, of promises formerly made to abandoned Old Testament Israel, which new body of God’s people had become the new spiritual Israel. Thus,

Old Testament prophecies must be interpreted in the light of the New Testament to find their deeper meaning. . . . I do not see how it is possible to avoid the conclusion that the New Testament applies Old Testament prophecies to the New Testament church and in so doing identifies the church as spiritual Israel.2

By way of example, Ladd refers to Romans 9:24-26 where Hosea 2:23; 1:10, while in its primary setting makes reference to Israel, yet is quoted by Paul concerning the church in Rome that is comprised largely of Gentiles and some Jews. Thus it is here that Ladd’s Gentile logic, rather than a Hebrew perspective represented by Paul, concludes that Hosea’s prophecy finds a broader, more inclusive fulfillment which nullifies a more narrow, national, eschatological interpretation of the prophet. Thus, “[t]he prophecies of Hosea are fulfilled in the Christian church. . . . It is clearly what the New Testament does to the Old Testament prophecies.3 Therefore, other national promises in the Old Testament may similarly be understood as being fulfilled in the church. So Ladd elsewhere concludes that, “it is highly probable that when Paul speaks of the ‘Israel of God’ (Gal. 6:16) he is referring to

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3 Ibid., pp. 23-24.
the church as the ‘true spiritual Israel.’” However, refer to *Chapter Ten: Israel - and a Romans 11 Synthesis*, where it is indicated how far more improbable Ladd’s opinion here proves to be.

Nevertheless, concerning the reference to the quotations in Romans 9 from Hosea, an explanation is in order, and it will somewhat justify the prior reference to Ladd’s “Gentile logic.” As a converted Jewish rabbi, Paul confessedly remains a Jew (Rom. 11:1; Acts 21:39; 22:3) who, in quoting the Old Testament in a manner that a Gentile is not accustomed to, makes use of Hosea in an applicatory or analogical manner which nevertheless does not nullify the obvious, original literal interpretation. So David Stern as a Hebrew Christian scholar comments:

Sha’ul [Paul] uses these texts from Hoshea midrashically. Hosea was not referring to Gentiles but to Israel itself; he meant that one day Israel, in rebellion when he wrote, would be called God’s people. Sha’ul’s meaning, which does not conflict with what Hoshea wrote but is not a necessary inference from it, is that ‘God’s people’ now includes some Gentiles. How this has come about and for what purpose are examined at [Rom.] 9:30-10:4 and 11:17-32, as well as in the book of Ephesians.5

In a similar way Sanday and Hedlam have commented:

St. Paul applies the principle which underlies these words [of Hosea], that God can take into His covenant those who were previously cut off from it, to the calling of the Gentiles. A similar interpretation of the verse was held by the Rabbis.6

This basic hermeneutical principle being true, then it opens up a world of understanding concerning how the Hebrew authors of the New Testament could legitimately quote from the Old Testament in a more

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5 David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, p. 392. Also refer to this author’s commentary on the quotation of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15, where he lists the four basic modes of Scripture interpretation used by the rabbis. These are explained in more detail later in this chapter under the heading, “A Christocentric Hermeneutic for the Hebrew Scriptures.”

applicative, illustrative sense without invalidating the original literal meaning, as Ladd’s rigid exclusionary approach demands, and as is frequently the case with Reformed amillennialists.7

Nevertheless, according to his exclusionary hermeneutical method, Ladd is led necessarily to introduce a term of doubtful legitimacy, that is “reinterpretation” with regard to his approach concerning the Old Testament.8 Obviously he appreciates that careful exegesis of eschatological texts within the Old Testament, employing his interpretive methodology, confronts him with difficulties. As a result he finds himself willingly boxed into a corner of generalization and suggestion according to his imposition of the New Testament upon the Old Testament. Proof of this is found in his dealing with such classic eschatological passages as Ezekiel 36-37 and Zechariah 8, 14, especially as they relate to Israel’s national and territorial destiny. Regarding these references in his A Theology of the New Testament, instead of specifically referencing “Israel,” “nations,” “land,” and “Zion/Jerusalem,” he repeatedly and accommodatingly substitutes “his/God’s people.” Thus he will not particularize in a precise exegetical manner since his hermeneutic is more arbitrary and inclusive with regard to the Old Testament. Hence we are not surprised at the diminutive place that the Jew holds in Ladd’s eschatology. He does acknowledge Jewish individuality; even nationality seems to find some brief, indistinct, uncertain mention; though consideration of the land and its validity for national Israel is virtually nonexistent. However we believe that the specificity and historic reality of the Prophets is of much greater importance than mere New Testament window dressing. We further believe that the New Testament authors, according to a Hebrew mindset, when rightly comprehended, would be startled to discover that they are chargeable with the principle of “reinterpretation” that tends to denigrate the plain, original meaning of the Prophets. A final perceptive objection to Ladd’s hermeneutic of New Testament imposition upon the Old Testament is that of Walter C. Kaiser Jr.

7 Consider the same form of amillennial argumentation, employing Romans 9:24-26; cf. Hos. 2:23; 1:10, in Oswald T. Allis, Prophecy and the Church, p. 156; W. J. Grier, The Momentous Event, p. 44; William Hendriksen, Israel and the Bible, p. 57; Hans K. LaRondelle, The Israel of God in Prophecy, pp. 130-131; Cornelius P. Venema, The Promise of the Future, pp. 271-272; etc.
It is widely held that the most obvious corollary to the Christocentric hermeneutic is the *theologia crucis* that the New Testament must always be our guide to interpreting the Old Testament. But why would a rule be imposed on the revelation of God that demands that the Old Testament passages may not become the basis for giving primary direction on any doctrines or truths that have relevancy for New Testament times? This is only to argue in the end for a canon within a canon. . . . [W]e misjudge the revelation of God if we have a theory of interpretation which says the most recent revelation of God is to be preferred or substituted for that which came earlier.9

THE INSTRUCTIVE EXAMPLE OF HEBREWS

Of all the books of the New Testament, Hebrews has the most concentrated collection of quotations from the Old Testament. In P. Ellingworth’s, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 1993, drawing heavily upon his doctoral research (1977), he assesses 35 explicit quotations, including 14 from the Psalms and 13 from the Pentateuch. This leads us to immediately refer to the cautionary comment of John Owen on Hebrews: “There is not any thing in this Epistle that is attended with more difficulty than the *citation of the testimonies out of the Old Testament* that are made use of in it.”10 The reason is that the author of Hebrews is comfortable with the flexible use of the Old Testament in a number of ways. Therefore it is both cavalier and misleading to suggest that a controlling New Testament hermeneutic kicks in, so to speak, with the result being that the original meaning of the Old Testament quotations is now invalidated. With this in mind, it cannot be too emphatically pointed out that Hebrews was written by a Hebrew Christian to Hebrew Christians. This being the assumed case, we need to approach the interpretation of this epistle, not so much with a Gentile frame of reference as with the very frank conclusion of Simon Kistemaker in mind, with regard to his doctoral thesis, *The Psalm Citations in the Epistle to the Hebrews*.

In contrast to the NT authors the present day writer is bound in his writing and thinking by profane [secular] motifs, by grammatico-historical principles, which characterize him as a child of his time. Hence our motifs

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and principles may never be foisted upon the writers and literature of the first century of our era.\textsuperscript{11}

Then he concludes the section dealing with hermeneutical principles as follows:

It is quite understandable that this type of [Midrashim] sermon delivery was transferred from the Synagogue to the Early Church. Many of the characteristics in the Jewish manner of expounding a portion of Scripture in respect to method, were directly passed on to the sermons preached by the apostles and evangelists. There are still a few of these early Christian Midrashim extant. The Second Epistle of Clement, usually considered a homily, is in fact an early midrash. It may be said conclusively that the recipients of the Epistle to the Hebrews were addressed in accordance with the literary methods prevalent in that day.\textsuperscript{12}

Thus Horatius Bonar, although writing over a century earlier, nevertheless appreciates this same approach concerning the presupposition of a Hebrew hermeneutic when he writes:

Much is to be learned in the way of typical exposition from the Epistle to the Hebrews, not merely in reference to the passages cited, or the events referred to, but respecting a multitude of others to which there is no allusion at all. The apostle proceeds upon certain principles of interpretation recognized among his countrymen. He did not write as one who had discovered a new theory of interpretation which he called on them to receive [emphasis added]; but he proceeds upon principles owned by and familiar to them. He takes his stand upon their own application of the prophecies regarding Messiah, and reasons with them upon principles which both he and they acknowledged. To ascertain these is of much importance. They are the principles adopted by the nation to whom the prophecies were addressed, and, therefore, acquainted with the circumstances in which they were spoken; a nation to whom the language and dialect of prophecy were as their native tongue, and of whose history every event had been an accomplished prophecy; a nation who had not only prophets to predict, but also to guide them to the right meaning of “what manner of things the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify” [I Pet. 1:11]; a nation that in their last days had the Messiah himself to expound to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning


\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 93.
Himself [Luke 24:17], to correct their principles wherein they were false, and to confirm them wherein they were true.\textsuperscript{13}

In this regard due credit should also be given to John Calvin who, in considering the manner in which some of the Old Testament quotations are employed in Hebrews, comes to a conclusion not unlike that of Stern, Kistemaker, and Bonar. In commenting on Hebrews 2:7 where Psalm 8:5-6 is quoted, he declares:

\begin{quote}
[This] Psalm which he [Paul?] quotes must be examined, for it seems to be unfitly applied to Christ. . . . He [David] does not, then, speak of any particular person, but of all mankind. To this I answer, that all of this affords no reason why the words should not be applied to the person of Christ. . . . It was not the Apostle’s design to give an exact explanation of the words. For there is nothing improperly done, when verbal allusions are made to embellish a subject in hand, as Paul does in Romans 10:6, from Moses. . . . [H]e only bids us to consider the abasement of Christ, which appeared for a short time, and then the glory with which he is perpetually crowned; and this he does more by alluding to expressions than by explaining what David understood.\textsuperscript{14}
\end{quote}

Hence we conclude that the hermeneutic of reinterpretation and transference which takes the adapted quotation of the Old Testament in the New Testament to be justification for nullification of the literal interpretation of that same Old Testament passage is illegitimate. The reason is that it not only ignores a fundamental, Hebrew, hermeneutical frame of reference, but also brings about a serious distortion of meaning, especially where the eschatological message of the Prophets is concerned. Representatives of this hermeneutic of reinterpretation and transference are now considered.

**A CHRISTOCENTRIC HERMENEUTIC AGAINST THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES**

An anti-Judaic eschatology is most often grounded upon a New Testament re-interpretation of the Old Covenant Scriptures. By this means the “Christianizing” of the Old Testament results in it being evacuated of its distinctive Jewish roots and substance. Some definitive examples of this teaching are as follows along with subsequent comment. What stands out here is that, apart from some variations in emphasis, the essentially Augustinian transference

\textsuperscript{13} Horatius Bonar, *Prophetic Landmarks*, pp. 211-212.

\textsuperscript{14} John Calvin, *Hebrews*, pp. 56, 58-59.
N. T. Wright writes:

He [Jesus] had not come to rehabilitate the symbol of the holy land, but to subsume it within a different fulfillment of the kingdom, which would embrace the whole creation. . . . Jesus spent his whole ministry redefining what the kingdom meant. He refused to give up the symbolic language of the kingdom, but filled it with such new content that, as we have seen, he powerfully subverted Jewish expectations.¹⁵

Through the Messiah and the preaching which heralds him, Israel is transformed from being an ethnic people into a worldwide family.¹⁶

Those who now belonged to Jesus’ people were not identical with ethnic Israel, since Israel’s history had reached its intended fulfillment; they claimed to be the continuation of Israel in a new situation, able to draw on Israel-images to express their self-identity, able to read Israel’s Scriptures (through the lens of Messiah and spirit) and apply them to their own life. They were thrust out by that claim, and that reading, to fulfill Israel’s vocation on behalf of the world.¹⁷

As if, “The song is ended, but the melody lingers on,” so historic Israel and the holy land, while having come to a substantial conclusion, yet are “universalized” through “symbolic language” and “images.” Here is an attempt to linguistically adorn what in reality is the offensive face of supercessionism. The end result is that today the Jew, his nation and his territory are “subsumed” within the kingdom of God, that is, they are absorbed into glorious homogeneity. The Old Testament promises concerning a distinctive restoration were a literary accommodation, a mere shadowy representation that should not be taken too finely!

Colin Chapman writes:

It was not that Jesus was simply “spiritualizing” Old Testament prophecies, and thereby leaving open the possibility that they might one day be interpreted literally. Rather, according to him, the gathering of believers into the kingdom of God was the true fulfillment of these prophecies. Some Christian writers have pointed out that the prophets predicted the return of the exiles from all countries—from north, south, east and west. Moreover, they say, some of the prophets (notably Zechariah) specifically predicted

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¹⁵  N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, pp. 446, 471.
that exiles of the northern kingdom of Israel would return to the land as well as exiles from the southern kingdom of Judah [Ezek. 37:15-23; Zech. 8:13]. They go on to ask: has anything happened in history which fits this description—except the recent return of Jews to the land? The question at first sight seems unanswerable; it sounds a convincing ‘knock-down’ argument. But if the Christian is to interpret Old Testament prophecy in the light of the teaching of Jesus, the question simply does not arise. Why? Because in the perspective of Jesus, the ingathering of the exiles—from north, south, east and west—takes place when people of all races are gathered into the kingdom of God. This is the true, the real, the intended fulfillment of prophecy.

Christians today do not have the liberty to interpret the Old Testament in any way that appeals to them. Everything in the Old Testament has to be read through the eyes of the apostles. It is they who, so to speak, give us the right spectacles for a genuinely Christian reading of the Old Testament. Therefore if Christians today find that certain details in books like Ezekiel appear to fit certain situations in the Middle East today, they should resist the temptation to draw direct connections with these contemporary events. The reason is that since the apostle John has given his interpretation of Ezekiel’s visions, this should be seen as the normative Christian interpretation of these visions, and not only one possible interpretation.18

The subjective arbitrariness of the supposed “interpretation” of Zechariah here is simply breathtaking. Though in all of this one senses a suppressed unease. The plain teaching of the exilic and post-exilic prophets is obliquely confessed as obvious, then put down. After all, if Ezekiel and Zechariah are allowed to stand according to their plain and obvious sense, then a whole eschatological edifice comes tumbling down. As a result, there would be an eschatological future for national Israel. But this would never do! Consequently we need to turn to the Jewish apostles, such as John, who have renounced that carnal Jewish focus of the past and ascended to more spiritual heights whereby Ezekiel and Zechariah are reinterpreted in more universal, Christocentric terms. Therefore be warned that this is the one and only interpretation; yield to it as the new norm lest one become beguiled by the deceitful, obvious clarity of literal interpretation. But then we turn to Acts 5:31 where these same Jewish apostles declare concerning Jesus Christ: “God exalted this man to His right hand as ruler and Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” This does not sound like supercessionism any more than was the case when Paul declared to the leading Jews in Rome that his captivity was “for

the hope of Israel” (Acts 28:20). These Jewish apostles here do not mislead us with ambiguous terminology whereby reinterpretation of “Israel” in fact means the homogenous people of God! No, we beg to assert that these Jewish apostles held to a future hope for national and territorial Israel whereby the nation would eventually be saved by its Messiah and retain its identity amongst the saved nations (Isa. 66:8, 12; Acts 3:21-22; Rom. 11:26-28).

Stephen Sizer writes:

As Palmer Robertson also observes, by the end of the Apostolic era, the focus of God’s redemptive work in the world has shifted from Jerusalem to places like Antioch, Ephesus and Rome. There is, therefore, no evidence that the apostles believed that the Jewish people still had a divine right to the land, or that the Jewish possession of the land would be important, let alone that Jerusalem would remain a central aspect of God’s purposes for the world. On the contrary, in the Christological logic of Paul, Jerusalem as much as the land, has now been superceded. They have been made irrelevant to God’s redemptive purposes.

Their selective and dualistic hermeneutic leads Christian Zionists to ignore how Jesus and the apostles reinterpreted the Old Testament. . . . Under the old covenant, revelation from God came often in shadow, image, form and prophecy. In the new covenant that progressive revelation finds its consummation in reality, substance and fulfillment in Jesus Christ and his church.19

To suggest that the Jewish apostles, especially at the time of the Council at Jerusalem apparently under the headship of James, did not believe that “the Jewish people still had a divine right to the land, or that the Jewish possession of the land would be important,” is sheer Gentile nonsense. In the plainest terms, we are told here that not only have Jerusalem and the land of Israel become irrelevant to God, but also that now they have become superceded. Here is unclouded, arrogant anti-Judaism that Paul so adamantly opposes in Romans 11. Perhaps we should be grateful here for the honest confession of supercessionism which others of a similar persuasion have attempted to ingeniously dance around. To attempt to claim support from Paul’s “Christological logic” is to fly in the face of not only the apostle’s passionate, persistent pro-Judaic stance, but also his repeated claim that he retained full status as a Jew or Israelite (Rom. 11:1; Acts 21:39; 22:3). For Paul to be told that his Jewishness, so integrated with

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19 Stephen Sizer, Christian Zionism, pp. 170, 204.
Jerusalem and the land as a “Benjamite,” was “irrelevant” would have invited the strongest disavowal (Rom. 3:1-2; 9:1-5; 11:18-21). Yet again we point out that the original promise of the land was not part of the old covenant; rather it was integral to the promise God originally gave to Abraham, 430 years before Moses, that eventually found fulfillment through Joshua. Therefore we assert that the land is not identical with the shadows established through the Mosaic covenant. Refer to Chapter 9: Israel – and the Inheritance of the Land through Abraham.

Steve Motyer Writes:

Throughout the New Testament, we see the first Christians wrestling with the relationship between the “new” thing that God has now done in Christ, and the “old” thing which he had done in Israel, and re-interpreting the latter in the light of the former. If we are to be New Testament Christians, we must do the same. . . . [D]istinctive Jewish Christianity finally died out. . . . [T]he first Christians set themselves the wonderful, exciting task of completely re-thinking their understanding of the Scriptures, in the light of Jesus Christ. . . . The New Testament ‘re-reading’ of the Old Testament promises sees their climax in Jesus, and makes him the ‘end’ of the story. The interpretation of Old Testament prophecy and other ‘Israel’ texts must be approached from the perspective of this basic New Testament teaching, and must follow the guidelines of New Testament interpretation. . . . [T]he New Testament writers are ‘normative’ for us, in showing us how to interpret Old Testament prophecy.20

To suggest that “the first Christians set themselves the wonderful, exciting task of completely re-thinking their understanding of the Scriptures, in the light of Jesus Christ,” especially by a “‘re-reading’ of the Old Testament promises,” is simply a reflection of Gentile blindness and bias. For theological convenience Motyer sets aside the Jewish Apostles’ continuing Jewish, albeit clarified regard for the Old Testament. They would be offended at the suggestion here that they had instigated a radically new hermeneutic. There was no such novel formulation. To declare that “distinctive Jewish Christianity finally died out” is to avoid mentioning the doctrinal conflict whereby it was “put to death” by proud Gentile ascendancy through Justin Martyr and Melito of Sardis on through to Augustine. If then the New Testament writers’ re-interpretation of the Old Testament had established a new,
Christological, normative hermeneutic, then what of those frequent occasions in which they interpreted the Old Testament quite literally? Has this literal hermeneutic now become sub-normal? Consider i’s comment at this juncture:

[In so far as prophecy has been already fulfilled, that fulfillment has been a literal one. Take the predictions regarding the Messiah. His being born of the house of David; of a virgin; at Bethlehem; being carried down to and brought up out of Egypt; His healing diseases; His entering Jerusalem on an ass; His being betrayed by one of His disciples; His being left by all His familiar friends; His being smitten, buffeted, spit upon; His side being pierced; His bones unbroken; His raiment divided by lot; His receiving vinegar; His being crucified between two thieves; His being buried by a rich man; His lying three days in the tomb; His rising on the third day; His ascending up on high, and sitting at the right hand of God; these and many others, have all been fulfilled to the very letter; far more literally than we could have ever conceived. And are not these fulfillments strong arguments in favor of the literality of all that yet remains behind? Nay, do they not furnish us with a distinct, unambiguous, and inspired canon of interpretation?21

O. Palmer Robertson writes:

[An]y transfer from the old covenant to the new covenant involves a movement from shadow to reality. The old covenant appealed to the human longing for a sure and settled land; yet it could not compare with the realities of new covenant fulfillment. This perspective is confirmed by a number of references in the new covenant documents. Abraham is declared to be heir, not of “the land,” but of “the world” (Rom. 4:13). By this comprehensive language the imagery of the land as a picture of restored paradise has finally come of age. No longer merely a portion of this earth, but now the whole of the cosmos partakes of the consummation of God’s redemptive work in our fallen world.

This perspective provides insight into the return to the land described by Ezekiel and the other prophets. In the nature of things, these writers could only employ images with which they and their hearers were familiar. So they spoke of a return to the geographical land of Israel. Indeed there was a return to this land, though hardly on a scale prophesied by Ezekiel. But in the context of the realities of the new covenant, this land must be understood in terms of the newly recreated cosmos about which the apostle Paul speaks in Romans. The whole universe (which is “the land” from a new covenant perspective) groans in travail, waiting for the redemption that will come with the resurrection of the bodies of the redeemed (Rom.

8:22-23). The return to paradise in the framework of the new covenant does not involve merely a return to the shadowy forms of the old covenant. It means the rejuvenation of the entire earth. By this renewal of the entire creation, the old covenant’s promise of land finds its new covenant realization.  

To read Robertson’s *The Israel of God* is to quickly discover his intoxication with the representation of virtually the whole Old Testament in terms of “shadowy, temporal forms.” This is especially true with regard to the land’s alleged temporal significance in view of Abraham’s subsequent inheritance of the world in Romans 4:13. Though for some strange reason it is vital for Robertson that this universal prospect should absorb, rather than include the particularity of Israel, and thus eliminate national identity. The same emphasis on absorption, or supercession, is made by Wright, Chapman and Sizer. Whereas it seems perfectly clear that since “in you [Abraham] all the families of the earth will be blessed” (Gen. 12:3), that is the Gentile nations, this broad prospect does not at all eliminate the distinctive inclusion of national Israel dwelling in the promised land under Christ surrounded by these same saved Gentile nations who are also under Christ. So Barrett rightly relates Paul’s exposition of Romans 4:13, which “summarize[s] the content of the promise [to Abraham],” to Genesis 22:17-18. Thus the world includes the land of Israel “at the center of the world” (Ezek. 38:12). Yet for Robertson, even the explicit restorationist language of Ezekiel is merely a necessary geographic accommodation to the times of the prophet that calls for a more universal perspective. However to this Bonar responds that such a hermeneutic of accommodation, evidently unoriginal, was not at all necessary.

So far, then, from conceding the opinion that the prophets used language of the peculiarly Jewish, or, as we might call it, Mosaic cast, because they had no other by which to convey their representations of the future glory of the Church, we maintain just the opposite. . . . The reason for which they [the prophets] used their peculiar style was, because it was the fullest, richest, and most exact that could be adopted; nay, because it was especially constructed by God to express that vast variety of ideas which prophecy

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23 Ibid., p. 82.
unfolds, with a correctness, and, at the same time, with a power, of which common language did not admit.\textsuperscript{25}

We agree with Robertson that there will certainly be an eschatological “newly created cosmos” according to Romans 8:22-23. Nevertheless we are once again at a loss to understand how this universal of a redeemed creation cannot include the particular of a redeemed national Israel, that is except the author cannot break free from the shackles of a rigid, unbiblical, eschatological homogeneity.

\textit{A Christocentric Hermeneutic that is Misguided}

From the foregoing it will be noticed that the anti-Judaic or supercessionist hermeneutic of Wright, Chapman, Sizer, Motyer and Robertson, etc., is declared to be founded upon a supremely Christocentric reinterpretation of the Old Testament, even as Ladd propounds. It is therefore implied that a Judeo-centric eschatology is not sufficiently Christocentric since it is impeded by a more literal understanding of Old Testament Judaism whereby its shadows are allowed to obscure the reality of Christ. Of course in response it simply needs to be pointed out that the risen, glorified Christ has never declared that His Jewishness would ever be abandoned. Though a supercessionist hermeneutic would tend to require this. Thus on the Emmaus road, the two Jewish disciples were enthralled when “beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He [Jesus] explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures” (Luke 24:27). Here was no imposition of Himself on Scripture, no reinterpretation of Scripture, but rather Jesus’ fulfillment of Scripture at every hand which the disciples embraced, not as radically new, but rather as wonderfully fulfilling in terms of the promises of the Old Testament.

However there is also the need to consider with closer scrutiny the extent to which Jesus Christ ought to be dominant in the interpretation of biblical eschatology, that is as an overriding hermeneutical principle. Some would emphatically suggest that the more we “see only Jesus,” even in the Old Testament, then the more we are keeping to the heart of the Bible. Hence this Christocentricity in interpreting the Old Testament, even as accentuated by Reformed hermeneutics, has to be right. However we would carefully assert, in upholding a

\textsuperscript{25} Bonar, \textit{Prophetic Landmarks}, p. 238.
A Trinitarian perspective with regard to the headship of the Father, that it is possible for such an understanding of Christocentricity to be misguided.\(^{26}\) This is not an insignificant point since, as has been well pointed out by Thomas Smail in *The Forgotten Father*, it is common today for an incorrect prominence to be given to Jesus Christ, especially within Reformed Christianity, as though impossible to challenge, while in fact it results in biblical distortion.\(^{27}\) For this reason we believe Chapman, Sizer, Motyer and Robertson, etc., take a legitimate Christological interpretive principle and give it a disproportionate primacy and driving emphasis. Consider how Bernard Ramm provides a more balanced approach when he recommends, for the interpretation of the prophetic segments of Scripture, four principles, the third being: “The interpreter should take the literal meaning of a prophetic passage as his limiting or controlling guide.” The fourth is: “The centrality of Jesus Christ must be kept in mind in all prophetic interpretation.”\(^{28}\)

As an example of this radical christocentricity, consider the following somewhat lengthy quote of Steve Motyer. It represents a variation of the more common type of supercessionism in which Jesus Christ replaces national Israel rather than the church. Nevertheless, the end result is identical, that is the nullification of Jewish nationality and territory.

The view which I am arguing in this paper does not see the *church* as the “replacement” for Israel, but sees Jesus in this role. . . . In the opening chapters of his Gospel, Matthew deliberately tells the story of Jesus’ birth, baptism, temptations and entry into ministry in such a way that

\(^{26}\) While the Christocentricity of the Gospel of John might be considered beyond dispute, in fact the ministry of Jesus throughout this record is repeatedly subsidiary to the will, calling and exaltation of His Father (4:34; 5:19; 8:29).

\(^{27}\) Thomas A. Smail, *The Forgotten Father*. Initially captivated by the Charismatic Movement, this Anglican author became troubled by a seeming primary emphasis on pneumatology that gave little place to God the Father. He further mentions that this lack of biblical proportion “was indeed characteristic of the kind of Reformed Christocentric emphasis in which I had been grounded. Indeed when one widens the scope and looks at vital modern Christian movements of any kind, one has to admit that emphasis upon and devotion to the Father has not been a main characteristic of many of them.” Pp. 18-19.

history replays the Exodus history of Israel. This is a dramatic re-telling of Israel’s story, which would have been immediately obvious to Jewish readers, but can easily be overlooked by us.

Jesus, too, goes down to Egypt by divine guidance, just like Jacob and his family. Then he comes out of Egypt in fulfillment of Hosea 11:1, “Out of Egypt have I called my son’ (Matt. 2:15). Matthew knows full well that he is applying to Jesus a verse originally about the Exodus! He is giving a clue to help us interpret the significance of Jesus. Armed with this clue, we then see how Jesus passes through water, just like Israel on her way out of Egypt, and, just as for Israel, this is a defining moment in Jesus’ relationship with God (Mat. 3). Then he is tested in the wilderness, just like Israel after the Exodus (Matt. 4:1-11), and he quotes to the Devil three verses all drawn from the story of that wilderness testing of Israel, with flying colors. Finally, just as Israel came to a mountain where she heard God’s ten “words”, constitutive of her life with him, so now Jesus climbs a mountain and utters the nine ‘words’ constitutive of life in the kingdom of God—statements not of duty, but of blessedness (Matt. 5:1-12).

We could hardly ask for a clearer presentation of the conviction that Jesus steps into the role of Israel, in God’s plan.29

It is the hermeneutic that especially concerns us here. To begin with, apart from this conjectural extrapolation, there is not one explicit statement in the New Testament which supports the suggestion that Jesus Christ is the new covenant replacement for old covenant Israel. However, strictly for the sake of argument, let us grant the rationale here that Matthew subtly portrays Jesus as the Old Testament revelation of Israel. Then, in allowing this subjective representation, where in all of this is there the necessity for Jesus to replace, and not simply be identified with Israel? A wonderful case can be made for the representation of Jesus by Joseph in Genesis, in spite of the fact that there is not one explicit verse of justification for this analogy to be found in the New Testament. Of course, this being the case, at best we are left with a good and helpful illustration. And this being so, Motyer’s proposal is likewise at best a good and helpful illustration. However, to build a doctrinal case upon this for the replacement of national Israel by Jesus is both extreme and unsound! Robert Strimple, another Reformed theologian making a defense of the amillennial disenfranchisement of national Israel, likewise declares that,

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The true Israel is Christ. . . . Yes, Israel was called to be God’s Servant, a light to enlighten the nations and to glorify God’s name. But since Israel was unfaithful to her calling and failed to fulfill the purposes of her divine election, the Lord brought forth his Elect One, his Servant, his true Israel.30

However this particular claim for supercession is made without the slightest warrant from the New Testament. Yes, there is a sense in which the suffering Servant of Isaiah does take the name of “Jacob” and “Israel” (Isa. 44:1), though we believe it is entirely arbitrary and unwarranted to suggest in a manner of replacement. Rather we would suggest that, by such terminology in Isaiah, the Messiah intimately identifies with Israel because of a specific saving purpose that is in mind: “[t]he LORD] will keep you [my servant], and I make you a covenant for the people [Israel] and a light to the nations” (Isa. 42:6; cf. 44:21-23). Nevertheless, the fact that “Israel” is consistently defined in the New Testament, with regard to the nation rooted in Abraham and never the Gentiles, wholly excludes the idea that Christ, or for that matter the church, have superceded Israel’s national identity. Thus William Campbell explains:

Although we do acknowledge Jesus as the true Israelite, the ideal servant of God, we must not totally identify him with Israel. We cannot claim that Christ is Israel. . . . Nor is it legitimate to claim that Christ displaces or becomes Israel. In such a theology, the humanity of Christ is obliterated with Israel, and the outcome is that we are left with a theological docetism that manifests itself as individualism.31

Certainly we accept the truth that Jesus Christ, as the seed of Abraham, both represents and embodies the nation of Israel in a vivid sense; His intimate identification in this respect must not be downplayed. Indeed we would further agree that there does appear to be a helpful analogy between the exodus of Israel and the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.32 Nevertheless we object to the out of bounds portrayal here of Jesus


Christ replacing national Israel to the point of elimination through transference.

**A Christocentric Hermeneutic for the Hebrew Scriptures**

In contrast with the foregoing, we maintain that there is a right Christocentric method of interpretation that is relevant to all of Scripture. In the light of modern supercessionism, this hermeneutic especially addresses both the Old Testament and the New Testament according to the unifying principle of Judeo-centricity. In other words, as the Scriptures of the whole Bible are mainly of Hebrew origin, and the Savior was Hebrew along with the founding church, then we should never cease to keep this Hebrew perspective before us. The Hebrew character of Old Testament Scripture ought not to be regarded, in its literal form, as passé, and therefore the object of reinterpretation by the New Testament Gentile Christian! In Tet-Lim N. Yee’s *Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Reconciliation: Paul’s Jewish Identity and Ephesians*, he significantly concludes:

> [I]t is my hope that the lasting impression of this study will be that the substantial contribution of Christianity is Jewish. Our assessment of Ephesians within the ‘new perspective’ which helps us to gain a clearer view of the first-century Jews and Judaism has shown abundantly clearly that the theme of Jewish attitudes toward the Gentiles and ethnic reconciliation cannot be fully appreciated unless we give the enduring Jewish character of Christianity which is represented in Ephesians its due weight.33

This does not simply involve being acquainted with extra-biblical Jewish sources but rather that Jewish hermeneutic with which the apostles almost unconsciously breathed. This is especially to be the case when Gentiles desire to understand the Word of God. Thus when the Old Testament is quoted in the New Testament by a Hebrew

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33 Tet-Lim N. Yee’s *Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Reconciliation: Paul’s Jewish Identity and Ephesians*, p.228. Although this revision of a doctoral thesis at Durham University, especially focusing upon Ephesians 2, draws upon the ‘new perspective’ emphasis of E. P. Sanders, James D. G. Dunn, and N. T. Wright, disagreement with some of the conclusions of this movement does not detract from appreciation of the fundamental approach that calls for heightened regard for the essential Jewish nature of biblical Christianity. Refer to *Chapter 10: Israel – and a Romans 11 Synthesis*, for further references to Dr. Yee’s study in relation to Ephesians 2.
author, we anticipate his use of an established Hebrew hermeneutic, not necessarily so familiar to the Gentile mind, though certainly not some supposed new, superceding and radical hermeneutic. This is the point that Horatius Bonar makes so well which we repeat from page 219. “The apostle [as the author of Hebrews] proceeds upon certain principles of interpretation recognized among his countrymen. He did not write as one who had discovered a new theory of interpretation which he called on them to receive [emphasis added].” This vital, essential principle being established, it follows that when the New Testament Jewish author quotes from the Old Testament, sometimes with a methodology that is not following the exact literal meaning, we consider it the height of presumption to conclude that this usage nullifies the possibility of the original passage retaining literal validity. Rather we look to a more Hebrew based hermeneutic that remains based upon a literal understanding of the text. And in this regard, we find ourselves in agreement with David Stern’s comment that “the New Testament is a Jewish book, written by Jews in a Jewish context,” as well as his explanation of the four basic modes of Scripture interpretation used by the Rabbis. These are:

1) *P’shat* ("simple")—the plain, literal sense of the text, more or less what modern scholars mean by “grammatical-historical exegesis,” which looks to the grammar of the language and the historical setting as background for deciding what a passage means. Modern scholars often consider grammatical-historical exegesis the only valid way to deal with a text; pastors who use other approaches in their sermons usually feel defensive about it before academics. But the rabbis had three other modes of interpreting Scripture, and their validity should not be excluded in advance but related to the validity of their implied presuppositions.

2) *Remez* (“hint”)—wherein a word, phrase or other element in the text hints at a truth conveyed by the *p’shat*. The implied presupposition is that God can hint at things of which the Bible writers themselves were unaware.

3) *Drash* or *midrash* ("search")—an allegorical or homiletical application of a text. This is a species of eisegesis—reading one’s own thoughts into the text—as opposed to exegesis which is extracting from the text what it actually says. The implied presupposition is that the words of Scripture can legitimately become grist for the mill of human intellect, which God can guide to truths not directly related to the text at all.

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Israel – and anti-Judaic hermeneutics

(4) Sod ("secret")—a mystical or hidden meaning arrived at by operating on the numerical values of the Hebrew letters, noting unusual spellings, transposing letters, and the like. . . . The implied presupposition is that God invests meaning in the minutest details of Scripture, even the individual letters.

These four methods of working a text are remembered by the Hebrew word “PaRDeS,” an acronym formed from the initials; it means “orchard” or “garden.”

Michael Vlach points to the same four categories, as referenced by Richard N. Longenecker, that would have been common knowledge to the authors of the New Testament. Hence, keeping these Judeo-centric hermeneutic principles in mind, we now turn to three examples frequently referenced concerning the manner in which Old Testament passages are quoted in the New Testament. In these instances, we believe it is wrong to allege that a New Covenant hermeneutic, previously unknown, is introduced that nullifies the original, literal Old Testament meaning. On pages 215-217, Hosea 2:23; cf. Romans 9:24-26, has already been considered in this regard.


At face value, the strict meaning of Hosea 11:1 seems at variance with the quotation from this verse found referenced in Matthew 11:1. Hosea is plainly speaking of “Israel” when he declares, “out of Egypt I called My son.” However Matthew, having advised that the child Jesus had found refuge in Egypt from Herod, then anticipates His eventual return from Egypt as fulfillment of Hosea’s explanation, “out of Egypt I called My Son.” Has Matthew then introduced a new Christocentric hermeneutic that nullifies the former reference to Israel? Is Christ now identified as Israel? To begin with it is important that the subsequent context of Hosea 11:1 be considered. Whereas v. 1 introduces God’s original redemptive love for Israel, yet vs. 2-7 tell of His relentless, compassionate pursuit, mingled with judgment, for a constantly

35 Ibid., pp. 11-12.
rebellious, betrothed people. However vs. 8-11 reveal the eventual triumph of God’s sovereign grace whereby “I will not turn back to destroy Ephraim. . . . They will follow the LORD; . . . Then I will settle them in their homes. This is the LORD’S declaration.” Clearly, the ultimate restoration of Israel is envisaged here, except that if Matthew has introduced a new hermeneutic, then this can be reinterpreted as simply the inclusive triumph of God’s love for His people, quite apart from any more exclusive national considerations that have now been superceded. However, not only is this unnecessary, but also it does not satisfy our reading of vs. 2-11. Hence, on the one hand the literal interpretation of Hosea stands, and especially as this so obviously agrees with Ezekiel 36-37 concerning the future salvation of national Israel. On the other hand, as we have already considered (pages 228-231), Matthew identifies Jesus as the personification of Israel, though certainly not as a replacement, even as Isaiah identifies the suffering Servant of the Lord as both Messiah and the personification of Israel. So David Stern sees here “a [Hebrew] remez, a hint of a very deep truth. . . . the Messiah is equated with, is one with, the nation of Israel.” Therefore Matthew does not reinterpret Hosea; he simply fulfills Hosea, for the restoration of national Israel will be inseparably related to that time when, “the sons of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king [Messiah]; and they will come trembling to the LORD and to His goodness in the last days” (Hos. 3:5).


According to Amos 9:11-15, the future restoration of Israel is declared in terms of reconstruction for the house of David, inclusive of national deliverance for the Gentiles, vs. 11-12, recovery from destitution, v. 13, return from captivity, v. 14, and relocation in the promised land, v. 15. The quotation of vs. 11-12 by James in Acts 15:16-18 is deemed by those of a supercessionist persuasion to be proof that the Christian church has inherited the promises originally made to Israel through Amos. Thus as amillenialist Kim Riddlebarger states:

James saw the prophecy as fulfilled in Christ’s resurrection, exaltation, and in the reconstitution of his disciples as the new Israel. The presence of both

37 Ibid., p. 12.
Jew and Gentile in the church was proof that the prophecy of Amos had been fulfilled. David’s fallen tent had been rebuilt by Christ.38

It is important to notice here that Riddlebarger, along with others who take a similar supercessionist stance, seems eager to disqualify the Jewish eschatological implications of the whole of Amos 9:11-15. For him, the hermeneutic of James, this quintessential Jewish Christian leader of the Jewish church at Jerusalem and likely author of the Epistle of James, is supposed to have completely nullified the nation of Israel, the future restoration, and the land as he would have understood it, with one fell blow! This we believe to be highly unlikely, in spite of Motyer’s extreme language that here, “James dramatically re-reads Amos’ prophecy of the restoration of Israel. . . . [Concerning the inclusion of the Gentiles] It’s a new action, demanding a new reading of Scripture.”39 Rather James references Amos simply to indicate his agreement with Peter’s experience that the Gentiles have been included in God’s gospel program. In no way does this “reinterpret” Amos 9:13-15 where Israel’s restoration to the land is specified. Even Palmer Robertson admits that all of Amos 9:11-15 cannot be exclusively equated with the blessings of the present church age. Rather

the present fulfillment of Amos’ prophecy may be seen as only the “first stage” of God’s consummation activity. The restoration of the Davidic throne takes on the lowly form of a “booth” or tent. Yet the first installment of the Spirit as possessed by Gentiles today guarantees the future restoration of all things. Endowed in the end with bodies transformed by the resurrection power of the same Holy Spirit, believers in Christ ultimately shall participate in the restoration of all things at the re-creation of heaven and earth.40

Of course the obvious weakness that remains here, being accentuated by the necessity of the foregoing, is the fact that Robertson still refuses to allow the inclusion of any eschatological future for the nation of Israel in the land. This is in spite of the fact that Amos 9:14-15 explicitly declares: “Also I will restore the captivity of My people

38 Kim Riddlebarger, A Case for Amillennialism, p. 39.
Israel, . . . I will also plant them on their land, and they will not again be rooted out from their land which I have given them.” Thus as Kenneth Barker puts it well:

[W]hat happened in Acts 15 constitutes a stage in the progressive fulfillment of the entire prophecy in Amos 9 (cf. Acts 15:12-15). It is an instance of direct fulfillment, but not the final and complete fulfillment, as the following verses in Amos (9:13-15) plainly indicate.41

Similarly, from a Hebrew Christian perspective, Stern comments: “The complete fulfillment of Amos’ prophecy will take place when the undivided realm of David’s time is restored. Meanwhile, this is a beginning.”42 In other words, the either-or hermeneutic of Reformed eschatology in which saved national Israel cannot coexist with the Gentile nations in the consummate kingdom of Christ does not mesh with the prophetic revelation here. The supposed necessity of Judaic exclusion, dressed in the language of supercession or transference, must yield to the both-and eschatology of one people of God in which Israel and the Gentile nations distinctively exist under Christ. When this fundamental issue is yielded to, then will result a change of temperament whereby a shameful anti-Judaic attitude is supplanted by Pauline, pro-Judaic passion.


According to Zechariah 12:1-9, the final eschatological attack upon Jerusalem results in the Lord’s intervention. So David Baron explains,

Israel’s great national deliverance and the destruction of the armies of the confederated anti-Christian world-powers which shall be gathered in the final siege of Jerusalem. That will, indeed, be a great and wonderful day in their history. . . But yet there is something greater, more solemn and more blessed, than mere outward deliverance and triumph over their enemies that Israel is to experience on “that day,” and that is God’s final conquest over them.43

43 David Baron, Zechariah, p. 436.
Then the house of David will be redeemed by means of “the Spirit of grace and supplication,” v. 10. Here is the crowning act by which the Lord saves Israel. It is *this* Spirit which causes Israel to look, mourn, and weep (Ezekiel 36:26-27; 37:1-4, 9-10, 14; 39:25-29) concerning its crucified Messiah. By way of application, God saves the Jews in the same way as He saves the Gentiles, through Holy Spirit regeneration that gives the repentant sinner eyes to see Jesus as Savior. So there will be the piercing of the Lord’s first-born, vs. 10b-14. While it was Roman soldiers who pierced Jesus Christ, yet it was at the instigation of the Jews (Acts 2:22-23).

But what of John 19:37? Is this the sole and complete fulfillment of Zechariah 12:10? In view of the rest of v. 10 and on through to v. 14, undoubtedly not. Furthermore, consider the additional reference of Revelation 1:7. As *all* of Israel paid off its shepherd (Zech. 11:12), so *all* of Israel pierced the Lord, and will continue to do so in a corporate sense to the end of this age. In effect John 19:37 refers to a fulfillment in part, that is the specific incident of Messiah’s piercing, but certainly not the whole of the national mourning yet to come. It is similar to the previous study of Amos 9:11-12 which was seen to be fulfilled in part by James in Acts 15:16-18. Hence after Israel’s national eschatological regeneration (Rom. 11:12, 15, 26) there will be national, bitter and prolonged weeping, vs. 10c-14. Undoubtedly this intensive and extensive mourning has never yet come to pass, though in recollection of the centuries of rejection, such thoroughgoing, consummate grief is not to be considered unexpected or inappropriate. Notice how Israel has grief “as one mourns for an only son,” even “over a firstborn,” and thus the deity of Christ as the only begotten of the Father is suggested. Feinberg adds: “When the one who is greater than Joseph makes himself known to his brethren, they will be heartbroken with grief and contrition”44 (Gen. 45:14-15). There will not only be special mourning in Jerusalem, v. 11, but also total mourning throughout the land, vs. 12-14. Nevertheless if Israel should so weep, then should any saved Gentile weep the less on account of his guilty participation in the piercing of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:27)?

Hence the partial soteriological fulfillment of Zechariah 12:10 according to John 19:37 in no way diminishes anticipation of the eschatological repentance of national Israel. It may be that Revelation

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1:7 should be translated, “And all the tribes of the land will mourn over Him”\textsuperscript{[45]} (cf. Matthew 24:30); but if not and “tribes of the earth” is substituted, the overall eschatological expectation of Israel’s national repentance and salvation according to Zechariah 12:10 is in no way diminished.

In conclusion, we return to the fundamental character of the Reformed eschatological hermeneutic, here severally represented, which so vehemently disallows a diversity within the unity of Jesus Christ’s consummate kingdom. We believe that for reasons more philosophic than logical, more historic than biblical, more systematic than exegetical, there is a tenacious refusal to allow a both-and regard for Israel and the Gentile nations. Indeed there has come about a Gentilic fear for the perpetuation of Judaic influence upon Christianity, as if the church at Antioch should supercede the church at Jerusalem. Though Acts 15 indicates how invalid such a proposal is. Of course the ethical results in this regard have not been inconsequential. It is as if history dominates, that is Augustinianism reigns and holds exegesis in captivity. However history also indicates that in the realm of eschatology, Augustine was terribly wrong and therefore so are those who follow in his eschatological steps with regard to the disenfranchisement of national Israel. Thus we believe that in this particular realm of divine truth, much of Reformed exegesis has been driven more by an historic hermeneutic rather than the principle of \textit{semper reformandum}, “always reforming.” After all, Luther, Calvin, Turretin, Fairbairn, Bavinck, and Vos could not possibly be wrong! Or could they? They are all part of the same eschatological lineage that focuses through lenses that are essentially Augustinian. And if this patristic root, with its unsavory eschatology, does not result in the ripening of its fruit through the sweetening of sovereign grace, its continuance and bitter influence, after the manner of centuries of church history, will only result in branches that bring forth tart produce during this 21\textsuperscript{st} century.

\textsuperscript{[45]} So J. A. Seiss and David Stern.
Chapter Eight

ISRAEL – and the harmony of spiritual materiality

ALL eschatological opinions are open to perversion, even with regard to the three major schools of interpretation. They each have attracted devotees who have strayed from the mainstream of the historic norm. Amillennialism has drifted in a gnostic and platonic direction through identification with a more spiritually amorphous, extraterrestrial, ethereal, egalitarian future kingdom that defies human comprehension. Postmillennialism has inclined toward a legislated political kingdom, somewhat Mosaic in character, that more recently has drifted toward extreme preterism. Premillennialism, in proclaiming a future earthly reign of Jesus Christ upon a renewed earth, has been associated with carnal Zionism that lacks authentic spirituality. It is this allegation against premillennialism that we are here concerned about for it certainly does have a degree of validity with regard to some deviant proponents. Certainly there are those who have given undue prominence to Israel’s prospective glorious dominion in predominantly political and sensationalist terms. Nevertheless this remains quite invalid in the light of a classic historic premillennial understanding with regard to Israel’s biblical future prospects.

It was Augustine who, in considering a seventh-day millennial Sabbath of a thousand years, commented that “this opinion would not be objectionable, if it were believed that the joys of the saints in that Sabbath shall be spiritual, and consequent on the presence of God; for I myself, too, once held this opinion.” However, in further expounding upon Revelation 20, he opposed chiliasm or millennialism, and characterized an extreme materialistic example of it as,

the leisure of immoderate carnal banquets, furnished with an amount of meat and drink such as not only to shock the feeling of the temperate, but even to surpass the measure of credulity itself, [so that] such assertions can be believed only by the carnal. They who do believe them are called by the

1 Aurelius Augustine, The City of God, XX, 7.
spiritual Chiliasm, which we may literally reproduce by the name Millenarians. 2

We can only designate this as an extreme representation which an authoritarian church perpetuated for centuries. A more biblical portrayal of classic millennialism, even incorporating a form of Christian Zionism, is now presented according to the essential distinguishing characteristic of “spiritual materiality.”

THE FALL OF SPIRITUALITY AND MATERIALITY

When we read in Genesis 1:31, “God saw all that He had made, and it was very good [tōb],” the totality here includes the “light,” “dry land,” the “gathering of the water,” the “earth,” the “vegetation . . . plants . . . seeds . . . trees,” “the two great lights,” “the large sea creatures and every living creature . . . every winged bird,” “the wildlife of the earth . . . the livestock . . . and creatures that crawl on the ground” (Gen. 1:4, 10, 11-12, 16-18, 21, 25). Hence we believe that this whole creation was “very good” in its substance in conjunction with a hovering and inherent spirituality. Perhaps we could go so far as to say that God’s original creation was comprised of “spiritual materiality,” and thus was wholly unpolluted, undefiled. There was nothing “carnal” or second-rate about this holy materiality. If “the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters” (Gen. 1:2) at the commencement of creation, how much more did this same Spirit inhabit the whole of that same creation at its completion, and especially the Garden of Eden. Further, the fact that Adam and Eve, in their innocence, had intimate fellowship with God (Gen. 3:8-9) indicates that there was blessed spiritual kinship and union. From God’s perspective, that which He had created was good, spiritually and materially, especially in the sense of it being admirable both ethically and esthetically. Psalm 104:1-6, 24, 30-31 well reflects the overall glory of God’s creation, not its material earthly inferiority that pales before spiritual heavenly superiority.

My soul, praise the LORD!
LORD my God, You are very great;
You are clothed with majesty and splendor.
He wraps Himself in light as if it were a robe,
spreading out the sky like a canopy,
laying the beams of His palace on the waters [above],

2 Ibid.
making the clouds His chariot,
walking on the wings of the wind,
and making the winds His messengers,
flames of fire for His servants.

He established the earth on its foundations;
it will never be shaken.
You covered it with the deep as if it were a garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.

How countless are Your works O LORD!
In wisdom You have made them all;
the earth is full of Your creatures.

When You send Your breath, they are created,
and You renew the face of the earth.
May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
may the LORD rejoice in His works.

In resting, immediately following the creation, God reflected and
mused upon the excellence of His labor, surely in greater terms of
veneration than any Psalmist could express. If it could be said that God
sings (cf. Christ singing, Matt. 26:30; Heb. 2:12), it would have been at
such a time that He sang an exultant doxology of worthy Self-praise
concerning the perfection resulting from His six days of labor.

However the fall of Adam and Eve in sin contracted the curse of God
upon the whole created order over which they had been commissioned
to have righteous dominion. The holy materiality of the creation
became an unholy materiality. The consequences of this universal
sinful pollution, being judgment upon Adam and his posterity, also
included judgment upon the world in its broadest sense, not just
humanity. In particular, decay and degradation in the human species
also resulted in decay and degradation within the whole material order.
Such is the world that today we inhabit. It is difficult for redeemed
man, let alone unredeemed man, to conceive of a world in which
materiality and spirituality perfectly coalesce. Nevertheless, the
promise that the child of God eagerly looks forward to is that future
time when, “the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage of
corruption into the glorious freedom of God’s children, . . . [that time
of] the redemption of our bodies” (Rom. 8:21, 23).
Not only is the Old Testament revelation a transcript of the truth of God communicated through a Hebrew prism, but also it reveals visceral earthiness and admiration of the imminent creation that is in confluence with transcendent spirituality reaching to God’s glorious throne in heaven. Thus as George Eldon Ladd explains:

Hebrew thought saw an essential unity between man and nature. The prophets do not think of the earth as merely the indifferent theater on which man carries out his normal task but as the expression of the divine glory. The Old Testament nowhere holds forth the hope of a bodiless, nonmaterial, purely “spiritual” redemption as did Greek thought. The earth is the divinely ordained scene of human existence. Furthermore, the earth has been involved in the evils which sin has incurred. There is an interrelation of nature with the moral life of man; therefore the earth must also share in God’s final redemption. . . . The fact that man is a physical creature is not the measure of his sinfulness and therefore a state from which he must be delivered. Rather, the acceptance of his creaturehood and the confession of complete and utter dependence upon the Creator God are essential to man’s true existence. . . . Salvation for man does not mean deliverance from creaturehood, for it is not an evil thing but an essential and permanent element of man’s true being. Salvation does not mean escape from bodily, creaturely existence. On the contrary, ultimate redemption will mean the redemption of the whole man. For this reason, the resurrection of the body is an integral part of the biblical hope.

The corollary of this is that creation in its entirety must share in the blessings of redemption. There is no Greek dualism or Gnosticism in the Old Testament hope. The world is not evil per se and therefore a realm from which man must escape to find his true life. When God created the world, he saw that it was good (Gen. 1:31). The goodness of nature has indeed been marred by sin. The earth is cursed for man’s sake, bearing thorns and thistles, and condemning man to a life of sweat and toil. This does not, however, suggest any intrinsic moral evil in nature. It does not mean that creation has fallen from goodness to evil, so that it has become offensive to its Creator. The world was created for God’s glory (Ps. 19:1); and the ultimate goal and destiny of creation, along with man, is to glorify and praise the Creator (Ps. 98:7-9). The world is not a temporary stage upon which man acts out the drama of his mortal existence; neither is it the reality of sin and evil from which man must be rescued. The world was and remains God’s world and therefore is destined to play a role in the consummation of God’s redemptive purpose.3

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Thus, from a Hebrew Christian perspective, Baruch Maoz comments:

It is true that redemption from sin is not to be conceived of in terms that are primarily material. On this point the New Testament is as clear as the Old, though much more emphatic. But salvation is not to be thought of as exclusively spiritual and moral, as if Israel’s living in the land had no spiritual and moral implications! The gospel message is replete with appreciation for the material realm. The New Testament makes it quite clear that the material is the arena in which ultimate salvation is to take place (Rom. 8:18-25), thus reconfirming Old Testament expectation. Even our bodies are to be redeemed.4

With this in mind, we reject that imposition of the shadowy character of the Mosaic covenant upon the general ethos of the Old Testament as a whole. This is in no way meant to depreciate the significance of progressive revelation where type and promise in the Old Testament proceeds toward antitype and fulfillment in the New Testament. However we believe that Palmer Robertson’s The Israel Of God, in repeatedly using the term “shadow” or “type” in a very comprehensive sense with regard to the Old Testament, goes way beyond the obvious temporal, typological limitations of the Mosaic Covenant. He does this by attempting to incorporate similar limitations within the Abrahamic Covenant since he knows that it is here that the promise of the Land is rooted.5 So he further comments: “In speaking of Israel’s land under the old covenant, it is necessary to think in categories of shadow, type, and prophecy, in contrast to reality, substance, and fulfillment under the new covenant.”6 This we believe to be a fundamental error. As we have repeatedly maintained, the Land is rooted in the abiding Abrahamic covenant, not the transient old covenant. Furthermore the materiality of this Land should not be divorced from any prospective spirituality. Being aware of this, Robertson responds:

Just as the tabernacle was never intended to be a settled item in the plan of redemption, but was to point to Christ’s tabernacling among his people (cf. John 1:14), and just as the sacrificial system could never atone for sins but could only foreshadow the offering of the Son of God (Heb. 9:23-26), so in

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5 In Chapter One, “The Israel of God: Its Land,” Robertson makes at least twenty references to the Land as “shadow” or “type,” and principally in parallel with Mosaic entities.
6 O. Palmer Robertson, The Israel of God, p. 4.
a similar manner Abraham received the promise of the land but never experienced the blessing of its full possession. In this way the patriarch learned to look forward to “the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God (Heb. 11:10).”

It is significant that Robertson cannot prove his point here apart from the further use of inappropriate identification of the Land with the Mosaic Covenant, along with an attempt at depreciation of the original Abrahamic Covenant. Here also is recourse to an incorrect, Gentilic, antithetical understanding of Hebrews 9:23-26; 11:10, that is the concept of a superior, other-worldly heaven above and inferior earth below, as an either/or rather than a both/and prospect. It appears to escape Robertson that here in Hebrews we have a learned Hebrew Christian author instructing Hebrew Christians concerning Hebrew Scripture using a Hebrew hermeneutic. When Abraham first entered and surveyed the promised land, it was manifestly unholy as a result of extreme Canaanite defilement. His looking was for the consummation of the promise originally given when heaven would come down and transform the unholy land into the land that was to become truly holy (Zech. 2:12). Doubtless at that glorious time, the Land will have become regenerated and at the same time spiritually material. Nevertheless, it will still be the Land of Israel. Refer to Chapter Nine: Israel – and the Inheritance of the Land through Abraham.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF MATERIALITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

At the transfiguration of Jesus, it seems that for a fleeting period, the veil of perfect humanity is penetrated to reveal essential glory so that “His face shone like the sun. Even His clothes became as white as the light” (Matt.17:2). The account of Luke adds concerning Moses and Elijah: “They appeared in glory [doxa]” (Luke 9:31). Evidently Moses was identifiable as Moses while Elijah was identifiable as Elijah. Here was the embodiment of spiritual materiality on planet earth. So with the resurrection appearances of the Lord Jesus; He was transformed into tangible, spiritual materiality (Luke 24:13-16, 30-31; John 20:15-16). In Galilee, He Himself “stood among them. He said to them, ‘Peace to you.’ But they were startled and terrified and thought they were seeing a ghost” (Luke 24:36-37). Then He invited them: “Touch Me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have” (24:39). Subsequently He ate fish, after which “He left
them and was carried up into heaven” (Luke 24:51). Again, here is the formerly crucified, but now resurrected, Son of God plainly evidencing spiritual materiality. So Paul similarly instructs us in 1 Corinthians 15:35-57 that the seed of the buried dead human body is to be raised with a distinctively new body. Concerning the more exact nature of this resurrection body we are told: “So it is with the resurrection of the dead: Sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body. . . . And just as we have borne the image of the man made of dust, we will also bear the image of the heavenly man [as a both/and result]. Brothers, I tell you this: [sinful] flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and corruption cannot inherit incorruption [except resurrection change be accomplished when]. . . . this corruptible must be clothed with incorruptibility, and this mortal must be clothed with immortality (I Cor. 15:42-44, 49-50, 53).

So the Judeo-centric, premillennial hope anticipates that time when the spiritual materiality of the redeemed, who have been regenerated and resurrected, will have become gloriously manifest. They will comprise Israel and the Gentile nations; they will enjoy the consummation of their salvation on an earth of spiritual materiality where the glorious, spiritually tangible and spiritually material Jesus Christ will reign from the spiritually material Jerusalem. However for those who continue to charge that premillennialism is carnal at its roots, Horatius Bonar has a compelling response that is worth pondering.

I am told that the literal sense is often so carnal that it must be departed from. Perhaps in some cases it may be so; but every passage must first be brought separately to the test. A literal fulfillment is often just as spiritual as any other; and it is a strange misapprehension of the true scope of Scripture to suppose that because some interpret literally, therefore they do not interpret spiritually. . . . Take the prophecies regarding the incarnation of Christ. Before that event took place, there might be a controversy as to whether they were to be literally fulfilled or not. A Jew might have argued with much apparent force against a literal meaning, What! Is God to take upon Himself the form of a man? Is Jehovah to become an infant of days, nay, to be born of a creature, to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, to die and be buried, as men die and are buried? Impossible! the very idea is carnal beyond endurance. These prophecies cannot be interpreted in their literal sense; they must have some figurative, some spiritual meaning. So might a Jew have argued before Messiah came; and truly, when we think what it was that he had to believe regarding his Messiah, we could not have wondered had he found much difficulty in receiving such prophecies as literal; our wonder is at the strength of that faith which, in spite of
difficulties so vast, could take in the idea, and believe in the reality of that stupendous fact which the literal interpretation of prophecy involved. The fact, the glorious but stupendous fact, made known in the fullness of time, proved not only that the literal was the true sense of these prophecies regarding Messiah’s first coming, but also established this truth, that the literal interpretation and fulfillment may be the more truly spiritual of the two. Take, as another illustration of the point in hand, the doctrine of the resurrection. That doctrine appeared to some, in the first ages, such a carnal doctrine, that they denied the literal accomplishment of those Scriptures which speak of it. Of these were Hymenæus and Philetis, mentioned in the Second Epistle to Timothy. They maintained that a literal resurrection was such a carnal thing, that those passages which refer to it must mean something spiritual,—the resurrection of the soul from sin. They “erred concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection was past already.” Here, also, the literal was the more spiritual of the two interpretations.

It is said, “All are one in Christ Jesus, therefore there can be no national distinction of the Jews, no national restoration, no national pre-eminence.” I am unable to comprehend the ground or force of this reasoning. I cannot discern the very shadow of inconsistency between the two things; nor can I understand how the national distinctiveness, or even national pre-eminence of the Jews, should prevent their being one in Christ Jesus with their Gentile brethren.

Some have surely a strange notion of what is meant by being “one in Christ,” when they make their spiritual oneness depend upon the uniformity of external circumstances. What a low idea of Christian oneness! They charge us with carnal views because we insist upon the future distinctiveness of the Jewish nation; but it appears that the charge of carnality belongs to them, not to us! We believe in the literal accomplishment of the prophecies regarding the Jews, in which there appear to be many promises of temporal blessings as well as spiritual; but we lay no further stress upon these than the Word of God lays; we admit spiritual blessings to be the highest and noblest. Our opponents, however, lay such stress upon external circumstances, as to insist, that if these exist the oneness in Christ is gone. We had always understood Scripture as telling us, not that there were no national distinctions, but that, in spite of these, there was a oneness which bound together all believers; a oneness so spiritual, so divine, so unearthly, so unapproachable, as not to be in the very least affected by temporal distinctions of time, or place, or rank.  

We might take this argument further by referring to the Apostle John’s insistence, not only that “the Word became flesh and took up residence among us” (John 1:14), but also that, “every spirit who confesses that

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Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. But every spirit that does not confess Jesus [has come in the flesh] is not from God” (I John 4:2-3). Indeed, added to this impeccable carnality of the Son of God was the vital sensual attestation that John esteemed to be of fundamental significance concerning, “what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have observed, and have touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life” (I John 1:1). Surely there is allusion here to Christ’s post-resurrection appearances that manifest a glorious and spiritual materiality that has been promised as the form of His personal second coming (Acts 1:9-11). In Jesus Christ has come about the union of eternal deity and holy materiality, while at the same time He has received from His Father “the Spirit without measure” (John 3:34).9

Thus the original creation before the fall, especially within the boundaries of the Garden of Eden, was not of such a lowly and inferior status that it will be superceded by a heavenly existence. On the other hand, this is not to say that the vindication of God by means of the future millennial reign of Jesus Christ upon earth will be the employment of an economy identical with that of Eden.

THE INFLUENCE OF PLATONISM, ARISTOTELIANISM, AND STOICISM
UPON THE EARLY CHURCH

The early Christian Fathers were Gentile Greeks and Romans. Having embraced Christian truth, they nevertheless were influenced by the dominant world view of their time, namely Greek philosophy, particularly Platonism, Aristotelianism, and Stoicism, often in blended forms. Gager indicates that “the appropriation of Middle- and Neo-Platonic philosophy by such theologians as Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Ambrose, and Augustine, eventually came to play an important role in the formulation of Christian doctrine.”10 Platonism also had ongoing relevance for Christian mysticism as represented by Dionysius the Areopagite and Bernard of Clairvaux. Later in the Medieval Church, John Scotus, then in the Renaissance, John Colet, Thomas More, and Richard Hooker, imbibed this ongoing stream of Platonic thought. The prevailing philosophic understanding of Hellen-

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9 Concerning this interpretation of John 3:34, refer to Barrett, Carson, Morris.

istic deity was that of a transcendent, spiritual, unchanging being in contrast with the changing character of this material world. Thus Greek thought was predominantly negative about this earthly existence. It considered material life in this world to be temporal, transient, the creation of an inferior deity. The philosophical approach to this world was usually ascetic in which the philosopher sought to rise above the things of the world. The Greek or Hellenist despised the material world because it was tangible substance and changing, deteriorating as an inferior creation. Man was comprised of body, the mere clothing of the soul, which was regarded as the real essential person. Future hope was release from the imprisonment of the earthly body. Of course it is not difficult to recognize some agreement in certain areas here with biblical Christianity, especially in the realm of the transcendence of God. However the thought that God would participate in human flesh, and indeed resurrect the body, was abhorrent to Greek thought (Acts 17:32; I John 1:1-3; 4:1-3; II John 1:7). Hence we can easily see how other-worldly Hellenistic thought was in conflict with a more earthly Hebrew world view, except that some mode of reconciliation could be employed. Alfred Edersheim explains how rapprochement could be obtained, even amongst Jews influenced by Hellenism during the time of Jesus Christ.

To those who sought to weld Grecian thought with Hebrew revelation, two objects would naturally present themselves. They must try to connect their Greek philosophers with the Bible, and they must find beneath the letter of Scripture a deeper meaning, which would accord with philosophic truth. So far as the truth of Scripture was concerned, they had a method ready at hand. The Stoic philosophers had busied themselves in finding a deeper allegorical meaning, especially in the writings of Homer. By applying it to mythical stories, or to the popular beliefs, and by tracing the supposed symbolical meaning of names, numbers, &c., it became easy to prove almost anything, or to extract from these philosophical truths ethical principles, and even the later results of natural science. Such a process was peculiarly pleasing to the imagination, and the results alike astounding and satisfactory, since as they could not be proved, so neither could they be disproved. This allegorical method was the welcome key by which the Hellenists might unlock the hidden treasury of Scripture.11

It should not surprise us then that the early Christians Fathers, but particularly the influential Augustine, should be similarly influenced by Greek thought in such a way as to subtly include elements of

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11 Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, II, pp. 33-34.
Hellenism within his hermeneutical frame of reference concerning Scripture, but especially with regard to eschatology. In other words, the Augustinian concept of the City of God was based upon an either/or, that is inferior/superior eschatological regard for earth and heaven rather then the Hebrew both/and eschatological hope concerning earth and heaven, materiality and spirituality. Herein lies a fundamental point of difference that this writer regards to be at the heart of much amillennial allegiance, often quite unconsciously, to anti-Semitic eschatology. To embrace the Augustinian dichotomy between materiality and spirituality and impose it on the Old Testament canon is to fly in the face of the Hebrew hope of spiritual materiality. However, of supreme importance is the consequence of this philosophic/theological amalgam that has lead to the depreciation of national and ethnic Israel. Augustine’s City of God found its earthly expression in the Roman Catholic Church that, as the new Israel of God, would not suffer any legitimacy from a rival old Israel of God. B. B. Warfield writes:

It was particularly in the doctrine of the Church, which he [Augustine] thus took up and transfigured, that he became in a true sense the founder of Roman Catholicism, and thus called into being a new type of Christianity, in which, “the idea of the Church became the central power in the religious feeling” and “in ecclesiastical activity,” “in a fashion which has remained unknown to the East.” . . . To Augustine the Church was fundamentally the congregatio sanctorum, the Body of Christ, and it is this Church which he has in mind when he calls it the civitas Dei, or the Kingdom of God on earth.

That a Christian today should, in retrospect, consider the subsequent centuries of denigration of the Jewish people that have transpired through the widespread influence of Augustinian eschatology and ecclesiology, and yet at the same time boast in this eschatology, is difficult to comprehend. Consider Jewish historian Robert S. Wistrich’s estimate in this regard.

The Augustinian theology reinforced the notion of the Jews as a wandering, homeless, rejected and accursed people who were incurably carnal, blind to

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spiritual meaning, perfidious, faithless, and apostate. Their crime, being one of cosmic proportions, merited permanent exile and subordination to Christianity. Israel, the older son, must be made to ‘serve’ the Church, the younger son, which is the true heir and rightful owner of the Divine promises enunciated in the Old Testament.14

Hence, when Reformed writers write with admiration concerning their eschatological linkage with Augustine,15 they might reconsider exactly what the fruit of this legacy has produced, and how their derived understanding of national and ethnic Israel would help or retard their witness to unbelieving Jews.

THE REDEMPTION OF SPIRITUALITY AND MATERIALITY

In rejecting the Platonic/Augustinian eschatological dichotomy between inferior, earthly materiality and superior, heavenly spirituality, the preferred alternative of both earthly materiality and heavenly spirituality in holy union should be carefully understood. Craig Blaising describes this essential distinction in the millennial debate in a manner that is well worth consideration at this juncture. It concerns what he designates as “Two Models of Eternal Life.” There is “The Spiritual Vision Model” which he defines as follows that in fact is the basic presupposition, or as he defines it, the “preunderstanding” of amillennialism.

In the history of the church, many Christian theologians have claimed that the final state of the resurrected will be in heaven. The way in which they have described it draws not only on biblical themes . . . but also on cultural ideas common to the classical philosophical tradition. That tradition has contributed to the spiritual vision model in three basic convictions.: (1) a basic contrast between spirit and matter; (2) an identification of spirit with mind or intellect; and (3) a belief that eternal perfection entails the absence of change. Central to all three of these is the classical tradition’s notion of an ontological hierarchy in which spirit is located at the top of a descending order.

15 W. J. Grier writes glowingly of Augustine as “one of the greatest men of the Christian Church of all time” since it has been said that he “laid the ghost of premillennialism so effectively that for centuries the subject was practically ignored.” The Momentous Event, p. 27. Cornelius P. Venema writes of the “great church father, Augustine” with regard to his instrumental role in establishing the predominant place of amillennialism over succeeding centuries and on through the Reformation. The Promise of the Future, pp. 236-237.
order of being. Elemental matter occupies the lowest place. In the spiritual vision model of eternity, heaven is the highest level of ontological reality. It is the realm of spirit as opposed to base matter. This is the destiny of the saved, who will exist in that non-earthly, spiritual place as spiritual beings engaged eternally in spiritual activity.

The perfection of heaven in the spiritual vision model means that it is free from all change. This changelessness is contrasted with life on the material earth. While changelessness means freedom from death and decay, it also means the absence of development or growth. It means freedom from temporal and historical change, such that the arrival of eternity (or better one’s arrival in eternity) is characterized as the end of time and history.

Following the classical tradition’s identification of spirit with mind or intellect, the spiritual model views eternal life primarily as cognitive, meditative, or contemplative. With this point of emphasis, the place or realm of eternal life is really a secondary or even inconsequential matter. In its essential reality, eternal life is a state of knowing. Knowing what? Knowing God, of course—and this is a perfect way, which means in a changeless manner. Perfect spiritual knowledge is not a discursive of developmental knowledge but a complete perception of the whole. The Platonic tradition spoke of it as a direct, full, and unbroken vision of true being, absolute good, and unsurpassed beauty. Following the biblical promise that the saints will see God, the Christian tradition has spoken of eternal life as the beatific vision of God—an unbroken, unchanging contemplation of the infinite reality of God.16

Then there is the “New Creation Model” which is the basic presupposition, or “preunderstanding” of premillennialism.

The new creation model of eternal life draws on biblical texts that speak of a future everlasting kingdom, of a new earth and the renewal of life on it, of bodily resurrection (especially of the nature of Christ’s resurrection body), of social and even political concourse among the redeemed. The new creation model expects that the ontological order and scope of eternal life is essentially continuous with that of present earthly life except for the

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16 Craig A. Blaising, “Premillennialism,” Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond, eds. Darrell L. Bock, Stanley N. Gundry, pp. 161-162. It is acknowledged that some amillennialists have attempted to retain materiality involving the present planet earth in their understanding of the future new heavens and new earth. Nevertheless, this must surely be seen as a precipitous situation in that it opens the door for a more earthly understanding of Old Testament passages that, according to a prima facie reading, proclaim a glorious, holy earthly existence. In such a case the door would then open even wider to Messiah inhabiting and reigning over a geographic Jerusalem, Israel, and the nations.
absence of sin and death. Eternal life for redeemed human beings will be an embodied life on earth (whether the present earth or a wholly new earth), set within a cosmic structure such as we have presently. It is not a timeless, static existence but rather an unending sequence of life and lived experiences. It does not reject physicality or materiality, but affirms them as essential both to a holistic anthropology and to the biblical idea of a redeemed creation.

While eternal life is essentially continuous with present existence, it is not simply an unending eternal life. Those who share that life will be immortal, having been freed from death through resurrection or translation. Sin will not exist. The saints will be confirmed and glorified in a holy character by the Spirit of God. As such they will enjoy communion with God as well as with one another in the new creation. This is the ‘Spirituality’ of eternal life in the new creation model—not the absence of materiality but the full effect of the Holy Spirit’s indwelling the resurrected physical bodies of the redeemed. (This is also the meaning of “spiritual bodies” in I Corinthians 15—material bodies indwelt by and glorified by the Holy Spirit.

Following the language of Isaiah 25, 65, and 66, of Revelation 21, and of Romans 8, the new creation model expects the earth and cosmic order to be renewed and made everlasting through the same creating power that grants immortal and resurrection life to the saints. The nonhuman aspects of creation, both animate and inanimate, will be greatly blessed beyond the state of things prior to the transgression of Adam and Eve. This is the “new” in the “new creation” view of eternity.17

THE TENSION BETWEEN SPIRITUALITY, MATERIALITY AND AUGUSTINIANISM

It is worthwhile considering Robert Strimple’s critique of the preceding scenario of Craig Blaising since it raises a more recent development within amillennial eschatology. In disclaiming a proven connection between amillennialism and the “Spiritual Vision Model,” reference is made to Charles E. Hill’s Regnum Caelorum: Patterns of Future Hope in Early Christianity, which volume considers the streams of millennialism and amillennialism that flowed during the early church up to the mid-third century. Thus Hill concludes:

Nor should it be thought permissible to portray all opposition to early chiliasm as “Greek,” “allegorizing,” or “spiritualizing.” Doubtless chilastic hopes must have seemed a chimera [a fantastic/gross result of imagination] to any who were favorably disposed to Platonism, but the eschatological scheme that looked for a return of Christ to be followed, without an

17 Ibid., pp. 162-163.
However, aside from this conclusion which spans a period of approximately 150 years, and thus hardly encompasses “the history of the church” as Blaising puts it, it must be asked as to how Augustine, immediately following the period of Hill’s consideration, arrived at his amillennialism. After all his doctrine was, as previously pointed out, influenced by the dominant world view of that time, namely Greek philosophy, particularly Platonism, Aristotelianism, and Stoicism, often, as we have already pointed out, in blended forms. As Gager indicated, those especially impacted by this teaching were Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Ambrose and Augustine.19 Hill himself admits: “We know that Augustine, in continuity with the non-chiliastic tradition, still reserved a large place in his exegesis for the ‘Church triumphant’ in heaven.”20 Hence, not surprisingly, in Augustine having been a Neo-platonist prior to his conversion, Warfield concludes: “[I]t was as a Neoplatonist thinker that Augustine became a Christian; and he carried his Neoplatonic conceptions over into Christianity with him.”21 Not that this legacy remained; quite to the contrary, Warfield suggests that it diminished. Thus Augustine is not expounding “the Neoplatonist philosophy in Christian terms: he is developing the philosophy of Christianity in terms of the best philosophic thought of the day.”22 With this in mind, as well as the subsequent Aristotelian legacy of Thomas Aquinas and centuries of Roman Catholic mysticism, it is not surprising that this era, up to the present, has indeed been dominated by Blaising’s “Spiritual Vision Model.”

Nevertheless, in the light of the preceding, it is interesting to consider that more recently a number of Reformed amillennialists have upheld a version of Blaising’s “New Creation Model,” and from a premillennial

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18 Charles E. Hill, Regnum Caelorum, Patterns of Millenial Thought in Early Christianity, p. 251.


20 Hill, Regnum Caelorum, p. 267.

21 Benjamin Breckinridge. Warfield, Calvin and Augustine, p. 369.

22 Ibid., p. 374.
perspective, we believe this to be a step in the right direction. In considering the representations of Anthony Hoekema, Robert Strimple, Cornelius Venema, and Samuel Waldron, we find interpretations of the “new heavens and a new earth” which do appear to affirm a hope in future spiritual materiality. Thus Hoekema raises the question as to “whether the new earth will be totally other than this present earth or a renewal of the present earth. . . . Lutheran theologians have often favored the former of these two options. . . . We must, however, reject the concept of total annihilation in favor of the concept of renewal.”

Now we would agree with Hoekema concerning his rejection of the Lutheran perspective. Nevertheless we would suggest a far more broad legacy has prevailed within Christendom that, as we have already indicated, involved centuries of a mystical heavenly hope rather than anything earthly, especially Jewish, according to spiritual materiality. Even so Hoekema appears to quote approvingly Edward Thurneysen who wrote that:

The world into which we shall enter in the Paousia of Jesus Christ is therefore not another world; it is this world, this heaven, this earth; both however, passed away and renewed. It is these forests, these fields, these cities streets, these people, that will be the scene of redemption. At present they are battlefields, full of the strife and sorrow of the not yet accomplished consummation; then they will be fields of victory, fields of harvest, where out of seed that was sown with tears the everlasting sheaves will be reaped and brought home.

Concerning Revelation 21:24 and 26, Hoekema declares:

One could say that, according to these words, the inhabitants of the new earth will include people who attained great prominence and exercised great power on the present earth—kings, princes, leaders, and the like. One could also say that whatever people have done on this earth which glorified God will be remembered in the life to come (cf. Rev. 14:13). But more must be said. Is it too much to say that, according to these verses, the unique contributions of each nation to the life of the present earth will

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23 Anthony A. Hoekema, The Bible and The Future, p. 280. It is significant that Hoekema acknowledges his indebtedness to Patrick Fairbairn’s Typology of Scripture with regard to the development of his teaching on “The New Earth,” pp. 276n, 279. Refer to Chapter Six: Israel - and Christian anti-Judaic hermeneutics in History for a consideration of Fairbairn in this regard.

24 Ibid., p. 281. Thurneysen, as a pastor theologian, was a close colleague of Karl Barth in Germany.
enrich the life of the new earth? Shall we then perhaps inherit the best products of culture and art which this earth has produced?

Then he concludes:

Whereas ecologists often picture the future of this earth in gloomy terms, it is encouraging to know that some day God will prepare a glorious new earth on which the ecological problems which now plague us will no longer exist. . . . As citizens of God’s kingdom, we may not just write off the present earth as a total loss, or rejoice in its deterioration. . . . As we live on this earth, we are preparing for life on God’s new earth.25

All of this is quite astonishing. Without blushing, language is used being very similar to that which premillenarians have employed for generations. Even more startling is the mention of distinctive national contributions, which of necessity would surely have to include the cultural benefactions of Israel! But then, according to amillennialism, such a distinction is passé. Hence, it is also fascinating to note that more recently, several amillennial authors have expressed their agreement with Hoekema’s exposition with regard to the nature of the eschatological “New Earth.” Three examples are:

1. Robert B. Strimple, “Amillennialism,” Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond, ed. Darrell L. Bock, pp. 256-276. Referencing Bavinck and Vos in support, he also draws upon Hoekema’s “even more earth-oriented vision.”

2. Cornelius P. Venema, The Promise of the Future, pp. 454-488. Also referencing Bavinck and Hoekema, he makes a significant though unexplained comment: “Ironically, the future millennium of dispensational expectations is in some ways a less literal fulfillment of the biblical promise of the new heavens and earth than that of Amillennialism.”26

3. Samuel E. Waldron, The End Times Made Simple, pp. 225-241. In confessing his dependence on Hoekema, this author declares that:

The heavenly country is not a country in heaven, but a country from heaven. The heavenly kingdom is the kingdom from heaven and not the kingdom in heaven. . . . Though heaven is the happy abode of the disembodied righteous during the present age, in the age to come heaven comes to earth. . . . This doctrine enables us to answer the best argument of

25 Ibid., pp. 286-287.
26 Cornelius P. Venema, The Promise of the Future, p. 469n.
both pre- and postmillennialists. What is this argument? It is the countless Old Testament and New Testament prophecies that clearly prophesy a future, earthly kingdom. In the past, those opposing millenarianism often failed to satisfactorily interpret such passages. They attempted to apply them to the church in the present age or to heaven. Such interpretations did not make sense to many good people. They shouldn’t have! They were wrong. Only the doctrine of the new earth [ Isa. 65-66] provides a proper interpretation of such passages.27

In reply, we very much appreciate the hermeneutical advance here from former classic amillennialism that is more genuinely literal. Though Waldron struggles with the interpretation of Isaiah 65-66 and the possibility of death,28 as does E. J. Young,29 relegating an alleged premillennial economy to the eternal state which will nevertheless constitute a millennial environment upon a renovated earth. Now we readily confess that Isaiah 65-66 is not an easy passage to interpret, whatever eschatology one follows. Yet our main objection to Waldron remains. In terms of Judeo-centric premillennialism, there is inconsistency in attributing millennial conditions to the eternal state because,

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\text{[t]he emphasis on the earth and land is too pervasive and too deeply rooted in the biblical doctrine of creation itself to be explained away on this basis. To dismiss all of the emphasis on the earth in favor of a more “spiritual” view of the eternal state raises serious questions.}^{30}
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This being all too true, in again considering Isaiah 65-66 in this regard, it is astonishing that the distinction that will exist between “My people/My chosen ones” (65:15, 19, 22) and the “nations” (66:12, 18), as well as the identification of “Jerusalem/Zion/My holy mountain” (65:18-19, 25; 66:8, 10, 13, 20), is rejected because of supercessional presuppositions concerning Israel. Are these terms, in distinctively representing the community and geography of “heaven on earth,” to be identified as the actual Jerusalem where Messiah will personally reign from Zion over “Israel, My servant” (49:3) as “the Holy One of Israel” (60:14)? Surely the pervasive Judeo-centric language of Isaiah 41:8-10; 43:1-7; 44:21; 45:17; 46:3-4, 13; 49:5-7; 55:5; 60:9, 14; 63:7-8

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28 Ibid., pp. 235-238.
29 Commenting on Isaiah 55:20, “The conditions of Paradise are to be restored, but the new age will surpass Paradise,” E. J. Young, *Isaiah*, III, p. 515.
provides an eloquent and positive answer. In the glory of the earthly kingdom yet to come, Israel will have distinctive prominence. However supercessionist amillennialism plainly conflicts with such an expectation while its eschatological outworking concerning Israel has proved to be historically shameful.

THE REDEMPTION OF ISRAEL’S FALLEN SPIRITUAL MATERIALITY

Surely the preeminent passage of Scripture that describes the regeneration, resurrection and restoration of national Israel is Ezekiel 36:22-37:28. Spurgeon’s sermon on this Ezekiel 37:1-10 is well worth studying. He proposes that dispersed national Israel will experience national conversion as well as glorious residency in the Land under Christ. His plain exposition is in stark contrast with O. Palmer Robertson’s attempt to spiritualize this passage in terms of a New Testament resurrection motif. We would strongly maintain that Spurgeon is essentially and obviously correct, while it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Robertson’s explanation is born of avoidance, at all costs, of what is, according to Spurgeon, patently obvious. Two related matters should be considered at this point. First, the nation of Israel will enjoy the redemption of its fallen spiritual materiality. The language is full of the inert material becoming gloriously alive unto God. The national and personal form remains, but the bones come to life and are clothed with redeemed flesh that responds with submissive adoration. Second, 37:28 declares, “When My sanctuary is among them forever, the nations [Gentiles] will know that I, the LORD, sanctify Israel.” There is no absorption here of the Jews into the Gentile community or of the Gentiles into the Jewish community. Rather the Jews will inhabit the Land, and the Gentiles will surround them, manifesting perfect diversity in unity, as the seed of Abraham.

Carnal Zionism

In Chapter Five: Israel - and Christian Encounter with Zionism, not only the predominant secularity of this modern movement was described, but also many remarkable providential circumstances. So

32 O. Palmer Robertson, The Israel of God, pp. 21-25.
David Larsen has written in this regard concerning this impressive rise of European Zionism.

While doubtless there were complex motives of self-interest on the part of Great Britain, [Chain] Weitzmann stoutly maintained in his memoirs that the sincere Christian beliefs of Balfour, Lloyd-George, and Jan Christian Smuts were more responsible than anything else for the new opening for the Jews in Palestine.33

Certainly the present leadership of Israel in general, also the population and diaspora, reflect no love for Jesus of Nazareth as its longed for Messiah. Before such animosity the Apostle Paul never ceased to witness in synagogues wherever he traveled. Though it is interesting to note that whereas in 1967, the year of the Six Day War in which Israel regained ancient Jerusalem, there were hardly any Messianic Jewish congregations in the world, by 1998 there were 350 gatherings.34 Within Israel, whereas in the 1950s there were at least 20 Christian churches, congregations and groups, in the 1990s there are over 130 such gatherings.35 However, as is pointed out in Chapter Eleven: Israel - as God's Beloved Enemy with reference to Romans 11:28, God still has a covenantal regard for His “beloved enemies” in the flesh, that is a preponderance of severed natural olive branches (Rom. 11:17, 20-21).

In essence, carnal Zionism places a primary emphasis upon circumcision of the flesh, related religious form, external legal conformity, and secular nationalism. In the realm of eschatology, it excludes the primacy of necessary spiritual renovation both personally and nationally. By way of example, consider the common referencing of, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” (Ps. 122:6). Dr. Stanley Ellison directs us to more seriously reflect upon this plea of King David.

To pray this prayer intelligently in the will of God, it is important to discern more specifically what “peace” the Psalmist had in mind. Was he speaking of military triumph for the nation? Are we to pray for modern Israel’s political dominance over the Arabs? Should we encourage her annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip? How about praying that the Muslim Dome of the Rock be replaced by a new Jewish temple? Or should we

33 David Larsen, Jews, Gentiles, and the Church, p. 182.
simply pray for Israel’s international prominence and peaceful relations with her neighbors in the Middle East?36

Here is also exposed the very heart of carnal Christian Zionism. It is chiefly concerned with a prophetic agenda, the Nation of Israel as if it were merely a playing piece on a chess board. However there is no Pauline passion for the very soul of Israel after the manner of the Lord Jesus Christ weeping over Jerusalem (Matt. 23:37-38)!

Spiritual Zionism

By way of contrast, spiritual Zionism places a primary emphasis upon circumcision of the heart, related Godly virtue and Spirit constrained worship, while yet continuing to acknowledge the significance of circumcision, national and territorial identity. But again with reference to Psalm 122:6, also vs. 7-9, the primary desire of David is for him, in fellowship with authentic believing brethren, to draw close to God within His house. This then is the very source of the peace, with rejoicing, he so longs for. But further he also acknowledges that ultimately this peace is a sovereign, gracious bestowment of God and not an achievement of man.

So Dr. Ellison further explains:

The context of this Psalm appears to have a very different emphasis. David’s concern was for the house of the Lord, that is, the tabernacle in Jerusalem. As Hebrew pilgrims ascended the rugged hills to the city, they especially anticipated a time of fellowship with their covenant Lord, bringing with them various offerings. They came “To give thanks to the name of the Lord,” as the psalmist expresses it. Warfare would restrict or deny this privilege, but that was not his main concern. The peace of which he speaks is not primarily outer, but inner peace—not political, but spiritual. “May peace be within you,” is his emphasis. His concern throughout the Psalm is “the house of the Lord” and the spiritual peace that comes through a right relationship with God.

For this “peace of Jerusalem” all creation groans, and all God’s people are exhorted to fervently pray. It is the grand climax of the biblical drama of Israel, through whom God will bring the full blessing of Abraham to all the world.37

37 Ibid., pp. 185-186
Hence, what is of supreme importance is that, in the sovereignty of the grace of God, Zion will undergo resurrection unto spiritual materiality. Because “the LORD of hosts says: I am extremely jealous for Jerusalem and Zion” (Zech. 1:14), He “will once more comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem” (Zech. 1:17). As a result, “I [the LORD] will return to Zion and live in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City, the mountain of the LORD of hosts, and the Holy Mountain” (Zech. 8:3). Commenting on this last reference and what follows, David Baron admirably describes the essential character of spiritual Zionism.

Jehovah, in the person of the Messiah, “will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem,” which shall become the center of His governmental dealings with the world, and the place whence light and truth shall go forth unto all the nations. “And Jerusalem shall be called ‘Ir ha-emeth, the City of truth’; first, because it shall be the seat of the El-emeth, “The God of Truth”; and, secondly, because “the remnant of Israel,” which shall then dwell in it, “shall not any longer do iniquity, nor speak lies” (Zeph. 3:13), but be known throughout the earth for their truth and fidelity toward God and man. “And the mountain of Jehovah of hosts,” i.e., Mount Zion, shall be called “The Holy Mountain,” because there the Holy one of Israel shall once more take up His abode, and by His presence in their midst sanctify His people, so that they, too, shall be holy; and, Qodesh la-Yehovah—“Holiness (or ‘holy’) unto Jehovah,” shall be written, not only upon their hearts and foreheads, but upon all their possessions, down to the very “bells of their horses,” and the “pots” which they shall use to prepare their food (14:20-21; Isa. 1:26; 60:14; 62:12).

Now follows a beautiful picture of restored and flourishing Jerusalem. No longer shall the holy city, and the land of which it is the metropolis, be depopulated by war and other grievous calamities, and lie desolate. “The LORD of hosts says this: ‘Old men and women will again sit along the streets of Jerusalem, each with a staff in his hand because of advanced age. The streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in them.” Zech. 8:4-5).38

Here spiritual materiality shall have attained to that glorious consummation over which Jesus the Messiah shall reign, with the harmonious, distinctive incorporation of both Israel and the Gentile nations.

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38 David Baron, Zechariah, pp. 233-234.
Chapter Nine

ISRAEL – and the inheritance of the land through Abraham

It is an astonishing fact that, at the heart of the controversy surrounding the nation of Israel today and the Jews in particular, the matter which most frequently awakens fervent dispute concerns the ownership and inhabitation of the land of Palestine, that is the Land of Israel, a specific geographic region, a material territory, a piece of historic real estate, that generates world shaking concern. In parallel with this are underlying biblical considerations that raise the question of disputed legitimacy for the Jewish people who have now comprised the State of Israel since 1948, and thus regained the Land, ha’aretz. The reason for this dispute is no small matter for consideration. It should be noted that while Jews, as individuals, are barely tolerated in their dispersal throughout the world, yet it is the current dispute over the Land, especially in relation to the hostile claims of the surrounding Arab nations and Arab Palestinians, that continually threatens to bring about calamity of international proportions. Hence, it is proposed that, as emphasized elsewhere in this book, as Jewish individualism is endured while at the same time Jewish nationalism is more strenuously opposed, even within the United Nations, so the Land has especially become a trigger, a catalyst that ignites world-wide animosity to Zionism. For Zionism is rooted in the biblical concept of the Land. And the Land epitomizes an indivisible union between territory and people. So Baruch Maoz explains this distinctive phenomenon.

[Linguistically] “Israel” denotes both people and land. . . . The land is no passive observer, a mere sphere in which Israel as a people operate. It is spoken of as altogether at one with the people—so much so that it becomes liable for the people’s actions (Lev. 26:14; Deut. 6:12). It is also a privilege granted to the land (Lev. 25:4-5). Israel’s sin brings punishment to the land (Lev. 26:33; Deut. 24:4, 28-29), for God will be “angry with the land” because of the people’s sin. Conversely, when the people are true to God,
he will bless them and the land (Deut. 30:9). Israel’s destiny is that of the
land (Ps. 122:1-2, 6; 147:2).  

Hence we repeat that while the individual Jew is socially tolerated at
best in Western society, yet his national identification with the Land of
Israel seems to awaken much greater controversy. And this appears to
be the case in the theological realm as well, particularly when
replacement theology or supercessionism are considered. Jewish
individuality is suffered, in a token sense, while the nation and territory
of Israel is repudiated by means of such misguided epithets as “carnal
Zionism,” “Dispensationalism,” “a temporal earthly shadow,” etc.

Those who have no millennial sympathies that closely identify ethnic
Israel with the land are usually quick to present a common objection,
namely that the New Testament revelation of the Word of God places
no emphasis on the land of Israel in contrast with the Old Testament
where references are so numerous. It is interesting that these comments
frequently arise in the consideration of Romans 9-11. With regard to
Romans11:25-26 Herman Bavinck comments:

[E]ven if Paul expected a national conversion of Israel at the end, he does
not say a word about Palestine to the Jews, about a rebuilding of the city
and a temple, about a visible rule of Christ: in his picture of the future there
simply is no room for all this.  

Similarly C. E. B. Cranfield writes concerning Romans 11:26b-27:

[T]here is here no trace of encouragement for any hopes entertained by
Paul’s Jewish contemporaries for the re-establishment of a national state in
independence and political power, nor—incidentally—anything which
could feasibly be interpreted as a scriptural endorsement of the modern
nation-state of Israel.  

Martyn Lloyd-Jones is even more shrill in tone when, in preaching on
vs. 25-32 during 1964 and 1965, he declared:

Where do you find any reference whatsoever to the land of Palestine or of
Israel in this section? Where is there any mention of the restoration of the

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1 Baruch Maoz, “People, land and Torah: a Jewish Christian perspective,”
Jews to the land? Where is any mention of Jerusalem as such and the reigning there of the Lord for a thousand years?\(^4\)

Finally, Bruce Waltke gives similar strong criticism that relegates the premillennial/dispensational understanding of the land to a cheap representation of that which is transcendentally enriching in its spiritual fulfillment.\(^5\)

What is astonishing here is that such comments are made of Paul, the converted rabbi, who, especially in Romans 9-11, is so eager to maintain his passionate loyalty and love for ethnic Israel. In other words he writes as a Hebrew Christian and it is a conspicuous weakness concerning Bavinck, Cranfield, Lloyd-Jones, and Waltke, that they seem to avoid contemporary conservative scholarship which is rooted in a Hebrew Christian perspective that is similar to that of Paul. Indeed, it could be enquired, apart from such categorical Gentile criticism, where is there any breadth of Hebrew Christian scholarship that would add support with equal force to what these authors maintain? To the contrary, it ought to be considered that a preponderance of Hebrew Christian opinion does indeed repudiate such

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\(^4\) D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Romans, Exposition of Chapter 11*, pp. 231-235. Preaching during 1964-5, prior to the 1967 Six Day War, He is repetitive in this vein, even denying any relationship in this passage to the Second Coming of Christ. However one wonders if there was an adjustment in perspective by 1980, shortly before his passing in 1981. When, interviewed by Carl Henry for *Christianity Today*, the response was given: “To me 1967, the year that the Jews occupied all of Jerusalem, was very crucial. Luke 21:43 is one of the most significant prophetic verses: ‘Jerusalem,’ it reads, ‘shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled.’ It seems to me that that took place in 1967—something crucially important that had not occurred in 2,000 years. Luke 21:43 is one fixed point. But I am equally impressed by Romans 11 which speaks of a great spiritual return among the Jews before the end time. While this seems to be developing, even something even more spectacular may be indicated. We sometimes tend to foreshorten events, yet I have a feeling that we are in the period of the end. . . . I think we are witnessing the breakdown of politics. I think even the world is seeing that. Civilization is collapsing.” Carl Henry, “Martyn Lloyd-Jones: From Buckingham to Westminster,” *Christianity Today*, February 8, 1980, pp. 33-34.

a Gentile understanding with equal vehemence. It is granted that amidst the dominance of contemporary Gentile Christianity this voice is not as influential. Nevertheless ought not this neglected focus cause the Gentile student of the New Testament to more carefully consider Romans 9-11 in the light of the fact that it was written by a converted, highly qualified Jewish Rabbi? Frankly, one suspects that Paul might respond with exasperation at that exegesis which, while strangely tolerating limited individualism concerning the contemporary fact of the Jew, most vigorously opposes any territorial nationalism that might still be rooted in the Abrahamic covenant. Besides, to suggest that the exclusion of the term “land” in Romans 9-11 has significance is as insignificant a conclusion as that which might be drawn from the exclusion of the terms “repentance” in the Gospel of John and “love” in the Acts of the Apostles. To suggest that in boldly confessing, “I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin,” 11:1, yet the Apostle disavows any attachment to the Land, is ludicrous. Here, as already indicated, is sadly evident that Gentile tendency towards detachment and aloofness from the “natural branches” 11:17-24 which has been the blight of the Christian church for centuries.

THE LAND IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The origin of the land commences, as Stephen relates, when “the glory of God appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he settled in Haran, and said to him: ‘Get out of your country [pagan Ur of the Chaldees] and away from your relatives, and come to the land that I will show you’” (Acts 7:2-3). In Haran, following the death of his father Terah, the call is repeated to Abraham, “The LORD said to Abram: ‘Go out from your cland, your relatives, and your father’s house to the land [?[87], ha´aretz] that I will show you” (Gen. 12:1). Upon his arrival at Shechem from Haran, there is further confirmation: “The LORD appeared to Abram and said, ‘I will give this land to your offspring’” (Gen. 12:7). Hence this specific territory is rooted in persistent promise (Gen. 13:14-17) that is then covenantally, unilaterally signified or cut (Gen. 15:7-21). The finality here was in no way abrogated when, 430 years later, the temporary, intervening,
Israel – as heir of the land through Abraham

foreshadowing administration of Moses “was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise had been made would come” (Gal. 3:19; cf. Jer. 11:7-8; Rom. 5:20). Just prior to Israel’s exodus from Egypt, God instructed Moses to reassure His captive people of their eventual inhabitation of the promised Land according to the Abrahamic Covenant (Exod. 6:1-9). The subsequent necessity of the interregnum Mosaic Covenant was never intended to supercede or overshadow that which had originally been promised. In this regard we believe that W. D. Davies is incorrect when he writes that, “In the Christological logic of Paul, the land, like the Law, particular and provisional, had become irrelevant.” With respect, the Land was not promised to Abraham as a passing shadow, as something merely provisional. There is no such representation in the Bible. Rather, unlike the structure of the Mosaic economy, the land is perpetuated as a vital element of the new covenant (Jer. 31:27-40; Ezek. 11:14-21; 36:22-37:23). In other words, it is important to understand that the Abrahamic Covenant finds its fulfillment in the New Covenant, notwithstanding the intervening, temporal Mosaic Covenant. As the Abrahamic Covenant promised the land, and the intervening Mosaic Covenant involved temporal association with the land, yet the New Covenant declares consummate fulfillment of that promise to Abraham with its specific references to the land, and not some extrapolated, abstract universalism. In particular, the New Covenant describes Israel’s return to the land from dispersion as “the land that I gave to your forefathers” (Jer. 31:38-40; Ezek. 11:17; 36:24, 28).

Hence in terms of roots, the Old Testament as a whole always originally identifies the land with the Abrahamic Covenant, but never the subsequent Mosaic Covenant. Certainly the Mosaic Covenant draws upon the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant (Exod. 3:6-8, 15-17; 13:5; 33:1-3; Lev. 20:24; Num. 13:27), nevertheless the Mosaic Covenant can never nullify that which was inaugurated with unilateral finality 430 years earlier (Gal. 3:17). While the New Testament Scriptures frequently describe the Mosaic Old Covenant as being comprised of shadows and types, this terminology is never directly applied to the promise character of the Abrahamic Covenant, notwithstanding its signification by means of circumcision (Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 8:3-6; 10:1). Certainly circumcision was a sign of the

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7 W. D. Davies, The Gospel And The Land, p. 179.
covenant that God made with Abraham. However, the land was never regarded as a sign of the covenant; rather it was intrinsic to that covenant, and this is a most vital distinction to keep in mind (Gen. 12:1, 7). It is for this reason that the land is distinguished from Mosaic typology since it is an abiding reality in itself.

By way of summary, we may understand the land from different perspectives according to the ways in which it is predicated.

1. The land as promise, according to God’s irrevocable covenant, His sworn oath (Gen. 50:24; Exod. 12:25; Deut. 6:3; 19:8).

2. The land as holy, that is set apart by God, who is holy, from other lands for inhabitation by His people (Ex. 15:13; Zech. 2:12-13).

3. The land as God’s possession, so that the people of Israel, as His redeemed children, are tenants since “the land is Mine” (Lev. 25:23).

4. The land as God’s gift, according to His gracious bestowal to Abraham and his descendants (Deut. 1:20, 25; 2:29).

5. The land as the fathers’ possession, that is Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, hence subsequent generations (Gen. 31:3; 48:21; Exod. 33:1).

6. The land as the nation of Israel’s inheritance, possession, permanent dwelling place, according to covenant promise (Gen. 12:7; 15:7; 24:7; 28:4; 36:43; 40:15).

7. The land as security, blessing, and rest, a place flowing with milk and honey, hence material and spiritual prosperity (Exod. 33:3; Lev. 20:24).

8. The land as the center of the world, that is its navel, the intention being that it will be a blessing to the world (Ezek. 5:5; 38:12).

The following compendium addresses the objection with regard to the supposed silence of the New Testament concerning the land of Israel as a continuing divine heritage. During the formative years of the Christian Church, certainly no Jewish Christian, and especially the mother Church in Jerusalem, would have faintly considered the thought that the promise concerning the land was about to be rescinded or transcended. For that matter, it is just as unlikely that the Gentile Church at Antioch, having been granted great liberty by the Council of Jerusalem, would have concluded that the Jewish Church at Jerusalem had, by its decree in giving freedom to the Gentiles, at the same time established its own demise with regard to being distinctively Jewish. Surely this was never in the mind of Paul or Barnabas.

Some Biblical Indications

In the New Testament, Israel, is used seventy-three times, eleven of which are found in Romans (9:6 (2), 27 (2), 31; 10:19, 21; 11:2, 7, 25, 26). Israelite/s is used four times (John 1:47; Rom. 9:4; 11:1; II Cor. 11:22). With regard to the Synoptic use, Mayer declares that “Israel stands for the people and the land (Matt. 20:1; 21:1).” Concerning Paul’s overall usage, and after consideration of Romans 2:29; 9:6; I Corinthians 1:18; Philippians 33:3, Burton concludes that, “there is, in fact, no instance of his using Israel, except of the Jewish nation or a part thereof.” Hence, to suggest that Paul the Israelite had nevertheless abdicated recognition of the legitimacy of the land is to impose upon the Apostle a Gentile perspective that he never remotely contemplated. In the light of the preceding, it is astonishing to consider once again a further aspect of Robert Strimple’s earlier referenced definitive proposition concerning Israel (pages 229-239):

The true Israel is Christ: He is the suffering Servant of the Lord [Isa. 41:8-9; 42:1-7; 44:1-2, 21; 45:4], this one who is—wonder of wonders—the Lord himself! . . . Yes, Israel was called to be God’s servant, a light to enlighten the nations and to glorify God’s name. But since Israel was

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9 Ernest De Witt Burton, Galatians, p. 358.
unfaithful to her calling and failed to fulfill the purposes of her divine
election, the Lord brought forth his Elect One, his Servant, his true Israel.\textsuperscript{10}

To begin with, here is a Reformed seminary professor describing
Israel’s lost election through disobedience! However Berkouwer
rightly addresses this inconsistency as follows:

Can a past that has been qualified by election ever come to naught? Can
“election of God” as we usually understand it ever be changed into
“rejection”? Can the Church inherit the place of the chosen people of Israel,
so that election passes over to the church? Do we not usually consider
God’s election as something irrevocable, definitive, and all-powerful; and
is it consequently meaningless to assume that the election of Israel could be
negated by human reaction, even unbelief?\textsuperscript{11}

The emphatic inference here that God’s election of Israel is absolute
leads us to consider the related fact that the land of Israel is part of that
election, and as such it too is part of the inviolate character inherent in
the Abrahamic covenant. It is for this reason that we believe the
following references quite clearly give New Testament indications that
the land of Israel has retained its validity during the Church age,
particularly because “the \textit{gifts [emphasis added]} and calling of God are
irrevocable” (Rom. 11:29).

1. Matthew 24:30; cf. Rev. 1:7. “Then the sign of the Son of Man will
appear in the sky, and then all the peoples of the earth will mourn;
and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven
with power and great glory.” A problem is brought to the fore here
concerning the translation of, hai phulai tês ges, “the tribes of the
earth,” since if, tês ges is uniformly translated in the New
Testament as “the earth,” then the absence of any mention of the
land of Israel in the New Testament is virtually guaranteed.
However the context suggests that Zechariah 12:10, 14 is inferred
by Matthew in this instance, in which case “the tribes of the Land
[of Israel]” is a more appropriate translation.\textsuperscript{12} The meaning here
would then indicate that reference is being made to the conversion

\textsuperscript{10} Robert B. Strimple, “Amillennialism,” \textit{Three Views on the Millennium and
Beyond}, pp. 87-88.

\textsuperscript{11} G. C. Berkouwer, \textit{The Return of Christ}, pp. 326-327.

\textsuperscript{12} Indebtedness here for this interpretation is due to David Stern, \textit{Restoring
The Jewishness Of The Gospel}, p. 39. Similarly John Gill, also J. A. Seiss,
of national Israel at the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed the subsequent reference that Christ “will gather His elect from the four winds” Matt. 24:31, and further the parable of the fig tree, would all the more lend credence to the focus here being upon national Israel. The same translation problem arises in Revelation 1:7 where, in the light of reference again being made to Zechariah 12:10, 14, the translation should probably read, “the tribes of the Land [of Israel],” not “the families of the earth.” Certainly reference to “the Land” in Zechariah 12:11-12 offers further support to the aforementioned interpretation.

2. Luke 21:20-24, especially v. 24. “They [the Jerusalemites] will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until [achri hou, as Rom. 11:25] the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” Thus following the subjugation of Jerusalem, and consequently the Land, to Gentile dominion for many centuries, there will follow a reversal of this order in which the Jerusalemites, and hence the Jews, shall regain dominion over the Land and Jerusalem. Such a fulfillment would unquestionably validate Israel’s covenant claim to the Land at the close of this present dispensation. This restoration to tangible favor would include the climactic “fulfillment” experienced by Israel according to Romans 11:12. So J. C. Ryle concludes:

While the nations of Europe are absorbed in political conflicts and worldly business, the sands in their hour-glass are ebbing away. While governments are disputing about secular things, and Parliaments can hardly condescend to find a place for religion in their discussions, their days are numbered in the sight of God. Yet a few years and the “times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled.” Their day of visitation will be past and gone. Their misused privileges will be taken away. The judgments of God shall fall on them. They shall be cast aside as vessels in which God has no pleasure. Their dominion shall crumble away, and their vaunted institutions shall fall to pieces. . . . When [the times of the Gentiles] do end, the conversion of the Jews and the restoration of Jerusalem will take place. . . . The Jews shall be restored. The Lord Jesus shall come again in power and great glory.13

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3. John 1:11. “He came to his own [embassy, residence, inheritance], and his own people did not receive [welcome] him.” That Christ came to, ta idia, his “own things/possessions,” indicates his territory and all that it contains, that is the land of Israel (II Chron. 7:20; Isa. 14:24-25; Jer. 16:18; Mal. 3:1). The same expression is found in John 19:26-27. “Jesus saw His mother and the disciple He loved standing there [John] . . . And from that hour the disciple took her into his home [ta idia, his own things/possessions].” In support of this territorial understanding, Westcott comments:

   There can be no reasonable doubt that this phrase [ta idia], and the corresponding masculine which follows, “his own” (hoi idioi i.e. “his own people”), describe the land and the people of Israel as being, in a sense in which no other land and people were, the home and the people of God, of Jehovah (Lev. 25:23; Jer. 2:7; 14:18; Hos. 9:3; Zech. 2:12).14

4. Romans 9:26. Here Paul quotes Hosea 1:10 as follows: “And it will be in the place where they were told, ‘you are not My people,’ there they will be called sons of the living God.” Danish scholar Johannes Munck, in his classic work Christ & Israel, notes that, “there”, ekei, is “a natural designation for Palestine, in order to imply that the Gentile nations will gather in Jerusalem and the Messianic kingdom will be established there (cf. 11:26).”15

5. Romans 11: 1. Here Paul is boasting that, “I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin.” The last expression being, phul¯es Beniamin, would, for a Hebrew Christian, undoubtedly include territorial meaning or divine land allocation. Tribal association for the Jew meant not only demographic personal identification, but also geographic territorial identification with a portion of the Land. Hence W. H. Bennett declares that, “After the conquest [of the Land] the tribes became essentially territorial.”16 So before King Agrippa, Paul declares: “And now I stand on trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers, the promise our 12 tribes hope to attain as they earnestly serve Him night and day. Because of this hope I am being accused

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15 Johannes Munk, Christ & Israel, p. 12.
by the Jews, O king!” (Acts 26:6-7). Surely Paul not only has the Diaspora in mind, but also the geographic portions and accompanying populace of the Land as a whole. There is not the slightest intimation here that upon conversion of the Jews, such territorial regions will be eliminated. Again in James 1:1 we read, “James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ: To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion. Greetings.” The attempts to spiritualize this reference are numerous and betray a Gentile bent, though it is not difficult to sense that such a conclusion is doctrinally rather than exegetically driven, especially in the light of the Jewishness that “Diaspora” in this same verse clearly indicates.17 A similar problem is faced in Revelation 7:4-7 where the 144,000 from the twelve tribes of Israel is commonly understood, according to frequent Gentile exegesis, as representing the Church, even though v. 9 describes a distinct Gentile assembly, that is “a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and people and tongues.”18 Of course, in all of these references to the tribes of Israel, their demographic Hebrew identity, inevitably suggests a territorial association as well.

6. Romans 11:26. More recently, many commentators have expressed a belief that this passage does indeed refer to an eschatological national conversion of Jews toward the end of this age. More often than not in these expositions, there is no qualification as to whether such resultant Jewish Christians will retain national Jewish identity according to divine mandate. John Murray is a case in point where he argues very persuasively for a future national conversion of “the mass of Israel,”19 according to covenantal promise, that is “because of their forefathers [Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob],” v. 28. However he fails to explain the resultant status of converted Israel as a body,

17 In An Introduction to the New Testament by Carson, Moo, and Morris, p. 415, to begin with we are told, “this designation [of 1:1] is so general as to be of little help in identifying the addressees.” Then in conclusion there is the grudging confession: “Nevertheless, the early date and Jewishness of James favors the more literal meaning.”

18 So J. A. Seiss writes: “[T]hese 144,000 are just what John says they are—Jews, descendants of the sons of Israel—the first fruits of that new return of God to deal mercifully with the children of His ancient people for their father’s sakes.” Revelation, I, p. 408.

19 John Murray, Romans, II, p. 98.
that is as to whether it retains national distinction in the sight of God, which would then entail a relationship to the land.\textsuperscript{20} Morris similarly opts for a future national conversion of Israel, though he less distinctly concludes: “Paul then is affirming that the nation of Israel as a whole will ultimately have its place in God’s salvation.”\textsuperscript{21} A number of writers convey the idea that while there will be some future Jewish ingathering, no national identity according to a covenantal basis is to be attributed here. Rather such a corporate conversion will result in incorporation into the people of God, that is the church, which has no identification with national and geographic Israel. So John Stott comments:

The prophecy of Romans 11 is a prophecy that many Jews will return to Christ, but the land is not mentioned, nor is Israel mentioned as a political entity. . . . [A]ccording to the apostles, the Old Testament promises are fulfilled in Christ and in the international community of Christ. A return to Jewish nationalism would seem incompatible with this New Testament perspective of the international community of Jesus.\textsuperscript{22}

To begin with, Stott’s reference to “many Jews” is nebulous terminology since any definition he might offer disallows fundamental Jewishness. Again we have here a condescension to temporal, vague individuality that seems almost offended at the thought of prospective national expression. But further inconsistency arises concerning this overall modern approach to Romans 11. By yielding to the obvious comprehensive meaning of references to “Israel” that are consistent throughout Romans 9-11 whereby some future form of national conversion is admitted, there is yet a reluctance to accept the obvious national associations that Paul makes with the term “Israelite” (11:1) as a converted Hebrew. Rather, the explicit boastings of Paul concerning his Jewishness in Romans 9:3-5; 11:1, particularly obvious territorial implications, must surely be associated with v. 26 and thus anticipate national conversion unto the Land. However a major problem arises at this point if a mere vague approach toward the future conversion of the Jews is concerned. If there is belief in

\textsuperscript{20} John Murray, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, II, pp. 96-101.

\textsuperscript{21} Leon Morris, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, p. 421.

some type of national conversion of Jews at the conclusion of the “times of the Gentiles,” then what was their national status prior to this awakening, and what shall it be following their regeneration? Are they in every sense of the word national Jews according to the flesh, even though remaining in bondage to unbelief (Rom. 11:28)? If so, then while their unbelief has resulted in dispersion from the land, yet their conversion would qualify them for inhabitation of that same land, especially since there is no biblical indication that the land has been forever taken from the Jew. In other words, to speak merely nominally of the Jew in Romans 9-11 is to fly in the face of the Jewishness that Paul there upholds, especially in Roman 9:1-5; 11:1-2, 28-29. Paul’s ongoing Jewishness would find it quite unthinkable for him to uphold his Jewish national status and at the same time deny continuity with its territorial foundation.

A final, conclusive proof in this regard concerns the eschatological hope of Israel because of “their forefathers” (Rom. 11:28). Surely the referencing here of the Abrahamic Covenant must include the essential component of the Land, which, as Matt Waymeyer points out, exegetically leads us back to the “all Israel” of Romans 11:26.

The antecedent of the supplied “they in v. 28 is “them” (αὐτοῖς, autois) in v. 27, which refers back to “Jacob” (Ἰακὼβ, Iakōb) in v. 26b, which in turn refers back to “all Israel” (πᾶς Ἰσραήλ, pas Israēl) in v. 26a. This is significant because it indicates that the group of individuals described in v. 28 describes the “all Israel of v. 26 and helps to establish its identity.23

Put another way, the “all Israel” of Romans 11:26 is the unbelieving nation of Israel in v. 28, plus the remnant of v. 5 as it accumulates, which in total remains an heir of the Abrahamic Covenant which is inclusive of the Land.

7. Romans 11:26-27 appears to incorporate quotations of both Isaiah 59:20 and Jeremiah 31:33-34, which passages contextually include

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restoration to the land as part of Israel’s redemptive blessings (cf. Isa. 60:21; Jer. 31:23).

8. Romans 11:29. “God’s gracious gifts and calling are irrevocable.” The plurality of the “gracious gifts,” ta charismata, surely follows on, by way of explication, from that which is declared secure according to the Abrahamic Covenant originating from “their [Israel’s] forefathers,” v. 28. Of course from a Hebrew perspective, the “gifts” include saving grace for Israel, yet surely more is included such as the encompassing covenant blessings of 9:4-5 that would unquestionably include the land.24

9. Galatians 3:16, cf. v. 21. “Now the promises [hai epangeliai] were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as though referring to many, but ‘and to your seed,’ referring to one, who is Christ.” While the usual focus here falls upon Paul’s doctrinal understanding of the singular “seed,” which is indicated to be Jesus Christ as the seed of Abraham, rarely is there any relating of this truth to the plurality of “the promises.” What then were “the promises” that were spoken both to Abraham and consequently Jesus Christ? Lacking specificity, Burton explains that, “[t]he promises here spoken of are those which accompanied the covenant and which constituted it on the side of divine grace.”25 However Lightfoot appears to get closer to the truth when he comments:

A question has been raised as to the particular passage to which Paul refers. In answering this question it should be observed, (1) That the words must be spoken to Abraham himself, and not to one of the later patriarchs; (2) That kai must be part of the quotation. These considerations restrict the reference to Genesis 13:15; 17:8, either of which passages satisfies these conditions. It is true that in both alike the inheritance spoken of refers primarily to the possession of the land of Canaan, but the spiritual application here is only in accordance with the general analogy of New Testament interpretation.26

Aside from Lightfoot’s dismissal of the literal primacy of the land here with regard to the details of “the promises,” based upon

24 So H. C. G. Moule, Romans, p. 164; Shulam, Romans, p. 327.
26 J. B. Lightfoot, Galatians, p. 142.
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supercensionist presuppositions, the parallel references to this covenantal term in Romans 9:4; 15:8 are instructive. Gentile commentators generally identify “the promises” as those made to the fathers and especially those that are Messianic, though without specific reference to the Land. An exception is H. C. G. Moule who defines “the promises” as being “of the Land, and of the Messiah.” However Jewish commentator Joseph Shulam provides the most comprehensive explanation of the plurality here that also includes the Land.

The “promises” are those God gave to Abraham, that his descendants would be as the sand and the stars (cf. Gen. 12:2; 15:5; 7:1f; 28:14); of the land (cf. Gen. 15:7; 17:8; 28:13; Exod. 12:25; 13:5; Deut. 1:11; 6:3; 19:8; Neh. 9:8; Rom. 11:29; Heb. 11:11-13, 17); to the House of David and his messianic offspring (cf. I Kgs. 2:24; 8:20; II Kgs. 8:19; Isa. 7:13-16; 9:6-7; 11:1-5; Rom. 1:3; II Cor. 1:20; Gal. 3:16-22; I Pet. 1:10, 12); of the Spirit and the new covenant (cf. Jer. 31:31; Ezek. 37:26; Joel 2:28, Acts 2:16-21, 39; Gal. 3:8, 15f; 4:24-28; Eph. 1:13; 2:12); and of life itself (cf. Deut. 8:3; 30:15-16; 32:39; Prov. 3:16; 8:35; Hab. 2:4; I Tim. 4:8; II Tim. 1:1; II Pet. 1:4).

Of course “the promises” of Romans 9:4; 15:8 are rooted “in the forefathers, . . . and from them, by physical descent, came the Messiah, who is God over all, blessed forever” (Rom. 9:5). However it is obvious from the preceding context that the plurality of “the promises” includes much more for Paul, who writes as presently being an “Israelite” (Rom. 11:1), and thus in his terminology undoubtedly incorporates the Land as part of the overall present inheritance.

Some Theological Indications

The argument from supposed silence put forward by Bavinck, Cranfield, Lloyd-Jones, Waltke, etc., is simply based on the alleged absence of explicit and even implicit references to “the Land” in the

27 Lightfoot subsequently explains that, “the Israel after the flesh becomes the Israel after the Spirit; the Jewish nation denotes the Christian Church,” p. 143. Concerning 6:16, the “Israel of God . . . stands here not for the faithful converts from the circumcision alone, but for the spiritual Israel generally, the whole body of believers whether Jew or Gentile,” p. 225.

28 Moule, Romans, p. 164.

29 Joseph Shulam, A Commentary On The Jewish Roots Of Romans, p. 27.
New Testament. The tone of these commentators is often quite categorical and we believe it is not inappropriate to suggest that such a response has Gentile undertones lacking the grace which Paul commends in Romans 11:18-20. Even if acknowledgment of the possibility of a national or mass conversion at the end of this age is granted, on purely exegetical grounds, yet it nevertheless remains a grudging admission that lacks Pauline enthusiasm. Certainly few Jewish Christian commentators would support their reasoning. Rather we believe that the preceding biblical evidence, especially when viewed through Jewish lens that most of the New Testament writers employed, provides both explicit and implicit references to the Land which are intimately related to such expressions as “Israel” and “tribe,” as well as “Jerusalem,” “Zion,” etc. But furthermore, it could also be argued that since the land was undoubtedly a divine bestowal up to the New Testament era, then it is necessary that evidence be provided of explicit land disinheritance that is irrevocable. Such evidence is patently absent.

Reference has already been made in Chapter Six: Israel - and Christian anti-Judaic Hermeneutics in History to Willem A. VanGemeren’s article, Israel As The Hermeneutical Crux In The Interpretation Of Prophecy. With regard to infrequent references in the New Testament to the restoration of the Jewish people, he provides two significant reasons which also relate to the question of the sparseness of references to the Land when compared with the Old Testament.

First, most of the NT writings were written before the events of A.D. 70. The judgment described by Jesus in the Mt. Olivet discourse pertains to Jerusalem and not the Jewish people. When Jerusalem was destroyed, the Jewish population remained in Judea and Galilee in large numbers. Most Jews voluntarily left the land during the subsequent centuries because of business opportunities elsewhere; however, a flourishing community continued in Palestine (Yabneh, Beth Shearim, and Tiberias). The excavation of ancient synagogues witnesses to a thriving and learned Jewish population in the land. All of this fulfilled God’s promise given by Amos. Arguments against the future of Israel in the land, based on a naïve view of history, are not uncommon because most Christians do not know the history of Judaism post-A.D. 70. A study of the historical and theological development of Judaism would help Christians have a proper understanding of Jews and Judaism.

Secondly, the apostolic concern is for the conversion of the Jewish people. The Gospels of Matthew (pre-A.D. 70) and John (post-A.D. 70) share this concern. The restoration of the land was never an issue because the Jews
were in the land and remained in the land in large numbers for hundreds of years after the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70). They voluntarily left the land in large numbers over a period of hundreds of years, but returned before the founding of the State of Israel. Their return was not from exile but from the diaspora. They look on themselves as 'olim (returnees), not golim (exiles).30

Baruch Maoz, being a pastor in Israel of Reformed Baptist convictions, presented an insightful paper for the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism in 1986 that was subsequently revised and included in The Land of Promise, edited by Philip Johnson and Peter Walker, titled, “People, land and Torah: a Jewish Christian perspective.” Some perceptive representative statements that climax on the significance of the land in the New Testament are as follows.

Israel as a people cannot truly fulfill its duties to God apart from the land. Please note this is not “land” in general, nor even any land in particular, but only on certain and specific land. This is the land repeatedly designated in the Bible by way of its borders (Gen. 15:18; Exod. 23:31; Deut. 11:24; Josh. 1:4), its topography (Deut. 1:7; Judg. 1:9, 15; 1 Sam. 14:4-5), its climate (Deut. 11:10-11; Judg. 6:40; Isa. 18:4; 55:10; Jer. 18:17; Hag. 2:17) and its history. . . . The land of Israel is not merely a piece of turf. It is God’s blessing (Gen. 1:22; 26:3; Num. 24:1, 5-7) and it is God’s presence (Gen. 15:18; Exod. 23:31; Deut. 11:24; Josh. 1:4). It is evidence of an ongoing relationship between God and the people of Israel (Deut. 7:12-13; II Kgs. 21:14; Jer. 23:39; Lam. 5:16-22). The land is the covenant made concrete (Gen. 17:7-8; Exod. 6:8; Neh. 9:8; Jer. 31:31, 38-40; 32:37-41).

The climax of blessing in the land is the divine promise: “I will be your God” (Lev. 25:17, 55). The land is thus the epitome of God’s promises, and an important part of the whole without which the remainder is incomplete. Nowhere in the Scriptures are the people of Israel considered to be blessed outside of the land. Nowhere is blessing promised to the people apart from blessing to the land (Deut. 28:65-68; Ps. 69:35-36; 85:10, 12). Small wonder, then, that the people of Israel have come to love the land so vehemently.

The people will be restored to the land if they repent (Deut. 30:1-10); otherwise they will be brought back to the land, and will there repent (Jer. 50:20; Ezek. 30:27-29; 36:4-21). . . . Spiritual restoration and a return to the land are linked (Jer. 23:7-8; 24:6-7; 30:1-9; Ezek. 34:13-27; 36:16-38; 37:21-27; Mic. 4:1) so that the people are never considered blessed, forgiven or redeemed except in the land promised to their fathers: ‘You will

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know that I am the Lord, when I bring you into the land of Israel’ (Ezek. 20:42).

The New Testament neither contradicts nor corrects what we have deduced from the Old Testament data. On the contrary, Old Testament expectations are heightened in the New Testament by the sheer fact that their fulfillment of Old Testament promise, the reliable description of a climax of hope being realized and clarified by the coming of Messiah. Jesus is not a cancellation of the Old Testament hope but its unequivocal affirmation (Luke 24:38-44; John 11:24; 20:24-27; Acts 24:15; Rom. 8:18-24; Phil. 3:21; Rev. 21-22). . . . Consequently, Israel is not displaced by the church. Rather, the church enters into enjoyment of Israel’s blessings as a strange branch “grafted in . . . contrary to nature”, but never in place of the natural branches, who will be grafted in again (Rom. 11:23-24).31

THE LAND AND PATRICK FAIRBAIRN

While the amillennial perspective of Fairbairn has already been considered in Chapter Six: Israel - and Christian anti-Judaic Hermeneutics in History, the fact that this author addresses the matter of the land in his The Typology of Scripture, as well as his Commentary on Ezekiel, calls for additional consideration. It should also be appreciated that Anthony Hoekema has indicated his reliance upon Fairbairn,32 and this in turn has influenced Venema, Waldron, etc.

The relationship between the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants.

It is not uncommon for amillennialists to associate the temporal nature of the conditional Mosaic Covenant with the abiding nature of the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant, the result being that elements of the former are imposed upon the later. Of course by this process, the promise of the land to Abraham in Genesis 12:13 becomes absorbed into a conditional, typological frame of reference. As a result, this same land having been forfeited through disobedience, is merely regarded as a micro earthly representation of future macro heavenly glory that the church inherits on a universal scale. We have already addressed O.

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Palmers Robertson’s representation of this concept in pages 77-88. He wrote:

The land of the Bible served in a typological role as a model of the consummate realization of the purposes of God for his redeemed people that encompasses the whole of the cosmos. Because of the inherently limited scope of the land of the Bible, it is not to be regarded as having continuing significance in the realm of redemption other than its function as a teaching model.33

However Patrick Fairbairn expressed a similar approach, though over 150 years prior. He likewise writes that

the relations of the covenant people, as connected with the occupation of Canaan, leads naturally to the conclusion, that their peculiar connection with that territory has ceased with the other temporary expedients and shadows to which it belonged.34

In other words, the land is merely a basic type that projects through the Mosaic economy into the New Testament reality, and as such has no tangible relevance today. Hence one cannot but suspect that this association of the Abrahamic land promise with the Mosaic economy is most necessary, even if unbiblical, so that the former might, by association, be abrogated. Thus for Fairbairn there is necessary progression from Abraham to Moses:

The Mosaic religion did not start into being as something original and independent; it grew out of the Patriarchal, and was just, indeed, the Patriarchal religion in a further state of progress and development. . . . We are not to imagine, however, that the additional religious truths and principles which were to be historically brought out at the commencement of the Mosaic dispensation, must have appeared there by themselves, distinct and apart from those which descended from Patriarchal times.35

However, we vigorously respond that this unsupported portrayal is incorrect and further sense a difficulty in proving what is a most necessary point for the upholding of a system. After all, if the land promised to Abraham remains as permanent for national Israel as the other terms of that covenant, then it radically interferes with supercessionist theology. In reality, the New Testament makes a clear

33 O. Palmer Robertson, The Israel of God, p. 194.
34 Patrick Fairbairn, The Typology of Scripture, I, p. 497.
distinction between the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants, and especially their conditionality, along with the permanence of one and the abrogation of the other, as Galatians 3:17 and Hebrews 8:13 make abundantly clear. Further, Paul’s explanation concerning the purpose of the law, that it “was added because of transgressions” (Gal. 3:19; cf. Jer. 11:7-8; Rom. 5:20) also conflicts with the idea of progression from Abraham.

The Critical Analysis of Horatius Bonar

Having already considered Bonar’s general critical assessment of Fairbairn’s eschatology in Chapter Six Israel: - and Christian anti-Judaic Hermeneutics in History, nevertheless there are further specific aspects that should be considered. They arise in a review article by Bonar in which he further challenges the amillennialism of Fairbairn as represented in his Typology of Scripture. Bonar freely acknowledges the author’s dignified manner, learning, and lofty views. Nevertheless he comments:

That with such powers and dispositions he has still so widely missed the truth, is owing, we think, to an undue influence to late German authors who have led him to mistake their false systems for the teachings of the word of God.36

What then is the essential problem with Typology of Scripture? It is reflected in Fairbairn’s subtitle taken from the first edition: “The Doctrine of Types, investigated in its principles, and applied to the Explanation of the earlier Revelations of God considered as preparatory exhibitions of the leading truths of the Gospel. With an appendix on the Restoration of the Jews.” Thus Bonar sums us the fundamental problem as follows.

He alleges that not only the principle things in the Mosaic ritual are types of corresponding things in the work of redemption as it is unfolded in the New Testament; but that all the chief personages, acts, and arrangements, that are recorded in the Old Testament, both in the histories and prophecies, are typical, in like manner, of other persons and events in the Christian church; and assumes and affirms that the very nature and design of the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, and actors, acts, and events that appear in their records, are such, that they are of necessity typical of things in the Christian

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church, and are to be taken, as far as they are prophetic, as exclusively predictive of them. No prophecy of the Old Testament, accordingly—if this scheme is adhered to—can by possibility relate in any degree to the real Israelites or Gentiles, Jerusalem or Palestine, or any other persons or places that are literally mentioned in them, and are philologically the subjects of their declarations.\footnote{Ibid., p. 355.}

The Hermeneutic of Supercession

As was pointed out, the very subtitle of Fairbairn’s \textit{Typology of Scripture} leads us to the conclusion that far more than a mere consideration of types in the Bible is the author’s intention here. Rather, we have the proposal of a whole hermeneutical system whereby the Old Testament revelation, as a complete unit, is regarded as typological whereby it is fulfilled and superceded by the New Testament. We have already suggested in pages 225-227 that O. Palmer Robertson replicates this approach. Thus Bonar rightly complains that this work is nothing else than the theory of Origen reproduced under another name, and set off with much speciousness of learning and argument, but in fact without any ground for its support. . . . The supposition indeed which led to the invention of the system, that the persons, transactions, and events of the Old Testament histories and predictions must be contemplated as types of answering things in the Christian system, in order that they may be the means to us of that instruction for which they were designed, is altogether mistaken. Mr. F. proceeds throughout his volumes on the assumption, that were it not for a typical office, the persons and occurrences of which the ancient Scriptures present a record would be almost wholly uninstructive to us.\footnote{Ibid., p. 392.}

We believe this criticism to be especially true when it comes to the interpretation of Old Testament prophecy. In this regard, it is fascinating to detect considerable correspondence here with the hermeneutic of “reinterpretation” that George Eldon Ladd upholds, whereby the Old Testament has no independent, objective prophetic significance except it be expounded by the New Testament. Hence, we find ourselves in a period in which Fairbairn’s considerable influence, especially as evidenced in the writings of Hoekema, Venema, Waldron, etc. with regard to amillennialism, has led to a dominant typological
hermeneutic. Since this in turn has resulted in objective textual and historic realities being subjected to New Testament categories, it is suggested that we need to reconsider Bonar’s call for a return to one hermeneutic for the whole Bible and not two. Further, that hermeneutic needs to return to the apostolic Judeo-hermeneutic that is not obscured by means of typological reinterpretation focusing through a Gentile lens. Then Judeo-centric premillennialism will come into its rightful place once again.

THE LAND AND W. D. DAVIES

The scholarly contribution of W. D. Davies toward a Christian understanding of the Land is massive indeed, though from the outset it must be frankly considered that the presuppositions of this author are not according to a conservative evangelical perspective. This being said, appreciation of his exegetical conclusions is important, especially because of their influence, even as is evident in the subsequent further consideration of the more conservative contribution of David Holwerda. To get to the heart of the matter, we focus upon “Paul and the Land” and quote the following as of the very essence of Davies’ conclusions.

With the coming of Christ the wall of separation between Israel and the Gentiles was removed. This wall, usually interpreted of “the Law,” or of “the veil in the Temple,” in the passage in Ephesians 2:11-22, which here, whether written by him or by a member of his school or not, brings Paul’s thought to its full expression, we may also interpret implicitly to include geographic separation between those in the land and those outside the land. Because the logic of Paul’s understanding of Abraham and his personalization of the fulfillment of the promise “in Christ” demanded the deterritorializing of the promise, salvation was not now bound to the Jewish people centered in the land and living according to the Law: it was “located” not in a place, but in persons in whom grace and faith had their writ. By personalizing the promise “in Christ” Paul universalized it. For Paul, Christ had gathered up the promise into the singularity of his own person, In this way, “the territory” promised was transformed into and fulfilled by the life “in Christ.” All this is not made explicit, because Paul did not directly apply himself to the question of the land, but it is implied.

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39 Especially refer to his Prophetic Landmarks, the full text of which is available, via PDF files, at www.bunyanministries.org, under the new title of Judeo-centric Premillennialism.
In the Christological logic of Paul, the land, like the Law, particular and provisional, had become irrelevant.  

To begin with, concerning Ephesians 2:11-12, the alienation of the Gentiles was from “citizenship of Israel, and . . . the covenants of the promise,” particularly as rooted in Abraham. However Christ’s breaking down was of “the dividing wall of hostility. In His flesh He did away with the law of the commandments in regulations” (Eph. 2:14-15; refer to Chapter Ten: Israel - and a Romans 11 Synthesis). This abrogation by Christ was of the Mosaic economy (Rom. 7:1-4), and not the covenants of promise in which the Land is integral. Davies’ incorporation of the Land into the dissolution of the Law, with the use of terminology that speaks of “the land, like the Law,” is a common but unwarranted association. Further we would suggest that it is logically unnecessary for the doctrine of both Jew and Gentile, being “in Christ,” to necessitate the “deterritorializing” of the original land promise. To similarly suggest that to be “in Christ” is consequently to “universalize” the land promise is to wrongly assume that within a universality there can be no diversity, which in fact the Old Testament prophetically anticipates (Isa. 60:1-4; 62:1-12; Mic. 4:1-5; Hag. 2:1-7; Zech. 14:16-21, etc.). The same fallacy arises with regard to the frequent appeal to Galatians 3:28 where in fact the stated unity incorporates a masculine and feminine diversity. So the triunity of the only blessed God comprises the personal diversity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So Jonathan Edwards describes the unity of the coming kingdom of Christ on earth that comprises Israel in the Land, under its Messiah, having harmonious relations with the surrounding Gentile nations. While it is comforting to read of Davies’ acknowledgment that his conclusion here is at best implicit, it would undoubtedly be disconcerting for the contemporary Jew to be evangelized with the glorious good news that the Land has become “irrelevant.” Does anyone for a moment think that, as Paul witnessed from synagogue to synagogue, this was integral to his gospel message?

THE LAND AND DAVID E. HOLWERDA

A significant volume from Professor David E. Holwerda of Calvin Theological Seminary is Jesus & Israel: One Covenant or Two? The

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Israel – as heir of the land through Abraham

importance is particularly due to it being a more recent Reformed estimate of Jewish national identity, especially in the light of Romans 11. There is acknowledgment of God’s present regard for unbelieving Jews as a whole, and not simply the Christian remnant, while the question of nationality as well as the divine validity of the land is raised. Nevertheless it is this territorial aspect which is not answered with any degree of hoped for clarity. Even so on pp. 85-112 this subject is dealt with in some detail under the chapter heading, “Jesus and the Land: A Question of Time and Place.” Hence we now consider this author’s explanation which certainly reflects sensitivity for a subject that is controversial within a Reformed environment. Clearly Holwerda is aware of criticism of much Reformed teaching in this regard when he comments:

[T]he faith of many Christians has been more heaven-oriented than land-oriented. The biblical themes of land and city have been spiritualized and focused elsewhere than on this earth. Is this the inevitable result of New Testament teaching? Is the land or this earth no longer important? Strikingly, since the return of the Jews to Palestine, the biblical theme of the land has caught the attention of Christian theologians.42

To begin with the Land is identified with an irrevocable promise, though like so many of a Reformed persuasion, there is no interaction with the vital place of the unilateral signification of the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 15.43 However the Land is then qualified as a conditional possession according to the covenant stipulations promising blessing or cursing in conjunction with obedience or disobedience. Consequently, in continually breaking the covenant Israel reaps judgment through exile. Nevertheless under the subheading of “The Land: Lost and Promised Again,” we read:

The amazing message of the prophets is that in spite of the faithlessness of his people, God is faithful and will act in mercy to restore the covenant blessings. God’s covenant with Israel is as certain as the order of creation. As long as the fixed order of creation continues, so will God’s covenant with Israel continue (Jer. 31:35-37).44

42 David. E. Holwerda, Jesus & Israel: One Covenant or Two? p. 87.
43 A classic instance of this omission is found in, Dispensationalism Today, Yesterday, and Tomorrow, by Curtis I. Crenshaw and Grover E. Gunn, III. In Appendix 3, “Conditional & Unconditional Covenants,” pp. 321-325, there is not so much as one reference to Genesis 15.
44 Holwerda, Jesus & Israel, p. 95.
Yet how strange it is that here the author makes no reference to the fact that his comments and reference to Jeremiah 31, also Ezekiel 36, are in fact with regard to the new covenant made with “the house of Israel and with the house of Judah” that replaces the old covenant. Furthermore, the Land was never lost since it was rooted in the unilateral, unconditional Abrahamic covenant. Though God’s people were exiled from the Land, yet the promise of Jeremiah was that they would return to it after seventy years (Jer. 29:10). In the same way the new covenant replaces the Mosaic covenant and incorporates the promises of the Abrahamic covenant, including restoration to the land (Ezek. 11:17; 36:24, 28).

The most vital matter arises when we move on to consider Holwerda’s understanding of the Land according to the New Testament and the closely related eschatological Jerusalem. With obvious sympathy for W. D. Davies’ aforementioned explanation whereby the promises concerning the Land have been “personalized” and “universalized” in Christ, the author offers evidence from Ephesians 6:2-3. Here Paul’s rendering of Deuteronomy 5:16 concerning the land is modified to, “so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” Thus, by omitting this specification [concerning the land], Paul declares that now in Christ the promise applies to any land. The promise has indeed been universalized, but it has been universalized precisely with reference to land.

What was once a blessing promised to God’s people in the particular land of Canaan, given by God as a gift, is now promised to God’s people living anywhere on the earth, which was given by God as a gift. Thus, there is at least this one hint that Paul’s relative silence about the land should not be construed as an implicit declaration that the land has become irrelevant and that the promise of the land should be forgotten. A universalized land is not an irrelevance.45

We would agree with the author that at best we have a “hint” here of his proposal, especially since the fact that while Paul appears to adapt the Mosaic reference on account of his Gentile audience, he in no way is denying the original territorial intent.46 However, of greater concern is the further linguistic plasticity that is employed to suggest that God’s saving intent with regard to the whole earth is somehow an indication of how He continues to have continued interest in “the land.” From a

45 Ibid., p. 102. Support is claimed from Calvin’s exegesis at this point.

46 Refer to p. 98 concerning Paul’s more likely employment of Exodus 20:12 in Ephesians 6:2-3 according to a Judeo-centric hermeneutic.
contemporary Reformed perspective, Palmer Robertson employs the same hermeneutic.\textsuperscript{47} To add some substance to his explanation, Holwerda refers to Paul’s explanation in Galatians 3:29 whereby

Christ is the corporate embodiment of Abraham’s seed, the One who represents and defines the authentic covenant lineage. In Christ it has been revealed that the inheritance of the promises is not by law but by promise, that the inheritance is a gift of God’s grace (as was Canaan in the Old Testament) to those who believe. All those who have faith as Abraham had faith, who now believe in Jesus Christ, are “Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:29).

Heirs of what? Of “the promises,” according to Galatians, and, according to Romans 4:13, these promises to Abraham and his descendants can be summarized in the promise “that he would inherit the world.” For Paul, the promise of Abraham has a cosmic sweep, including not just the territory of Canaan but the entire inhabited world.\textsuperscript{48}

Granted that Abraham “would inherit the world,” it is strange logic indeed that concludes that this prospect would of necessity eliminate distinct national identity for Israel, especially since the original promise of Genesis 12:1-3; 18:18; 22:18 indicated that Israel, as a nation and through its seed, would bring about blessing to the families of the earth, that is the Gentiles (Gal. 3:8). This promise never indicated that there would be a final blending, an absorption whereby Israel would lose its identity, and nor did subsequent confirmations of this promise. Thus Paul tells us “that Christ [the seed, Gal. 3:16] has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God, to confirm the promises to the fathers, and so that Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy” (Rom. 15:8-9). Here again we are faced with the same illogical, unbiblical suggestion that a universal cannot incorporate distinctive particulars, that oneness in Christ cannot

\textsuperscript{47} “In the process of redemptive history, a dramatic movement has taken place. The arena of redemption has shifted from type to reality, from shadow to substance. The land, which once was the specific place of God’s redemptive work served well in the realm of old covenant forms as a picture of paradise lost and promised. But in the realm of new covenant fulfillments, the land has expanded to encompass the whole world.” \textit{The Israel Of God}, pp. 30-31. Again we would point out that the land is grounded in the Abrahamic rather than the old Mosaic covenant. Further, it is not represented as a shadow, but rather as part of the promise of the new covenant (Jer. 31:31-40; Ezek. 11:14-21; 36:22-32).

\textsuperscript{48} Holwerda, \textit{Jesus & Israel}, p. 103.
incorporate distinctive maleness and femaleness, that the messianic kingdom of Christ cannot include Jewish and Gentile identity. Such a concept is quite fallacious. But we are further told:

Has Paul rejected or even forgotten the promise of the land? By no means. Instead, the horizons of the land have been shaped by the revelation of Jesus Christ. His previous Jewish focus on a particularistic fulfillment has been transformed into a Christian universalism focused on the new creation.49

Yet again, definition of “the Land” is linguistically reshaped whereby the land of the nations has both assimilated the land of the fathers and evacuated it of any distinctive Jewish heritage. Whether this process is called “transformational” or whatever, what stands out here, that is yet essentially akin to replacement theology or supercessionism, is the eventual striping away of all things Judaic so that pure “Christian universalism” might remain. This does not appear to seriously heed Paul’s warning to the Gentiles, “You do not sustain the root, but the root sustains you” (Rom. 11:18). It will not do for Holwerda to identify the Jews as “all Israel,” and not merely the remnant alone, according to Romans 11,50 and then at the same time take away national and territorial identity. As W. D. Davies makes plain, “The Land is so embedded in the heart of Judaism, the Torah, that—so, its sources, worship, theology, and often its history attest—it is finally inseparable from it.”51 But more importantly we would suggest that this is so according to the terms of the new covenant.

49 Ibid., p. 104.
50 Ibid., p. 164.
51 W. D. Davies, *The Territorial Dimension Of Judaism*, p. 85. It should be noted that this author adds the following qualification: “However, all this being recognized, it remains to emphasize one thing. If by a territorial religion is meant, as is usually the case, ‘a cult whose constituency is a territorial group identified by common occupation of a particular land area, so that membership of the cult is in the final instance a consequence of residence and not kinship or ethnic designation’ [quoting J. M. Schoffeleers], then Judaism is not a territorial religion: The Land is *not* the essence.” As far as it goes, this is true. Of course this would also be true of carnal, hence cultic Israel as Diaspora having longings for the Land prior to 1948. But what stands is God’s covenant promise to convert a carnal Israel into a spiritual Israel with the result that there *will* be kinship in the Land (Ezek. 36:22-28; 37:1-23). This being the case, then surely the Land
For I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries, and will bring you into your own land. I will also sprinkle clean water upon you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will place My Spirit within you and cause you to follow My statutes and carefully observe My ordinances. Then you will live in the land that I gave your fathers; you will be My people, and I will be your God” (Ezek. 36:24-28; cf. 11:14-21; Jer. 31:31-37).

As already noted in Chapter Seven: Israel - and Christian anti-Judaic Hermeneutics, when the interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews is considered, one major problem appears to loom larger than even that which has to do with a right understanding of certain warning passages. It is the manner in which a number of Old Testament quotations and inferences appear to be related to the author’s New Covenant teaching. In this regard we repeat John Owen’s warning: “There is not any thing in this Epistle that is attended with more difficulty than the citation of the testimonies out of the Old Testament that are made use of in it.”

This being the case, let cavalier explanations of these Old Testament references and intimations be shunned, that is those which simplistically suggest that the more illustrative use of an Old Testament passage in Hebrews automatically nullifies any original literal meaning. The truth is that the Hebrew author feels he is at liberty to quote with some variation in his hermeneutical methodology. In pages 218-220 we have referenced Kistemaker, Bonar, and Calvin in support of this contention.

Hence this leads us to suggest that, with regard to this recommended caution, perhaps one of the most significant and yet neglected characteristics of this distinctive portion of Scripture concerns the vital truth that this epistle was written by a Hebrew Christian for Hebrew Christians. This might seem an unnecessary comment except for the fact that problems can arise when a Gentile imposes his presuppositions upon the text that only Hebrew presuppositions can illuminate. Whether Paul wrote Hebrews or not, it is a thought well

remains covenanted until that glorious day, intervening national conflict notwithstanding.

worth bearing in mind that whereas the epistles of the Apostle were all addressed to Gentiles in the main, here the distinctive character of Hebrews is due to the fact that Jewish Christians are addressed by a Jewish Christian who presumes a Jewish mindset in his addressees.

With the preceding thoughts in mind, we now move to consider the most common objection to the idea of national Israel having title to the land promised to Abraham, whether in the present or future. This concerns several New Testament references that are all set forth as evidence that the earthly ha’aretz is indeed a former earthly hope that has been superceded by a more universal and heavenly hope. This cluster of references is Hebrews 11:10, 16; 12:22, along with Galatians 4:25-26, whereby it is proposed that while Israel’s inheritance of the land according to the Old Testament economy was decidedly earthy, materialistic, and shadowy, the Christian’s future, although rooted in the promise God made to Abraham, is yet a more transcendentally spiritual and heavenly hope. As an example of this popular understanding, especially where the repudiation of national Israel is concerned, consider O Palmer Robertson’s explanation.

Just as the tabernacle was never intended to be a settled item in the plan of redemption but was to point to Christ’s tabernacling among his people (cf. John 1:14), and just as the sacrificial system could never atone for sins but could only foreshadow the offering of the Son of God (Heb. 9:23-26), so in a similar manner Abraham received the promise of the land but never experienced the blessing of its full possession. In this way, the patriarch learned to look forward to “the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (Heb. 11:10). . . . [I]f the promised land of the old covenant becomes the blessed object to be achieved, then its tremendous fulfillment in the new covenant could be missed. To claim “the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (Heb. 11:10), Abraham had to look beyond the shadowy form of the promise, which he never possessed, to the realities that could be perceived only by faith.53

Also consider Peter Walker’s similar commentary.

[In Hebrews 11] positive descriptions of the physical land, however, are then immediately eclipsed by his [the author’s] insistence that the real focus of the promise to which Abraham “looked forward” was the “city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (v. 10). This eschatological focus is then repeated in verse 16: “Instead, they were

looking for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.”

So the patriarchs were looking forward, not so much for the day when their descendants would inherit the physical land, but rather to the day when they would inherit the heavenly country (or city) which the physical land signified. In a sense they “saw through the promise of the land, looking beyond it to a deeper, spiritual reality.”

Consequently, we consider a collection of expressions, “the present Jerusalem . . . the Jerusalem above” (Gal. 4:25-26), “the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (Heb. 11:10), “a better land—a heavenly one” (Heb. 11:16), “Mount Zion . . . the city of the living God (the heavenly Jerusalem)” (Heb. 12:22), that are commonly agreed to be speaking of a truth that is essentially the same, but especially represented in the perception of Israel’s founding patriarch.

To begin with, consider Abraham, called of God and converted from paganism in Ur of the Chaldees, having entered Canaan via Haran, is confronted with more paganism in the land of promise. He explores this inheritance from north to south, as an unsettled nomadic tent-dweller, and continues to be appalled at its pervasive unholiness that only the future leadership of Joshua could begin to cleanse. Yes, he was looking for “a better country, that is a heavenly one,” but the vital matter here concerns not how a Gentile world view perceives this expression, but the Hebrew perspective of the author. Franz Delitzsch makes a significant comment on Hebrews 11:16 at this point.

It must be confessed that we nowhere read of the patriarchs, that they expressed a conscious desire for a home in heaven. The nearest approach to anything of the kind is in Jacob’s vision of the angel-ladder, and his wondering exclamation, “this is the gate of heaven” (Gen. 28:17), but even there no desire is expressed for an entrance into the heavenly land, but the promise renewed of future possession of the earthly Canaan, “The land whereon thou sleepest will I give to thee.”

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54 Peter Walker, “The Land in the Apostles’ Writings,” The Land of Promise, eds. Philip Johnston and Peter Walker, p. 90.

Then he adds further concerning Hebrews 11:10.

[H]ere the heavenly Jerusalem is not contrasted with the earthly city, but with the frail and moveable dwellings of the patriarchs in their nomad life.56

Thus Abraham’s hope was eschatological, but certainly not in the sense of the superiority of heaven above compared with earth below, of the superiority of the spiritual over the material. Rather his hope was of the future messianic age, the millennial kingdom in which heaven would be manifest on earth and residence there would be gloriously holy, permanent. Consequently George Peters explains this perspective as follows.

Evidently that which misleads the multitude in this matter is the statement of the apostle (Heb. 11:16), that “they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly.” Commentators, as Barnes, Bloomfield, etc., overlooking entirely the Theocratic relationship that this country (i.e. Palestine) is to occupy in the Kingdom of God, at once conclude that this “heavenly” country is the third heaven. They forget that this phraseology would not mislead a Hebrew, who was accustomed to designate the restored Davidic Kingdom a heavenly Kingdom, and the country enjoying its restoration and Theocratic blessings, a heavenly country. The expression does not mean “the third heaven,” but something that pertains to, or partakes of, the heavenly, as heavenly vision, body, calling, etc.57

Hence the hope of a “heavenly Jerusalem” was not a matter of a superior, exclusively spiritual extraterrestrial location, but rather a fulfilled, holy, spiritually substantial regeneration of that which was formerly polluted and imperfect. James Calvin De Young explains such a Hebrew hope.

This eschatological liberation [of Jerusalem] is the antitype of the liberation of the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt, but is, of course, far greater and more glorious. Israel will at this time be gathered and re-established; Jerusalem will be rebuilt and her glory will last forever. Of all the apocalyptic literature, Tobit 13:8-18 paints the clearest and best picture of the future restored Jerusalem. . . . The clearest evidence that this renewed

56 Ibid., p. 238.
57 George N. H. Peters, The Theocratic Kingdom, I, p. 295. J. B. Lightfoot confirms this thought of Hebrew perception when, on Galatians 4:26 concerning “the Jerusalem above,” he comments. “St. Paul here uses an expression familiar to rabbinical teachers, but detaches it from those sensuous and material conceptions which they invested it.” Galatians, p. 182. Also refer to Alford, Greek Testament, III, p. 48.
city is the earthly Jerusalem of Palestine is found in the numerous passages in Jewish literature where this renewal demands a great expansion in the city’s territory.\textsuperscript{58}

The problem then concerns, as was stated earlier, the necessity of a hermeneutical approach to these passages under consideration, especially in Hebrews, that gives weighty import to Hebrew perception. It is granted that rabbinical embellishment must be considered and purged. Nevertheless C. K. Barrett, in making such an allowance, concludes that such eschatological language, as represented in Hebrews, looked forward to holy earthly glory, that is a both/and resolution rather than one which takes us out of this world.

The Rabbinic literature in general looks forward to a restored Jerusalem under earthly conditions. The new city is described in detail in terms which are often fantastic, but the welter of imagination bestowed upon the subject does not alter the fact that what the Rabbis hoped for, and described as “the Jerusalem of the age to come”, was essentially the material capital of a material state.

The heavenly tabernacle in Hebrews is not the product of Platonic idealism, but the eschatological temple of apocalyptic Judaism, the temple which is in heaven primarily in order that it may be manifested on earth.\textsuperscript{59}

Again, such an approach to any supposed tension concerning the material and spiritual, that is between the material land and the heavenly Jerusalem, should be considered according to a both/and rather than an either/or resolution. Thus Baruch Maoz writes:

Of course, salvation is not exclusively or primarily a matter of material realities (Heb. 4:8); nor are the Old Testament promises exhausted by exclusively material accomplishments as opposed to heavenly ones (Heb. 11:16). The contradictions found between ‘heavenly’ and ‘earthly’ lie not in terms of geography but in terms of the priority of things: Godward or otherwise, holy or sinful. The new heaven and new earth are said to ‘descend’. There are spiritual bodies and natural ones (I Cor. 15:36-44), and the New Testament doctrine of resurrection implies a spiritual kind of

\textsuperscript{58} James Calvin De Young, \textit{Jerusalem In The New Testament}, pp. 113-114.

material existence rather than a non-material state of being (Exod. 3:6, 8; Num. 32:11; Deut. 30:20; Neh. 9:7-8).60

Though not in the mainstream of Augustinian thought, nevertheless we appreciate the confession of amillennialist Samuel Waldron at this juncture.

The heavenly country is not a country in heaven, but a country from heaven. The heavenly kingdom is the kingdom from heaven and not the kingdom in heaven. . . . Though heaven is the happy abode of the disembodied righteous during the present age, in the age to come heaven comes to earth.61

In conclusion, it is readily confessed once more that some manifestations of premillennialism are carnal with regard to a balanced or both/and comprehension of spiritual materiality. So with regard to national Israel, but especially the territorial factor, there are some manifestations of premillennialism that are carnal in their Zionist loyalty. Nevertheless, these deviant representations in no way nullify the essence of a biblical, Judeo-centric, premillennial eschatology. More specifically this involves a future, holy, consummate messianic kingdom subsequent to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ comprised of spiritual materiality. It will be spiritually tangible. Even more specifically this universal kingdom upon a glorified earth will incorporate a blessed unity with diversity, that is the regenerate nation of Israel inhabiting the fruitful promised land under the reign of Jesus Christ from Jerusalem surrounded by regenerate Gentile nations. In this setting of heaven come to earth, Israel and the Jewish people will be fulfilled (Rom. 11:12), not superceded, and the Gentile nations will happily submit to this divine order as engrafted wild olive branches. To this end was the gospel sent forth (Zech. 14:9; Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 8:18-23).

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61 Samuel E. Waldron, The End Times Made Simple, pp 239-240.
Chapter Ten

ISRAEL – and a Romans II synthesis

ROMANS II is, by common confession, the *locus classicus* passage with regard to the New Testament teaching concerning the present nature and destiny of national Israel. Consequently the following six summary expositions concerning Romans 11:11-32; Galatians 6:16, Ephesians 2:11-22, Philippians 3:2-3, Hebrews 8:7-13, and 1 Peter 2:9-10, aim at establishing harmony with Paul’s preeminent gospel teaching that we would define as vigorously Judeo-centric. Historic exegesis of these portions of Scripture, being predominantly Gentile in character, has tended to result in conclusions supportive of replacement, supercessionist, or fulfillment theology.

However it should go without saying that all of these passages of the Word of God were penned, humanly speaking, by Hebrew Christian authors. Hence there needs to be recollection of Romans 1:16 where the gospel is to be offered “to everyone who believes, first *prôtos* to the Jew, and also to the Greek,” which principle the Lord Jesus revealed to Ananias, namely that Paul was “to carry My [Christ’s] name before Gentiles, kings, and the sons of Israel” (Acts 9:15). As a result Paul consistently witnessed to the Jews at every opportunity, even from the beginning at Damascus following his conversion (Acts 9:22). His first missionary journey saw initial synagogue witness at Salamis, Pisidian Antioch, and Iconium (Acts 13: 5, 14; 14:1). Note that Acts 13:46 reveals: “It was necessary that God’s message be spoken to you [Jews at Psidian Antioch] first. But since you reject it, and consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles!” Nevertheless, at the next stop at Iconium, Paul first visits the synagogue. His second missionary journey finds him seeking the Jews first at Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth and Ephesus (Acts 16:13; 17:1, 10, 16-17; 18:1-4, 19). Note that Acts 18:6 records, “Your blood [that of the Jews at Corinth] is on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.” Nevertheless, at the next stop at Ephesus, Paul first visits the synagogue. His third missionary journey finds him seeking the Jews first at Ephesus, but first to the synagogue for three months (Acts 19:8). Paul’s final journey, in which he is led captive to Rome for trial, commences
in Jerusalem where he witnesses in the Temple (Acts 21:26), and then declares to the Jews that, “I am a Jewish man” (Acts 22:3). Three days following his arrival at Rome, he “called together the leaders of the Jews,” and declared that, “it is for the hope of Israel that I’m wearing this chain” (Acts 28:17, 20).

It should be born in mind that Romans was received in Rome from Corinth approximately three years before Paul’s arrival in Rome just described. Thus the Apostle, although repeatedly scorned and assailed by the Jews, nevertheless manifested an indefatigable and gracious persistence with those to whom he continued to feel so indebted (Rom. 9:4-5). Paul was relentlessly pro-Judaic, even when faced with the most stubborn unbelief and spiritual adultery (9:1-3; 10:1; 11:1, 11; cf. Hosea 11:8-9; I Thess. 2:14-16). Indeed he manifests a degree of ongoing Jewishness that, while on occasion used pragmatically (Acts 16:1-3), yet is reflective of deep love for “my kinsmen according to the flesh” (9:3). Hence, no Christian should harbor any lesser attitude, though sad to say, as is abundantly clear in Chapter Two: Israel - and Centuries of Christian anti-Judaism, many Christians have continued to be anti-Judaic both racially and theologically.

With this in mind, a correct interpretation of the New Covenant writings requires a hermeneutic that gives serious consideration to the Jewish presuppositions that are inherent in them. Consequently this being an assumed approach as established in Chapter Seven: Israel - and Christian anti-Judaic hermeneutics, it should not surprise us when such a Hebrew orientation results in truth agreement leading, by means of the progress of revelation, from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from promise to fulfillment, that finds no necessity for the displacement of national Israel.

The relationship of Romans 9-11 with Romans 1-8 is not parenthetical, but continuative and climactic. Many earlier references indicate an underlying interest in the destiny of God’s covenant people (2:9-10, 17-29, 3:1-2, 9, 29) and particularly the character of true Jewishness (2:28-29; cf. 9:6-8). Further the theme of Romans being God’s saving righteousness (1:16-17; 3:21-26; 5:17-21; 8:4, 10) has highlighted the integrity of God in saving sinners, whether Jew or Gentile. Hence God’s righteousness is not to be questioned, even “if some [Jews] did not believe” (3:3). Therefore there is good reason for maintaining that 9:6a is of crucial importance when it declares: “But it is not as though
the word of God has failed/fallen out [ekpipto].” So John Piper rightly argues at this juncture that 9:6a declares,

the main point which Romans 9-11 was written to prove, in view of Israel’s unbelief and rejection. What is at stake ultimately in these chapters is not the fate of Israel; that is penultimate. Ultimately God’s own trustworthiness is at stake. And if God’s word of promise cannot be trusted to stand forever, then all our faith is in vain.1

Thus the Word of God has not failed, and for this reason neither has its promised dealings with national Israel. And in considering final proof of this fundamental truth, with Paul’s close argument in mind we proceed from the gospel and Israel’s election in Romans 9, to the gospel and Israel’s defection in Romans 10 and now, ultimately, the gospel and Israel’s salvation in Romans 11.

ROMANS 11:1-32

If ever an opportunity presented itself for Paul to renounce unbelieving Israel once and for all it would be at this juncture where the argument of chapter 10 has so conclusively demonstrated the accountability of the Jew for his blatant rebellion against the light of the gospel. A similar situation presented itself in 2:28-29 where we were told that, “a person is not a Jew who is one outwardly, and [true] circumcision is not something visible in the flesh. On the contrary, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart—by the Spirit, not the letter. His praise is not from men but from God.” Surely at that point the extinction of national Judaism could have here been affirmed once and for all. But we immediately read: “So what advantage does the Jew have? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Considerable in every way.” (3:1-2). So here at the commencement of Romans 11 we find another passionate endorsement of the national descendants of Abraham. Hence Paul’s subsequent dynamic argument calls for intense investigation since it best challenges anti-Judaism at its roots.

Israel’s rejection by God is denied, vs. 1-10.

Admittedly, even amongst Christians of this twentieth century who are indebted to the Reformation for the recovery of the gospel of the free grace of God, there has been vigorous disagreement with regard to the

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A Judeo-centric New Testament synthesis

future destiny of Israel. Nevertheless this writer has no hesitation in declaring, from the outset, his strong commitment to God’s eschatological promise of a regenerated nation of Israel in the Land under its acknowledged Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, it is believed that a prima facie reading of Romans 9-11 will readily lead to this conclusion; it is only when a preconceived system of doctrine becomes dominant, such as in the magisterium or teaching authority of the Roman Catholic Church, or entrenched Augustinian theology, or denominational/creedal loyalty, that an alternative interpretation is desperately sought. However Paul is equally adamant in this matter when, in reply to the question, “Has God rejected His people?” He vehemently responds, “Absolutely not! [Perish the thought; it is unthinkable]” (Rom. 11:1). Cranfield is right to designate Paul’s dogmatic exclamation here as being not only reflective of national Israel, but also the theme of this chapter. So Horatius Bonar has penned a hymn that is just as emphatic about this truth.

Forgotten; no that cannot be;  
All other names may pass away,  
But thine, MY ISRAEL, shall remain  
In everlasting memory.  

Forgotten! No, that cannot be;  
Inscribed upon My palms thou art,  
The name I gave in days of old  
Is graven still upon My heart.  

Forgotten! No, that cannot be;  
Beloved of thy God art thou  
His crown forever on thy head,  
His name forever on thy brow.

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2 To quickly assuage the protest of those who are certain that the Land has no place in Romans 11, we invite them to recall the evidence declared in Chapter Nine: Israel - and the Inheritance of the Land through Abraham. But further, for converted Rabbi Paul to reference the unbelieving Israelites’ present investment in the promises of “their forefathers,” v. 28, cf. 9:4, and then to suggest that the Land is not included, is simply ridiculous.

3 Cranfield, Romans, II, p. 542, 574-577.
Forgotten! No, that cannot be:
Sun, moon, and stars may cease to shine,
But thou shalt be remembered still,
For thou art His and He is thine.⁴

Immediate proof of Israel not having been rejected is the biblical principle that there is “at the present [now] time a remnant chosen by grace,” v. 5. This sovereign preservation is the guarantee of the preservation of the nation as a whole in the future. But it is vitally important to understand also that although a present remnant justifies God’s ongoing faithfulness, the subsequent teaching here indicates that this is in no way meant to convey His final satisfaction with a remnant, even as v. 23 seems to suggest. Rather there will ultimately be Israel’s “fulfillment,” v. 12, Israel’s “resurrection,” v. 15, that is the salvation of “all Israel,” v. 26.

Israel’s Stumbling at Christ is Temporary, vs. 11-24

The preceding stark definition of Israel’s blindness, even as the church at Rome could so plainly observe, might lead to the belief that the nation as a whole had been finally abandoned by God. Further it would then be assumed that in the main the saved Gentiles now constituted the new spiritual nation comprised of all races, including a Jewish remnant. Sadly the early Christian church, in embracing replacement or supercessionist theology, did eventually come to this conclusion, and with tragic consequences for the Jew.⁵ But “No!” exclaims Paul. God’s rejection of Israel is in no way final, v. 1; hence Israel’s present stumbling is not irretrievable, v. 11.

⁵ While the first century was dominated by the Jewish mother church at Jerusalem that acknowledged the inclusion of the Gentiles into the blessings of Abraham, during the second to the fourth centuries a change evolved so that by the time of Constantine the Jews were believed to have forever forfeited the blessings of Abraham that had now been inherited by the Gentiles. Refer to H. Wayne House, “The Church’s Appropriation Of Israel’s Blessings,” *Israel, The Land and the People*, ed. H. Wayne House, pp. 77-110; Walter Kaiser Jr., “An Assessment Of ‘Replacement Theology,’” *Mishkan* 21, (February 1994), pp. 9-20; Ray Pritz, “Replacing The Jews In Early Christian Theology,” *Mishkan* 21, (February 1994), pp. 21-27; Jeffreys S. Siker, *Disinheriting The Jews*, 296 pp.
God will bless the Gentiles to bless the Jews, vs. 11-15.

For Paul, while his own distinctive Gentile ministry is significant in this divine saga, yet his ultimate vision concerns the saving of Israel, “their full number,” v. 12, and “life from the dead,” v. 15, yet through his distinctive vocation, vs. 13-15. However the interim bringing in of “the full number of the Gentiles,” v. 25, ought to provoke the Jews to jealousy, that is make them desirous of God’s evident outpoured blessing and so become, not Gentiles, but fulfilled Jews under their Messiah. So, as David Larsen points out:

Christian love, instead of arrogance [cf. vs. 18-20], ought to foster “envy or jealousy” among the Jews for what Christians possess in Christ (Rom. 11:11). How frequently has this phenomenon been in evidence in Christian history or now?6

The answer is all too sadly obvious. Nevertheless, as Barrett states: “Paul looks beyond the advantage conferred on the Gentiles by the unbelief of Israel to the far greater eschatological bliss which Israel’s return will inaugurate.”7 While Israel’s downside is its “rejection/being cast aside” vs. 15, 26-27 (cf. Ezek. 37:11), yet its greater upside is its eschatological resurrection (Ezek. 37:7-10, 12-14).

God will bless the Jews through wise cultivation, vs. 16-24.

While many a man quits a difficult task, the burden of Paul is now to demonstrate that God’s resolve in the saving of national Israel has never faded (Gen. 18:14; cf. Phil. 1:6), as is reflected by two Old Testament images in vs. 16-24 that will stimulate the climactic declaration of vs. 25-32. Israel’s Gomer-like spiritual adultery (Hos. 3:1) has resulted in all of the tawdry vicissitudes of human history, as with the conflict of the centuries in which the Jew has suffered unspeakable persecution, being “for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar and without ephod or household idols” (Hos. 3:4). Nevertheless “the people of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come with awe to the LORD and to His goodness in the last days” (Hos. 3:5).

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7 C. K. Barrett, Romans, p. 214.
The analogy of Israel as a lump of dough, v. 16a.

While the firstfruits piece of dough is holy (Num. 15:17-21), that is the Abrahamic root to which the remnant of Jewish Christians is attached, how certain is the ultimate consecration to holiness of the whole lump or cake (Lev. 6:14-18). Again, the salvation of the “remnant,” v. 5, guarantees the salvation of the “full number,” v. 12, of Israel.

The analogy of Israel as natural olive branches, vs. 16b-24.

By means of the olive tree parallel, Paul intends to provide his most compelling reasons as to why national Israel has glorious prospects in spite of ongoing obstinacy through unbelief resulting in dispersal. In a word, the reason is “grace” through unilateral, unconditional, covenental promise (4:13-16; 9:8). However, while this Gentile dominance continues, such privilege for saved barbarians should stimulate their humble gratitude and loving respect for the severed natural branches rather than arrogance and conceit.

Moo comments that, “Gentile believers [in Rome] were apparently convinced that they belonged to a new people of God that had simply replaced Israel,” and consequently their derisive attitude was showing. Haldane adds that here is well described, “the [overbearing] spirit that has long prevailed among the Gentiles who profess Christianity. What marvelous ignorance, folly, and vanity, are often displayed even in God’s people!” However, while Israel is under discipline in the Lord’s woodshed, Gentiles are to show them loving respect, even if the task is at times frustrating. Yet here church history does not reflect a good record. Though the manifest attitude of Paul, already summarized in pages 294-295, becomes a model in terms of what is here commended. Nevertheless concerning the shameful record of many centuries, one scholar declares:

8 Moo, Romans, p. 704.
9 Haldane, Romans, p. 546.
10 A study of church history regarding the treatment of the Jews by Christians is vital at this point. Refer to Chapter Two: Israel - and centuries of Christian anti-Judaism, also Paul E. Grosser and Edwin Halperin, The Causes And Effects Of Anti-Semitism; David L. Larsen, Jews, Gentiles, And The Church; David Rausch, A Legacy Of Hatred; Clark M. Williamson, Has God Rejected His People?
The Holocaust was, of course, the bitter fruit of long centuries of Christian teaching about the Jewish people. From the time of the gentile Church Fathers and the legal establishment of a triumphant ecclesiastical and philosophical control system with Constantine the Great, Christendom treated the Jewish people with contempt and taught contemptuously of them. . . . [T]he baptized gentiles succumbed to that wrongheadedness against which Paul had warned: they turned in jealousy and envy against the very root that bore them (Rom. 11:18).  

Hence the Gentile, in not being arrogant, in “continuing in the kindness of God,” v. 22, is to allow grace received to be a stimulant of graciousness that is to be directed toward the unbelieving Jews, and thus promote jealousy, vs. 11, 14. It is well worth contemplating here how a Christian, whose eschatological system denies the existence of Jews in the sight of God since 70 AD, can adequately respond here in glad conformity with Paul’s exhortation. 

Israel’s Hardening in Unbelief is Impermanent, vs. 25-32

Since the beginning of Romans 9, the overriding concern of Paul has been the justification of God in His covenant dealings with the nation of Israel. Now a climactic thrust is reached that seals the dogmatic assertions of 11:1, 11. The emphasis upon the nation as a whole continues in large focus, especially since for Paul the Old Testament manifestation has ongoing New Testament significance.

The hardening of Israel will conclude, v. 25.

Paul’s remedy for Gentile conceit, whereby they might esteem themselves as singularly and forever favored by God to the exclusion of the Jew, is the revelation of Israel’s future salvation. The present hardening of Israel will be “until,” ἕως, the mystery of the inclusion of the Gentiles, within God’s saving purpose, has run its course and attained its “full number” (Luke 21:24). Moo rightly comments that Paul leaves no doubt about what he wants his readers to learn from this mystery: to stop thinking so highly of themselves in comparison with Jews (v. 25a). We who are Gentiles should likewise take these verses as a reminder that

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we are only part of the great salvation-historical plan of God and that that plan has its climax in the salvation of Israel.\textsuperscript{12}

They are not to act with an “elder brother” attitude (Luke 15:25-32). Trench, in expounding the Parable of the Prodigal Son, explains:

[W]e Gentiles must not forget that at the end of the present dispensation all will be reversed, and that we shall be in danger of playing the part of the elder brother, and shall do so if we grudge at the largeness of the grace bestowed upon the Jew, who is now feeding upon the husks, far away from his Father’s house.\textsuperscript{13}

The Deliverer will save national Israel, vs. 26-27.

“And in this way, all Israel will be saved,” v. 26. The controversy that surrounds this verse is closely related to systems of eschatology that have espoused three main perspectives. 1. “Israel” here refers to the redeemed of the New Testament era who comprise the church, whether converted Jew or Gentile. Thus the Christian church has become the new Israel that has replaced the former Old Testament nation. This view of Calvin has diminished support because of obvious exegetical weakness. 2. “Israel” here refers to the accumulation, over many centuries, of the saved remnant of national Israel, 11:5. While it is comprised of Jewish Christians, yet it merges with the church which is the new Israel. Both of the above views can admit to a larger number of Jews being converted at the end of this age, though without there being any national or territorial significance with regard to the future. Such an increase, again, merges with the church. This view is especially supported by English, Dutch and Reformed scholars. 3. “Israel” here refers to a future national conversion of Israel, the larger unbelieving segment in particular, that results in Israel serving under Christ in the promised land with restored glory. This view, with variations, is most widely held today within evangelical Christendom,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{12} Moo, \textit{Romans}, p. 713. Also Barrett, Cranfield, Haldane, Hendriksen, Hodge, Morris, Murray, Shedd.
\item \textsuperscript{13} R. C. Trench, \textit{Notes on the Parables of Our Lord}, p. 152. Cranfield makes a similar comment: “The order of salvation thus described marks significantly an inversion of the order in which the good news is preached according to 1:16 (‘both for the Jew first and for the Greek’). \textit{Romans}, II, p. 572.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
even as N. T. Wright acknowledges.\textsuperscript{14} It is the obvious meaning that is also in full harmony with a Judeo-centric eschatology.\textsuperscript{15}

\textit{The national salvation of all Israel, v. 26.}

In relation to the clear chronological sequence of v. 25, “in this way all Israel [the same national Israel of v. 25, inclusive of the remnant of v.5] will be saved.” The agent of this salvation is “the Liberator . . . from Zion.” Paul’s flexible use of Isaiah 59:20 and Jeremiah 31:33-34 probably incorporates Psalm 14:7; 53:6 as well. The future tense here suggests the return of Jesus Christ, having come from the heavenly Zion and his throne of intercession (Heb. 12:22-24) for the purpose of coming to earthly Zion in its present ungodly state; it complements the other future aspects of vs. 24, 26. This is further indicated since this Liberating One “will remove [again future tense] ungodliness from Jacob” (Isa. 27:9; cf. vs. 6, 12-13, which, according to Paul’s reference here, must transcend the return from Babylon).

\textit{The national covenant of cleansing, v. 27.}

The continuing quotation of Isaiah 59:21a, now incorporating the thought of covenant cleansing from Isaiah 27:9; Jeremiah 31:31, 33-34, indicates that the basis of the aforementioned salvation of Israel will be the atoning “Seed” of Abraham (Gal. 3:16). The “newness” of this covenant (Heb. 8:8-13; 12:18-24) is in relation to the old covenant made at Mt. Sinai, while it is but the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant, v. 28. Cranfield rightly concludes that such unilateral deliverance, “dashes Israel’s self-centered hopes of establishing a claim upon God, of putting Him under an obligation by its merits, making it clear that the nation’s final salvation will be a matter of the forgiveness of its sins by the sheer mercy of its God.”\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{14} N. T. Wright, \textit{The Climax of the Covenant}, p. 246.

\textsuperscript{15} For more conclusive proof in this regard, refer to Matt Waymeyer, “The Dual Status of Israel in Romans 11:28,” \textit{The Master’s Seminary Journal}, (Spring 2005).

The salvation of Israel will be comprehensive, vs. 28-32.

The whole problem for the Gentile has been one of misplaced focus, that is self-centeredness; the overriding purpose of Paul has been to correct this narrow vision so that it encompasses the broader perspective of Jew and Gentile in God’s plan of redemption. Notice the emphatic contrast between “they” (Israelites) and “your” (Gentiles), v. 28, between “you” (Gentiles) and “their/these/they” (Israelites), vs. 30-31. By way of concluding summation, Paul now continues to address the Gentile in much the same way that God needed to address and correct the narrow focus of Peter (Acts 10:44-11:18).

According to irrevocable covenant, vs. 28-29.

Refer to Chapter Eleven: Israel - as God’s Beloved Enemy, for a more detailed study of v. 28. Here biblical covenantalism, with regard to God’s saving purposes, is brought to the forefront, and this in turn causes us to grasp that God’s gospel is rooted in His sovereign will and purpose rather than human cooperation. Hence we are constrained to view God’s dealings from His point of view rather than that of either the Gentile or Jew, and here this calls for continued emphasis on the Gentile having his vision expanded even as this thrust was introduced at v. 17. The necessity may also be due to the glorious deliverance of vs. 26-27 that could arouse Gentile discomfort, again after the manner of the “elder brother” (Luke 15:25-32).

According to universal mercy, vs. 30-32.

It is a common quirk of human nature that we more readily focus on grace bestowed upon ourselves while at the same time sin manifest in others (Matt. 7:3-5). Likewise the Gentiles, particularly in their ascendency, have tended to look with admiring exclusivity at themselves and disparagement toward the Jews. However Paul is persistent in communicating God’s inclusive, loftier perspective which, though none the less particular, intends that Gentile and Jew should be accepting of each other even as He has been equally gracious in showing “mercy to all.” As Frederick W. Faber has well penned:

There’s a wideness in God’s mercy
Like the wideness of the sea;
There’s a kindness in His justice
Which is more than liberty.
For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man’s mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind.

The significance of Paul continuing to exhort the Gentiles in particular from v. 13 up to v. 32 ought not to be missed. The point is that a wider perspective is necessary concerning God’s design for human history. So often we are blinded by a narrow and exclusive frame of reference, v. 18, that requires divine enlightenment, vs. 24-29.

GALATIANS 6:16

When apologists for Augustinian Reformed eschatology seek to biblically justify the identification of the Christian church as the new spiritual Israel of God, invariably Galatians 6:16 is offered as the primary proof-text.17 Though it should be pointed out that this reference is really the only explicit verse in the New Testament that can reasonably be appealed to in this regard, especially if the NIV translation is considered.

The Context

Paul has almost reached a point of exasperation with the Jewish legalists who are so adamant in requiring that Gentile Christians be circumcised and thus commence submission to “the Law of Moses” (Acts 15:5). So in Galatians 5:12 he expresses, in a very down-to-earth manner, his desire that they would “get themselves castrated.” Again in Galatians 6:12-13 Paul assails the carnality and hypocrisy of his opponents, particularly their “boasting” in gaining submission to circumcision. So he responds with a different sort of boasting, which is self-renouncing and exalts alone in Jesus Christ’s atonement. This proclamation of confidence in grace alone through Christ alone is antithetical to the formalistic religion of this world, v. 14. And when all

17 This is clearly evident in Hendriksen, Israel and the Bible, pp. 33-34; Palmer Robertson, The Israel of God, pp. 39-46; Venema, The Promise of the Future, pp. 274-277. So La Rondelle comments, “Paul’s Benediction in Galatians 6:16 becomes, then, the chief witness in the New Testament in declaring that the universal Church of Christ is the Israel of God, the seed of Abraham, the heir to Israel’s covenant promise (cf. Gal. 3:29; 6:16).” The Israel of God in Prophecy, pp. 110-111.
has been said and done, what matters most is that sovereignty of grace
which alone is able to convert a works-boasting sinner into “a new
[spiritual] creation/species [ktisis, cf. II Cor. 5:17],” v. 15.

The Israel of God, v. 16

So Paul exhorts “those” to whom he is writing, being principally
Gentiles (1:2), to show discernment in this matter. “Peace . . . and
mercy,” which are so central and resultant concerning a true experience
of his gospel, will be bestowed upon those who are exclusively
directed in their daily walk by the fundamental rule of grace and life in
union with Christ. But for those who employ Moses along with Christ,
as it were with a relationship that may be likened to spiritual bigamy
(Rom. 7:1-4), “peace . . . and mercy” are impossible. Moses will only
aggravate the problem (Rom. 5:20; 7:7). Then Paul is reminded of a
minority group in the church at Galatia, “a remnant chosen by grace”
(Rom. 11:5), that is a small number of Jewish Christians. They are
ethnically Jewish, yet very different from “those who want to make a
good showing in the flesh” (5:12). So he includes them as well in his
exhortation since they, as Christians, being authentically Jewish, are
“the Israel of God,” and with the Gentiles are equally able to
participate in the benediction of “peace . . . mercy.”

The Jewish Christian Interpretation

Considerable debate has surrounded the translation of this verse. Many
translations follow the NASB which reads: “And those who will walk
by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and [emphasis added]
upon the Israel of God.” Then the HCSB reads, “May peace be on all
those who follow this standard, and mercy also [emphasis added] be on
the Israel of God.” However the NIV translates: “Peace and mercy to
all who follow this rule, even [emphasis added] to the Israel of God.”

Concerning the NIV version, Jewish Christian commentator David
Stern remarks:

The consequence of this wrong interpretation has been immeasurable pain
for the Jews. The conclusion was reached that the Church is now the “New
Israel” and the Jews, the so-called “Old Israel,” no longer God’s people. If
the Jews are no longer God’s people, isn’t it appropriate to persecute them?
There are four reasons why this anti-Semitic conclusion is false and is not
taught by this verse or any other: (1) the Greek grammar, (2) the Jewish
background, (3) Sha’ul’s [Paul’s] purpose here, and (4) Sha’ul’s teaching elsewhere.18

The distress of Stern here is by no means unfounded. In John Gager’s The Origins of Anti-Semitism, there is an honest reckoning with Galatians 6:16 concerning the unfortunate neglect of certain historic doctrinal factors that conflict with the common association of Israel with the church.

Peter Richardson has shown that Justin Martyr was the first Christian writer to identify Christianity with Israel in explicit terms [refer to footnote 22]. This is a sobering discovery. If language provides any clues to reality, we ought now to be more cautious when speaking about rejection-replacement views of Israel in the earliest stages of Christian development. Paul’s writings come a full century before the time of Justin. They are certainly the earliest Christian documents to have survived and perhaps even to have been written. If we knew nothing of their contents and were forced to hazard a guess based solely on an extrapolation from Richardson’s observation about Justin, would we arrive at anything like the traditional interpretation of Paul on Israel and the Torah? In fact, Paul nowhere addresses his churches as Israel. Nor does he transfer to them Israel’s distinctive attributes. The RSV translation of Philippians 3:3 (“We are the true circumcision. . . .”) indicates such a transfer, but the RSV translation at this point must be seen as dependent on the rejection-replacement view of Israel, not the other way around.19

Then in rejecting the identification of Israel with the church, and having cited Ernest D. Burton’s designation of “the Israel of God” as “the pious Israel, the remnant according to the election of grace (Rom. 11:5),” Gager appears to opt for Richardson’s conclusion. It is that “the blessing [of ‘peace and mercy’] falls on two separate groups: those who follow Paul’s standard and the Israel to whom God will show his mercy, namely, ‘all of Israel’” (cf. Rom. 11:26).20

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19 John G. Gager, The Origins of Anti-Semitism, p. 228. He also footnotes the fact that, concerning Philippians 3:3, “There is no counterpart for ‘true’ in the Greek text.” Ibid.

20 Ibid., pp. 228-229.
The Exegesis of Two Key Words

“Israel” according to Paul.

There is no use of the term “Israel” in the New Testament that is an explicit equivalent to the Christian church. This is confirmed by Burton’s declaration: “[T]here is, in fact, no instance of his [Paul’s] using Israel, except of the Jewish nation or a part thereof.”21 Furthermore there is no evidence taken from history that the term “Israel” was synonymously used with regard to the church before A.D. 160.22

“And” rather than “even.”

The continuative “and,” kai, is not only contextually but also statistically preferable when compared with the ascensive “even.” Most commonly the translation is, “and upon the Israel of God” (KJV, NKJV, NASB, ESV), in which case Hebrew Christians retain a distinct identity within the one people of God, while the minority translation reads, “even upon the Israel of God” (NIV), in which case the church, comprised of all of the people of God, is simply given a refined title, it being the spiritual Israel of God. However in the New Testament of the KJV the approximate usage is 97% for kai as “and” compared with 3% for kai as “even.” Hence the continuative use of kai has a far greater frequency than the ascensive use. Concerning the NIV’s uncommon use of “even” in this regard, “Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God,” a degree of ambiguity yet remains since not only can the ascensive use of kai be understood, but also the emphatic use, that is, “Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even [by way of an adjunctive, emphatic thought] to the Israel of God. A. T. Robertson suggests this is possibly the original meaning of kai, so that “also” here would seem to be a preferable translation, as with


22 In Peter Richardson’s acclaimed Cambridge University doctoral thesis, he writes, “The word ‘Israel’ is applied to the Christian Church for the first time by Justin Martyr c. A.D. 160. It is a symptom of the developing takeover by Christians of the prerogatives and privileges of Jews.” Israel In The Apostolic Church, p. 1.
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the HCSB. 23 “May peace be on all those who follow this standard, and mercy also be on the Israel of God.” In this instance the distinctive character of the Jewish Christian is retained. However it is difficult not to suspect that the NIV translation is doctrinally driven so that the intention is to identify the church as in fact the new Israel of God.

The Compatibility with Romans 11:5, 26

There is a broad Judeo-centric approach here which divides into two interpretations that both relate to Romans 11. On the one hand there is association with the “remnant according to the election of grace” (Rom. 11:5). These are authentic Jewish Christians, at the time when Paul wrote Romans, who readily parallel the remnant that Paul identifies as “the Israel of God,” a minority within the Gentile churches of Galatia when Galatians 6:16 was written. In holding to this perspective, Ernest D. Burton writes:

[T]here is, in fact, no instance of his [Paul’s] using Israël, except of the Jewish nation or a part thereof. These facts favor the interpretation of the expression [Israël tou theou] as applying not to the Christian community, but to Jews; yet, in view of tou theou, not to the whole Jewish nation, but to the pious Israel, the remnant according to the election of grace (Rom. 11:5).24

So a number of scholars has taken a similar exegetical pathway including G. C. Berkower, Hans Dieter Betz, Walter Gutbrod, A. T. Hanson, and Gottlob Schrenk. 25 On the other hand it is difficult to ignore Paul’s eschatological hope in a future authentic conversion of national Israel, at which time “all Israel will be saved” (Rom. 11:26). Hence this “full number” (Rom. 11:12) parallels the consummation of “the Israel of God,” as we have already seen with Richardson, but also F. F. Bruce and Franz Mussner. However, notwithstanding variations here, there is consensus that Galatians 6:16 refers to Jewish Christians

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24 Burton, Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Galatians, p. 358. Also Hans Dieter Betz, Walter Gutbrod, Gottlob Schrenk.

and therefore cannot be identified as a synonym for the homogenous people of God.

The Conflict between Exegesis and Doctrine

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson, a former Dallas Seminary professor who later embraced the doctrines of sovereign grace, has written a highly significant article on the interpretation of Galatians 6:16. One particular comment is most insightful.

I cannot help but think that dogmatic considerations loom large in the interpretation of Galatians 6:16. The tenacity with which this application of “the Israel of God” to the church is held in spite of a mass of evidence to the contrary leads one to think that the supporters of the view believe their eschatological system, usually an amillennial scheme, hangs on the reference of the term to the people of God, composed of both believing Jews and Gentiles. Amillennialism does not hang on this interpretation, but the view does appear to have a treasured place in amillennial exegesis.

A certain rigidity in evangelical eschatological debate emerges again in the discussion of Galatians 6:16. For example, amillennialists seem to strongly desire to equate “the Israel of God” with the church. Some amillennialists, however, think an ethnic future for Israel is compatible with their system. An example of this is found in the fine work of Anthony A. Hoekema on eschatology. He grants that an ethnic future for Israel would with certain strictures be compatible with his amillennial views, but he argues strongly against such an interpretation.

Why, then are amillennialists so opposed generally to an ethnic future for Israel? This is not an easy question to answer. It may be perfectly conceivable that an amillennialist would grant that an ethnic future for Israel at the Lord’s return could be fitted into his system. But if such a normal interpretation of the language of the Old Testament is followed in this instance, it is difficult to see how one can then escape the seemingly plain teaching of many Old Testament prophecies that the nation of Israel shall enjoy a preeminence in certain aspects over the Gentiles in the kingdom that follows our Lord’s advent (cf. Isa. 60:1-4; 62:1-12; Mic. 4:1-5; Hag. 2:1-7; Zech. 14:16-21, etc).

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The Exegesis of Drs. Herman Bavinck and Geerhardus Vos

Whereas Herman Bavinck believed that the future salvation of Israel would only incorporate a remnant gleaned through the centuries, Vos believed in a future mass conversion of Israel. In the light of this, the preceding explanation of Dr. Johnson is born out by the previous reference in Chapter Six: Israel - and Christian anti-Judaic Hermeneutics in History, concerning the anti-premillennial, eschatological understanding of Bavink with regard to the future of Israel. We briefly quote again Willem VanGemeren as follows:

"[I]n the interest of polemic against premillennialism Bavink sacrifices the OT prophetic hope to a harmonious understanding of the NT, in which the NT passages which hold out a hope for Israel and different exegetical options are either harmonized or not fully considered. The authority of the OT as well as of the NT seems to be sacrificed out of concern for unity, harmony, and systemization."

VanGemeren also references Geerhardus Vos’s similar anti-premillennial concern and why it was so difficult for him to enter into detail about his belief in the future conversion of Israel and its absorption into the Christian church. It was “[b]ecause it had been connected on the one hand with the restoration of the Jews to the Holy Land and on the other hand with the millennial kingdom.”

Conclusion

The Apostle Paul, who never repudiated his Jewishness, who always gave priority to Jewish evangelism, who continued to indicate the most tender love for his “countrymen by physical descent” (Rom. 9:3), is hardly likely to be propounding here a vital truth through the use of ambiguous, even specious terminology. Surely he would not be declaring to the Galatian Jews that, through absorption amongst the Gentiles, they were about to be racially disenfranchised by God. Upon his arrival at Rome, several years after the Epistle to the Galatians had


been penned, Paul first sought to witness to “the leaders of the Jews” concerning “the hope of Israel” (Acts 28:17, 20). To suggest that in this situation he spoke deftly with his tongue using an expression, often employed before, that in fact he believed would soon require divine “reinterpretation,” is simply unthinkable. Certainly he would not have been declaring the demise of Judaism. Rather in Rome he would have preached Christ to both Jew and Gentile with the especial hope that unbelieving natural branches, through jealousy, might become part of the “remnant chosen by grace” (Rom. 11:5), that is the true “Israel of God.” In this way Paul would have heartily rejoiced in declaring, “I magnify my ministry” (Rom. 11:13-14).

Ephesians 2:11-22

In churches of a Reformed persuasion, any eschatological distinction made between national Israel and the Church will often be challenged with the teaching of Paul in Ephesians 2:11-22. Here it is asserted that the apostle describes Israel and the Church as having been uniformly joined together, that is amalgamated into one body, one new man, the new people of God that nevertheless retains the title of the Church of Jesus Christ. However it is further stressed that in such a unity, in the sight of God the Jew has been completely, covenantally divested of his Jewishness, even as the Gentile no longer retains any distinction. So Martyn Lloyd-Jones, strongly influenced by Reformed commentary, declares that,

[The one new man here, the one body, is the Church, consisting of these various parts, all as a representation of the body of Christ... The Jew has been done away with as such, even as the Gentile has been done away with, in Christ. If you believe in the new creation, you must realize that all else has been entirely done away with, put aside. ‘There is neither Jew nor Greek... for ye are all one in Christ Jesus’ (Gal. 3:28). Another obvious principle is that nothing that belonged to the old state is of any value or has any relevance in the new state. If that seems startling to us we have but to read what Paul says in Galatians 6:15: ‘In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature’. So the Jew has gone, Gentile has gone; all that belonged to the Jew, all that belonged to the Gentile, is irrelevant henceforward. It is the new creature that matters.”

Apart from the erroneous absolutist referencing of Galatians 3:28; 6:15, Lloyd-Jones believes, again in outright terms, that God has eliminated all racial distinctions, whether Jewish or Gentile. Hence there is no possibility of any divine future for national Israel and individual Jewish identity, though it is really not difficult to appreciate that this extreme egalitarian spirit has overstepped itself. The reason is that in Romans 9-11 the same author presents teaching that certainly, according at least to a prima facie perspective, is in direct conflict with Lloyd-Jones’ exposition of Ephesians 2.

Of course, as already asserted in pages 294-296, Romans is best understood from the Jewish perspective that so thoroughly permeates its doctrine, and not according to Gentile imposition upon this pivotal gospel account. So Ephesians is similarly confronted with the same problem, especially in terms of centuries of protestant exposition. In this regard Dr. Tet-Lim Yee expresses concern at

the previous scholarship which has been hampered by too rigid an understanding of ‘Pauline Christianity’. This can be attributed substantially to scholarly tradition whose hermeneutical ‘grid’ has been derived from the philosophy of dialectics or the Protestant Reformation. The ‘new perspective(s) on Paul’, however, shifts our perspective back to first-century Judaism and enables us to penetrate fully into the historical context of first-century Jews and Judaism.31

Further this preferred Judaic approach is not to be thought so surprising when one considers the conclusion of Dr.Yee’s study of Ephesians overall.

The reason for the heavy use of the Jewish Scripture in Ephesians is obvious enough: it shows the continuity of Ephesians with the Jewish tradition to such an extent that the Jewish scriptures had become part of the

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30 Obviously Christian conversion does not eliminate racial, gender, and social distinctions. They remain as diverse characteristics of Christian unity. Neither did Paul nullify circumcision for the Jewish Christian.

31 Tet-Lim N. Yee, Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Reconciliation: Paul’s Jewish Identity and Ephesians, p. 213. As previously mentioned in Chapter Six: Israel - and Christian anti-Judaic Hermeneutics in History, we do not have to agree with all of the conclusions that the “new perspective” presents via E. P. Sanders, James D. G. Dunn, and N. T. Wright, to nevertheless appreciate the significance of a heightened regard for the essential Jewish nature of biblical Christianity, especially as reflected in Paul.
author’s tacit dimension, forming the “grid” of his theological and ethical weaving.32

Now it is vital to note that the rapprochement presently under discussion here in Ephesians 2 is predicated upon that period when Jesus declared to the chief priests and Pharisees, “the kingdom of God will be taken away from you [though not eternally, Matt. 23:38-39] and given to a nation [mainly the Gentiles/the new people of God], producing its fruit” (Matt. 21:43). Hence this union that has been instituted through the blood of Christ, vs. 13-16, commences at the inauguration of the Church age, signified at Pentecost, and thus progresses through the subsequent centuries and advancing fullness of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24; Rom. 11:25). In the language of Romans 11, we are at that point where “the [natural] branches were broken off, and you, though a wild olive branch [of Gentile stock], were grafted in among them [the remnant], and have come to share in the rich root of the cultivated olive tree.” v. 17.

The Gentiles are the Main Subject of Discussion

As with Romans 11:11-32, here in Ephesians 2 Paul is similarly addressing those formerly “Gentiles in the flesh—called ‘the uncircumcised,” v. 11, so that they might understand that they have been graciously engrafted into the root of Abraham as wild, uncultivated stock, except that the language here is of being “brought near by the blood of the Messiah,” having formerly been “without the Messiah, excluded, . . . foreigners to the covenants of the promise, with no hope and without God in the world,” vs. 12-13.

The Gentiles were “excluded from the citizenship of Israel,” v. 12

They were “excluded from the citizenship [politeia] of Israel [as a nation/state], and foreigners to the covenants of the promise,”33 that is separate from “the rich root of the cultivated olive tree,” being the Abrahamic covenant and the “forefathers” (Rom. 11:17, 28). Such alienation was when you “were dead in your trespasses and sins, . . .

32 Ibid., p. 43.

33 The plural “covenants” especially anticipates the continuity of the original promise, declared to Abraham on several occasions (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:5-21; 17:7-8; 26:1-5; 28:10-17; 35:9-12), by means of the subsequent Davidic Covenant (II Sam. 7:8-17) and New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-37).
[and] walked according to this worldly age. . . . We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires,” (Eph. 2:1-3). Thus the Gentiles were prodigals, “with no hope and without God in the world,” (Eph. 2:12).

The Gentiles “have been brought near by the blood of the Messiah,” vs. 13-19

It is vital to notice here that the Gentiles are not saved to comprise the Church, but are “brought near” to an unidentified entity by means of Christ’s atonement. So in Romans 11:17, the wild olive branches are not independently saved as the church, but are engrafted into “the rich [Abrahamic] root of the cultivated olive tree,” that is “brought near” to the Abrahamic covenant. Carl Hoch, Jr. describes the connection here as follows:

The Gentiles are brought near to Israel in Christ to share with Israel in its covenants, promise, hope, and God. They do not become Israel; they share with Israel.34

Near to the blessing of Abraham, vs. 13.

The context makes it clear that this “nearness” does not refer to union with or nearness to Christ. Rather it is by means of “the blood of Christ” that we are brought near to something else. In parallel with Romans 11:17 we suggest the Gentile is certainly brought near to God, though more particularly through being engrafted into the Abrahamic covenant. Thus J. S. Perowne explains:

The thought of remoteness and nearness in respect of God is of course implied, and comes out clearly in v. 18; but it is not the immediate thought of this passage, which rather speaks of the incorporation of once heathen souls into the true Israel. But the two views cannot be quite separated.—”Nigh” and “far” were familiar terms with the Rabbis in the sense of having or not having part in the covenant.35

That is, by faith the Gentiles draw near to “the blessing of Abraham” (Gal. 3:14, 29); as uncultivated olive branches, they become engrafted into the “rich root of the cultivated olive tree” (Rom. 11:17); they too

34 Hoch, Jr. “The New Man of Ephesians 2,” Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church, Blaising and Bock, eds., p. 125
35 J. S. Perowne, Ephesians, p. 78.
become participants in “the covenants of the [Abrahamic] promise,” v. 12, the “sustaining root” (Rom. 11:18).


Formerly there was a seeming impenetrable fence/partition (*phragmos*) of animosity between Jew and Gentile, especially on account of the law, v. 15. There may be reflection here upon the Temple wall that divided the Court of the Israelites from the Court of the Gentiles. However Christ has established reconciliation and peace with the result that the two warring factions have become one, as in a marriage, even though the Jew and Gentile distinction is still present as with the male/female distinction within a Christian marriage (Gal. 3:28). Jewish Christian commentator David Stern makes an interesting explanation at this point.

Sha’ul’s [Paul’s] point is that Gentiles are no longer separated but can now join the Jewish people and be one with them as God’s people through faith in the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua. The partition is down, the Gentiles can join us! The critics understand it the other way round: the partition is down, so that once Jews believe in their own Messiah they can no longer have the right to maintain their Jewish identity but must conform to Gentile patterns. Amazing! And certainly not what Shau’l himself did.36

Thus we would declare that former Gentile alienation having been transformed through incorporation into the concord of “one new man,” certainly does not result in the elimination of distinctions that concern sexuality, personality, giftedness, appearance, and ethnicity. Hence, with Romans 11 also in view, we reject the rather common Gentile understanding that this oneness results in a homogenous union which completely eliminates former Jew/Gentile distinctions, even as Lloyd-Jones has represented. Note that this “one new man” is identical with the “one body” of God, v. 16, which according to Paul’s analogy comprises a diversity within a unity with regard to the church as the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:14-27). Similarly in marriage, a man and a woman, while retaining gender distinction, become “one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). Thus Dan Gruber well describes this oneness as follows:

The church is composed of believers called out of the Gentiles to be joined to the faithful remnant of Israel. It is Israel’s fruit. There is a distinction between Israel and the Church, not a separation. There is a union without a

loss of identity. . . . Believers are not identically the same, but “Messiah is all, and in all.” Messiah is the ONE new man, and we are all part of Him. There are many members of the body, with different appearances and functions, but only one body.  

Near as making “two into one new man,” v. 15.

Prior fierce enmity between Jew and Gentile having been eliminated, the result is “one new man from the two.” This is the church, “God’s household,” or better, “God’s household,” (οικείοι του θεού) v. 19, rooted in Abraham, that presently comprises a growing fullness of Gentiles and a growing Jewish remnant that will attain to a climactic fullness (Rom. 11:12, 26); it is “a holy sanctuary in the Lord” being “God’s dwelling in the Spirit,” vs. 21-22. A significant part of this “new man” is disassociation from “the law of the commandments in regulations,” v. 15, that is the Old Covenant, “so that you may belong to another—to Him who was raised from the dead,” (Rom. 7:4). Thus redeemed Jew and Gentile are at peace with each other due to a better foundation. Yet, as v. 19 indicates, the redeemed Gentiles “are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints.” Such a united relationship in no way invalidates a Jew/Gentile distinction within “God’s household,” any more than the male/female distinction is invalidated because they are “one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28). Again David Stern comments:

In this entire passage Shau’l is writing to Gentiles, and his object is to reassure them that they are fully God’s people, that because of their faith in the Messiah and his work no barrier exists between them and Jews—Gentiles are not second-class citizens of the Kingdom. His purpose is not to downplay Jewish distinctives, but to “up-play” what God has now done for Gentiles. To find in these verses grounds for opposing Messianic Judaism is simply to misappropriate them for a purpose Shau’l never dreamed of.

The “new man” then is the seed of Abraham brought to “new covenant” fulfillment; the newness here is not a replacement, as if “brand new,” but a “fulfillment newness,” a union through incorporation that involves the luster of grace and unity in the seed of Abraham which the Old Testament people of God were never able to manifest. This household of God is essentially and foundationally

37 Dan Gruber, The Church and The Jews, pp. 331, 410.
Hebrew, with Zion as its headquarters (Rom. 11:26; Rev. 14:1), while the incorporated wild Gentile branches participate in a oneness that retains individuality.

Near as “one body to God,” vs. 16-18.

The church or “God’s household,” v. 19, is established through reconciliation “to God in one body to God,” v. 16. Its foundation is “the rich root of the cultivated olive tree” (Rom. 11:17), which supports the cultivated, along with the uncultivated branches that have been engrafted into the Abrahamic Covenant. Thus through Christ, the seed of Abraham (Matt. 1:1-17; Gal. 3:16, 29), peace, instead of former enmity between Jew and Gentile, has been brought to those “who were far away” and those “who were near” (Isa. 57:19), v. 17. Further, “we both,” Jew and Gentile, as with the man and woman, through Christ the one Mediator, have identical access “by one Spirit to the Father,” while yet retaining Jew/Gentile distinctiveness.

Near as “fellow citizens with the saints,” comprising “God’s household,” v. 19

Here then is the resolution of the tension which Lloyd-Jones introduced. Here also is further explanation concerning the “one new man” of v. 15. While some interpret “the holy ones/saints” tôn hagión with reference to believers in general, for converted Rabbi Paul this term, in context here, would indicate Jewish Christians, or the remnant according to Romans 11:5, in parallel with Galatians 6:16. Thus Gentiles, through grace in Christ, now share with a remnant of Israel, through grace in Christ, resulting in coexistence as “the new man,” the church, “the rich [Abrahamic/Hebrew] root of the cultivated olive tree” (Rom. 11:5, 17). However the church is now constituted as “God’s household/householders [oikeioi tou theou],” it being comprised of Gentile Christians who are “fellow citizens with the saints [Jewish Christians],” v. 19. As another writer puts it:

39 Carl B. Hoch, Jr. All Things New, p. 309. Also refer to John Gill.

40 Hoch, Jr. “The New Man of Ephesians 2,” Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church, Blaising and Bock, eds., p. 125. Also refer to the classic study of William Rader, The Church and Racial Hostility, which traces the interpretation of Ephesians 2:11-22 throughout church history.
The Church is not the people of God which has taken the place of Israel, the Old Testament people of God. Rather, according to Rom. 11:1, the Church is only “the participant in the root” (Israel) and its forefathers, the extended people of God who together with Israel form the one people of God.41

With this in mind, it is well to remember that Paul, who wrote this Epistle to the Ephesians (1:1), continued to identify himself as an ethnic Jew, in the present tense (Acts 21:26, 39; 22:3; Rom. 9:3; I Cor., 9:20), and that surely without any thought of a mere shallow fraternal acknowledgment or even duplicity in his profession. Hence we have harmony with the eschatological prospect of Israel’s national conversion and re-engrafting according to Ezekiel 37 and Romans 11:15, 23-26. This great, distinctive ingathering (Rom. 11:12, 15, 24-26) shall become part of the one “God’s household,” v. 19.

Conclusion

The main point that many Augustinian amillennialists attempt to derive from this passage is that the “one new man” and “God in one body,” vs. 15-16, evidence a homogenous unity that does not allow diversity, namely divine recognition of Jewish and Gentile Christians. This we believe to be a fundamental error since the “one Spirit” and “one Lord” and “one God and Father” (Eph. 4:4-6) comprise a personal diversity in the essential unity of the Godhead. So here in 2:13-16, and in I Corinthians 12:12-30 where there is one body of Christ that is composed of distinctively gifted members, overall unity comprises a complementary diversity, as in the marriage union. Thus the “one new man” and the “one body to God,” indeed the “the whole building, . . . a holy sanctuary in the Lord,” v. 21, represent a unity that incorporates Jewish and Gentile individuality ordained of God (Gal. 3:28-29; 6:15-16).

PHILOPPIANS 3:2-3

It has been common, especially amongst Gentile commentators, for Philippians 3:2-3 to be understood as a clear indication that Paul has now come to understand that all Christians comprise the circumcision of God. This new alleged identification, according to God’s perspective, is in lieu of a now defunct physical rite that parallels an equally defunct nation of Israel. Thus Palmer Robertson comments:

41 Franz Mussner, Tractate on the Jews, p. 9.
“[I]n Romans 2:29 and Philippians 3:3, Paul indicates that all believers in Christ, whether or not they are Jewish externally, are truly the Israel of God.”\footnote{O. Palmer Robertson, \textit{The Israel of God}, p. 44n. This view follows a common Reformed perspective, even as does Richard Sibbes, \textit{Works}, V, p. 69.} This we believe to be a mistaken understanding of Paul’s overall teaching, he being an ongoing brother in the flesh of the “Israelites, . . . [to whom presently] belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the temple service, and the promises” (Rom. 9:4). According to Paul’s own confession, he remains a distinctive, bona fide Jew (Acts 16:1-3; 22:3; Rom. 9:3-4; 11:1).

The Warning against Carnal Signification, v. 2

In Paul writing to the local church at Philippi, that is predominantly Gentile, he is especially concerned with regard to “[devouring] dogs, . . . evil workers, . . . those who mutilate the flesh.” Whether these troublemakers be Gentiles who have been Judaized or Judaizing Jewish Christians, the Apostle’s concern is akin to that which he confronted with regard to the churches in Galatia (Gal. 5:12). Clearly these disturbers zealously attempt to, as it were, collect Gentile foreskins like scalps, and then boast in their harvest for the cause of perpetuated Judaism (Gal. 6:12-13; Phil. 3:2).

The Encouragement of Spiritual Signification, v. 3

While the HCSB translates: “For we are the circumcision,” the NASB reads, “for we are the true circumcision,” and the ESV: “For we are the real circumcision.” To begin with, the “we” here must be identified, and many have concluded that the general congregation at Philippi, along with Paul and his immediate entourage, is collectively indicated. However there is good reason for believing that a more exclusive reference is in mind, that is Paul himself and Timothy, both circumcised, even as v. 17, cf. 1:1, would suggest. In a similar vein, note the significant contrast in Galatians 3 between the “we [Jews]” of 2:15-17; 3:23-25; 4:3-5, and the “you [Galatian Gentiles]” of 3:1-3, 26-29. Carl Hoch, Jr. makes a good case for the interpretation of “we” here as being equivalent to “we Jews.” He first references J. B. Lightfoot who comments that \textit{latreuō}, that is “worship/service” here, “had got to be used in a very special sense to denote the service
rendered to Jehovah by the Israelite race, as His peculiar people.  

43 He then adds that, “In every instance where Paul uses this verb to describe service to God, he uses it of his own personal ministry (see also Acts 24:14; 26:7; 27:23; Rom. 1:9; II Tim. 1:3).”  

44 Then Hoch, Jr. further comments:

When Paul refers to possible confidence in the flesh in Philippians 3:5-6, he mentions, “circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless.” Paul is definitely contrasting his pre-Christian experience with his present Christian Jewish experience. Saying “we” are the circumcision may have been his way of anticipating the list of his pre-Christian credentials versus his new position in Christ.  

45 Hoch, Jr. makes further reference to A. T. Hanson, from whom we quote more extensively. While explaining that the prevailing interpretation of Philippians 3:3 identifies the “we” as all true Christians, he nevertheless declares that this understanding seems quite foreign to Paul’s thought and means actually reading into Philippians ideas which seem to have originated at the time of the Reformation. . . . The Philippians, being Gentiles, would have no reason to boast in the flesh anyway. Paul goes on to describe what he means by this phrase in the ensuing verses: it is plain that he means boasting of the national and spiritual privileges peculiar to the Jews. This the Philippians could not do. . . . It is simpler to take “we” here as “we believing Jews”, or even “we, Paul and Timothy”, in whose name the letter is written. We know that Timothy was circumcised. So there is no good reason for maintaining that the use of “the circumcision” here suggests that Paul could apply the name Israel to Gentiles.  

46 Furthermore, the NASB is not to be preferred at this point when it translates v. 3: “For we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.” In spite of the reference to “the false circumcision,” v. 2, better translated by the NIV as “those mutilators of the flesh” that immediately precedes, the inferential “true” is misleading since it

43 J. B. Lightfoot, Philippians, p. 145.  
44 Carl B. Hoch, Jr. All Things New, p. 289.  
45 Ibid.  
46 A. T. Hanson, The Pioneer Ministry, p. 35.
suggests a contrast with a “false circumcision.” The NIV, similar to the KJV, better translates: “For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh.” However, consider the more literal: “For we are the [spiritual] circumcision, those by the Spirit of God serving and boasting in Christ Jesus, not having placed confidence in [the] flesh.” Paul’s intention here is not to contrast a false with a true circumcision so as to indicate that Jewish racial circumcision has been nullified and replaced with the true circumcision, namely whoever authentically believes in Jesus Christ. Rather, while he does not reject the physical identification of a racial Jew by means of circumcision, he is certainly opposed to those who demand that circumcision is of such importance that it overshadows its significance which is a representation of a truly circumcised heart. Paul might be likened to someone who, in proposing baptismal regeneration, perverts the significant role of water baptism. In this vein he might protest: “Beware of the water dippers; for we are the baptized, we who worship by the Spirit of God [having been baptized by the Spirit], who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the mere rite of water baptism.” In no way would such a response be a total repudiation of water baptism.

The Parallel with Romans 2:25-3:2; 4:11-12; 15:8-9

The definition of an authentic Jew for Paul the Jew, especially here in Romans, is a matter of disagreement amongst conservative Christians. Some suggest that in this church age, it is the true Christian who is now the real and only spiritual Jew, and that since God has finished forever with Israel as a nation, there is no such thing in His sight as a national or ethnic Jew. As already indicated, we believe this to be contrary to what Paul has in mind, not only with regard to Philippians 3:3, but also here in Romans 2:25-29, especially in the light of 3:1-2; 11:1-36; Acts 22:3; Galatians 6:16. Consider that if Paul was here, in Romans 2:25-29, so categorically dismissive of the Jew in the flesh, then the conclusion of Romans 2 presented him with an opportunity to continue relentlessly this thought on into Romans 3. However, what astonishment results when this mistaken perspective is confronted with Paul’s enthusiastic vindication concerning the great advantage of the circumcised Jew (Rom. 3:1-2)! The same surprise awaits the reader of Romans 10:18-21 where the opportunity was ripe for Paul to repudiate again national Judaism. However, in anticipating such a thought, he
immediately responds that such an idea is unthinkable (Rom. 11:1-2). Thus an unbelieving Jew is still a racial Jew, nevertheless with his soul in jeopardy (John 8:24); yet at the same time he is a “beloved enemy” of God (Rom. 11:28). However a Jewish Christian is an authentic, fulfilled Jew, one who has been circumcised both of the heart and of the flesh, even as Paul describes himself and Timothy in Philippians 3:3. Likewise a Gentile Christian is in brotherhood with the Jewish Christian, reckoned as spiritually circumcised of the heart (Rom. 2:26) and thus joined to Abraham through faith as a Gentile (Gal. 3:29). Here then is racial diversity within spiritual unity, in the same way as a Christian man and wife are diverse in their spiritual unity (Gal. 3:28). This same diversity in unity is strongly intimated in Romans 15:8-9 since “Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God, to confirm the promises to the fathers, and so that Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy [because of their inclusion as Gentiles with the fathers].”

The Perpetuation of Distinctive Signification

Concerning the diversity in unity with regard to Jew and Gentile comprising the people of God rooted in the Abrahamic Covenant, the Council at Jerusalem is of foundational significance. How very much we would like to know in detail of the actual deliberations, both public and private, that led to an astonishing decision. Surely Paul’s contribution was substantial as a Jewish spokesman for the Gentile church at Antioch. Even so, it is Peter’s testimony and conclusion, upheld by James, which is of supreme importance. Notwithstanding Peter’s later capitulation in weakness (Gal. 2:11-14), the declaration that, “we [Jews] believe we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way they [Gentiles] are,” (Acts 15:11), was revolutionary to the common Jewish mind. Here was a definitive statement unambiguously pronouncing that physical circumcision was not salvific, and therefore neither was entrance into Judaism. Thus the Gentiles at that time well understood that the Council never for a moment was considering if it was requisite that Jewish Christians should renounce circumcision. The uncultivated olive branches were not expected to become cultivated branches; neither were the cultivated branches expected to become uncultivated olive branches. However, by the time of the fourth century when Constantine converted to Christianity, Gentile assertiveness unbiblically required that Jews converting to Christianity should renounce their Jewishness.
Conclusion

Thus for national Judaism, circumcision remains a valid signification of distinctive racial identity that was originally ordained to represent circumcision of the faithful, spiritually circumcised heart (Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:25-29). There is no biblical indication that this outward right has been divinely disqualified for the Jewish Christian. Thus, as Stern explains:

Although Jews and Gentiles are equal as regards salvation, there are other distinctions between them, as Shau’l acknowledges immediately (Rom. 3:1-2) and later (9:4-5, and especially 11:28-29). One distinctive (Shau’l does not deal with it, but Yeshua does at Luke 21:20-24), for example, is that the Jewish people are to inherit the Land of Israel in perpetuity. This is a promise to physical or national Israel that has not yet been entirely fulfilled, but it will be. . . . [T]he only real Jew is the born Jew who has been born again by trusting in Yeshua the Messiah, for only he lives up to what the name “Jew,” conferred on him at birth and confirmed by physical circumcision, implies and demands.47

HEBREWS 8:7-13; CF. 10:15-18; JEREMIAH 31:31-40

A common interpretation of Hebrews 8:7-13 has concluded that Jeremiah 31:31-40 finds its fulfillment in the Christian church as the new Israel. For example W. J. Grier writes:

In the Epistle to the Hebrews (chapters 8 and 10), we have the sacred writer claiming that the new covenant (of New Testament times) is the fulfillment of these words of Jeremiah: ‘Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.’ Israel and Judah are evidently the Israel of God, the New Testament Church.48

Certainly this perspective has predominated through the centuries of the Christian church, though very much in parallel with replacement theology and its derogation of national Judaism, even as we have seen in the incorrect interpretations of Romans 11, Ephesians 2:11-22, Galatians 6:16, and Philippians 3:3.

On the other hand, anyone who reads Jeremiah 31:31-40, especially in its immediate context without any recollection of Hebrews 8 and 10, is

unlikely to conclude that we are solely considering the New Testament church. Further, Alford approvingly quotes Delitzsch concerning the Jeremiah passage:

> It belongs throughout to the cycle of Messianic prophecies, and is one of the most beautiful and sublime of them; and its true fulfillment can only be sought in the covenant brought in by the Savior, and in the salvation through Him imparted to mankind, and ever more and more unfolded and completed. This is the case, however this salvation, in the perception and declaration of the prophet, is bound up with the restoration of the ancient covenant people and their reunion in the land of their home.49

Some Background Comments

The title, PROS HEBRAIOUS, “TO HEBREWS,” traceable to the early third century, rightly suggests that the addressees were obviously Jewish Christians,50 that is, “a remnant chosen by grace” (Rom. 11:5). No pagan background, associated with Gentile converts, is mentioned in this Epistle. The danger is that these addressees “drift away” from sound teaching, 2:1, “neglect such a great salvation” 2:3, develop “an evil, unbelieving heart that departs from the living God,” 3:12, “become lazy,” 6:12, “stay away from meetings,” 10:25, become “led astray by various kinds of strange teachings,” 13:9. But the author is especially concerned that his Jewish Christian audience might have an insufficient understanding of the superiority of Jesus Christ’s priesthood over Moses and Aaron, both ministers of the old covenant (Heb. 3:1-6). Hence it is reasonable to expect that the Hebrew author has a decidedly Jewish appreciation of Jeremiah 31. Further, assuming that the date of composition is prior to 70 A.D, especially since there is no mention of the catastrophe that befell Jerusalem at that time, we conclude that Hebrews was written during a period when there was no extra biblical evidence of Israel being equated with the church, that is until about A.D. 160 when Justin Martyr’s Dialogue with Trypho was published.51

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50 This opinion has prevailed over the centuries of church history, Donald Guthrie, Hebrews To Revelation, New Testament Introduction, pp. 24-29.

51 Peter Richardson, Israel in the Apostolic Church, p. 1.
What are the “old” and “new” Covenants?

The old covenant is the broken, bilateral Mosaic covenant established on tables of stone, mediated through Moses (Exod. 19:1-9; 20:1-17), and affirmed by Israel with sacrificial offerings (Exod. 24:1-8). It is to be distinguished from the unilateral Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 15:1-18), established 430 years earlier (Gal. 3:17). The “new covenant,” according to its heart-renewing and cleansing ability, is designed by God to inaugurate His true worship by Israel (Jer. 31:31-40; cf. Ezek. 11:14-21; 36:22-32). Subsequently we learn that it is Jesus Christ who initiates this divine contract in the very presence of Israel (Luke 22:20; 23:33-49; I Cor. 11:25; II Cor. 3:6).

According to Jeremiah 31:31-40.

It is Jeremiah 31:31 which anticipates that redemptive transaction made with the blood of Christ, “when I [the LORD] will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.” Although the unilateral nature of this covenant is implicit at this stage, it becomes more explicit in v. 33 when “I will place My law within them and write it on their hearts.” Both the nations of Israel and Judah, their unification also being implicit (cf. Ezek. 37:15-23), are here the primary objects of the Lord’s saving design, not the Gentile Christian church. With regard to its addressees, the new covenant is plainly established with the nation of Israel through its Messiah who was, in covenantal terms, “cut,” that is “pierced because of our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities” (Isa. 53:5). However through this new covenant “all the families [nations] of the earth [will] be blessed” (Gen. 12:3) as “wild olive branches” that become engrafted into “the cultivated root of the olive tree” (Rom. 11:17). Consequently the new covenant communicates the new torah of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which is incorporated in the new commandment (John 13:34-35; I John 2:7-8). Then shall the Gentiles also enter into new covenant blessings. Similarly Ephesians 2:13 describes this direction of reconciliation concerning the Gentiles, “who were far away [but now] have been brought near by the blood of the Messiah [to the cultivated root of the olive tree].”

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52 The indication of common misunderstanding here on the part of Christians is illustrated by a sermon of Charles Simeon on Jeremiah 31:31-34 titled “The New Covenant.” In the whole message there is not one reference to
Subsequent blessing after Israel’s national conversion will be the more glorious establishment of Jerusalem, vs. 38-40, so that

this prophecy does not refer to the rebuilding of Jerusalem after the exile, but, under the figure of Jerusalem, as the center of the kingdom of God under the Old Testament, announces the erection of the more spiritual kingdom of God in the Messianic age.\(^{53}\)

*According to Hebrews 8:1-13 and 10:15-18.*

Consider that the Jewish addressees of this epistle are well acquainted with Jeremiah 31, so that when the author writes of “the first [covenant],” v. 7, which is “the covenant that I made with their fathers [the leaders of Israel at the Exodus], v. 9,” and “a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,” v. 8, they are instantly in tune with the weeping prophet. There is not the slightest suggestion that the author of Hebrews has in mind “a new covenant” that is different or reconstituted from that which Jeremiah writes about. Nor is there here any reference to the fact of the incorporation or engrafting of the Gentiles into this “new covenant” as Romans 11 and Ephesians 2 indicate. The reason is that this is not the author’s concern here, but rather the very necessary comprehension by Hebrew Christians of the superiority of the “new covenant” over the “old covenant,” 8:13-10:18. So Jeremiah 31:33-34 is quoted again in Hebrews 10:16-17 to support the gospel truth that, “by one offering [not innumerable offerings] He [Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant] has perfected forever those who are sanctified,” 10:14.

Israel or Judah while the new covenant is twice called the Christian covenant. The following sermon on Jeremiah 31:35-37 is titled “The Church’s Security.” Nevertheless, Simeon’s pro-Semitism is clearly indicated in the next sermon titled “The Future Conversion Of The Jews,” based on Jeremiah 32:37-42, in which he clearly expresses his belief in the restoration of Israel to the land. There is the specific qualification that “this diffusion of piety will not precede, but follow, their [Israel’s] restoration to their own land.” Then they will be “an holy people unto the Lord.” *Horæ Homiletice*, IX, pp. 236-255.

A Judeo-centric New Testament synthesis

The New Covenant for Jewish and Gentile Christians

At this juncture it is again emphasized that Judeo-centric eschatology embodies a unity which at the same time incorporates a functional diversity. Like the instrumentally diverse unity of a symphony orchestra that produces a glorious concerto, or the individual notes that unite through chords to resound with harmonious melody, so the new covenant involves complementary diversity resulting in holy harmony. As Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. puts it:

[T]here is one people (“the people of God”) with a number of discernable aspects within that one people (such as Israel and the church), and there is only one program of God (the “kingdom of God”) with numerous aspects under that single program.54


As has already been indicated, the context of Jesus’ declaration to the twelve disciples in the upper room, “This cup is the new covenant [established by] My blood,” is that of Messiah as “the King of the Jews” (John 19:19) addressing twelve believing Jews.55 In a proleptic manner of speaking, the Son of God exclusively proclaims to representatives of “the house of Israel and . . . the house of Judah” (Jer. 31:31), direct benefactors of the new covenant, that He Himself is about to cut this new agreement by means of the shedding of His own blood. To point this out is in no way intended to stimulate Gentile discontent any more than the fact that the Abrahamic covenant was exclusively cut with Abraham (Gen. 15:1-21) to the exclusion of Gentile participation. However, as the Abrahamic covenant was to result in blessing to “all the peoples on earth” (Gen. 12:3), so the new covenant similarly is to result in the incorporation of “other sheep” (John 10:16), that is “uncultivated olive branches” by means of their being engrafted into “the rich root of the cultivated olive tree” (Rom. 11:17). Nevertheless, this same new covenant was inaugurated in Jerusalem (Acts 1:8), that is with the Jews first (Rom. 1:16; Acts 3:26).


55

While the conversion of Paul anticipates the proclamation of Christ “before Gentiles, kings and the sons of Israel” (Acts 9:15), it is Peter’s encounter with the converted household of Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48) that sets the stage for the definitive proclamation from the Jewish church at Jerusalem that “God has granted repentance resulting in life to even the Gentiles. . . . [That] He made no distinction between us [Jews] and them [Gentiles], cleansing their hearts by faith” (Acts 11:18; 15:9). Hence the letter sent from the Jewish church in Jerusalem to the Gentile church in Antioch was an astonishing acknowledgment by Jewish Christians that there was no necessity for Gentile Christians to become Jewish Christians (Acts 15:22-30), and the resultant rejoicing on the part of the Gentile Christians was demonstrative acknowledgment of this truth (Acts 15:31). However, the thought that while Gentile Christians were free to enjoy their liberty as Gentiles, the Jewish Christians should give up their Jewishness, would have been unthinkable at Antioch as well as Jerusalem. Yet such has been the sad historic development that, for centuries, Gentile Christians have been harshly enforcing their liberty upon Jewish Christians and disenfranchising them of national and geographic identity. This ought not to be.

The new covenant celebrated by Jewish and Gentile Christians (I Corinthians 11:25).

Paul instructs us that the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper was “received from the Lord Jesus” (I Cor. 11:23). That is, the Apostle intends to convey that these specific directions had been directly related to him by the Son of God, and this being the case, connection with Luke 22:20 should be readily understandable. Hence, when Paul relates the words of the Lord Jesus in I Corinthians 11:25, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me,” doubtless he well appreciates the source of the terminology here as being Jeremiah 31:31. However it is plain that he is communicating the importance of this new covenant celebration to not only Jews, but also a preponderance of Gentiles amongst his audience at Corinth. Thus the Lord’s Supper is for Jewish Christian, the “remnant chosen by grace” (Rom. 11:5), or branches of the rich root of the cultivated olive tree (Rom. 11:17), as well as Gentile Christians, or uncultivated olive branches engrafted into the same root of Abraham (Rom. 11:17).
Paul delights to point out the intrinsic, distinctive character of the new covenant that Jesus Christ has inaugurated. Like the author of Hebrews, he uses *a fortiori* argumentation to stress the surpassing greatness of that which Jeremiah 31:31 promised. Thus there is contrast between:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Old Covenant</th>
<th>The New Covenant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tablets of stone, v. 3</td>
<td>Tablets of the human heart, v. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The letter kills, v. 6</td>
<td>The Spirit gives life, v. 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ministry of death, v. 7</td>
<td>The ministry of the Spirit, v. 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ministry of condemnation, v. 9</td>
<td>The ministry of righteousness, v. 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>The fading glory, vs. 10-11</td>
<td>The remaining glory, v. 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veiled heart, vs. 13-15</td>
<td>Unveiled heart, vs. 16-18</td>
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The resultant effect of the new covenant is heartwork, upon both Jew and Gentile, whereby the formerly concealed glory of God is revealed to the children of God. So, “we all, with unveiled faces, are reflecting the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit,” v. 18.

Conclusion

Other passages in Hebrews, 9:15; 12:24; 13:20, draw fulfillment from Jeremiah 31, even as do Luke 22:20; I Corinthians 11:25; II Corinthians 3:6, but especially Romans 11. Here the Gentiles become invited guests with Abraham (Luke 14:16-24), and at the same time join in fellowship with the remnant of Christian Jews. However, when “the full number” of the Gentiles has come in,” then will follow Israel’s “full number” and consummate national salvation (Zech. 12:10; Rom. 11:12, 25-26). As a result, in the consummate earthly kingdom there will be a unity under Christ that accommodates a functional difference between Jew and Gentile, as Johnson indicates in his study of Galatians 6:16, with regard to Isaiah 60:1-4; 62:1-12; Micah 4:1-5; Haggai 2:1-7; Zechariah 14:16-21, etc.56

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The assumption on the part of many is that Peter, in his First Epistle, is addressing Christians in general throughout “Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1:1). Hence his designation of these same believers as “a chosen race, a royal priesthood [cf. 2: 5], a holy nation, a people for His possession. . . . Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy” (2:9-10), indicates that Old Testament designations concerning Israel are now applied to Jews and Gentiles without distinction. Hence, the Church is now God’s “chosen people,” that is the “new Israel.” Consider Richard J. Mou’s explanation in this regard, he being the President of Fuller Theological Seminary.

The church is, after all, in an important sense “the new Israel.” I have been especially taken with the imagery employed in the First Epistle of Peter. The apostle is writing to a group of Christians that obviously includes Gentiles, but he begins his letter with Old Testament terminology, greeting his readers as the “exiles of the Dispersion” (I Pet. 1:1, NRSV). Especially significant is the way, in the second chapter, he takes a series of images of Old Testament Israel and applies them to the New Testament church: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people.” He then adds a quotation from one of the prophets: “Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people” (I Pet. 2:9-10, NRSV). These verses helped clarify my own thinking about the nature of Christian community. . . . I realized the implications of I Pet. 2:9-10. God is putting together a new kind of “race,” a new kind of “priesthood,” and a new kind of “nation.” Jesus is in the business of actively promoting a unity that he does not want us to define ourselves along artificial lines of what the sinful world sees as ethnic-racial or denominational or national identities. Through the blood of Jesus Christ we have been made into a new kind of people, in which “there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave not free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28).57

57 Richard, J. Mouw, “The Chosen People Puzzle,” Christianity Today, March 5, 2001, Vol. 45, No. 4, p. 70. Internet sourced. F. J. A. Hort similarly comments, with an extreme supercessionist view that seems almost blindly Gentile: “The truth is that St. Peter, as doubtless every other apostle, regarded the Christian Church as first and foremost the true Israel of God, the one legitimate heir of the promises made to Israel, the one community which by receiving Israel’s Messiah had remained true to Israel’s covenant, while the unbelieving Jews in refusing their Messiah had in effect apostatized from Israel.” The First Epistle of St. Peter, I:1-II:17, p. 7.
Hence of crucial importance at this juncture is the identification of the addressees, whether they be, in the main, Jewish or Gentile. E. G. Selwyn sums up the main conclusions over the centuries as follows:

In the patristic age Origen, Eusebius, and the Greek fathers generally maintained that they [the addressees] had been Jews, while Augustine, Jerome, and other Latin writers held the opposite view. This divergence has continued almost to our own day, the Greek view on the whole prevailing under the weighty impetus given to it by Erasmus, Calvin, Bengel, and Grotius on the threshold of the modern age. Its doughtiest champion in more recent days has been Bernard Weiss, and the facts and arguments which he adduces deserve careful attention. Chief of them is what may be termed the Jewish character of the Epistle as seen in the O.T. quotations and allusions, which would hardly be familiar to Christians of Gentile origin, and in the conception of the Church which is markedly Levitical and suitable only to those who had been nurtured in Judaism.58

However, from a Reformed perspective, it is common to read of interpretations of which the following by Cornelius P. Venema is representative.

In I Peter 2:9-10, the apostle gives a summary statement regarding the New Testament church. Writing to the scattered believers and churches throughout Asia Minor, Peter defines the new covenant church in terms drawn from the old covenant descriptions of the people of Israel. . . . What is so remarkable about this description of the church is that it identifies the church with the exact terminology used in the Old Testament to describe the people of Israel with whom the Lord covenanted. The best reading of this language takes it literally to mean that the new covenant church is altogether one with the old covenant church. The Lord does not have two peculiar peoples, two holy nations, two royal priesthoods, two chosen races— he has only one, the church of Jesus Christ.59

The Textual Indications of Jewish Addressees

Certainly the Epistle of I Peter is widely acknowledged to be a writing addressed to Christians who suffer intense persecution that does not appear to have the prospect of abating, that is for pilgrims upon earth

58 E. G. Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter, p. 42. While disagreeing with this author when he opts for an inclusive view of Jew and Gentile addressees, we would agree with his suggestion that the congregations would have included god-fearers and proselytes.

(1:6; 2:20-21; 3:14; 4:1, 12-19; 5:8-10). This being the case, it was especially the lot of Jews to have little rest from opposition to their racial distinctiveness at around the time of Peter’s writing, c. 60 A.D., and particularly if they were Jewish Christians under the reign of Nero. Believing this to be the case, we find much evidence that Peter, who it would readily be expected would be writing to Jewish Christians, is indeed addressing, in the main, the Jewish Christian Diaspora. This is not to deny that Gentiles, engrafted into the stock of Abraham as wild olive branches (Rom. 11:17), could read this passage and derive personal blessing and encouragement from it. They have been incorporated into this “chosen race, . . . royal priesthood, . . . holy nation” (I Pet. 2:9), the end result being both cultivated and uncultivated branches having diversity in unity. However we do deny that this passage establishes that the Christian church is here designated as the New Israel that has supplanted any designation of historic, individual, national and territorial Jewishness.

**I Peter 1:1.**

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ: To the temporary residents of the Dispersion in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.” Bigg explains that, “Diaspora, [is] a word which in its proper sense denotes those Jews who for one reason or another were domiciled in foreign countries.” Peter being the addressee here, there is good reason for believing that he had Bigg’s meaning in mind (Gal. 2:7-9). Further, a right healthy interest in the doctrine of election according to Reformed standards should not be allowed to obscure the fact that for the Apostle, here *eklektos*, “elect/chosen” draws principal focus upon Israel’s national election, in which Jewish Christians individually participated (LXX, Deut. 14:2; Isa. 41:8-9; 44:1-3; 45:4; 49:7; 65:9).

**I Peter 2:5-10.**

For the suffering Diaspora, here is comfort indeed that aims at recollection of the Old Testament revelation concerning “a holy priesthood” that has been consummately established “through Jesus Christ,” v. 5 (Exod. 19:5-6; Deut. 4:20; 7:7; 10:15; 14:2; Psalm 118:22; Isa. 4:14; 28:16; 43:20; 61:6; 66:21). In Jesus Christ, “a chosen and

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60 Charles Bigg, *I Peter*, p. 70.
valuable cornerstone, . . . a stone that causes men to stumble, and a
rock that trips them up,” is fulfillment of the hope of the Diaspora truly
becoming “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people
for His possession, . . . God’s people, . . . [who] have received mercy.”
Thus John Calvin comments:

[H]owever, as the greater part of the nation was unbelieving, the Apostle
indirectly sets the believing Jews in opposition to all the rest, though they
exceeded them in number, as though he had said, that those only were the
children of Abraham, who believed in Christ, and that they only retained
possession of all the blessings which God had by a singular privilege
bestowed on the whole nation. He calls them a chosen race, because God,
passing by others, adopted them as it were in a special manner. They were
also a holy nation; for God had consecrated them to himself, and destined
that they should lead a pure and holy life. He further calls them a peculiar
people, or, a people for acquisition, that they might be to him a peculiar
possession or inheritance; for I take the words simply in this sense, that the
Lord hath called us, that he might possess us as his own, and devoted to
him. This meaning is proved by the words of Moses, “If ye keep my
covenant, ye shall be to me a peculiar treasure beyond all other nations.”
(Exod. 19:5). There is in the royal priesthood a striking inversion of the
words of Moses; for he says, “a priestly kingdom,” but the same thing is
meant. So what Peter intimated was this, “Moses called your fathers a
sacred kingdom, because the whole people enjoyed as it were a royal
liberty, and from their body were chosen the priests; both dignities were
therefore joined together: but now ye are royal priests, and, indeed, in a
more excellent way, because ye are, each of you, consecrated in Christ, that
ye may be the associates of his kingdom, and partakers of his priesthood.
Though, then, the fathers had something like to what you, have, yet ye far
excel them. For after the wall of partition has been pulled down by Christ,
we are now gathered from every nation, and the Lord bestows these high
titles on all whom he makes his people.61

The identification of the Diaspora as once being “not a people” who
had “not received mercy” thus recollects, not some Gentile
characteristic of alienation, but the declaration of Hosea 1:10; 2:23
concerning the house of Israel. That is, “I will say to Not My people:
You are My people, and he will say: [You are] My God.” From a
Jewish Christian viewpoint, David Stern comments:

Christians are indeed a chosen people set aside for God to possess—not by
way of superceding the Jews as God’s people, but by way of being joined
to them by faith in the same God and in the Jewish Messiah. A so-called

61 John Calvin, I Peter, Calvin’s Commentaries, internet sourced.
‘Christian’ who opposes or looks down on the Jews as merely God’s ‘former’ people has missed the point altogether.62

I Peter 2:11-12.

“Dear friends, I urge you as aliens and temporary residents to abstain from fleshly desires that war against you. Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles.” The language here is of “temporary residents of the Dispersion,” 1:1, that is “aliens and temporary residents,” 2:11, who parallel those “not a people,” v. 10, even the Jewish seed of Abraham (Hos. 1:10; 2:23; Heb. 11:9-10, 13-16; cf. Lev. 25:23), hence the Diaspora and not preeminently Gentiles. Thus: “Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles [tois ethnesin],” v. 12, is a most natural exhortation to Jewish Christians in the main who reside in Gentile Asia Minor. Hence Calvin adds:

And he [Peter] expressly says among the Gentiles; for the Jews were not only hated everywhere, but were also almost abhorred. The more carefully, therefore, ought they to have labored to wipe off the odium and infamy attached to their name by a holy life and a well-regulated conduct.63

However, for Gentile Christians having union with the Diaspora as children of Abraham (Gal. 3:29), this injunction would also have real personal meaning.

I Peter 2:25.

“For you were like sheep going astray, but you have now returned to the shepherd and guardian [overseer] of your souls.” Here is language that would immediately bring to the Jewish Christian mind the Old Testament representation of Jehovah as the Shepherd of Israel that finds messianic fulfillment in Jesus Christ (Ps. 23:1; 78:52; 80:1; Isa. 40:11; 53:6; Jer. 31:10; Ezek. 34:11-16). This also is a reminder of Peter’s commission from Jesus: “Shepherd My sheep” (John 21:16) which the Apostle later understands more specifically as being a vocation directed toward the Jews (Gal. 2:7-9). By way of contrast, Paul, the minister to the Gentiles (Gal. 2:7-9), never uses the shepherd metaphor except with reference to the Christian pastor, and that only twice (Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11).

63  Calvin, I Peter, Calvin’s Commentaries, internet sourced.
A Judeo-centric New Testament synthesis

I Peter. 4:3.

“For there has already been enough time spent in doing the will of the pagans.” The former lifestyle of these Jewish Christians was one in which they lived in the midst of Gentile dominance, especially in Asia Minor. To their shame, there was capitulation to and lusting after aspects of Gentile paganism (cf. II Chron. 36:14). So Calvin explains:

But instead of the lusts or covetings of men, he [Peter] now mentions the will of the Gentiles, by which he reproves the Jews for having mixed with the Gentiles in all their pollutions, though the Lord had separated them from the Gentiles.64

Conclusion

Why should it surprise us that Peter, the Apostle to the Jews (Gal. 2:7-9), would, in the main, address Jewish Christians? Could it be that Gentiles, especially Gentile commentators, tend to find it difficult to appreciate that they are not always the center of New Covenant focus (Rom. 11:18)? Nevertheless, concerning the addressees of I Peter, amillennialist Patrick Fairbairn writes that this epistle was “addressed, more immediately, to believing Israelites scattered throughout the cities of Asia Minor.”65 They were the remnant of Romans 11:5. It may also be significant in further considering the fact that the earliest interpreters of I Peter did indeed identify the addressees as predominantly Jewish Christians, this being at a time of waning dominance emanating from Jewish Christian leaders in Jerusalem. Subsequent Gentile identification of the addressees as being inclusive of Gentiles, who now collectively comprise the New Israel, parallels the surging dominance of the Gentile church that depreciated both Judaism as a whole and any Jewish Christian distinctiveness.

64 Ibid.
65 Patrick Fairbairn, The Prophetic Prospects of the Jews, or Fairbairn vs. Fairbairn, p. 106.
Chapter Eleven

ISRAEL – as God’s beloved enemy

While we have elsewhere considered and upheld the status of the Jewish Christian, that is in terms of his retention of ethnic, national and territorial identity, it is also important for us to consider the status of the unbelieving Jew from a Christian perspective. In particular, we raise the question as to whether the contemporary Jew, who does not believe in Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah, who is in Christian biblical terms “carnal” and “spiritually uncircumcised” (Rom. 2:25; 9:3; I Cor. 10:18; Gal. 2:9), nevertheless is still recognized by God as a Jew, even if only according to the flesh? We would also press this question further by enquiring as to whether national, unbelieving Israel in this present age is the object of any divine recognition, especially in covenantal terms? In immediately responding positively to both questions, we would indicate that negative responses pose more than a doctrinal difference of opinion. Consider how today a Christian may propose that God has no covenantal interest whatsoever in unbelieving national Israel and the Jews, especially in the light of their strident opposition to biblical Christianity. In this case, for such a Christian, his eschatological belief raises the most profound of ethical considerations with regard to his present treatment of “Jews.” He is forced to reckon with his covenantal repudiation of national Israel and the Jew while at the same time being confronted with Paul’s contrasting recognition of and eschatological hope for national Israel, his personal identification with Judaism, his passionate pro-Semitism and his lifestyle as a model for distinct, prioritized, persistent, loving Jewish evangelism.

Christians are generally agreed that in Romans 11:5 Paul distinguishes the Jewish Christian in terms of being part of “a remnant chosen by grace” (Rom. 11:5). Even then, some will use the term “Jewish” here at best deferentially and nominally while at the same time rejecting any divine ethnic or covenantal meaning with regard to “Jewishness.” Nevertheless, the term “Jewish Christian” stands. But when in Romans 11:17 Paul writes of branches “broken off . . . the rich root of the cultivated olive tree,” and these are clearly unbelieving Jews, then what is their ongoing status, if any, in the sight of God? Some would suggest
that the only authentic Jew, as part of the remnant in this Christian dispensation, is the Jewish Christian. But if this is so, then what does Paul mean when in Romans 11:18 he exhorts the Gentile Christian: “[D]o not brag that you are better than those [cultivated] branches [broken off],” that is the unbelieving Jews, and then contemplates that nevertheless, “God has the power to graft them in again” (Rom. 11:23)? How could he speak this way if these severed cultivated branches had lost all Jewish identity in the sight of God forever? Does not the context of these “[cultivated] branches broken off” indicate that, for all of their carnality, rebelliousness and unbelief, God still retains a distinctive loving interest in them, as Romans 11:28 appears to plainly indicate?

**CARNAL ISRAEL AS GOD’S BELOVED ENEMY IN ROMANS 11:28**

For all of the expressed good intentions of those with historic Reformed convictions who hold to an Augustinian, amillennial eschatology and at the same time abide by the unqualified authority of Scripture, it is not always easy, by way of the primacy of exegesis, to unreservedly adhere to a confessional standard. This is especially the case when one considers the commitment of these same people to an integrated system of doctrine that is linked to a historic creedal lineage. Thus when a Christian becomes convinced of this body of Reformed doctrine, that is renowned for adhering to a logical and systematic body of truth, it is inevitable that he will also become immersed in the history of European Christianity, especially that of the pivotal sixteenth and on through to the eighteenth century. To be sure, no child of God is immune from pitfalls concerning the logic of his doctrinal system. However belief in biblical Calvinism, euphemistically called the doctrines of grace, although closely rooted in one of the most esteemed expositors of all time, yet also finds itself integrated within a historic and scholastic environment. We have already noted how, in varying degrees, much of historic Reformed Christianity has not only been undergirded by Platonic, Aristotelean and Stoic thought, but also channeled through the lineal heritage of Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Turretin, Fairbairn and Vos, etc. Hence there has developed a commitment to systematic Reformed theology by many that has tended to assume that this faithful corpus of biblical truth, as an interlocking whole, directs us in our exegesis of major texts with regard to whatever area of doctrine we may study. In other words, the tendency is to assume that the exegesis has already been masterfully achieved by the
Reformed fathers, and thus their eschatology is equally as dependable as that of the realm of Reformed soteriology. However, his conclusion we believe to be exegetically, ethically, and thus doctrinally flawed.

Hence, on account of the Reformation witnessing a rediscovery of the biblical/Pauline gospel, many heirs of this emancipating heritage have erroneously tended to assume that the eschatology emanating from that era must have also been an equally authentic recovery according to Scripture. However for centuries it was in fact the accepted belief of Roman Catholicism that as the true church of Jesus Christ it was the supplanting New Israel, and this teaching in fact became perpetuated in the Reformed and community, its breach with Rome notwithstanding. Refer to Chapter Six: Israel - and Christian anti-Judaic Hermeneutics in History. Thus the Reformation did not involve an eschatological biblical recovery according to the first and early second century, but rather it embraced a medieval inheritance that has produced shameful consequences. This is abundantly evident, with some exceptions, in consideration of the ongoing exegesis of the most important passage in the New Testament concerning the status of national Israel, namely Romans 11. Certainly John Murray’s break with Calvin at this point is one of these exceptions. When this writer attended Westminster Theological Seminary in California, he recalls one professor indicating that considerable time elapsed between Murray’s release of his two volumes on Romans due to his wrestling with the exegesis of chapters 9-11 in particular. Nevertheless, in the area of eschatology, by and large Reformed exegesis has tended to be influenced by a systematic theological tradition that must uphold a certain understanding of a passage of Scripture, otherwise a crack in the dyke will result in an overwhelming flood of inevitable millennial truth. Dr. S. Lewis Johnson comes to this conclusion in his significant study of Galatians 6:16 when he considers the reasons why those of Reformed conviction so strenuously defend their belief that “the Israel of God” here is identical with the Christian Church. Refer to Chapter Ten: Israel - and a Romans 11 Synthesis. With this in mind, we now turn to Romans 11:28, a supremely critical passage with regard to God’s present regard

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1 Murray’s commentary on Romans 1-8 was published in 1959; his subsequent commentary on Romans 9-16 was published in 1965. While his eventual conclusion anticipated an eschatological “mass” conversion of Jews being “Israel as a whole,” that is “the theocratic election,” he refrains from using the term “nation” and mention of the territorial implications of his conclusion. Romans, pp. 98, 101.
for national Israel. According to a prima facie assessment, it is obviously declaring that God continues to have a loving covenant regard for rebellious, alienated national Israel, represented by the figure of disciplined, detached, cultivated olive branches.

The interpretation of Romans 11:28

By way of an expanded translation, Paul declares: “From the perspective of the gospel of the righteousness of God that saves both Jew and Gentile, the bulk of national Israel presently remains an enemy of God for the sake of the salvation of Gentiles throughout the world. However from the perspective of God’s original election of national Israel, still remaining in unbelief, at the same time this Hebrew people continues to be beloved for the sake of the unconditional Abrahamic covenant ratified to Isaac and Jacob. Therefore because of God’s covenant integrity, the gospel gifts and the saving call of God directed toward national Israel, through promise given to Abraham, will not be repealed” (Rom. 11:28-29). Far more literally we translate: “On the one hand, according to the gospel [to euangelion], enemies [echthroi] they [unbelieving Israel] are for you [Gentiles]; on the other hand, according to the election [tên eklogèn], beloved [agapètoi] they [unbelieving Israel] are for the fathers, for irrevocable/not to be regretted/abrogated are the gifts [ta charismata] and calling [hē klēsis] of God.” The antithetical parallelism in v. 28 is exact and instructive.

The interplay that God sovereignly ordains in history between Jew and Gentile, having been finely argued in vs. 11-27, is now brought to a summary conclusion. The absence of a connective with the preceding context only enhances the climactic nature of this truth. Thus the force of argument peaks here in terms of what precedes. Back of all of Paul’s argument in Romans 11 is God’s “covenant with them [Israel], when I take away their sins,” v. 27, cf. vs. 1, 17, that references the new covenant promise of Jeremiah 31:33-34. Here is the fundamental reason as to why “all Israel will be saved,” v. 26, en masse, nationally, eschatologically. Refer to the exegesis of Romans 11 in Chapter Ten:
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Israel - and a Romans 11 Synthesis. As Matt Waymeyer well points out:

[I]t is difficult—if not impossible—to understand these two clauses as describing the church. In what sense can those of the Body of Christ be described as the “enemies” of God?2

Hence the historic tension between Gentile and Jew will be wondrously resolved in the historic process that God has ordained. On the one hand, according to the present gospel dispensation, “they,” that is the unbelieving Jews, corporate Israel, not the remnant, are “enemies” for the sake of the Gentiles, even the audience in the main that Paul addresses. That is they are “enemies” passively, of God, in parallel with passively being “beloved” of God.3 On the other hand, from the standpoint of “the election,” the original, irrevocable choice of national Israel in pure grace according to “forknowledge/distinguishing forelove,” vs. 1-2 (cf. Ps. 33:11-12; Isa. 41:8-9; 44:1-2; Amos 3:2), “they,” those just designated as “enemies,” hence not the remnant but unbelieving national Israel, are at the same time “beloved” on account of the original, irrevocable promise made to “the fathers,” Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.5 So Ronald Diprose concludes, after his careful study at this point:

In the light of the conclusion in v. 28, we can safely say that Paul also is confirming the election of Israel despite the nation’s failure to recognize Jesus as their Messiah. Nothing, not even their opposition to the gospel, could cancel the special love of God for his people. It is this election of Israel which makes her eschatological salvation certain. Likewise, her status as an elect people explains why, in the present time, even in her

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3 So Cranfield, Morris, Murray, Schreiner, though Moo suggests that both an active and passive sense is intended.
4 Here “the election” is descriptive of “they” and thus the nation rather than a reference to the “remnant according to God’s gracious choice,” v. 5. So Barrett, Cranfield, Haldane, Hodge, Moo, Morris, Murray, Schreiner, contra Lenski, Palmer Robertson.
5 Matt Waymeyer points out that “Paul’s use of the correlative conjunctions [men . . . de] indicates that these individuals are simultaneously ‘enemies’ and ‘beloved,’ not enemies for a time and the later beloved.” “The Dual Status of Israel in Romans 11:28.” The Master’s Seminary Journal, Spring 2005, p. 65.
unbelief, Israel contributes to the enrichment and the reconciliation with God of the other nations of the world (vv. 11-15).

If one is committed to the position that God is no longer covenantally related to national Israel in the present, then how is this verse to be interpreted? Palmer Robertson, in being aware of the problem here, attempts to identify those “beloved for the sake of the fathers” as being elect Jews, not unbelieving Israel in a national sense. Amillennialist Lenski is of a similar interpretation, although the overwhelming opinion of most commentators in that, as Barrett concludes, “[t]hey [Israel] are the race [emphasis added] whom God elected to be his peculiar people, and their election rests in no way upon their merits or achievements.”

Some think, because of the way that Paul describes election in 9:6b-13—an act by which God brings people into relationship with himself—that Paul must be referring here to the remnant. But a switch in subject in mid-verse, from the Jews who are God’s enemies in the light of the gospel, to Jews who are beloved by God as elect members of the remnant, seems unwarranted.

The eschatological significance of Romans 11:28

Thus Murray rightly concludes concerning Romans 11:28, “Unfaithful as Israel have been and broken off for that reason, yet God still sustains his peculiar relation of love to them, a relation that will be demonstrated and vindicated in the restoration (vs. 12, 15, 26).”

Similarly Willem VanGemeren writes: “In the sense of historic and national continuity, Israel is still the people of God, even in their rejection of Messiah.” Likewise David Holwerda declares:

We err if we assume that the significance of the remnant pertains only to the elect individuals who constitute the remnant. Paul is not implying that

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7 Ibid., p. 190.
the remnant alone is Israel and no one else. If we assume that the people of God in Romans 11:1 is now restricted to the elect remnant, we undercut the rest of Paul’s argument. Nowhere in Romans 11 does the apostle withdraw from unbelieving Jewish Israel the reality of being the people of God or the fact of their election. Instead, Paul points to himself and other Jewish Christians as evidence that God has not withdrawn his grace from Jewish Israel. The remnant is a sign that God is still faithful to his election of Jewish Israel.\(^\text{12}\)

Now all of these declarations are good as far as they go, even so they really do not go, what might be called, the full distance. Indeed most commentators who agree with Murray, VanGemeren and Holwerda, nevertheless still hold back from expounding upon the ramifications of national Israel being in the present a “beloved enemy,” that is covenantally in the sight of God. It is as if they sense what Paul is saying from an exegetical perspective, yet for various presuppositional reasons refrain from confessing the outcome of this truth in terms of the course of church history and the future. That is, while God was graciously dealing with the Gentiles, nevertheless unbelieving Jews continued to retain an identity in His sight that in fact the Gentile has been loathe to confess, but especially in the national and territorial spheres. Again we are faced with this limited, temporal acknowledgement of Jewishness that in fact contemporary Jewishness can in no way rightly endure. Granted that there is mystery here, yet for the Christian, who should be a student of history, he cannot easily deny that God continues to evidence a hovering concern over the Hebrew people as a nation concerning which He is both offended and covenantally gracious. Thus J. C. Ryle explains this inescapable truth as follows.

I assert then that the Jews are at this moment a peculiar people, and utterly separate from all other people on the face of the earth. They fulfill the prophecy of Hosea: “The children of Israel shall bide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice” (Hos. 3:4). For eighteen hundred years they have been scattered over the globe, without a country, without a government, without a capital city, strangers and aliens everywhere, often fiercely persecuted and vilely treated. Yet to this moment they continue a distinct, isolated and separate nation, far more than any nation on the earth.

Now how shall we account for this extraordinary state of things? How shall we explain the unique and peculiar position which the Jewish people occupies in the world? Why is it that, unlike Saxons, and Danes, and

\(^\text{12}\) David E. Holwerda, *Jesus & Israel: One Covenant or Two?* p. 164.
Normans, and Flemings, and French, this singular race still floats alone, though broken to pieces like a wreck, on the waters of the globe, amidst its 1500 million inhabitants, and after the lapse of eighteen hundred years is neither destroyed, nor crushed, nor evaporated, nor amalgamated, not lost sight of; but lives to this day as separate and distinct as it was when the arch of Titus was built in Rome?

I have not the least idea how questions like these are answered by those who profess to deny the divine authority of Scripture. In all my reading I never met with an honest attempt to answer them from the unhappy camp of unbelievers. In fact it is my firm conviction that among the many difficulties of infidelity there is hardly any one more really insurmountable than the separate continuance of the Jewish nation. It is a burdensome stone which your modern skeptical writers may affect to despise, but cannot lift or remove out of their way. God has many witnesses to the truth of the Bible, if men would only examine them and listen to their evidence. But you may depend on it there is no witness so unanswerable as one who always keeps standing up and living, and moving before the eyes of mankind. That witness is the Jew.13

Hence in the light of the Paul’s explicit teaching here in Romans 11:28 concerning the present status of unbelieving Israel, a brief confession of Colin Chapman is significant at this point. As the author of Whose Promised Land? which volume, on account of its “replacement theology,” is not appreciated in Jewish Christian circles,14 he nevertheless comments:

13  J. C. Ryle, Coming Events And Present Duties, pp. 148-150.

14  David Stern writes: “Let them [Christians] not be taken in by Colin Chapman’s book, Whose Promised Land?, which uses replacement theology as its basis for denying that the Land of Israel is any longer promised by God to the Jews.” Restoring The Jewishness Of The Gospel, p. 40. Chapman denies his subscription to “replacement theology,” explaining that “Gentiles are grafted into Israel (Rom. 11:17-24), which is thereby transformed to become the ‘one new humanity’ (Eph. 2:15).” “Ten questions for a theology of the land,” The Land of Promise, ed. Philip Johnston and Peter Walker, p. 178. Apart from the subtlety here whereby Jewishness nevertheless ceases, Stern’s objection is quite valid in the light of Chapman’s plain statement: “As a Christian, I feel bound to conclude that the promise of the land to Abraham and his descendants ‘as an everlasting possession’ does not give the Jews a divine right to possess the land for all time. . . . Could it be that God is challenging the whole Jewish people to think again about their destiny as a people? What is the whole enterprise of settling Jews in the land and setting up a Jewish state doing to the soul of Judaism? Did God really intend that they should be ‘a peculiar
Unlike some of my Arab and Western Christian friends, I still believe there is something special about the Jewish people. “They are loved on account of the patriarch’s” (Rom. 11:28). But I also believe that the fulfillment of all that was promised to Abraham and his descendants is found in the kingdom of God which came in Jesus.\footnote{Colin Chapman, “Ten questions for a theology of the land,” \textit{The Land of Promise}, ed. Philip Johnston and Peter Walker, p. 178. This book is heavily slanted against any premillennial understanding of Israel and the Jews.}

Unfortunately, “something special” is not only left undefined, but also quite inadequate in explaining Paul’s meaning here. To a considerable degree, Chapman’s mystery here is really of his own making. Such a concession is almost grudging since, in the bulk of this author’s writing, he is quite adamant in his denial of Israel’s national and territorial identity. We are grateful for Chapman’s patronizing honesty at this point in the face of the obvious meaning of such a crucial text of Scripture. Nevertheless, as a whole, his book in its several editions remains theologically anti-Judaic.

\textbf{CARNAL ISRAEL AND THE SPIRITUAL REMNANT IN GOD’S DEALING WITH HIS PEOPLE IN GENERAL}

We have already considered the “remnant according to God’s gracious choice” in Romans 11:5 and identified it as those Jewish Christians who are circumcised in both body and soul. On the other hand we have also seen that the bulk of unbelieving national Israel, although carnal in their unbelief, yet according to Romans 11:28 retains national Jewish identity in the sight of God. However, consideration of the historic origins of this truth, with regard to a godly remnant, is necessary in relation to God’s dealings with national Israel as a whole in the Old Testament, especially concerning persistence in unbelief. The reason for this is that it has sometimes been claimed that the only Jews of the old covenant era were those who were of faith. By extension it is also claimed that in fact unbelieving Jews today, being wholly carnal, are not Jewish in the sight of God in any sense whatsoever.

The doctrine of the remnant in Old Testament Israel has its origin in the idea of something left over from a large corporate body, as is suggested in Deuteronomy 4:26-27. While the Jews as a whole were...
subject to considerable destruction in the Land, they were also told that “[t]he LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be reduced to a few survivors among the nations where the LORD your God will drive you.” In this instance Israel, as a diminished, scattered nation, at the same time became a remnant. Furthermore, the remnant idea also has reference to part of national Israel, that is a relative minority of exiles who survived judgment and captivity in Babylon. Following mourning and repentance, they joyfully became returnees to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah (Ezra 9:8; 13-15; Neh. 1:3; Jer. 42:2; 50:19-20; Isa. 10:20-22; 11:11-16). In turn this also anticipates an eschatological remnant with regard to the Diaspora that will be gathered from the four corners of the earth for the Messianic age (Jer. 31:7-8; Mic. 5:7-8; 7:18; Zech. 8:6-12). Hence, in the Old Testament, a repentant remnant returned to Jerusalem from Babylon which contrasted with the larger part of national Israel remaining abroad as the exiled dispersion. So in the present, according to Romans 11:5, a remnant, a relatively small number of Jewish Christians, contrasts with the larger part of unbelieving Israel that remains dispersed throughout the world. However the question that must now be asked concerns God’s attitude toward the nation of Israel as a whole, from its very inception as a nation and onward to the Babylonian captivity, and particularly with regard to its division according to carnal and spiritual lines of demarcation. And the answer that becomes so obviously clear is the fact that while God did sharply distinguish between carnal and spiritual characteristics, He nevertheless regarded even the carnal constituency as retaining national status. Now let us consider several Old Testament indications of this truth which is maintained as a principle in the New Testament.

God’s Dealing with Carnal Israel in the Wilderness and Today

Almost immediately after their redemption from Egypt, the children of Israel repeatedly murmured against God and sinned before they reached Mt. Sinai (Ex. 15:22-24; 16:1-3; 17:1-3). For this reason the “Law was added because of transgressions” (Gal. 3:19, cf. Jer. 11:7-8; Rom. 5:20). Upon departure from Mt. Sinai the complaining continued (Num. 11:1-12:16) and led to a point of crisis at Kadesh Barnea. There, as a result of further unbelief and rebellion (Num. 14:1-10), God in His wrath nevertheless heeded the intercession of Moses (Num. 14:11-19) and declared, “I have pardoned [them] as you requested” (Num. 14:20). However, the resultant discipline was banishment of the
original redeemed generation from entrance into the Promised Land and consequent wandering in the Sinai wilderness (Num. 14:22-23, 26-37). Even so the “faithful remnant,” namely the households of Joshua and Caleb, as well as the new generation (Num. 14:31), were assured of settlement in Canaan (Num. 14:24, 38). All of this transpired in under two years, that is from Israel’s departure from Egypt up to Kadesh Barnea. Hence the thirty-eight years that followed saw the nation of Israel wandering in the wilderness, this period commencing with the rebellion of Korah and a resultant plague whereby over 14,700 of God’s people perished (Num. 16:1-50). The actual wilderness wanderings from Kadesh Barnea and eventually back to that same location, are briefly recorded in Numbers 15-19. Then Israel proceeded north to the plains of Moab, though murmuring, unbelief, and rebellion continued (Num. 20:1-5; 21:5). Especially notable was the deceitfulness of Balaam that resulted in national apostasy and judgment once again, that is by plague with the death of 24,000 of the people of God. This being the case, it is hardly possible to say that the new generation was that much better than the preceding fathers. Nevertheless they gained entrance into the Promised Land.

Now in this Old Testament setting it is readily obvious that God esteemed Israel after the Spirit, surely a remnant, and was vexed by Israel after the flesh, or the bulk of Israel. We might further say that Israel after the Spirit was the true Israel having circumcision of the heart and of the flesh. On the other hand Israel after the flesh had only circumcision of the flesh and was simply carnal Israel. However, it would be totally incorrect to say that Israel after the flesh had no national, indeed territorial identity in the sight of God in that historic setting. In all of this forty year period there was an overarching national identity granted on the part of Jehovah which, from the very beginning of Israel’s redemption was based, not upon the Mosaic, but the Abrahamic covenant. To begin with this was clearly established before Moses had even encountered God at the burning bush near Mount Horeb. Then, “God heard their [the Israelites’] groaning, and He remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (Exod. 2:24). However, once Moses did stand barefooted before God on holy ground, there mention was made to him by Jehovah concerning His covenantal identity, namely that “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Exod. 3:6, cf. 15-16; 4:5; 6:3). In particular, Moses was instructed to pass on to Israel: “I will be your God. You will know that I am Yahweh your God, who delivered you from the forced labor of the Egyptians. I will
bring you to the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD” (Exod. 6:7-8). Even after Israel sinned under the leadership of Aaron by worshipping the golden calf, and Moses’ intercession before God was accepted, yet we read that “[t]he LORD spoke to Moses: ‘Go, leave here, you and the people you brought up from the land of Egypt, to the land I promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying: ‘I will give it to your offspring’” (Exod. 33:1).

So when Israel was about to cross the Jordan into Canaan, God instructed His people: “You are not going to take possession of their [the Canaanites’] land because of your righteousness or your integrity. Instead, the LORD your God will drive out these nations before you because of their wickedness, in order to keep the promise He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to posses because of your righteousness, for you are a stiff-necked people” (Deut. 9:5-6). Here then, Israel’s possession of the Land was ultimately to be based, not upon disobedience or disobedience, but covenant promise alone! Significantly, on account of disobedience, Moses also did not inherit the Land, though upon viewing it from the heights of Mt. Nebo, “the LORD then said to him, ‘This is the land I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’ I have let you see it with your own eyes, but you will not cross into it’” (Deut. 34:4). This should be a sufficient indication that those who did not inherit the land ought not to be bundled together, in a simplistic sense, as if they represent unbelievers who are wholly carnal, while the subsequent generation was spiritual.

However, the main point here is that God’s dealing with the nation of Israel is not merely with the Israel after the Spirit, with the remainder having no identity in the sight of God. Israel after the flesh was still the recipient of God’s covenant interest. Granted it was of this world, so to speak. But this in no way nullifies the fact that God in human history had a covenantal interest in the earthly nation of Israel in total, both Spiritual and carnal. We are repeatedly told that God’s persistence with national Israel, from the very beginning of its redemption, is for the sake of “Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” So we would conclude that it ought not to surprise us that in this present age, while there is a “[Jewish Christian] remnant according to grace” (Rom. 11:5), this language of necessity demands that there is an unbelieving national
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Israel that still has God’s offended, yet loving steadfast covenant interest, “for the sake of the fathers” (Rom. 11:28).

In further consideration of the fact that unbelieving national Israel today retains God’s covenantal interest, consider the significant exposition of Dan Gruber with regard to Romans 10:21-11:2.

When Paul says, “I also am an Israelite,” he is identifying himself with his unfaithful, physical brethren. That identification is not the same as his identification with the Church. Paul is pointing to his own relationship with God as proof of the fact that God has not cast off unfaithful Israel. For indeed, Paul himself was part of unfaithful Israel.

“21But as for Israel He [God] says, ‘All the day long I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.’ 1I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant [seed] of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?’” (Rom. 10:21-11:2).

“Israel” in this first verse is physically identified, including the disobedient and obstinate. “Israel” in this third verse is also physically identified, including the disobedient and the obstinate, i.e. the un-faithful un-believers.

Paul’s identification of himself, in the middle verse, as an Israelite is also an obvious physical identification with an “Israel” that includes the disobedient and obstinate. To substantiate his claim that he is an Israelite, Paul points out that he is “of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin” (Rom. 11:1). He is referring to his physical descent. For Paul, being “of the tribe of Benjamin” proves that he is an Israelite.

This physically identified “Israel” is still called “His people.” Within “His people,” God has kept for Himself a faithful remnant.

The fact that the faithful in Israel are a “remnant of Israel” indicates that there is much more of Israel that is not faithful. Paul makes this quite clear. Otherwise, there could not be a remnant. Had “Israel” signified only the faithful, God’s continual call to Israel throughout the Bible would not have been to repentance, but to perseverance.

Paul said, “I could pray that I myself were anathema, separated from Messiah for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Messiah according to the flesh, who is over all God blessed forever. Amen” (Rom. 9:3-5).

It is clear that he is talking about physical, natural Israel. It is impossible to understand his words differently. It is for his unbelieving Jewish brethren
that Paul is willing to be anathema. It is from them that Messiah came. It is to them that the adoption, glory, and covenants, etc. belong. It is they who are Israelites.

Had “Israel” signified the faithful only, there would have been no need for, and no sense to, Paul’s “unceasing grief and continual sorrow,” nor to his willingness to be accursed for their salvation.16

God’s Dealing with Carnal Israel in Hosea

The appropriateness of Hosea for the subject of God’s dealing with Spiritual and carnal Israel is twofold. First, as a prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel, he ministered in times when, although God’s people prospered, yet their religious devotion was at best external (6:4-6; 7:8-10; 8:14; 10:1-2; 12:8; 13:15) and at worst pagan (4:11-14; 6:7-10; 13:1-2). Second, in the light of spiritual declension, indeed spiritual adultery, yet God remained covenantally faithful in being wedded to Israel as a nation (1:10-11; 2:14-23; 3:1-5; 11:8-11; 14:4-8). The prospect was not merely the saving of a remnant for indeed nowhere in Hosea is a remnant mentioned. Rather it is the nation as a whole that is both an “enemy” of God and “beloved” by God, even as is the case in Romans 11:28. However the triumph of pure grace is such that although God has become wedded to “an adulterous” people (3:1), and “the Israelites must live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, and without ephod or household idols. Afterwards, the people of Israel will return and seek the L ORD their God and David their king. They will come with awe to the LORD and to His goodness in the last days” (Hos. 3:4-5). The reason for this prophetic illustration of the truth that ultimately “all Israel will be saved” (Rom. 11:26), concerns Hosea’s closing declaration from the L ORD: “I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, for My anger has turned from him” (Hos. 14:4). This is really identical with Paul’s declaration that unbelieving, even adulterous Israel, is “loved because of their forefathers” (Rom. 11:28), and for this reason, with absolute certainty, “the Liberator will come from Zion; He will turn away godlessness from Jacob” (Rom. 11:26).

God’s Dealing with Carnal and Remnant Israel in Micah

The appropriateness of Micah for the subject of God’s dealing with Spiritual and carnal Israel is threefold. First, as a prophet primarily ministering to the southern kingdom of Judah, he encountered times that saw the common people harassed by foreign enemies, impoverished, and insecure. While the wealthy class and religious establishment fostered carnal security, injustice, and oppression of the poor in particular, at the same time they continued to participate in mere formal religion (2:1-2, 8-9; 3:1-12; 6:6-8, 10-12; 7:1-6). Thus Micah declared that judgment was inevitable (1:5-7; 2:3-5; 6:13-16). Second, in the light of overall spiritual poverty, yet God remained covenantally faithful in view of his inevitable future triumph and redemption through the promised Messiah (5:1-5). Third, unlike Hosea, a distinction is made between a faithful remnant that results from the judgment of captivity (2:12-13; cf. Isa. 10:20-22), and the nation of Israel as a whole that was exiled. Further, in the future, there will be another “remnant of Jacob [that] will be among many peoples like dew from the LORD” (5:7-8; cf. Rom. 11:5) having originated from the coming of Messiah (5:1-5). But for the present, Micah identifies himself as part of the remnant in his time by means of the confession of sin and the confident assertion,

7But as for me, I will look to the L ORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me. . . . 8Because I have sinned against Him, I must endure the L ORD’S rage until He argues my case and establishes justice for me. He will bring me into the light; I will see His salvation (7:7, 9).

Concerning the note of expectation here, Hosea has earlier described the eschatological hope of national restoration (Mic. 2:12-13). However here there is anticipation of the Messianic age incorporating a regenerate Israel “walking in the name of the LORD” being headquartered in restored Zion.

1In the last days the mountain of the LORD’S house will be established at the top of the mountains and will be raised above the hills. Peoples will stream to it, 2and many nations will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us about His ways so we may walk in His paths.” For instruction will go out of Zion and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 3He will settle disputes among many peoples and provide arbitration for strong nations that are far away. They will beat their swords into plows, and their spears into pruning knives. Nation will not take up the sword against nation, and they will
never again train for war. 4But each man will sit under his grapevine and under his fig tree with no one to frighten [him]. For the mouth of the LORD of Hosts has promised [this]. 5Though all the peoples each walk in the name of their gods, we will walk in the name of Yahweh our God forever and ever. (4:1-5).

This future distinctive glory of national Israel is further expounded at the close of Micah’s prophecy. Here he describes the reversal of circumstances with regard to the Gentiles and God’s children of Jacob.

16Nations will see and be ashamed of all their power. They will put [their] hands over [their] mouths, and their ears will become deaf. 17They will lick the dust like a snake; they will come trembling out of their hiding places like reptiles slithering on the ground. They will tremble before the LORD our God; they will stand in awe of You. 18Who is a God like You, removing iniquity and passing over rebellion for the remnant of His inheritance? He does not hold on to His anger forever, because He delights in faithful love. 19He will again have compassion on us; He will vanquish our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. 20You will show loyalty to Jacob and faithful love to Abraham, as You swore to our fathers from days long ago. (7:16-20).

Clearly national Israel in Micah 4:1-5; 7:14-20 has an identity that is distinct from the nations. It is the people of “Jacob” according to God’s “faithful [covenant] love to Abraham” (7:20). While the spiritual remnant, that is the exiles who eventually return to Jerusalem, continues as the perpetuated core of the nation, yet God will also continue to acknowledge the carnal remainder that is eventually to be dispersed. Throughout the centuries subsequent to 70 A.D., there has always been a remnant of unbelieving Jews in the Land, notwithstanding Arab dominion. However the dispersion is also described as the remnant (Isa. 11:11; Jer. 23:3). Nevertheless as Scripture abundantly teaches, even the Diaspora is not to be spurned forever (Isa. 11:11; 14:1; Jer. 16:14; 23:3; 24:6-9; Ezek. 37:21, 25; 39:28; Amos 9:14-15; Zech. 10:10). “Then I will pour out a spirit of grace and prayer on the house of David and the residents of Jerusalem, and they will look at Me whom they pierced. They will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child and weep bitterly for Him as one weeps for a firstborn.” (Zech. 12:10). Then, according to Romans 11:12, 26, the remnant will eventually become part of the “full number” of Israel when “all Israel will be saved” (Rom. 11:26).
CARNAL ISRAEL AS “ISRAEL AFTER THE FLESH”

In Romans 1:3 Jesus Christ is described as being a descendant of David “according to the flesh [kata sarka].” So in I Corinthians 10:18 Paul declares, “Look at the people of Israel [according to the flesh, blepete ton Israel kata sarka].” Here the HCSB translation is correct since the historic or physical nation of Israel is designated. There is no intended intimation here concerning national Israel’s lack of spiritual life. However the physical Jewish emblem of circumcision is used in Scripture as a distinguishing feature in the contrasting realms of the flesh and the Spirit. God associated Israel’s unfaithfulness with an “uncircumcised heart” (Lev. 26:41). To national Israel circumcised in the flesh, Moses declared:

12 And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you except to fear the LORD your God by waking in all His ways, to love Him, and to worship the LORD your God with all your heart and all your soul. . . . 16 Therefore, circumcise your hearts and don’t be stiff-necked any longer (Deut. 10:12, 16).

Jeremiah similarly exhorted the nation of Judah: “Circumcise yourselves to the LORD; remove the foreskin of your heart, men of Judah and residents of Jerusalem. Otherwise My wrath will break out like fire and burn with no one to extinguish [it], because of your evil deeds” (Jer. 4:4). However in all of these instances, there is not the slightest intimation that God ceased to recognize Israel’s national identity, notwithstanding carnality and consequent discipline. With this in mind, we consider in some detail Paul’s use of the same dichotomy in Romans 2:25-29.

An observer of Paul’s preceding confrontation with the Jew in Romans 2:17-24 might well ask the question: “How is it possible for the Jew to so shamelessly maintain his proud self-esteem and nationalism in the face of such deplorable condemnation by the Gentile?” as in v. 24, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.” The answer, that really goes without saying, is in a word, “circumcision.” Whereas the current teaching was that, “no person who is circumcised will go down to Gehenna [hell as the lake of fire],” so Paul now commences to destroy the religious hypocrite’s last bastion, namely sacramental/ritual/covenantal regeneration.

17 Moo, Epistle to the Romans, p. 167; also Hodge, Romans, p. 63.
Israel – as God’s beloved enemy

Circumcision is Significant, not Effecting, Romans 2:25

“For circumcision benefits you if you observe the law, but if you are a lawbreaker, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.” Some background on circumcision is called for here. According to Genesis 17:9-14, circumcision was ordained by God as signification of the covenant He had made with Abraham and his subsequent seed. For this reason the seed organ was cut. Note that at that same time, the name “Abram” meaning “exalted father,” was appropriately changed to “Abraham” meaning “father of a multitude” (Gen. 17:5). As a modern conservative Jew puts it, “For Jews circumcision today, as in the past four thousand years, is not a detail of hygiene. It is the old seal of the pledge between Abraham and his Creator, a sign in the flesh, a mark at the source of life.” However, even Jeremiah became aware that a physically circumcised Hebrew could yet be “uncircumcised of heart” (Jer. 9:25-26), and therefore subject to punishment.

Circumcision is “significant,” that is, it is an authentic “sign” when it points to an authentic “practicer of the Law.” But for the lawless, circumcision has no significance and in fact is invalidated; it is certainly not regenerative. Later in Romans 4:9-12, the point will be made that Abraham was justified through faith, and hence regenerated, before he was circumcised. Therefore Paul is not repudiating circumcision as a sign of national Jewish identity, as 3:1-2 plainly indicates. Rather he is negating a delusive function of circumcision that never really existed.

Circumcision is Significant for the Gentile, Romans 2:26-27

The implications of this right teaching on circumcision are encouraging for the Gentile. Otherwise, he is ipso facto excluded from the favor and grace of God because of an absent physical qualification.

His obedience is as circumcision, v. 26.

“Therefore if an uncircumcised man keeps the law’s requirements, will his uncircumcision not be counted as circumcision?” Paul posits a Gentile who “keeps the righteous requirements of the Law,” that is an uncircumcised “God-fearer who reveres and obeys the Mosaic Law

18 Herman Wouk, This Is My God, p. 140.
such as Cornelius (Acts 10:1-2; cf. 13:26), or a lesser sincere disciple of the God of Israel. How then is he to be regarded? God will reckon/accredit circumcision to him, even as any fair minded observer ought to do, because God regards the doing of righteousness as the justifying evidence of his sonship. He may not have the fleshy circumcision of Abraham, but he is nevertheless a child of Abraham because he does “the deeds of Abraham” (John 8:39) and therefore evidences circumcision of the heart.

His obedience shames the transgressor, v. 27.

“A man who is physically uncircumcised, but who fulfils the Law, will judge you who are a lawbreaker in spite of having the letter [of the Law] and circumcision.” Should a Gentile have a heart for God, a heart that is alive to God, a heart that loves God, a heart of holy affections that yearns to please God, then he is circumcised of heart even though he be physically uncircumcised. Consequently this man is the judge of the ungodly, circumcised Jew, since, by example, he reflects shame upon him and lays bare the hypocrisy of mere legal conformity (Matt. 8:5-13, especially vs. 10-12).

The word “judge” is emphatic here, and it relates, by way of contrast with the Jew “having the letter [of the Law],” by means of which he is quick to judge. Such a circumcised religionist has the Bible in his hand and mind, intellectual proficiency, doctrinal comprehension, and an attitude that is quick to judge, yet his disgraceful godlessness will reap severe condemnation by the mere presence of the godly Gentile, without a word being spoken (Phil. 3:2-3). By way of illustration, in an office situation, the unbaptized member of The Salvation Army who manifests genuine graces of the Spirit will stand out in obvious silent judgment upon the baptized Baptist who manifests the works of the flesh.

Circumcision is Significant for the Real Jew, Romans 2:28-29

The definition of an authentic Jew, especially for Paul here, is a matter of varying opinions according to conservative Christians. Some suggest that in this church age, it is the true Christian who is now the real and only spiritual Jew, and that since God has finished forever with Israel as a nation, there is no such thing in His sight as a national Jew. This is not what Paul has in mind here, especially in the light of 3:1-2 (cf.11:1-36; Acts 22:3; Gal. 6:16). A genuine Jew is one who,
having been circumcised of the heart, is also circumcised of the flesh, and identifies geographically with those of the same commitment, cf. 9:6. In this respect circumcision has not been abrogated.

*It does not signify a real Jew, v. 28.*

“For a person is not a Jew who is one outwardly, and [true] circumcision is not something visible in the flesh.” A more literal translation reads, “For not the one in outward manifestation is [essentially] a Jew, neither is the one in the outward manifestation of fleshy circumcision.” What is it that essentially identifies a Jew? Negatively, it is not any outward religious ceremony, not even the physical rite of circumcision. However this does not mean that formal circumcision itself has been eliminated (Romans 3:1-2; Acts 16:3). At best, circumcision identifies a professing Jew. Yet it is the profession itself that validates or invalidates the significance of the individual person’s circumcision.

*It does signify heart circumcision, v. 29.*

“On the contrary, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart—by [or in the] Spirit, not the [outwardly performed] letter. His praise is not from men, but from God [who knows his heart].” The sine qua non of true Jewishness is “heart circumcision” which divine operation is “by the Spirit,” being more probable than “in the spirit,” though as Morris writes, “either way gives good sense (cf. 7:6; II Cor. 3:6-7).”19 In such a case, the true Jew receives his affirmation of Jewishness from God, which for him is what really matters, and not as was commonly sought in Paul’s time according to “the letter,” the praise of man (John 5:41-44). Above all else, a true Jew has a heart that is made by God, owned of God, and consecrated to God.

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19 Morris, *Epistle to the Romans*, p. 142. “Spirit” is supported by Calvin, Hodge, Moo, Morris, Murray, Schreiner; “spirit” by Barrett, Haldane, Lloyd-Jones, Shedd.
On several occasions the Apostle Paul declared himself presently to be a Jew. In the temple precincts of Jerusalem, the chained Apostle implored a Roman commander, who had arrested him, that he be allowed to address an enraged Jewish crowd. He argued: “I am a Jew [Ego eimi Ioudaios] of Tarsus in Cilicia” (Acts 21:39). His request having been granted, Paul then addressed the crowd in Hebrew, but again declared, “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia” (Acts 22:3). Further, in Romans 11:1 Paul declares that “I am an Israelite,” [egô Israelîtes eimi]. In all three instances the present tense is significant.

Then in Romans 9:3-4 Paul lovingly writes of “my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites [hoitines eisin Israëlitai].” Here again the present tense is used, and concerning this Schreiner comments that “the Jews still ‘are’ Israelites and that all the blessings named still belong to them.”20 Such a conclusion has profound ramifications with regard to the present validity of Jewish ethnicity, nationality and territory.

Hence it is obvious that the Apostle regards his Jewishness as a present reality, both with regard to himself as a Jewish Christian as well as his kinship with unbelieving Jewish brethren. Here is no mere token confession. Here is Paul’s acknowledgment that the unbelieving Jew has present authenticity with regard to the full meaning of Jewishness. He clearly upholds this vital truth, not merely for the cause of secular convenience, but rather his bona fide identification as a fellow Israelite with “the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the temple service, and the promises” (Rom. 9:4). This is not the language of superceded Judaism.

20 Thomas R. Schreiner, Romans, p. 485.
Chapter Twelve

ISRAEL – in need of the prodigal Gentile’s love

The parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32 is part of an illustrative trilogy that is based upon Jesus Christ’s confrontation with complaining Pharisees and scribes. These self-righteous Jewish zealots, having audited Jesus’ social lifestyle and teaching, “began to grumble, saying, ‘This man welcomes sinners and eats with them!’” (Luke 15:1-2). As a result there follows, in response, three parables that all depict the Son of God’s compassionate interest in the saving of the lost, they being represented by the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Sons. Obviously Jesus is not only justifying his ministry, but also indicating that both the leaders of Israel, as well as his disciples, should have the same merciful attitude. Therefore the interpretation of these three parables should be based upon this one underlying theme. When the parable of the Prodigal Son is considered, though it is really concerned with two lost sons, two main approaches have been followed. First, there is simply the representation of God’s fatherly love for a wayward member of His human family. Here is portrayed an earthly father’s gracious longing for the return of His rebellious son, as well as his largeness of heart in being quick to forgive in the face of genuine repentance. But especially is noted the father’s eager desire to joyously celebrate such an authentic instance of conversion. By way of contrast, the elder brother represents that hard heartedness which self-righteousness engenders. He is lacking in God’s tender concern and readiness to forgive. Second, there is the more intriguing understanding of the prodigal son representing the Gentiles who sin with open abandon and the elder brother depicting the Jews’ indignation that flagrant, persistent decadence should receive such an abundance of grace while they have been impeccably righteous. This latter view is sympathetically considered by Archbishop Trench in his classic volume, Notes on the Parables of Our Lord, in which he provides a significant concluding application.

[We] Gentiles must not forget that at the end of the present dispensation all will be reversed, and that we shall be in danger of playing the part of the elder brother, and shall do so if we grudge at the largeness of the grace
Israel – in need of the prodigal Gentiles’ love

bestowed upon the Jew, who is now feeding upon husks, far away from his Father’s house.¹

How appropriate is this comment in terms of the attitude of many conservative evangelicals today, especially of Reformed convictions, toward the ethnic Jew and national Israel. The disposition of the elder brother was not only one of contempt for his close relative in the flesh, but also he was of the opinion that his brother was beyond redemption and thus permanently cast aside from his father’s home. Certainly the Jews of Jesus’ time were of this opinion with regard to the Gentiles. But how strange it is that today so many Gentile Christians, and hardly any Jewish Christians, are of the opinion that now it is the Jews that are beyond redemption and forever cast aside by the Father in His heaven. On the part of some Gentile Christians, their attitude toward ethnic Jews and national Israel is literally disgraceful. Like the elder brother, they are void of grace and full of condemnation toward their kinsmen in a spiritual sense (Gal. 3:29), even to the degree where their theological anti-Judaism is in danger of becoming ethnic. Some literature in this realm is, to say the least, offensive and utterly unchristian. Especially refer to Chapter Two, Chapter Three and Chapter Four. Others, less animated and vociferous in this regard, are nevertheless indifferent. There is no compassionate interest in the plight of the Jews, no inward sympathy for their historic tribulations, no admittance of widespread complicity on the part of Christianity with regard to these sufferings, no special interest in Jewish missions, but only a resignation that the judgment of God is rightly having its course.

THE ADMONITION OF PAUL TOWARD THE GENTILES
IN ROMANS 11:17-21, 31

In Romans 11 as a whole, certainly the main thrust of the Apostle’s instruction concerning Israel is toward the Gentiles. Now it is also clear that the Gentile “uncultivated olive” branches have been graciously grafted into “the rich root of the cultivated olive tree” at the expense of disobedient Israel’s temporal severance. Consequently the Gentile Christians are exhorted that they “do not brag” because they are better off than the cultivated branches that are presently scattered, that is the unbelieving Jews as Diaspora. There is no place here for pride or arrogance because “[natural Jewish] branches were broken off by unbelief, . . . so that I [as a Gentile Christian] might be grafted in,” vs.

¹ Richard Chenevix Trench, Notes on the Parables of Our Lord, p. 152.
Commentators generally agree that here the Gentiles are encouraged to be compassionate toward the Jews while dispersed, notwithstanding their entrenched unbelief. So while in v. 30 the Gentile unbeliever has received gospel mercy at the expense of national Israel’s unbelief, “now” in v. 31 the Gentile Christian is to show gospel mercy to unbelieving national Israel. However, the context of vs. 17-21 suggests that not only evangelistic proclamation toward the Jew is involved, but also a distinctive, comprehensive loving attitude. Consider that while 15:26-27 calls for material support for “the poor among the saints in Jerusalem” out of a sense of spiritual indebtedness, surely this also suggests the related compassionate interest that Gentile Christians should spontaneously reflect toward the unbelieving Jew in his universal plight. In other words, while Jewish evangelism is to be of primary concern for the Christian, yet it is not to be at the neglect of social and material support.

However is it possible for such compassionate concern to be constrained by means of doctrine that regards Jewishness and national Judaism as passé? In other words, if a Christian’s eschatology leads him to believe that Israel has been divinely, eternally disenfranchised, then is it possible for such teaching to engender a distinctive loving interest in the plight of the Jewish people as they presently exist? In this regard, history sadly witnesses to the fact that, in general, Gentile Christians have responded with shameful disdain that has included contempt, arrogant aloofness and even militant opposition. And furthermore, the roots of this disregard for the mandate of Romans 11:17-21, 31 have proved to be decidedly doctrinal. For contemporary proof of this assertion, refer to Appendix D: Melanie Phillips on Replacement Theology. Here this columnist for the London Daily Mail reports of opposition to Israel being motivated by anti-Semitism that is deeply rooted in Christian replacement theology rather than economic and cultural factors. This is no mere isolated instance of eschatology effecting an unethical response, as the influence of Augustine so well illustrates.

According to Moo, “these Gentile believers were apparently convinced that they belonged to a new people of God that had simply replaced Israel. . . . It is the egotism of Gentile Christians who present God’s manifold plan as having the salvation of themselves as its focus that Paul wishes to expose and criticize.” Romans, p. 704-5. Murray similarly views Paul as admonishing the Gentiles since, “[a] streak of contempt for the Jew may also be detected.” Romans, II, p. 87.
Once again, let us make a point of clarification. With regard to “theological anti-Judaism” we mean that understanding of the present New Testament age in which the Christian Church is now alleged to have superceded or replaced the Old Testament people of God. As a result it is asserted that covenantally, in the sight of God, there is now no such person as a “Jew” or “Hebrew” with distinctive national and territorial identity. This is true for many Christian writers who, while giving token recognition of the Jew in contemporary society, as with Chapman and Sizer, nevertheless censure and lambaste any who identify contemporary Israel with the biblical nation. Alternative expressions of “transference” or “absorption” concerning Israel’s lost national status still result in the same end result of Jewish nullification.

According to this anti-Judaic Augustinian perspective, although there are presently several million “Jews” in Israel, and for practical purposes they are designated as “Jews” as such, and we converse with them and witness to them in America and the United Kingdom, in theological reality and according to the New Testament revelation, their racial claim has no present or prospective heavenly validity. Rather the Christian Church has inherited this past Jewish legacy in a shadowy sense only, using as it were appropriated terminology, so as consequently to become the spiritual New Israel. As a result every believer in Jesus as the Christ, of whatever nationality, is a spiritual Jew. The people of Christ throughout the world, void of ethnic distinctions, have become His new nation which, in inheriting the whole earth as the fulfilled Land, is the truly ecumenical kingdom of God. Yet how do the proponents of this supercessionist agenda respond toward the modern Jew who, in all honesty, is offended at this denial of his Jewishness? It is rarely with the spirit of Paul’s exhortation in Romans 11:18-20, 31.

The Directional Challenge to anti-Judaism in Romans 11

Such is the force of this locus classicus passage with regard to the future of the Israel that many modern commentators increasingly have come to the opinion that Romans 11:26 does indeed refer to a future conversion of the Jews on a national, or at least a climactic, multitudinous scale. Yet others of Reformed convictions have

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3 So Barrett, Hodge, Moo, Morris, Murray, Schreiner, etc.
believed that the salvation of Israel here is merely the cumulative saving of a Jewish remnant over many centuries, though this interpretation has not gained a broad following. In this regard, there has also been a turning from Calvin’s understanding of both saved Jew and Gentile within the church being designated as the “all Israel [that] will be saved.” Refer to Chapter Ten: Israel - and a Romans 11 Synthesis for more detailed exegesis of this whole matter. Yet having said this, at the same time many sense a dilemma that is not so readily clarified. With regard to Reformed convictions, there is often no indication as to whether this future en masse conversion of Jews, revealed in Romans 11, will incorporate divinely acknowledged individual, national and territorial Jewishness. However denial in this regard is often intimated. Hence there is especial reluctance to admit that such an awakening will be nationally allied to the inhabitation of the Land of Israel. One senses that some scholars, their doctrine excluding the divine recognition of national and territorial Israel in the present or future Christian era, nevertheless sense being eschatologically driven in this direction through arousal of the plain meaning of the text of Romans 11. They sense that the tendency of this truth is to lead, as it were down a slippery slope, toward an acknowledgment of a distinct national and territorial destiny for Israel that is inevitably related to much that the Old Testament has specifically promised. Consequently, while some attempt to allow a degree of temporary, vague corporateness in a future conversion of the “Jews,” whatever this term may mean, nevertheless they put the brakes on when national and territorial identity seems to appear on the horizon as an inevitable consequence. And this restraint, we suggest, leads to some difficulty in witnessing to the Jew in a spontaneous sense. The reason is that while a future climactic conversion of the “Jews” is anticipated, yet there is obfuscation with regard to affirming any specific eschatological future for the converted “Jew,” other than vague incorporation into the people of God. And the Jew who knows his Old Testament well cannot be blamed for making reference to the prophets at this juncture. Having accepted the plain fulfillment of the numerous messianic prophecies, he then enquires as to why he ought not similarly accept the plain and obvious meaning of passages such as Ezekiel 36-37 and Zechariah 14. However Horatius Bonar has well responded to this enquiry on pages 198-199, 225.

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4 So Bavinck, Berkhoff, Hendriksen, Hoekema, etc., especially according to a Dutch Reformed lineage.
The Romans 11 Dynamic for Witnessing to the Jew

For the classic, theologically anti-Judaic Christian, that is he who places great store in his allegiance to Augustinianism with regard to the Jew, there is a significant problem which he especially has to face in the light of Romans 11. He is ready to confess his responsibility for proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah, even to those who mistakenly claim divine national identification as a “Jew.” After all, the exuberance and priority of Paul in this regard is hard to avoid as a model for contemporary Christians. Hence he will even declare that surely God has His people amongst unbelieving Judaism, and in designating them as the remnant of Romans 11:5, then explain that for this reason there must be evangelism directed toward the “Jews.” So Ambrose and Chrysostom and Luther were of a similar opinion. However in allowing the identification of resultant new converts as “Jewish” Christians in a nominal sense, he will be quick to deny them divine national and territorial recognition. In fact, if pressed, he will confess that this new “Jewish” Christian really has no distinctive Jewishness whatsoever, at least in connection with divine Old Testament terms.

In other words, this modern Augustinian will speak of these converted Jews in an individual, token sense, but disallow historic Jewish corporate identity. Within himself he will also believe that the non-Christian Jew has in fact no real Jewishness, even in a carnal sense. Privately he believes that God has abandoned Judaism so as never again to revive it. He is convinced that the contemporary Jew is deceived, being a racial anachronism, but for witnessing purposes, and at a strictly secular or social level, he ought to be addressed as a “Jew.” However, with this attitude in mind, the question then arises as to what degree he really has a distinct passion for Jewish missions, even as was the case with Paul (Rom. 9:1-5; 10:1-2), who continued to identify himself, quite unambiguously, as an Israelite (Acts 21:39; 22:3; Rom.11:1; II Cor. 11:22)? In fact, when it comes to a history of distinctive Jewish missions over the last two hundred years, it stands out most plainly that agency after agency has always doctrinally presupposed ongoing and eschatological Jewish national, territorial identity according to God’s covenant faithfulness. But where has there been a similar burgeoning of evangelistic outreach toward the Jews based upon that contrasting Augustinian doctrine which upholds Jewishness as a mere shadow that has been superceded by the substance of Christianity? And which of these missionary scenarios more closely mirrors the missionary priority of Paul? Of course there
may be the response by the Augustinian Christian that while he is second to none in concern for evangelistic outreach, yet he believes it should be non-discriminatory, so to speak, that is to both Jew and Gentile without distinction. Yet we would enquire what explanation then is to be given for the fact that Paul’s evangelistic thrust, Gentile by divine vocation, nevertheless was always prioritized in terms of being “to the Jew first” (Rom. 1:16; 2:9-10)?

As a representation of this problem with regard to formal expressions of interest in Jewish evangelism, first consider the comments of Professor Marten Woudstra of Calvin Theological Seminary who, in upholding continuity with regard to Israel and the subsequent Christian church, makes a number of comments that are quite representative of Augustinian, supercessionist eschatology at this point while at the same time they reflect an essential detachment from divinely acknowledged, contemporary Jewishness. In consideration of Romans 11:25-26, he concludes that,

the apostle’s emphasis is not upon some later point in time when there will be a reversal in the hardening in part of the Jews. Rather, the emphasis is upon the word “so” or “thus,” “in this way.” All Israel [the accumulating remnant] will be saved in the way of the bringing in of the fullness of the Gentiles. . . . As the fullness of the Gentiles is brought in and “until” this is finished, so, in this manner, “all Israel” [an accumulating remnant] will be saved. . . . There will be one body of the redeemed, Christ’s flock, known to him by name and distinguished from those who are not his sheep. . . . The saving of “all Israel” is still going on, for the fullness of the Gentiles is also still being brought in. But at all events some of the Jews who are now hardened in part will be grafted into the one olive tree. They will not form a separate program or a separate entity next to the church.

The question whether it is more proper to speak of a replacement of the Jews by the Christian church or of an extension (continuation) of the OT people of God into that of the NT church is variously answered. . . . What should be stated clearly, however, is that the idea of the church replacing Israel is not to be understood as a form of advanced anti-Semitism, as is done by some.5

There seems to be an underlying concern in the final comment here that betrays an inherent weakness of the doctrine being proposed. It could never be said that Paul’s teaching in Romans concerning Israel might be misunderstood as having an anti-Judaic tone. Quite to the

contrary. Of course what Woudstra fails to make clear is the status of the unbelieving Jew in the present time; one suspects it is not the covenantal regard of Romans 11:28 that inevitably calls for national and territorial recognition, even in unbelief. This being the case, any talk concerning “Jews” is simply with regard to a convenient term that in fact has no divine specificity or authentication. Certainly here the “Jew,” having become converted, loses all of his Jewishness. Yet at the end of this explanation, we then read of Woudstra making a plea for Jewish evangelism. “The church-and-Israel question presents all evangelicals, regardless of where they stand with respect to any of the above questions, with the challenge to preach the gospel to the Jews.”

But is this expression driven according to the same pro-Judaic passion of Paul, or a cool acknowledgment of the broad need of “Jews” and Gentiles to hear the gospel? What exactly, eschatologically is Woudstra’s meaning of “Jew” here? It would seem to have certain evangelistic implications. Would not his approach suggest that in witnessing to Jews, it is a most vital matter as to whether we tell them of the “good news” that they, in becoming a Christian, will lose their distinct Jewish identity, or whether we direct them to the King of the Jews as “the hope of Israel” (Acts 28:20). We suggest that the former approach will not gain much of a hearing, to say the least. However the latter method, far more akin to the eagerness of Paul in his missionary visits to innumerable synagogues, is much more likely to result in a respectful audience.

THE ANALOGY CONCERNING FAMILY INTEREST IN THE UNBELIEVING JEW

It is common for the Augustinian Christian to critically respond that the pro-Judaic Christian aligns himself with those who, in their “carnal Zionist zeal,” neglect evangelism due to a preoccupation with purely political machinations and prophetic speculation. After all the Jew, in rejecting Christ, is, according to that same Christ, consigned to certain judgment. It was indeed Jesus who solemnly declared that “unless you believe that I am [the Son of God], you will die in your sins” (John 8:24). To this we would thoroughly agree. So the Jew has to be warned concerning the grave danger that confronts his soul, and with this no evangelistic outreach worthy of the qualifying title of “Jewish” would disagree. But how do we fulfill the burden of this responsibility for Jewish missions? Is it with the constraint of gratitude for the legacy

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6 Ibid.
that the Jew represents (Rom. 9:4-5)? Is it with appreciation that the Savior is fully Jewish? Is it with respect for the truth that the Christian Bible is almost totally Jewish? Or is it with a more dispassionate attitude that includes “Jewishness” as a temporary accommodating appendage within one’s theology, that at the same time denies the existence of national Judaism and simply anticipates the inclusion of some Jews into the people of God as an accumulating remnant?

By way of illustration, suppose as a Christian we have unbelieving loved ones and family members who we have witnessed to on numerous occasions. Our soul aches with concern for a mother or father or sister or brother who, with stubborn unbelief, does not hesitate to scoff at our faith that is caricatured as a religious crutch! Such reproach within the family circle may persist for many years. Do we likewise believe in this situation that such relatives will “die in their sins” if they believe not that Jesus Christ is their Savior? Yes we do believe this with both love and fear. But how do we continue to relate to these beloved relatives? After such a long time of rejection, is it with eventual abandonment since these kin have become so hard hearted? Having prayed for them, do we then eventually give up on them before God’s throne of grace? No, not for a moment. Such a limitation to our patience is unthinkable when we contemplate God’s great forbearance toward us. While we have life in our bodies, we will continue to hope and pray for our loved ones, and at the same time take every opportunity to reflect graciousness through life and lip in the face of unremitting hard-heartedness. It is the fact that we are related through the flesh to our loved ones that constrains us to persevere with renewed effort, endeavoring to commend Christ by a godly lifestyle, even while our verbal witness continues to be spurned. In the same vein then ought we not also lovingly persevere in witnessing to the Jewish people, our relatives through saving faith in the God of Abraham?

However, to take the analogy further, is our overall witness to our unsaved loved ones strictly in the realm of literature distribution, conversation about the Bible, and invitations to hear the gospel preached? Surely not! There is also enjoyable social intercourse, sharing on a host of topics, genuine interest in family problems, and a readiness to offer practical help whenever a problem merely looms on the horizon. This being the case, then how is it that some convey the idea that to help the Jew is strictly to expose him to the gospel while any other more secular assistance is to be discarded as carnal, even inappropriate Zionism? Surely such an attitude is to be thoroughly
condemned. Therefore the Christian will be concerned for the Jew in matters individual, national, and territorial. Yes, he will be, like Paul, enthusiastically pro-Judaic, ever supportive of the cause of Israel, its great failings and carnality notwithstanding.

In the same vein we never give up on our earthly relatives according to the flesh, their failings and carnality notwithstanding. Being of the same blood, our undying love for them constrains us to persist; the thought of abandonment never crosses out mind. Hence this being true, then what ought to be our attitude toward the Jew to whom, through faith in Christ, we are also related according to the flesh (Gal. 3:29)? Surely it ought to be with the same loving persistence. And this same undying concern is precisely what Paul seems to have in mind in Romans 11:18-20, 31 with regard to the proper attitude of Gentile Christians toward unbelieving Jews. Of course if there is no such thing as a “Jew” today, then there can be no such relationship in the flesh, and thus no resultant merciful interest after the manner of Paul. However the fact that the Apostle exhorts us to have this loving family regard is surely further proof that this ethnic status is not null and void. Rather, it will eventually blossom into a “full number” of unimagined proportions for the glory of God (Rom. 11:12, 33-36).

THE ANALOGY CONCERNING RUTH AND ORPAH

In Dan Gruber’s significant volume The Church and The Jews, he makes a very telling application from the Book of Ruth in the Old Testament concerning the contrasting attitudes of Ruth and Orpah that illustrate how a Gentile should respond toward the Jews.

Orpah [a Gentile Moabitess] was a loving daughter-in-law, but she ended up staying with her own people. Ruth [a Gentile Moabitess] saw something that Orpah did not see. What did Ruth see in Naomi [a Jewish Bethlehemite]? Naomi had left the land of Israel with her husband and two sons because there was a famine in the land. They went to Moab, and Naomi’s husband died there. Her two sons married Moabite women, but died soon after that.

In Naomi’s words, “the hand of the Lord has gone forth against me” (Ruth 1:13). When Naomi returned to Bethlehem, “the women said, ‘Is this Naomi?’ And she said to them, ‘Do not call me Naomi [pleasant]; call me Mara [bitter], for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the Lord has witnessed against me and the Almighty has afflicted me?’” (Ruth 1:19-21).
It was obvious that the Lord was against Naomi. Just like it was obvious that the Lord was against Job. Just like it was obvious that the Lord was against Paul when the viper bit him, shortly after he had escaped from a shipwreck (Acts 28:4). Just like it has been obvious that the Lord is against the Jewish people. Such things are obvious, but they are not true.

Despite what people thought, God was not against Naomi, Job, or Paul. Despite what people think, God is not against the Jewish people. God intends to do something more wonderful for all Israel than what He did for Naomi, Job, or Paul. Though His hand may sometimes be against His first-born son, His heart never is.

Naomi is a type of the Jewish people. She was bereaved, bitter, and angry at God. She had no hope. In that condition, she came back to her own land. Ruth saw that, but she saw something more. There was something that she had seen in her mother-in-law and in her own husband, that was more precious to her than life. She saw something invisible that Orpah could not see.

“But Ruth said [to Naomi], ‘Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God’” (Ruth 1:16). Ruth said, “I will be joined to the Jewish people, and I will serve the God of Israel.” She knew that He, and He alone, is the only God. She made that choice before she ever met Boaz.

Ruth made the same choice that Abraham made. She left her family, her people, and her land behind. She lost her life in order to find it. Orpah said good-bye to Naomi and then went to reclaim her old life. She found her life in order to lose it. Naomi’s Gentile daughter-in-law, Ruth, was to be the means of her greatest blessing. God planned it that way. Ruth embraced the Jewish people, and God blessed her eternally.

What did Cornelius see? He was a military man, and Rome ruled over Jerusalem. Jerusalem itself, as a city of the first-century world, could not compare to “the glory that was Rome.” Cornelius was assigned to a backward, troublesome, superstitious province and people. At least that was the Roman view. They believed that Rome had better ways, more might, and greater gods. What did Cornelius see in Israel that is described in the gospels? He saw everything. He saw the corruption, the legalism, the brutality, and the hypocrisy. But he also saw the invisible hand of God, the only God, upon His people Israel.

Cornelius made a choice which would have made him the laughingstock of all his family, friends, and neighbors back home. He started to pray to the God of Israel, and he started to give his money to help the Jewish people. He made that choice before he ever met Peter. And the angel said, “Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God” (Acts 10:4). Cornelius embraced the Jewish people, and God blessed him eternally.

“Now faith is . . . the conviction of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1). Gentiles
who are believers need to look at the Jewish people and see the invisible. They need to choose as Ruth and Cornelius did: “Your people will be my people; your God will be my God.”

THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF ESCHATOLOGICAL JEWISHNESS

From the outset of this defense of a pro-Judaic eschatology, let it be understood that the mere justification of a distinctive prophetic cause has not been the main purpose. To be sure the repudiation of theological anti-Judaism has been vigorous. Nevertheless the singular intent has been the vindication of the cause of the Jewish people according to the mind of God even as has been portrayed in the whole of Scripture. Certainly the perspective upheld here might be broadly identified as premillennial. Nevertheless, if necessary, let such a title perish. But this being said, never let perish the biblical indications of God’s sovereign grace that will supremely triumph in the salvation of Israel as a nation through the mediation of its Messiah, Jesus, the Son of God, and His consummate reign from Jerusalem. Israel’s original election was according to the purest grace, and so will be the climactic salvation of national Israel unto holiness as God’s people.

However, it continues to remain true in a sizeable part of Reformed Christianity that an eschatological perspective on Israel often results in anti-Judaism of varying shades, even if more kindly defined as theological rather than racial, and progressive rather than the replacement variety. The reality is that some who confess faith in the doctrines of grace or historic Calvinism have acted both neglectfully and shamefully with regard to their consideration of and association with Jews, the present nation of Israel and even Jewish Christians. Some notable examples have already been cited. And discussion with those of this persuasion usually indicates that such belief is doctrinally driven. It has already been acknowledged that history certainly is strewn with moving exceptions in this regard. Even so, over the centuries, they remain just that, exceptions as distinct from the overwhelming general rule. For this reason, indications of belief in national Israel’s everlasting disenfranchisement are not difficult to discern, and those of Jewish extraction find it easy to notice this attitude which, as has been related to this writer, does not commend Christ.

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7 Dan Gruber, *The Church and The Jews*, pp. 401-402.
Following the visit of Andrew Bonar, Robert Murray M’Cheyne, Alexander Keith, and Alexander Black to Palestine in 1839 under the auspices of the Church of Scotland, a full account of this investigative journey, concerned with missionary outreach to the Jews, was published with the title, *A Narrative of a Visit to the Holy Land*. Of particular significance are the following extracts that indicate the deplorable attitude of “Christians” toward Jews in Jerusalem at that time.

On another occasion, passing by the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the monks mistaking him [a Mr. Nicolayson, a Christian resident in Jerusalem dressed in an eastern manner] for a Jew, rushed out upon him, and pursued him through the streets, into a house where he took refuge, threatening to kill him, unless he kissed a picture of the Virgin, in a New Testament which they held out to him. This he did, and saved his life.

The professing Christians here [in the Holy Land]—Greeks, Armenians, and Roman Catholics—are even more bitter enemies to Jews than Mahometans; so that in time of danger, a Jew would betake himself to the house of a Turk for refuge, in preference to that of a Christian. How little have these Christians the mind of Christ!

How shameful this is, not only because of the way this behavior is so antithetical to that of the Apostle Paul, but supremely because of the way in which Jesus Christ is unnecessarily blasphemed before His brethren in the flesh. The *Narrative* goes on to describe that, when the Jews recognized the more genuine loving interest of the delegation from Scotland, there was a contrasting response of desire for cordial fellowship. It also needs to be pointed out that the eschatological doctrine of this delegation, in the main, recognized the ongoing national and territorial status of the Jews at that time, notwithstanding their unbelief. Their eschatology was decidedly not Augustinian.

As was stated in the introduction of this volume, in the field of eschatology there are matters of relatively lesser significance that concern the antichrist, the great tribulation, the rapture, etc., and then this transcendentally important issue of the place of Israel in the Bible, and especially the New Testament. With regard to this vital matter of national Israel’s present existence or nonexistence, history plainly leads us to an unavoidable conclusion. It is that profound ethical and most practical consequences are involved, even issues of life and death.

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8 Andrew A. Bonar and Robert Murray M’Cheyne, *A Narrative of a Mission of Inquiry to the Jews from the Church of Scotland*, pp. 146-147, 149.
It is for this reason, amongst other lesser matters, that this author has felt compelled not only to make such a vital distinction at this point in the field of what is really important in eschatology, but also vigorously defend that doctrine which tends to rectify such an appalling anti-Judaic heritage. Here we are not dealing with an eschatological refinement concerning which we can agree to disagree. If the Christian Church in general, over the centuries, had followed Paul’s exhortation in Romans 11:17-24, 31, it is not unreasonable to conceive that the tragic treatment of the Jews during the twentieth century that resulted in human ashes might have been replaced with the fruit of a great harvest of Jewish souls saved, having been provoked to jealousy (Rom. 11:11), to the glory of God (Rom. 11:36).

Wake, harp of Zion, wake again,  
Upon thine ancient hill,  
On Jordan’s long deserted plain,  
By Kedron’s lowly rill.  
The hymn shall yet in Zion swell  
That sounds Messiah’s praise,  
And Thy loved name, Immanuel!  
As once in ancient days.  
For Israel yet shall own her King,  
For her salvation waits,  
And hill and dale shall sweetly sing  
With praise in all her gates.  
Hasten, O Lord, these promised days,  
When Israel shall rejoice;  
And Jew and Gentile join in praise,  
With one united voice.  

*James Edmeston, 1846*

In conclusion, we would return to a most vital matter in the current debate over the future destiny of national Israel. It is the question of “tone” or “attitude” with regard to the Jewish people. Sadly it needs to be pointed out that much of the literature which continues in the Augustinian eschatological tradition is fatally flawed at this most vital juncture. Refer to *Chapter Four: Israel - and Christian anti-Judaism in the UK*. This anti-Judaic genre resounds with an unsavory character that most Jewish Christians and unbelieving Jews will quickly identify. And this being the case, then there is indicated a most basic defect with
the whole system that is represented. On the other hand, consider the subsequent brief article by Horatius Bonar which throbs and breathes with a gospel generated, loving regard for the Jewish people that speaks for itself as being essentially Pauline. If this chord does not resonate in the biblical Christian, then without apology it is maintained that the fundamental, doctrinal, eschatological root here is unsound. Whereas it is also maintained that it is the right theological, eschatological root which produces from Bonar such a sweet resonance that both the Jewish Christian and the Gentile Christian will delight in and spontaneously reflect upon.

AN EXHORTATION OF HORATIUS BONAR,
"THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHRISTIANS AS REGARDS THE JEWS."

The complete contrast between a holy God and fallen man has been abundantly and fearfully displayed in all ages. The false religions which have cursed the world under the forms of heathenism and Mohammedanism, and those miserable perversions of true religion, Rabbinism among the Jews, and Roman Catholicism among Christians, have served to present man as the moral opposite of God in all of His holiness. The result has been that man has magnified and adored those things which God has ever depreciated and forbidden, while he has undervalued and despised whatever Jehovah has testified to and highly commended.

The gospel, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, wins man back into sympathy with God. Thus it is the power of God unto salvation. It endows the mind with God-like tastes, and fills the heart with holy aspirations and desires. But this work is not wrought all at once. It admits of degrees, and is capable of continual increase. Our sympathy with God will be in proportion to the light which we obtain, and our honest use of that light. Many Christians fail in important duties because they have not studied the whole of God’s statute-book. Their minds are but partially illuminated, and so their hearts are not found in all God’s ways of service, nor in all God’s thoughts of coming glory.

There was a time when there was much religion in our beloved land [of Scotland], much zeal for God’s truth and glory, though there was no concern for the millions of the heathen who were living without God and without hope in the world. The people ate the fat and drank the sweet, but they sent no portion to the perishing. “Go out into the highways and along the hedges” [Luke 14:23], “Preach the gospel to all creation” [Mark 16:15], had become obsolete commands to the professing Churches which were the offspring of the Reformation. But this state of things greatly changed about fifty years ago. The Church awoke from her slumber, went forth on her mission, and as of old, the Lord “worked with his servants,” and confirmed His Word with signs following. This was a step in the right direction with
regard to heartfelt obedience toward the Savior; for we should imitate him not only in love of truth, mercy, and holiness, but also in zeal for spreading them, and in intense longing for the salvation of souls.

But while the noble missionaries went forth on their noble commission to the nations sitting in darkness, in the highway of those nations through which they passed, and even close by where they labored, lay the poor neglected Jew, torn and bleeding at every pore, trodden down and despised, a proverb and a byword. And who cared for him? These despised ones “were taken up on the lips of talkers and treated as infamous by the people” (Ezek. 36:3). “Man called the scattered and peeled nation” an outcast, saying, “It is Zion; no one cares for her” (Jer. 30:17). But “God has not rejected his people whom He foreknew” [Rom. 11:2]; he still has wondrous thoughts of lingering love toward them, and it became a sight well-pleasing in his eyes when, in the spirit of the Samaritan, the Church directed her steps towards the plundered and wounded traveler, and sought to “pour oil and wine into his bleeding wounds.” Surely those missionary agencies which seek the spiritual and eternal welfare of the scattered and long-injured children of Abraham richly deserve the name of “Good Samaritan Societies;” and surely all Christians who now observe these efforts would do well to give heed to the application which the Great Teacher and Pattern of Love makes of his own beautiful parable, “Go thou and do likewise.”

Yes, Christian; if you would be in full sympathy with God, you must not only trust the cross, love holiness, and send the gospel to the heathen; but you must love the Jew, pity and pray for the Jew, and be willing to lay out personal investment and energy so as to send the good tidings that Jesus of Nazareth “came into the world to save sinners” [I Tim. 1:15], to the Jew, to whom he came “preaching peace” [Acts 10:36].

With a view of awakening a proper attitude in this regard, and inducing a right course of action towards the lost sheep of the house of Israel, let the reader look earnestly at the scene presented before him by their history and present condition; and then look up to that redeeming Lord who was of “the seed of Abraham according to the flesh,” and ask, with reference to them, Lord! “what will You have me to do?”

The people of Israel present a most interesting subject for contemplation, and a large sphere for labor. Do you want an important theme to think upon? Here it is. Do you want a field in which to work? Behold it here. Surely no one who thinks on the past history of the Jews, or their present condition or future destiny, can complain of lack of interest in the subject before them. In the Jews we see a people by whom the Bible was written, and to whom, either as history or prophecy, a large part of it refers. These are the fathers, the prophets, and the types; from them came the Savior and his apostles. The lovers of antiquity, the admirers of the marvelous, the seekers after wonders, may all come here and not fear disappointment. Here there is much revealed that is most valuable; and two things, above all others in importance, may be learned by studying the history and
prophecies of this wonderful nation; these are, the knowledge of God, and of ourselves. Yes, the Divine character and the human heart may be both traced in the past, the present, and the future of the Jew.

To know God is the great pinnacle of theology, for “it is life eternal to know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3). The person and character of Christ makes the grandest discovery of God. Next to Him who is “the brightness of God’s glory, and the express image of his person” [Heb. 1:3], the salvation and history of the Church, or of sinners saved by the wondrous grace of a Triune God, affords the noblest subject for study, and the best facilities for acquaintance with God. If called upon to mention the next field for studying God, we should name the Jewish nation. Here God has written out his glorious name. In this people we see every divine perfection in act and operation. Omnipotence raised them up at first. Then countless multitudes sprang from a dead stock. Wisdom watched over, led, and guided them unerringly. Faithfulness fulfilled every promise uttered by the lip of Truth. Goodness established them in a noble land, gave them holy laws, divine and instructive institutions, sent among them prophets to teach and priests to minister. Holiness warned, cautioned, and exhorted them, and when they rebelliously spurned the gentle tones of love, how long did Patience bear with them; how often did God return and have mercy on them! When they had sinned “till there was no more remedy” [II Chron. 36:16], when they had consummated the rebellions of fifteen hundred years by that unparalleled deed of blood, the murder of the Son of God, then, after some yet further lingerings and invitations of insulted Mercy, did awful Justice arise, bare his arm for the battle, and strike down the terrible and crushing blows. Now, in what state do we behold them? Even as they have been for the last eighteen hundred years, like a burnt mountain on the plains of Time, scorched and splintered by the lightnings of divine wrath. As one tremlingly sings:—

Salted with fire, they seem to show
How spirits lost in endless woe
May undecaying live.

Yes! still preserved in all their woe, still unconsumed by all these penal fires! Preserved! And for what? Let a thousand glorious prophecies answer! That burnt mountain shall yet be clothed with lovely foliage; down its sides shall streams of living water gush; and the nation that now witnesses to the truth, justice, and power of God, shall sing till the ends of the earth shall hear and echo back the song, “Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity, and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love” (Mic. 7:18). Then shall the Lord be glorified in Israel, and all his attributes displayed in full-orbed glory, when he shall “call her Hephzibah, and her land Beulah” [Isa. 62:4]. What a glorious Jehovah is
the LORD God of Israel! With what awe, what love, what fear, what hope, should this character, as exhibited towards Israel, inspire us!

And the poet sang truly, who, looking at Israel and their history said—

Here in a glass our hearts may see
How fickle and how false they be!

The reader need not be reminded of the use which the apostle makes of their history in I Corinthians 10:1-13, and Hebrew 3 and 4, and Romans 11. We can only quote some of his solemn applications. “Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come” [I Cor. 10:11]. “Take care, brethren, that there not be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God” [Heb. 3:12]. “[T]hey were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear” [Rom. 11:20].

How great, then, are our obligations to a nation, from whose history we learn so much of God, and so much of ourselves! They encourage us to hope in God, they warn us against tempting him. Their very failure is for our profit; “through their fall, salvation has come to us” [Rom. 11:11]. We have been “made partakers of their spiritual things” [Rom. 11:17] and have been “grafted into the good olive tree” [Rom. 11:17], from which, for a time, they are broken off. Surely we are responsible, as regards the Jew, to a very large amount. Have we felt this? Have we so acted as to show that, like the apostle, we feel that “we are debtors?” [Rom. 15:27]. Do our prayers on their behalf prove this? Are they not too much forgotten, both in public and private, by many of God’s people? Although something has been done, yet, if we consider the present sad and oppressed condition of Israel, especially in Russia, if we think anything of their anguish of soul, and cruel bondage, we must feel that we are “verily guilty concerning our brethren.” Israel’s past we cannot remedy; their future, as a nation, is with God, and is safe in his omnipotent and faithful hands; but let men say or think as they will, their present is with us; God in a measure casts it upon us, and calls upon us to care for their souls. He will not interfere during this dispensation in any miraculous way, but he will work by the means which he has put in our hands, and will be pleased if these means are used diligently in faith, and with prayer.

Israel has been a long time neglected, persecuted, and grievously wronged. Let us go, like Jeremiah, and sit down with them amidst their ruins, and in a sympathetic spirit tell them of the Restorer of Israel—the Almighty Repairer of the great breach—the true Antitype of their own Zerubbabel, who can yet build them up “an holy temple, an habitation of God through the Spirit” [Eph. 2:21-22]. While we mourn over their great griefs, their mighty wrongs, and their yet mightier sins, let us gently tell them of “the Man of sorrows,” who is the all-sufficient “consolation of Israel” [Luke
2:25]. We carry God’s own message, prepared by the hand of mercy for the heart of the miserable, and which can, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, win its way through a mountain of stone and a heart of stubbornly resolute hardness. Go, Christian, to thy wandering and fugitive brother, tell him of Blood “which speaks better than the blood of Abel” [Heb. 12:24]—Blood which can cleanse even those who have “gone in the way of Cain” [Jude 11]. Go, in the spirit of Paul, “with our hearts desire and prayer to God, that Israel may be saved” [Rom. 10:1]. Go, “praying in the Holy Spirit” [Jude 20]; and you will give no heed to those who say that “it is of no use preaching the gospel to the Jew.” *It is of use*; facts abundantly prove it; God has owned his own word, and is still blessing his servants. “Many of the sons of Israel have been turned to the Lord their God” [Luke 1:16]; several of them are now the ministers of Christ to the Gentiles or to their own countrymen; and “how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!” But “how will they preach unless they are sent?” [Rom. 10:15]; and to send them, means are required; and surely all pardoned Gentile sinners should aid according to their ability in furnishing these means. Who, then, is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord? To liberality, prayer must be added. When messengers are sent, fervent supplications must be offered continually for them, that God would give his word free course, and greatly glorify it. Surely we should stir up ourselves to take hold of God’s name, and cry out for the “arm of the Lord to awake, as in the days of old, the generations of long ago” [Isa. 51:9]. We should pray earnestly for Israel’s final restoration, even for her national glory and spiritual salvation. In so doing we pray for the blessedness of the earth, and the life of the world, which God is pleased to conjointly establish. But believing that God has at the present time “a remnant according to God’s gracious choice” [Rom. 11:5], we should give, pray, and labor, “if by any means we may save some” [Rom. 11:14]. Nor should we forget to lay the letter of their complaint before the Lord, as regards the oppression of man. Who can think of 2,300,000 Jews under the iron despotism of Russia, without feeling their hearts moved to cry for God to come to their help against the mighty, and to work deliverance for the oppressed? Their “future!” Ah! There is a dark cloud resting over the years that are fast hastening on; but beyond, what brightness! what glory! and both prompt us to prayer. Prophecy tells us of a faithful praying remnant during the coming troubles, and reveals, beyond the fiery trials, “a nation born in one day” [Isa. 66:8], and that nation “the perfection of beauty” [Ps. 50:2], “the praise of the earth” [Jer. 33:9], “dew from the Lord” [Mic. 5:7], “life from the dead” [Rom. 11:15]; and all their faithfulness in trial, and their national glory, may be God’s answer to the prayers of those who “find pleasure in the stones of Zion, and feel pity for her dust” [Ps. 102:14].

Compassion for Israel must be of great pleasure to God. To feel and to manifest this, is to be like Him whose first words on the cross of agony were a prayer for the Jews, and whose final words on earth, just before he
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went to glory, were a command respecting them. With “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing” [Luke 23:34], and “Beginning at Jerusalem” [Acts 1:8], ever resounding in our ears, we surely cannot be indifferent to the spiritual welfare of a people so useful to ourselves, so dear to God, and with whose future blessedness the full salvation of a ruined world is connected. “Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion!” [Ps. 14:7]. Soon may the day dawn when Israel, brought through her great tribulation, shall as the priestly nation breathe forth the acceptable prayer, “God be gracious to us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; that Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations. God bless us, that all the ends of the earth may fear him” (Ps. 67:1-2, 7).9

From whence comes this compassionate concern that Bonar so earnestly and yet so warmly commends? Surely it is inevitably born of a distinct eschatological perspective. Missionary interest in the Jew has never blossomed forth from the roots of theological disparagement, cool, token confession of interest notwithstanding. Love for the heritage of the Jew, past, present and future cannot erupt from a well that is declared to be dry and sealed with the notice of a divine, irreversible embargo. Rather this indomitable regard for the people of Israel, so Pauline, while all too well aware of the present parched status of the Jew, is yet convinced of the gospel principle, on a broader scale, “that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:6). So God, having begun a good work with the promised seed of Abraham, will certainly complete what He has covenanted. He may have changed “a fruitful land into a salt waste, because of the wickedness of those who dwell in it;” nevertheless, “He [the LORD] changes a wilderness into a pool of water and a dry land into springs of water; and there He makes the hungry to dwell” (Ps. 107:33-36). So God has promised Israel concerning “the faint-hearted: ‘Be strong; do not fear! Here is your God; vengeance is coming. God’s retribution is coming; He will save you.’ Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute will sing for joy, for water will gush in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; . . . and the ransomed of the LORD will return and come to Zion with singing, crowned with unending joy. Joy and gladness will overtake [them], and sorrow and sighing will flee” (Is. 35:4-6, 10).

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APPENDICES
Appendix A

The Future of Israel and
Jonathan Edwards

Jonathan Edwards (1703-58), is arguably the most significant and influential evangelical Christian in the history of the United States. He is frequently identified with a sober Puritan image that characterized Massachusetts during the eighteenth century. Although a leading figure throughout the Great Awakening of that period, his most notable writings have tended to identify him as a Calvinist theologian/philosopher, though certainly not in any mere academic or detached sense. On the one hand his *Freedom of the Will* is a most profound study of a much debated vital point of doctrine; on the other hand his *Religious Affections* penetrates to the very heart of experiential Christianity.

However, the more recent and comprehensive publication of Edwards’ writings by *Yale University Press* has provided an expanded vision of what this man of God regarded to be of some importance. Notably, among many other matters, Edward’s was a decided millennialis, somewhat following a revival of interest in this aspect of biblical eschatology that erupted in England during the middle of the seventeenth century. Stephen J. Stein, as the editor of the Yale Edition, Volume 5, *Apocalyptic Writings*, explains:

> [T]he millennium remained a matter of consuming private interest for him. . . . During the millennium kings will be like the judges who ruled ancient Israel before the monarchy was established—a form of government that pleased God greatly. . . . In that glorious day, Edwards conjectured, a variety of forms of government may prevail, but none shall be contrary to “true liberty.” . . . The geography of the millennium, another issue that divided commentators, attracted his exegetical attention. Edwards found scriptural warrant for placing the land of Canaan at the center of the coming kingdom of Christ. . . . In like manner, he speculated that the return of the Jews to their homeland is inevitable because of the promises of land made to them have been only partially fulfilled. God intends the Jews to be “a visible monument” of his grace and power. The return to their traditional home-land, how-ever, was premised by Edwards upon a con-version of the
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Jews to Christianity. . . . [Then] Canaan will be the spiritual center of the coming kingdom, and Israel will again be a truly distinct nation.¹

To be more specific, Edwards was a post-millennialist, and although this perspective differs somewhat from the premillennialism that this volume upholds, nevertheless with regard to the issue of Israel and the millennium, we find ourselves largely in happy agreement with his attitude and expectations concerning the Jews and the land of Israel.²

And of course it ought to go without saying that Edwards was not remotely a dispensationalist! More specifically he believed that authentic Christian expansion through evangelism would effectively sweep the world to such an extent that a largely Christianized, millennial world would result. Only then, at such a triumphant world climax, would Jesus Christ return in universally acknowledged glory. Stein further explains the historic setting of Edwards’ prophetic optimism as follows:

Since the Reformation, God has reversed the fortunes of the church by pouring out the vials of wrath upon his enemies. The memory of persecution and martyrdom will fade in the future as the knowledge of divinity spreads, injustices are rectified, the saints and martyrs vindicated, and men stimulated to greater holiness during the millennium. The promised triumph of the saints is the hope and encouragement of the church on earth.³

And who among us, if living in America during the eighteenth century, could avoid the encouraging force of circumstances in the world at that time, especially with regard to the stimulus of revival and the effective expansion of evangelical missionary endeavors. On the other hand, if

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² It is interesting to note that at the urging of many for a Second American Bible and Prophetic Conference (premillennial) in Chicago, 1886, following the immensely successful First Conference (premillennial) in New York, 1878, the organizing secretary, Rev. George C. Needham commented that: “Many of postmillennial faith ratified the call, and were present at every session as interested listeners. Prophetic Studies of the International Prophetic Conference, p. 1. Specifically, classic postmillennialism is in mind here, and not the more recent revisionist, reconstructionist variety. Of course nonmillennialists would sense relatively little affinity in such a setting.
³ Stein, Edwards, Works, Apocalyptic Writings, V. 8, p. 11.
Edwards were alive today, most likely he would write with a more disturbing perspective in mind. However, our focus being chiefly on his regard for the Jews and Israel, now let us consider several significant excerpts from Edwards’ writings. The first is taken from his, *A History of the Work of Redemption*, posthumously published in 1773. Edwards concludes that as the millennium is inaugurated, following the overthrow of the Mohammedan kingdom,

Jewish infidelity shall then be overthrown. However obstinate they have now been for above seventeen hundred years in their rejecting Christ, and instances of conversion of any of that nation have been so very rare ever since the destruction of Jerusalem, but they have against the plain teachings of their own prophets continued to approve of the cruelty of their forefathers in crucifying [Christ]; yet when this day comes the thick veil that blinds their eyes shall be removed (II Cor. 3:16), and divine grace shall melt and renew their hard hearts, “And they shall look on him whom they [have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn]” (Zech. 12:10, etc.). And then shall all Israel be saved [Rom. 11:26]. The Jews in all their dispersions shall cast away their old infidelity, and shall wonderfully have their hearts changed, and abhor themselves for their past unbelief and obstinacy; and shall flow together to the blessed Jesus, penitently, humbly, and joyfully owning him as their glorious king and only savior, and shall with all their hearts as with one heart and voice declare his praises unto other nations [Isa. 66:20; Jer. 50:4].

Nothing is more certainly foretold than this national conversion of the Jews is in the eleventh chapter of Romans. And there are also many passages of the Old Testament that cannot be interpreted in any other sense, that I cannot now stand to mention. Besides the prophecies of the calling of the Jews, we have a remarkable seal of the fulfillment of this great event in providence by a thing that is a kind of continual miracle, viz. the preserving them a distinct [nation] when in such a dispersed condition for above sixteen hundred years. The world affords nothing else like it—a remarkable hand of providence. When they shall be called, then shall that ancient people that were alone God’s people for so long a time be God’s people again, never to be rejected more, one fold with the Gentiles; and then also shall the remains of the ten tribes wherever they are, and though they have been rejected much longer than [the Jews], be brought in with their brethren, the Jews. The prophecies of Hosea especially seem to hold this forth, and that in the future glorious times of the church both Judah and Ephraim, or Judah and the ten tribes, shall be brought in together, and shall be united as one people as they formerly were under David and Solomon (Hos. 1:11), and so in the last chapter of Hosea, and other parts of his prophecy.
Though we don’t know the time in which this conversion of the nation of Israel will come to pass, yet this much we may determine by Scripture, that it will [be] before [the] glory of the Gentile part of the church shall be fully accomplished, because it is said that their coming in shall be life from the dead to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:12, 15) [Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world . . . how much more their fullness? . . . For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?"].

It is already obvious that for Edwards, the conversion of ethnic Israel is related to the nation’s promised return to the land of Israel. This man of acknowledged, profound spirituality, is wholly at rest with such a substantial triumph; to charge him with carnality would be absurd. Further, while Israel and the church comprise the people of God, yet there is national distinction within this unity, as Galatians 3:28 well illustrates. Hence, let us now consider Edwards’ more detailed description of the millennial economy, both with regard to geography and the diversity within unity that will incorporate Jews and Gentiles.

That the land of Israel has distinct eschatological importance is indicated by Edwards consideration of its strategic location.

The land of Canaan is the most advantageously posited of any spot of ground on the face [of the earth], to be the place from whence the truth should shine forth, and true religion spread around into all parts of the world. There are three continents of the earth: the old continent, America and Terra Australis. This land is right in the center of the old and principle continent, between Europe, Asia and Africa, but most in Asia, because it is abundantly the largest. And [it is] lying at the end of the Mediterranean Sea, which opens the way from Canaan directly to America, and having the Red Sea and Persian Gulf touching its borders as much as the Mediterranean, according to Exodus 23:31 and other places, opening the way straight to Terra Australis, the third continent.

That God did take care of the situation of his people Israel, upon their account, for the advantage of spreading the truth and diffusing the influences of religion, I think is evident from Deuteronomy 32:8-9, and from Acts 17:26-27 and from Habakkuk 3:6 . . .

And it is the more evident, that the Jews will return to their own land again, because they never have yet possessed one quarter of that land, which was so often promised them, from the Red Sea to the river Euphrates (Exod. 23:31; Gen. 15:18; Deut. 11:24; Josh. 1:4). Indeed, it was partly fulfilled in

Solomon’s time, when he governed all within those bounds for a short time; but so short, that it is not to be thought that this is all the fulfillment of the promise that is to be. And besides, that was not a fulfillment of the promise, because they did not possess it, though they made the nations of it tributary.5

Hence both the Jew in the land of Israel and the Gentile in surrounding regions shall enjoy distinct yet harmonious relations.

We are not to suppose but that when the nation of the Jews are converted, other Christians will be as much God’s Israel as they, and will have in every respect the same privileges. Neither can we suppose, that their church will have any manner of superiority over other parts of Christ’s church, any otherwise than as that part of the church will be more glorious. Religion and learning will be there at the highest; more excellent books will be there written, etc. Without doubt, they will return to their own land; because when their unbelief ceases, their dispersion, the dreadful and signal punishment of their unbelief, will cease too. As they have continued hitherto, with one consent, to dishonor Christ by rejecting the gospel, so shall they meet together to honor him, by openly professing of it with one mouth, and practice it with one heart and one soul, together lamenting their obstinacy, as it is said they shall (Zech. 12:11-12), and together praising God for his grace in enlightening them. And as they have hitherto continued a distinct nation, that they might continue a visible monument of his displeasure, for their rejecting and crucifying their Messiah, so after their conversion will they still be a distinct nation, that they may be a visible monument of God’s wonderful grace and power in their calling and conversion. But we cannot suppose they will remain a distinct nation, any more than the primitive Jewish Christians, if they continue dispersed among other nations.

But yet, we are not to imagine that the old walls of separation will be set up again. But all nations will be as free to come to Judea, or to dwell in Jerusalem, as into any other city or country, and may have the same privilege there as they themselves. For they shall look upon all the world to be their brethren, as much as the Christians in Boston and the Christians in other parts of New England look on each other as brethren.6

However, according to Edwards’ postmillennial expectations, the definitive biblical account of this future state in Revelation 20 will be accomplished gradually, and not in an apocalyptic fashion.

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5 Edwards, Works, Apocalyptic Writings, V. 8, pp. 133-34.
6 Ibid., pp. 135.
The ruin of the popish interest is but a small part of what is requisite, in order to introduce and settle such a state of things, as the world is represented as being in, in that millennium that is described in Revelation 20, wherein Satan’s visible kingdom is everywhere totally extirpated, and a perfect end put to all heresies, delusions and false religions whatsoever, through the whole earth, and Satan thence-forward “deceives the nations no more” [v. 3], and has no place anywhere but in hell. This is the sabbatism of the world; when all shall be in a holy rest, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and there shall be nothing to hurt or offend, and there shall be abundance of peace, and “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters covers the seas” [Isa. 11:9], and God’s people shall dwell in quiet resting places. There is not the least reason to think, that all this will be brought to pass as it were in one stroke, or that from the present lamentable state of things, there should be brought about and completed the destruction of the Church of Rome, the entire extirpation of all infidelity, heresies, superstitions and schisms, through all Christendom, and the conversion of all the Jews, and the full enlightening and con-version of all Mahometan and heathen nations, through the whole earth, on every side of the globe, and from the north to the south pole, and the full settlement of all in the pure Christian faith and order, all as it were in the issue of one great battle, and by means of the victory of the church in one great conflict with her enemies . . . If the Spirit of God should be immediately poured out, and that great work of God’s power and grace should now begin, which in its progress and issue should complete this glorious effect; there must be an amazing and unparalleled progress of the work and manifestation of divine power to bring so much to pass, by the year 2000.7

As earlier indicated, surely if it was possible now for Edwards to survey this present turbulent, unspeakably wicked world in the year 2006, how likely it is that, while his basic expectations concerning the Jews and the land of Israel would indicate little fundamental change, yet his optimistic gradualism would be discarded. In its place there would be optimistic hope in God’s apocalyptic intervention, that is “the great day of their wrath,” the wrath of God the Father and His Son, “the Lamb” (Rev. 6:12-17), and the subsequent establishment of “new heavens and a new earth, in which dwells righteousness” (II Pet. 3:12).

7 Ibid., pp. 410-11.
Appendix B

The Future of Israel and J. C. Ryle

JOHN CHARLES RYLE (1816-1900), the first Bishop of Liverpool, was, according to C. H. Spurgeon’s consideration of that period, “the best man in the Church of England.” Born near Macclesfield, Cheshire County, there remains today, at the church of St. Michael and All Angels, a memorial plaque rightly describing him as, “A Man of Granite, with the Heart of a Little Child.” Anticipating a wealthy inheritance, the bankruptcy of his father was a crushing blow for this young man. Having been well educated at Eton and completing studies at Oxford, thoughts of entering Parliament were abandoned upon Ryle’s conversion in 1837. As a result he was ordained as a minister of the Church of England in 1841, becoming a bishop in 1880. His whole ministry was marked by a singular devotion to the evangelical reformed faith, especially as confessed in the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Anglican Church. His vigorous, uncompromising, and yet kindly manner lives on in the books and tracts he authored that, to this day, have gone through numerous reprints.

In 1867 a collection of sermons by Ryle was published under the title, Coming Events and Present Duties, in which his clear yet carefully stated premillennial convictions were expressed. As with Horatius Bonar in his volume Prophetical Landmarks, which work Ryle highly recommends, here the dominant subject similarly concerns Israel. With regard to his understanding of the future of the Hebrew people, as well as the regathering of the Jews to the promised land, the following excerpts plainly express Ryle’s firm convictions in this regard.

By way of introduction, Ryle sets forth his prophetic creed in eleven sections, several of which follow.

6. I believe that after our Lord Jesus Christ comes again, the earth shall be renewed, and the curse removed; the devil shall be bound, the godly shall be rewarded, the wicked shall be punished; and that before He comes there shall be neither resurrection, judgment, not millennium, and that not till after He comes shall the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord (Acts 3:21; Isa. 25:6-9; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; Rev. 20:1; etc.).

7. I believe that the Jews shall ultimately be gathered again as a separate nation, restored to their own land, and converted to the faith of Christ,
after going through great tribulation (Jer. 30:10-11; 31:10; Rom. 11:25-26; Dan. 12:1; Zech. 13:8-9).

8. I believe that the literal sense of the Old Testament prophecies has been far too much neglected by the Churches, and is far too much neglected at the present day, and that under the mistaken system of spiritualizing and accommodating Bible language, Christians have too often completely missed its meaning (Luke 24:25-26).¹

WATCH!

In the first chapter titled “Watch,” Ryle expounds upon Matthew 25:1-13, but especially the example of the five wise virgins who were awake in eager expectation of the coming of the Bridegroom. Here is what is to be anticipated:

The plain truth of Scripture I believe to be as follows. When the number of the elect is accomplished, Christ will come again to this world with power and great glory. He will raise His saints, and gather them to himself. He will punish with fearful judgments all who are found His enemies, and reward with glorious rewards all His believing people. He will take to Himself His great power and reign, and establish an universal kingdom. He will gather the scattered tribes of Israel, and place them once more in their own land. As He came the first time in person, so He will come the second time in person. As He went away from earth visibly, so He will return visibly. As He literally rode upon an ass, was literally sold for thirty pieces of silver, had His hands and feet literally pierced, was numbered literally with the transgressors and had lots literally cast upon His raiment, and all that Scripture might be fulfilled so also will He come, literally set up a kingdom and literally reign over the earth, because the very same Scripture has said it shall be so (Acts 1:11; 3:19-21; Ps. 102:16; Zech. 14:5; Isa. 24:23; Jer. 30:3, 18; Dan. 7:13-14).²

OCCUPY TILL I COME

The next chapter, “Occupy Till I Come” deals with a most vital matter. There continue to be those who speak out of one side of their mouth in declaring that God has finished with any national identity regarding Israel, especially concerning the promised land, while from the other side of their mouth they express some necessity for the “Jews,” being

¹ J. C. Ryle, *Are You Ready For The End Of Time?* pp. 8-9. This is simply a retitled reprint of *Coming Events and Present Duties*.

² Ibid., pp. 22-24.
vaguely defined, to hear the gospel. Some believe a remnant of the Jews will be saved through the centuries, while others expect the conversion of a large number of them toward the end of this age; though in either case, Jewish identity will be lost since this will be an engrafting within Christendom that completes the people of the God, the church, also known as the new supplanting Israel. To this Ryle responds, concerning Luke 19:11-13, where the twelve disciples erroneously “thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.”

I believe we have fallen into an error parallel with that of our Jewish brethren, an error less fatal in its consequences than theirs, but an error far more inexcusable, because we have had more light. If the Jew thought too exclusively of Christ reigning, has not the Gentile thought to exclusively of Christ suffering? If the Jew could see nothing in Old Testament prophecy but Christ’s exaltation and final power, has not the Gentile often seen nothing but Christ’s humiliation and the preaching of the gospel? If the Jew dwelt too much on Christ’s second advent, has not the Gentile dwelt too exclusively on the first? If the Jew ignored the cross, has not the Gentile ignored the crown? I believe there can be but one answer to these questions. I believe that we Gentiles till lately have been very guilty concerning a large portion of God’s truth. I believe that we have cherished an arbitrary, reckless habit of interpreting first advent texts literally, and second advent texts spiritually. I believe we have not rightly understood “all that the prophets have spoken” about the second personal advent of Christ, any more than the Jews did about the first. And because we have done this, I say that we should speak of such mistakes as that referred to in our text with much tenderness and compassion.

Reader, I earnestly invite your special attention to the point on which I am now dwelling. I know not what your opinions may be about the fulfillment of the prophetical parts of Scripture. I approach the subject with fear and trembling, lest I should hurt the feelings of any dear brother in the Lord. But I ask you in all affection to examine your own views about prophecy. I entreat you to consider calmly whether your opinions about Christ’s second advent and kingdom are as sound and scriptural as those of His first disciples. I entreat you to take heed, lest insensibly you commit as great an error about Christ’s second coming and glory as they did about Christ’s first coming and cross.

I beseech you not to dismiss the subject which I now press upon your attention, as a matter of curious speculation, and one of no practical importance. Believe me, it effects the whole question between yourself and the unconverted Jew. I warn you that, unless you interpret the prophetical portion of the Old Testament in the simple literal meaning of its words, you will find it no easy matter to carry on an argument with an unconverted Jew.
You would probably tell the Jew that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah promised in the Old Testament Scriptures. To those Scriptures you would refer him to for proof. You would show him Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, Daniel 9:26, Micah 5:2, Zechariah 9:9 and 11:13. You would tell him that in Jesus of Nazareth those Scriptures were literally fulfilled. You would urge upon him that he ought to believe these Scriptures, and receive Christ as the Messiah. All this is very good. So far you would do well.

But suppose the Jew asks you if you take all the prophecies of the Old Testament in their simple literal meaning. Suppose he asks you if you believe in a literal personal advent of Messiah to reign over the earth in glory, a literal restoration of Judah and Israel to Palestine, a literal rebuilding and restoration of Zion and Jerusalem. Suppose the unconverted Jew puts these questions to you, what answer are you prepared to make?

Will you dare to tell him that Old Testament prophecies of this kind are not to be taken in their plain literal sense? Will you dare to tell him that the words Zion, Jerusalem, Jacob, Judah, Ephraim, Israel, do not mean what they seem to mean, but mean the Church of Christ? Will you dare to tell him that the glorious kingdom and future blessedness of Zion, so often dwelt upon in prophecy, mean nothing more than the gradual Christianizing of the world by missionaries and gospel preaching? Will you dare to tell him that you think it “carnal” to expect a literal rebuilding of Jerusalem, “carnal” to expect a literal coming of Messiah to reign? Oh, reader, if you are a man of this mind, take care what you are doing! I say again, take care.

Do you not see that you are putting a weapon in the hand of the unconverted Jew, which he will probably use with irresistible power? Do you not see that you are cutting the ground from under your own feet, and supplying the Jew with a strong argument for not believing your own interpretation of Scripture? Do you not see that the Jew will reply, that it is “carnal” to tell him that the Messiah has come literally to suffer, if you tell him that it is “carnal” to expect Messiah will come literally to reign? Do you not see that the Jew will tell you, that it is far more “carnal” in you to believe that Messiah could come into a world as a despised, crucified Man of sorrows, than it is in him to believe that He will come into the world as a glorious King? Beyond doubt he will do so, and you will find no answer to give.

Reader, I commend these things to your serious attention. I entreat you to throw aside all prejudice, and to view the subject I am dwelling upon with calm and dispassionate thought. I beseech you to take up anew the prophetical Scriptures, and to pray that you may not err in interpreting their meaning. Read them in the light of those two great polestars, the first and second advents of Jesus Christ. Bind up with the first advent the rejection of the Jews, the calling of the Gentiles, the preaching of the gospel as a witness to the world and gathering out of the election of grace.
Bind up with the second advent the restoration of the Jews, the pouring out of judgments on unbelieving Christians, the conversion of the world and the establishment of Christ’s kingdom upon earth. Do this and you will see a meaning and fulness in prophecy which perhaps you have never yet discovered.

I am quite aware that many good men do not see the subject of unfulfilled prophecy as I do. I am painfully sensible that I seem presumptuous in differing from them. But I dare not refuse anything which appears to me plainly written in Scripture. I consider the best of men are not infallible. I think we should remember that we must reject Protestant traditions which are not according to the Bible, as much as the traditions of the Church of Rome.

I believe it is high time for the Church of Christ to awake out of its sleep about Old Testament prophecy. From the time of the old fathers, Jerome and Origen, down to the present day, men have gone on in a pernicious habit of “spiritualizing” the words of the Prophets, until their true meaning has been well nigh buried. It is high time to lay aside traditional methods of interpretation, and to give up our blind obedience to the opinions of such writers as Poole, Henry, Scott and Clarke, upon unfulfilled prophecy. It is high time to fall back on the good old principle that Scripture generally means what it seems to mean, and to beware of that semi-skeptical argument, “Such and such an interpretation cannot be correct, because it seems to us ‘carnal’!”

It is high time for Christians to interpret unfulfilled prophecy by the light of prophecies already fulfilled. The curses of the Jews were brought to pass literally: so also will be the blessings. The scattering was literal: so also will be the gathering. The pulling down of Zion was literal: so also will be the building up. The rejection of Israel was literal: so also will be the restoration.3

SCATTERED ISRAEL TO BE GATHERED

The chapter titled “Scattered Israel to be Gathered,” is based upon Jeremiah 31:10, “Here 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.” Ryle maintains that the Gentiles are addressed here concerning their duty to makes known God’s will with regard to the nation of Israel. In particular this means the inevitable future restoration of the Jews to the land, following a prolonged scattering, that far exceeds in wonder the return that immediately followed the Babylonian captivity. To this end,

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3 Ibid., pp. 46-49.
Ryle vigorously upholds a consistent meaning with regard to the term “Israel” being a reference to the nation.

For many centuries there has prevailed in the Churches of Christ a strange, and to my mind, an unwarrantable mode of dealing with this word “Israel”. It has been interpreted in many passages of the Psalms and Prophets, as if it meant nothing more than Christian believers. Have promises been held out to Israel? Men have been told continually that they are addressed to Gentile saints. Have glorious things been described as laid up in store for Israel? Men have been incessantly told that they describe the victories and triumphs of the gospel in Christian churches. The proofs of these things are too many to require quotation. No man can read the immense majority of commentaries and popular hymns without seeing this system of interpretation to which I now refer. Against that system I have long protested, and I hope I shall always protest as long as I live.

I do not deny that Israel was a peculiar typical people, and that God’s relations to Israel were meant to be a type of His relations to His believing people all over the world.

I would have it most distinctly understood that God’s dealings with individual Jews and Gentiles are precisely one and the same. Without repentance, faith in Christ and holiness of heart, no individual Jew or Gentile shall ever be saved.

What I protest against is, the habit of allegorizing plain sayings of the Word of God concerning the future history of the nation of Israel, and explaining away the fullness of their contents in order to accommodate them to the Gentile Church. I believe the habit to be unwarranted by anything in Scripture, and to draw after it a long train of evil consequences.

Where, I would venture to ask, in the whole New Testament, shall we find any plain authority for applying the word “Israel” to anyone but the nation of Israel? On the contrary, I observe that when the Apostle Paul quotes Old Testament prophecies about the privileges of the Gentiles in gospel times, he is careful to quote texts which specifically mention the “Gentiles” by name. The fifteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans is a striking illustration of what I mean. We are often told in the New Testament that, under the gospel, believing Gentiles are “fellow heirs and partakers of the same hope” with believing Jews (Eph. 3:6). But that believing Gentiles may be called “Israelites”, I cannot see anywhere at all.

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4 It hardly needs mentioning that these volumes are almost exclusively Gentile in authorship. B.E.H.

Concerning the future of national Israel, Ryle is quite emphatic about the eventual return of the Hebrew people to the promised land. He provides supportive quotes from ten of the prophets (Isa. 11:11-12; Jer. 30:3, 11; Ezek. 37:21; Hos. 1:11; 3:4-5; Joel 3:20; Amos 9:14-15; Obad. 1:17; Mic. 4:6-7; Zeph. 3:14-20; Zech. 10:6-10), and explains:

Reader, however great the difficulties surrounding many parts of unfilled prophecy, two points appear to my own mind to stand out as plainly as if written by a sunbeam. One of these points is the second personal advent of our Lord Jesus Christ before the Millennium. The other of these events is the future literal gathering of the Jewish nation, and their restoration to their own land. I tell no man that these two truths are essential to salvation, and that he cannot be saved except he sees them with my eyes. But I tell any man that these truths appear to me distinctly set down in holy Scripture and that the denial of them is as astonishing and incomprehensible to my own mind as the denial of the divinity of Christ.6

In relation to this matter of Israel’s return to the land, a further qualification is made.

I might show you by scriptural evidence that the Jews will probably first be gathered in an unconverted state, though humbled, and will afterwards be taught to look to Him whom they have pierced [Zech. 12:10-14], through much tribulation.7

AND SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED

The crucial text of Romans 11:26 is understood in a manner consistent with the explanation of the meaning of “Israel,” as earlier defined, being plainly a reference to the nation identified with Judaism.

To a plain man, untrammeled by traditional interpretation, the words of this prophecy appear very simple.

Israel shall be saved: that means the Jewish nation and people. It cannot possibly mean the Gentiles, because they are mentioned in the verse which directly precedes our text, in direct contrast to the Jews. “Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until; the fullness of the Gentiles be come in” (Rom. 11:25).

All Israel: that means the whole people or nation of the Jews. It cannot possibly mean a small elect remnant. In this very chapter the Israelitish nation and the election out of Israel are mentioned in contradistinction to

6 Ibid., pp. 112-115.
7 Ibid., p. 115.
one another. “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it; and rest were blinded” (Rom. 11:7).8

Hence, notwithstanding centuries of oppression under “the just displeasure of God,” and at the same time unparalleled preservation unlike any other racial group, yet,

the history of Israel then has not yet come to an end. There is another wonderful chapter yet to be unfolded to mankind. The Scripture tells us expressly that a time is coming when the position of Israel may be entirely changed, and they shall be once more restored to the favor of God.9

Then follows reference to several supporting passages of Scripture (Zech. 12:10; 13:1; II Cor. 3:16). However special mention is made concerning Ezekiel 36:24-38. In this regard Ryle comments:

Once more I remind you that this wonderful passage primarily belongs to the JEWS. No doubt the Church of Christ may secondarily make spiritual use of it. But let us never forget that the Holy Ghost first caused it to be written concerning Israel.

But time would fail me, if I attempted to quote all the passages of Scripture in which the future history of Israel is revealed. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Zechariah all declare the same thing. All predict, with more or less particularity, that in the end of this dispensation the Jews are to be restored to their own land and to the favor of God. I lay no claim to infallibility in the interpretation of Scripture in this matter. I am well aware that many excellent Christians cannot see the subject as I do. I can only say, that to my eyes, the future salvation of Israel as a people, their return to Palestine and their national conversion to God, appear as clearly and plainly revealed as any prophecy in God’s Word.

But I freely confess that these are deep things. Enough for you and me to know that Israel shall be restored to their own land, and shall be converted and saved, without entering too minutely into particulars. Let me close this branch of my subject with the Apostle’s words: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out” (Rom. 11:33).10

However, for Ryle, such a perspective concerning God’s ongoing regard for national Israel brings with it a responsibility toward this

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8 Ibid., pp. 145-46.
9 Ibid., p. 151.
10 Ibid., p. 152-54.
distinctive people. From Israel came our Bible, the first preaching of
the Bible, the mother of Jesus and her Son. Although the Jews
presently remain in unbelief concerning their messiah, Jesus Christ,
even so it should be incumbent upon Gentiles that they do all they can
to show kindness and thoughtfulness toward their spiritual benefactors.

[W]e may all pay our debts indirectly by striving to remove stumbling-
blocks which now lie between the Jews and Christianity. It is a sorrowful
confession to make, but it must be made, that nothing perhaps so hardens
Israel in unbelief as the sins and inconsistencies of professing Christians.
The name of Christ is too often blasphemed among Jews, by reason of the
conduct of many who call themselves Christians. We repel Israel from the
door of life, and disgust them by our behavior. Idolatry among Roman
Catholics, skepticism among Protestants, neglect of the Old Testament,
contempt for the doctrine of the atonement, shameless Sabbath breaking,
widespread immorality, all these things, we may depend upon it, have a
deep effect on the Jews. They have eyes and they can see. The name of
Christ is discredited and dishonored among them by the practice of those
who have been baptized in Christ’s name. The more boldly and decidedly
all true Christians set their faces against the things I have just named, and
wash their hands of any complicity with them, the more likely are they to
find their efforts to promote Christianity among the Jews prosperous and
successful.11

More directly, Ryle concludes with the following recommendations
concerning this vital subject of the destiny of Israel in Scripture.

1. Take up the subject because of the important position which it occupies
   in Scripture. Cultivate the habit of reading prophecy with a single eye to
   the literal meaning of its proper names. Cast aside the old traditional idea
   that Jacob, and Israel, and Judah, and Jerusalem, and Zion must always
   mean the Gentile Church, and that predictions about the second Advent are
to be taken spiritually, and first Advent predictions literally. Be just, and
honest, and fair. If you expect the Jews to take the 53rd of Isaiah literally,
be sure you take the 54th and 60th and 62nd literally also. The Protestant
Reformers were not perfect. On no point, I venture to say, were they so
much in the wrong as in the interpretation of Old Testament prophecy.
Even our venerable Authorized Version of the Bible has many “tables of
contents” which are sadly calculated to mislead, in the prophetic books.
When the Revised Version comes out, I trust we shall see a great
improvement in this respect.

2. In the next place, take up the Jewish subject because of the times in
   which we live. That man must be blind indeed who does not observe how

11 Ibid., p. 157.
much the attention of politicians and statesmen in these days is concentrating on the countries around Palestine. The strange position of things in Egypt, the formation of the Suez Canal, the occupation of Cyprus, the project of the Euphrates railway, the drying up of the Turkish empire, the trigonometrical survey of Palestine, what curious phenomena these are! What do they mean? What is going to happen next? He that believeth will not make haste. I will not pretend to decide. But I think I hear the voice of God saying, “Remember the Jews, look to Jerusalem.”

3. In the next place, take up the Jewish subject because of the special blessing which seems to be given to those who care for Israel. I challenge anyone to deny that few ministers of Christ have been so useful of late years and made a greater mark on the world than the following well-known men, Charles Simeon, Edward Bickersteth, Haldane Stewart, Dr. Marsh, Robert M’Cheyne and, though last not least, Hugh McNeile. They were men of very different gifts and minds; but they had one common feature in their religion. They loved the cause of the Jews. In them was the promise fulfilled. “They shall prosper that love thee” (Ps. 122:6).

4. In the next place, take up the Jewish subject because of its close connection with the second Advent of Christ and the close of this dispensation. Is it not written, “When the LORD shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory”? (Ps. 102:16). “If the casting away of Israel be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” (Rom. 11:15). The words which the angel Gabriel addressed to the Virgin Mary have never yet been fulfilled: “He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:33).

5. Last of all, let us annually support that great and good institution, the Jews’ Society, by our money and our prayers. Our money will be bestowed on an old and faithful servant of Christ, which does Christ’s work in Christ’s own way. Our prayers are well bestowed if given for a cause which is so near our Master’s heart. The time is short. The night of the world is drawing near. If ever there is a “nation born in a day”, that nation will be Israel. Let us pray for that blessed consummation, and give habitually as if we really believed the words, “All Israel shall be saved.”

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12 Granted that the Turkish empire has not “dried up,” yet Ryle well anticipates the significant role of Britain that leads to the Jews’ possession of their own land. Refer to, David L. Larsen, Jews, Gentiles and the Church, pp. 135-221. B.E.H.

13 Ibid., pp. 157-159.
Appendix C

God’s Pre-eminent Dealing with Israel
Is it of Grace or Law?

by

Samuel Hinds Wilkinson

It is usual for those writers, who declare that God has irrevocably abandoned national Israel, to propose that the basis of this divine disenfranchisement was the disobedience of the Hebrew people concerning the terms of the Mosaic covenant. One such author is Philip Mauro who, at times derisively, in his *The Hope of Israel*, maintains that, “from this national destruction [of Israel] by the Romans [in 70 A.D.] *there was to be no recovery.*”¹

A published response to this ardent upholder of replacement theology was by Samuel Hinds Wilkinson, late director of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, England, his volume being titled *The Israel Promises and their Fulfilment.*² From this we quote Chapter XV titled “Grace and the Rainbow,” which presents a most moving apologia for the sovereignty of grace toward national Israel, even as the church of Jesus Christ has likewise been the recipient.³

The root of the solemn consideration raised by Mr. Philip Mauro’s book, in and by which he challenges the assurance to God’s chosen people Israel of a national restoration, conversion and beneficent mission, will be exposed if we ask the question: Did Law precede Grace of Grace precede Law?

¹ Philip Mauro, *The Hope of Israel*, p. 57.
³ Ibid., pp. 115-120.
This is indeed a vital question: for indisputably the original promises to Abraham, recorded in Genesis 12, were given unconditionally. No one was bound by those promises but the One Who made them. No terms were imposed. No mediator was present (Gal. 3:20). Whatever those promises were, whatever kind of fulfillment they required, those promises and that Covenant which ratified them, in particular the grant of a specific territory as an everlasting possession, were unconditional and undeserved. We are told that Israel was not thus chosen for Divine love and favor because they were more numerous than other peoples: for they were “the fewest of all peoples” (Deut. 7:7-8); nor was the territory granted to them because of their righteousness, for they were “a stiff-necked people” (Deut. 9:4-6). And this unconditional Covenant and all that it included and involved antedated the Covenant of the law by 430 years. And the legal Covenant “which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul it, that it should make the promise of none effect” (Gal. 3:17).

But Mr. Mauro says:

Deuteronomy 4:1. Here is a summary of the Covenant. They were to hearken always to God’s statutes and judgments: and upon that express condition, they were to go in and possess the land. Every blessing mentioned in this book is made to depend upon that same condition.

Then in that case, Mr. Mauro, the original Covenant of grace could be disannulled by the terms of the legal Covenant, made 430 years after. In that case, temporary deprivation of privilege or delay in its realization connotes absolute and final cancellation of a Divine promise. In that case, the Scriptures you quote (Deut. 4:1, 15-24, 26-30) are of private or individual or isolated (idias) interpretation [cf. II Pet. 1:20], and not to be understood as in harmony with the whole body of prophetic Scripture. In that case, the law was not “added because of transgressions till (archi) the seed should come to whom the promise was made” [Gal. 3:19]; but it was introduced to impose new terms and conditions by means of which promises already freely given and confirmed might be annulled and superceded.

4 This is even more certainly established in Genesis 15:1-21 where the Abrahamic covenant is signified by God’s unilateral “cutting” of animals in half so that He alone might pass between them while Abraham was deep in sleep. For this reason, God declares that Abraham will “know for certain” that the Covenant is sure, vs. 13-16. B.E.H.

5 Mauro, Hope of Israel, p. 42.
Then did Law precede Grace; or Grace precede Law? And another question arises. Does Grace survive Law or Law outlast Grace? Our reading of Scripture in its entirety enables us to reply without hesitation or qualification. Grace was anterior to Law, Grace is superior to Law, Grace will outlast all legal enactments and all covenants based upon them.

Let us ask a few questions. Was not the Church, was not every member of it, whose standing is on the ground of grace alone, chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world? Were not the tables of the law shut within the ark and placed in the Holiest apartment of all in the temple of God and made thus to rest beneath the mercy seat? Is not judgment God’s strange work? Does He not delight in mercy? Where sin abounds, does not grace much more abound? Does He forsake Israel for a small moment, will He not gather Israel with great mercies? If He hides His face in a little wrath for a moment on account of broken law, will He not have mercy with everlasting kindness on the same people who have been the subjects of His wrath? When God saved His people Israel over and over again from oppressive enemies was it not because He “remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob (Exod. 2:24; cf. Ps. 115:8, 42; 116:45; &c.)”? Was He in such cases remembering the broken and unrenewable Covenant of Sinai or the everlasting covenant of grace made with Abraham 430 years earlier? If the law, even to the believer, was a schoolmaster, having done his work, to be for ever intruding? When faith is come are we longer under a schoolmaster? Is Israel as a nation always to be unbelieving? Is the New Covenant not to be made with the same people as were under the Old Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34)? And if so, does it not guarantee individual and national repentance, faith and regeneration to the same people? And if the legal Covenant of Sinai could not disannul the promises and Covenant made to and with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, can it do so now or ever? Can grace be tied by conditions? Can out-and-out gifts be withdrawn? Can God repent of gifts or calling or grants or promises, unconditionally made? Is not God

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6 It is simply astonishing, indeed it tends toward incredulity, that those who so fervently proclaim the sovereignty of God in this realm with regard to New Covenant conversion that results in newness of life and entrance into the Church, should so adamantly deny this sovereignty of grace to the nation of God’s Old Covenant people. In other words, there is sovereignty in Calvinism reserved for the Church, but only conditionalism in Arminianism for Israel! B.E.H.
able to graft Israel again into its own olive tree? Shall they not be
grafted in, if they abide not in unbelief? Will the time limit of Israel’s
blindness never be reached and passed?

But Mr. Philip Mauro, quoting Dr. Charles W. Rankin, maintains that:
“This dispensation of promise ended when Israel rashly accepted the
law (Exod. 19:8).”7 And quoting Deuteronomy 28:63-64 (which
passage runs): “And it shall come to pass that as the Lord rejoiced over
you to do good and to multiply you: so the Lord will rejoice over you
to destroy you and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked
from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall
scatter thee among all people from the one end of the earth even unto
the other,” Mr. Mauro says: “This, according to this prophecy was to
be the end of their history as a nation.”8

Frankly, is not this a defamation of the Divine Character?
Unintentional defamation no doubt, for it is Mr. Mauro’s interpretation
of Scripture (which he is personally entitled to) which causes him to
divert the clear promises of God from the parties to whom they were
given and to confine them to a new constitution. But defamation none
the less, for it leaves no scope for grace, no credit for inviolability of
oath, nor for continuity of purpose, nor for overcoming of set-backs
and resistances and failures, no place for pardon, no delight in store for
the Father’s heart when the repentant prodigal returns (Jer. 31:18-20).

Then if Mr. Mauro be right, what is grace and where is it? Better, far
better, is the great vision of John the Divine while in the Isle that is
called Patmos: “And immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold a
throne was set in heaven, and One sat on a throne. And He that sat was
to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow
about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald” (Rev. 4:2-3).

Are the colors significant? Is the crystalline purple indicative of
enthroned holiness, the red sardine or carnelian of fiery wrath? Surely
then the encircling rainbow, enclosing all with its endless line of
radiant green, speaks of grace and abiding. For was not the first
exhibition of a rainbow the token of God’s first Covenant with all
flesh, “between Me and you and every living creature that is with you
for perpetual generations (Gen. 9:12).” Was not that Covenant made

7  Mauro, Hope of Israel, p. 52.
8  Ibid., p. 57.
independently of all future human resistance and apostasy and guilt—was not the rainbow the token, “of a covenant between Me and the earth (Gen. 9:13)?” Surely the rainbow symbolizes and represents grace—the grace of benevolent purpose, the grace of changeless attitude, the grace of persistent long-suffering and patience, the grace which is endless, all-inclusive, all conquering. “And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace (Rom. 11:6).” “I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed (Mal. 3:6).” No other reason but that of changeless grace could have spared Israel the complete annihilation they deserved. And shall the original purpose fail, the original declaration be falsified or even modified, shall works be substituted for grace or any kind of transference of specific promise take place? Shall not the whole purpose come to final achievement as with Zerubbabel, who after gazing on the desolations of Jerusalem, desertion, rubbish, silence, defilement and ashes, after confronting opposition and apathy, yet saw in vision and by promise the work of the new temple completed and the headstone thereof brought forth with shoutings of “Grace, grace unto it” (Zech. 4:7).

9 John Gill comments that, “the rainbow is of various colors and fitly expresses the various promises and blessings, in the covenant of grace, and the various providences, both prosperous and adverse, with respect to soul and body; and as the rainbow was an emblem of mercy, peace, and reconciliation in God to man, after he had destroyed the world by a flood, so the covenant is a covenant of grace and mercy; it springs from it, and is full of it, and provides for the peace and reconciliation of the people of God, by the blood of Christ; whence it is called a covenant of peace: and as the rainbow is a security to the world, and the inhabitants of it, from a destruction by a flood any more, so the covenant is a security to those who are interested in it, from eternal destruction, and wrath to come; herein lies all their salvation, and this is the security of it: to which may be added, that God calls it my bow, as he often calls the covenant of grace my covenant, in distinction from man's.” John Gill, “Expositions on the Bible,” *Collected Writings*, Ages Software.
Melanie Phillips on Replacement Theology and Anti-Judaism

ANYONE who doubts a cause and effect relationship between Christian replacement theology and Christian anti-Judaism will find the following article by Melanie Phillips both illuminating and distressing. As a British social commentator, her columns have appeared in the Guardian, Observer, Sunday Times, Daily Mail, and Spectator. Here we are not dealing merely with a theological, even an eschatological nuance that readily admits the legitimacy of opposing opinions, but rather an impending unethical maelstrom of growing proportions that threatens to transfer shame from the twentieth to the twenty-first century. Perhaps the most incredible feature of this movement, which disgraces the Jewish people and thus generates Christian anti-Judaism, is the claim that its theology is based upon the person of Jesus Christ, the quintessential Jew. Also refer to this author’s more recent publication titled Londonistan, especially Chapter Eight, “On Their Knees before Terror.”

COVER STORY

(The Spectator, England, 16 February, 2002)

CHRISTIANS WHO HATE THE JEWS

by Melanie Phillips

It was one of those sickening moments when an illusion is shattered and an ominous reality laid bare. I was among a group of Jews and Christians who met recently to discuss the Churches’ increasing public hostility to Israel. The Jews were braced for a difficult encounter. After all, many British Jews (of whom I am one) are themselves appalled by the destruction of Palestinian villages, targeted assassinations and other apparent Israeli overreactions to the Middle East conflict.

But this debate never took place. For the Christians said that the Churches’ hostility had nothing to do with Israel’s behavior towards...
the Palestinians. This was merely an excuse. The real reason for the growing antipathy, according to the Christians at that meeting, was the ancient hatred of Jews rooted deep in Christian theology and now on widespread display once again.

A doctrine going back to the early Church fathers, suppressed after the Holocaust, had been revived under the influence of the Middle East conflict. This doctrine is called replacement theology. In essence, it says that the Jews have been replaced by the Christians in God’s favor, and so all God’s promises to the Jews, including the land of Israel, have been inherited by Christianity.

Some evangelicals, by contrast, are ‘Christian Zionists’ who passionately support the state of Israel as the fulfillment of God’s Biblical promise to the Jews. But to the majority who have absorbed replacement theology, Zionism is racism and the Jewish state is illegitimate.

The Jews at the meeting were incredulous and aghast. Surely the Christians were exaggerating. Surely the Churches’ dislike of Israel was rooted instead in the settlements, the occupied territories and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. But the Christians were adamant. The hostility to Israel within the Church is rooted in a dislike of the Jews.

Church newspaper editors say that they are intimidated by the overwhelming hostility to Israel and to the Jews from influential Christian figures, which makes balanced coverage of the Middle East impossible. Clerics and lay people alike are saying openly that Israel should never have been founded at all. One Church source said that what he was hearing was a ‘throwback to the visceral anti-Judaism of the Middle Ages’.

At this juncture, a distinction is crucial. Criticism of Israel’s behaviour is perfectly legitimate. But a number of prominent Christians agree that a line is being crossed into anti-Jewish hatred. This is manifested by ascribing to every Israeli action malevolent motives while dismissing Palestinian terrorism and anti-Jewish diatribes; the belief that Jews should be denied the right to self-determination and their state dismantled; the conflation of Zionism and a ‘Jewish conspiracy’ of vested interests; and the disproportionate venom of the attacks.

When I hear “the Jews” used as a term, my blood runs cold — and I’ve been hearing this far too often,” says Rowan Williams, the Archbishop
of Wales and a contender for the see of Canterbury. ‘Whenever I print anything sympathetic to Israel, I get deluged with complaints that I am Zionist and racist,’ says Colin Blakely, the editor of the Church of England Newspaper.

Andrew White, canon of Coventry cathedral and the Archbishop of Canterbury’s representative in the Middle East, is heavily engaged in trying to promote dialogue and peace between Israelis and Palestinians. He says of attitudes in the Church, ‘These go beyond legitimate criticism of Israel into hatred of the Jews. I get hate mail calling me a Jew-lover and saying my work is evil.’

The reason, he says, is that Palestinian Christian revisionism has revived replacement theology. ‘This doctrine was key in fanning the flames of the Holocaust, which could not have happened without 2,000 years of anti-Jewish polemic,’ he says. After the Holocaust the Vatican officially buried the doctrine, the current Pope affirming the integrity of the Jewish people and recognizing the state of Israel. But, according to Andrew White, the doctrine is ‘still vibrant’ within Roman Catholic and Anglican pews. ‘Almost all the Churches hold to replacement theology,’ he says.

The catalyst for its re-emergence has been the attempt by Arab Christians to reinterpret Scripture in order to delegitimize the Jews’ claim to the land of Israel. This has had a powerful effect upon the Churches which, through humanitarian work among the Palestinians by agencies such as Christian Aid, have been profoundly influenced by two clerics in particular.

The first is the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem, Riah Abu El-Assal, a Palestinian who is intemperate in his attacks on Israel. ‘We interviewed Bishop Riah after some terrorist outrage in Israel,’ says Colin Blakely, ‘and his line was that it was all the fault of the Jews. I was astounded.’

The bishop also has an astounding interpretation of the Old Testament. Last December, he claimed of Palestinian Christians, ‘We are the true Israel . . . no one can deny me the right to inherit the promises, and after all the promises were first given to Abraham and Abraham is never spoken of in the Bible as a Jew. . . . He is the father of the faithful.’

The second cleric, Father Naim Ateek, is more subtle and highly influential. Although he says that he has come to accept Israel’s
existence, his brand of radical liberation theology undermines it by attempting to sever the special link between God and the Jews.

In a lecture last year Andrew White observed that Palestinian politics and Christian theology had become inextricably intertwined. The Palestinians were viewed as oppressed and the Church had to fight their oppressor. ‘Who is the oppressor? The state of Israel. Who is Israel? The Jews. It is they therefore who must be put under pressure so that the oppressed may one day be set free to enter their “Promised Land” which is being denied to them.’

This view, said Andrew White, had now influenced not only whole denominations but also the majority of Christian pilgrimage companies and many of the major mission and Christian aid organizations. One such outfit, he said, had sent every UK bishop a significant document outlining Israel’s oppression of the Palestinians, accusing Israel of ethnic cleansing and of systematically ‘Judaising’ Jerusalem.

David Ison, canon of Exeter cathedral, took a party of pilgrims to the Holy Land in 2000 at the start of the current intifada. They had a Palestinian guide, visited only Christian sites in Arab east Jerusalem and the West Bank, and talked to virtually no Jews. ‘The Old Testament is a horrifying picture of genocide committed in God’s name,’ he avers. ‘And genocide is now being waged in a long, slow way by Zionists against the Palestinians.’

Asked what he made of Yasser Arafat’s rejection of the offers made by Israel at Camp David and Tabah, he said that he knew nothing about that. Indeed, he said, he knew nothing about Israel beyond what he had read in a book by an advocate of replacement theology, with which he agreed, and what he had been told by the Palestinians on the pilgrimage.

The Bishop of Guildford [John Gladwin, now of Chelmsford], who is consistently hostile to Israel, shares the view that the Jews have no particular claim to the Promised Land. Christianity and Islam, he says, can lay equal claim. And although he says that Israel’s existence is a reality that must be accepted, his ideal is very different. A separate Palestinian state would be merely a ‘first step’.

‘Ultimately, one shared land is the vision one would want to pursue, although it’s unlikely that this will come about.’ As for the Churches’ hostility to Israel, his reply is chilling: ‘The problem is that all the
power lies with the Israeli state.’ So by implication, Israel would merit sympathy for its casualties only if it had no power to defend itself.

The Bishop of Guildford, who chairs Christian Aid, says that he particularly admires Bishop Riah and Naim Ateek. He also warmly endorses a parish priest in his diocese, Stephen Sizer, vicar of Christ Church, Virginia Water.

Sizer is a leading crusader against Christian Zionism. He believes that God’s promises to the Jews have been inherited by Christianity, including the land of Israel. ‘A return to Jewish nationalism,’ he has written, ‘would seem incompatible with this New Testament perspective of the international community of Jesus.’

He acknowledges that Israel has the right to exist since it was established by a United Nations resolution. But he also says that it is ‘fundamentally an apartheid state because it is based on race’ and ‘even worse than South Africa’ (this, despite the fact that Israeli Arabs have the vote, are members of the Knesset and one is even a supreme court judge).

He therefore hopes that Israel will go the same way as South Africa under apartheid and be ‘brought to an end internally by the rising up of the people’. So, despite saying that he supports Israel’s existence, he appears to want the Jewish state to be singled out for a fate afforded to no other democracy properly constituted under international law.

But perhaps this is not surprising given his attitude towards Jews. ‘The covenant between Jews and God,’ he states, ‘was conditional on their respect for human rights. The reason they were expelled from the land was that they were more interested in money and power and treated the poor and aliens with contempt.’ Today’s Jews, it appears, are no better. ‘In the United States, politicians dare not criticize Israel because half the funding for both the Democrats and the Republicans comes from Jewish sources.’

A number of authoritative Christian figures are extremely concerned by the elision between criticism of Israel and dislike of the Jews. Rowan Williams says that after a website of the Church in Wales attracted inflammatory language about Jews, and a meeting in Cardiff about Israel provoked similar anti-Jewish rhetoric, he was forced to introduce some balancing material about the Middle East into his Church periodicals.
Dr Patrick Sookhdeo, the director of the Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity, has been addressing Christian groups up and down the country on the implications of 11 September. When he suggests that there is a problem with aspects of Islam, he provokes uproar. His audiences blame Israel for Muslim anger; they want to abandon the Jewish state as a ‘dead’ part of Scripture and support ‘justice’ for the Palestinians instead. ‘What disturbs me at the moment is the very deeply rooted anti-Semitism latent in Britain and the West,’ he says. ‘I simply hadn’t realized how deep within the English psyche is this fear of the power and influence of the Jews.’

Since 11 September, he says, the Palestinian issue has had a major distorting impact on the whole of the Christian world. ‘Those who blame Israel for everything don’t realize that for Islam the very existence of Israel is a problem. Even a Palestinian state would not be sufficient. Israel may be behaving illegally in a number of areas, but she is under attack. But white liberal Christians find it deeply offensive not to blame Israel for injustice.’

The Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, has spoken out against replacement theology. But unlike the Roman Catholics, the Anglicans have never been forced to confront their Church’s role in the Holocaust and their attitude towards the Jews.

Carey, say Church sources, is now in an invidious position. Under pressure to make an accommodation with the Muslims, he is also hemmed in by some highly placed enemies of Israel within the Church and is reluctant to pick a fight with the establishment view.

Nevertheless, there are many decent Christians who don’t hold this view. The network of councils of Christians and Jews is going strong. Archbishop Williams preached in Cardiff’s synagogue last weekend. Christians who voice these concerns are prepared to risk opprobrium or worse.

But for the Jews, caught between the Islamists’ blood libels on one side and Christian replacement theology on the other, Britain is suddenly a colder place.
Appendix E

An Annotated Bibliography on Jewish-Christian Relations in Church History

Unfortunately, a high proportion of conservative evangelical Christians, including those of a Calvinist persuasion, are unaware of the historic roots underlying the eschatological concept of the Christian church, as the new people of God, that has superceded the nation of Israel, and ethnic Jews in particular. This concept of dismissal or transference, in which God has supposedly forever disenfranchised national Israel, indeed Judaism as a whole, is better known as replacement or supercessionist theology. The revelation from church history of the outworking of this doctrine is one which Gentile Christians will find painful to digest, notwithstanding its undeniable truth. Unless they are prepared to read of this shameful legacy, the agony of these centuries, it will be difficult for headway to be made in dealing with doctrinal anti-Semitism as it manifests itself today amongst Christians who profess a serious biblical faith.

The following annotated bibliography is offered as an introduction for those who will not retreat from the truth, concerning resultant Christian behavior, for the purpose of retaining their doctrinal system. Time and time again this writer has met sincere Christians who simply were ignorant of the following testimony. It matters not whether these historic accounts are Jewish, Roman Catholic, evangelical or secular. The conclusions in general are consistently in agreement, notwithstanding a variety of backgrounds and distinctive perspectives.

Baron, David. The Shepherd Of Israel and His Scattered Flock. London: Morgan and Scott, 1910. This author, born in a strict orthodox Jewish home in Russia, converted to Christianity and founded the Hebrew Christian Testimony to Israel, based in London, England. His commentary on Zechariah is acknowledged as a classic. Here is an exposition of Psalm 80, of which vs. 4-7 are seen as a summary description of Jewish travail during this Christian dispensation. Thus pp. 25-79 present a parallel and discerning panorama of this same period according to the actual events of Jewish history as they merge with Christian church history.
Brown, Michael L. *Our Hands are Stained with Blood: The Tragic Story of the “Church” and the Jewish People*. Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 1992. While written in a popular and animated style, this Hebrew Christian provides extensive documentation, including a most comprehensive Bibliographical Supplement, that demands consultation. Consider:

It is a fundamental tenet of the Koran that both Israel and the Church failed. Moses was a prophet. Jesus was a prophet. But Muhammad was the seal of the prophets, the messenger of the final revelation. The Jews are not the people of God—they failed! The Christians are not the people of God—they failed! It is the Muslims who are the people of God. Of course this is preposterous. But, in the event that you are still uncertain about the calling of Israel, consider this simple truth: If God could forsake Israel, in spite of His unconditional, everlasting promises, then He could forsake the Church! If God could replace Israel, in spite of His unconditional, everlasting promises, then He could replace the Church! So, if you hold to a theology that says, “God has forsaken physical Israel,” or “The Church has replaced Israel,” you had better be extremely careful. Maybe the Koran is right!1

Also refer to this author’s three volumes on *Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus*, recommended by Moishe Rosen of *Jews for Jesus*. Volume One deals with general and historical objections. Volume Two deals with theological objections. Volume Three deals with objections to Messianic prophecy.

Callan, Terrance. *Forgetting the Root, the Emergence of Christianity from Judaism*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1986. As the title suggests, Romans 11:13, 17-24 describes the birth of Gentile Christianity and the Apostle Paul’s warning that this engrafting of wild olive branches into the rich root of the olive tree should not lead to arrogance. This author concludes that:

The liberal Gentile Christians forgot that they had been grafted into the root of Judaism. This forgetfulness is strikingly illustrated by a comment made by Clement of Alexandria (dies c. 215). . . . [He] interprets Romans 11:17 as a reference to the grafting of converts to Christianity into the Word. . . . Clement’s interpretation of the cultivated olive tree as the Word, and the wild olive tree as including Jews who need to be grafted into the Word, reverses Paul’s use of the metaphor and shows to what extent the Jewish roots of Christianity have been forgotten. This is precisely what Paul was

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trying to prevent by using the image. . . . To have retained this positive appreciation of Israel might have prevented much Christian anti-Semitism in the past; to retrieve it for our time might put relations between Christians and Jews on a much better foundation than otherwise supports them.²

Carroll, James. *Constantine’s Sword*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001. A former Roman Catholic priest of the Paulist order, Carroll’s traumatic discovery of the substantial anti-Semitic legacy of the Roman Catholic Church led him to delve into this matter with great thoroughness while employing a style that constantly interacts with the churnings of his soul. Although many of his biblical comments stem from liberal presuppositions, yet this revelation of the unending abuse of Jews over the centuries by professing Christians is a tragic yet necessary record. Consider the significance of the following analysis.

If the death camps [of Nazi Europe] are causally linked through two millennia to mistakes made by the first generation of Christians—and I believe they are—can they still not be acknowledged as mistakes? What difference does it make whether two years have passed or two thousand if the causal link can be made? . . . Paul knew nothing of supercessionism. He remained a Jew. Indeed, his faith in Jesus was, to him, a way of being more Jewish than ever. . . . For Christians, the dramatic and unexpected conversion of Constantine was a proof of the Church’s proclamation, but the change of fortune it led to was proof of even more. “The creation of the Christian state,” Neusner says, “claiming to carry forward the ancient Israelite state, and to appeal to its precedents, brought to a critical stage the long-term Christian claim that Christians formed the new Israel.”³ . . . The gradual closing of the imperial vice on Judaism—from Constantine’s edict in 315 making it a crime for Jews to proselytize to the edict almost a century later making it a crime punishable by death—was driven by the real

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² Terrance Callan, *Forgetting the Root, the Emergence of Christianity from Judaism*, pp.107-108.

³ Jacob Neusner, *Judaism and Christianity*, p.58. Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones makes a significant and related comment concerning the Puritans: “[W]ere they not too much influenced by the analogy of the Old Testament and of Israel? Here, it seems to me, was the source of the trouble, that they would persist in taking the analogy of Israel in the Old Testament and applying it to England. Was not that the real error? In the Old Testament and under that Dispensation of the State (of Israel) was the church (Acts 7:38), but the State of England in the sixteenth was not the church. In the Old Testament the two were one and identical. But surely in the New Testament we have the exact opposite. The church consists of the ‘called out’ ones, not the total State.” *The Puritans: Their Origins And Successors,* pp. 64-65.
problem that Jewish dissent from Christian claims made overcoming paganism far more difficult. . . . The basis of Luther’s anti-Judaism, as the historian Heiko Oberman sums it up [see this volume referenced below], was the conviction that ever since Christ’s appearance on earth, the Jews have had no more future as Jews. 4


For twenty centuries, then, Jews have suffered at the hands of anti-Semites. The injustices and pogroms inflicted on the Jewish community have been to a large degree the result of Christian contempt. Anti-Jewish attitudes in the history of the Church were not accidental—rather they were the direct consequence of Christian teaching about Judaism and the Jewish nation. . . . Anti-Semitism has thus been a constant feature of the history of Christendom. As we reach the end of the second millennium of this era, it is vital that both Christians and Jews affirm that they are heirs of a fearful tradition. . . . Only then will Christians and Jews fully appreciate the promise in the Psalmist’s words: [Psalm 133:1-3]. 5

Also refer to this author’s *Holocaust Theology: A Reader*, New York: New York University Press, 2002. The contributions to this volume include the writings of authors Stephen Davis, Edward Flannery, Graham Keith, Franklin Littell, Jacob Neusner, and David Rausch who are referenced in this annotated bibliography. More recently this author has published *Anti-Semitism: A History*, Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2002, concerning which Cohn-Sherbock writes: “In an earlier study, *The Crucified Jew*, I focused on the Christian roots of anti-Semitism. The aim of this volume is to answer this question by surveying the history of anti-Semitism from a more global perspective.” 6

Diprose, Ronald E. *Israel and the Church*. Waynesboro, GA: Authentic Media, 2000. This doctoral thesis presented to the Evangelische Theologische Faculteit, Louvain, Belgium, is a patristic

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4 James Carroll, *Constantine’s Sword*, pp. 102-103, 142, 176-177, 368.
and exegetical study of the origin and effects of replacement theology. Following careful analysis, the author declares:

It is a fact of history that the Augustinian concept of a Christian theocracy is closely linked with the anti-Semitic attitudes of the medieval church and unbelievably harsh treatment of the Jewish people. Thus it is not surprising that the traditional claim of Christendom to embody the promised messianic kingdom is an embarrassment to Christians involved in dialogue with Jewish people.\(^7\)

The exegetical highlight may well be the study on pages 14-27 of Israel’s uniqueness according to God’s election in Romans 9-11, especially 11:28, which is referenced in more detail in Chapter Eleven: Israel – as God’s Beloved Enemy. The major concluding principles are:

Failure to reflect seriously on Israel in light of all the relevant biblical data has serious consequences for the entire enterprise of Christian theology. It was the neglect of relevant biblical data concerning the place of Israel in God’s plan which permitted replacement theology to develop during the early centuries of the Christian era. Once replacement theology became a presupposition of theological reflection, it required that much of the Old Testament be interpreted allegorically. This involved the loss of the Hebrew world view and influenced the direction of theological reflection in areas such as ecclesiology and eschatology.

Christian theology must be based on sound hermeneutical principles which presuppose the Church’s essential relationship with Israel. These include taking into account the whole of the biblical Canon, taking seriously the Jewishness of Jesus and of much of the New Testament, recognizing the institutional distinctions between Israel and the Church, avoiding gratuitous allegorization of Scripture, and giving normative value to what the New Testament teaches concerning both the first and second advents of Christ.\(^8\)

Ellison, Stanley A. *Who Owns The Land?* Portland: Multnomah, 1991. From a conservative evangelical perspective, here is one of the better assessments of the biblical, historical, and political issues that arise from the ongoing tensions which are endemic concerning the Middle East. While supportive of the biblical grounds of Israel’s present and future claims upon the land, yet it is not without reasonable consideration of opposing opinions and the opponents of Israel. He concludes:

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\(^7\) Ronald E. Diprose, *Israel and the Church*, p. 168.

\(^8\) Ibid., pp. 171-172.
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Israel’s basic need today is not peace with the Arabs; it is peace with God. The national turmoil and heartache of both clans is spiritual in nature rather than merely racial. Israel’s deepest need is not economic, political, or military, but one she yet firmly resists—a historic tryst with her covenant Lord, similar to that of Jacob returning from exile [Gen. 32-33]. That meeting will do what no military victory could accomplish—institute permanent peace with good will toward all.9

Flannery, Edward H. The Anguish of the Jews. New York: Macmillan, 1965. Another Roman Catholic priest, Flannery’s loyalty to the Church of Rome notwithstanding, provides a helpful overview of the relationship between Christianity and Judaism over the centuries. He commences:

This book received its first impetus from a personal experience. One evening several years ago, I walked north on Park Avenue in New York City in the company of a young Jewish couple. Behind us shone the huge illuminated cross the Grand Central Building displays each year at Christmas time. Glancing over her shoulder, the young lady—ordinarily well disposed toward Christians—declared: “That cross makes me shudder. It is like an evil presence.” This disturbing comment evoked many questions in me, not least of which was: How did the cross, the supreme symbol of universal love, become a sign of fear, or evil for this young Jewess? It soon became clear that her fearful reaction to it was the fruit of a knowledge which she, but not I, had—a knowledge of the immense suffering undergone by her people at the hands of Christians for many centuries. It was my first introduction to the problem of anti-Semitism. Later discussions of the incident with both Jewish and Christian friends led me to a further discovery. Jews generally are acutely aware of the history of anti-Semitism, simply because it comprises so large a portion of Jewish history. Christians, on the contrary, even highly educated ones, are all but totally ignorant of it—except for contemporary developments. They are ignorant of it for the simple reason that anti-Semitism does not appear in their history books. Histories of the Middle Ages—and even of the Crusades—can be found in which the word “Jew” does not appear, and there are Catholic dictionaries and encyclopedias in which the term “anti-Semitism” is not listed. There seems to be only one conclusion: The pages Jews have memorized have been torn from our histories of the Christian era. In a sense, this book is a contribution toward the reinsertion of those pages.10

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Gager, John G. *The Origins Of Anti-Semitism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983. This scholarly work proposes that anti-Semitism surged following the birth of Christianity, principally because of conflict amongst Christians with the result that the opponents of Judaism triumphed. Thus modern anti-Semitism is not a uniquely modern phenomenon; it is not paganism in a modern dress or that pagan anti-Semitism which influenced early Christianity. Further Paul was totally outside the mainstream of early Christian anti-Judaism. He viewed Christ as the fulfillment of God’s promise to redeem the Gentiles. In Paul’s thinking, Christ represents neither an abrogation of God’s covenant with Israel nor the replacement of Jews by Christians as the chosen people of God.

Goldhagen, Daniel Jonah. *Hitler’s Willing Executioners*. New York: Random House, 1997. This Harvard University professor brings to the public the fruits of his acclaimed doctoral dissertation. In simple terms, with regard to responsibility for the Holocaust, Germans in general were culpable, especially in the light of exposed myths such as supposed ignorance and reluctance. However while German nationalism, that mushroomed from the nineteenth century onward, was the distinctive incubator for “eliminationist antisemitism” of the twentieth century, the antecedents of this historic atrocity streamed forward from the early centuries of Christianity.

European antisemitism is a corollary of Christianity. From the earliest days of Christianity’s consolidation of its hold over the Roman Empire, its leaders preached against the Jews, employing explicit, powerfully worded, emotionally charged condemnations. . . . From the time of John Chrysostom until the modern period, the attitudes and treatment of Jews in the Christian world underwent frequent adjustment, as did Christian doctrine and practice. Yet while all the changes in Christians’ theology and practice were taking place, the underlying belief in the divinity of Jesus remained firm. So too was anti-Semitism. . . . The medieval European hatred of Jews was so intense and so divorced from reality that all calamities in society could be and were attributed to the Jews’ malfeasance. The Jews stood for everything that was awry, so that the reflexive reaction to a natural or social ill was to look to its supposed Jewish sources. Martin Luther’s anti-Semitism was ferocious and influential enough to have earned him a place in the pantheon of anti-Semites. This did not matter to the Church that Luther was fighting, for the Church denounced him and his followers as heretics and Jews.

The ubiquitous anti-Semitism that existed in 1800 and in 1850 became, if anything, more intense and certainly more deadly as the century was
drawing to a close, as Germany became more economically and technologically advanced. . . . By the end of the nineteenth century, the view that the Jews posed extreme danger to Germany and that the source of their perniciousness was immutable, namely their race, and the consequential belief that the Jews had to be eliminated from Germany were extremely widespread in German society. The tendency to consider and propose the most radical form of elimination—that is, extermination—was already strong and had been given much voice. . . . The fact was that as the 1920s and then the Nazi takeover approached, the German people were more dangerously oriented towards Jews than they had been during any other time since the dawn of modernity.11

Gorday, Peter. *Principles Of Patristic Exegesis: Romans 9-11 in Origen, John Chrysostom, and Augustine.* New York: E. Mellen Press, c1983. How did these three influential church fathers understand the most important passage in the New Testament concerning the relationship between Christianity and Judaism? Insofar as disregard for national Israel in the Christian dispensation is concerned, there was unanimity of opinion.

Concerning Origen we read:

Origen’s summary statement [in his exegesis of Romans] is “. . . through the whole text of the epistle . . . the Apostle has taught how the highest religion has been transferred from the Jews to the Gentiles, from circumcision to faith, from the letter to the spirit, from shadow to truth, from carnal observance to spiritual observance.” . . . The “letter” of the Old Testament text is always for Origen pointing in some way to its “spirit,” i.e. the specifically Christian transformation of the Old Testament content. This may take the form of a Christological application or of a refining in some way of the ethical and inner-spiritual horizon of the text by means of a New Testament reference. Along the way a fair amount of anti-Jewish polemic takes place as Origen reflects on the relation of the church and the synagogue.12

Concerning Chrysostom we read:

The event of Christ and the New Covenant for the Gentiles have divested the Jews as a people of any special standing before God. But finally it is the unbelief of the Jews and their rejection of Christ that constitute their


supreme offense; for these there is no forgiveness, only the hope that God in his providential mercy will one day move their hearts to conversion. Thus Chrysostom finds consistent denunciation of the Jews in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 9-11 of Romans, as he senses in Paul’s polemic a fundamental critique of the privileges and prerogatives of Judaism. This perspective on the Jews is held consistently throughout Chrysostom’s writings, and down to the present day has been one of his best known and most ignominious characteristics. He frequently polemicized against “Judaizing” and freely encouraged repressive measures against the synagogues.\textsuperscript{13}

Concerning Augustine we read:

[In Romans 11] some Jews have believed in Christ, and they are the remnant of the natural olive and fulfillment of the divine promises to historical Israel. . . . The “Israel” that will ultimately be saved are the predestined elect, drawn into a unity out of Jews and Gentiles. . . . Judaism is simply relegated to the latter [non-elect] category, and its status in salvation-history assigned to the pre-Christian past.\textsuperscript{14}

Grosser, E and Halperin, Edwin. The Causes And Effects Of Antisemitism: The Dimensions Of Prejudice. Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1979. This is a systematic accounting of 1900 years of anti-Semitic attitudes and practices, with a preface by Franklin H. Littell. The authors’ declared purpose is to increase awareness and understanding of anti-Semitism’s historical magnitude and continuity, and its deep infection of the Western World. The method involved the concise listing, in chronological order, of anti-Semitic incidents. There is also a compilation, analysis and synthesis of the causes and theories of anti-Semitism that are apparent from the catalogue.

The extent of anti-Semitism in Western history has never, to say the least, been common knowledge. And today there is a tendency to assume that the problem of Jewish security and the attitudes of Jews toward their survival grow from the experience of the Holocaust alone. The actions of the Nazis and their collaborators are of such a scale and horror as to obscure the long history of anti-Semitism. Often lost in appraisals of anti-Semitism is the fact that the underlying spirit of the Holocaust is almost 2,000 years old. The genocide carried out by a civilized and cultured nation in the mid-

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., pp. 129-130.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., pp. 171, 333.
The twentieth century was an extreme manifestation of this spirit, but not an isolated one.\(^\text{15}\)

**Gruber, Dan.** *The Church and The Jews: The Biblical Relationship.* Hagerstown: Serenity Books, 1997. This is a most significant book that is highly commended as seminal by Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. The unveiling from history concerning how the Christian church has mistreated Israel is comprehensive and compelling. Particularly enlightening is the comfortable relationship that existed between the historian Eusebius and the Emperor Constantine by means of which state sanctioned anti-Judaism came to the fore. Significant is the proposal that God made the New Covenant with the house of Judah and the house of Israel. Hence the Church does not have its own covenant with God. The Bible does not mention any covenant that God has made with the Church, though, according to Romans 11, the Church is incorporated into the New Covenant that God made with Israel. The author concludes that:

> The greatest obstacle to the salvation of the Jewish people is the Church designed by men. The greatest means of bringing salvation to the Jewish people is the church designed by God. Paul warned the Gentile believers not to be arrogant towards the Jewish people, nor ignorant of God’s faithfulness to them. Yet it is this very arrogance that generally characterizes the Church’s traditional theology and behavior.\(^\text{16}\)

**Hay, Malcolm.** *Thy Brother’s Blood.* New York: Hart Publishing, 1975. This Catholic historian is especially commended by Walter Kaufmann for his intellectual honesty. This concerns the author’s unveiling of the dishonesty of great religious figures, that is their disdainful regard for and mistreatment of the Jews over the centuries of church history. For example:

> The violence of the language used by St. John Chrysostom in his homilies against the Jews has never been exceeded by any preacher whose sermons have been recorded. Allowances must, no doubt, be made for the custom of the times, for passionate zeal, and for the fear that some tender shoots of Christian faith might be chilled by too much contact with Jews. But no amount of allowance can alter the fact that these homilies filled the minds of Christian congregations with a hatred which was transmitted to their children, and to their children’s children, for many generations. These homilies, moreover, were used for centuries, in schools and in seminaries


where priests were taught to preach, with St. John Chrysostom as their model—where priests were taught to hate, with St. John Chrysostom as their model.  

**Heer, Friedrich.** *God’s First Love: Christians and Jews over Two Thousand Years.* London: Phoenix Giant, 1970. As a professor at the University of Vienna, the author explains that this book, “by an Austrian Catholic, is dedicated to the Jewish, Christian and non-Christian victims of the Austrian Catholic, Adolf Hitler.” In raising the question of the positive guilt of Christianity in fostering anti-Semitism throughout its history, Heer shows that the concepts of Jew-hating and Jew-killing were based on Christian theology, taught by the most eminent fathers of the church.

**Keith, Graham.** *Hated Without A Cause? A Survey of Anti-Semitism.* Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 1997. Here is a serious study of Israel in relation to the Christian Church written by a conservative evangelical whose outlook has a British touch. Showing less animated disturbance than some concerning the fruit of supercessionism, special emphasis is given to Luther as well as the Reformation and its legacy. Thus “most churches have acknowledged that Christians bear some responsibility for anti-Semitism.” Also consider the reference to “eminent Christians like John Chrysostom or Martin Luther, whose piety is unquestioned and whose opposition to the Jews clearly derived from their piety.” Supportive of John Murray’s exegesis on Romans 11, a future national blessing upon Israel is to be expected, though not necessarily on the eve of Jesus Christ’s second coming. The issue of the return to and repossession the land of Israel from a biblical perspective is skirted, except when, quite erroneously according to history, it is in the main identified with Zionism, dispensationalism and the uncritical support of Americans. However the concluding comment is most appropriate:

> Clearly it is as difficult today as at any time for the Gentile churches to hold in balance the two elements of Paul’s perspective in Romans 11:28. Yet, they must strive to do so. If they forget that the Jewish people are beloved of God and their election is irrevocable, inevitably they will slip into anti-Semitic attitudes and practices. On the other side of the coin, to ignore the

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19 Ibid., p. 268.
reality of Jewish unbelief and the fact that it makes them enemies of God means that the Jewish people will be deprived of the greatest service the Gentile Christians can give them—the testimony to Jesus of Nazareth as the Savior of Israel.  

Even so, the spirit of gospel communication is not recognized by the Jews as attractive or convincing when tainted by theological anti-Judaism.

Larsen, David. Jews, Gentiles and the Church: A New Perspective on History and Prophecy. Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 1955. The author, a professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, is unabashedly pro-semitic and provides us with a very readable yet comprehensive record of the relationship between Israel and Judaism over the past two millennia. As such, it is one of the best introductions to this subject. Larsen comments that,

> the ‘displacement theory’ by which Israel is totally and finally replaced by the church in the plan and purpose of God . . . may lurch dangerously toward anti-Semitism. Any careless implication that the Jews are superfluous or unrelated to the divine scheme of things is dangerous.”

Lindsey, Hal. The Everlasting Hatred: The Roots of Jihad. Murieta: Oracle House Publishing, 2002. As a prolific and popular writer and commentator on eschatology from a dispensational perspective, this volume is especially relevant. The easy reading style does not cloud an enlightening exposé of the contemporary conflict between Jews and Muslims that reaches back over 4000 years and yet is presently attaining white-heat proportions. The following extract gets to the heart of the matter and at the same time calls upon the western world, especially Christians in particular, to wake up to the imminent threat that such tensions present.

Mohammad believed the Muslim is in a perpetual state of “Jihad”—“holy war”—with all countries in the Dar al-harb sphere. The true follower believes that Allah has willed for Muslims to establish Islamic ways over the whole world—either by conversion or sword.

Islam believes this doctrine is especially applicable to the Middle East, which they claim as the center of their world. They contend that any land captured and held by Muslim forces in the past is sacred. But their myths

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20 Ibid., p. 283.

21 David Larsen, Jews, Gentiles and the Church: A New Perspective on History and Prophecy, pp. 84-85.
built around Jerusalem and Palestine make it second only to Mecca and Medina as a most holy place.

A remnant of Jews has always continued to dwell in Jerusalem and Palestine in spite of the dangers and difficulties. But when Jews began to return in growing numbers at the end of the nineteenth century, it caused Muslims great alarm.

When the Jews declared sovereignty in Palestine in 1948, it was considered “Al Nabka”—a catastrophe. Their continuing presence is viewed as the ultimate blasphemy to Islam, a desecration of the “Third Holiest Place in Islam,” and an insult to Allah that must be cleansed.

Israel’s victories over the “armies of Allah” in five wars have placed the Koran in jeopardy, for it promises the forces of Islam victory in “holy wars.” Devout Muslims fervently believe this is something that must be rectified. Nothing can remove this insult to Allah but a final military defeat of Israel.

Land is looked upon by Islam differently than by other religions. Once Islamic culture is established in an area, it is considered sanctified to Allah. It becomes “Dar al-Islam”—the land of peace. When an invader takes it away, Muslims are obligated to take it back for Allah, no matter what the sacrifice.

This is why Muslim forces fought European Crusaders for three centuries over “the Holy Land.” But now the Jew has “invaded.” Islamic’s ancient enmity toward them has made this an intolerable insult. They point to Israel as “a cancer in the heart of Islam that must be removed.”

Western civilization just does not understand this basic Islamic thinking. Western media particularly don’t have a clue as to what motivates the Muslim—or what strategies he will use to fulfill his duty to Allah. This why they swallow Muslim propaganda “hook, line and sinker.” As we will see, the Modern Arab myths spun about “legitimate rights of the Palestinian refugees” and “Israel’s occupation of Palestinian territory” are based upon monstrous distortions of history.

As Mohammad said, “War is deception.” He set the example for negotiating peace with an enemy until you are strong enough to annihilate him. It is called “the Quraysh Model.” This was the ten-year peace treaty Mohammad signed with the Quraysh tribe of Mecca, which within a year he broke by destroying them. This is how he conquered Mecca and made it the holiest site in Islam—through treachery. 22

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An annotated bibliography

Littell, Franklin. *The Crucifixion of the Jews.* New York: Harper, 1975. This United Methodist Church minister, ecumenist, former professor at Temple University, Holocaust scholar, and friend of Israel, could not be ranked as a conservative evangelical. Nevertheless this volume is a vigorous polemic that calls Gentile Christians to honestly face the shameful legacy of theological anti-Semitism which cannot be divorced from the fact of the Holocaust. Further, he writes that:

> The cornerstone of Christian anti-Semitism is the superceding or displacement myth, which already rings with the genocidal note. This is the myth that the mission of the Jewish people was finished with the coming of Jesus Christ, that “the old Israel” was written off with the appearance of “the new Israel.” To teach that a people’s mission in God’s providence is finished, that they have been relegated to the limbo of history, has murderous implications which murderers will in time spell out. The murder of six million Jews by baptized Christians, from whom membership in good standing was not (and has not yet been) withdrawn, raises the most insistent question about the credibility of Christianity. The existence of a restored Israel, proof positive that the Jewish people is not annihilated, assimilated, or otherwise withering away, is substantial refutation of the traditional myth about their end in the historic process. And this is precisely why Israel is a challenge, a crisis for much contemporary Christian theology.23

Mussner, Franz. *Tractate On The Jews: The Significance of Judaism for Christian Faith.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. This Roman Catholic New Testament scholar and theologian confesses that, regarding his relationship to Judaism, he was no different from the vast majority of Christian scholars, namely, filled with undisturbed prejudices against Judaism. Then, with Vatican II and its aftermath, he underwent a *metanoia* [repentance] and ventured forth on the rereading of the Scriptures with new eyes as far as Judaism is concerned.

> “Tractates against the Jews” were written in the time of the church fathers, and the anti-Jewish spirit of these tractates has its effect even in our own times; thus, as the churches undertake a comprehensive rethinking of their relationship to Judaism, it is appropriate and timely for us to produce a “tractate for the Jews.” . . . Behind this book lies a learning process of many years, a true changing of the mind, and I would like to invite the reader to enter into this learning process and to think newly and differently about Israel, the elder brother and the “root” of the Church.24

Concerning the interpretation of Romans 11:26, national Israel will not attain salvation by means of a mass conversion that precedes the parousia (appearing, coming) of Jesus Christ.

The parousia Christ saves all Israel without a preceding “conversion” of the Jews to the gospel. God saves Israel by a “special path” which likewise rests upon the principle of grace (sola gratia) and thereby maintains the divinity of God, his “choice,” his “call,” and his promises to the fathers and his “decision” which is independent of all human ways and speculation. It is the victory of the free grace of God which will save all Israel. . . . It is not the Gentile peoples who have been converted to the gospel that will save “all Israel”—an absolutely unbiblical thought—but God alone. The hardening and saving of Israel correspond to one another.25

Oberman, Heiko. The Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Age of Renaissance and Reformation. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, c1984. This recognized work is by a former professor at Harvard University and the University of Tübingen, West Germany. In focusing on the founders of modern Europe, Reuchlin, Erasmus, Luther, and Calvin, he concludes that their achievements, at best ambiguous in contemporary Jewish eyes, did little however, to make the sixteenth century anything more for the Jews than a bleak extension of the dark Middles Ages. Hence, the roots of anti-Semitism were laid long before the Reformation.

[H]atred of the Jews was not an invention of the sixteenth century. It was an inherited assumption. Far from acquitting the age of Renaissance and Reformation, we should recognize that this same age which so consciously scrutinized the medieval traditions simultaneously passed on, with new strength, whatever withstood the test of inspection. This is what stamps the character of the age and determines its significance for the modern era.26

Parkes, James. The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue: A Study in the Origins of Antisemitism. New York: Athaneum, 1969. This Ph.D. thesis submitted to Oxford University by a Church of England clergyman, is an exhaustive study of the first eight centuries of the Christian era with regard to the roots of anti-Semitism. Convinced that the hostility of the Roman world to the Jew offers no explanation of the creation and survival of this scourge, the author became persuaded that

25 Ibid., pp. 33-34.
26 Heiko Oberman, The Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Age of Renaissance and Reformation, p. xi.
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it was in the conflict of the Church with the Synagogue that the real roots of the problem lay. His conclusions include:

In the passage of the eight centuries reviewed in the previous chapters of this book we have seen the laying of the foundations of modern anti-Semitism. At times the ancient legislation itself has an appallingly modern ring in its very phraseology. With Leo and Charlemagne the curtain rings down upon the first act. The second act takes us up to the Reformation: the third act is still upon the stage. But it is an act of the same play, and can be explained only in the light of what has preceded it. Our interpretation of the first act is, therefore, no academic question, but the means by which we can understand what is passing before our eyes . . . At the end of the [first] century the leadership of the Church was already passing into Gentile hands. Gentile congregations were powerful and numerous. Any compromise on the ceremonial law had been completely rejected. . . . The hardening of Judaism is a result, not a cause, of the separation. But whether through the influence of Paul, or, more likely, through the misunderstanding of him by Gentile successors, the issue had gone much deeper, and the entirety of the religious conceptions of Judaism as proclaimed in the Old Testament was reject as superceded by the Church.27


Peters, Joan. From Time Immemorial: The Origins of the Arab–Jewish Conflict over Palestine. London: JKAP Publications, 1993. Differing claims amidst conflict between Arabs and Jews call for a studied response. Historian and journalist Joan Peters has provided such a book that both the Christian Century and National Review acknowledge as providing unrivaled clarifying thoroughness. Fierce criticism of this book by Noam Chomsky and Norman Finkelstein has not greatly subtracted from the essential challenge that it presents to Palestinian claims, which Alan Dershowitz cautiously references.

Phillips, Melanie. Londonistan. New York: Encounter Books, 2006. As a columnist for the London’s Daily Mail, this author lays bare the threat that resurgent Islam presents to the United Kingdom. However special focus is brought upon London as the hub of Moslem

27 James Parkes, The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue: A Study in the Origins of Antisemitism, pp. 371, 373,
extremism. From here we learn how Britain sleepwalks toward cultural oblivion by means of multicultural paralysis. Even Christian leaders, in buying into replacement theology, aid the advance of Islam while at the same time expressing support for anti-Judaism and anti-Zionism. This book is an excellent supplement to Bat Ye’or’s Eurabia.

**Porter, Stanley E and Pearson, Brook W. R., eds., Christian-Jewish Relations through the Centuries.** Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000. The first two chapters are of particular significance. Chapter One is, *Root Causes of the Jewish-Christian Rift from Jesus to Justin,* by Craig A. Evans, pp. 20-35. The supreme reason concerns the stumbling block that the suffering Christian Messiah presented to Judaism that had more triumphal expectations. Chapter Two is, *Ancient Understanding of the Christian-Jewish Split,* by Stanley E. Porter and Brook W. R. Pearson, pp. 36-51. The supreme reason here concerns supercessionism which, although not upheld by the Jerusalem church, yet flourished through the growth of Gentile Christianity, and especially the founding stimulation of Paul.

**Rausch, David A.** *Fundamentalist-Evangelicals and Anti-Semitism.* Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1993. Here is a conservative evangelical historian whose writings dispel numerous fallacies concerning the mischaracterization of fundamentalist-evangelicals, especially in America. In particular, a premillennial eschatology and its sympathy for national Israel and secular Zionism, has frequently come under fire, such as from amillennialists with a tendency for theological anti-Semitism.

In spite of scholarly perceptions to the contrary, the prophetically minded fundamentalist-evangelical has been (and currently is) a firm supporter of the Jewish state. And, in an age when anti-Zionism is often indistinguishable from ant-Semitism, this fact is crucial to our study. As we have seen throughout this study, the fundamentalist-evangelical was long a supporter of Jewish restoration to the Holy Land and, to this day, has received ridicule and scorn from other Christians for pro-Israel views. In spite of numerous liberal and conservative Christian cries to the contrary, this Christian Zionism has been a positive factor in combating any anti-Semitism within the fundamentalist-evangelical community.28

Also refer to this author’s *A Legacy Of Hatred: Why Christians Must Not Forget the Holocaust.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990.

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Remaud, Michel, *Israel, Servant Of God*. London: T & T Clark, 2003. Here is yet another Catholic, indebted to Franz Mussner, who challenges the established supercessionism of centuries while attempting to better reconcile the present reality of elect Israel and the Church, especially in the light of the Vatican II declaration, *Nostra Aetate*. Consider:

[I]t is well known that the [Roman Catholic] Church calls herself the ‘New Israel’, and it is regrettable that Vatican II itself made use of this expression. Now traditional in theology but nowhere to be found in the New Testament, it gives the impression that the Church has taken the place of Israel, so that from the theological point of view Israel no longer exists. Such a simplistic position, pushed to extremes, contradicts more balanced texts found in the New Testament (Rom. 9-11; Eph. 2-3). . . . Of all the theological documents promulgated by the Second Vatican Council, only the text on the Jews [*Nostra Aetate*] is without a single reference to any of the teachings of the Church, whether patristic, conciliar or pontifical. As is usual for all the declarations of the Magisterium, documents of Vatican II include references to former tradition. . . . The text on the Jews is the sole exception to this rule in that it refers exclusively to Scripture. . . . To study the horrendous history of anti-Semitism, overwhelming for us, is to perceive that nowhere did the Jews suffer more than within the Christian world. No theology of history can spare itself from deep reflection on this fact. 29

Sachar, Howard M. *A History of Israel, from the Rise of Zionism to Our Time*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979. This is an outstanding work. Especially relevant is Chapter IX, “Britain Repudiates The Jewish National Home.” Sachar is also the author of *A History of the Jews in America, Israel and Europe*, and editor of *The Rise of Israel: A Documentary History* (39 vols.). He serves as Professor of Modern History at George Washington University, is a consultant and lecturer on Middle Eastern affairs for numerous governmental bodies, and lectures widely in the United States and abroad.

Siker, Jeffrey S. *Disinheriting The Jews*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, c1991. This revision of a doctoral thesis presented to Princeton Theological Seminary, was originally titled: “Disinheriting the Jews: The Use of Abraham in Early Christian Controversy with Judaism from Paul Through Justin Martyr.” This is a work of recognized authority. The author’s conclusion is that,

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29 Michel Remaud, *Israel, Servant Of God*, pp. 5-6, 19, 36-37.
the various uses of Abraham from Paul through Justin Martyr show a shift in focus from Gentile inclusion to Jewish exclusion.” However: “Was this move theologically necessary or defensible? . . . Does Gentile inclusion in God’s promises necessitate Jewish exclusion? Justin Martyr, Marcion, Heracleon, Barnabas, and Ignatius apparently did equate Gentile inclusion with Jewish exclusion. . . . Only Paul seems clearly to have had problems with such an equation, in fact rejecting it implicitly in Romans 4 and explicitly in Romans 9-11. . . . Paul did not equate Jewish rejection of the gospel with God’s rejection of the Jews. Nor would he allow such an equation to be inferred. Rather, Jewish rejection of the gospel served God’s purpose of Gentile inclusion within the gospel. The Jews became enemies of the gospel so that Gentiles might be included within the gospel. Thus the Gentiles were saved by their enemies. This situation is the utter paradox and mystery of the gospel for Paul. . . . For Paul, non-Christian Jews continue to be included within God’s promises simply because of God’s covenant faithfulness to Abraham and other patriarchs. . . . Paul would not affirm the theological doctrine that became entrenched among later generations of Christians, namely, that Gentile inclusion necessitates Jewish exclusion.30

Telchin, Stan. *Abandoned: What is God’s Will for the Jewish People and the Church?* Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, 1997. This Hebrew Christian, in a simple and very readable style, deals with Romans 11, Church history, the Holocaust, and a host of matters that relate to a contemporary appreciation of Jews at a basic level, and especially the need to witness appropriately to them of their Messiah. The concluding chapter is most practical in that it provides specific directions concerning, “What Does the Church Need to Do?”

Vlach, Michael J. *The Church as a Replacement of Israel: An Analysis of Supersessionism.* This doctoral dissertation was presented to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, North Carolina. Included are assessments of Justin Martyr, Origen, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Immanuel Kant, Friederich Schliermacher, and Karl Barth. While supercessionism has been the majority view of the Christian church from the second century A.D. through the nineteenth century A.D., . . . this work will conclude that the Scriptures do not support the view that the New

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Testament church is the new Israel that has forever superceded national Israel as the people of God.31

**White, Derek C. Replacement Theology, Its Origin, History, And Theology.** Teddington, Middlesex: Christian Friends of Israel, 1997. This booklet of only 30 pages is an excellent introduction to and summary of the nature and role of replacement theology in church history.

One of the greatest tragedies to befall the Church was the severance from her Jewish roots, a rift which has been a cause of many heresies, of monasticism and departures from Biblical truth and lifestyle. The very descent of the Western Church into the dark middle ages—the period of intellectual and spiritual darkness in Europe from the fifth to the (possibly) fifteenth centuries—was almost certainly the result of this separation, not the least as a divine judgment on the Church for the anti-Semitism which was part of this severance.32

**Williamson, Clark M. Has God Rejected His People?** Nashville: Abingdon, 1982. Designed as an introduction to the history of the relationship between Judaism and Christianity, this author is an excellent resource even though he evidences little allegiance to conservative evangelical presuppositions. Concerning the roots of anti-Semitism that pervaded Hitler’s Germany, the author concludes:

All the literature one reads on the final solution leaves the clear impression that the pervasiveness of classical Christian anti-Jewish theology was a significant factor in the success of Hitler’s program. Where it did not directly contribute to support for Hitler’s policies—and it often did—it created an apathy toward Jews that was equally decisive in permitting the Holocaust. The great majority of the German people did not actively support or actively oppose Hitler: they were merely indifferent.33

**Wilson, Marvin R. Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith.** Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2000. Here is an excellent corrective to the widespread ignorance that pervades Christendom concerning its Jewish heritage. Especially refer to

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Though the break between Synagogue and Church had now essentially been made, the struggle between the two was far from over. A triumphalist and arrogant Church, largely Gentile in makeup, would now become more and more de-Judaized—severed from its Jewish roots. This de-Judaizing developed into a history of anti-Judaism, a travesty which has extended from the second century to the present day. . . . We must emphasize in conclusion that the Holocaust did not happen in a vacuum. Though it was devised in a country with an enviable reputation for brilliant culture and intellectual sophistication, the seeds of anti-Semitism had been planted much earlier. The Holocaust represents the tragic culmination of anti-Jewish attitudes and practices which had been allowed to manifest themselves—largely unchecked—in or nearby the Church for nearly two thousand years. Perhaps the most important reason the Holocaust happened is that the Church had forgotten its Jewish roots.34

Wistrich, Robert S. Antisemitism, The Longest Hatred. New York: Pantheon Books, 1991. This is a companion volume to the excellent Thames Television video production The Longest Hatred, 150 minutes, also released in 1991. With the encouragement of Simon Wiesenthal, Wistrich has provided a broad, scholarly sweep of anti-Semitism from a Jewish perspective that is approvingly referenced in Graham Keith’s Hated Without A Cause? Of particular interest is “Part 1, From the Cross to the Swastika.” Consider the following:

[Augustine was ] the immensely influential North African Church Father who lived at the end of the fourth century AD. His teachings had a dogmatic importance of the first order for the policy of the Popes and secular Christian rulers of the Middle Ages with regard to the Jews. They served to underline that the Church had become the new chosen people, replacing the old Israel which had betrayed the true message of God—which it should, of course, have been the first to acknowledge. St. Augustine even likened the Jewish people to Cain, the first criminal recorded in biblical history, who had murdered his own brother and merited death but instead had been condemned to wander unhappily ever after. The Torah is the mark of Cain of the deicide people who have misinterpreted their own Scriptures and continue to live in blindness and error. The Jews might deserve to be eradicated for their crime, but St. Augustine prefers

that they be preserved as “witnesses” to Christian truth until the end of time, when they will turn to Christ at the Last Judgment.

The canonical legislation of the Church would fully institutionalize by the thirteenth century the reprobate status of the Jew and the doctrine of *Servitus Judaeorum* (the ‘perpetual servitude of the Jews’). The Jews had to be subordinate to Christians, they could exercise no position of authority and Christian society had to be rigidly protected from ‘contamination’ through living, eating or engaging in sexual relations with them. The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) codified this will to segregate the Jews by requiring them to wear distinguishing dress—a conical hat in the Germanic lands and a ‘Jew badge’ (usually a yellow disc sewn into the clothing, whose color symbolized Judas’ betrayal of Christ for gold pieces) in Latin countries. The effects of the badge were to make Jews more visible and vulnerable to attack, reducing their ability to travel freely.

The German Reformation under Luther’s guidance, therefore led in a very unfavorable direction for the Jews, when compared with parallel developments in English, Dutch or Swiss Protestantism. The seed of hatred sown by Luther would reach its horrible climax in the Third Reich, when German Protestants showed themselves to be particularly receptive to Nazi anti-Semitism.35

**Yee, Tet-Lim N.** *Jews, Gentiles and Ethnic Reconciliation: Paul’s Jewish Identity and Ephesians*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. This revised doctoral thesis presented to Durham University, with Professor James Dunn as advisor, provides a detailed study of Ephesians 2:1-22 from the “new perspective” which, along with E. P. Sanders and N. T. Wright, reconsiders the epistles of Paul through the distinctive focus of first century Judaism. To begin with, his study leads to the conclusion “[t]hat the thought world of our author is characteristically Jewish,” and that “the author represents the Gentiles from the perspective of a Jew” and “is at heart a (Christian) Jew,”36 This leads to detailed exegesis of Ephesians 2 and resultant conclusions that the historic Reformed hermeneutic needs to seriously consider. For instance:

We will simply fail to grasp the import of Ephesians 2:14-18 unless we appreciate that the author wrote those encomiastic statements [declarations


of obsessive interest in *oneness*] about Christ to be set in comparison with the small-mindedness of certain Jews or Judaism.

The author of Ephesians does not abandon Judaism in favor of ‘Gentile Christianity’. There is also no concrete evidence for Gentile triumphalism over ethnic Israel in Ephesians (contra Käseman, Martin, Roetzel and others). Rather, the author’s language is of a renewed and expanded Israel/‘holy ones’ in which a ‘Gentile Christianity’ cannot understand itself except in terms of the category of Israel and of Israel’s blessing.

One of the unfortunate features in the Christian history of interpretation is that Ephesians has often been taken as a pretext for the view that the ‘Church’ has parted company with Israel (e.g., Schnackenburg, Lincoln, et al.).

It may be fairly claimed that the ‘Christianity’ represented by the author of Ephesians is a movement of renewal breaking through the boundaries within one Judaism (not all) of the first century which is marked characteristically by covenantal ethnocentrism. That being said, it would be wrong to suggest that Ephesians represents the abandonment of Judaism in favor of Greek triumphalism over ethnic Israel. Rather, we should speak of a Jewish messianic inclusivist movement which transcends covenantal ethnocentrism: the Messiah Jesus, who is portrayed as a peace-maker in Ephesians, has come to preach peace to the ‘far off’ and the ‘near.’ He has surmounted the social distance between Jew and Gentile so that ‘both’ can gain access to the God of Israel in a common spirit.37

The last paragraph here well represents the essential thrust of Judeocentric eschatology.

**Ye’or, Bat.** *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis.* Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2005. The Arabic word “dhimmi” refers to a non-Moslem who is under harsh terms of subjection within a Moslem society. Particularly since the defeat of the combined Arab military by Israel during the 1967 Six Day War and the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the Moslem states, especially those with substantial petroleum resources, have focused upon a different strategy. The exchange of European technology, both economic and military, for Middle Eastern oil, has come with the added price of recognition of the Palestinian Liberation Organization’s territorial claims as well as an anti-American and anti-Israel and Anti-Christian and anti-Western agenda. Hence, for over thirty years, European capitulation to these demands has resulted in “Eurabia: The Land of Dhimmitude,” that is the gradual subjection of Europe in general to spreading Moslem influence without

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37 Ibid., pp. 217, 221-222, 228.
ideological capitulation to the West in return, as well as increasing anti-Judaism. In parallel with this intended penetration of western society, there has also come about an increase in the influence of strident Christian anti-Judaic supercessionism as represented by Anglican Stephen Sizer and Islamophile literature represented by Anglican Bishop Kenneth Cragg. Here is essential reading for those who would better understand the present Moslem resurgence along with, especially in Europe, the increase in anti-Judaism.