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JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

C. I. Scofield's Teachings

Regarding the Conversion and Restoration of the Jewish Nation

in Fulfillment of Old and New Testament Prophecies

and their Potential Apologetic Value

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of

Rawlings School of Divinity

In Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree:

Doctor of Philosophy in Theology and Apologetics

By

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Dissertation Approval Sheet

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Abstract

The confirmation of C. I. Scofield's beliefs and teachings regarding a literal and national restoration of the Jewish people in fulfillment of Old and New Testament prophecies can be argued through the writings of Reformed theologians and those hostile to dispensationalism by utilizing a comparative biblical/theological approach on a key eschatological passage, Romans 11:26 and the statement, "All Israel shall be saved." Non-dispensationalists acknowledge or are in agreement with many of the teachings of Scofield but reject his conclusions regarding the restoration of a literal Jewish nation as being proof of the proper interpretation of the biblical text, even though a literal nation has been in existence since 1948. A comparative sampling of past and present non-dispensational scholars will be used similarly to a minimal facts apologetic approach showing that a literal nation today best explains and is the most logical and reasonable interpretation of the Old and New Testament prophecies.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Dr. Wim Malgo, founder of Midnight Call Ministries, pastor, evangelist, author, and tireless friend of Israel, who instilled in me a love for Israel and a love for the prophetic Word, and who once referred to C. I. Scofield as “a light shining in a dark place.”

Chapter One

Introduction

Need for the Study

This dissertation seeks to answer the research question, “What were the teachings of C. I. Scofield with respect to the conversion and restoration of the Jewish nation in fulfillment of Old and New Testament prophecies and how might his understanding be used in a way similar to a minimal facts apologetic?” In answering this question the dissertation will provide a detailed study of his views and then compare similar teachings of selected mid-twentieth and twenty-first century non-dispensationalists demonstrating areas of agreement and the one main area of disagreement with Scofield’s teachings.

Thesis Statement of the Study

The confirmation of C. I. Scofield's beliefs and teachings regarding a literal and national restoration of the Jewish people in fulfillment of Old and New Testament prophecies can be argued through the writings of Reformed theologians and those hostile to dispensationalism by utilizing a comparative biblical/theological approach on a key eschatological passage, Romans 11. Non-dispensationalists acknowledge or are in agreement with many of the teachings of Scofield, but reject his conclusions regarding the restoration of a literal Jewish nation as being proof of the proper interpretation of the biblical text.

Purpose and Limitations of the Study

In answering the research question above, the purpose of this dissertation will be to present and evaluate C. I. Scofield's teachings and apologetic regarding a literal and national restoration of the Jewish nation in fulfillment of Old and New Testament prophecies. In part, this will be done by comparing a sampling of non-dispensational¹ scholars showing areas of agreement and disagreement, contending that while there is some exegetical agreement, especially with respect to the interpretation of Romans 11 regarding the chronological and eschatological salvation and restoration of the Jews, there also remains a disagreement over a literal national Israel now and in the future. This sampling of non-dispensationalists on Romans 11 with Scofield then will argue that Scofield's apologetic of a restored Israel might be used similarly to a minimal fact apologetic.²

Some non-dispensationalists acknowledge or are in agreement with the eschatological and chronological timeframe of Scofield, but reject his conclusions regarding the restoration of a literal Jewish nation in fulfillment of Bible prophecy. This is the problem that will be addressed in this dissertation. Many scholars of either position, dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists agree Romans 11 to be a key eschatological passage of Scripture. Romans

¹ This dissertation defines a non-dispensationalist as one who rejects primarily the restoration of a literal national Israel in fulfillment of biblical prophecies past, present, or in the future. The designation "non-dispensationalist" as used here includes Reformed theologians and those not Reformed such as Roman Catholics, Jewish theologians, and Seventh Day Adventists, all of which will be utilized in this dissertation. Sometimes, the term may refer to Reformed theologians specifically as many of those surveyed in this dissertation are from a Reformed Theology background or members of a Reformed church. Those not from a Reformed background will usually be identified as necessary and appropriate. When the Reformed are alluded to in this dissertation, their eschatology is in focus, not their soteriology.

² The approach taken in this dissertation is not a minimal facts approach in itself as that would be quite exhaustive, but operates similarly with a smaller sampling and more focused time limitation.

11:25-26 can be used as a case study for revealing how a particular hermeneutical system sees Israel and its future.³

An extensive study of Scofield's own writings will be examined to focus on his apologetic approach to the Scriptures.⁴ There is a need for an honest, fair, and scholarly treatment of Scofield's role in his understanding of the restoration of the Jewish people to a national homeland within the framework and hermeneutics of his dispensational beliefs. It is much more consistent and reasonable to argue with Scofield that Zionism (religious and political) is a precursor of the fulfillment of the biblical prophecies in the Old Testament rather than a denial of present-day Israel as having prophetic significance.⁵ Romans 11 will be used either to confirm Reformed Theology's understanding of a future for Israel or it may challenge its ability to address Israel's existence biblically or theologically. As understood by present-day dispensationalists, the current nation-state of Israel affirms Scofield's teaching and might be argued as an apologetic for the truthfulness of Christianity and the Bible.

This dissertation is not a defense of dispensationalism nor is it an attempt to rebut and defend charges or accusations against dispensationalism with the exception being as they relate

³ H. Wayne House, "The Future of National Israel," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 166:664 (October 2009): 476.

⁴ A listing of Scofield's books, pamphlets, articles, and other relevant writings is included in Appendix A.

⁵ There are several interpreters who have attempted to make the claim that the Jews of modern-day Israel are not true descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For a Reformed scholar who has argued this point, see James B. Jordan, "The Future of Israel Re-examined," *Biblical Horizons* no. 27 (July 1991). For others, see dispensationalist Thomas Ice's, *The Case for Zionism* (Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Press, 2017), 9, 127-47. On the other hand, a few scholars who address the land issue do make the case that there is a viable connection between the Jewish people in modern Israel and the Jews of the Old Testament. For three that do, see Walter Brueggemann, *Chosen? Reading the Bible Amid the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2015), 5-6, 47-52; John Goldingay, "The Jews, the Land, and the Kingdom," *Anvil* vol. 4, no. 1 (1987): 21; and Reinhold Niebuhr, "Our Stake in the State of Israel," *The New Republic* (February 3, 1957): 6. See also Donald E. Gowan, *Theology of the Prophetic Books: The Death and Resurrection of Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 16. Gowan notes, "In fact, however, the Jews who survived the loss of their land have become one of the most remarkable people on earth. They did cease to exist as a nation, but unlike others who have suffered the same fate, they did not lose their identity." Most theologians avoid the issue altogether.

to Scofield's main thesis regarding the return of the Jewish people and the re-establishment of their national homeland in fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Hence, it is not an attempt to prove that dispensations exist or the validity of dispensationalism as a theological system derived from a literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic.

No attempt will be made to argue the number of dispensations. Scofield believed in seven dispensations: the dispensations of innocence, conscience, human government, promise, law, grace, and the kingdom age (man under the personal reign of Christ).⁶ Only two of Scofield's dispensations will be addressed: the Church age and the kingdom age. Paul Karleen notes, "... It is generally recognized that the distinction between law and grace is basic to an understanding of the Scriptures."⁷ What Karleen is acknowledging is that at least two eras or dispensations are agreed upon by most Bible interpreters, dispensational and non-dispensational alike. Todd Mangum and Mark Sweetnam note, "Despite Scofield's proliferation of complex contrasts and classifications, the heart of his explanation is actually quite easy to grasp. Law and grace are opposing principles; the Old Testament is built on law, the New Testament on grace."⁸ In that sense, every biblical theologian is a dispensationalist insofar as he or she recognizes that God works in different eras or time periods in history.⁹

This research has not been an attempt to prove or disprove C. I. Scofield's personal life to determine his foibles, sins, personal shortcomings, or his character. None of these claims,

⁶ C. I. Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1896), 13-16.

⁷ Paul S. Karleen, "Introduction to the 1984 Edition," in *The New Scofield Study Bible*, C. I. Scofield (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), vii.

⁸ R. Todd Mangum and Mark S. Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible: Its History and Impact on the Evangelical Church* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster Publishing, 2009), 127.

⁹ Gerald McDermott, ed., *The New Christian Zionism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 15.

accusations, charges, or innuendos have been investigated in this dissertation. Most of the attacks on Scofield's personal life concerned events before his conversion although such matters are acknowledged in Chapter Two.¹⁰

Scofield's hermeneutical approach was the foundation for his belief in a literal fulfillment of the prophecies in the Old Testament as well as his belief that Israel's Messiah would return and rule over a literal nation of Israel in fulfillment of the covenant made with David.¹¹ This would become the framework of dispensationalism as he presented it. Renald Showers notes, "Because of this hermeneutic, Scofield saw in God's word a resurrection for the nation of Israel long before there was any hope of a modern Jewish state."¹² After Scofield's death, World War II and the attempted Nazi extermination of the Jews culminated in an apparent fulfillment of the predictions of dispensationalists regarding a national Israel and a homeland for ethnic Jews, something that many had ridiculed for decades.¹³

It is not the purpose of this dissertation to validate every teaching of C. I. Scofield or *The Scofield Reference Bible*. Scofield did propagate ideas thought by subsequent evangelicals and conservative theologians and commentators to be errors such as the gap theory, Ussher's chronology, and perhaps an overzealous emphasis on typology.¹⁴ There are certainly any number of things that Scofield could be attacked for biblically or theologically, but the primary assault

¹⁰ For a very good treatment addressing some of the accusations against Scofield, see Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 1-51. The first part of the book addresses accusations against Scofield, the latter half addresses his theological influences.

¹¹ C. I. Scofield, *What Do the Prophets Say?* (Philadelphia: The Sunday School Times, 1916), 91-92.

¹² Renald Showers, "The Life and Legacy of C. I. Scofield," *Israel My Glory* (September-October 2016): 38.

¹³ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 179.

¹⁴ Albertus Pieters, *The Scofield Bible* (Swengal, PA: Reiner Publications, 1965), 11-13. Mangum and Sweetnam discuss Scofield's typology on pages 159-65, 193, 223-25.

has been directed at his eschatological beliefs, especially as they relate to Israel and the Jews as Mangum and Sweetnam acknowledge, “That so many of Scofield’s notes are devoted to tying these themes together and making the case for their validity is a feature of *The Scofield Reference Bible* that has drawn more attention, positively and negatively, than any other feature.”¹⁵ Scofield did not have theological training nor a theological degree as he was a lawyer, and his training was in law.¹⁶ Also, it is noted that Scofield did not address higher or textual criticism in his notes as that was not his interest in producing the study Bible.

This dissertation is not a study on the rapture of the Church nor premillennialism *per se*. Scofield did hold to the pre-tribulation rapture of the Church but as Mangum and Sweetnam point out the pre-tribulation viewpoint is given very little attention in *The Scofield Reference Bible*.¹⁷

On a similar topic, this study is not a critique of John Nelson Darby, though Darby’s influence on Scofield cannot be denied.¹⁸ It is interesting to note that neither in the

¹⁵ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 89.

¹⁶ The fact that Darby and Scofield were attorneys was a great advantage. As lawyers, they were trained to take the words of a document literally – at face value – and by following the same procedure they would have much discernment in interpreting the plain text of Scripture. See George Zeller, “John MacArthur and Dispensationalism and Our Response,” The Middletown Bible Church, <http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/dispens/jmacdis.htm> (November 2018). That Scofield’s theology was also influenced by his legal background, see Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 75.

¹⁷ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 88-89. Scofield does not use the word “rapture” in the definitive passage of I Thessalonians 4, the secondary passage of I Corinthians 15, nor in the Subject Index. He uses the word only once in an obscure footnote on page 1349.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 62-73. The popularity of dispensationalism and *The Scofield Reference Bible* in America owes its theology and unique emphasis primarily to one man: John Nelson Darby. Paul Richard Wilkinson proposes that it was John Nelson Darby through his dispensational theology who laid the foundation for Christian Zionism. See Paul Richard Wilkinson, *For Zion’s Sake* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007). Darby not only influenced British attitudes toward the Jews (which eventually led to the Balfour Declaration) but also influenced Christian Zionism in America during the early 1900s, which movement is still strong today. Wilkinson wrote, “The very ethos of the United States enabled an unassuming ‘Irish clergyman’ to lay the foundations for a distinct form of evangelicalism which has greatly impacted American Christianity” (258). Thomas Ice notes in the foreword to Wilkinson’s book, “... He was also a pioneer in the development of a consistent Israelology, which today provides the theological basis for the majority of Christian Zionists,” (p. xvii).

“Introduction” to *The Scofield Study Bible*, nor in any of his writings does Scofield acknowledge his indebtedness to Darby.¹⁹ However, Miss Emily Farmer, who was assigned as Scofield’s assistant in his work on the Bible stated that the two sets of reference books on his desk to which he referred constantly were *The Synopsis of the Books of the Bible* by John Nelson Darby and *The Numerical Bible* by F. W. Grant.²⁰

Only one aspect of dispensationalism will be addressed and that is as a product of literal interpretation or as a philosophy of history.²¹ It examines the goal of God through history culminating in the kingdom of God on earth. One will not understand the goal and purpose of all of history in Scofield’s understanding and that is the establishment of the glory of God upon the earth through the designated appointed ruler, the Messiah without understanding dispensations. For God’s ultimate purpose in his sovereign plan is the establishment of his Son over the nations (e.g., Psalm 2). The millennium and millennial reign of Jesus Christ is the culmination of all human history.²² Historian of American church history and evangelicalism, George Marsden,

¹⁹ Stephen Sizer, “Dispensational Approaches to the Land,” in *The Land of Promise*, Philip Johnston and Peter Walker, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 151.

²⁰ John Reid, *F. W. Grant: His Life, Ministry, and Legacy* (Plainfield, NJ: John Reid Book Fund, 1995), 27-28.

²¹ Richard Mouw, a Reformed author and former president of Fuller Theological Seminary acknowledged that dispensationalists were right regarding their philosophy of history. See Richard Mouw, “What the Old Dispensationalists Taught Me,” *Christianity Today* (March 6, 1995): 34. For dispensationalism as a philosophy of history, see Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 20-23. Literal interpretation will be addressed in Chapter Four.

²² Dispensationalism is defined as “a theological movement within evangelicalism stressing an apocalyptic understanding of history. One of its distinguishing peculiarities is that it sees the Old and New Testaments united eschatologically in a way that is consistent with a historical-grammatical (i.e., literal) interpretation of promises made to national Israel of an earthly kingdom ruled personally by the Messiah, Jesus Christ.” See M. James Sawyer, “Dispensationalism,” in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought*, Alister E. McGrath, ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 106. Also, it has been defined as “a philosophy of history, delineating God’s relationship to human affairs, a hermeneutical methodology defining how Scripture is to be interpreted, and more popularly a particular form of eschatology, a futurist premillennialism with an apocalyptic view of the end-times.” See B. Dwain Waldrep, “Dispensationalism,” in *The Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization* (Vol. 1:A-D), George Thomas Kurian, ed. (West Sussex, England: Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 695.

notes that dispensationalists “predicted the literal return of the Jews to Israel just as the Bible indicated.”²³

Israel’s restoration to their ancient homeland after centuries of exile played a central role in Scofield’s dispensational scheme. He believed that this was necessary before their conversion but it also would be necessary before the conversion of the nations as a whole. A fresh look at Scofield’s apologetic belief in the literal fulfillment of the sacred Scripture is necessary today due to a large number of attacks on Scofield and dispensationalism as well as a renewed emphasis in the area of apologetics. Also noteworthy is progressive dispensationalist Craig Blaising’s observation that current events have altered the political landscape: “With the reconstitution of Israel as a political reality after more than 1800 years, the providential-historical argument for the end of Israel nationally has been thrown into question as well.”²⁴

It was necessary to read and research all relevant writings of Scofield, including his reference study Bible notes, his books, pamphlets, articles and other writings. The goal is to critically examine and present Scofield’s own teachings rather than distortions of them.²⁵

As will be seen, it is important to note that Scofield did not just believe in a mass conversion of the Jews at the end of time as they were incorporated into the Church, but in a total national restoration of the Jewish nation totally separate from the Church.²⁶ This was a

²³ George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 40.

²⁴ Craig Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44/3 (September 2001): 439.

²⁵ Distortions of Scofield and dispensationalism will be addressed in Chapter Two.

²⁶ See Richard R. DeRidder, “Jesus for the Jews: the Christian Reformed Church in Mission,” *The Presbyterian Journal* (Vol. 43, No. 22, September 26, 1984): 6-7. According to DeRidder, the salvation of the Jews was dependent upon their incorporation into the Church. Jews could maintain their identity as Jews as long as they did not disrupt the Christian community. This is the belief of some within Reformed Theology today, even among those who still contend for a national salvation of the Jews. However, the belief of many Reformed and non-Reformed theologians today is that this salvation of Israel will take place at the end of the age and will not occur

completely radical interpretation according to well-known Reformed scholar Albertus Pieters, writing fifty years after the publication of Scofield's works, who contended that it went against the Church and the creeds and was thereby heretical.²⁷

As will be seen, Scofield was writing as early as 1909 of a Jewish return to their land as promised in the Old Testament.²⁸ He departed from the restorationist tradition in his account of the Jewish return to the land of Israel. Classic restorationists believed that the Jewish people would adopt Christianity before or in conjunction with that great event.²⁹ According to political scientist Samuel Goldman, "Scofield pushed off conversion to the last minute before the second coming of Christ and taught that Jews would have returned to Palestine *in unbelief*."³⁰ He believed that Jews would be inhabiting the land at the time of the great tribulation period; Jerusalem and the Holy Land would be the vortex of the great tribulation.³¹

through evangelization methods in this present age. For example, Baptist theologian Millard J. Erickson notes, "There is, however, a future for national Israel . . . Yet Israel will be saved by entering the church just as do the Gentiles. There is a special future coming for national Israel, however, through large-scale conversion to Christ and entry into the church." See Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 1053. Erickson believes that this conversion will be accomplished at the second coming of Christ.

²⁷ Pieters, *The Scofield Bible*, 8, 9, 22. For a more recent Reformed interpreter who argues Israel's status from the creeds and Church tradition, see Willem VanGemenen, "Israel as the Hermeneutical Crux in the Interpretation of Prophecy," *Westminster Theological Journal* 45:1 (Spring 1983): 133.

²⁸ C. I. Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1909, 1917), 881. See also C. I. Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain* (Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis, Printers and Publishers, n.d.), 126; and C. I. Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box* (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1917), 66.

²⁹ The term "restorationist" was the term used before Zionism became a movement at the end of the nineteenth century. The term "restoration" is understood to mean more than simply the salvation of Israel and individual Jews. Rather, the term is referring to a return of Israel to the land and a role to the nations in an earthly millennium. Included in the concept of restoration would be a return to their status as God's elect nation over all the nations of the world that is not shared with any other group, including the Church. See Michael J. Vlach, "Various Forms of Replacement Theology," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 20/1 (Spring 2009): 65.

³⁰ Samuel Goldman, *God's Country* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 148, (emphasis in original). Cf. Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1337.

³¹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1337.

Samuel Goldman understands that the key to Scofield's dispensational belief was that the people of Israel were the living link between the covenantal past and the prophetic future.³² Contemporary dispensationalists following in the footsteps of Scofield contend that this seems to be the Apostle Paul's argument as well in Romans 11:1ff. They believe that the survival of the Jewish people through the centuries provides a powerful apologetic to the veracity of the Bible.³³

Theological Disagreements Addressed Within the Study

The primary purpose of this dissertation is a detailed study, presentation, and articulation of C. I. Scofield's understanding of Israel, past, present, and future. Yet, as is well known, the dispensational framework and biblical hermeneutics of which he and others have been and are proponents differ significantly in eschatology from many in the Reformed tradition.³⁴ One such difference or problem that will be studied in this dissertation is that of the rejection by many non-dispensationalists and Reformed theologians of a literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic leading to a national Israel as fulfillment of Old Testament and New Testament prophecies in spite of Israel's resurrection and re-establishment as a nation in 1948 and the surpassing of Israel's seventieth birthday in 2018. Reformed theologians and non-dispensationalists, including both amillennialists and postmillennialists affirm a salvation for ethnic Israel (who they equate

³² Goldman, *God's Country*, 148.

³³ Michael Rydelnik, "The Jewish People: Evidence for the Truth of Scripture," in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel*, Darrell L. Bock, Mitch Glaser, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2014), 258, 265. See also Norman L. Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1999), 613-14. Israel and the Jews as an apologetic will be dealt with in Chapter Six.

³⁴ When capitalized, "Reformed" was originally a synonym for "Protestant," so it covered the Lutheran, Zwinglian, and Calvinist branches of the Reformation. Gradually, the term was restricted to the Calvinist churches on the European continent, while in British lands such churches were generally called "Presbyterian." See Fred H. Klooster, "How Reformed Theologians 'Do Theology' in Today's World," in *Doing Theology in Today's World*, John D. Woodbridge, Thomas Edward McComiskey, eds. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), 227. The specific disagreement with Reformed Theology comes in the area of eschatology, not soteriology.

with national Israel in Romans 11:26) distinct from Gentile Christianity (i.e., the Church), but they reject a literal national Israel – currently and in the future.³⁵

Craig Blaising succinctly states the basis for disagreement in his article, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” presented at the 2000 annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Nashville, Tennessee. Blaising asks, “Is there a theological future for a national Israel? ... Are there theological reasons to believe that Israel has a future?”³⁶

Much of contemporary theology continues to deny Israel’s biblical and theological importance rejecting a grammatical-historical approach to the Scripture. This belief is known as replacement theology or supersessionism.³⁷ While most of Christianity has adopted a punitive version of supersessionism (the belief that God rejected the Jews when they rejected Jesus), some adopt economic supersessionism or structural supersessionism³⁸ – a belief that does not

³⁵ Stephen J. Wellum and Brent E. Parker, *Progressive Covenantalism* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016), 235-36. See also Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 1053 and Manfred Brauch, *Hard Sayings of Paul* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1989), 71.

³⁶ Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 435.

³⁷ Both terms refer to the same concept and are used interchangeably. The term “supersessionism” will be used more often in this dissertation. Others such as Terence Donaldson use the term “displacement theology.” Some prefer to use the term “fulfillment theology,” or a “redefined” theology as these labels are more positive than negative. Christopher J. H. Wright prefers the term “extended theology.” However, Barry Horner observes, “Whatever the terminology that is used concerning this perspective, whether replacement theology, supersessionism, fulfillment theology, transference theology, or absorptionism, they all amount to the same basic denigration of the Jews and ultimately of national Israel in the present Christian dispensation.” See Barry Horner, *Future Israel* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2007), 3, and Michael Vlach, “Various Forms of Replacement Theology,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 20/1 (Spring 2009): 57-59.

³⁸ Structural supersessionism refers not to a doctrinal perspective like punitive or economic supersessionism, but rather to the canonical narrative as a whole. This view sees the Jews and Israel as a mere backdrop to the biblical story. Israel is not really even in the main story of the Bible, but has been redacted completely. For the scholarly understanding of structural supersessionism, see R. Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg-Fortress Press, 1996), 29-33. To see how prevalent this teaching is, consult Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible Book by Book* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 14-20.

deny that the Jews are still God's chosen people and that God will be fulfilling his covenant promises, but that the covenants are being or will be fulfilled by the Church.³⁹

Yet many Reformed scholars and non-dispensationalists continue to uphold a distinction between Israel and the Church up until the very end according to Romans 11:26 as will be studied in this dissertation. Non-dispensational theologians bring Israel (i.e., ethnic Jews) to the verge of salvation but any national distinction dissipates after that point. Israel as a people and a nation will merge into the one people, the Church.⁴⁰

Toward the end of this study, this research will consider the question, "To what extent does non-dispensationalism's insistence on Israel's salvation argue logically for a position similar, if not identical, to Scofield's position and that of dispensationalism that Israel will again be a restored earthly nation?" This perspective is grounded in the belief that the Jewish people have been preserved as a people and now occupy their centuries-old land.⁴¹ Israel's existence as a nation today might be used as a strong argument that Scofield has been vindicated in his teaching and that present-day Israel can be seen as an apologetic to the Bible: a precursor to a future national salvation as described in Romans 11:26-28.

³⁹ For example, see covenant theologians Wellum and Parker, *Progressive Covenantalism*, 39-40.

⁴⁰ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 1058-59; Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 861. See also William Hendriksen, *Exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), 376. "The Apostle Paul recognizes *only one (cultivated) olive tree!* In other words, the church is *one* living organism . . . *One olive tree* represents *all* the saved, regardless of their origin. . . Remember: ONE OLIVE TREE!" (Emphasis and caps are in the original).

⁴¹ Dispensationalists take literally the land promised to Abraham's descendants in Genesis 15:18, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." Different translations of the Bible will be utilized in this dissertation. This passage is from the *King James Version*. According to Wilkinson, "Although many Jews have now returned to the land, and the state of Israel has been re-established, Christian Zionists insist that Israel's present territory is only a fraction of what was promised to Abraham." See Paul Richard Wilkinson, *For Zion's Sake* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), 19.

Methodology and Limitations of the Study

It is necessary to study the primary writings of Scofield to present a detailed study and analysis of his views on the Jewish people and the nation of Israel as he understood it from Bible prophecy. In so doing, it will study his view of Israel and the Jewish people in history, in his era, and his understanding of them beyond his era in fulfillment of Bible prophecy and the divine and sovereign plan of God throughout history.

The research methodology will focus on surveying a sampling of theologians and biblical scholars primarily in the last 100 years or so (since the publication of *The Scofield Reference Bible* in 1909) to the present in order to compare their views with those of Scofield focusing on the chronological and eschatological timeline of events surrounding the salvation of Israel and the Jews as presented in Romans 11: 25-26.⁴² This comparative approach to Romans 11:25-26 will present points of agreement with Scofield, as well as study and articulate the disagreement with Scofield's thought.

This dissertation does not argue from a minimal facts perspective directly as that is beyond the scope of this study, but it is based on a similar methodology.⁴³ This approach will do the same thing on a smaller, limited scale operating within a timespan of current and past thought primarily over the past 100 years with respect to a national Israel. Several current scholars will be consulted regarding their views on Romans 11.

⁴² This sampling will be mainly limited to around the past 100 years or so since 1909 and the publication of *The Scofield Reference Bible*, even though it may include several contributions more recent especially on the exegesis of Romans 11.

⁴³ The minimal facts approach is to utilize data that is well evidenced and admitted to by a general consensus of scholars, even critical scholars. Habermas notes, "One of the most popular approaches to historical Jesus studies is to begin with a list of historical facts that are admitted to by virtually all researchers." The minimal facts approach would be considered a bare-bones level of historical evidence. See Gary Habermas, *The Risen Jesus and Future Hope* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 8-9.

According to Gary Habermas, “The probability of the resurrection can be argued *even when only a minimum number of highly evidenced, critically admitted historical facts is employed.*”⁴⁴

The approach taken in this dissertation does not deal as much with probability as with fact and reality. Metaphorically, Israel as a nation was resurrected from the dead in 1948. Theologically and exegetically, it might be argued that Jesus’ resurrection guaranteed Israel’s resurrection.

Scotfield believed that the resurrection of Jesus is the bridge from Messiah’s death to Messiah’s glory.⁴⁵ If so, then perhaps the argument also might be extended to national Israel.

The value of a comparative study approach will be to narrow the points of disagreement very much like the minimal facts argument for Jesus’ resurrection. The minimal facts argument does show the points of agreement, but it also reveals the point of disagreement; in Romans 11 the disagreement is clearly over the existence of a literal Israel now and in the future.

Although Scotfield’s death in 1921 occurred more than a quarter of a century before the establishment of Israel as a nation in 1948, his anticipation of such an event is significant in the history of dispensationalism in that not only did he and his contemporaries believe and teach that such an event would occur, but dispensationalists (and other premillennialists) since 1948 have continued to understand the event as prophetically significant.

Relationship to Theology and Importance of the Study

Within the broad spectrum of contemporary evangelical theology there remains disagreement with respect to the question: “Is there a theological future for a national Israel?”

⁴⁴ Gary Habermas, *The Risen Jesus and Future Hope* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 30, (emphasis in original). For more on the minimal facts approach, see Gary Habermas, “Evidential Apologetics,” in *Five Views on Apologetics*, Steven Cowan, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 92-121.

⁴⁵ C. I. Scotfield, *Prophecy Made Plain* (Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis, Printers and Publishers, n.d.), 109.

“Are there theological reasons to believe that Israel has a future?” Even within the narrower field of dispensationalism, there has been significant historical and theological development since Scofield’s era. In recent decades, some of this has pertained to central ideas of dispensationalism and the essence of dispensationalism or the *sine qua non*, the absolutely, indispensable part of the system. According to Charles Ryrie, the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism is a literal hermeneutic and a distinction between Israel and the Church.⁴⁶

The traditional Christian answer to Blaising’s question regarding a future for Israel is largely rejected by replacement theology or supersessionism, the belief that the Christian Church has replaced, nullified, redefined, and inherited all the promises and covenants God made to a literal nation and people in the Old Testament, the Jews or physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.⁴⁷ Old Testament Jewish scholar Jacques Doukhan explains supersessionism:

It teaches that the disobedience of the people of Israel in the Old Testament and, above all, in the New Testament with the rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah, has led God to reject Israel and make a ‘new covenant’ with a new people. The Israel of the Old Testament stands replaced by the Christian church, which has inherited all the privileges and divine blessings given to Abraham and the Hebrew prophets, leaving to the Jews only the curses and the judgments. *Israel has failed.*⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 45-48. This one feature is understood in the study to be the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism. *Sine qua non* is Latin for, “the indispensable part of the system.” This will be emphasized throughout as it is the main point of the argument as espoused by Scofield and dispensationalists and rejected by non-dispensationalists.

⁴⁷ The term “Israel” in its primary sense designates the descendants of Jacob as an ethnic, cultural, and national identity. See Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 435. The term also includes Jews, Jewish people, Hebrews, etc. The term is not limited to the present political and national state in the Middle East, nor is it limited to those who adhere to the religion of Judaism only. See Arnold Fruchtenbaum, “Israel and the Church,” in *Issues in Dispensationalism*, Wesley R. Willis, John R. Master, Charles C. Ryrie, eds. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 113. Non-dispensationalists may have three or four different Israels in the same context, whether it be true Israel, spiritual Israel, national Israel, unbelieving Israel, or elect Israel even after some of them admit that the term contextually can only have one meaning in Romans 11.

⁴⁸ Jacques Doukhan, *The Mystery of Israel* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2004), 11, (emphasis in original).

Blaising has noted, “Supersessionism lives in Christian theology today purely on the momentum of its own tradition.”⁴⁹ Most historians are in agreement that Justin Martyr was one of the first to claim that the Church was the true Israel.⁵⁰ Justin Martyr’s *Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew*⁵¹ was important in establishing a view of the Christian Gentiles as the new Israel. The doctrinal authority ascribed to the Old Testament was based on the unquestioning assumption that it was a Christian book. According to J. N. D. Kelly, “Justin’s insistence that the Jewish Scriptures did not belong to the Jews but to the Christians was universally shared.”⁵²

The main point and argumentation of the *Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew* by Justin with the Jewish interlocutor is to show that by virtue of the Old Testament text and prophecies, Christians are the true heirs of the promises made to Israel. Justin’s dialogue with Trypho is the first elaborate exposition of the reasons for regarding Christ as the Messiah of the Old Testament, and the first systematic attempt to exhibit the false positions of the Jews in regard to Christianity.⁵³ That the subsequent centuries-long history of Jewish-Christian relations has been tragic and devastating is well documented.

⁴⁹ Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 436.

⁵⁰ Gerald McDermott, *Israel Matters* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2017), 3. There are quite a few variations to this among non-dispensationalists. Many today claim that Jesus is the true Israel. For example, see Wellum and Parker, *Progressive Covenantalism*, 43-46. The same authors also claim that the Church is the true Israel, (39-40). These terms never occur in the Bible. Because they cannot adequately define the term “Israel,” there are major inconsistencies in their interpretation of Romans 11. See Chapter Four, pages 147-156.

⁵¹ There are various translations of the *Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew*. Quotes here are from Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Apostolic Fathers: Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*, vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1885), 194-270.

⁵² J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1960), 32.

⁵³ Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Apostolic Fathers: Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*, vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1884), 160.

Blaising notes that after the tragedy of the Holocaust, many biblical scholars have reassessed the anti-Jewish bias by which Scripture has been read with the consequences in part being a major shift of opinion on the New Testament expectation of a future for Israel.⁵⁴ Because of Auschwitz and the other extermination sites of the Holocaust, more and more people have come to recognize a linkage with the supersessionist ideology.⁵⁵

This supersessionist thesis has consciously and unconsciously nurtured the teaching of contempt and inspired the anti-Semitic hatred that led to the Holocaust.⁵⁶ Blaising notes, “Key to this has been the development of a consensus regarding Paul’s teaching in Romans 9-11 that there is indeed a future in the plan of God for Israel – not a redefined Israel, but ethnic-national Israel.”⁵⁷

Terence Donaldson made the observation that the Holocaust, or the final solution and centuries of anti-Semitism and anti-Judaic preaching and teaching have contributed significantly to the atmosphere of social attitudes that once saw the Jews and Judaism as a problem, and Christian scholars began to reevaluate New Testament texts regarding the role of the Jews in Paul’s writings. At the forefront of this movement stood the “New Perspective on Paul,” a term coined by New Testament scholar James D. G. Dunn.⁵⁸ In this scholarly reappraisal of Paul,

⁵⁴ Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 437.

⁵⁵ Though beyond the scope of this dissertation, interested readers should see Barry R. Leventhal, “Theological Perspectives on the Holocaust,” unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1982, and Barry Leventhal, “Israel in Light of the Holocaust,” in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel*, Darrell Bock, Mitch Glaser, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2014), 213-48.

⁵⁶ Doukhan, *The Mystery of Israel*, 11-12.

⁵⁷ Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 437.

⁵⁸ Terence L. Donaldson, “Riches for the Gentiles” (Romans 11:12): Israel’s Rejection and Paul’s Gentile Mission,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 112/1 (1993): 81-82.

Romans 11 plays a prominent role according to Donaldson. Perhaps this has contributed to a more sympathetic role of the Jews in God's prophetic plans and less of an effort to replace or displace them as supersessionism has taught since the beginning of church history.⁵⁹

As will be studied in this dissertation, exegesis of Romans 11 throughout church history from patristic times unto the present day has taught a displacement theology (or replacement theology or supersessionism). Donaldson writes, "But the thrust of Romans 11 is that Gentiles join the Jews who believe, not that they replace the Jews who do not. However the riches of the Gentiles are linked to the failure of the Jewish majority, they are linked just as tightly to the success of the believing remnant."⁶⁰ In dispensationalism, it is not so much Israel joining the Church as the Church joining Israel, partaking of the blessings which were originally covenanted to Israel and then extended to the Gentiles through the Jewish Messiah.⁶¹ Scott Bader-Saye agrees: "God's faithfulness to the church is predicated on God's faithfulness to Israel, and the church's own place in the covenant is secure only if Israel remains part of the covenant. The limbs are no sturdier than the trunk that upholds them."⁶²

There is in contemporary theology a recurring charge based on Scofield's teaching that dispensationalists want Jesus to return so that Jews will all die in a fiery apocalypse.⁶³ Yet, this

⁵⁹ Donaldson, "Riches for the Gentiles, 81-82.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 83-84.

⁶¹ David L. Turner, "Matthew among the Dispensationalists," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* vol. 53, no. 4 (December 2010): 716.

⁶² Scott Bader-Saye, *Church and Israel after Christendom* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005), 26.

⁶³ Timothy Demy, "American Evangelical Dispensationalism and the Charge of Anti-Semitism," in *Intellectual Anti-Semitism from a Global Perspective- Comparative Studies from a Global Perspective* vol. 4, Sarah K. Danielson, Frank Jacob, eds. (Wurzberg: Koenigshausen & Neumann, 2018).

charge continues to be made that dispensationalism seeks to initiate an end-times apocalyptic scenario that would result in the death of millions of people. In reality, the exact opposite is true. Romans chapter 11 concludes with the promise not that all Israel will be burned up in the apocalypse, but rather with the statement that “all Israel will be saved.”⁶⁴ The charge of anti-Semitism against Scofield, dispensationalists, and his contemporaries is unfounded in that Scofield advocated for the restoration and re-establishment of a Jewish nation in which Jews would be the predominant people as the elect people chosen by God and blessed above all nations. A charge of anti-Semitism would be the exact opposite of the teaching and beliefs of Christian Zionists. Scofield believed that Israel and unbelieving Jews would be saved and converted (not destroyed in a fiery apocalypse) when their Messiah returns.⁶⁵ Scofield would write, “I have always loved God’s ancient people, and I rejoice to know from the prophets that this mission (i.e., world evangelization) is a part of their glorious future.”⁶⁶ A detailed study of Scofield’s beliefs with respect to national Israel and its relationship to the field of apologetics will be a contribution to the greater field of contemporary eschatology and theology.

Structure of the Study

The first chapter provides the research question for the study and with some comment, presents a plan for the dissertation. In so doing it articulates the nature of the study and its contribution to the greater discipline of theology and apologetics.

⁶⁴ David French, “The Real Reasons American Evangelicals Support Israel,” *National Review* (March 22, 2019).

⁶⁵ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 74; 88-89; 122.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 99.

The second chapter studies the historical context of the life and ministry of C. I. Scofield by examining his influence in American culture, and the influences on him. In so doing, it studies and evaluates favorable and unfavorable presentations of his life and work and places his teaching against the backdrop of early twentieth-century Anglo-American evangelicalism and the transatlantic commonalities of existing Christian expectations of a return of the Jewish people to a national homeland in fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

The third chapter provides a detailed study and presentation of Scofield's teaching on Israel in Bible prophecy. In so doing, the chapter will study his understanding of biblical teaching with respect to Israel's biblical and prophetic history past, present, and future. It will show that although there was no national homeland for the Jewish people in Scofield's lifetime, he anticipated, based on his biblical interpretation, that there would be such a place in the future. The existence of present-day Israel in the Middle East is something that Scofield believed would occur in the then near future. The extent to which he understood this to be likely either within his lifetime or shortly after it is also studied. Further, he taught that there would a future national Israel in fulfillment of biblical prophecy. The nature and purpose of this prophetic fulfillment in his theology will be presented and evaluated.

The fourth chapter evaluates some contemporary interpretations of the idea of present-day and future national Israel when compared to the teaching of Scofield and other dispensationalists who continued and built upon his legacy and teaching. In so doing, it will consider interpretations of national Israel in the contexts of pre-1948 and post-1948 idea of a national homeland for the Jewish people based upon Bible prophecy.

The fifth chapter will study interpretations of Romans 11 as they pertain to future Israel. It will consider dispensational and non-dispensational interpretations and their relationship to the

thought of Scofield. In so doing, it will highlight areas of agreement with Scofield with a view to a potentially larger apologetic perspective regarding national Israel.

The sixth chapter will propose that the present-day nation-state of Israel is most consistent from a literal-historical-grammatical interpretation of Old Testament prophetic passages. In so doing it will present an argument from Ezekiel 37 that the present-day nation-state of Israel is a fulfillment of biblical prophecy. This was Scofield's position and it is the most logical position based on the reality of Zionism. Evidentialist apologetics argues from the existence of fulfilled prophecy.

The seventh and concluding chapter will present a summary of the study and offer several recommendations for further study based upon the findings of this dissertation. It will be followed by a Bibliography and an Appendix.

Uniqueness and Contribution of the Study

This research is unique in that it offers a fresh reading and appraisal of C. I. Scofield's writings and his teachings by focusing on his beliefs regarding a literal and national restoration of the Jewish people to their biblical homeland and it will propose use of that belief as an apologetic to the Christian faith. This study also involves the reading of relevant writings of Scofield, whether his reference study Bible notes, his books, pamphlets, articles, and other publications. One of the goals in this dissertation is to address Scofield's own teachings rather than address distortions of his views.

The attempt will be to highlight the possible apologetic value of Scofield's work as a defense of the literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic of the Bible and the accuracy of fulfilled prophecy. Scofield's apologetic value and defense of Christian truth as taught in the

Bible has been greatly overlooked over the past years and this dissertation will be an attempt to focus on his contributions in the area of evidentialist apologetics.

It will be necessary in this study to interact with some other current dispensationalists as well as some from the past like Scofield's mentor and colleague, A. C. Gaebelein who was highly influential in *The Scofield Reference Bible* as a consulting editor. Gaebelein influenced much of what Scofield taught regarding the Jewish people and Israel.⁶⁷ It will interact with other opinions of Scofield's position as well as highlighting new or recent developments in thought on the subject of religious and Christian Zionism.⁶⁸

This dissertation is also unique as it will involve a comparison between Scofield and non-dispensationalists on the major issue confronting the restoration of a national Israel from the New Testament and that is Romans 11:26, "All Israel shall be saved." This verse and chapter is a major contention between dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists regarding the salvation of a future Israel. Yet, many non-dispensationalists admit of a future salvation of national Israel, but how they reconcile it with current events is problematic.⁶⁹

A sampling will be taken from past and current Reformed and other non-dispensational scholars specifically from the past 100 years whose own words are either contradictory, self-defeating, or directly confirm the truthfulness of Old and New Testament passages confirming a

⁶⁷ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 86-88. See also Michael Stallard, *The Early Twentieth-Century Dispensationalism of Arno C. Gaebelein* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2003) and Donald M. Lewis, *A Short History of Christian Zionism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2021).

⁶⁸ For the most recent development on Christian Zionism see Gerald R. McDermott, ed., *The New Christian Zionism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016).

⁶⁹ Others have noted that many non-dispensational interpreters avoid the issue of a present-day Israel altogether. This causes Craig Blaising to muse, "Sometimes, however, supersessionist publications omit key texts that arguably challenge their system... Failure to address these texts is itself indication that the interpretation may be weak." See Craig A. Blaising, "Israel and Hermeneutics," in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel*, Darrell L. Bock, Mitch Glaser, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2014), 158-59.

national restoration of the Jewish people as the Bible predicted in hundreds of passages.⁷⁰ Many of these current scholars and authors from a Reformed background argue for the faithfulness of God in fulfilling the covenants to Israel, but still propagate the same supersessionism which has been propagated in the Church for the past 2,000 years of church history. Israel will be saved, but there will be no future for national Israel except as it is absorbed into the Church. This is clearly problematic, but Scofield saw no problem, and there was no national Israel at the time he wrote.

The author of this dissertation is not aware of any current literature that approaches Scofield's teaching on what was then known as Restorationism and subsequently became Zionism (secular and political) and Christian Zionism from an approach using the interpretation of Reformed and other non-dispensational scholars to argue for the restoration of a national Israel and showing basic common agreement with his position. Scofield's position has the advantage of a literal, visible apologetic that non-dispensationalists do not have. This means that its odds of being biblically correct are greater since its reality has come to pass. As will be discussed in Chapter Six, evidentialist apologetics operates on the principle of probability. However, Israel's existence is not a probability; it is at present a reality. Dispensationalists readily acknowledge that it is conceivable that the present nation of Israel may hypothetically cease to exist, but they do not believe that this will occur.⁷¹ If it were to happen, such a displacement in God's prophetic plan as they understand it from the Bible would not be

⁷⁰ See Chapter Four where many non-dispensationalists do admit that literal interpretation in the areas of Old Testament prophecy leads to dispensationalism, pages 130-133.

⁷¹ There is no evidence in Scofield's writings that he envisioned another dispersion from the land once the Jews have returned in unbelief in fulfillment of Ezekiel 37. Scofield implies that when Israel is back in the land, God's prophetic time clock begins which would imply that prophetic events would run their course concurrently as he wrote, "When the Church period has been finished, and God, ... begins again to deal with Israel, namely, at the beginning of the Great Tribulation, then the clock of prophecy begins to run again, and the seventieth week has its fulfillment." See Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 132.

challenged. Rather, it would be lengthened in duration. Even so, fulfilled prophecy is an apologetic for the truthfulness of the Bible and the Christian faith and the teaching of Scofield may be used to support such an apologetic.

C. I. Scofield, the influences that shaped him and his influences on American culture a century later are a fitting introduction to his beliefs and teachings. It is that influence that Chapter Two will address.

Chapter Two

C. I. Scofield and His Influence in American Religious Culture

C. I. Scofield's Multifaceted Influence

C. I. Scofield's influence on American religious culture and specifically American conservative Protestantism was multifaceted. Undergirding much of this was the popularity of his study Bible, which made Scofield a major popularizer of dispensationalism in the United States. However, he was not the founder of dispensationalism. It was a transatlantic movement that had been in existence for several decades before his conversion, writing, and ministry began. Dispensational premillennialism emerged in England in the 1830s and became popular in the United States in the years after the American Civil War. Still prominent in American evangelicalism, dispensationalism upholds a specific hermeneutic, contending that within the Bible there are specific passages that foretell of the re-establishment of the nation of Israel as part of a divine plan of history. According to dispensationalists such as Scofield, this plan culminates in the cataclysmic and apocalyptic ending of the world.

Prior to Scofield, dissemination and popularization in the United States of this perspective occurred in part through the publication of Chicago businessman William E. Blackstone's (1841-1935) treatise on Bible prophecy (1878), entitled *Jesus is Coming*. Thirty years later, Scofield's 1909 publication by Oxford University Press of *The Scofield Reference Bible* provided a resource that became an anchor of dispensational thought for more than a generation and its revision in 1967 extended Scofield's legacy and influence into the twenty-first

century. Whereas Blackstone's book was widely read, it was Scofield's study Bible that was read daily by conservative Christians and utilized in classrooms, living rooms, and pulpits in the United States and beyond with lasting effects and influence.

In 1951, thirty years after the death of Scofield, well-known Bible teacher, pastor, and professor Wilbur M. Smith dedicated his book, *World Crises and the Prophetic Scriptures* to: C. I. Scofield, R. A. Torrey, James M. Gray, and A. C. Gaebelein. Each of these men had been influential in Smith's thought: Scofield the senior editor of *The Scofield Reference Bible*, Gray, and Gaebelein, two of the consulting editors of the Bible, and prominent evangelist, educator, pastor, and author R. A. Torrey who was a contemporary of D. L. Moody and Scofield.⁷²

Smith, a prominent and devout premillennialist whose ministry and writings spanned the years before and after the 1948 establishment of the state of Israel, believed that biblical prophecy was being fulfilled in the twentieth century and that such events were those of which Scofield believed would occur in accordance with the Bible as he understood it and God's prophetic plan in human history.

Cyrus Ingerson Scofield (1843-1921) is best known for the dissemination of dispensationalism through his editing and publication of *The Scofield Reference Bible*.⁷³ Anyone who undertakes the effort to compile the life story of C. I. Scofield finds a lack of primary source material. The primary and authorized biography of Scofield was written by a close personal friend and does have the advantage of being written during Scofield's lifetime, and checked by

⁷² Wilbur M. Smith, *World Crises and the Prophetic Scriptures* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1951), 5.

⁷³ Originally published as *The Scofield Reference Bible*, copyright 1909, 1917 by Oxford University Press, the title was changed to *The Scofield Study Bible*. "Except for this change of title, the book remains as it was when Dr. C. I. Scofield finished his task. Not one word has been altered, added, or deleted"- (*The Scofield Study Bible*, p. ii). All Scripture references in this dissertation will be taken from *The Scofield Study Bible*.

Scotfield himself before its publication.⁷⁴ However, from a historical perspective, such biographies can be problematic for scholars in that the work lacks distance and time from the subject and may be too subjective and uncritical. That Scotfield checked and approved its publication also means that the information unfavorable to Scotfield may not have been given to the author or made known to him.

Only two biographies of Scotfield have been published, the first, by his friend Charles Trumbull titled, *The Life Story of C. I. Scotfield* (also published by Oxford University Press in 1920) was a book that eulogized Scotfield. Joseph Canfield's book, *The Incredible Scotfield and His Book* (independently published in 1984) was designed to destroy the reputation of Scotfield and his study Bible. However, there have been several articles published on Scotfield's life and ministry.⁷⁵ That the story of Scotfield's life has only ever been told by those aiming to canonize him or demonize him, "has further muddied the waters of our understanding, making the southern minister appear as a rather shadowy figure."⁷⁶ Most critics of Scotfield have focused on

⁷⁴ William BeVier, "C.I. Scotfield: Dedicated and Determined," *Fundamentalist Journal* (October 1983): 37-38.

⁷⁵ These two books are the only two full-length biographies of Scotfield. There are short pamphlets and booklets that mention key aspects of Scotfield's life and work in A. C. Gaebelien, *The History of the Scotfield Reference Bible* (Spokane: Living Words Foundation, 1991); Frank E. Gaebelien, *The Story of the Scotfield Reference Bible: 1909-1959* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959); William BeVier, *A Biographical Sketch of C. I. Scotfield* (Master's Thesis, Southern Methodist University, 1960); Raymond F. Surburg, "The New Scotfield Reference Bible," *The Springfielder* vol. xxxi (Winter 1968), #4; and a shorter pamphlet by Cornelius R. Stam, *The New Scotfield Reference Bible: an Appraisal* (Windber, PA: Pilkington & Sons, n.d.). The article by Raymond Surburg does give very good information on Scotfield and the publication of the Bible but it is not by any means a biography. For the time it was a very fair and factual assessment of Scotfield both personally and theologically. For background on Canfield's interest in Scotfield and stated purpose in writing the biography, see John S. Torell, "Joseph M. Canfield: A Short Biographical Sketch," <https://www.eaec.org>. A critical yet fair historical study, especially of Scotfield's early life can be found in Jean D. Rushing, "From Confederate Deserter to Decorated Veteran Bible Scholar: Exploring the Enigmatic Life of C.I. Scotfield 1861-1921," (Unpublished M.A. thesis, East Tennessee State University, 2011). There is a tract titled *Set Free, Cured!* published by *Moments with the Book*.

⁷⁶ R. Todd Mangum and Mark S. Sweetnam, *The Scotfield Bible: Its History and Impact on the Evangelical Church* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster Publishing, 2009), 3.

his personal life and foibles in an attempt to discredit his teachings on dispensationalism, prophecy, the Jewish people, Christian Zionism and other related biblical topics.

Influences on C. I. Scofield

No person's beliefs, ideas, or writings arise in a vacuum. C. I. Scofield's notes and theology were influenced by both American and European evangelicals and arose in part because of the interchange of ideas taking place at the time on both continents.⁷⁷ The Scofield Bible was a snapshot of American Christianity at the time it was published as Mangum and Sweetnam note, "Ironically – and tragically – controversiality itself has come to be recognized as characteristic of American Christianity. In this too *The Scofield Reference Bible* reflects its roots."⁷⁸

Below is a listing of the major influences on Scofield that were incorporated into *The Scofield Reference Bible* as summarized from Mangum and Sweetnam with the major area of influence listed:⁷⁹

- *The Geneva Bible* (format, text, and commentary)

The prototype for Scofield's format appeared to be the *Geneva Bible*. First published in 1560, *The Geneva Bible*'s status as the first annotated Bible is incontestable. It paved the way for *The Scofield Reference Bible* centuries later (54-58).

- Bishop James Ussher (chronology and dating)

⁷⁷ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 53.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 92.

⁷⁹ In order to avoid excessive footnotes from the same book, pages are put in brackets at the end for documentation. For each of the influential people listed as well as for the *Geneva Bible*, there are helpful and detailed studies, biographies, and analyses of their lives and thought. Though beyond the scope of this dissertation, some of those works are provided in the Bibliography.

James Ussher was a predominant Puritan bishop in the Irish church. Bishop Ussher's writings, even though highly influential are mostly remembered for his dating of creation at 4004 B. C. Scofield borrowed this dating and assigned a date to every event in Scripture (59). Sweetnam comments, "In using Ussher's chronology, it was Scofield's privilege to perpetuate the work of one of the giants of the Christian Church" (60).

- Isaac Watts (1674-1748) (dispensations)

Though Watts was known mostly for his hymns, he did divide human history into six dispensations with the exception of the millennium. His other periods line up exactly with those of Scofield's (61).

- John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) (e.g., eschatology, Israel, the Jews, ecclesiology, prophecy)

As a priest in the Church of Ireland, Darby's eschatology flowed from his ecclesiology. Sweetnam observes, "One of the most important features of the dispensationalism that developed from Darby and that would be embodied in Scofield's notes is the recognition of a distinction between Israel and the Church" (69). Of course, the most innovative feature of Darby's eschatology was the secret rapture of the Church and the two stages of the return of Christ (71-72).

- James H. Brookes (1830-1897) (dispensationalism, prophecy)

Brookes was the pastor of Washington and Compton Avenue Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, Missouri. It was Brookes who disciplined Scofield in his early Christian life (76). It was also Brookes that influenced his dispensational belief and prophecy according to

Scotfield himself.⁸⁰ Scotfield seems to have derived his distinctive brand of dispensationalism from Brookes and according to Sweetnam, no one exerted a greater influence (76).

- Arno C. Gaebelein (1861-1945) (eschatology, the Jews, Israel, prophecy)

Gaebelein was one of the early fundamentalists who placed crucial significance on eschatology and he was the major influence on Scotfield in the area of eschatology.

According to Sweetnam and Mangum, “Gaebelein may have been Scotfield’s primary consultant for his notes, especially regarding eschatology and overall theological orientation” (16).⁸¹

These Christian leaders had an enormous effect on Scotfield influencing him personally, spiritually, and intellectually. In turn, he would go on to influence the lives and thought of countless others and do so through a lengthy and multifaceted ministry. It was however, his edited study Bible that would gain for him the greatest acclaim and criticism.

C. I. Scotfield and The Scotfield Reference Bible

Oxford University Press is one of the world’s oldest and most renowned publishers of Bibles and it has occupied a unique place at the heart of Bible publishing and printing since its founding in 1586. The Oxford Bible publishing division had been very cautious and had not been involved in risky or speculative innovations. Mangum and Sweetnam note, “But at the beginning

⁸⁰ Charles Gallaudet Trumbull, *The Life Story of C. I. Scotfield* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1920), 35-36.

⁸¹ Dr. A. C. Gaebelein, although the youngest in years, was perhaps the most influential of all the consulting editors of the Scotfield Bible as he was the last surviving member of the editorial staff of consulting editors. Dr. Scotfield considered Gaebelein superior in knowledge to any other individual in the area of prophetic teaching. Scotfield wrote in a letter to Gaebelein, “My beloved brother, ‘By all means follow your own views of prophetic analysis. I sit at your feet when it comes to prophecy, and congratulate in advance the future readers of the reference Bible on having in their hands a safe, a clear, sane guide through what to most is a labyrinth” - A. C. Gaebelein, *The History of the Scotfield Reference Bible* (Spokane: Living Words Foundation, 1991), 55-56. Gaebelein’s influence on Scotfield is also noted by Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scotfield Bible*, 86-88.

of the twentieth century, they lent their publishing experience and academic weight to a novel experiment – a study Bible by an American lawyer-turned-minister who surrounded the text of the King James Version with commentary that embodied a theology unknown to the translators of 1611.”⁸²

What C. I. Scofield published in 1909 as a Bible study tool to help the average layperson became an American cultural phenomenon. As Mangum and Sweetnam observe, “That he also conceived of, completed, and published a Bible study tool that millions across the world have testified to being a help in their understanding of the Scriptures and their Christian walk serves as a capstone accomplishment.”⁸³

The Scofield Reference Bible’s influence on American culture cannot be denied, as it is listed in the top 100 most influential books in American history.⁸⁴ Nothing quite like it had ever been offered to the Christian public as a study Bible with a commentary of the Bible interwoven with the text of Scripture itself. Scofield annotated many portions of Scripture, which made it the first Bible to include a commentary within the same book since *The Geneva Bible* in 1560.⁸⁵ One critic of the Scofield Bible wrote, “It may fairly be called one of the most influential books – perhaps it is the most influential single work thrust into the religious life of America during the

⁸² Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 1. On the early history of Bible printing at the press, see Scott Mandelbrote, “The Bible Press,” in *The History of Oxford University Press, Volume I: Beginnings to 1780*, ed. Ian Gadd (Oxford U.K: Oxford University Press, 2014), 481-510. See also David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).

⁸³ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 51.

⁸⁴ William J. Petersen and Randy Petersen, *100 Christian Books that Changed the Century* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 2000), 27-28.

⁸⁵ Renald Showers, “The Life and Legacy of C. I. Scofield,” *Israel My Glory* (September-October 2016): 39. See also Mangum and Sweetnam, 54-58.

twentieth century.”⁸⁶ Notable British Bible teacher and evangelist Herbert Lockyer, (author of over one hundred books and pamphlets including the “All ” series) once referred to *The Scofield Reference Bible* as the single greatest tool the Christian can possess.⁸⁷ Some critics have labeled the teachings in Scofield’s Bible a heresy and Scofield has been labeled as a pawn of the Zionists, a swindler, an embezzler, a dubious character who abandoned his wife and children.⁸⁸ However, this same critic of Scofield, dispensationalism, and the rapture notes that *The Scofield Reference Bible* is perhaps the most important single document in all of fundamentalist literature: “With sales in the millions, it became the version of the Bible through which Americans read their scriptures throughout much of the twentieth century. Scofield’s notes and headings were woven in with the biblical text itself, elevating dispensationalism to a level of biblical authority that no previous writing had.”⁸⁹ Stephen Sizer referred to it as “something of a literary coup.”⁹⁰ *The Scofield Reference Bible* became the largest single force in spreading dispensational teaching.⁹¹ Ernest Sandeen adds, “His reference Bible is perhaps the most influential single publication in millenarian and fundamentalist historiography.”⁹²

⁸⁶ Albertus Pieters, *The Scofield Bible* (1938; reprint, Swengel, PA: Reiner Publications, 1965), 4.

⁸⁷ Herbert Lockyer, *The Fascinating Study of Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1957), 15.

⁸⁸ Barbara R. Rossing, *The Rapture Exposed* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 23.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Stephen Sizer, “Dispensational Approaches to the Land,” in *The Land of Promise*, Philip Johnston, Peter Walker, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 151.

⁹¹ M. James Sawyer, “Dispensationalism,” in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought*, Alister E. Mc Grath, ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 108.

⁹² Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British & American Millenarianism 1800-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 222.

Pastors and laypersons alike were studying *The Scofield Reference Bible* despite the resistance of their church associations and denominational leaders.⁹³ One present-day source affirms, “Dispensationalists belong to many denominations, and they often identify with the *Scofield Reference Bible* and generally interpret the Scriptures according to its notes and outlines.”⁹⁴ Following its first publication in 1909, Scofield’s annotated Bible provided millions of readers around the world with a new understanding of the Bible, of God’s plan for the world, and of their own place in that plan.⁹⁵

Within fifty years of its publication (1909), 3,000,000 copies of *The Scofield Reference Bible* were printed in the United States.⁹⁶ According to A. C. Gaebelein, a very close personal friend of Scofield, and the last surviving member of the list of consulting editors of the Bible,⁹⁷ Oxford University Press had informed him that 2,000,000 copies of *The Scofield Reference Bible* had been sold as of 1943 which is within thirty-four years of its publication.⁹⁸ The Scofield Bible has never ceased to be in publication.

⁹³ Mal Couch, “Foreword,” in *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, Mal Couch, ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1996), 9. Cf. Pieters, *The Scofield Bible*, 8-9, 22.

⁹⁴ Elmer Towns and Thomas Ice, “Dispensationalism,” in *The Harvest Handbook of Bible Prophecy*, Ed Hindson, Mark Hitchcock, Tim LaHaye, eds. (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2020), 96-97.

⁹⁵ Couch, “Foreword,” 9.

⁹⁶ Robert G. Clouse, “Introduction,” in *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views*, Robert G. Clouse, ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977), 12.

⁹⁷ According to A. C. Gaebelein, Scofield actively consulted the editors and advisors of the Bible, their names listed by Gaebelein in his booklet *The History of the Scofield Reference Bible* (pp. 16-17) and the first page of *The Scofield Study Bible*. Gaebelein was the last surviving member of the editorial board. In addition to the correspondence with these consulting editors, three meetings of the group were held. According to Charles Trumbull, Scofield’s biographer, the last of the three meetings, reviewing the whole work was held at Princeton, New Jersey when several of the editorial board members spent many days together. See Trumbull, *Life Story of C. I. Scofield*, 99. Gaebelein may have been Scofield’s primary consultant for his notes, especially regarding eschatology and the overall theological orientation. See Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 16.

⁹⁸ A. C. Gaebelein, *The History of the Scofield Reference Bible* (Spokane: Living Words Foundation, 1991), 11.

Many faithful advocates of *The Scofield Reference Bible* are so familiar with their Bible that they can tell which side of the page a certain passage is on from memory.⁹⁹ Professor Glen Kreider of Dallas Theological Seminary relates how the Scofield Bible impacted the tiny church in which he was raised: “The pastor would come to the pulpit, open his large King James Version *Scofield Reference Bible*, and began to preach. His sermons were heavily expositional and applicational, and a reading from the Scripture almost always included the explanation, ‘And the Scofield note says...’”¹⁰⁰

Likewise, Professor Ron Cobb of Luther Rice College and Seminary relates his own personal story of an elderly parishioner who was convinced that Dr. Scofield’s notes were an actual part of the Word of God:

Early in my Christian life, I experienced an interesting exchange between a pastor and a parishioner one evening at a Bible study in a small United Methodist church. Near the end of the Bible study one evening, Mrs. Smith (not her real last name), spoke up and voiced her disagreement with a comment made by the pastor. ‘The notes in my Scofield Bible are disagreeing with you pastor.’ The pastor patiently explained to the lady that, while the Word of God is inerrant, inspired, and authoritative, the notes that have been added to the Scofield Bible are not. Growing a bit irritated Mrs. Smith said, ‘Pastor, these words are in my Bible and they disagree with what you said, therefore you are wrong.’ ‘Mrs. Smith, while the words of Scripture are God’s Word, the notes that have been added are not, they are the opinions of a man,’ replied the pastor. After slamming her Bible down on the pew beside her, Mrs. Smith said, ‘Preacher, if its in my Bible its the Word of God!’¹⁰¹

Such stories, though they may make readers smile or give pause, are illustrations of the deep roots of Scofield’s study Bible in American fundamentalism and evangelicalism of the twentieth century. It was a study Bible for the common person.

⁹⁹ David E. Walker, *King James Only Revised Dispensationalism Dismantled* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2020), vii.

¹⁰⁰ Glenn R. Kreider, “What is Dispensationalism? A Proposal,” in *Dispensationalism and the History of Redemption*, D. Jeffrey Bingham, Glenn R. Kreider, eds. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2015), 15-16.

¹⁰¹ Ronald Cobb, Doctor of Ministry Program Coordinator, Luther Rice College and Seminary, interviewed by Tim Skinner, Luther Rice College and Seminary, September 11, 2019.

C. I. Scofield's Influence on Dispensationalism

Within premillennialism and within fundamentalism, the central teaching of Scofield was dispensationalism. It was not just premillennialism that Scofield advocated, it was dispensational premillennialism. So too within fundamentalism; it was dispensationalists within fundamentalism that provided a strong core. Although dispensationalism would cause divisions and disagreements within fundamentalism, dispensationalism remained a central tenet among fundamentalists and many evangelicals.

Anglo-Irish Plymouth Brethren leader John Nelson Darby is credited with being the individual most responsible for systematizing dispensational theology and promoting it throughout Great Britain. Even so, he was not its originator. Dispensational theologian Charles C. Ryrie writes of dispensationalism's origins, "But neither Darby nor the Brethren originated the concepts involved in the system, and even if they had, that would not make them wrong if they can be shown to be biblical."¹⁰² Darby's understanding of eschatology was not something he invented, but was the collating and organizing of ideas already circulating in nineteenth-century British theology. Ariel notes, "Darby did not construct dispensationalism out of thin air. His contribution was, in large part, the shaping and crystallizing of earlier ideas concerning the Second Coming of Jesus."¹⁰³ Darby's eschatology was different because it placed an emphasis on interpreting prophecy from a futurist rather than a historicist perspective.

After the 1909 publication of *The Scofield Reference Bible*, dispensational theology grew enormously in the number of its American advocates. Although the theology of Scofield's study

¹⁰² Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 77.

¹⁰³ Yaakov Ariel, *On Behalf of Israel: American Fundamentalist Attitudes toward Jews, Judaism, and Zionism, 1865-1945* (New York: Carlson Publishing, 1991), 13.

Bible differed in details from Darby's scheme, there is broad agreement in their perspectives and a shared heritage. Ryrie notes, "Although we cannot minimize the wide influence of Darby, the glib statement that dispensationalism originated with Darby, whose system was taken over and popularized by Scofield, is not historically accurate."¹⁰⁴ Dispensational historian Larry V. Crutchfield also supports this perspective on the Darby-Scofield relationship, contradicting historian Ernest R. Sandeen's widely promulgated views and statement that "Americans [specifically Scofield] raided Darby's treasuries and carried off his teachings as their own."¹⁰⁵ Crutchfield shows that Scofield and other Americans benefited from Darby, but not without major differences.¹⁰⁶

Mal Couch observes, "At the beginning of the twentieth century, dispensationalism was one of the most important forces in fundamentalism and evangelicalism."¹⁰⁷ John D. Hannah, Distinguished Professor of Historical Theology at Dallas Theological Seminary commented, "The *Reference Bible* is widely recognized as the most important literary production of the Bible conference/institute movement. Scofield, by editing the text of the Bible with carefully placed notes, articulated the dispensational understanding of Scripture for the lay audience as never before accomplished."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, 79.

¹⁰⁵ Ernest J. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930* (1970; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978), 102.

¹⁰⁶ Larry V. Crutchfield, *The Origins of Dispensationalism: The Darby Factor* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992), 206-13.

¹⁰⁷ Couch, "Foreword," 9.

¹⁰⁸ John Hannah, "Cyrus Ingerson Scofield," in *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, Mal Couch, ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1996), 392.

Scotfield's purpose was not to promote a distinctive theological system but as Scotfield himself wrote that he wanted to summarize, arrange, and condense the mass of material from biblical scholarship of the last fifty years, which had been inaccessible to most Christian workers.¹⁰⁹ His purpose was to gather and make accessible existing teaching – not to produce doctrinal innovation. He wanted to represent the consensus of Bible-believing interpreters of Scripture and “interact with all the major doctrines of Christianity.”¹¹⁰

Mangum and Sweetnam observe that even though Scotfield's dispensational beliefs receive the most attention, it is important to note that most of Scotfield's teaching and theology is a repackaging of teaching that can be traced to the evangelicalism of the eighteenth century, to the sixteenth century Reformation or back to early Christianity. Much of the commentary he presents would have been unremarkable to evangelical Christians in any period.¹¹¹ Mangum and Sweetnam also suggested that Scotfield did not seem to have regarded his dispensational scheme as out of the norm and does not seem to have anticipated these positions as becoming controversial. Rather, “he seems to have regarded his work as reflecting the consensus of a broad coalition of Bible-believing interpreters of Scripture.”¹¹² However, of course, a theological perspective did come through. The level of eschatological detail has drawn more attention positively and negatively than any other feature of the Bible. The prophetic aspects of the rapture, tribulation period, Armageddon, etc. are what many think of when they hear the term

¹⁰⁹ Scotfield, *The Scotfield Study Bible*, iv.

¹¹⁰ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scotfield Bible*, 54.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 85. In view of the rapture, see his note on page iii regarding expository novelties.

dispensationalism.¹¹³ But the emphasis in Scofield's notes is mostly on the distinction between the old and new dispensations, and that God has a purpose for Old Testament ethnic Israel.¹¹⁴

Vern Poythress suggested that Christology was the deep ground for the attractiveness of dispensationalism.¹¹⁵ Daniel Fuller argued that dispensationalism took root in the United States more on the basis of its eschatological teaching than on the basis of a distinction between Israel and the Church.¹¹⁶ Richard Mouw, Reformed author and former President of Fuller Theological Seminary acknowledged that dispensationalists were right regarding their philosophy of history:

The older dispensationalism placed a strong emphasis on a highly conflictual understanding of historical change. History moves from crisis to crisis, with the major dispensations often being ushered in by cataclysmic events. In the 'normal' historical flow, things do not tend to get better. Christian hope is based, not in a trust about anything intrinsic to the historical process, but in the firm expectation that, in the end, God will intervene from outside that process.¹¹⁷

There are strong biblical grounds for rejecting postmillennialism. Jesus' teaching regarding great wickedness and a cooling off of the faith of many before his return seems to conflict sharply with postmillennial optimism.¹¹⁸ Todd Mangum adds, "Scofield's notes simultaneously vindicated the

¹¹³ The contributors of the book, *The New Christian Zionism*, along with the editor Gerald McDermott downplay dispensationalism and distance themselves from it by stating at the outset, "The Christian Zionism that this book proposes is not connected to the dispensationalism . . . attached to an elaborate schedule of end-time events dominated by the great tribulation and a rapture of the church that leaves Jews and the rest of the world behind" (p. 11). The new Christian Zionism separates from the association with dispensationalism with its emphasis on an end-times scenario and avoids date setting and other questionable teachings associated with classic dispensationalism. See Gerald McDermott, ed., *The New Christian Zionism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 14.

¹¹⁴ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 189-90.

¹¹⁵ Vern Poythress, *Understanding Dispensationalists* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 19.

¹¹⁶ Daniel P. Fuller, *The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism* (Th.D. Dissertation, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Chicago, 1957), 92-93.

¹¹⁷ Richard Mouw, "What the Old Dispensationalists Taught Me," *Christianity Today* (March 6, 1995): 34. According to Mouw, dispensationalism has been vindicated.

¹¹⁸ Millard J. Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 400.

truth of the Bible and helped explain the circumstances of life, reassuring people not to worry because the Bible had predicted this would happen a long time ago.”¹¹⁹ Dispensationalism has proven to be tremendously influential in evangelical circles and it is the most accepted teaching about Christ’s second coming in American fundamentalist churches today.¹²⁰

With Scofield’s reference Bible, dispensationalism entered its scholastic period, nurtured and supported by the educational leadership of his theological successor Lewis Sperry Chafer.¹²¹ Historically speaking, *The Scofield Reference Bible* was to dispensationalism what Luther’s *Ninety-Five Theses* was to Lutheranism, or Calvin’s *Institutes* to Calvinist doctrine.¹²² The wide dissemination of dispensational thought, moving across and beyond Protestant denominational boundaries occurred in part through the catalyst of *The Scofield Reference Bible*. According to anti-Zionist Stephen Sizer, “Dispensationalism is one of the most influential theological systems within the universal church today. Largely unrecognized and subliminal, it has increasingly shaped the presuppositions of fundamentalists, evangelicals, Pentecostal and charismatic thinking concerning Israel and Palestine over the past 150 years.”¹²³ Mangum observed, “As ordinary Christians made *The Scofield Reference Bible* their Bible of choice, dispensationalism came to have greater and greater influence on ground level populist Christianity. Its pragmatic usefulness made room for its dispensational distinctives to gain influence.”¹²⁴

¹¹⁹ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 169.

¹²⁰ Edward L. Queen II, Stephen Prothro, Gardiner H. Shattuck, Jr., eds., *The Encyclopedia of American Religious History* (New York: Facts on File Inc., 1996), 185.

¹²¹ Craig A. Blaising, “Development of Dispensationalism by Contemporary Dispensationalists,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* (July - September 1988): 256.

¹²² Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 195.

¹²³ Sizer, “Dispensational Approaches to the Land,” 142.

¹²⁴ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 133.

Dispensationalism provided the impetus for the explosion of missionary activity in the twentieth century. It has been suggested that the striking success of the parachurch movements in the United States is due in measure to the de-institutionalization of grace which has characterized dispensationalism.¹²⁵ The following schools and mission agencies have been traced to the driving force of dispensationalism: Moody Bible Institute, Biola University/Talbot School of Theology (originally The Bible Institute of Los Angeles), Dallas Theological Seminary, Grace Theological Seminary, Campus Crusade for Christ, Jews for Jesus, Friends of Israel, SIM (Sudan Interior Mission), Central American Mission (CAM) (founded by C. I. Scofield himself),¹²⁶ Africa Inland Mission (AIM International), Africa Evangelical Fellowship, Baptist Mid-Missions etc.¹²⁷ It was the publication and popularity of *The Scofield Reference Bible* that brought recognition to the rise of a new parachurch movement and spawned the development of a distinctive systematic theology (even though that was not its initial purpose).¹²⁸ In the early twentieth century, the Bible conference movement, the Bible college movement, and Scofieldianism had all become virtually synonymous.¹²⁹

After the 1970s interest in dispensationalism began to decline within the mainstream of conservative evangelicalism.¹³⁰ While not as popular as it was in its earlier period, dispensationalism is still widely held and propagated through various schools, colleges,

¹²⁵ Sawyer, "Dispensationalism," 111.

¹²⁶ Trumbull, *The Life Story of C. I. Scofield*, 71.

¹²⁷ Sawyer, "Dispensationalism," 108-9.

¹²⁸ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 191.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 181.

¹³⁰ Couch, "Foreword," 10.

seminaries, publishing houses, conferences, study Bibles etc. The Bible institute movement historically was almost totally dispensational and many of the leading Bible institutes, Bible colleges and seminaries today still teach this system of interpretation. The writings of Dallas Theological Seminary presidents and professors have been more at the forefront of promoting dispensationalism in academia, and Charles Ryrie's book *Dispensationalism* is the standard defense of classic dispensationalism that silenced many of its critics.¹³¹ In the 1970s the movement was invigorated and popularized by Hal Lindsay's *Late Great Planet Earth*, and more recently by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins's fictional *Left Behind* series of the 1990s. According to Mangum and Sweetnam, "The scheme of the ages outlined in Scofield's notes, has, in fact, become an organic part of biblical exposition and prophetic interpretation."¹³² Dispensationalism continues to resonate with many evangelicals in the twenty-first century.

Dispensationalism has undergone revisions especially with the rise of progressive dispensationalism in the early 1990s but it is still taught by popular and recognized evangelical authors such as John MacArthur, Darrell Bock, Mitch Glaser, Craig Blaising, Josh McDowell, Ed Hindson, the late Tim LaHaye through the *Left Behind* series, Hal Lindsey, Thomas Ice, Mark Hitchcock, Ron Rhodes, David Jeremiah, the late Mal Couch, Ronald Diprose, Michael Vlach, Michael Stallard, Barry Horner, Charles Swindoll, Paul Wilkinson, the late Norman L. Geisler and scores of others. Dallas Seminary scholars Darrell Bock, Craig Blaising, and the late Robert L. Saucy have been at the forefront of progressive dispensationalism which has been

¹³¹ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008), 551. Frank Gaebelien noted in the Foreword to Ryrie's book *Dispensationalism*, "Dr. Ryrie's book is the first book-length contemporary apologetic for dispensationalism to be written by a recognized scholar. As such it commands attention... As a reasonable and scholarly apologetic for dispensationalism, it cannot be ignored" (pp. 7-8). Ryrie's work marked the beginning of the attempt to define the essence of dispensational teaching and set the direction for dispensational self-definition over the last decades of the twentieth century.

¹³² Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 150-51.

modified somewhat from the teachings of Scofield and his contemporaries as well as from the teachings of prominent dispensationalists in the two generations beyond Scofield.¹³³

Progressive dispensationalism has been very influential in evangelical academic circles, yet thus far, it has failed to gain wide support among the evangelical laity. Mangum and Sweetnam observed, “Perhaps progressive dispensationalism has had a harder time convincing the dispensationalist standard-bearers because essentialist dispensationalists¹³⁴ really did succeed in landing on what truly was core to Scofield’s system. Or, perhaps dispensationalism has simply reached the end of its tolerance for revision, at least for a while.”¹³⁵ Progressive dispensationalism has not been successful because it has attempted to blur the distinctions between Israel and the Church too much. Paul Enns has commented that progressive dispensationalism represents a departure from a coherent hermeneutical system that attempts to interpret the Scriptures literally or normally by its allegorizing of the normal meaning of words.¹³⁶

Although the new Christian Zionists distance themselves from classic dispensationalism, they still hold to the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism and are still *bona fide* dispensationalists. Attempts have been made by both dispensationalists and covenant theologians to find common

¹³³ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 188-95.

¹³⁴ The term “essentialist dispensationalism” refers to Charles Ryrie’s three pillars of dispensationalism in his book, *Dispensationalism* (45-48), specifically the distinction between Israel and the Church.

¹³⁵ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 195.

¹³⁶ See Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, 561. One of the key elements of progressive dispensationalism is the belief that Jesus is currently fulfilling the Davidic promises in a “now” and “not yet” role. See Robert L. Saucy, *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993), 76, and Darrell Bock, “Evidence from Acts,” in *A Case for Premillennialism: a New Consensus*, Donald K. Campbell, Jeffrey Townsend, eds. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992), 198. Enns challenges this hermeneutic.

ground in both systems of interpretation.¹³⁷ Most theologians make a distinction between classical dispensationalism (also known as historic dispensationalism) as taught by Scofield, and progressive dispensationalism as modified by Darrell Bock, Craig Blaising and Robert L. Saucy.¹³⁸ However, there is still a national future for a literal Israel. Progressive dispensationalists also recognize a distinction between Israel and the Gentiles, allowing that Israel means a particular national people in accordance with the early covenants and promises of Scripture.¹³⁹

Dispensationalism is an essential and enduring facet of the evangelical landscape. Kreider summarizes its influence: “Its fivefold commitment to (1) the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible, (2) the authority and relevance of the Word of God for Christian living, (3) the unity of the history of redemption, (4) the gospel and the need for conversion, and (5) global missions all bear this out. It is an evangelical tradition in service to the global Church.”¹⁴⁰

By no means was Scofield the only person to influence early twentieth-century dispensationalism, but he played a major role in its dissemination, popularity, and acceptance in the United States. That other individuals and institutions complemented, built upon, and

¹³⁷ For example, see Craig Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1993).

¹³⁸ Robert L. Saucy, *The Case for Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993).

¹³⁹ Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, 193. Progressive dispensationalists do not deny the national restoration of a future Israel.

¹⁴⁰ D. Jeffrey Bingham and Glenn R. Kreider, eds., “Preface,” in *Dispensationalism and the History of Redemption* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2015), 13

expanded the shared beliefs of dispensationalism as articulated by Scofield is important in understanding twentieth-century American religious history and culture.¹⁴¹

C. I. Scofield's Influence on Premillennialism

The Scofield Reference Bible was one of the greatest literary works produced in the twentieth century for promoting premillennial teaching. Today, premillennial theologians are a respectable minority in American evangelicalism and their teachings and writings continue to have a broad constituency. Prior to the American Civil War, evangelicals were largely postmillennialists.¹⁴² As such, they believed that human effort could help bring about a Christian society that would be followed by the return of Jesus Christ. This belief encouraged social activism. Michael Gerson explains, “Early evangelicals were an optimistic lot who thought that human effort could help hasten the arrival of the Second Coming.”¹⁴³

However, premillennialism, prominent in historical manifestation of twentieth-century American fundamentalism (of which Scofield and others advocated) believed that the current age was not progressing but declining into moral decadence evidenced in part by teachings that led to the decline in belief in the authority of the Bible due to higher criticism, and the acceptance of evolution. From the fundamentalist and evangelical standpoint, a new and better age would not be ushered in through social progress and activism, but by the second coming of Jesus Christ.

¹⁴¹ On the significance of dispensationalism in twentieth-century American intellectual thought (in addition to religious thought), see the significant work by B. M. Pietsch, *Dispensational Modernism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹⁴² Dispensationalism rejected the postmillennialism of the day, which was the belief that human beings could establish God's kingdom on earth through their own moral efforts. Dispensationalists placed little value on human achievement, stressing instead the absolute sovereignty of God over history. See Edward L. Queen II, Stephen Prothro, Gardiner H. Shattuck Jr., eds., “Dispensationalism,” 184.

¹⁴³ Michael Gerson, “The Last Temptation: How Evangelicals Lost Their Way,” *The Atlantic* (April 2018): 46-47.

Gerson adds, “This general pessimism about the direction of society was reflected in a shift away from postmillennialism and toward premillennialism.”¹⁴⁴ The world was getting worse and worse and only Christ could rectify all of the evils of society. Premillennialists and dispensationalists (as a subset) of premillennialism further insisted that the world is now poised at the end of the final dispensation and that Jesus could return at any moment. This thinking, generated by the premillennialism and dispensationalism of the day was succinctly noted by Scofield, “But prophecy, grandly optimistic in its ultimate view, presents anything but a flattering picture of the end of this age. Apostasy, heading up in the man of sin, and the utter destruction of the present imposing world-system by a crushing blow, is the testimony of the prophets.”¹⁴⁵

Dispensationalism explained why America had not developed into the millennial kingdom that evangelicals early in the nineteenth century had so confidently predicted and it helped explain why the society all around them late in the nineteenth century seemed to be in such turmoil.¹⁴⁶

Scofield insisted that world renewal was not the responsibility or capability of the Church and gives a fitting insight into his thinking on the responsibility of the Church in this dispensation.¹⁴⁷

Craig Keener and Michael Brown observe that World War I challenged postmillennialism which was prominent at the time and made premillennialism and dispensationalism more palatable in the early twentieth century, a belief they admit was popularized by *The Scofield*

¹⁴⁴ Gerson, “The Last Temptation: How Evangelicals Lost Their Way,” 47.

¹⁴⁵ C. I. Scofield, “Foreword,” in A. C. Gaebelein, *The Harmony of the Prophetic Word* (New York: Our Hope Publications, 1902). Gaebelein himself confirms the date of the book as 1902 in *The History of the Scofield Reference Bible*, 54-55.

¹⁴⁶ Randall Balmer, *Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 511.

¹⁴⁷ C. I. Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain* (Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis, Printers and Publishers, n.d.), 52, 55-56.

Reference Bible.¹⁴⁸ World War I brought carnage, death and destruction to western civilization followed by a great depression and then the most horrifying chapter in world history, the Holocaust and Nazi threat to world peace and security during World War II. These events gave credence to the belief that the world was under divine wrath and boosted premillennialism's claim that the world was getting worse and worse and would continue on that course until Jesus returns to usher in his kingdom.¹⁴⁹ Mangum and Sweetnam added, "While modernism was optimistic about social progress, dispensationalism was pessimistic. While modernists tended to emphasize evolutionary development, dispensationalists accentuated the supernatural and God's intervention in the historical process."¹⁵⁰

Postmillennialism greatly diminished the first two decades of the twentieth century. According to Daniel P. Fuller, John Nelson Darby's ideas were accepted in America because, historically the pendulum swung from those revolting from one extreme (society can be transformed through human effort, i.e., postmillennialism) to take the alternative extreme (i.e., premillennialism), the belief that society must be saved by a supernatural intervention of God, in this case the return of Jesus Christ.¹⁵¹

The second coming of Jesus Christ was one of the fundamentals of the Christian faith and was vigorously held by Scofield.¹⁵² Fuller notes, ". . . Postmillennialism made the event of the millennium the great object of hope; but Darby, by his insistence on the possibility of Christ's

¹⁴⁸ Michael L. Brown and Craig S. Keener, *Not Afraid of the Antichrist* (Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, Baker Publishing Group, 2019), 62.

¹⁴⁹ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 178-79.

¹⁵⁰ Queen II, Prothro, Shattuck, Jr., *The Encyclopedia of American Religious History*, 185.

¹⁵¹ Fuller, "The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism," 92-93.

¹⁵² C. I. Scofield, *Where Faith Sees Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1967), 63.

coming at any moment, made Christ Himself, totally apart from any event, the great object of hope.”¹⁵³

C. I. Scofield's Influence on Fundamentalism

Noting the era and the theological climate in which *The Scofield Reference Bible* was produced, S. R. Spencer observes, “Challenged by higher criticism, Darwinism and the prevailing cultural optimism of modernist and liberal theologies, dispensational premillennialists rallied believers to biblical fidelity and world evangelization, impelled by the shadow of prophetic signs.”¹⁵⁴ *The Scofield Reference Bible* was published just as the fundamentalist-modernist battles were reaching the height of their intensity. In fundamentalist circles, Scofield’s reference Bible has been most revered because of its faithfulness to the Authorized *King James Version*.¹⁵⁵ Scofield’s loyalty to the *King James Version* won him a place dear to the heart of most fundamentalists as he wrote, “The King James, or Authorized Version, remains the Bible of the people, and is, therefore, best for the minister’s public work... In the main the A. V. is a magnificent translation of the Scriptures.”¹⁵⁶ Of course, Scofield was not adverse to textual criticism which made for better and clearer reading of certain passages, but it was a safe rule he

¹⁵³ Fuller, “The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism,” 92-93.

¹⁵⁴ S. R. Spencer, “Cyrus I. Scofield: (1845-1921),” in *Historical Handbook of Major Biblical Interpreters*, Donald K. McKim, ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 610.

¹⁵⁵ The editorial board of *The New Scofield Reference Bible*, like Scofield, originally rejected the inclusion of critical scholarship and modern textual criticism, choosing to stick with the *King James Version* instead of the more critical version at the time, the *Revised Standard Version*. See Raymond Surburg, “The New Scofield Reference Bible,” *The Springfielder* vol. xxxi, no. 4 (Winter 1968): 17. While the scholarly world rejected Scofield’s teachings and notes, it became most popular with fundamentalists who revered the *King James Version* of the Bible. Scofield noted in his Bible, “Introduction: (To Be Read):” “After mature reflection it was determined to use the Authorized Version. None of the many Revisions have commended themselves to the people at large” (*The Scofield Study Bible*, iii).

¹⁵⁶ C. I. Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box* (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1917), 82.

claimed “never to make public reference to the renderings of individual translators.”¹⁵⁷ Perhaps overlooked by many fundamentalists was Scofield’s comment:

And here, let me say, when I make corrections in the rendering of passages, I make only those which are admitted by all scholars of all schools – not something I think necessary to prove my point. If I call a rendering in the King James version incorrect, I do it on the authority of all critical scholars.¹⁵⁸

The fundamentalist movement was boosted by Scofield and by the popularity of premillennialism and dispensationalism, both of which were popularized and spread throughout America by *The Scofield Reference Bible*. Not only did *The Scofield Reference Bible* introduce the American people to dispensationalism, for over 100 years the Bible has been a mighty force for fundamentalism because of its strong stance and belief in the inspiration and literal nature of the Bible and interpretation of the prophetic portions of Scripture consistent with a literal hermeneutical interpretation. Perhaps the popularity and influence of *The Scofield Reference Bible* was due to the alignment of Scofield and his editors with fundamentalism, as these men were well-known in fundamentalist circles and exerted a great influence on American Christianity.¹⁵⁹

However, according to George Dollar, Scofield was never involved in the battles of fundamentalism though he supplied preaching materials for many militant fundamentalists.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield’s Question Box*, 82. Scofield did include critical notes in the Bible, especially his notes on text criticism regarding Mark 16 (1069) and I John 5:7 (1325), but these did not deter fundamentalists. Writes one of them: “It is true that there are *many* places where the margin ‘corrects,’ or ‘emends’ the King James text, but at least he regarded the AV as the Bible for the English-speaking world” (emphasis in original). See David E. Walker, *The Bible Believer’s Guide to Dispensationalism*, 2nd ed. (Miamitown, OH: DayStar Publishing, 2006), 69.

¹⁵⁸ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 121.

¹⁵⁹ Raymond F. Surburg, “The New Scofield Reference Bible,” *The Springfielder* vol. xxxi (Winter 1968, #4): 6-8.

¹⁶⁰ George W. Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America* (Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1973), 359.

Scotfield did contribute to *The Fundamentals*, a twelve-volume set of articles published from 1910-1915 that were designed to affirm the fundamentals of the Christian faith. He did contribute a chapter on “The Grace of God.”¹⁶¹

Mangum and Sweetnam contend that perhaps it is too presumptuous to read much into a rigid distinction between fundamentalism and evangelicalism at the time Scotfield lived and participated in Bible conferences and writing. Although he certainly held the same beliefs of most all fundamentalists, *The Scotfield Reference Bible* could hardly be described as militant.¹⁶² The authors have made it a point to argue that Scotfield was not interested in pressing for a militant theological position but providing a commentary and Bible that would find agreement among a broad range within orthodox Christianity. They clarify, “Fundamentalism and evangelicalism were part of one cut of cloth, not distinguishable at the time he ministered and wrote. Scotfield seems to have regarded his work as reflecting the consensus of a broad coalition of Bible believing interpreters of Scripture.”¹⁶³ In other words, Scotfield did not have an ax to grind but rather he wanted to harmonize Christian orthodoxy in order to be utilized by a large segment of the Church thus crossing denominational lines.¹⁶⁴ Although he contributed to *The*

¹⁶¹ C. I. Scotfield, “The Grace of God,” in *The Fundamentals*, vol. III, R. A. Torrey, A. C. Dixon, eds. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), 98-109.

¹⁶² Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scotfield Bible*, 85.

¹⁶³ Ibid. See also their comments on pages 53-54; 136-37; 209.

¹⁶⁴ Mangum and Sweetnam have pointed out that Scotfield accomplished the crossing of denominational boundaries by even bridging Pentecostalism despite the fact that Scotfield’s notes do not support Pentecostal theology (173). *The Scotfield Reference Bible* has been consistently popular among independent Baptist groups and Pentecostals, even though their theology does not agree. “The impact of *The Scotfield Reference Bible* on the Pentecostal and charismatic movements in this country can scarcely be understated...” Although Scotfield denied that spiritual gifts are valid under the present dispensation that did not stop Pentecostal pioneers from using it. See P. H. Alexander, “Scotfield Reference Bible,” in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Stanley Burgess, Gary McKee, eds. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988), 771.

Fundamentals with his article titled, “The Grace of God,” “he was not a prominent controversialist” as noted by S. R. Spencer.¹⁶⁵

Scotfield and others were known proponents of fundamentalism in America and the traditional denominations were dying as a result of modernism, the rejection of inerrancy, the deity of Christ, the resurrection, and the doctrines of the faith.¹⁶⁶ *The Scofield Reference Bible* gave the American public reassurance that the Bible was in fact the Word of God during a rather critical period in American history. It is the contention of Russell Hitt, editor of *Eternity* magazine, that it would be difficult to estimate the world-wide influence *The Scofield Reference Bible* had in shaping the theological thinking of thousands of Christians. He wrote,

When Protestant leadership was abandoning the faith right and left for a watered down caricature of Christian truth, fundamentalists clung to their Scofield Bibles and sought to defend what they believed as the core of the apostolic faith. Some critics of fundamentalism and the Scofield Bible forget the enormous battle that was then raging within the church. Too many key Protestant leaders were all ready to jettison the classical Christian truth of God’s sovereign, supernatural and redemptive power and man’s sinful nature and to substitute an insipid modernism that elevated man and dethroned God. In this context the Scofield Bible was the book that stood defensively for truth against the onslaughts of the ravaging wolves. It is no wonder the fundamentalists became defensive; no wonder so many called the existing structures ‘apostate.’¹⁶⁷

Fundamentalist forces were formidable in the 1920s because at the center of conservative Protestants were dispensational premillennialists who had been promoting dispensational teaching through prophecy conferences, Bible institutes, evangelistic campaigns, and *The Scofield Reference Bible*.¹⁶⁸ Church historian George Marsden confirms:

¹⁶⁵ Spencer, “Cyrus I. Scofield: (1845-1921),” 611.

¹⁶⁶ Surburg, “The New Scofield Reference Bible,” 16.

¹⁶⁷ Russell Hitt, “Review of the New Scofield Reference Bible,” *Eternity* 18 (May 1967), 41-42.

¹⁶⁸ George F. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 57.

Dispensationalists emphasize that their views are based on literal readings of Scripture, especially of biblical prophecies. For instance, they predicted the literal return of the Jews to Israel, as the Bible indicates. Because of their emphasis on literal interpretations of prophecies, dispensationalists have been one of the groups most insistent on making the inerrancy of Scripture a test of true faith.¹⁶⁹

Most notable here is Marsden's affirmation that dispensationalists "predicted the literal return of the Jews to Israel as the Bible indicates."

Even though he disagreed with Scofield's premillennial beliefs, Reformed theologian Albertus Pieters praised Scofield for his commitment to doctrinal orthodoxy at a time when Protestant churches and denominations were abandoning the faith due to liberalism:

On the great fundamental issues of the Christian religion, such as the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the deity of Christ, the atonement, justification by faith, regeneration, sanctification through the Holy Spirit, the resurrection of Christ, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting, it (the Scofield Bible) rings clear as a bell. Many Christian people have been profoundly disturbed during the last forty years over the growing denial of these things, on account of the increasing modernism in the churches. Often they fail to hear any clear testimony of the gospel from their own pastors, even in Presbyterian and Methodist churches. For such people it is a relief and a most welcome assurance to take up the Scofield Bible, and to find in its notes no suggestion that the old gospel is out of date or that the great doctrines are to be doubted. This is the most vital and valuable service that the Scofield Bible has rendered to the Christian faith and life of our country, and its importance cannot easily be over-estimated. It has undergirded the faith of God's people in a remarkable manner, and from that point of view even we who see much fault in it, and seriously deprecate its influence in other respects, must thank God for it.¹⁷⁰

Pieters continues:

As already remarked, in the great standard doctrines of Systematic Theology, the book is decidedly good. Dr. Scofield gives such instruction mainly through his definitions of pivotal theological terms, such as regeneration, reconciliation, redemption, election, predestination, etc. . . . These doctrinal conceptions are fully shared by all Presbyterians and Reformed theologians . . . They have wrought a great and much needed work among American Christians, who because of the prevailing neglect of catechetical instruction, have usually only the vaguest notions of Christian doctrine.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism*, 40.

¹⁷⁰ Pieters, *The Scofield Bible*, 5-6.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

These comments made even by those hostile to Scofield and dispensationalism reinforce the earlier observations by Mangum and Sweetnam noted above. Beyond the importance of Scofield's reference Bible to individuals and its promotion of the dispensational premillennial framework, Scofield's Bible and efforts permeated twentieth-century fundamentalism providing an undercurrent of unifying thought and theology that transcended American geographic and denominational boundaries.

C. I. Scofield's Influence on Jewish Restorationism

What was most unique about *The Scofield Reference Bible* was its emphasis on the Jews and the nation of Israel, especially at a time before there even was a Jewish homeland in 1948. Scofield taught a literal fulfillment of literal prophecies made to the Jewish nation in the Old Testament which would be fulfilled at a later time in the future, preceding and even pointing to the second coming of Jesus Christ. It was John Nelson Darby who was most influential in this area as Thomas Ice notes in the *Foreword* to Paul Wilkinson's book, "... He was also a pioneer in the development of a consistent Israelology, which today provides the theological basis for the majority of Christian Zionists."¹⁷² In the context of prophetic enquiry, there was a great interest in the Jewish question and the exact status in the present age of God's people the Jews. Darby's answer to the question of the Jews was vital to his interpretive system.¹⁷³ Darby provided the impetus for a dispensational Bible and a Bible that still believed the Jews had a future in God's plan, restored to their ancient homeland in fulfillment of the Old Testament promises made to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

¹⁷² Thomas Ice, "Foreword," in Paul Richard Wilkinson, *For Zion's Sake* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2007), xvii.

¹⁷³ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 70.

Historian Timothy P. Weber notes of the dispensationalist perspective:

What separated dispensationalists from their fellow futurists was their strict literalism when interpreting biblical prophecy, their absolute separation of Israel and the church as two distinct peoples of God, and some conclusions which grew out of these two presuppositions...¹⁷⁴

One of those conclusions was and is the belief that the restoration of the Jewish people to a national homeland in Palestine, now Israel, is part of a divine plan of history. It was this theological conviction and conclusion that fanned the political flames of Christian Zionism in the last part of the nineteenth century.

According to Samuel Goldman, it was not John Nelson Darby that influenced Christian Zionism originally, but centuries of belief preceding him with many American theologians and politicians who already accepted the beliefs of Jewish Restorationism, what would become in the twentieth century Zionism and Christian Zionism. Goldman does admit that it was *The Scofield Reference Bible* that found a receptive audience of American Christians who were already primed for a Jewish homeland.¹⁷⁵ Goldman accurately understood the key to Scofield's dispensational belief: "For Scofield, the people of Israel were the living link between the covenantal past and the prophetic future."¹⁷⁶ This provides a powerful apologetic to the truthfulness of the Scripture. Even though support for the nation of Israel is declining among

¹⁷⁴ Timothy P. Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism 1875-1982*, enlarged ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 17. See also David A. Rausch, *Zionism within Early American Fundamentalism 1878-1918: A Convergence of Two Traditions* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1979).

¹⁷⁵ Samuel Goldman, "The Real Reason Americans Support Israel (Hint: It's Not AIPAC)," *Tablet Magazine* (February 15, 2019), <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/the-real-reason-americans-support-israel>. Also, see Gerald McDermott, ed., *Israel Matters* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2017), 33-41.

¹⁷⁶ Samuel Goldman, *God's Country* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 148.

millennials, it is still a very strong tenet among evangelicals.¹⁷⁷ Evangelical Christians are now the largest pro-Israel constituency in the United States.

C. I. Scofield's Influence on Personal Bible Study

The marketing trend of study Bibles today is geared to find a study Bible that is most relevant for the public's situation (e.g., *The Women's Ministry Bible*, *Businessman's Bible*, *African American Study Bible*). This was the starting assumption and goal of *The Scofield Reference Bible*, and it was the first of its kind for American Bible readers. *The Scofield Reference Bible* started it all.¹⁷⁸

Dispensationalism has asserted the primacy of the Scriptures and the ability of the layman to interpret and understand them.¹⁷⁹ One author gave this fitting tribute to Scofield:

There were some sincere believers, especially in the Reformed and Presbyterian denominations who never accepted the dispensational principle of interpreting the Bible, but the really *live* segment of the evangelical Church was the dispensational segment. It was among the dispensationalists that pastors *expounded* the Scriptures from the pulpit. It was among the dispensationalists that people carried their Bibles to church and followed the preacher as he taught the Word. It was the dispensationalists who were studying the Scriptures in their homes and using their Bibles to win others to Christ. There was no doubt about it; God had used the Scofield Reference Bible and those who stood for dispensational truth to bring about a spiritual revival in the Church, the results of which are still felt among us.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ George Barna, *The Day Christians Changed America* (Ventura: Metaformation, 2017), 14, and also Joel C. Rosenberg, "After Trump Recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's Capital, Evangelicals Work for Peace between Jews and Arabs" (December 9, 2017), <http://joelrosenberg.com/articles/after-trump-recognizes-jerusalem>. See also Walker Robins, *Between Dixie and Zion* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2020) and Motti Inbari, "Why Do Evangelicals Support Israel?" Palm Beach Center for Democracy and Policy Research (March 12, 2021), <https://palmbeachdemocracy.org/why-do-evangelicals-support-Israel>.

¹⁷⁸ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 197, (cf. 171-73, 214).

¹⁷⁹ Sawyer, "Dispensationalism," 111.

¹⁸⁰ Cornelius R. Stam, *The New Scofield Reference Bible: An Appraisal* (Windber, PA: Pilkington & Sons, n.d.), 6.

Even Albertus Pieters, a Reformed scholar who was highly critical of Scofield agreed with this:

Those who use this work are, in other respects, among the best Christians in our churches, those with the deepest faith in the Holy Scriptures, and with the most sincere devotion to the Lord. . . Through its influence there have arisen here and there ‘tabernacles’ and ‘undenominational’ churches, composed of people no longer at home in the established orthodox denominations, because they do not get there the sort of teaching they find in the Scofield Bible.¹⁸¹

The Scofield Bible encouraged personal, individual study and Bible reading. The guides and helps for the average reader generally untrained in Bible knowledge were a godsend to the average layperson.

Also unique about C. I. Scofield and the reference Bible was its emphasis upon a literal interpretation of Scripture especially among the prophetic and eschatological portions of the Old Testament. The basic implications of dispensationalism arise not out of its chronology of eschatological events, but out of its principle of literal interpretation.¹⁸² Literal interpretation insists upon a distinction between Israel in the Old Testament and the Church in the New Testament. The New Testament never confuses Israel and the Church. As opposed to the Church, which is a universal, religious body composed of individuals from all nations, the term Israel retains its reference to that people which came physically from the loins of Abraham.¹⁸³

The whole series of devotional Bibles offered by Christian publishing houses, dispensationalist or not, are rooted in the phenomenon of *The Scofield Reference Bible* as a Bible study tool.¹⁸⁴ Robert G. Clouse admits, “The extent of this influence has been so vast that in

¹⁸¹ Pieters, *The Scofield Bible*, 4-5, (emphasis in original).

¹⁸² Clarence B. Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), 149.

¹⁸³ Robert L. Saucy, *The Church in God’s Program* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972), 70.

¹⁸⁴ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 197-200.

many evangelical circles today the dispensational interpretation prevails.”¹⁸⁵ Todd Mangum suggests that its popularity was due to the fact that it made sense not only of biblical teaching but also of current events at the time, noting, “It is difficult to imagine or overstate just how prevalent the influence of this Bible was.”¹⁸⁶

Stephen Sizer notes how the course of history turned, “Darby’s dispensational views would probably have remained the exotic preserve of sectarian Brethren assemblies were it not for the energetic efforts of individuals such as William Blackstone and D. L. Moody. Above all, however, they were propagated by Scofield, who introduced them to a wider audience in America and the English-speaking world through his Scofield Reference Bible.”¹⁸⁷ Albertus Pieters, who offered an early critique of Scofield (1938)¹⁸⁸ made an interesting point along the same lines that had Scofield published his notes separately by themselves as a commentary, rather than being interspersed along with the biblical text itself, they would have long been forgotten.¹⁸⁹ Whether this is true or not or if the divine plan of God meant otherwise may be up to the theology of the particular reader.

Scofield’s purpose in creating and publishing the study Bible was not to change the course of prevailing biblical hermeneutics or reshape Protestant conservative thought in the United States through his theology or through existing and new religious institutions. His primary goal

¹⁸⁵ Clouse, “Introduction,” 12.

¹⁸⁶ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 169.

¹⁸⁷ Sizer, “Dispensational Approaches to the Land,” 151.

¹⁸⁸ “A Candid Examination of the Scofield Bible:” A Lecture Delivered before the Ministerial Association of the Christian Reformed Church at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 1, 1938. <https://www.archive.org/details/candidexaminatio00pieters>.

¹⁸⁹ Pieters, *The Scofield Bible*, 7.

was to provide a reference Bible that easily could be used by any reader seeking greater knowledge of the Bible, orthodox Bible doctrine (that Scofield believed arose from a literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic), and personal spiritual growth. That other significant things arose from his writings and ministry will be seen below, but first and foremost, Scofield wanted to enhance the individual reader's ability to understand the Bible and apply biblical teaching in his or her life. According to one reviewer, "Scofield's greatest legacy is a host of Bible students, whether Scofieldians or not."¹⁹⁰

C. I. Scofield and Contemporary Social Media

The consensus of social media coverage regarding C. I. Scofield is adversely negative. Opinions and conspiracy theories are rife with mostly distortions of the understanding (or misunderstanding) of dispensationalism. A casual perusal of *YouTube* reveals the intensity to which dispensationalism is opposed even to the extent of absurdity that it is an Illuminati conspiracy, a Zionist conspiracy, or a Jesuit conspiracy etc. If one were to do a simple perusal of "C.I. Scofield" on *YouTube*, one could spend hours and hours viewing anti-Scofield material. For example, a recent search turned up the following: "C. I. Scofield was a Racist;" "Scofield's Hyper-Zionists: the Useful Idiots of Talmudic Judaism;" "Dispensationalism Debunked: C. I. Scofield is Burning in Hell;" "Was Satan Behind Scofield, Darby, and Dispensationalism?;" "C. I. Scofield, the Illuminati, and the Plymouth Brethren;" "C. I. Scofield and the Strange Woman;" "Exposing the Heretical Doctrines of C. I. Scofield;" "Scofield Attacks the Resurrection of Jesus Christ;" "C. I. Scofield: False Prophet;" "The Evil of Scofield;" "Scofield's War on the King James Version;" "How Christians Were Hoodwinked by the Scofield Bible;" "Scofield was a Deceiver;" "The Perverted Scofield Study Bible;" "Dispensationalism Debunked 101: 100%

¹⁹⁰ Spencer, "Cyrus I. Scofield: (1845-1921)," 614.

Proof its Satanic;” “Was Scofield an Evil Man?;” “Scofield Study Bible and the Hijacking of American Evangelicals;” “Christian Zionism and How They Injected the Bible (with verses for Jews);” “The Roots of Christian Zionism: How Scofield Sowed Seeds of Apostasy;” “Was C.I. Scofield a Crypto-Jew?;” and “C. I. Scofield was a Liar.”¹⁹¹ Similarly, one finds a plethora of websites with equally critical and disparaging presentations. Many focus specifically on Scofield, but often Scofield is the initial subject of attack in order to attack dispensationalism as a whole.

Conversely, although one finds many exaggerated and inflammatory sites and videos castigating Scofield and his beliefs, social media platforms have also wide dissemination of beliefs held by Scofield. Dispensational premillennial theology is readily available in media and social media platforms from laypersons, academics, pastors, churches, and institutions. Further, with the advent of the internet, dispensational schools and institutions have created online courses for lay and collegiate usage that have freely disseminated dispensational theology to hundreds of thousands, if not millions of people globally. In so doing, the purpose and legacy of Scofield’s life and ministry continues, specifically in the realms of evangelism, missions, personal Bible study, and the teaching of the Bible and Bible doctrine. While Scofield’s Bible is more available than ever before and in a variety of translations and platforms, the biblical truths he expounded are available globally, regardless of the Bible one uses or owns. To that end, his influence is incalculable and exceeded his own expectations and desires.

For more than a century, the technological progression of print, radio, film, television, internet, and social media platforms have permitted those in favor of dispensational premillennialism and those opposed to it to disseminate their perspective to the masses. This

¹⁹¹ Internet search February 21, 2021. Specific sites and videos change often but the above are representative of the plethora of anti-Scofield material online.

capability and attempts to restrict access to it by ideological, denominational, and political opponents of fundamentalists, evangelicals, and their doctrines is a significant aspect of twentieth-century American religious history. Yet, in the twenty-first century the spectrum of American fundamentalism and evangelicalism is well represented.

C. I. Scofield and His Dispensational Thought as Villain

The mention of the word, “dispensation” associated with C. I. Scofield usually evokes an immediate reaction. To millions of people the term is probably not even understood; to those who do understand its concepts, it is a way of understanding the Bible better and more systematically. To many in the Reformed theological tradition, it is a dangerous teaching that borders on heresy and it is a threat to the Reformed theological system of interpretation known as covenant theology.¹⁹² Many in the church have misunderstood the concept of dispensationalism and therefore have rejected or distorted it.¹⁹³ For example, many have claimed that dispensationalism teaches more than one way of salvation, but even Scofield rejected this claim in *The Scofield Study Bible* section titled, “A Panoramic View of the Bible.” He wrote, “From beginning to end, the Bible testifies to one redemption.”¹⁹⁴ It seems that misunderstandings and

¹⁹² Charles L. Feinberg, *Millennialism: The Two Major Views* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 2008), 79.

¹⁹³ Roy B. Zuck, *Connection Extra: We Believe in Dispensationalism* (Dallas: Office of Alumni & Church Relations, Dallas Theological Seminary, January 2000), 1.

¹⁹⁴ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, v. Church historian George Marsden makes one of these erroneous claims in *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, (p. 40). This same charge is made by Keener and Brown, 71. Mangum and Sweetnam as well insist on this erroneous belief that Scofield taught different ways of salvation in the Old and New Testaments. See Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 128, 182. There are two places where Scofield could have been misunderstood regarding his views on salvation in the different dispensations and one comes from a note in the Gospel of John where he writes: “As a dispensation, grace begins with the death and resurrection of Christ... The point of testing is no longer legal obedience as the condition of salvation, but acceptance or rejection of Christ, with good works as a fruit of salvation,” – *The Scofield Study Bible*, (p. 1115). The other comes from his book, *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box*: “The eternal security of the believer is a New Testament doctrine and cannot be applied to Old Testament believers, who were under a covenant of works, not of grace. It is true indeed that the Old Testament believer was justified by faith (Heb. 11), but with that faith a perseverance in obedience was also necessary, else he lived under a broken and unpropitiated law, which was

misrepresentations of dispensationalism, even though unintentional, account for much of the criticism of the system.¹⁹⁵ Some critics have a single goal in mind, and that is to discredit dispensationalism by discrediting the man himself. Some attack the teaching of someone important by attacking the person's character instead.

Although there was support and acceptance of dispensationalism when Scofield's reference Bible was released, there was also opposition. George W. Dollar observed many years ago that "*The Scofield Reference Bible* is openly attacked as almost an enemy of men's souls."¹⁹⁶ Many focus specifically on Scofield, but often Scofield is the initial subject of attack in order to attack dispensationalism as a whole. For example, one reviewer noted in 1938:

This book (i.e., *The Scofield Reference Bible*) must be pronounced from the standpoint of the Reformed theology, and with a view of the peace and prosperity of our churches, one of the most dangerous books on the market. Its circulation is no aid to sound Bible study and true Scriptural knowledge, but rather the contrary. Its use should be quietly and tactfully, but persistently and vigilantly opposed; and our congregations should be diligently instructed in a better interpretation of the Word of God.¹⁹⁷

Similarly, in 1958 the faculty of the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary saw it necessary to address dispensationalism in their book, *The Church Faces the Isms*. Professor W. D. Chamberlain was chosen to be the voice of opposition. In Part Two of the book, ironically titled "Isms Predominantly Biblical," he wrote, "There are some good notes in The Scofield

inexorable in its judgment. Not so with the believer, who is saved by grace, and his disobedience does not affect his salvation, but his fellowship, peace, and growth" (pp. 13-14). But Scofield notes elsewhere in the study Bible: "The O.T. sacrifices enabled God to go on with a guilty people because they typified the Cross. To the *offerer* they were the confession of his desert of death, and the expression of his faith; to God they were the 'shadows' (Heb. 10:1) of which Christ was the reality" (p. 148), (emphasis in original). In other words, the acts were an expression of faith. Charles Ryrie has rebutted the charge of two different plans of salvation in his book, *Dispensationalism*. He devotes an entire chapter to doing so (pp. 121-42).

¹⁹⁵ Feinberg, *Millennialism: The Two Major Views*, 78.

¹⁹⁶ Dollar, *A History of Fundamentalism in America*, 268.

¹⁹⁷ Pieters, *The Scofield Bible*, 26.

Reference Bible, but many that are false, even pernicious. They have become a menace to the faith of the Church.”¹⁹⁸ The same author had praised dispensationalists earlier in the chapter for their intent to be completely loyal to the Scriptures.¹⁹⁹

Chamberlain further adds, “We need badly to recover the biblical doctrine of the Church. Dispensationalist error makes this imperative, unless we are to be carried away into an apostasy resulting from false teaching.”²⁰⁰ Chamberlain also claims, “The very zeal of dispensationalism is a part of its danger because it is misdirected; it is bent to preserve a special status for the Jews for which the New Testament offers no hope.”²⁰¹ Reformed Bible expositor and former dispensationalist Arthur W. Pink referred to dispensationalism as a modern and pernicious error, and a device of the enemy.²⁰² One self-published author ended his pamphlet with a prayer: “In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ we rebuke Cyrus Ingersall [*sic*] Scofield in the name of our Father and Kingdom.”²⁰³

John Wick Bowman of Union Theological Seminary wrote, “It (dispensationalism) represents the most dangerous heresy currently to be found within Christian circles.”²⁰⁴ Old

¹⁹⁸ W. D. Chamberlain, “Dispensationalism,” in *The Church Faces the Isms*, Arnold Black Rhodes, ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), 109. According to Chamberlain, the Bible was so popular that it was forcing pastors and church officials to confront it head on even as Pieters notes in his book, *The Scofield Bible*, 4-5.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 103.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 97. But see Romans 11:26 and Chapter Five.

²⁰² Arthur W. Pink, *The Application of the Scriptures* (Canton, GA: Free Grace Publications, 1985), 2.

²⁰³ Nord Davis, Jr., *Cyrus I. Scofield: Pope of Premillennialism* (Mountain City, TN: Sacred Truth Ministries, n.d.), 16. Sources such as these will be quoted only to show the absurdity of their accusations.

²⁰⁴ John Wick Bowman, “The Bible and Modern Religions: Dispensationalism,” *Interpretation* 10 (April 1956): 172.

Testament Reformed scholar Oswald Allis believed that “Dispensationalism has become increasingly in recent years a seriously divisive factor in evangelical circles.”²⁰⁵

Critics have labeled dispensationalism a dangerous heresy, and Scofield has been labeled as a pawn of the Zionists, a swindler, an embezzler, and a dubious character who abandoned his wife and children.²⁰⁶ According to Pieters:

It seems like a harsh judgment, but in the interest of truth it must be uttered: Dr. Scofield in this was acting the part of an intellectual charlatan, a fraud who pretends to knowledge which he does not possess, like a quack doctor, who is ready with a confident diagnosis in many cases where a competent physician is unable to decide.²⁰⁷

Dispensational critic Clarence Bass, who wrote one of the first histories of dispensationalism adds, “Has not dispensationalism contributed largely to this default of the church’s mission (of taking the gospel to the world) and made of it a detached, withdrawn, inclusively introverted group, waiting to be raptured away from this evil world?”²⁰⁸ Bass does admit that Scofield’s synthesis of Darby’s principles form the guideline for dispensational hermeneutics.²⁰⁹

More recently, John Gerstner called dispensationalists false teachers and he is concerned about their souls.²¹⁰ Similarly, R. C. Sproul wrote that dispensationalism should be discarded as being a serious deviation from biblical Christianity.²¹¹ Oswald Allis, quoted above, commented,

²⁰⁵ Oswald T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1945), vi.

²⁰⁶ Rossing, *The Rapture Exposed*, 23.

²⁰⁷ Pieters, *The Scofield Bible*, 9. Such criticism is inconsistent in that elsewhere in his book Pieters praised Scofield for his commitment to Christian orthodoxy in doctrine and was in agreement with Scofield in many areas.

²⁰⁸ Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism*, 149.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 150.

²¹⁰ John Gerstner, *Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth* (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt Publishers Inc., 1991), 262-63.

²¹¹ R. C. Sproul, “Foreword,” in John Gerstner, *Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth*, xi.

“The result is a situation that is deplorable. It is more than deplorable; it is dangerous.”²¹²

Biblical sensationalist Texe Marrs declares that Scofield “was a crooked, adulterous lawyer who abandoned his wife and was paid handsomely by New York Jewish plotters to betray the Christian faith by promoting a Jewish kingdom and an earthly Zionist New World Order to be ruled over by a god-like Jewish race.”²¹³

Founder of the Emergent Church movement Brian McLaren equates dispensationalism and Zionist theology with the racism that was prominent in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s and urged those who held these views to “have the courage to differ when racism was acceptable and even justified in most American churches.”²¹⁴ According to some critics, dispensational theology gives justification to a form of racism, the denial of human rights, supporting an “ethnic” cleansing of Palestinians, advocates an exclusive Jewish political agenda, and advocates an apocalyptic eschatology likely to become a self-fulfilling prophecy.²¹⁵ Mangum and Sweetnam quip that Scofield could never have imagined that his study Bible and inferences would one day form a major plank of American foreign policy with his views on Israel!²¹⁶ Philip A. F. Church wonders if Christian Zionism should not be labeled a heresy.²¹⁷

²¹² Allis, *Prophecy and the Church*, vii.

²¹³ Texe Marrs, “The Shocking Truth about C. I. Scofield,” <https://www.Jesus-is-Savior.com/wolves>.

²¹⁴ Brian McLaren, “Four Points Toward Peace in the Middle East,” *Sojourners Magazine* (April 16, 2009), <https://www.sojo.net/articles/four-points-toward-peace-middle-east>.

²¹⁵ Sizer, “Dispensational Approaches to the Land,” 167.

²¹⁶ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 196-97.

²¹⁷ Philip A. F. Church, “Dispensational Christian Zionism: A Strange but Acceptable Aberration or a Deviant Heresy?” *Westminster Theological Journal* 71:2 (Fall 2009): 375-398.

Yet there are moderating voices. Former Fuller Theological Seminary president Richard Mouw, who was raised on dispensationalism and a Scofield Bible writes, “I was to hear many negative things said, especially by my Reformed colleagues, about dispensationalism’s ‘heresies.’ But the criticisms never quite rang true.”²¹⁸ The dangers of dispensationalism so badly threatening the world and Church have failed to materialize.

Dispensationalist Ernest Pickering believed that there were and are five primary reasons that dispensationalism is rejected and attacked.²¹⁹ Most of these continue to be promoted sixty years after his article was first published and include: 1) Any theological system which becomes prominent and makes an impact upon the Church or Christianity will find opposition, 2) There is a growing spirit of ecumenicism among evangelicals which tends to diminish theological perspectives and sharply defined distinctions, 3) There is a growing intellectualism among evangelical scholars who feel that dispensationalism as a whole is un-intellectual and un-scholarly, 4) There is a desire among some for a more philosophical content in theology and an endeavor to adopt the latest findings in science, and 5) It is the trend of evangelicals to return to a Reformed theological position wherein Reformed Theology is vehemently opposed to dispensationalism in part rejecting it because it is not found in the standard creeds and Reformed creeds of Christianity. As such, it is rejected as a valid system of interpretation. Pickering’s reasons were formulated and published in 1961 and still resonate with many today.

However, Pickering did not articulate one of the more relevant reasons today, and that is that dispensationalism divides God’s people into two: Israel and the Church. Few have been able

²¹⁸ Mouw, “What the Old Dispensationalists Taught Me,” 34, (emphasis in original).

²¹⁹ Ernest Pickering, “Dispensational Theology,” *Central Bible Quarterly* (Spring 1961): 29-30. See also Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, 13-26.

to single out the most predominant reason why dispensationalism has been opposed so fiercely throughout Church history and the reason for this has been clearly enunciated by Charles Lee Feinberg. Feinberg observed that dispensationalism is a major threat to the very foundation of Reformed Theology with their emphasis on what is known and taught as “covenant theology.”²²⁰ Covenant theologians stress the unity of God’s people soteriologically throughout the Bible.

The widespread influence of Scofield through his writings, teachings, preaching, conferences, and his most abiding legacy even to this day, his reference Bible (which celebrated its 100-year anniversary in 2009) is still a formidable force. *The Scofield Study Bible* has never ceased to be in print. His belief in the authoritative Word of God; his belief in the premillennial return of Jesus Christ at a time when American culture was at a crossroads due to liberalism and waning belief in the inerrancy of the Bible from a literal, historical-grammatical perspective; and his influence on the average layperson in the pew is still evident today after more than a hundred years. To show how Scofield’s teaching has influenced and permeated all races of American culture, a young African American woman posted on social media:

I used to read Stephen King, Dean Koontz types HEAVY. I was at a neighbor’s house and she had a huge library. I pulled Left behind (*sic*) by Tim Lahaye (*sic*) off the shelf and asked if I could read it (*sic*) she hadn’t read it before but she was like sure (*sic*). I read it in its completion on a flight to Houston that January 15, 2000, weekend. I have never been the same. When I got back home my neighbor had moved but the seed had been planted (*sic*) she was not a believer as a matter of fact she was an LGBTQIA+ agnostic. God can choose whomever He wants to get His message out. I’ve not read/watched that genre since that day. Being left behind is more fearful than anything else. Have you ever thought of what that part of your future will look like? I didn’t until that day...²²¹

²²⁰ Feinberg, *Millennialism: The Two Major Views*, 79. See also Charles Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), 177-78.

²²¹ This quote was posted verbatim from a Facebook entry dated February 3, 2021 grammatical errors included. Another equally young African American woman responded to the post: “I’ve watched and read the series. A life-changing experience.”

Scotfield never saw the political restoration of the nation of Israel in 1948. He died in 1921, twenty-seven years before that momentous event. Yet, he believed in the promises of God as revealed in Scripture. Scotfield was anticipating the return of the Jews to the land in his Bible, published thirty-nine years before the event occurred. Scotfield's contribution to American Christianity is loved and appreciated by many but rejected by others.

Mangum and Sweetnam address the accusations made against Scotfield concluding, "Someone once said, 'God can draw a straight line with a crooked stick.' How straight was the line drawn through the life of Scotfield and how crooked the stick of Scotfield the man are points that remain in dispute. But that the life and work of Scotfield manifests the truth of this proverb no one really can dispute."²²² The same authors add, "A fully accurate assessment of Scotfield's Christian service will one day be made, but it remains, ultimately, the prerogative of his own Master."²²³

Scotfield's biographer, Charles Gallaudet Trumbull, wrote about the numerous struggles and health threats Scotfield faced in the publication of *The Scotfield Reference Bible*, a Bible that would be a major influence on pastors, missionaries, colleges, seminaries, ordinary Christians, and Bible students to the present, over 100 years of American history, "Of course Satan tried desperately, over and over again, to block the work upon, and prevent the publishing of, a Reference Bible which he could see was going to mean regrettable inroads upon his domain in human lives."²²⁴ Biographer Edward Reese adds a concluding note:

²²² Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scotfield Bible*, 51.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 222.

²²⁴ Trumbull, *The Life Story of C. I. Scotfield*, 108.

It is nothing short of amazing to realize that what has been the world's most sought after study Bible was compiled by a man who was not converted until age 36, who never received a formal education in theology, yet won the respect of the greatest scholars of his time.²²⁵

Having provided an overview of Scofield's ministry and influence, Chapter Three will examine his teaching and writings with respect to Bible prophecy, and more specifically Israel as the chosen people of God, past, present, and future.

²²⁵ Ed Reese, *The Life and Ministry of Cyrus I. Scofield, 1843-1921* (Christian Hall of Fame Series # 43) (Lansing, IL: Reese Publications, n. d.), 7.

Chapter Three

C. I. Scofield's Teaching on Israel as the Chosen People of God: Past, Present, and Future

Introduction: To the Jew First and Last

This chapter will focus on the teaching of C. I. Scofield as it relates to the Jewish prophecies. Five of Scofield's main books on prophecy have been studied in order to present an eschatological study of his views: *The Scofield Study Bible* (1909); *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (1896); *Prophecy Made Plain* (1910); *What Do the Prophets Say?* (1916); and *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box* (1917). The scope will not be on Israel's past history, but present and future prophecies centering on the resurrection of the nation according to Ezekiel 37 and also the restoration of the nation at the second coming of Jesus Christ.²²⁶ Scofield contends that the teaching that the Jewish people are forever set aside because of their rejection of the Messiah and that the Christian now inherits the Jewish promises is utterly unscriptural.²²⁷ Whereas this is not a study of all of Scofield's prophetic teaching, it is a study of the end-times as they relate to Israel, the Jews, and their return to the land, and for Scofield, there is very little prophetic teaching that does not concern that land. He wrote:

Had the proposal been that we should discuss the future of any other people than Israel, I, for one would not attempt it. And for this sufficient reason: our task in that case would be purely

²²⁶ It is at the second advent of Christ when the national promises to Israel will be fulfilled (Matt. 1:21-23; Luke 2:28-35; Luke 24:46-48 with Luke 1:31-33, 68-75; Matt. 2:2, 6; 19:27-28; Acts 2:30-32; 15:14-16). The restoration of Israel and the establishment of the kingdom are connected with the advent of the Lord, yet future. See C. I. Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1909, 1917), 711, 977.

²²⁷ C. I. Scofield, *Scofield Bible Correspondence Course*, vol. II (Chicago: Moody Bible Institute Correspondence School, 1959), 182.

a speculative one... But it is the unique distinction of Israel that she has for a historian the Holy Spirit of God... He has been pleased always to publish the story of Israel's destiny in advance of its accomplishment.²²⁸

For Scofield, God's word regarding the prophecies were so sure and certain that Scofield could write in 1910:

My task is but to gather up into orderly sequence the testimony of the Holy Spirit through the prophets. . . It matters nothing that to many this future is unwelcome; each of the nations of earth, and every unit of those nations, is moving irresistibly towards a rendezvous which God has fixed, and when the hour strikes nations and individuals will be there.²²⁹

Scofield believed that "the Jew verifies the Scriptures in his history, and the Scriptures in their foreview explain the mystery of that history. Jewish history authenticates the Bible, and the Bible explains, as it foretells, Jewish history,"²³⁰ and "The Jewish Scriptures (Old Testament) contain predictions concerning that people written centuries before the fulfillment of them, so it would simply be impossible for human oversight to have anticipated them."²³¹ Prophecy invariably receives a literal fulfillment.²³²

According to Scofield in his "Introduction: (To Be Read)" to *The Scofield Study Bible*,²³³ one of the remarkable aspects of a renewed interest in the expositional study of the Bible was in

²²⁸ C. I. Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain* (Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis, Printers and Publishers, n.d.), 74.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 75. Scofield's teachings are mildly Calvinistic in that they maintain a high view of God's sovereignty. The emphasis on the divine plan for all history would naturally harmonize with a high view of God's sovereignty. See Vern Poythress, *Understanding Dispensationalists* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 20.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 62-63.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 62.

²³² *Ibid.*, 62, 77-78. Many Christians have accepted Israel's past history and the curses that have befallen the nation literally but reject a literal fulfillment of the future promises and blessing. Scofield would not accept an allegorical method of interpretation of the prophecies. He added, "Prophecy invariably receives a literal fulfillment. It is not open to dispute" (p. 78).

²³³ Originally published as *The Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1909, 1917). The title was changed to *The Scofield Study Bible*. All quotations in this chapter will be taken from *The Scofield Study Bible*. Scripture references listed in brackets are coming from Scofield. This will let the reader know which

the area of prophecy, which he believed made up one-fourth of the whole Bible. He claimed that prophecy as a whole had been closed to the average Bible reader by fanciful and allegorical schemes of interpretation.²³⁴ It is necessary to exclude the notion ... “that the Church is the true Israel, and that the Old Testament foreview of the kingdom is fulfilled in the Church.”²³⁵

Points VIII-X in his “Introduction” represent what is probably the most distinctive and most controversial aspect of *The Scofield Reference Bible*, the dispensations.²³⁶ According to Mangum and Sweetnam, “This dispensational Israel-Church dichotomy is assumed by *The Scofield Reference Bible* as a key aspect of what forms the basic framework for understanding and properly applying biblical teaching and this is also the approach assumed to provide the key for unlocking prophetic teachings of the Bible.”²³⁷

Scofield basically states this in his section on, “The Prophetical Books,” which is a very important key to understanding Israel’s role in Bible prophecy:

The whole scope of prophecy must be taken into account in determining the meaning of any particular passage (2 Pet. 1:20). Hence the importance of first mastering the great themes above indicated, which, in this edition of the Scriptures, may readily be done by tracing through the body of the prophetic writings the subjects mentioned in the preceding paragraph.²³⁸

passages were key to Scofield’s understanding of prophetic themes and where these particular themes are summarized in his study Bible.

²³⁴ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, iii.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 989.

²³⁶ R. Todd Mangum and Mark S. Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible: Its History and Impact on the Evangelical Church* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster Publishing, 2009), 112-13.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 113.

²³⁸ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 712. The great themes he refers to here are the two advents of Christ, the Jewish remnant, the day of the Lord, the kingdom, and the arrival of the Beast and Armageddon. See the bullet points below.

Scofield gives the chronological scheme of all of prophecy. All prophecy he believed, centers around the covenant people Israel as he noted, “It is necessary to keep this Israelitish character of the prophet in mind. Usually his predictive, equally with his local and immediate ministry, is not didactic and abstract, but has in view the covenant people, their sin and failure, and their glorious future.”²³⁹ Future prophecy concerns Israel as a nation, looking especially to the last days, the day of the Lord, and the kingdom age to follow.²⁴⁰ Israel, (the whole nation), was a vessel marred in the potter’s hand, and is a key to the prophetic strain. But Jehovah will make it another vessel (Jer. 18:4).²⁴¹ Prophecy does not concern itself with history as such, but only with history as it affects Israel and the Holy Land.²⁴² Jewish history alone is told in Old Testament narrative and prophecy; the nations are mentioned only as they touch the Jew.²⁴³ Broadly speaking, predictive prophecy is concerned with the fulfillment of the Palestinian, Abrahamic, and Davidic covenants.²⁴⁴ However, prophecies are interspersed with much historical matter concerning the prophet’s own time and circumstances. Often the prediction springs immediately from the local circumstance.²⁴⁵

The keys which unlock the meanings of prophecy are:

- The two advents of the Messiah, the first advent to suffer (Gen. 3:15, Acts 1:9), and the second advent to reign (Deut. 30:3, Acts 1:9-11)

²³⁹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 711.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 804.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 791.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 918.

²⁴³ C. I. Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1896), 6.

²⁴⁴ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 711.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

- The doctrine of the remnant of the Jews (Isa. 10:20)
- The doctrine of the day of the Lord (Isa. 2:10-22, Rev.19:11-21)²⁴⁶
- The doctrine of the kingdom (i.e., the millennium)

To these, Scofield notes, “The detail of the time of the end upon which all prophecy converges, will be more clearly understood if to those subjects the student adds:

- The Beast (Dan. 7:8, Rev. 19:20)
- Armageddon (Rev. 16:14, 19:17).”²⁴⁷

Prophetic sections of the Scofield Bible have been pretty much arranged around these themes and they occur throughout his Old and New Testament notes.

Joel, coming at the beginning of the writing prophets (B. C. 836) gives the most complete view of the consummation of all prophecy. The whole scope in the Book of Joel is of the end of this present age, of the times of the Gentiles, the battle of Armageddon, the regathering of Israel, and of kingdom blessing. The last days in Joel are generally applied to the nation of Israel and the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit. For example, Joel 2:28-32 awaits the second advent and the day of the Lord and will find their greater fulfillment in Israel.²⁴⁸ The Old Testament

²⁴⁶ Richard Mayhue confirms this: “The phrase, “day of the Lord,” embodies one of the major strands woven throughout the fabric of biblical prophecy. Without a clear understanding of the day of the Lord, the pattern of God’s plan for the future is obscure.” Scholars are generally in agreement that the term is used by the prophets to describe either the immediate future or the eschatological consummation. See Richard L. Mayhue, “The Prophet’s Watchword: Day of the Lord,” *Grace Theological Journal* vol. 6, no. 2 (Fall 1985): 231, 245. See also Dan Kent, “Zephaniah Describes the Day of Yahweh,” *Biblical Illustrator* (Spring 1996): 31-33.

²⁴⁷ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 711-12. The importance of this section cannot be underestimated in Scofield’s understanding of Israel in the end times. The additions of the Beast, Armageddon, and the judgment on the nations is not periphery, but a major focus of the Scofield end-times scenario.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 930, 932. Many Bible expositors interpret this as being fulfilled at Pentecost. It is important to note that Peter did not quote Joel’s prophecy in the sense of its fulfillment, but purely as a prophetic illustration of those events. Peter’s phraseology, “this is that,” means nothing more than that this is [an illustration] of that which was spoken by the prophet Joel (Acts 2:16). For an interpretation of Joel and Pentecost, see Merrill F. Unger, *New Testament Teaching on Tongues* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1971), 26. It was a new and staggering thing to a Jew that, in advance of the fulfillment of Joel 2:28-29 all might receive the Spirit- *The Scofield Study Bible* (p. 1090). For Scofield’s dispensational teaching on the Holy Spirit, see *Plain Papers on the Holy Spirit* (Greenville, SC: The Gospel Hour Inc., 1969).

contains predictions of a future pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon Israel (Ezek. 37:14, 39:29) and upon all flesh (Joel 2:28-29).²⁴⁹ The last days of Israel are to be distinguished from the last days of the Church (1 Tim. 4:1). The last days as related to Israel are the days of Israel's exaltation, glory and blessing and are synonymous with the kingdom and messianic age (Isa. 2:2-4, Mic. 4:1-7). The term "last days" is a reference to the whole of Israel's history.²⁵⁰

It is important to note that Scofield did not just believe in a mass conversion of the Jews at the end of time as they were incorporated into the Church, but a total national restoration of the Jewish nation totally separate from the Church. This was a completely radical interpretation at the time (1909) and it was thirty-nine years before the year of 1948 when the event did in fact occur.

Israel's exaltation and restoration would include a return to their status as God's elect nation over all the nations of the world. The concept of restoration would mean more than just a salvation of individual Jews. It means a return of Israel to the land and a major role to the nations in an earthly millennium.²⁵¹ Scofield notes that Isaiah 11 pictures "Israel in her land, the center of the divine government of the world and channel of the divine blessing – and the Gentiles blessed in association with Israel."²⁵² In the days when Jerusalem has been made the center of earth's worship again, (e.g. Zech. 8:23), the Jew will then be the missionary to the very nations

²⁴⁹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 982.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 1151.

²⁵¹ See Michael J. Vlach, "Various Forms of Replacement Theology," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 20/1 (Spring 2009): 60.

²⁵² Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 725.

now called “Christian!”²⁵³ The prophets speak of the restoration of Israel to the land, and of the restoration of theocratic rule under David’s greater Son.

Paramount to all Bible prophecy would be the Jew. Scofield argues philosophically for the election and preservation of the Jews. The philosophy of history fails to account for the Jew.²⁵⁴ It is only reasonable and logical for the Jew to survive and prosper and flourish if he has been so called by God for a specific task to be accomplished. Scofield asks, “If we say that a man is immortal until his work is done, why should it not be true of a people?” And, “Why, then, should it be thought incredible that God should raise up a nation to have a special and unique ministry to all the nations, and to all times? And then, because entrusted with a perpetual ministry, that they should be preserved through all mutations and dangers?”²⁵⁵

After 2,500 years without self-government and 1,800 years without a national home, no other people deprived of their homeland has been able to maintain its identity and resurrect its own country.²⁵⁶ Most end-time prophecies have some connection with the nation of Israel, but scholars before 1948 struggled to make sense of those prophecies.²⁵⁷ For Scofield, the people of Israel were the living link between the covenantal past and the prophetic future.²⁵⁸ As Scofield saw it, the Jew is the miracle of history and can no more be understood apart from God than the

²⁵³ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 972-73, (emphasis in original).

²⁵⁴ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 60-61.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 61.

²⁵⁶ Tim LaHaye, *The Beginning of the End* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1991), 42.

²⁵⁷ James Collins, “A Miraculous Nation,” *Prophetic Observer*, Southwest Radio Ministries (May 2021-Vol. 28, No. 5): 1.

²⁵⁸ Samuel Goldman, *God’s Country* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 148.

universe can. The Jew is one of the four mysteries of the world, along with the Bible, the physical universe, and the person of Jesus.²⁵⁹

Dispersed for centuries among the nations and without a nation, capitol, government, flag, temple, king, land or rallying point, the Jew has never been absorbed into the culture around him. He is distinct among all people even as he is scattered throughout the nations. He is indestructible in spite of the persecutions, sufferings, and pogroms, and this was written in 1910, some thirty years prior to the Holocaust as Scofield wrote on the eve of the Nazi rise to power.

The Jew is seen by Scofield not only prophetically, but philosophically as an apologetic to the truthfulness of the Bible, as he can never be understood except for his place in the plan and purpose of God so he must survive as a witness.²⁶⁰ In summary Scofield wrote:

Suppose, in short, that Israel is set apart of God a representative people, a teaching nation, whose sublime mission is to make Him known among all the nations of the earth, then the phenomena of Jewish history at once becomes luminous with meaning, and all that is strange and all that is inexplicable in the light of mere philosophy is explained. The mind at once responds to that explanation of these phenomena – at once pronounces it adequate.²⁶¹

It is only logical that the Jews survive.

Israel's Past: Calling and Election

Israel's prophecy is connected to Israel's past. The doctrine of election is one of the central themes of the Old Testament. Amos 3:2 reads, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth..." Buber writes, "The Hebrew word, know, (*yada*) in its precise biblical sense (normally used to designate a sexual union between a man and a woman) means that the knowing Being

²⁵⁹ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 57-58.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 57-67. Scofield even insinuates that because the Jews have been scattered worldwide, this may aid their endeavor to preach the gospel worldwide when that moment comes (p. 128). See Chapter Six on Israel as an apologetic to the Christian faith.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 60.

(God) draws the known (Israel) out of the abundance of creatures and establishes a particular and exclusive relationship between the two of them.”²⁶² Israel’s election is corporeal election and the foundation of Judaism is nothing more than the family identity of the Jewish people.²⁶³ What national election does mean is that God’s purpose for choosing the nation will be accomplished and that the elect nation will always survive as a distinct entity. For Israel, it also guarantees the physical salvation of Abraham’s seed and in Israel’s case, the national salvation.²⁶⁴ This salvation is at the center of the dispute among dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists. Election promises its ultimate purpose will be fulfilled, which is to bring the whole world finally into the covenant of redemption.²⁶⁵ This belief is held by most dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists alike. Israel’s election is not to be understood as merely a rejection of others for it is precisely through the elect people Israel that God will bring redemption to all nations.²⁶⁶ The Jews were chosen not to be exclusive recipients of God’s blessings and glory but rather to be recipients and transmitters of it.²⁶⁷ The call of Abraham involved the creation of a distinctive people through whom the great purposes of God toward the human race might be worked out.²⁶⁸

²⁶² Martin Buber, “The Election of Israel: A Biblical Inquiry,” in *The Martin Buber Reader*, Asher D. Biemann, ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 23.

²⁶³ R. Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg-Fortress Press, 1996), 6.

²⁶⁴ Arnold Fruchtenbaum, “Israel and the Church,” in *Issues in Dispensationalism*, Wesley R. Willis, John R. Master, Charles C. Ryrie, eds. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 114.

²⁶⁵ David Novak, *The Election of Israel: The Idea of the Chosen People* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 23.

²⁶⁶ Scott Bader-Saye, *Church and Israel after Christendom* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005), 47.

²⁶⁷ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 561.

²⁶⁸ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 976.

Scofield summarizes the appointed mission of God to Israel: 1) To be a witness of the unity of God in the midst of universal idolatry, 2) to illustrate to the nations the greater blessedness of serving the one true God, 3) to receive, preserve, and transmit divine revelation, 4) to produce as to his humanity the Messiah.²⁶⁹

In contrast to Israel, Scofield writes, “The student finds mention in Scripture of another distinct body, which is called the church, the *ecclesia*. This body also has a peculiar relation to God, and, like Israel, has received from Him specific promises. But similarity ends there, and the most striking contrast begins.”²⁷⁰

In Scofield’s dispensational scheme, the Church is to receive heavenly promises, the Jews earthly promises: “If faithful and obedient, the nation is promised earthly greatness, riches and power; if unfaithful and disobedient, it is to be scattered ‘among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other’” (Deut. 28:64).²⁷¹ He adds, “Just as distinctly as Israel stands connected with temporal and earthly things, so distinctly does the church stand connected with spiritual and heavenly things.”²⁷² In origin, calling, promise, worship, principles of conduct and future destiny the Church is contrasted with Israel. In the predictions concerning the future of Israel and the Church, the distinction is still more striking. The Church will be removed from the

²⁶⁹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, vi, 19, 1206. Scofield reiterates these same principles in his other writings maybe with a slight change in wording and he elaborates a little more on these four in *Prophecy Made Plain*, (63-67) and *What Do the Prophets Say*, (31-32).

²⁷⁰ Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, 7.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 6-7, (emphasis in original).

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 7. This dichotomy between earthly and heavenly is not distinct with dispensationalists. Non-dispensationalists acknowledge this same dichotomy. See John Goldingay, “The Jews, the Land, and the Kingdom,” *Anvil*, vol. 4, no. 1, 1987): 12. According to the Book of Ephesians, the believer’s position is in the heavenlies. He is a heavenly man and a stranger and pilgrim on the earth.

earth entirely, but Israel is to be restored to her greatest splendor and power after her restoration from the nations from which she had been scattered.²⁷³

The Church age began with Pentecost. In Ephesians 3:1-10, the apostle Paul informs us that the Church was a mystery hid in all ages and dispensations which went before but now is being revealed to Paul.²⁷⁴ The Church is called a mystery as there is no mention of it in the Old Testament and it is not an Old Testament prophecy.²⁷⁵ The purpose of the Church age is not to incorporate Israel's promises, nor is the Church a continuation of Israel or Israel's economy.²⁷⁶ That the Christian now inherits the distinctive Jewish promises is not taught in Scripture and is a theological error that needs to be avoided.²⁷⁷

Historically the Church comes after Israel: "Now we need only to see that after Israel had run its course God brought out of His storehouse another new thing, the Church."²⁷⁸ The Church was born on the heels of Israel's rejection of Jesus' messianic claims. Jesus had offered himself to the nation accordingly as the prophets of Israel foretold, and now, when it is perfectly evident that nationally Israel is not going to receive their king, he mentions for the first time the word "church:" "Upon this rock I will build my church (Matt. 16:18)." The Church was not in existence when Jesus spoke, but still a thing in the progressive purpose of God.²⁷⁹ Jesus does not

²⁷³ Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, 10.

²⁷⁴ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 43.

²⁷⁵ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 975.

²⁷⁶ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 52-53. Cf. Robert Saucy, *The Church in God's Program* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1972), 69-74.

²⁷⁷ C. I. Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box* (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1917), 58-59.

²⁷⁸ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 44.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 42. See also Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Chafer Systematic Theology*, vol. IV (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947), 41. George Eldon Ladd and Millard J. Erickson admit along with Scofield that the Old Testament does

mention the Church until the rejection by Israel of the kingdom of heaven of which he as king has been rejected. He announces an entirely new thing hidden in God (Eph. 3:9, 10).²⁸⁰

The Church's purpose though is not to convert the world as Scofield reiterates, "The evangelization of the world, then, and not its conversion is the mission committed to us."²⁸¹ The preaching of the gospel is the divinely appointed means for the calling out a people for his name, the Church, the *ecclesia*. But for Scofield, "Faith is not compulsory, and nigh two thousand years of preaching have demonstrated that as the age began with an out calling from among the Gentiles of 'a people for his name,' (Acts 15:14), so it has gone on. Glorious victories have been won for Christ, but never anywhere, have all the hearers been converted."²⁸²

The Church, the body of Christ of which Jesus is the head was formed by the baptism with the Spirit on the day of Pentecost and began the building of itself through the testimony that Jesus was both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36).²⁸³ The Church is a mystery or insertion in-between God's past and future promises and purposes for the nation of Israel. A parenthesis is the best explanation for understanding God's purposes for this specific age. The Church is not Israel's successor but a spiritual link between the rejection and re-acceptance of Israel.²⁸⁴ He admits,

not predict the Church age. See Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1998), 1058 and George Eldon Ladd, "Historic Premillennialism," in *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views*, Robert G. Clouse, ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977), 39.

²⁸⁰ C. I. Scofield, *Things Old and New* (New York: Our Hope Publication Office, 1920), 258-59.

²⁸¹ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 31-32.

²⁸² C. I. Scofield, *What Do the Prophets Say?* (Philadelphia: The Sunday School Times Company, 1916), 164, (emphasis in original).

²⁸³ Scofield, *Things Old and New*, 262.

²⁸⁴ See Andrew Woods, *The Coming Kingdom* (Duluth, MN: Gospel Press, 2016), 262-63; 267-68; A. C. Gaebelein, *The Jewish Question* (New York: Our Hope Publications, 1912), 55; Wim Malgo, *1000 Years Peace* (West Columbia: Midnight Call, Inc., 1984), 47-51.

“There are Scriptures after Scriptures to which I might refer you which show that this whole Church period is a parenthesis, as it were.”²⁸⁵ The Church runs the interval of time between the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, until his return in glory.²⁸⁶ From Acts 1:1 – Revelation 4:1, the Church is primarily in view, and the Jewish nation has been temporarily set aside.²⁸⁷

Israel’s future is centered in the biblical covenants, primarily the Abrahamic Covenant. From the Abrahamic covenant, the Mosaic, Palestinian, Davidic, and New Covenants are chiefly related by adding detail or development.²⁸⁸ This covenant becomes the seed from which are brought forth the later covenants made with Israel. The essential areas of the Abrahamic covenant: the land, the seed, and the blessing are enlarged in the subsequent covenants made with Israel.²⁸⁹ The future blessing of Israel as a nation rests upon the Palestinian covenant of restoration and conversion (Deut. 30:1-9); the Davidic Covenant of the kingship of the Messiah, David’s greater son (2 Sam. 7:8-17), and this gives to all prophecy its messianic character.²⁹⁰ The whole Bible centers around these covenants and they all point to Christ. The one grand theme of the covenants is the redemption found in the person and work of Christ.²⁹¹

²⁸⁵ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 131. See also, Scofield, *What Do the Prophets Say*, 79.

²⁸⁶ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1189. Scofield sees the Church age as temporary.

²⁸⁷ C. I. Scofield, *Scofield Bible Correspondence Course*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody Bible Institute Correspondence School, 1959), 76.

²⁸⁸ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 3.

²⁸⁹ J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, Zondervan Publishing House, 1964), 71. See also Paul N. Benware, *Understanding End Times Prophecy* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2006), 53.

²⁹⁰ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 711.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, v; 1298. See also Scofield, *Scofield Bible Correspondence Course*, vol. 1, 70-72.

The Abrahamic Covenant

The Abrahamic Covenant is introduced in Genesis 12:1-3 and confirmed in Genesis 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-8; 22:15-18; 26:1-5; 28:12-15; 35:9-12; 48:3-4; 50:24, and throughout the Old Testament. The Abrahamic Covenant founds the nation of Israel and confirms with specific additions the adamic promise of redemption. Wyschogrod notes, “With the covenant made with Abraham his flesh and blood descendants became distinctively the heirs of promise. The mystery of Israel’s election is that it concerns a natural human family, the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It is a human family neither better nor worse than others, the sanctification of a natural family.”²⁹² Scofield confirms that the entire Bible is an account of one nation elected by God for the purpose of redeeming the nations of the earth when he writes:

Whoever reads the Bible with any attention cannot fail to perceive that more than half of its contents relate to one nation: the Israelites. He perceives, too, that they have a very distinct place in the dealings and counsels of God. Separated from the mass of mankind, they are taken into covenant with Jehovah, who gives them specific promises not given to any other nation. Their history alone is told in Old Testament narrative and prophecy; other nations are mentioned only as they touch the Jew. . . Even the promise of the Messiah is of blessing to ‘all the families of the Earth.’²⁹³

God’s promise, covenant, and oath to Abraham is not a peripheral element in the story of the Bible. It is a key structural component in the entire biblical account. The covenants made with Abraham and Israel lie at the heart of the canonical narrative. Not only are the promises made early in the narrative (i.e., Genesis 12), but they are reinforced throughout Genesis by acts of swearing, reaffirming, and restating God’s desire to fulfill them as promised.²⁹⁴ Walter Kaiser’s monumental Old Testament work *Toward an Old Testament Theology* argues that the theme of

²⁹² Michael Wyschogrod, *The Body of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1983), xv.

²⁹³ Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, 6-7, (emphasis in original).

²⁹⁴ Craig Blaising, “Israel and Hermeneutics,” in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel*, Darrell L. Bock, Mitch Glaser, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2014), 161.

the covenant promise of God to Abraham is the center of Old Testament theology.²⁹⁵ This is also argued as well from David Clines. Even though Clines accepts the JEDP theory of the composition of the Pentateuch, he wrote that it could still be read as a unity which has a single theme: the fulfillment of the threefold promise to the ancestors of land, of descendants and of a relationship with God.²⁹⁶ God founded the Hebrew nation for the specific purpose of making it a messianic nation.²⁹⁷ The promise to Abraham is the foundation thought of which the whole Bible is a development.²⁹⁸ The book of Genesis is occupied with the great themes of Israel's creation and election, with the covenant faith and the providential activity of God. While the book of Genesis does reveal the origin of all things in its scope, its real purpose is to explain the *origin* of the elect nation Israel.²⁹⁹

Scofield contends that the reader of Scripture should hold firmly in mind that from Genesis 12 to Matthew 12:45, "the Scriptures have primarily Israel in view, the little rill, not the great Gentile River, though again and again the universality of the ultimate divine intent breaks into view (e.g. Gen. 12:3)." Genesis 11 and 12 mark an important turning point in the divine dealings with the election of Abraham.³⁰⁰ Genesis chapters 1-11 are introductory for that purpose.

²⁹⁵ Walter Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), ix.

²⁹⁶ David J. A. Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

²⁹⁷ Henry Halley, *Halley's Bible Handbook* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965), 31, 94.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 94.

²⁹⁹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, vi, (emphasis in original).

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

The Davidic Covenant

The Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7:8-17) establishes the perpetuity of the Davidic line and family (Matt. 1:1) and of the Davidic kingdom over Israel and over the whole earth which was to be filled in and by the Messiah (Luke 1:31-33; Acts 15:14-17; 1 Cor. 15:24).³⁰¹

Many biblical scholars working in historical Jesus research share the view that the teaching and mission of Jesus can only be understood in terms of Jesus' vision for the restoration of Israel.³⁰² The mission of Jesus was *primarily* to the Jews (Matt. 10:5-6; 15:23-25; John. 1:11). He was made under the law (Gal. 4:4); he was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers (Rom. 15:8); and he lived to fulfill the law that grace might flow out. There was a strong Jewish coloring up to the cross.³⁰³

Matthew is peculiarly the gospel for Israel, and, as flowing from the death of Christ a gospel for the whole world.³⁰⁴ Matthew alone of the four Gospels displays a keen interest in presenting Jesus as the Son of David. In Mark and Luke, this Christological title is found only four times, and John makes no use of it whatsoever.³⁰⁵ The title "Son of David" has to do exclusively with the earthly Jesus. The initial purpose for which Matthew employs the title "Son of David" is to describe the earthly Jesus as the royal messiah from the house of David. The title functions as the counterpart of the title, "Son of Abraham" (Matt. 1:1).³⁰⁶ In Matthew's scheme, it is precisely

³⁰¹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1297-298.

³⁰² Craig Blaising, "The Future of Israel as a Theological Question," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44/3 (September 2001): 438.

³⁰³ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 989, (emphasis in original).

³⁰⁴ Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box*, 59.

³⁰⁵ Jack Kingsbury, "The Title 'Son of David' in Matthew's Gospel," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95/4 (1976): 591.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 597-98.

when the populace refer to Jesus as the Son of David, they are in effect confessing him to be the Messiah sent to Israel.³⁰⁷

What is interesting about Kingsbury's study is that the term Son of David is primarily used in regard to Jesus' ministry of healing, and the recognition of him as the Son of David implies that the people are recognizing him as Israel's messiah, whereas the leaders of Israel have repudiated him as the messiah. In other words, the title Son of David is used by Matthew as a polemic against those who do not recognize him as the messiah and Son of God.³⁰⁸ As a title for the earthly Jesus, Matthew narrows his application of the term Son of David to only three principle passages and Matthew presents the public ministry of the earthly Jesus as one of teaching, preaching, and healing, but never dying. According to Kingsbury, Matthew never associates the title Son of David with the death and resurrection of Jesus.³⁰⁹ Kingsbury coincides with Scofield's understanding even though this is not his intent. Scofield had noted:

The disciples had been proclaiming Jesus as the Christ, i.e., the covenanted King of a kingdom promised to the Jews, and 'at hand.' The church, on the contrary, must be built upon testimony to Him as crucified, risen from the dead, ascended, and made 'Head over all things to the church' (Eph. 1:20-23). The former testimony was ended, the new testimony was not yet ready, because the blood of the new covenant had not yet been shed, but our Lord begins to speak of His death and resurrection (Matt. 15:21). It is a turning point of immense significance.³¹⁰

Kingsbury's research coincides with the dispensational message as there was a different message to the Jews than there was for the Church.³¹¹ This cannot be denied as there was a different

³⁰⁷ Kingsbury, "The Title 'Son of David' in Matthew's Gospel," 599.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., 601-02.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 592.

³¹⁰ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1022, (emphasis in original).

³¹¹ The gospel of the kingdom (cf. Matt. 10:7) is not the same as the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. The gospel of the kingdom is the good news that the King is at hand to establish the kingdom, which was the very same message preached by John the Baptist, Jesus, and his disciples. See J. Dwight Pentecost,

message to the disciples at the beginning of Jesus' ministry (cf. Matt. 10:5-6) than at the end (cf. Matt. 28:19-20). Jesus' message to his disciples after his resurrection was a different message than the preaching of the kingdom at the beginning. In Matthew 28, Jesus told his Jewish disciples to take the gospel message to non-Jewish people. What Kingsbury does confirm is that the title Son of David was clearly identified by the Jews as a reference to an earthly king in keeping with the Old Testament promises to David (2 Sam. 7:12-17), but not to be associated with the death of a king. This is consistent with Scofield's teaching that the earthly message of Jesus was to the Jewish nation in his offer of the kingdom. According to Scofield, the message of the death, burial, and resurrection was preached after the rejection by the nation.³¹² He noted, "Christ must be lifted up on the cross and believed in as a sacrifice for sin, as Seed of Abraham, not David."³¹³ The future ministry of Christ relates to his reign as king upon the Davidic throne. Christ would receive the throne of his father David. This promise will find its fulfillment in the millennial kingdom reign of Christ. Because of the resurrection he ever lives and has title to the throne of David and he shall exercise that title when He returns.³¹⁴ The Son of David as his messianic title is inappropriate and nonsensical if one rejects a literal, earthly kingdom.³¹⁵

Things to Come (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), 473. This same phrase, "gospel of the kingdom," Jewish in connotation, interestingly occurs again as the message during the tribulation period (Matt. 24:14) and the return of the Son of Man (Matt. 24:27-31). The gospel of the kingdom is the glad tidings that Christ is to set up His kingdom on earth according to 2 Sam.7:8-16; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 15:16-17; Isa. 11:1-12; Jer. 16:13-15; 23:5-8 etc. "It should be remembered that the gospel of the kingdom will be the peculiar testimony of the believing remnant during the great tribulation... and before the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." See Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box*, 72 and Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1343.

³¹² Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1022.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 1132.

³¹⁴ W. W. Barndollar, *The Validity of Dispensationalism* (Des Plaines, IL: Regular Baptist Press, 1964), 69-70.

³¹⁵ Scofield, *What Do the Prophets Say*, 57-59.

Scofield believed that the throne of David is literal, not allegorical.³¹⁶ Scripture, up until the accounts of the crucifixion in the Gospels, looks forward to the cross, and has primarily in view Israel and the blessing of the earth through the messianic kingdom.³¹⁷

The Palestinian (Land) Covenant (Deut. 28-30)³¹⁸

Yehuda Radday wrote, “The Land itself has shaped both the history and the character of the Jew and of the Jewish people as a whole.”³¹⁹ Scofield noted the same:

It is important to note that, while the land of promise was unconditionally given to Abraham and to his seed in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 13:15, 15:7), it was under the conditional Palestinian Covenant (Deut. 28–30:9) that Israel entered the land under Joshua. Utterly violating the conditions of that covenant, the nation was first disrupted (I Ki. 12) and then cast out of the land (2 Ki. 17:1-18, 24:1–25:11). But the same covenant unconditionally promises a national restoration of Israel which is yet to be fulfilled.³²⁰

Scofield believed that there is in the purpose of God an inseparable connection between the Jew and his land. It is the key which unlocks many prophetic secrets he wrote.³²¹ The gift of the land is modified by prophecies of three dispossessions and restorations (Gen. 15:13-16, Jer. 25:11-12, and Deut. 28:62-65, 30:1-3). The Assyrian and Babylonian conquests of Israel and Judah were the fulfillments of the warnings given in the Palestinian covenant (Deut. 28:63-68).³²² With the

³¹⁶ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 721. Classical dispensationalists believe Rev. 3:21 is conclusive proof that Christ is not now seated upon his own throne, and that the Davidic Covenant and the promises of God through the prophets and the angel Gabriel concerning the messianic kingdom await fulfillment (p. 1334).

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1189.

³¹⁸ Scofield, like many other older dispensationalists used the term, “Palestinian” covenant, but most now avoid this term because of the political ramifications involved.

³¹⁹ Y. T. Radday, *Israel an Experiment in Human Redemption* (Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing House Jerusalem Limited, 1979), 5.

³²⁰ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 216.

³²¹ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 69.

³²² Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 784.

dispersion of Jews in the year A.D. 70 begins the saddest period in the long history of the Jewish people. Two dispossessions and restorations have already occurred, and Israel is now in the third dispersion from the land but will be restored at the return of the Lord as king under the Davidic covenant.³²³ Jeremiah 23:7-8 describes the regathering of the nation announced in v. 3, and the restoration of Israel to the land in connection with the establishment of Messiah's kingdom is a great and constant theme of the prophets (Isa. 49:8-13; 52:1-12; Jer. 31:7-25, Ezek. 36:16-38).³²⁴

Scofield observed that wherever the Jew is scattered from the land and persecuted, he (the Jew) maintains that the prophecies will be literally fulfilled. On the other hand, wherever the Jews are protected and when they accumulate wealth and power where they have been scattered, "he (the Jew) ceases to believe in the literal fulfillment of his prophecies as he loses all desire to go back to the Holy Land or to have his national life reconstituted."³²⁵ The implication seems to be that scattering and persecution are used by God to further his plans and purposes in regard to the fulfillment of the promises.

Chapters 28-30 of Deuteronomy contain in prophetic form a synopsis of the entire history of the chosen people from that day to this – closing with what many believe to be a prophecy as could be understood as a description of the present-day Israel. With exact literalness, these passages have been fulfilled in history of the sufferings of the Jewish people.³²⁶ The Palestinian Covenant is the mold of predictive prophecy in the larger sense and it determines Israel's destiny.³²⁷

³²³ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 25.

³²⁴ Scofield, *What Do the Prophets Say*, 64.

³²⁵ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 73.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 72-73.

³²⁷ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 711.

Scofield explains how the Old Testament Feast of Trumpets (Lev. 23-27) is prophetic and refers to the future regathering of long dispersed Israel. A long interval elapses between the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets, which answers to the long period occupied in the pentecostal work of the Holy Spirit in the present dispensation, the Church age. These trumpets are always symbols of testimony and are connected with the regathering and repentance of Israel after the Church, or pentecostal period has ended.³²⁸ Chapter 26 of Leviticus is prophetic as well and should be read in connection with the warnings of the Palestinian Covenant (Deut. 28-30).

Next, the Day of Atonement looks forward to the repentance of Israel after her regathering under the Palestinian Covenant, which is preparatory for the second advent of the Messiah and the establishment of the kingdom on earth. After the regathering of Israel, the cleansing fountain will then be available to the nation (Zech.13:1).³²⁹

Lastly, the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles is prophetic of the millennial kingdom-rest for Israel after her regathering and restoration. The feast will become a memorial, not only for Israel but for the nations as well (Zech. 14:16-21).³³⁰ Ezekiel describes the distribution of the land to the tribes of Israel, and the erection of the millennial temple. There are to be offerings and memorial sacrifices during this time, but not expiatory sacrifices. The Feast of Tabernacles will be observed by the Gentile nations.³³¹

The deuteronomic covenant secures unconditionally the restoration and conversion of Israel. Salvation and the restoration to Palestine are unconditionally promised.³³² However, the

³²⁸ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 157.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, 157-58, 976.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 158, 234.

³³¹ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 150-51.

³³² Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box*, 87-88.

predictions of the restoration to the land from the Babylonian captivity at the end of seventy years of fulfillment must be distinguished from those of the restoration from the present worldwide dispersion.³³³ The exile of the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom from the land is still a present-day reality. From this captivity the ten tribes have never been restored and still continues to this day, but the *national* restoration and reunification of all tribes is yet to be fulfilled.³³⁴

The New Covenant (Jeremiah 31)

The New Covenant secures the perpetuity, future conversion, and blessing of Israel.³³⁵ According to the writer of Hebrews, the New Covenant is not made with the Church, the elect, the faithful, or the spiritual; it was made with both the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel and Judah (Heb. 8:8, cf. Jer. 31:31).

The period of the New Covenant is vitally linked with the restoration of Israel to her land. Ryrie explains, “According to Romans 11:26-27, where this passage is quoted, the fulfillment of the New Covenant was still future at the time of the writing of Romans. Israel’s covenant with the Messiah is yet to be accomplished and that only when their iniquity has been purged by the return of Messiah.”³³⁶ Paul quotes the covenant made with Israel in the Old Testament and it is unlikely that any Jew would have allegorized Israel’s promises in the Old Testament regarding

³³³ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 711.

³³⁴ Ibid., 442, 718-19, (emphasis in original). These two kingdoms are to be reunited in the future messianic kingdom (Isa. 11:10-13; Jer. 23:5-6; Ezek. 37:15-28, (pp. 500, 719, 881). See Scott Hahn, “All Israel Will be Saved: The Restoration of the Twelve Tribes in Romans 9-11,” *Letter & Spirit* 10 (2015). In this quite interesting article, Hahn, a Roman Catholic, argues that the northern kingdom tribes had disappeared and had been absorbed into the Gentile nations so Paul’s reference to “all Israel” is a reference to literally, “all Israel,” as the term was a reference to all twelve tribes in the Old Testament.

³³⁵ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1297.

³³⁶ Charles Ryrie, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith* (Neptune: NJ: Loizeaux Brothers Publishing, 1953), 110.

the land and national existence over to the Church. Israel as a people will be saved and will finally experience the ultimate enjoyment of the land reaching to the full extent of the boundaries promised in the Book of Genesis (e.g., Gen. 15:18-21).³³⁷

Romans 11:27 links Israel's salvation (forgiveness of sins) with the New Covenant promises of the Old Testament that predicted Israel's restoration (Jer. 31:31), thus tying Israel's salvation with the Old Testament promises of a restoration of Israel to its land. Scofield addresses the New Covenant further under Romans 11 in Chapter Five.

Israel's Present Status: The Partial Return

Dan Bruce writes: "One would ask if the modern ingathering of Jews to Eretz-Israel is simply a secular phenomenon with only a coincidental biblical basis, or if the ingathering is actually a fulfillment of Bible prophecy."³³⁸ Scofield noted, "If, therefore, God has decreed the reconstitution of the nation of Israel upon the sacred soil of Palestine no reluctance of the people will avail to delay it an hour."³³⁹ On the other hand, there is no evidence in his writings that it was the Christian's responsibility to help God in establishing his dispensational scheme nor to establish a Jewish homeland by British mandate. God has ordained the work and program for each dispensation. If the ages are ordained of God, one does not work for the coming age, but one works for the age that God has decreed in each dispensation. According to Scofield:

The great body of the churches believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, but they have turned aside the greater part of their resources to the attempt to reform the world, to educate the world, and, in short, to anticipate the next dispensation in which those things belong, and to do now the work that is distinctly set apart for restored and converted Israel. We shall never succeed in doing it.³⁴⁰

³³⁷ Walter Kaiser, *Back Toward the Future* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 115.

³³⁸ Dan Bruce, *Daniel Unsealed* (Atlanta: The Prophecy Society, 2011), 196.

³³⁹ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 75.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 55.

Again, he notes, “As we will not go back to Judaism because we are not of that age, so neither will we go forward into the kingdom age, seeking to imbibe its spirit or do its work.”³⁴¹

For Scofield, such attempts were tied to larger millennial schemes such as postmillennialism. Postmillennialism was an attempt to create the millennial kingdom on earth through the efforts of the Church which was doomed to failure.³⁴² *The Scofield Reference Bible* transferred Christian Zionism from a purely political matter to a spiritual one.³⁴³ God would establish his kingdom in his time, not through human effort. The partial return of the Jews to their ancient land in unbelief will be addressed further as an apologetic in Chapter Six.

The Jewish Remnant

From the rejection of Christ at His first coming, Jehovah will give Israel up until the believing remnant appears.³⁴⁴ That Israel is the wife of Jehovah now disowned but to be restored is the clear teaching of Scripture. Israel is to be Jehovah’s earthly wife restored and forgiven.³⁴⁵

Scofield summarizes the future of the remnant during the great tribulation. A remnant out of all Israel will turn to Jesus as Messiah and will become his witnesses after the removal of the

³⁴¹ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 24.

³⁴² Scofield ridiculed the concept of postmillennialism at the time of World War I when he wrote, “For thirty years these prophets of peace without righteousness have assured us that great and serious wars were ended forever; and yet we are in the greatest and most serious of all wars. *What does it all mean?*” (*What Do the Prophets Say?*, p. 5) [emphasis in original]. For a direct argument against postmillennial teaching, see Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield’s Question Box*, 126-27.

³⁴³ Michael David Evans, *The History of Christian Zionism*, vol. 1 (Phoenix: Time Worthy Books, 2013), 137.

³⁴⁴ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 949.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 922. This relationship is not to be confused with that of the Church to Christ. The New Testament speaks of the Church as a virgin espoused to one husband (1 Cor. 11:1, 2), which could never be said of Israel, an adulterous wife of Jehovah. See note in Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1348.

Church (Rev. 7:3-8). Turning to the Lord in the great tribulation (Ps. 2:5, Rev. 7:14), the remnant takes up the beautiful gospel of the kingdom (Rev. 14:6) and proclaims it under persecution, unto all nations for a witness (Matt. 24:14). The result of this preaching is seen in Revelation 7:4-14. Some of these will undergo martyrdom (Rev. 6:9-11), and some will be spared to enter the millennial kingdom (Zech. 12:6 - 13:9).³⁴⁶ In the midst of the “beginning of sorrows,” as Christ calls it in Matthew chapter 24, a vast number of Jews turn to Jesus as the Messiah. From that moment, God’s eye is upon those suffering Jews who have turned to Him and are receiving Jesus, though unseen yet, as their Messiah. These believing Jews are the brethren of Jesus in Matthew 25:40. The elect of Matthew 24 are the restored and sealed Jews, the identity being the 144,000 out of every tribe of Israel. Through it all, a world-wide preaching is carried on mainly by these Jews.³⁴⁷ As Scofield shows, the chief interest in the remnant is prophetic.

In the way of typology, Scofield saw Noah, preserved through the judgment of the flood as a type of the Jewish people who will be kept or preserved through the apocalyptic judgments of the tribulation period and brought as an earthly people into the new heaven and the new earth.³⁴⁸ The three Hebrew children (Dan. 3), faithful to God while the nation of Israel was exiled from her land is a type of the Jewish remnant preserved in the last days (Rom. 11:5) who will be faithful in the furnace of the great tribulation (Ps. 2:5, Rev. 7:14).³⁴⁹ Also, Noah’s ark is also a type of Christ as the refuge of his people from judgment. This speaks of the preservation of the

³⁴⁶ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1205, 949-50, 1036 respectively.

³⁴⁷ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 125-26, 128 respectively.

³⁴⁸ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 12.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 903.

remnant of Israel through the great tribulation who will turn to the Lord after the Church has been caught up (like Enoch) to meet the Lord at the rapture.³⁵⁰

In discipline for sin, God's ancient people Israel is cast out of the land and judicially blinded (2 Cor. 3:12-15), but in covenanted mercy the individual Jew may resort to the simple faith of Abraham and be saved (Gen. 15:6, Rom. 4:1-5). Israel's blindness nationally during this age (Rom. 11:25) is described as a mystery . . . "A previously hidden truth, now divinely revealed, but in which a supernatural element still remains despite the revelation."³⁵¹ But this does not set aside the Palestinian (Deut. 30:1-9) and Davidic (2 Sam. 7:8-16) covenants (cf. Rom. 11:25-27).³⁵² There is a believing remnant in Israel while the nation is in blindness and unbelief with neither priesthood nor temple, and consequently unable to keep the ordinances of the law. Those so disciplined are not cut off from the grace of God as Romans 11 teaches.

The final restoration of Israel is to be accomplished after a period of unprecedented tribulation (referred to as Jacob's trouble, Jer. 30:3-10) and in connection with the manifestation of David's righteous branch (Jer. 23:5) who is *Jehovah-tsidkenu* – "the Lord our righteousness," (Jer. 23:6). The restoration described here in Jeremiah is not to be confused with the return of the remnant of Jews under Ezra and Nehemiah at the end of the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity (Jer. 29:10). This prophecy in Jeremiah 23 is yet to be fulfilled (Acts 15:14-17).³⁵³

³⁵⁰ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 13. Scofield does not use the word "rapture" here, nor does he use it in the definitive passage of I Thessalonians 4, or in the Subject Index. However, he does use the word only once in an obscure footnote on page 1349.

³⁵¹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1014.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, 956.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 795.

Scofield wrote, “The great tribulation is distinctly the time of Jacob’s trouble (Jer. 30:7) and its vortex Jerusalem and the Holy Land. It involves the people of God who will have returned to Palestine in unbelief.”³⁵⁴ When referring to the tribulation period he added, “When the Church period has been finished, and God ... begins again to deal with Israel, namely, at the beginning of the Great Tribulation, then the clock of prophecy begins to run again, and the seventieth week has its fulfillment.”³⁵⁵ The remnant must be in existence in the land in order to fulfill prophecy.

Resurrection from the Dead

An important point needs to be noted regarding Scofield’s views of the Jews and the land in his understanding of future events when he wrote, “God never reckons time with the Jews when they are out of their own land. Then there is always an interlude. With Israel out of the land, God’s Jewish clock stops. It begins again when Israel is back where Israel ought to be.”³⁵⁶ He envisioned a national restoration to be followed by a national conversion of Israel at the same time as the conversion of the nations.³⁵⁷

The restoration and re-establishment of Israel as a nation is spoken of as a resurrection (Isa. 26:19). Of course, this implies a literal resurrection of dead bodies, but a national resurrection is meant as well.³⁵⁸ The phrase in Romans 11:15, “Life from the dead,” is believed by many scholars to be a reference to the final resurrection at the end of time, but Scofield’s marginal

³⁵⁴ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1337.

³⁵⁵ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 132.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 131.

³⁵⁷ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1148.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 735.

references direct the reader to Ezekiel 37, Isaiah 26, and Hosea 6, which means that Scofield had in mind Israel's national resurrection.³⁵⁹

Israel's resurrection from the dead (nations) is outlined in Scofield's notes regarding Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezek. 37).³⁶⁰ Scofield wrote in 1917 of a Jewish return to their land as promised in the Old Testament:

Did you ever notice that in Matthew 24, after speaking of the Tribulation and His own Second Coming, our Lord gives the parable of the fig tree? 'When its branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh.' The fig tree is everywhere, and always, a symbol of Israel. According to that parable we are to watch the fig tree, not for the fullness of leaves, but for the first starting buds, the first indications of renewed life in Israel, religiously and nationally. Are there any buds upon the fig tree to-day? Note that a large and ever increasing number of Jews in Russia and elsewhere have already received Jesus as Messiah. What else? They are flocking back to the Holy Land, where, according to prophecy, a remnant must be at the beginning of the Great Tribulation. Only to-day, I saw in a newspaper the statement that increasing numbers of Jews are going to the Levant, to Joppa, to Constantinople, feeling their way back, blindly, to their own land. Watch the fig tree! When you see these first buds you know that the time is at hand.³⁶¹

Accordingly, Scofield believed that this return to the land would be in blindness (i.e., unbelief). Scofield believed that the vision of the valley of dry bones is self-explanatory with the reference to the restoration of the Davidic monarchy and the promise that the ten tribes and the two shall no longer be divided into two kingdoms, but united when Israel is restored. The earthly center of the worship of God at that time shall be Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be the center.³⁶² The purpose of Ezekiel was to sustain the faith of the exiles by prediction of national restoration and of

³⁵⁹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1205. See also George Eldon Ladd, "Is There a Future for Israel?" *Eternity* (May 1964): 28. According to Ladd, the phrase does not refer to Israel's restoration *per se*, but to the results of Israel's restoration among the Gentile world.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 881. See also Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box*, 66.

³⁶¹ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 126.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, 84-85.

national glory under the Davidic monarchy. Chapters 40-48 are prophetic of Israel's restoration in the land during the kingdom age.³⁶³

The Gentile nations that will come against Jerusalem at the end of the tribulation period suggests that the Jews will be in the land as an independent nation when the nations invade (Ps. 2:5, Rev. 7:14).³⁶⁴ There are end-time prophecies which do not predict Israel's return to the land and their possession of it as a nation, but they do require it.³⁶⁵ The process of restoring Israel, the land, and the people serves one specific purpose, and that is Israel's conversion.

Israel's Future

Many dispensationalists believe that Israel's re-establishment as a national homeland for the Jews and the recapture of Jerusalem in 1967 by the Israeli army set Israel's prophetic clock in motion again. The return of Israel to their ancient land and the establishment of the state of Israel is the first step in a sequence of events which will culminate in Christ's millennial kingdom on earth.³⁶⁶ The editor of the prophetic magazine *Midnight Call* wrote, "We all know that Israel is THE sign on God's world clock, but few realize that this hand is moving slowly but surely toward midnight."³⁶⁷

Israel as a sign or "super sign" of the return of Jesus is reiterated in many books on prophecy including one of the most recent by Ron Rhodes who writes, "Israel's rebirth is a

³⁶³ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 840, 885.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 737.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 189. See Chapter Six.

³⁶⁶ John Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), 115.

³⁶⁷ Wim Malgo, "God's End Time Signs," *Midnight Call* (March 1979): 4, (emphasis in original).

super-sign that makes relevant all the prophetic signs of the times that follow.”³⁶⁸ He further adds, “But because Israel has indeed become a state again, end-time trends tend to take on powerful relevance. Because the super-sign has now been fulfilled, the individual signs of the times serve to inform the kinds of trends we should be watching for as we move deeper into the end-times.”³⁶⁹ Likewise, Thomas Ice reiterates, “This is why Israel is considered God’s super-sign of the end-times.”³⁷⁰ Or, LaHaye and Hindson confirm, “In this book, we’ll look at the biblical information that reveals Israel as God’s super sign of the end-times.”³⁷¹ Such views are most consistent with the views of Scofield.

Scofield highlighted the reality of signs and also of Israel as the greatest sign becoming the pioneer for students of prophecy today as they relate to Israel: “Students of prophecy cannot, as it would seem, but find our times full of signs of the approaching end of the age. . . There is a ‘sign’ of apostasy – more accurately, the apostasy begun . . . An apostate church then is the first sign of the end.”³⁷² Then, Scofield set the template for end-time chronology:

But Israel is also a sign, since the first constructive work of the Lord after His return will be the restoration of the Davidic throne, regathering of Israel (Luke 1:31-33, Acts 15:16-17). The great Zionistic movement, evincing a stirring of the hearts of the Jewish people toward their ancient land, is a most significant sign of the end.³⁷³

³⁶⁸ Ron Rhodes, *End-Times Super Trends* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2017), 14.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁷⁰ Thomas Ice, “What Should We Think About the Zionist Movement?” in *What Should We Think About Israel*, J. Randall Price, ed. (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2019), 41.

³⁷¹ Tim LaHaye and Ed Hindson, *Target Israel* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2015), 11. See also Mark Hitchcock, *What on Earth is Going On* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishing Inc., 2002), 49-59.

³⁷² Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield’s Question Box*, 125, (emphasis in original).

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 125-26. It should be noted that this was written in 1917, thirty-one years before the Jewish state was recognized by the United Nations in 1948.

The fact that in the present day there is again movement and development in relation to this ancient nation is a sign that the stage is being set for the final world drama.³⁷⁴ This restoration and salvation of Israel is agreed upon by most dispensationalists as there will be two stages and the first step in the sequence of events alluded to by Walvoord and Scofield will be the gathering and return of the Jews in unbelief as Scofield had argued over 100 years ago. The passage of Ezekiel does appear to allow for Israel's return to the land in stages. An order is discernable in this and succeeding prophecies: 1) Restoration of the land (Ezek. 36:1-15), 2) Restoration of the people (Ezek. 36:16 - 37:28), 3) Destruction of Israel's enemies (Ezek. 38:1 - 39:24). Then follows that which concerns the glory of Jehovah that he may dwell among the people.³⁷⁵

Acts and a National Jewish Restoration

It was not only the Old Testament prophecies that predicted a national restoration of the Jews; the New Testament does as well. Scofield wrote, "It is important to note that the prophetic element in the book of Acts concerns the reconciliation of a postponed kingdom with the promises made to Israel through the Old Testament prophets. The Church is not the subject of the prophetic testimony of that book."³⁷⁶ In the past few years a consensus has been emerging in at least one area of historical Jesus research by those who see Jesus as an eschatological prophet of Israel who lived and died for one thing: the national restoration of Israel.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁴ Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy*, 130-31.

³⁷⁵ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 879.

³⁷⁶ Scofield, *What Do the Prophets Say*, 109.

³⁷⁷ Scott, "Jesus' Vision for the Restoration of Israel as the Basis for a Biblical Theology of the New Testament," 131, 133. See also Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), 239-40 and Blaising, "The Future of Israel as a Theological Question," 438-39.

In Acts 1:6 the disciples of Jesus asked a puzzling question: “When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, ‘Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?’” David Stern translates this verse, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore self-rule to Israel?”³⁷⁸ Scofield observed, “It is noteworthy, first, that our Lord did not rebuke this question; and, secondly, that His answer left whole and entire the Jewish hope: ‘It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.’”³⁷⁹ Luke maintained a bilateral eschatology that would bring the restoration of the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6) along with the cosmic renewal of all things (Acts 3:21).³⁸⁰

Perhaps the most important passage for consideration occurs in Peter’s sermon in Acts 3. If there is an indication of a future restoration of Israel under these new circumstances it will go a long way toward silencing the objection that the New Testament nowhere expresses such a hope for a national restoration of the Jewish people.³⁸¹ The promise of Peter is national in scope. Here, the whole nation is addressed and the promise to *national* repentance is *national* deliverance: “And he shall send Jesus Christ” to bring in the times which the prophets had foretold (Acts 2:14).³⁸² Scofield also connects this passage and all the passages in Acts as referring to the kingdom age, not the Church. Larry Helyer wrote, “At some unspecified time the messianic days will feature a national regathering, restoration and conversion, and Acts 1:6 may now be linked

³⁷⁸ David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), 215.

³⁷⁹ Scofield, *What Do the Prophets Say*, 102.

³⁸⁰ Isaac W. Oliver, *Luke’s Jewish Eschatology: The National Restoration of Israel in Luke-Acts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 16.

³⁸¹ Larry Helyer, “Luke and the Restoration of Israel,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 36/3 (September 1993): 327.

³⁸² Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1153, (emphasis in original).

with 3:19-21 as evidence for such a belief among the apostles. Luke has certainly hinted that before history has expired we will witness a national restoration of Israel in accordance with prophetic hope.”³⁸³ Historical Jesus research seems to agree very much with Scofield.

The author of Luke-Acts did not write off the Jews but still awaited the restoration of Israel. Luke conceived of Israel’s eschatological restoration in traditional, Jewish national terms.³⁸⁴ This is exactly what Scofield taught; there is continuity between the Old and the New Testament as he noted, “It is most interesting to see, and of vital moment to the right interpretation of the prophetic testimony, that the Davidic Covenant, as conditioning the kingdom foretold by them, *enters the New Testament unchanged.*”³⁸⁵

Romans 11

Romans 11:25-26 addresses Israel’s future salvation, but the question is whether or not it deals with Israel’s national earthly restoration. In three pivotal chapters (Romans 9-11), the promises to Israel are connected with the promises concerning the salvation of the Gentiles, and the fulfillment to the promises to Israel await the completion of the Church and then the coming of the Deliverer out of Zion (Rom. 11:25-27).³⁸⁶ A comparison of Scofield’s teaching with non-dispensationalists is one of the major purposes of this dissertation and will be addressed at length in Chapter Five. Israel’s national salvation and restoration was a major focus of Scofield’s belief.

³⁸³ Helyer, “Luke and the Restoration of Israel,” 328.

³⁸⁴ Oliver, *Luke’s Jewish Eschatology*, 22, 40.

³⁸⁵ Scofield, *What Do the Prophets Say*, 59, (emphasis in original).

³⁸⁶ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1191. For a scholarly consensus of this same order, see Oliver, *Luke’s Jewish Eschatology*, 22-23; 36-37.

Paul: One Born Before the Due Time

Scofield connected Israel's future salvation as a nation with Paul's own conversion and salvation experience on the Damascus Road (Acts 9).³⁸⁷ Scofield colleague and consulting editor for the reference Bible, A. C. Gaebelein also taught that Paul's supernatural salvation was a pattern for Israel's national salvation at the second coming of Christ. Saul of Tarsus is a type and pattern of what Israel is to be and to receive in the future when God will arise and have mercy on Zion.³⁸⁸ Gaebelein wrote, "The untimely birth, before the time, suggests another birth time as well as another birth, the birth of the nation when Israel, the remnant of his people, will be born again by looking upon Him in glory, whom they have pierced."³⁸⁹ The condition from self-righteousness to the righteousness of God, of which Paul's experience is an illustration (Phil. 3:1-9) is the foreshadowing of the conversion of national Israel.³⁹⁰

Regarding I Corinthians 15:8, Scofield saw the Apostle Paul's conversion as a preview or down-payment of Israel's national conversion. Scofield wrote, "As one born 'before the due time,' Paul thinks of himself here as an Israelite whose time to be born again had not come nationally (cf. Matt. 23:39), so that his conversion by the appearing of the Lord in glory (Acts 9:3-6) was an illustration, or instance before the time, of the future national conversion of Israel (see Ezek. 20:35-38; Hosea 2:14-17; Zech. 12:10 - 13:6; Rom. 11:25-27)."³⁹¹

³⁸⁷ C. I. Scofield, *No Room in the Inn and Other Interpretations* (Greenville, SC: The Gospel Hour Inc., 1941), 105-6.

³⁸⁸ A. C. Gaebelein, *The Jewish Question* (New York: Our Hope Publications, 1912), 15. The entire chapter argues this point (pp. 12-18).

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

³⁹⁰ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 967.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 1226.

In Romans Chapter 11, Paul has been speaking about the setting aside of Israel as a nation, so it follows that the restoration of Israel will be as a nation. Israel's salvation by Paul cannot be anything but future at the time of Paul's writing here, "All Israel shall be" Scofield confirmed that, "During this age, only the Jewish remnant will accept Christ, as there is a veil over the heart of the nation, but when Christ returns in glory, Israel will repent and turn to the Lord (See Zech. 12:10)."³⁹²

Scofield argues that Israel's salvation occurs directly from Christ himself and that Joseph's revelation and manifestation to his brothers in Egypt (Gen. 45:1-3) is a type of the future when Christ reveals himself to his nation. The reconciliation of Joseph with his brethren is a picture prophetically of the future reconciliation of the Hebrew people to their long-rejected Messiah, which is the theme of some of the most glowing prophecies of the prophets adding that both the Old Testament and the New Testament are at one in the declaration that the Hebrew people are to be restored to Palestine, converted, and then enter upon the period of their greatest earthly exaltation and distinction.³⁹³ As Scofield observes, "Joseph's life and situation lay the foundation and the prophetic order of Israel's future salvation: Joseph, rejected by his brothers, goes to Gentile Egypt where he becomes a blessing and receives a Gentile bride. Then follows the salvation of Jacob's family when he reveals himself to his brothers."³⁹⁴

³⁹² Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box*, 119.

³⁹³ Scofield, *No Room in the Inn, and Other Interpretations*, 149-50.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 155-56.

The Day of the Lord

The phrase, “day of the Lord” is one of the keys which unlock the meaning of prophecy in Scofield’s understanding of Israel’s future.³⁹⁵ All earth judgments will culminate in that “day” to be followed by the restoration and blessing of Israel and the nations in the kingdom (i.e. millennium).³⁹⁶ The vengeance of the tribulation period precedes the regathering of Israel and synchronizes with the day of the Lord.³⁹⁷ This is the prophetic order: first the judgments of the day of the Lord, then the kingdom.³⁹⁸

The terms “that day,” “the day,” “the great day,” “the day of God” (e.g., 2 Pet. 3:12) are often equivalent terms and encompass the final destruction of *all* Gentile world-power at the return of the Lord in glory.³⁹⁹ The Day of Jehovah is that lengthened period of time beginning with the return of the Lord in glory and ending with the purgation of the heavens and the earth by fire preparatory to the new heavens and the new earth (Isa. 65:17-19; 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1).⁴⁰⁰ It is preceded by seven signs:

- 1) The sending of Elijah (Mal. 4:5; Rev. 11:3-6)
- 2) Cosmic disturbances (Joel 2:1-12; Matt. 24:29; Acts 2:19-20; Rev. 6:12-17)
- 3) The insensibility of the professing Church (1Thess. 5:1-3)
- 4) The apostasy of the professing Church (Laodicea) (2 Thess. 2:3)

³⁹⁵ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 711.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 959.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 766.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 970.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 722, (emphasis in original).

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 1349.

- 5) The rapture of the true Church (1 Thess. 4:17)
- 6) The manifestation of the man of sin the Beast (2 Thess. 2:1-8)
- 7) The apocalyptic judgments (Rev. 11-18)⁴⁰¹

The term “day of destruction” is that aspect of the Day of Jehovah which visits final and eternal judgment upon the wicked.⁴⁰²

Judgment on the Nations, the Beast, and Armageddon

To complete the subject of prophecy as it relates to the chosen people, Scofield added the additional themes of the Gentile nations, the Beast, and Armageddon: “The detail of the ‘time of the end’ upon which all prophecy converges, will be more clearly understood if to those subjects the student adds the **Beast** (Dan. 7:8, Rev. 19:20) and **Armageddon** (Rev. 16:14, 19:17).”⁴⁰³

Jesus predicted that “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24b). The *New Living Translation* better translates this phrase, “Until the age of the Gentiles comes to an end.”⁴⁰⁴

This statement by Jesus outlines the history of the time of Gentile ascendancy and describes past and future empires that occupy Palestine and rule over the nation until he returns. Scofield notes, “The Times of the Gentiles is that long period beginning with the Babylonian captivity of Judah, under Nebuchadnezzar, and to be brought to an end by the destruction of Gentile world-power by the ‘stone cut out without hands’ (Dan. 2:34, 35, 44), (i.e. the coming of the Lord in

⁴⁰¹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1349.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, 1350.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, 712, (emphasis in original).

⁴⁰⁴ Holy Bible, *New Living Translation* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers Inc., 1996), 1058.

glory) (Rev. 19:11, 21), until which time Jerusalem is politically subject to Gentile rule (Luke 21:24).⁴⁰⁵ While Israel has been trampled on by the Gentile nations ever since the time of Nebuchadnezzar, most likely a reference to the ten-toes of the beastly image in Daniel 2:34, the Messiah will trample on the toes of the last remaining form of Gentile world power. The phrase, “times of the Gentiles,” is not referencing the salvation nor the evangelization of the Gentiles as Romans 11:25 does, but it does suggest that God’s timetable with his chosen nation Israel will coincide with his plan and purpose for the nations which are separate from Israel.⁴⁰⁶

The Beast of Revelation, symbolized by the ten horns is the last form of Gentile world power, a confederated ten-kingdom empire covering the sphere of authority of ancient Rome (Rev. 13:1). Political Babylon and the Beast will be destroyed by the return of the Lord in glory.⁴⁰⁷ The Beast will have been the full instrument of wrath and hatred against God and the Jewish saints during the great tribulation.⁴⁰⁸ Daniel is distinctly the prophet of the times of the Gentiles and his vision includes the whole course of Gentile world rule until its end in judgment and to the setting up of the messianic kingdom. Gentile world-power is to be crushed by the sudden smiting stone.⁴⁰⁹ Armageddon is the designated place for the beginning of the final battle in which the Lord, at his coming in glory will deliver the Jewish remnant besieged by the Gentile world-powers under the Beast and False Prophet (Rev. 16:13-16, Zech. 14:1-9).⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁵ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1345, (emphasis in original).

⁴⁰⁶ Kaiser, *Back Toward the Future*, 114.

⁴⁰⁷ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1341-342, 1346.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 1349.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 898.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1348-349. According to Pentecost, “The battle of Armageddon will not be one isolated incident, but a campaign which will extend over a three-and-a-half-year period.” See J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, Zondervan Publishing House, 1964), 340.

Prophecies against the nations, Jeremiah chapters 45-52, look forward to the judgment of the nations after Armageddon and the deliverance of Israel (e.g., Rom. 11:26).⁴¹¹ More so than the prophets Haggai or Malachi, the prophet Zechariah gives the mind of God about the Gentile world powers surrounding the restored remnant. God has given the nations their authority to rule (Dan. 2:37-40), but he will hold them accountable. The test will be their treatment of Israel.⁴¹²

The throne judgment in Matthew 25 is a judgment of the living nations as the word *ta ethne* has been translated. The nations are described as a mingling of sheep and goats and are to be judged on the basis of their treatment accorded to those whom Christ calls here “my brethren” (Matt. 25:40). Scofield believed that the brethren symbolize believing Jews who will have turned to the Messiah during the tribulation period after the removal of the Church. This remnant of Jews will proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to all nations during the tribulation.⁴¹³ Joel 3:14-16 climaxes the day of the Lord prophecy as it describes an international judgment in the presence of God (Joel 3:2, 14). This judgment seems to anticipate Matthew 25:31-46.⁴¹⁴

Most Bible expositors assume that the brothers of Christ here can only be a reference to Christians, the Church, the poor, or some variation thereof, or a combination of all three. The term not only applies to Christian believers (which it definitely does) but it may apply to one’s physical birth siblings as well. Some have argued that the term “brothers” in this passage could not refer to Jews in a collective sense, but in fact it can and does in the following passages: Acts

⁴¹¹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 822-23.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, 965.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*, 1036; Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield’s Question Box*, 62; Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, 31.

⁴¹⁴ Leslie Allen, *The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), 110.

2:29; Acts 2:37; Acts 7:2; Acts 13:15, 38; Acts 23:1, 5, 6; Rom. 9:3; and Heb. 2:17. In all these cases, unbelieving Jews were addressed by the apostles as brothers or brethren.⁴¹⁵

A correct understanding of the passage must also take into account the Jewish context of the passage in which the judgment occurs. The fate of these two groups (the sheep and the goats) is determined by their response to the needs of the persecuted people of the Messiah, the Jews. Ed Glascock notes that the most fascinating aspect of this judgment is that it is a judgment of Gentiles, not Jews.⁴¹⁶ The conversion of the nations will occur *after* the smiting of the nations.⁴¹⁷

Before entering the millennial kingdom, both Jews and Gentiles will pass under the judgment bar of God. God's promise to Abraham that he would "bless them that bless thee," and "curse him that curseth thee," (Gen. 12:3) has been fulfilled in the history of the dispersion. It has invariably fared ill with the people who have persecuted the Jew – well with those who have protected him. The future will invariably prove this principle further (Deut. 30:7; Isa. 14:1-2; Joel 3:1-8; Mic. 5:7-9; Hag. 2:22; Zech. 14:1-3; Matt. 25: 40, 45).⁴¹⁸

Because the Gentile nations have persecuted Israel and violated the land, prophecies predict the retribution that awaits them. While it is true that retribution against Israel's persecutors have been partly fulfilled throughout the times of the Gentiles, these Gentile persecutions of Israel for many centuries are to have their final and fiercest fullness in the days of the great tribulation.

⁴¹⁵ See Clarence Wagner, "The Least of My Brothers," *Bridges for Peace: Israel Teaching Letter* (August 2001): 5.

⁴¹⁶ Ed Glascock, *Moody Gospel Commentary: Matthew* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1997), 490.

⁴¹⁷ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 961, (emphasis in original).

⁴¹⁸ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 25.

History itself provides a continuous retribution upon any nation which persecutes Israel. But in the full sense this retribution is to be accomplished when the Lord returns.⁴¹⁹

Israel will not be exempt from judgment either. Regathered Israel is to be judged after the appearing of the Lord Jesus (Ezek. 20:33-44). Some will be prevented from entering the land; others will be blessed in the land.⁴²⁰

The Millennium

After the purifying judgments which attend the personal return of Christ to the earth, he will reign over restored Israel and over the earth for one thousand years. This is the period commonly called the millennium.⁴²¹ The millennium follows the great tribulation on the earth.

The phrase, “kingdom of heaven,” (“kingdom of the heavens”) is peculiar to Matthew and signifies the messianic earth rule of Jesus Christ, the son of David.⁴²² Matthew is peculiarly the gospel for Israel.⁴²³ It is called the kingdom of the heavens because it is the rule of the heavens over the earth (Matt. 6:10). It is always limited to the earth. The phrase is derived from Daniel 2:44 as the kingdom which the God of heaven will set up after the destruction by the stone cut out without hands of the Gentile world system. It is the kingdom promised to David’s seed (2 Sam. 7:7-12), described by the prophets (Zech. 12:8), confirmed to Jesus, the Son of Mary through the angel Gabriel (Luke 1:32-33) and moving toward the culmination of all history.⁴²⁴

⁴¹⁹ Scofield, *Scofield Bible Correspondence Course*, vol II, 388.

⁴²⁰ Scofield, *Scofield Bible Correspondence Course*, vol. I, 134. See also, Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 861.

⁴²¹ Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, 16. “It is to be regretted,” Scofield writes, “that the word ‘millennium’ ever supplanted the old biblical word, ‘kingdom’” – Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 134.

⁴²² Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 135, and Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 996.

⁴²³ Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield’s Question Box*, 59.

⁴²⁴ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 996, 1330; Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 135.

The return of Jesus Christ would be followed by world-wide Gentile conversion and participation in the blessings of the kingdom (Isa. 2:2-4; 11:10; 60:3; Zech. 8:3, 20, 23; 14:16-21).⁴²⁵ For the Gentile nations as Scofield believed, there would be world renewal during the millennium and the nations would experience the blessing of salvation as well as the blessing of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (e.g., Zeph. 3:8ff; Joel 2:28-29; Zech. 9:16-21). The majority of earth's inhabitants will be saved during this period (Isa. 11:4-9; 65:20; Psa. 2:9; Isa. 26:9; Zech. 14:16-21).⁴²⁶ But that every individual is not converted during the kingdom age appears evident (Rev. 20:7-8).⁴²⁷

The kingdom is to be established first over regathered, restored, and converted Israel, and is then to become universal (Ps. 2:6-8; 24; 22; Isa. 1:2-3; 11:1-13; 60:12; Jer. 23:5-8; 30:7-11; Ezek. 20:33-40). The conversion of the peoples (i.e., the nations) is stated from the usual prophetic order, in which the blessing of Israel and the setting up of the kingdom precedes the conversion of the Gentiles. But the conversion of the nations will occur *after* the smiting of the nations.⁴²⁸ Not until after the restoration of Israel will the Gentile nations be converted to God (Zech. 8:20-23). Zechariah shows us that this conversion will be through Jewish agency.⁴²⁹ It is through restored Israel that the kingdom is to be extended over the earth" (Zech. 8:13, 20-23).⁴³⁰ At the

⁴²⁵ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1148.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*, 977.

⁴²⁷ C. I. Scofield, *Scofield Bible Correspondence Course*, vol. VI (Chicago: Moody Bible Institute Correspondence School, 1960), 1612.

⁴²⁸ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 961, (emphasis in original). However, in Zephaniah, the conversion of the "peoples" (i.e., nations) is stated out of the usual prophetic order in which the blessing of Israel and the setting up of the kingdom precedes the conversion of the Gentiles.

⁴²⁹ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 87, 144-45.

⁴³⁰ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 634.

second advent when Christ returns, then, and not before, will the world be converted.⁴³¹ Israel shall one day be the first of nations and not the last, majestic and holy, the channel as always, of light and blessing from God to the nations of the millennial earth.⁴³²

The messianic kingdom is the goal of history. Prophecy points to this coming kingdom-age on earth under Messiah.⁴³³ According to Scofield, “The Kingdom was no mystery. The Kingdom is the great theme of the prophets. From Isaiah to Malachi the burden of the prophetic testimony is the Kingdom to be set up by the Messiah, David’s great Son, but who was to be also ‘the mighty God, the everlasting Father’ (Isa. 9:6)”⁴³⁴ The earth shall indeed one day be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Isa.11:9, Zech. 14:9). Israel shall be the glory of all nations during that time and Israel shall have the first place among the nations during the millennium. There will never be any nation at the head again until Israel is the head. The administration of the kingly rule over the earth during the millennium is through the restoration of the administrative office of judges over Israel (cf. Matt. 19:28, Isa. 1:26).⁴³⁵ This period is also called the *palingenesia*: the re-creation, the re-creation of the social order and the renewal of the earth.⁴³⁶ This is also what Peter referred to in Acts 3:21 as “the restitution of all things,” the time of national restoration and fulfillment.⁴³⁷

⁴³¹ Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, 24.

⁴³² Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 88.

⁴³³ Scofield, *What Do the Prophets Say*, 20; Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 34-35.

⁴³⁴ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 26.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, 147-48.

⁴³⁶ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1026.

⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*, 1153. See also Oliver, *Luke’s Jewish Eschatology*, 16.

Scofield's Eschatological Time Frame

Dispensationalism has been popularized by Hal Lindsay's *Late Great Planet Earth*, and more recently by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins's fictional *Left Behind* series. The scheme of the ages outlined in Scofield's notes, has in fact, become an organic part of biblical exposition and prophetic interpretation.⁴³⁸ *Left Behind* theology to a large extent has been patterned after dispensationalism.⁴³⁹ The popular term "*left behind*" is a Scofieldian term for those who do not participate in the rapture.⁴⁴⁰

The major eschatological events are chronologically laid out chapter by chapter in Scofield's book, *Prophecy Made Plain*. Scattered throughout *The Scofield Reference Bible* Scofield placed the order of eschatological events with various emendations. However, the central order which is somewhat fixed is given in Acts 15:13-18, which Scofield considered to be, from a dispensational standpoint, the most important passage in the New Testament.⁴⁴¹ It gives the divine order for this age and for the beginning of the next one. There will be:

- The calling out from among the Gentiles a people for his name (the distinctive work of this present dispensation, the Church age which began at Pentecost)
- The return of Jesus Christ (the second advent in glory at which time the final regathering of the Jews scattered among all the nations will take place)
- The rebuilding of the tabernacle of David (which Scofield interpreted as the re-establishing of the Davidic rule over Israel during the kingdom age, i.e., the millennium)⁴⁴²

⁴³⁸ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 150-51, (cf. p. 173).

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*, 179-80; 218-21.

⁴⁴⁰ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 120-21.

⁴⁴¹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1169.

⁴⁴² The expression "booth of David" (Amos 9:11) correctly understood, refers to Jerusalem with the temple in its midst and Zion is viewed as God's capitol, the center of the land/earth. See Gregory Goswell, "Making Sense of the Prophetic Books of the Old Testament Canon," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* vol. 64, no. 1 (March 2021): 89.

- The conversion of the nations (“That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles”)⁴⁴³

Scotfield observes that this same order coincides with Romans 11:24-27, (the fulness of the Gentiles) referring to the calling out of the body, the Church, the *ecclesia*. Israel’s national restoration follows.⁴⁴⁴ The divine program of God according to (Acts 15:14-17):

- Puts the re-establishment of David’s throne after the return.
- Puts the throne after his return to judge the nations (Matt. 25).
- Puts the coming after the fulness of the Gentiles (Rom. 11).
- Puts the kingdom of the heavens after the destruction of the present political world system.
- Requires the restoration of Israel as the initial fact and that follows their return to the land (Isaiah 11, Deut. 30:3).⁴⁴⁵

To the following order, Scotfield adds the rapture of the Church:⁴⁴⁶

Four events mark the beginning of the age to come: 1) the taking up of the church to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:14-17), 2) the judgment of the living Gentile nations who for thirty centuries have misgoverned the earth in greed, pride, and ceaseless war (Matt. 25:31-46), 3) The regathering of God’s elect people Israel (Deut. 30:1-10; Mt. 24:30-31), 4) The conversion of Israel (Zech. 12:10, Ezek. 20:33-38, Rom. 11:25-27) and, 5) the filling of the earth with the knowledge of the Lord.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴³ Summarized from *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1169-170.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1170; 1205-206.

⁴⁴⁵ Scotfield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield’s Question Box*, 126-27.

⁴⁴⁶ In *The Scofield Study Bible* Scotfield does not use the word rapture in the definitive passage of 1 Thessalonians 4, 1 Corinthians 15 (pp. 1227-228), or in the Subject Index (pp. 1355-362). However, he does use the word only once in an obscure footnote on page 1349. This may have been because there was a division among dispensationalists at the time. Mangum and Sweetnam have pointed out that Scotfield’s purpose in compiling the Bible was to unify, not divide and he could have deliberately omitted the reference to avoid division. See Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 88-89.

⁴⁴⁷ Scotfield, *What Do the Prophets Say*, 165-68.

Below is the order of events in the establishment of the millennial kingdom and it may be compared with the other eschatological lists:

- 1) The second advent of Jesus Christ takes place (Rev. 19:11-13).
- 2) The nations, (led by the Beast) gather against the Jewish remnant (Rev. 19:19).
- 3) The Lord appears in glory and delivers the beleaguered Jewish saints (Zech. 14:3, 4, 9).
- 4) God regathers dispersed Israel.
- 5) Christ judges the nations (compiled of sheep and goats) (Matt. 25:31-46).
- 6) Then, in the wilderness of the people, Jesus meets them (the Jewish nation) and they receive Him as the Christ (Messiah).⁴⁴⁸
- 7) The millennium, the earthly kingdom is established on earth.
- 8) Israel becomes a missionary nation (Zech. 8:13-23).⁴⁴⁹
- 9) A final rebellion by Satan and the wicked ends in judgment (Rev. 20:7-8).
- 10) The new heaven and the new earth, the eternal state, begins (Rev. 21:1).⁴⁵⁰

These chronological listings are taken from the five main Scofield books on prophecy with several emendations, but certainly consistent in their eschatological order of events.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁸ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 144. Scofield believes that Israel's salvation occurs directly from Christ himself. Joseph's revelation and manifestation to his brothers in Egypt (Gen. 45:1-3) is typical of the future when Christ reveals Himself to the nation. Jews will be reconciled to Christ as Joseph was reconciled to his brothers and then ruled over them. See Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 53, 62; Scofield, *No Room in the Inn and Other Interpretations*, 149-56.

⁴⁴⁹ This world conversion will not be accomplished through the Church, but through Israel. This has been prevalent throughout Scofield's writings that world evangelization will occur through the medium of the Jew. Note the great contrast between the Church's failure to convert the world, and Israel's success. He added, "Who are we that we should point the finger of scorn to Israel and say that Israel failed?" See *Prophecy Made Plain* (128; 144-45; especially page 53). The failure of the Church to evangelize the nations will be the result of apostasy.

⁴⁵⁰ Summarized from Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 139-48.

⁴⁵¹ Several references were taken from *The Scofield Bible Correspondence Courses* even though these were not compiled by Scofield.

What has been revealed from Scofield's writings is that there is a heavy Jewish focus in the Bible as a story of the history of the Jewish people. In summary, Scofield taught that:

- 1) The scope of the prophecies focuses on the Jews and their return to the land.
- 2) The history of the biblical narrative concerns the Jews.
- 3) The Jews have been preserved throughout history.
- 4) The Jews serve as an apologetic to the truthfulness of the Bible.
- 5) The Jews through Abraham will bring the Messiah into the world.
- 6) The Church is an interval (parenthesis) between Israel's rejection and restoration.
- 7) Israel's future is centered in the biblical covenants regarding the land, seed, and blessing.
- 8) The Book of Genesis was written to show the origin of Israel.
- 9) The Jewish feasts are prophetic of Israel's restoration.
- 10) Jews have partially returned to the land in fulfillment of Ezekiel 37, the vision of the valley of dry bones.
- 11) A Jewish remnant, returned in unbelief will be preserved through the tribulation period.
- 12) Israel will be restored and regathered as a people at the second coming of Jesus Christ.
- 13) The Book of Acts teaches the restoration of the Jewish nation.
- 14) Romans 11 teaches the salvation of all Israel.
- 15) Israel, like Paul the Apostle will be saved directly when their Messiah appears.
- 16) God judges the nations based on their treatment of the Jews.
- 17) Israel will be restored to God's favor and her national glory restored during the millennium.
- 18) Jews will be the means of world evangelization during the tribulation period and the millennium.
- 19) Jesus' resurrection foreshadows Israel's resurrection.

20) Jews have been scattered in order to maintain God's witness in the world and as a means of world evangelization in the future.⁴⁵²

Israel's history is far from over as Scofield would write in 1910, "When the Church age is ended by the taking away of those who are Christ's, God again takes up the Jew and begins to deal with Israel... Indeed, to understand that is fundamental to the understanding of all unfulfilled prophecy."⁴⁵³ One could say prophetically that *The Scofield Reference Bible* is a Jewish Bible which emphasizes Israel's election and confirms the fulfillment of the promises made to that nation literally. Scofield clearly believed in the election and predestination of the Jewish nation based on a literal reading of Scripture.

⁴⁵² Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 128, (cf. p. 73). The failure of the Church to evangelize the world is based on the apostasy of the professing Church at the end of the age. Scofield taught that all dispensations will end in failure and judgment (e.g., see *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, 16). "Apostasy in the church is irredeemable and awaits judgment,"- *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1281. Perhaps Scofield has been influenced here by his prophetic mentor A. C. Gaebelein, who had written that the apostasy of Christendom, (i.e., the professing Church) is incurable, but the apostasy of Israel is not. Scofield's teaching that the Jews will convert the world is very similar to Gaebelein. See Gaebelein, *The Jewish Question*, 19-31, especially pages 21-22.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, 122.

Chapter Four

The Restoration of National Israel: Assessing the Biblical and Theological Differences

C. I. Scofield and the Restoration of the Jews

When the modern state of Israel was born in 1948 as an independent nation, it saw the beginnings of a fulfillment of specific Bible prophecies about an international regathering of Jews in a semi-secular state. This regathering was to take place after the Jews had been exiled for centuries and scattered among the nations of the world.⁴⁵⁴

A national restoration of the Jews was paramount in the teaching of C. I. Scofield as noted in the conclusion of Chapter Three. All prophecy centers around the covenant people Israel as a nation, looking especially forward to the last days, the day of the Lord, and the kingdom age to follow.⁴⁵⁵ Scofield wrote, “Prophecy does not concern itself with history as such, but only with history as it affects Israel and the Holy Land.”⁴⁵⁶ He believed that God would sovereignly bring the Jewish people back into the land even though they would be in a state of unbelief regarding Jesus as the Messiah. Their conversion would eventually follow. In *The Scofield Reference Bible*, Scofield was writing in 1909 of a Jewish return to their historic homeland based in part on what he understood to be a prophecy in the book of Ezekiel and its image/vision of the valley of dry

⁴⁵⁴ Ron Rhodes, *The Popular Dictionary of Bible Prophecy* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2010), 147.

⁴⁵⁵ C. I. Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1909, 1917), 804.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 918.

bones in Ezekiel 37.⁴⁵⁷ God has a plan and destiny for Old Testament Israel – an ethnically, genetically Jewish people and nation distinctive from all other peoples/nations of the earth.⁴⁵⁸

Scotfield has had numerous critics over his teachings regarding a literal Jewish nation. One critic pointed out that throughout church history, preachers, teachers, theologians, Bible commentaries, sermons, theological textbooks and concordances were not dispensationalists or dispensational in written content, and most importantly, “They did not even mention a restored Jewish political state or a thousand-year reign of Christ on David’s literal throne in a natural and material kingdom. They seemed to be absolutely unaware of ... a future national Jewish restoration...”⁴⁵⁹ Scotfield critic William E. Cox also wrote, “For I could not find the verse and chapter to support my beliefs concerning national Israel. I had been taught that the Jews would go back to Palestine... It finally dawned upon me that what I sincerely thought were verses of the Bible actually were footnotes put inside the covers of the Bible by a man.”⁴⁶⁰

The Scotfield Bible study notes were permeated with restorationist themes.⁴⁶¹ Scotfield’s understanding of the Bible’s prophetic timetable pushed back the conversion of the nation until

⁴⁵⁷ Scotfield, *The Scotfield Study Bible*, 881. For his belief that the Jews would have returned in unbelief, see his notes on pages 723, 737, 881, 883, 1033, 1337. See also C. I. Scotfield, *Prophecy Made Plain* (Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis, Printers and Publishers, n.d.), 126, and C. I. Scotfield, *Dr. C. I. Scotfield’s Question Box* (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1917), 66. Ezekiel 37 as an apologetic will be dealt with at length in Chapter Six.

⁴⁵⁸ R. Todd Mangum and Mark S. Sweetnam, *The Scotfield Bible: Its History and Impact on the Evangelical Church* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster Publishing, 2009), 189.

⁴⁵⁹ Paul E. Sisco, *Scotfield or the Scriptures*, n.d., 5. Many of the anti-Scotfield pamphlets and booklets were self-published and lack information such as location or year of publication.

⁴⁶⁰ William E. Cox, *Why I left Scotfieldism* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company, n. d.), 5.

⁴⁶¹ Samuel Goldman, *God’s Country* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 148. On early Christian restorationist teaching, see William C. Watson, *Dispensationalism Before Darby: Seventeenth Century and Eighteenth Century English Apocalypticism* (Silverton, OR: Lampion Press, 2015). See also Paul C. Merkley, *The Politics of Christian Zionism 1891-1948* (London: Frank Cass, 1998) and Moshe Davis, ed., *Christian Protagonists for Jewish Restoration* (New York: Arno Press, 1977).

very shortly before the second coming of Christ at the end of the seven-year tribulation period. He believed that Jews would be inhabiting the land at the time of the great tribulation period; Jerusalem and the Holy Land would be the vortex of the great tribulation.⁴⁶²

It is important to note that Scofield did not believe in only a massive spiritual conversion of the Jewish people at the end of the tribulation as they were incorporated into the Church, but a total national restoration of the Jewish nation that is completely separate from the Church and that occurs prior to their conversion. Beyond the circles of dispensational influence this was a radical interpretation at the time (1909) and it was thirty-nine years before 1948 when the event did occur.

God's promises in the Old Testament were to Israel, which was not a symbolic allusion to the Church which was the teaching of much of Christianity at the time. Israel literally meant the Jews and for the Church God had different intentions. At the second coming, Christ would again offer the kingdom to Israel; David's throne would again be occupied; the temple would be restored; and the traditional Jewish sacrifices would be reinstated. This Davidic king would not only rule over all twelve tribes of a reunited nation, but he would rule over the nations as well (e.g., Isa. 11:1, 11-12, 16).⁴⁶³ This was a central teaching of Scofield.

In point VIII of the "Introduction" to *The Scofield Study Bible*, Scofield explained that one of the remarkable results of a renewed interest in the expositional study of the Bible has been the neglect of the study of the prophetic portions of Scripture writing:

The remarkable results of the modern study of the Prophets, in recovering to the church not only a clear and coherent harmony of the predictive portions, but also great treasures of

⁴⁶² Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1337.

⁴⁶³ Regarding Jesus' mission to restore Israel, see James M. Scott, "Jesus' Vision for the Restoration of Israel as the Basis for a Biblical Theology of the New Testament," in *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect*, Scott J. Hafemann, ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 132. For the phrase, "all Israel," see Scott Hahn, "All Israel Will Be Saved," *Letter & Spirit* 10 (2015): 65-108.

ethical truth, are indicated in expository notes. This portion of the Bible, nearly one-fourth of the whole, has been closed to the average reader by fanciful and allegorical schemes of interpretation.⁴⁶⁴

Scotfield did not appear to be militant nor did he resort to personal attacks in his writings, but he did not avoid attacking what he believed were faulty approaches to the interpretation of the prophetic sections of the Scriptures, what he referred to as fanciful and allegorical schemes of interpretation. He did not use the terms “replacement theology,” or “supersessionism,” but the term he did use was what he referred to as the “Judaizing” of the Church. He explains:

It may safely be said that the Judaizing of the Church has done more to hinder her progress, pervert her mission, and destroy her spirituality, than all other causes combined. Instead of pursuing her appointed path of separation, persecution, world-hatred, poverty, and non-resistance, she has used Jewish Scripture to justify her in lowering her purpose to the civilization of the world, the acquisition of wealth, the use of an imposing ritual, the erection of magnificent churches, the invocation of God’s blessing upon the conflicts of armies, and the division of an equal brotherhood into ‘clergy’ and ‘laity.’⁴⁶⁵

He also added:

Therefore, in approaching the study of the Gospels the mind should be freed, so far as possible, from mere theological concepts and presuppositions. Especially is it necessary to exclude the notion – a legacy in Protestant thought from post-apostolic and Roman Catholic theology – that the Church is the true Israel, and that the Old Testament foreview of the kingdom is fulfilled in the Church.⁴⁶⁶

His feelings about allegorizing were clear in a quote from *What Do the Prophets Say?*

But the evil of the so-called ‘spiritualizing’ of prophecies, which came over into Protestantism from Rome, is the greater cause of the neglect of these writings. That interpretation which finds in the Christian Church the fulfillment of the numerous and explicit predictions which the prophets themselves declare relate to Israel, and to the kingdom covenanted to David and his seed, sufficiently explains the common attitude of neglect

⁴⁶⁴ Scotfield, *The Scotfield Study Bible*, iii.

⁴⁶⁵ C. I. Scotfield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (Findlay, OH: Dunham Publishing Company, 1956), 12. [Publisher’s Note: “Dr. C. I. Scotfield, Editor of the Scotfield Reference Bible, wrote this book over forty years ago and it has been published in many editions by various publishers. In some of these editions there are important changes in the text, made without the author’s knowledge. This edition is exactly as Dr. Scotfield wrote it.”].

⁴⁶⁶ Scotfield, *The Scotfield Study Bible*, 989.

toward prophecy. For no other writings, Divine or human are thus interpreted. No one even proposes to interpret a statute, or a contract, or a friendly letter, by a method so grotesque.⁴⁶⁷

Like other scholars have observed, there was a tendency to interpret Israel's curse passages literally, but to allegorize the blessing passages:

I am of course perfectly aware that there is a school of interpretation having disciples among both Jews and Christians, which insists that, unlike all other writings, unfulfilled prophecy is to be interpreted, not in the natural and unforced sense of the words themselves, but in an allegorical, or so-called 'spiritual' sense. Christian exegetes of this school follow the simple plan of literalizing all the curses and bestowing them upon the Jews; while spiritualizing all the blessings and claiming them for the Church.⁴⁶⁸

He argued for the literal interpretation of the prophecies:

Of this allegorical or spiritualizing method, whether employed by Christian or Jew, it is enough to say that God Himself has for thousands of years been disproving it. He has been expounding prophecy by fulfilling it.... The question, therefore, is a simple question of fact: 'How does God fulfill prophecy?' Does the event answer to the prediction in some figurative, allegorical, or 'spiritual' sense, or in literal and exact detail?⁴⁶⁹

The prophetic writings, according to Scofield, "Have been forced into meanings utterly foreign to the language used, in the effort to make them apply to the Church instead of to Israel; or have been the ready resort of unscholarly fanatics."⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁶⁷ Scofield, *What Do the Prophets Say*, 26, (emphasis in original).

⁴⁶⁸ C. I. Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain* (Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis, Printers and Publishers, n.d.), 75-76. See Frank Charles Thompson, *The Thompson Chain Reference Bible* (Indianapolis: B. B. Kirkbride Bible Company, 1964). This popular Bible, published in 1908 one year before Scofield's, applies the blessings given to the Jews to the Church, but leaves the curses for the Jews for example on page 694. The reader is also directed to *The Open Bible* where the ultimate destiny of the Jew is listed as 1) Blinded 2) Rejected 3) Destroyed as a nation and 4) Scattered, and this all after 1948! See *The Open Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1975), 168. Steve Herzig notes, "God filled His Scriptures with promises to bless His beloved Israel, whom he has loved 'with an everlasting love' (Jer. 31:3) – and it is these blessings that Replacement Theology (RT) appropriates for the church. Yet it completely discards the curses. When it comes to the curses, RT (Replacement Theology) maintains that *Israel* still means biological Israel – a clever feat of theological gymnastics" - Steve Herzig, "Who is a Jew?" *Israel My Glory* (May-June 2019): 12.

⁴⁶⁹ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 76-77, (emphasis in original).

⁴⁷⁰ Scofield, *What Do the Prophets Say*, Foreword.

Scofield's rejection of the allegorical method of interpretation is one of the characteristic marks of his interpretation. He wrote, "The failure to distinguish between the individual Jew or Christian, and Israel the nation, and the saved of this dispensation, as forming the Church brings confusion to many minds."⁴⁷¹ Very similarly, he noted, "Comparing, then, what is said in Scripture concerning Israel and the Church, he finds that in origin, calling, promise, worship, principles of conduct, and future destiny – all is contrast."⁴⁷² According to Mangum and Sweetnam, "Scofield's theology is notable in part for its representing perhaps the most elaborate scheme for dividing and classifying biblical terms and concepts as has ever been proposed in the history of theology."⁴⁷³

Literal Interpretation, Dispensationalism, and the Restoration of the Jews

Bernard Ramm wrote that the measure to which literal interpretation is followed directly relates to the problem of the restoration of Israel.⁴⁷⁴ Ramm suggested that the interpretation of Old Testament prophecy favors a millennial interpretation of the kingdom of God.⁴⁷⁵ Though a premillennialist, Ramm is critical of strict literal interpretation and some dispensational teaching. The millennial question, Ramm noted, is the *crux interpretum* of Old Testament prophetic

⁴⁷¹ C. I. Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box* (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1917), 58.

⁴⁷² Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1896), 7.

⁴⁷³ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 121.

⁴⁷⁴ Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970), 255.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 255-56, 266.

interpretation.⁴⁷⁶ Reformed theologian Willem VanGemenen’s article titled, “Israel as the Hermeneutical Crux in the Interpretation of Prophecy” seems to agree.⁴⁷⁷

According to Ramm, the Bible interpreter should take the literal meaning of a prophetic passage as his limiting or controlling guide. This is the foundation and footing for the interpretation of any passage of Scripture.⁴⁷⁸ As basic as one believes normal interpretation to be, and as consistently as he uses it in interpreting Scripture, to that extent he will of necessity become a dispensationalist.⁴⁷⁹ A literal hermeneutic, consistently applied leads to futuristic premillennialism, a point that amillennialists have admitted and will be noted further.⁴⁸⁰ Millard Erickson acknowledges that “the first tenet of dispensationalism is that the Bible must be interpreted literally.”⁴⁸¹

The essential difference between dispensationalism and Reformed Theology is the manner in which both interpret the Bible. Dispensationalists arrive at their system of interpretation through two primary principles: 1) Maintaining a consistent literal method of interpretation and, 2) Maintaining a distinction between Israel and the Church.⁴⁸² The supersessionist approach is to

⁴⁷⁶ Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, 266, (emphasis in original).

⁴⁷⁷ Willem VanGemenen, “Israel as the Hermeneutical Crux in the Interpretation of Prophecy,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 45:1 (Spring 1983): 132.

⁴⁷⁸ Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, 253.

⁴⁷⁹ Charles Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 24.

⁴⁸⁰ John MacArthur, “Does Calvinism Lead to Futuristic Premillennialism,” in *Christ’s Prophetic Plans*, John MacArthur, Richard Mayhue, eds. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2012), 145.

⁴⁸¹ Millard J. Erickson, *Contemporary Options in Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), 115.

⁴⁸² Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2008), 547.

interpret the Bible in reverse. It begins with the New Testament and then seeks to re-interpret or completely revise the original meaning of the Old Testament.

Most all supersessionists approach the Old Testament and the promises and covenants made to an earthly people, the Jews, as being nullified, cancelled, or transferred to the New Testament people of God, the Church, or to Jesus. This creates a clear conflict between the literal aspect of the promises and covenants made to an earthly nation with the New Testament, which according to Reformed Theology seems to be silent on the subject of a national Israel.⁴⁸³ The Church has proclaimed itself as the true spiritual Israel, composing the faithful of all nations of which the old carnal Israel existed merely as a temporary foreshadowing or type. Soulen notes: “By claiming to be God’s new people, the Church directly assaults the trustworthiness of God’s promise to Israel.”⁴⁸⁴

To resolve this apparent conflict of an ethnic nation, Reformed theologians must resort to the non-literal method of allegorizing or spiritualizing any passages or promises made to a literal nation in the Old Testament. Such promises made to Israel since Israel was replaced by the Church must be transferred to the Church or Christians, or the world at large.⁴⁸⁵ The hermeneutics of dispensationalism, writes Kevin Vanhoozer, is insufficiently sensitive to the

⁴⁸³ For example, see Boyd Luter, “The Continuation of Israel’s Land Promise in the New Testament: A Fresh Approach,” *Eruditio Ardescens* vol. 1 (May 2014).

⁴⁸⁴ R. Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg-Fortress Press, 1996), 11-12.

⁴⁸⁵ Oren Martin, “The Land Promise Biblically and Theologically Understood,” in *Progressive Covenantalism*, Stephen J. Wellum, Brent E. Parker, eds. (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016), 270-71. Martin claims that Israel’s land promise reaches its fulfillment when redeemed people from every nation inhabit the whole earth.

literary sense of the text as dispensationalists insist that passages about Israel concern the physical nation of Israel and never the church.⁴⁸⁶

Nicholas Thomas (N. T.) Wright is one of the most ardent proponents of supersessionism today, as anyone who reads his book, *The Challenge of Jesus* will see. Wright affirms all of the tenets of supersessionism in this one book alone. In Wright's theology, the physical people of Israel have been replaced by Jesus who lives out Israel's story. This theology is hinted at in a current devotional written for the average layperson by Kevin Vanhoozer. Vanhoozer writes, "The Old Testament ends with God's people still waiting for life in God's place under God's prince. Jesus completes Israel's unfinished story."⁴⁸⁷

In *The Challenge of Jesus*, Wright argues that, 1) Jesus is the true Torah, 2) Jesus is the true land, 3) Jesus is the true temple, and 4) Jesus is the true Israel. Jesus is resurrected from the dead but Israel is not.⁴⁸⁸ According to this hermeneutic, the literal land promises and covenants promised to ethnic, national, and territorial Israel have been nullified by the coming of Jesus Christ.⁴⁸⁹

A sampling of two different religious encyclopedias defining dispensationalism reveals its distinctive hermeneutic: literal interpretation, which would include the prophetic portions of Scripture. The first comes from M. James Sawyer:

Dispensationalism is defined as a theological movement within evangelicalism stressing an

⁴⁸⁶ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 429-30.

⁴⁸⁷ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *What Every Christian Needs to Know about Reading the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Our Daily Bread Ministries, 2021), 17.

⁴⁸⁸ N. T. Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2000), 87.

⁴⁸⁹ The coming of Jesus ushered in a number of replacements. Clark Williamson notes that "Jesus Christ is the hinge upon which the replacement of Jews with Gentile Christians turns." See Clark Williamson, *A Guest in the House of Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 168.

apocalyptic understanding of history. One of its distinguishing peculiarities is that it sees the Old and New Testaments united eschatologically in a way that is consistent with a historical-grammatical (i.e., literal) interpretation of promises made to national Israel of an earthly kingdom ruled personally by the Messiah, Jesus Christ.⁴⁹⁰

The second definition comes from Dwain Waldrep:

Or, it has been defined as a philosophy of history, delineating God's relationship to human affairs, a hermeneutical methodology defining how Scripture is to be interpreted, and more popularly a particular form of eschatology, a futurist premillennialism with an apocalyptic view of the end-times.⁴⁹¹

A third is offered by Mark Bailey, former President of Dallas Theological Seminary who defines dispensationalism "as a biblical hermeneutic that analyzes and synthesizes the Scriptures and seeks to understand both the unity and the diversity of the historical workings of God on earth. . . . Dispensationalists affirm the benefits of both textual analysis and theological synthesis."⁴⁹²

The starting point of understanding the hermeneutics of dispensationalism must begin with Charles Ryrie's *sine qua non* (the absolutely, indispensable part) of dispensationalism. Ryrie lists three pillars of dispensationalism: 1) A dispensationalist keeps Israel and the Church distinct, 2) the distinction between Israel and the Church is born out of a system of hermeneutics that is usually called literal interpretation, 3) the underlying purpose of God in the world is his own glory.⁴⁹³ Ryrie's three pillars set forth the distinguishing characteristics of dispensationalism compared with other theological approaches. Ryrie's *sine qua non* was well received by

⁴⁹⁰ M. James Sawyer, "Dispensationalism," in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought*, Alister E. McGrath, ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 106.

⁴⁹¹ B. Dwain Waldrep, "Dispensationalism," in *The Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization*, vol. I: A-D, George Thomas Kurian, ed. (West Sussex, England: Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 695.

⁴⁹² Mark Bailey, "Foreword," in *Dispensationalism and the History of Redemption*, D. Jeffrey Bingham, Glenn R. Kreider, eds. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2015), 8.

⁴⁹³ Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*, 45-48. Ryrie's original edition was titled *Dispensationalism Today* and was published in 1965 by Moody Publishers.

dispensationalists and is often used as a starting point for explaining dispensationalism.⁴⁹⁴

Vlach's synopsis of dispensationalism in MacArthur and Mayhue is a little different than Ryrie's criteria of dispensationalism and narrower as it pinpoints the most distinctive fact: a national Israel.⁴⁹⁵

Dispensationalists teach that Israel was the primary focus of God's redemptive plan in one dispensation; the Church is the focus in another which is the Church age, or the age of grace.⁴⁹⁶ After the Church age, Israel will be restored to her national status. Even Reformed theologians and non-dispensationalists agree with Scofield that Israel's salvation in Romans 11:25-26 comes after the time of the Gentiles. Salvation came to the Gentiles, to take out a people for his name. This is the work of God in this present age. After God is finished with the Gentiles, he resumes his work with Israel. The Church is an interval between Israel's rejection and restoration.⁴⁹⁷

A dispensationalist always keeps Israel and the Church distinct. Daniel Fuller observed that "the basic premise of dispensationalism is two purposes that God expressed in the formation of two peoples who maintain their distinction throughout eternity."⁴⁹⁸ The dispensationalist believes that God is pursuing two distinct purposes: one related to the earth with earthly people and

⁴⁹⁴ There are points of disagreement over Ryrie's three pillars. For example, see Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 188-95; Craig Blaising, "Development of Dispensationalism by Contemporary Dispensationalists," *Bibliotheca Sacra* (July-September 1988): 268; and Michael Vlach, "What is Dispensationalism," in *Christ's Prophetic Plans*, John MacArthur, Richard Mayhue, eds. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2012), 20-24.

⁴⁹⁵ Michael J. Vlach, "What is Dispensationalism?" in *Christ's Prophetic Plans*, John MacArthur, Richard Mayhue, eds. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2012), 33.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴⁹⁷ A. C. Gaebelien, *The Jewish Question* (New York: Our Hope Publications, 1912), 55. See also Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1189.

⁴⁹⁸ Daniel P. Fuller, *The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism* (Th.D. Dissertation, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1957), 25.

earthly objectives involved which is Judaism and the Jews; while the other is related to heaven with heavenly people and heavenly objectives which is Christianity and the Church.⁴⁹⁹ It is a point that Scofield maintained and defended and which lies at the heart of his interpretive assumptions.⁵⁰⁰

The survival of the Jews is exactly what one would expect if one were to apply a consistently literal hermeneutic to prophecy and if one understood God's sovereign election of Israel to be unconditional and distinct from the Church.⁵⁰¹ Of all people, Calvinists should affirm that God's sovereign election cannot be forfeited. The promises made to elect Israel must be fulfilled by Israel just as the promises made to the Church will be fulfilled by the Church.⁵⁰² According to Scott Bader-Saye, "The church needs desperately to recover and re-Judaize its doctrine of election."⁵⁰³ Bader-Saye is more in line with Scofield's Calvinistic position. One could say prophetically that *The Scofield Reference Bible* is a Jewish Bible which emphasizes Israel's election by God and confirms the fulfillment of the promises made to that nation literally. Scofield clearly believed in the election and predestination of the Jewish nation.

Dispensationalism follows a consistently literal method of interpretation which even extends to the eschatological or prophetic portions of Scripture. The terms non-literal, spiritual, allegorical, mystical, or fuller sense (*sensus plenior*) have been used throughout Church history

⁴⁹⁹ Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Dispensationalism* (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary Press, 1936), 107. See also Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, 6-12. This dichotomy is not distinct among dispensationalists; Anglican Theologian John Goldingay also makes the same distinction in his article: "The Jews, the Land, and the Kingdom," *Anvil* vol. 4, no. 1 (1987): 12.

⁵⁰⁰ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 192.

⁵⁰¹ MacArthur, "Does Calvinism Lead to Futuristic Premillennialism," 154.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, 155.

⁵⁰³ Scott Bader-Saye, *Church and Israel After Christendom* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005), 27.

in reference to prophetic portions of Scripture denying a literal Israel and transferring their promises to the Church. The Jews of the Old Testament were taken to be the literal (fleshly) people of God in contrast to the spiritual people of God the Church. Although the term “literal” is open to debate it should be understood as the normal, customary approach to any literature unless conditions mitigate otherwise.⁵⁰⁴ According to non-dispensationalist A. B. Davidson, “Any hermeneutic which goes so far as to eliminate from the prophecies of the Old Testament which refer to the New Testament times, the natural race of Abraham, seems to go against the methods of interpretation applied by the apostles.”⁵⁰⁵ That Israel has a great future is clear from Scripture as a whole. There is a large unfulfilled element in the Old Testament which demands it, unless it is allegorized or spiritualized away as oriental hyperbole.⁵⁰⁶ Ramm agrees, “A literal interpretation calls for the fulfillment of many Old Testament passages in a future millennial age.”⁵⁰⁷

According to non-dispensationalists, Israel’s national promises have been replaced with spiritual or allegorical ones in spite of many who insist that they do not adhere to replacement theology.⁵⁰⁸ As Vlach notes, they are the ones who consistently use the term “replace” or an

⁵⁰⁴ Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, 554.

⁵⁰⁵ A. B. Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1912), 477.

⁵⁰⁶ R. B. Girdlestone, *The Grammar of Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1955), 138.

⁵⁰⁷ Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, 255-56.

⁵⁰⁸ See Stephen J. Wellum and Brent E. Parker, *Progressive Covenantalism* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016). Brent Parker repudiates the moniker “replacement theology” and writes, “Not all covenant theologians apply the terminology of replacement, and many repudiate such a description” (p. 42). However, the contributing authors of the book of which Parker edits do use the terms “replace” (p. 26), or, they use the word “supersede” instead (2x) when it comes to promises to Israel (p. 62). They write, “. . . Jesus... supersedes Israel as the very locus of the people of God.” See pages 62-63.

equivalent.⁵⁰⁹ *The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* never uses the word “replace,” but they do substitute the word “re-define” instead. Both entries in the dictionary on “Israel” and “The Land of Israel” will show the typical evolution of the concept of Israel, how the word evolves from a literal nation in the Old Testament to a spiritual entity, the spiritual people of God the Church.⁵¹⁰ Joel Green, Methodist theologian and understudy of New Testament interpreter I. Howard Marshall suggests that the promises made to Israel may be fulfilled in an entirely different manner than the recipients understood.⁵¹¹ Green notes that the promise of the land to Israel awaits complete fulfillment in a new form: that of the believer’s heavenly dwelling with God.⁵¹² This suggestion is similar to A. B. Davidson’s that Israel’s land promises in the Old Testament must be transfigured and expanded to become the world to come, or the heavenly Jerusalem in spite of arguing so forcefully for a literal interpretation earlier.⁵¹³ This was the understanding of Martin Wyngaarden, professor at Calvin Theological Seminary, that the passages that referred to a future state of Israel must be fulfilled in another way than literally.⁵¹⁴ Jason DeRouchie also argues that the property aspects (i.e. land promise) will get transformed in the age of the

⁵⁰⁹ Michael Vlach, “Various Forms of Replacement Theology,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 20/1 (Spring 2009): 58-59. “It is not simply the case that non-supersessionists have imposed the title replacement theology against the will of supersessionists. Those who espouse the supersessionist view are partly to credit or blame for this title since they often have used replacement terminology themselves. Thus, an argument against the designation ‘replacement theology’ is not in order.”

⁵¹⁰ Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, Tremper Longman III, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 430-31; 487-88. Once the authors use the term “re-apply,” and four times use the word “re-define” in assessing the physical descendants of Abraham in their entry on “Israel.”

⁵¹¹ Joel B. Green, *How to Read Prophecy* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984), 103-5.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*, 104-5.

⁵¹³ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 500. Davidson will be addressed later in Chapter Six.

⁵¹⁴ Martin Wyngaarden, *The Future of the Kingdom in Prophecy and Fulfillment: A Study of the Scope of ‘Spiritualization’ in Scripture* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955), 28.

Messiah.⁵¹⁵ Their argument is that the fulfillment of the prophecy is not expected to be in the exact form in which the prophecy was uttered.

Herbert Bateman notes that the real issue between dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists is testament priority. Testament priority is “a presuppositional preference of one testament over the other that determines a person’s literal, historical-grammatical hermeneutical starting point.” For Reformed theologians, the Old Testament is reread by the New Testament because the Old Testament authors presented their subjects in ideal forms and thereby never fully understood what they wrote. The human author’s intended meaning is unclear.⁵¹⁶ However, Earl Radmacher affirms that it is Reformed Theology that is hindering a normal reading of the text: “One might question here whether it is faithfulness to the NT which forces this deductive principle of spiritualization, or whether it might more correctly be stated that it is faithfulness to a particular theological interpretation of the NT.”⁵¹⁷

Instead of relying on tradition alone, which has propagated supersessionism, it is necessary to have a hermeneutical procedure in place that accepts the entire Bible, Old and New Testaments and this is a historical-grammatical approach to the text. Many non-dispensationalists and

⁵¹⁵ Jason DeRouchie, “Father of a Multitude of Nations: New Covenant Ecclesiology in OT Perspective,” in *Progressive Covenantalism*, Stephen J. Wellum, Brent E. Parker, eds. (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016), 14.

⁵¹⁶ Herbert Bateman IV, ed., *Three Central Issues in Contemporary Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1999), 38. See also John Feinberg, ed., *Continuity and Discontinuity* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1988), 75. Palestinian pastor Naim Ateek explains this testament priority: “Christ, then, is the heart of the Bible. He is its hermeneutic, the criterion for its interpretation and understanding. As Christians, we cannot begin our study of the Bible from Genesis. We must begin with what God has done in Christ and then move into the Old Testament in order to understand the background of the faith.” See Naim Ateek, “Zionism and the Land: a Palestinian Christian Perspective,” in *The Land of Promise*, Philip Johnston, Peter Walker, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 208.

⁵¹⁷ Earl Radmacher, “The Current Status of Dispensationalism and its Eschatology,” in *Perspectives on Evangelical Theology*, Kenneth Kantzer, Stanley Gundry, eds. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1979), 170.

Reformed theologians agree that literal interpretation in the area of prophecy does lead to dispensational belief.⁵¹⁸

A. B. Davidson wrote his *magnum opus* titled *Old Testament Prophecy* of which he argues that Old Testament prophecies that refer to Israel's land must be taken literally in order to do justice to the writers and hearers of the prophecies. Then, Davidson concludes that the prophecies are literal only in the minds of the prophets.⁵¹⁹ Davidson then concludes that there will be no literal land fulfillment as the prophecies must be interpreted spiritually in the Church,⁵²⁰ even though he had previously stated that the name Israel cannot be idealized into the abstraction, church.⁵²¹ It seems, according to Davidson's logic that Israel, which is the Church in the Old Testament, merges back into the Church at the end of the age.⁵²² Davidson though is not consistent in his own hermeneutical advice as he wrote in the same chapter, "This I consider the first principle in prophetic interpretation – to read the prophet literally – to assume that the literal meaning is *his* (i.e. the prophet's) meaning – that he is moving among realities, not symbols, among concrete things like peoples, not among abstractions like *our* Church, world, etc."⁵²³

O. Palmer Robertson admitted the same that "Because of the apparent definiteness of these scriptural affirmations, it may be assumed that this viewpoint will continue to be favored by a

⁵¹⁸ MacArthur, "Does Calvinism Lead to Futuristic Premillennialism," 145.

⁵¹⁹ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 490.

⁵²⁰ *Ibid.*, 491, 494.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, 477.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, 486-87. Davidson's work revealed the inconsistency of non-dispensationalism's exegetical approach but showed amazing agreements with Scofield at the same time in Chapter Five.

⁵²³ *Ibid.*, 167-68, (emphasis in original). However, Davidson does not follow his own hermeneutical advice. His final conclusion is that Israel in the Old Testament is a reference to the Church and there will be no literal Israel (p. 498).

large number of evangelical scholars devoted to the inerrancy and infallibility of the Word of God.”⁵²⁴ Reformed theologian of the past, Oswald Allis, acknowledges that Old Testament prophecies if taken literally, “cannot be regarded as having been yet fulfilled or as being capable of fulfillment in this present age.”⁵²⁵ Anglican theologian Graeme Goldsworthy adds, “The literalist must become a futurist, since a literalistic fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecy has not yet taken place.”⁵²⁶ Loraine Boettner, another major Reformed theologian from the past also admits, “It is generally agreed that if the prophecies are taken literally, they do foretell a restoration of the nation of Israel in the land of Palestine with the Jews having a prominent place in that kingdom and ruling over the other nations.”⁵²⁷ Philip A. F. Church does make the concession: “Normal hermeneutics... consistent literalism... applied to the entire Bible leads the interpreter to normative dispensational theology.”⁵²⁸ Others like John Stott claimed that a literal restoration of Israel was a reasonable view to hold based on a literal reading of the text.⁵²⁹ Davidson fully recognizes that if taken literally, the prophecies do in fact speak of a national restoration as there are many such passages.⁵³⁰ Professor Martin Wyngaarden agrees with Reformed Theology’s literal but not literal interpretation:

⁵²⁴ O. Palmer Robertson, *Understanding the Land of the Bible* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 1996), 141.

⁵²⁵ Oswald T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company, 1945), 238.

⁵²⁶ Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 170-71.

⁵²⁷ Loraine Boettner, “A Postmillennial Response,” in *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views*, Robert G. Clouse, ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977), 95.

⁵²⁸ Philip A. F. Church, “Dispensational Christian Zionism: A Strange But Acceptable Aberration or a Deviant Heresy,” *Westminster Theological Journal* vol. 71:2 (Fall 2009): 383.

⁵²⁹ John Stott, “Foreword,” in *The Land of Promise*, Philip Johnston, Peter Walker, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 11.

⁵³⁰ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 475.

Few things can so stimulate one's faith in the revelation of God as the fulfillments of prophecy. Here we have, first of all, those fulfilled in Christ's ministry, in his sacrifice and resurrection. But there are also many others fulfilled in the history of great cities and mighty nations, in a most remarkable manner. The fulfillments are so precise, unmistakable, important and far-reaching... And then we find many literal fulfillments of prophecy, in connection with Israel as the theocratic nation, and in connection with the surrounding nations referred to by the prophets serving under the theocracy – the Old Testament kingdom of Jehovah. Now the very remarkable thing is that those fulfillments are so exceedingly literal.⁵³¹

He continued, "Even if we should say that prophecies are fulfilled literally, as a rule, we find a series of exceptions to this rule, in the future state of Israel, in the eschatology of the theocracy, in the spiritualization of the kingdom of priests – the holy nation."⁵³²

A comparative study approach revealed that a proper exegesis – a historical-grammatical reading of the text will agree with dispensationalism's teaching that confirms the literal covenants and promises made to the Jews in the Old Testament. A comparative approach in Romans 11 agreed that the Church has not replaced the Jews. Ethnic Israel will be saved and this salvation will occur in the future or at the second coming of Christ. Israel's salvation will take place after a gap period, or delay, and after the salvation of the Gentiles.

Historian Samuel Goldman, neither a fundamentalist Christian nor a Reformed theologian points out that the arguments for Christian Zionism were products of the emphases on the plain meaning of Scripture and the theological significance of covenants that characterized Calvinism. He asks, "But why was it nonsensical to believe that the Jews might be reconstituted as a nation and return to their own land?"⁵³³

⁵³¹ Wyngaarden, *The Future of the Kingdom in Prophecy and Fulfillment*, 13-14.

⁵³² *Ibid.*, 28.

⁵³³ Samuel Goldman, "The Real Reason Americans Support Israel (Hint: It's Not AIPAC)," *Tablet*, (February 15, 2019), www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/the-real-reason-americans-support-israel.

Theological Disagreement Regarding the Restoration of the Jews

As noted in Chapter One, Craig Blaising states the disagreement within conservative Christianity with respect to the prophetic significance of a national restoration of the Jewish people to a homeland in his article, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” in which he asks, “Is there a theological future for a national Israel?” and “Are there theological reasons to believe that Israel has a future?”⁵³⁴ The existence of present-day national Israel is an item of major theological disagreement. Old Testament scholar Willem VanGemeran addressed the same questions from a Reformed perspective in an article titled “Israel as the Hermeneutical Crux in the Interpretation of Prophecy.” For the Christian community, Israel is a theological issue. The theological questions are many: “Who are the Jews?” “What is the relationship of Church and synagogue?” “Does the existence of the State of Israel mark the return of our Lord?”⁵³⁵ Each of these questions rests upon a larger exegetical and theological issue. Vlach observes, “At issue is whether the New Testament church replaces, fulfills, and/or displaces national Israel as the people of God. And if so, to what extent does this affect national Israel?”⁵³⁶

Some interpreters readily acknowledge the issue of national Israel. VanGemeran’s article is an attempt to address Reformed Theology’s stance regarding the state of Israel and the Jewish people. He writes, “The existence of Israel as a state together with the issues raised by modern

⁵³⁴ Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 435.

⁵³⁵ VanGemeran, “Israel as the Hermeneutical Crux,” 132.

⁵³⁶ Vlach, “Various Forms of Replacement Theology,” 57-59. Some supersessionists prefer the term “fulfillment theology” which they argue sees the Church fulfilling the promises made to national Israel in the Old Testament. They allege that Israel in the Old Testament was simply as a type of the Church or the true people of God which the Church fulfills. Once the fulfillment has come there is no longer a need for the type. The Church and the person of Jesus have rendered Israel unnecessary. See also Michael Vlach, “What Does Christ as ‘True Israel’ Mean for the Nation Israel? A Critique of the Non-Dispensational Understanding,” *Master’s Seminary Journal* 23/1 (Spring 2012).

theologians make the place and use of the Old Testament a burning issue to which Reformed theologians must respond.”⁵³⁷ VanGemerens article addresses Jewish restoration and the nation-state of present-day Israel. Reformed Theology’s solution to this question is to turn to the creeds and Reformers for an answer. According to VanGemerens, the answer is not to be found in the creeds as they are silent, but in the Reformers, especially John Calvin.⁵³⁸ VanGemerens consensus on Israel’s future is consistent with Reformed Theology that Israel will be saved, and Israel is composed of ethnic Jews, but there will be no national or literal Israel, and no fulfillment of the land promises made to Abraham. Rather, he quotes Calvin that the land promises made to Israel are merely a type of heaven.⁵³⁹

The problem regarding national Israel, according to Blaising stems from the structural nature of supersessionism, the deep-set tradition of excluding ethnic, national Israel from the theological reading of Scripture. He also adds, “To put Israel back into the picture does not involve a slight change of interpretation on a few passages, but the prospect of an overall adjustment of the way Scripture is to be read.”⁵⁴⁰

Blaising warns that hermeneutical awareness alone will not automatically solve the problem of supersessionism:

One must not underestimate the power of long-standing tradition in shaping the hermeneutical pre-understanding by which individual texts as well as whole portions of biblical literature are read – preunderstandings which are reinforced by the expositional commentary traditions in evangelical preaching and by traditional forms of evangelical catechesis in evangelical teaching.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁷ VanGemerens, “Israel as the Hermeneutical Crux,” 134.

⁵³⁸ Ibid., 133-34.

⁵³⁹ Ibid., 133. The irony of the article is VanGemerens thesis that “one’s answer to the theological question of the Jews and Israel depends on how he reads the Scriptures. Essentially it is also an exegetical issue.”

⁵⁴⁰ Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 442-43.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid., 443.

He further adds:

We as evangelicals affirm the consistent application of a grammatical-historical-literary hermeneutic. . . However, although we are rich in hermeneutical theory, we are poor in its theological implementation. Our tendency in evangelicalism is to rest confessionally on the theological work of predecessors rather than drawing the faith afresh and ever richer out of Scripture by the hermeneutical methodologies which we spend so much time developing.⁵⁴²

He then concludes:

In short, to take the future of Israel seriously as a theological question encumbers evangelical theology foundationally in the work of drawing out a canonical theology that is faithful to verbal revelation. And as we do that, as we draw that theology out of the canon with Israel left in the story, what might we expect theologically?⁵⁴³

Because supersessionism is traditionally structured deeply within Christian thought, the question of a future for Israel is traditionally met with automatic rejection if not incomprehension.

Blaising confirms that “Supersessionism lives in Christian theology today purely on the momentum of its own tradition.”⁵⁴⁴ Supersessionism is systemic in itself; a rejection of the Jews is deeply engrained in Christian tradition.⁵⁴⁵ In other words, Blaising is addressing the problem that creates supersessionism in the first place, a theology that supersedes exegesis. He cautions that correct theology must be based on correct hermeneutics, not the kind that has continued to propagate replacement theology-supersessionism since the days of the Church Fathers.

Blaising’s article was published several years after R. K. Soulen’s book on supersessionism, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology*. Soulen’s work investigated how deeply supersessionism is interwoven into the fabric of Christian theology. He wrote:

Revisiting the teaching of supersessionism after nearly two thousand years, many churches

⁵⁴² Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 443.

⁵⁴³ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid., 436.

⁵⁴⁵ For example, see Stuart Dauermann, “Do You See What I See? Western Christian Theologizing as a Skewed Tradition,” *Messiah Journal* Issue 113 (Spring 2013): 52.

have now publicly confessed that fidelity to the gospel requires the rejection of supersessionism and the affirmation of God's unbroken fidelity to the Jewish people... For the rejection of supersessionism is fraught with profound implications for the whole range of Christian theological reflection.⁵⁴⁶

One of the purposes of Soulen's book is to assess God's engagement in the realm of history, who is identified by faithfulness to the Jewish people within human history in its public and corporate dimensions. This means that for the gospel of Jesus Christ to be credible, it must be predicated upon the God of Israel. Christian theology and traditional Christianity must be brought into congruence with the God of Israel.⁵⁴⁷

Soulen asks, "If carnal Israel was fundamentally superseded within the sphere of the church, what accounted for its continued existence outside the church?"⁵⁴⁸ W. S. Campbell's observation is along similar lines:

The continuing existence of the Jewish people should not be viewed simply as a result of their failure to accept the Christian message, that is, as a result of their disobedience. Nor should they be viewed merely as a sort of living object-lesson to Christians of the danger of 'blind religiosity' as some extremists might describe them. We dare not insist that everything that happens in this world is directly caused by God, but it would be naïve to suggest it is merely an accident of history that the historical people of God, the Jewish race, should continue to exist alongside Christianity.⁵⁴⁹

Supersessionism according to Soulen is perplexing: "If Christians nevertheless claim to worship the God of Israel while teaching God's indifference toward the people Israel, they are engaging in a massive theological contradiction . . . If the God of Israel is ultimately indifferent even to the

⁵⁴⁶ Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology*, x.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, x- xi.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁵⁴⁹ W. S. Campbell, "Israel," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, Daniel G. Reid, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 445-46.

existence of the Jewish people, how seriously can one take God's engagement with the rest of creation?"⁵⁵⁰

Blaising's article listed several reasons why he believes there is a future for Israel, though he does not argue from a comparative methodology from Romans 11 as is presented in this study. Some developments in the twentieth century have undermined and questioned the traditional, historical, and biblical basis of supersessionism. Blaising lists six things that must be a positive in a rejection of supersessionism: 1) the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, 2) newly emerging millennial beliefs that predate dispensationalism,⁵⁵¹ 3) a return to a historical-grammatical (literal) hermeneutic which became more widespread through the influence of premillennialism, 4) a reappraisal of anti-Semitic beliefs and teachings that taught a displacement of the Jews as a result of the Holocaust, 5) the development of a consensus on Romans 9-11 that teaches a future for Israel and, 6) a return to a Jewish view of Jesus' mission to restore national Israel.⁵⁵²

Even though this dissertation will approach the issue from a comparative methodological approach from Romans 11, a methodology to confirm essential agreement with Scofield, other arguments will be utilized to show conformity with Scofield's teaching and all of these have been alluded to in Blaising's article. Scofield taught each one of Blaising's six points.

⁵⁵⁰ Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology*, 4.

⁵⁵¹ The new Christian Zionism poses as an apologetic for the modern state of Israel, which makes it a political purpose as well. Perhaps the most potent case against Christian Zionism on the world stage today is political which mainly centers around the question of political justice for Palestinians. The new Christian Zionists like McDermott et al., seek to look for support for a Jewish state based on humanitarian grounds, moral grounds, or Israel's strategic role in the Middle East in curbing Islamic ascendancy, but attempt to downplay Israel's connection to end-time events. See Gerald R. McDermott, *The New Christian Zionism*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 11. See also Mark Tooley, "Israel's 70th and Christian Zionism," *National Review* (May 25, 2018); Reinhold Niebuhr, "Our Stake in the State of Israel," *The New Republic* (February 3, 1957); and William F. Albright, "The Near East Needs the Jews," *The New Palestine* vol. 32, no. 9 (January 23, 1942): 12-13.

⁵⁵² Blaising, "The Future of Israel as a Theological Question," 436-39.

Varieties of Christian Beliefs Regarding the Restoration of the Jews

The rise of the state of Israel in 1948 continues to pose a theological problem with respect to its prophetic significance for Christian theology in both its liberal and conservative expressions. Within the conservative element, the issue has become highly charged with clear lines between opposing viewpoints and usually debates concerning the different millennial views are at least a part of the discussion.⁵⁵³

Israel's eschatological future continues to be a major point of disagreement between dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists. Dispensationalists maintain that the nation of Israel will be saved and restored to a place of service to the nations when Jesus returns and reigns over the nations. Non-dispensationalists argue that Israel will not be restored as a nation. For them, Jesus is the fulfillment of Israel. There is no need for a restored national Israel.⁵⁵⁴ To assess the problem accurately it is best to examine the various interpretations as Bible students are divided on the issue of a Jewish national restoration as it pertains to this theological disagreement. There are basically four major biblical and theological interpretations regarding a national restoration.

In a study on prophecy in the Old Testament published in the same decade as Scofield's study Bible, A. B. Davidson listed four interpretations regarding Israel's future when interpreting prophetic portions of Scripture: 1) Those who deny a future for a restored national Israel, 2) those who believe in Israel's conversion but not a national restoration, 3) those who believe in a conversion and restoration but with no special prominence for Israel, and 4) those who believe in

⁵⁵³ Larry Helyer, "Luke and the Restoration of Israel," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 36/3 (September 1993): 317.

⁵⁵⁴ Michael Vlach, "What Does Christ as 'True Israel' Mean For the Nation of Israel?: A Critique of the Non-Dispensational Understanding," *Master's Seminary Journal* 23/1 (Spring 2012), 43.

a conversion of Israel, a restoration of Israel, and millennial preeminence of Israel.⁵⁵⁵ These positions are still the main positions in contemporary biblical studies and theology, with Scofield and dispensationalists contending for the fourth position.

In the first position, there are those who believe that God is finished with Israel as a nation, and that all the prophecies concerning Israel in the Old and New Testaments have been or are being fulfilled by the Church, or Jesus Christ. In this group are supersessionists who espouse replacement theology. The Jews have been forever replaced by the Church, the true people of God or the true Israel. Position numbers 1 and 2 above are supersessionist-replacement theologians. All supersessionists reject a literal, visible, restored nation called Israel in fulfillment of Old and New Testament prophecies. These are referred to by Vlach as strong supersessionists.⁵⁵⁶ However, proponents of position number 2 admit that ethnic Jews will be saved and converted as this is the inevitable teaching of Romans 11:26ff, (“All Israel will be saved”). Many in group number 2 would be labeled as moderate supersessionists.⁵⁵⁷ This position contends that national Israel is the focus of Romans 11, still maintaining its distinction

⁵⁵⁵ Compiled by Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 468-73. Davidson’s real position will be addressed later in Chapter Five. Ramm also lists the four categories but Davidson’s distinctions are clearer and will be used here. See Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, 255. Joe Odle also addresses the various interpretations but he omits an important one, number 2 above. See Joe Odle, *Is Christ Coming Soon?* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), xi-xii. Several of the interpretations are listed in Ed Hindson, Mark Hitchcock, Tim LaHaye, eds., *The Harvest Handbook of Bible Prophecy* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2020), 172, but one of the most important perspectives is missing, the theory most pertinent to this dissertation and that is number 2 above. This interpretation is the current consensus of those researched for this dissertation.

⁵⁵⁶ Vlach, “Various Forms of Replacement Theology,” 57.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

from the Gentiles.⁵⁵⁸ However, there will be no national restoration. Israel's restoration will take place when they are absorbed into the Church, the true Israel, the spiritual people of God.⁵⁵⁹

The third position is comprised of those who believe that God is not finished with the Jewish people with respect to the land. They will be brought back into the land in connection with the return of Jesus Christ. However, this position believes that present day events have nothing to do with his return; present day Israel has no connection to Bible prophecy or fulfillment.⁵⁶⁰ This interpretation rejects the modern Jewish state as the fulfillment of Bible prophecy because Israel has not repented and received the Messiah.⁵⁶¹ However, this is not a prominent position; most believe that the present-day nation state of Israel is a precursor to the biblical fulfillment. The Jews have been brought back into the land in unbelief and this is explained in the next interpretation.

The fourth position, the last group, believes that Bible prophecy is being fulfilled in Palestine, and that the presence of the Jew in Jerusalem may well be the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophecies related to the Jews' presence there at the time of the return of the Lord. The present return of Israel to the land is a prelude to the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth and the exaltation of the people of Israel to a place of prominence and blessing. Present day Israel, even in unbelief, serves as a down payment that God is obligated to

⁵⁵⁸ See Osborne, Mathison, Davidson, Goldingay, Erickson and others who argue for Israel as a "nation" in Chapter Five.

⁵⁵⁹ It is important to note that moderate supersessionists take at least two different views on a fulfillment of Israel's land promises of the Abrahamic Covenant. Some supersessionists believe that Israel's land promises are being fulfilled now in the Church as the various nations experience salvation in Christ and the others believe that Israel's land promises will be fulfilled in the new creation as described in Revelation 21-22. However, both views reject the present-day nation-state of Israel as fulfilling prophecy.

⁵⁶⁰ Joe Odle, *Is Christ Coming Soon?* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), xi.

⁵⁶¹ Arnold Fruchtenbaum, "Israel in Prophecy," in *The Harvest Handbook of Bible Prophecy*, Ed Hindson, Mark Hitchcock, Tim LaHaye, eds. (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2020), 172.

fulfill His covenants. Since Scofield believed in a Jewish return to the land in *unbelief*, this modification made fundamentalism compatible with Zionism in a way that the old restoration theories did not.⁵⁶²

One theory posited by R. B. Girdlestone suggests that “they will not be a kingdom in the sense in which they were in old times, but they will be a vast community, with organization and worship and ministration, which the Old Testament naturally expresses in terms borrowed from the past. They will not be called ‘Zionists’ as in the modern sense, but Zion may be yet their true center.”⁵⁶³ Girdlestone further adds, “It is difficult to believe that there will be no local center for the restored people.”⁵⁶⁴ But if the prophecies of a restoration to the land could be accomplished literally, then there should be no problem believing that a literal city like Jerusalem could be restored with a future king and government in place during the millennial age.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum lists five different perspectives regarding Israel’s future but omits the second position above: that ethnic Jews are in focus in Romans 11:26, and even as a nation when Paul writes that “All Israel will be saved.” Fruchtenbaum omits those who believe in Israel’s conversion but deny a national restoration. However, Fruchtenbaum reiterates the Reformed belief that ethnic Jews (those being saved now and the mass of Israel [also ethnic Jews]) who will be saved at the end of time will be amalgamated into the Church, and that “God has no future restoration for Israel as an ethnic people.”⁵⁶⁵ It is the consensus of those in the Reformed

⁵⁶² Goldman, *God’s Country*, 148, (emphasis in original).

⁵⁶³ Girdlestone, *The Grammar of Prophecy*, 139-40.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 139.

⁵⁶⁵ Fruchtenbaum, “Israel in Prophecy,” 172.

tradition today, at least the ones researched, that Israel (ethnic Jews) will be saved *en masse*.⁵⁶⁶ This is one of the agreements with dispensationalism addressed in Chapter Five. However, how this will be accomplished is unclear among Reformed theologians. As will be studied in the next chapter, most dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists believe that Israel will be saved at the appearance of Christ, a common view with that of Scofield. Arnold Fruchtenbaum notes that, “Replacement theology understands the modern Jewish state to be purely an accident of history that is totally unrelated to Bible prophecy.”⁵⁶⁷ Few supersessionists, regardless of the type of supersessionism held to (punitive, economic, or structural)⁵⁶⁸ believe that there will be a literal restoration of a national Israel in the Middle East in fulfillment of hundreds of literal prophecies. The literal nation-state of Israel today has no connection to prophecy according to this view.⁵⁶⁹

While the Zionist movement and the formation of the nation of Israel today are not the complete fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, dispensationalists believe they are significant indications that God is at work. Present-day Israel, understood to be a forerunner of and a preparation for the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning national Israel in the future is characterized today by a partial return in unbelief.⁵⁷⁰ Many dispensationalists agree with the statement by Eugene Merrill, “If the present nation of Israel isn’t the nation to come, it is the foundation for it.”⁵⁷¹ The progressive regathering of Jews to Palestine in modern times and their

⁵⁶⁶ See Andrew David Naselli, “Introduction,” in *Three Views on Israel and the Church*, Jared Compton, Andrew David Naselli, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2018), 20.

⁵⁶⁷ Fruchtenbaum, “Israel in Prophecy,” 172.

⁵⁶⁸ See Vlach, “Various Forms of Replacement Theology,” 60. For a discussion of punitive, economic, and structural supersessionism, see Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology*, 29-33, 181.

⁵⁶⁹ See Fruchtenbaum, “Israel in Prophecy,” 172.

⁵⁷⁰ Charles Ryrie, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1953), 111.

⁵⁷¹ Eugene Merrill, “God’s Heart for Israel,” *Kindred Spirit* vol. 33, no. 3 (Winter 2009): 7. See also Abraham Heschel, *Israel: An Echo of Eternity* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1995), 223.

political restoration as an independent nation is certainly consistent with this expectation. However, it is not in itself the fulfillment of the prophesied messianic kingdom. That kingdom will come with the Messiah's return in glory.⁵⁷²

Many of Scofield's teachings are shared by non-dispensationalists, such as his teaching regarding the demise of post-millennialism; the predominance of premillennialism among the Church Fathers; the belief that biblical eras and theological distinctions of these eras (dispensations) exist; and that Jesus taught a restoration of a national Israel. All of these are alluded to by Blaising who notes that current trends are challenging the supersessionism embedded in traditional theology.⁵⁷³ All of these teachings are distinctives of Scofield and were embedded in *The Scofield Reference Bible*.

Narrowing the Distinctives Regarding Jewish Restoration

Reformed theologians acknowledge Israel's salvation in the future as is now the current consensus.⁵⁷⁴ However, the question, "Will Israel be saved?" or, "Do the Jews still have a future in God's plan?" will always be answered in the affirmative by Reformed theologians and other non-dispensationalists as this is what Romans 11 clearly teaches, whatever that phrase means to the theologian.⁵⁷⁵ Even for those who believe that Israel equals the Church, then all Israel will be saved so this could be argued within a Reformed theological perspective. If it is taken to mean

⁵⁷² Craig Blaising and Darrell Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Wheaton: Bridgepoint Books, 1993), 297.

⁵⁷³ Blaising, "The Future of Israel as a Theological Question," 450.

⁵⁷⁴ Naselli, "Introduction," 20.

⁵⁷⁵ See John Goldingay, "The Jews, the Land, and the Kingdom," *Anvil* vol. 4, no. 1 (1987): 10. Goldingay admits that it is difficult exegetically to take this passage any other way. See also Scott Hahn who quotes James Scott's article, "All Israel Will Be Saved." According to James Scott, "All Israel" means exactly that: "all" Israel: specifically the twelve tribes of Israel in the Old Testament. See Scott W. Hahn, "All Israel Will Be Saved: The Restoration of the Twelve Tribes in Romans 9-11," *Letter and Spirit* 10 (2015): 65-108.

that God has fulfilled his promise to the Jews in the person of Jesus; or if the land promises have been fulfilled in Jesus because he was a man who lived in the land; or if Jews will be added to the Church as they come to belief in Jesus Christ; or if there will be a massive turning to Christ at the end of time, supersessionists will always be able to answer, “Yes” to the question, “Is there still a future for the Jews/Israel in God’s plan and purpose,” because Israel equals the Church in their reckoning, or, Israel will metamorphosize into the Church in the eschaton (eternal state).

Vlach notes that Israel’s future salvation according to Romans 11:26 is not necessarily a distinguishing characteristic of dispensationalism as even many non-dispensationalists will readily admit to the salvation of all of Israel. This statement is not specific enough as most Reformed theologians, amillennialists, and postmillennialists largely believe that Jews will be saved.⁵⁷⁶ The teachings of selected non-dispensationalists argue for the same thing that Scofield and dispensationalists taught, mainly that Israel’s salvation and conversion are distinct from the Church. Israel maintains a separate identity from the Church and Gentiles in this respect just as Scofield taught. But, however distinct Israel and the Church are or have been throughout history they will eventually blend into one entity *en masse* at the end of history, and that one entity is the Church. However, they must maintain that distinction up to that point for their argument to be viable according to their hermeneutic.

Perhaps many are not asking the right questions since the question of Israel’s salvation and future role in God’s plan can be open to evasion and even deception. Perhaps theologians are reluctant to answer the question honestly as it may elicit an anti-Semitism charge, or an anti-Zionism charge as Walter Brueggemann suggests, “Given that anti-Semitism still exists, many

⁵⁷⁶ Vlach, “What is Dispensationalism?” 33.

are afraid to criticize the state of Israel and the U.S. government's support of Israel for fear of being denounced as racist."⁵⁷⁷

Perhaps the more appropriate question to ask might be, "Is the nation-state of Israel today fulfilling Bible prophecy and is the present-day Jewish state a guarantor of a future salvation and restoration of the nation in fulfillment of the biblical prophecies?" What does distinguish all dispensationalists, however, is that they not only believe in a salvation of Israel, but also in a restoration of a national Israel. The concept of restoration certainly involves the idea of salvation but it goes far beyond that.⁵⁷⁸

The central question that needs to be answered remains, "Will there be a future national Jewish restoration or not?" The return of the Jewish people to a national homeland was unprecedented and it matches the predictions of the prophets. It also corresponds to what the New Testament anticipates – a return to the land and a restoration of the Jewish people as a coherent group that is self-governing (Acts 1:6). McDermott has pointed out, "Israel has maintained a continuity with its ancient forebears in ways that no other modern nation has maintained."⁵⁷⁹ Gentry and Wellum ponder the distinctiveness of dispensationalism and acknowledge, like Ryrie, that it is the Israel-Church distinction, and then they reiterate the unchanging promise to Israel of a literal land to be fulfilled in the millennial reign of Christ.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁷ Walter Brueggemann, *Chosen? Reading the Bible Amid the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), 85. What is strange is that dispensationalists are labeled racist because they believe that Israel does have a viable right to national status, thus discriminating against Palestinians, and non-dispensationalists fear being labeled racists if they do reject a Jewish state.

⁵⁷⁸ Vlach, "What is Dispensationalism," 33.

⁵⁷⁹ Gerald McDermott, *Israel Matters* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2017), 77, 89.

⁵⁸⁰ Peter Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 42-43, 55-56. See also Wellum and Parker, *Progressive Covenantalism*, 40-41.

Blaising noted, “Supersessionists believed that the catastrophes of A.D. 70 and A.D. 135 signaled God’s intention to make a complete end of Israel as a political, national entity. However, the dramatic establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 under God’s providence has belied that notion.”⁵⁸¹

Inconsistencies within Non-Dispensational Theology Regarding Restoration of the Jews

Presentation of some of the inconsistencies and contradictions within Reformed Theology (and other evangelical perspectives) with respect to its views on Israel clearly distinguish it from Scofield’s teachings.

For centuries, non-Jewish people have been asking the question, “Who is a Jew?” “Who are the true children of Abraham?” Hunter and Wellum state that “Paul’s answer is that from the very beginning God intended his people to be those who share the faith of Abraham *and* who are united to the *true* seed of Abraham – Christ.”⁵⁸² Many Christians today are claiming that they are Jews (i.e. spiritual Jews) who believe that they deserve to inherit promises made to Abraham because they are Abraham’s seed and because they are in Christ.⁵⁸³ It is not uncommon for non-dispensational theologians to differ on the word Israel in Romans 11 or argue for more than one Israel. Many theologians may posit three or four different Israels in the same context, whether it be true Israel, spiritual Israel, national Israel, or unbelieving Israel.

A further difficulty with the non-dispensational interpretation is the denial of a distinction between Israel and the Church and insistence that there cannot be two people of God, one earthly

⁵⁸¹ Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 436.

⁵⁸² Trent Hunter and Stephen J. Wellum, *Christ from Beginning to End* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 229, (emphasis in original).

⁵⁸³ Steve Herzig, “Who is a Jew?” *Israel My Glory* (May-June 2019): 11-13.

and one heavenly (which is the foundation of dispensationalism).⁵⁸⁴ Critics have argued that Scofield's theology destroys the unity of the Bible's message and that it revives the Jew-Gentile antithesis that Christ overcame and the New Testament rebukes.⁵⁸⁵ The debate is a central element of this dissertation.

Paul is clearly making a distinction between Jews and Gentiles as Reformed Theology does in Romans 11 and in I Corinthians 10:32: "Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God." Some use Paul's statement in Galatians 3:28, that there is no distinction in the body of Christ according to Paul between Jew and Gentile, male and female, slave or free, yet the Apostle Paul does this very thing in Romans 11. Christ, they argue has eliminated those distinctions, hence, there cannot be two distinct people of God. But Paul is speaking of salvation, atonement, sin, and the promised blessing of the Holy Spirit within the body of Christ. These are given freely to Jew and Gentile, male and female, bond and free. There is no distinction there. But soteriological equality does not lead to androgyny.⁵⁸⁶

However, according to many non-dispensationalists, this distinction between Jew and Gentile will remain until the eschaton, the second coming of Jesus Christ when all Israel will metamorphosize into the Church, the one people of God. Until that happens there must be a distinction between Israel and the Church, Jews and Gentiles. A. B. Davidson consistently made the point that there was a clear distinction between the race of Abraham's descendants, the

⁵⁸⁴ See the note by William Hendriksen, *Exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), 376. "The notion according to which God recognizes two objects on which he bestows his everlasting, saving love, namely, the Jews and the church, is contrary to Scripture." See Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*, 7, and Vern Poythress, *Understanding Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, Academic Books, 1987), 9.

⁵⁸⁵ Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 114.

⁵⁸⁶ Blaising, "The Future of Israel as a Theological Question," 448.

people of God in the Old Testament, with the New Testament people of God the Church. Hence, he posits two peoples of God, the very thing that is anathema to non-dispensationalists. He admits that there is a New Testament Church in contradistinction to the nation of Israel, the Old Testament Church, so there are two distinct peoples of God.⁵⁸⁷

In spite of non-dispensationalism's insistence that there could not be two peoples in God's program, non-dispensationalists uphold upon keeping Israel (i.e. ethnic Jews) distinct from the Gentiles, whose salvation would come before Israel's as Stibbs affirms, "Not until the full complement of Jews are added to the full number of elect Gentiles will all Israel be saved, and the end come."⁵⁸⁸ This distinction between Israel and the Church is held by all non-dispensationalists until the time that Israel would be absorbed by and amalgamated into the Church.⁵⁸⁹ Note the words of Keith Mathison who adds, "Paul consistently contrasts Gentiles and Israel throughout this chapter . . . and this partially hardened Israel is distinct from the Gentiles (v. 25)."⁵⁹⁰ Similarly, according to Mathison, "Even when speaking of the one people of God in his analogy of the olive tree, Paul distinguishes between Gentile branches and Jewish branches."⁵⁹¹ Again, he writes, "Paul continues to use the word "Israel" to refer to the nation of Israel as distinguished from the Gentiles (e.g. Rom. 9:30-31; 10:21; 11:1, 2, 7, 11, 25), and Mathison adds, "In none of these instances does Paul use the word Israel to refer to the whole

⁵⁸⁷ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 478.

⁵⁸⁸ Alan Stibbs, *Great Doctrines of the Bible: God's Church* (London: Intervarsity Fellowship, 1959), 58.

⁵⁸⁹ See Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 478. Davidson will be critiqued in Chapter Five.

⁵⁹⁰ Keith A. Mathison, *From Age to Age: The Unfolding of Biblical Eschatology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 2009), 579.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 580.

people of God, Gentile and Jew together.”⁵⁹² Mathison acknowledges that which is argued by dispensationalism, that there is a distinction between Israel and the Church. Covenant theologians Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum are textually correct with the distinctions between ethnic Jew and Gentile, and that ethnic Jews will be grafted back into their own olive tree (which they admit is in fact Israel). However, the authors argue that the olive tree will metamorphosize back into the Church, the one united new humanity and covenant community, the new Jerusalem, the bride.⁵⁹³

Many theologians within evangelicalism insist on Israel’s national status in Romans 11 and continue to insist that Israel is a nation that will be saved in keeping with God’s covenant promises.⁵⁹⁴ But according to progressive covenantalists, Wellum and Parker, “In Christ the identity, vocation, and prophesied roles of corporate Israel are fulfilled; and thus nothing is left outstanding for national Israel apart from Christ.”⁵⁹⁵ Many such theologians insist on keeping Israel intact nationally and that the covenants made with Abraham’s descendants in the Old Testament are still in force and valid. Reformed theologian Keith Mathison is very concerned that God must and will be true to his covenants, writing, “In Romans 11:28-29, Paul provides a reason for the restoration of Israel. Although Israel can presently be considered an enemy, she is beloved for the sake of her forefathers. . . God has made promises to Israel, and those promises cannot be revoked.”⁵⁹⁶ He also notes that, “Israel as a whole will come to Christ... There will be

⁵⁹² Mathison, *From Age to Age*, 581.

⁵⁹³ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 501-2.

⁵⁹⁴ Richard J. Lucas, “The Dispensational Appeal to Romans 11 and the Nature of Israel’s Future Salvation,” in *Progressive Covenantalism*, Stephen J. Wellum, Brent E. Parker, eds. (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016), 252.

⁵⁹⁵ Wellum and Parker, *Progressive Covenantalism*, 5.

⁵⁹⁶ Mathison, *From Age to Age*, 583.

some kind of eschatological conversion of the nation.”⁵⁹⁷ Baptist theologian Millard J. Erickson uses the same terminology. Erickson insists that there is a future for national Israel but confirms that this salvation will be through large-scale entry into the Church.⁵⁹⁸

New Testament exegete Grant Osborne emphasizes that the nation is in view in Romans 9-

11. Quotations with page numbers have been used in order to avoid unnecessary footnotes:

- “There is a future salvation for national Israel” (p. 235).
- “The people of Israel... This is the covenant name for the nation, naming them as his chosen people (Gen. 32:28; 35:9-12; Ps. 25:22; 130:7-8). In fact, they were called Jews by others, but they called themselves Israelites in conscious reflection of their elect status as God’s special people” (p. 238).
- “There is no guarantee for the salvation of individual Israelites for this is dependent on faith, but there is a guarantee of God’s special favor toward the nation as his covenant people” (p. 238).
- “There are three sections here, verses 6-13 on national Israel versus true Israel” (p. 241).
- “In Chapter 11 the theme of God’s faithfulness continues in terms of the national future for Israel” (p. 303).
- “All Israel refers not to the Jewish people down through the ages but to the nation at the end of history who will be saved” (p. 306).
- “The result is that after the Gentile mission is complete, (v. 25), Israel will experience a national revival and come to Christ” (p. 306).
- “So even though many have rejected Christ and become his enemies, God’s love is still upon the nation” (p. 309).
- “The covenant promises were given to the nation through them. . .” (p. 309).⁵⁹⁹

⁵⁹⁷ Mathison, *From Age to Age*, 570.

⁵⁹⁸ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1998), 1053.

⁵⁹⁹ Grant R. Osborne, *Romans* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004).

Reformed Theology teaches that Israel's salvation will occur in the future at Christ's return or during the eschaton (eternal state).⁶⁰⁰ These two facts are agreed upon by Scofield and dispensationalists. But even though non-dispensationalists can and do bring Israel (i.e., ethnic Jews) to the verge of salvation, they do not acknowledge a national restoration as a prophetic necessity. Romans 11 has created a contradiction in that it teaches a salvation of Israel, ethnic Jews, which Reformed theologians argue is a fulfillment of the covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and a fulfillment of the national promise. In reality, there will be no nation, but it is still called a nation. National Israel's future is limited to Jews who come into the Church through faith in Jesus Christ.

Many in the Church have attacked dispensationalism's insistence on a national Israel, arguing instead that the Church is universal and non-nationalistic. However, Isaac Oliver observes the paradox that the Church continues to identify itself as Israel: "The kingdom of Christ makes no distinction in terms of race or nationality, though its new representatives (i.e., the church) are free to appropriate Israel's title and distinctive prerogatives."⁶⁰¹ This appears to be an inconsistency of identification.

For dispensationalists, it is the Abrahamic covenant promises – particularly the land and the seed promises that have suffered the most from allegorical interpretation with respect to eschatology.⁶⁰² Progressive covenantalists represented by Wellum and Parker argue that an appeal to Romans 11 is not sufficient to prove dispensationalism because none of the restoration

⁶⁰⁰ Jared Wilson, *Romans* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 74.

⁶⁰¹ Isaac W. Oliver, *Luke's Jewish Eschatology: The National Restoration of Israel in Luke-Acts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 4.

⁶⁰² Radmacher, "The Current Status of Dispensationalism and its Eschatology," 171.

features of Israel nationally are explicitly mentioned in Romans 11: “Arguments for their view will have to found elsewhere, for they are not in Romans 11.”⁶⁰³

According to Scofield, Romans 11:27 links Israel’s salvation (forgiveness of sins) with the New Covenant promises of the Old Testament that predicted Israel’s restoration in Jeremiah 31:31. “... The New Covenant” he noted, “rests upon an accomplished redemption” (Matt. 26:27f, 1 Cor. 11:25, Heb. 9:11-12, 18-23).⁶⁰⁴ This would tie Israel’s *salvation* with the Old Testament promises of a *restoration* to its land, which Richard Lucas calls an assumption.⁶⁰⁵ Perhaps one could argue that it is a fair assumption if one were Jewish like Paul. Barry Horner observes, “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... Surely reference here to the Abrahamic covenant must include the essential component of the land...”⁶⁰⁶ McDermott states, “To think that God fulfilled his other promises but will not fulfill this one (regarding the land) or that Israel today has nothing to do with the biblical promises does not seem to take the Bible seriously.”⁶⁰⁷

Non-dispensationalists argue for a spiritual fulfillment here by Paul and reject the material aspects of Israel’s covenant in Jeremiah 31:8-10, which refers to a restoration to the land from the nations which is the background of the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31 which Paul quotes. Ironically, Jeremiah predicts that if the sun, the moon, and the stars cease in their functions, then

⁶⁰³ Wellum and Parker, *Progressive Covenantalism*, 6, 236.

⁶⁰⁴ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1297.

⁶⁰⁵ Lucas, “The Dispensational Appeal to Romans 11,” 237-38, (emphasis in original).

⁶⁰⁶ Barry Horner, *Future Israel* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2007), 233.

⁶⁰⁷ McDermott, *Israel Matters*, 109.

Israel will also cease from being a nation. Israel is in fact a nation again after 2,000 years of not having a national homeland. However, Jeremiah is prophesying that Israel is eternal. Israel cannot perish. Blaising asserts that the Old Testament context for this passage relates the promise of future national blessing to the presence of a believing remnant during the time of exile and judgment. The remnant's existence is tied to the hope of a return of God's favor to the nation.⁶⁰⁸

Reformed author Fred Zaspel asks, "Are we to understand Paul as *limiting* their fulfillments (i.e., the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New covenants) to a soteric sense only? And if so, Why? The prophets certainly did not understand their word to be so restricted; they plainly held out a hope of salvation *and* restoration to the land *and* Israelite prominence among the nations."⁶⁰⁹ Zaspel's next question is a significant one: "What exegetical warrant is there for allowing only a part of the covenant's promises (i.e. the forgiveness of sins) and not the whole of them?"⁶¹⁰ In other words, dispensationalism is based on a literal interpretation of the Old Testament covenant of Jeremiah 31, to which any Jew would have understood literally in Romans 11. Paul's argument is that God will be faithful to his covenant promises because he has preserved the Jews, of which Paul is living proof.⁶¹¹ Most of Reformed Theology agrees that God will be faithful to his covenants; he has not abandoned his promises to the Jews; God's

⁶⁰⁸ Craig Blaising, "A Premillennial Response" in *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond*, Darrell Bock, ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 148.

⁶⁰⁹ Fred Zaspel, *Jews, Gentiles, and the Goal of Redemptive History: An Exegetical and Theological Analysis of Romans 9-11* (Hatfield, PA: Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute, 1995), 25-26, (emphasis in original).

⁶¹⁰ Lucas, "The Dispensational Appeal to Romans 11," 238-39. According to Richard Lucas, Fred Zaspel is a progressive covenantalist and Reformed pastor, but he is arguing for the dispensational position here. Zaspel does damage to the Reformed position exegetically.

⁶¹¹ Michael Rydelnik, "The Jewish People: Evidence for the Truth of Scripture," in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel*, Darrell L. Bock, Mitch Glaser, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2014), 263. Scofield's argument philosophically for the existence of the Jew is discussed in Chapter Three, and mainly comes from his book, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 57-73.

promises to Israel are irrevocable and certain; God keeps his promises to his people Israel; God has not failed in his promises to Israel.⁶¹² However, it is important to note that according to Jared Wilson, “Israel isn’t limited to ethnic Israel” and, “It is clear from the New Testament that many (if not all) of the promises made to ethnic Israel are now fulfilled in Christ and the church.”⁶¹³

Richard Lucas has an answer to Fred Zaspel’s pertinent questions. He contends that many Reformed theologians do believe in the physical nature of the land covenant and promises, but these promises are fulfilled in Christ’s resurrection.⁶¹⁴ According to Gregory Beale, the physical way that these land promises have begun fulfillment is that Christ himself introduced the new creation by his physical resurrection. Jesus’ resurrection body begins the fulfillment of the land promises assuming the typological role they serve. Resurrection in Scripture is tied to the eschatological fulfillment of the new creation.⁶¹⁵ But, according to progressive covenantalism, the land will not be Israel’s but it will belong to all the world collectively. According to Oren Martin, “Israel’s land promise ultimately reaches its fulfillment when redeemed people from every nation fill and inhabit the whole earth.”⁶¹⁶

⁶¹² Wilson, *Romans*, 63.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁶¹⁴ Lucas, “The Dispensational Appeal to Romans 11,” 241.

⁶¹⁵ G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 751.

⁶¹⁶ Martin, “The Land Promise Biblically and Theologically Understood,” 270-71. Non-dispensational theology does interpret the land promises at least two different ways: one is presented by Martin here, the other sees the land promises as yet being fulfilled in the eschaton, in a future new creation, the newly restored earth of Revelation 21-22. See Craig Blaising, “Israel and Hermeneutics,” in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel*, Darrell L. Bock, Mitch Glaser, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2014), 163-65. To this interpretation, Charles Ryrie asks, “Will the teaching of some amillennialists that Israel’s yet unfulfilled promises will be fulfilled on the new earth be accepted by dispensationalists? If so, will there be a river of Egypt and the river Euphrates on the new earth...?” See Charles C. Ryrie, “Update on Dispensationalism,” in *Issues in Dispensationalism*, Wesley R. Willis, John R. Master, Charles C. Ryrie, eds. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 24.

DeRouchie agrees that the land promises are eternal, but the participation and property aspects get transformed in the age of the Messiah.⁶¹⁷

According to the progressive covenantalists, Israel's land covenant is typological. That rules out any additional literal fulfillment of the land promise in a future restoration of a national Israel subsequent to or alongside of the messianic fulfillment.⁶¹⁸

A question these authors might be asked is that if God has already fulfilled Israel's promises and covenants in Christ as they allege, then why would it be necessary to fulfill the promises made to an ethnic Israel in the future according to Romans 11? Further, why would it be necessary to fulfill promises made to a nation of ethnic Israelites if there is in fact no need to maintain such a distinction of Jew or Gentile in the Church, or the new community if Israel will be absorbed anyway?⁶¹⁹ The essence of dispensationalism is the belief that God does have an earthly people and a heavenly people. Yet Reformed Theology keeps the two distinct until the eschaton. One would also have to wonder why there is such an adamant denial of present-day Israel and the land promises when both exist today as Scofield expected. If Jews are being saved by their coming to Christ and incorporation into the Church, then there should be no need for a future conversion of a nation, which is in fact, not really a nation at all. There is some degree where non-dispensationalists take the Old Testament land covenant literally, but exegetical and theological methods are preventing a literal interpretation to confirm a present reality as having an eschatological significance.

⁶¹⁷ DeRouchie, "Father of a Multitude of Nations," 14.

⁶¹⁸ Mark W. Karlberg, "The Significance of Israel in Biblical Typology," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 31 (1988): 259-60.

⁶¹⁹ This is the argument of Jason DeRouchie, "Father of a Multitude of Nations," 7-38.

These inconsistencies, discrepancies, and contradictions among one another in attempting to explain Israel's national future will be studied from a sampling of non-dispensationalists (Reformed and similar opinions and interpretations) studying the extent to which they either directly contradict one another or agree with Scofield's teachings regarding a national Israel thus presenting the dilemma for non-dispensationalists. These inconsistencies will be contrasted with Scofield's position on the restoration of national Israel with respect to a fulfillment of prophecy.

Theological Challenges for Non-Dispensationalists Regarding the Restoration of the Jews

For the first time in more than 2,000 years Israel lives as a nation, possesses the area previously known as Palestine as her homeland, controls Jerusalem, and is not under the domination of a foreign power. Yet, this has no biblical significance according to non-dispensational theology. Jesus did give numerous signs related to his return, and the Jews are definitely included in some of those signs. Joe Odle presents Luke 21:24 as one of the most important signs in the New Testament relating to the Jews. Jesus taught that Jerusalem would be under Gentile domination but a period was coming when that control of Jerusalem would end and Jerusalem would be in Jewish hands once more. Kenneth Boa and Robert Bowman note that this has been partially fulfilled:

One could admittedly argue that Jewish control of Jerusalem at this point is not complete. Still, the revival of a Jewish state and of Jerusalem as at least partially under Jewish control after nineteen centuries is a remarkable turn of events. It is very reasonable to conclude that Jesus' prophecy has already been largely fulfilled and that the implied end of Gentile domination over Jerusalem is now in sight, if not in some sense already fulfilled.⁶²⁰

The return of Jerusalem to the Jews points to Christ's coming. Odle notes, "The prophecies of the Old Testament concerning Israel's return to her land, and her experiences as a people in the

⁶²⁰ Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman, Jr., *20 Compelling Evidences that God Exists* (Tulsa: RiverOak Publishing, 2002), 163-64.

last days have not been fulfilled previously at any time in history, neither have the words of Jesus in Luke 21:28 or of Paul in Romans 11:25-27.”⁶²¹ There are many who believe that the prophecies that have been fulfilled in Palestine, and the presence of the Jewish people in Jerusalem may be the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophecies related to the Jewish presence there at the time of the return of Christ. Much of contemporary theology denies a prophetically significant national future for a Jewish state at the same time emphasizing a distinctive future hope for Israel in a soteriological sense.⁶²²

Anglican author John Goldingay typifies the debate. He refers to the Jews fulfilling prophecy today in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies (e.g. Ezek. 37) as nonsense: “A fulfillment in 1948 of a prophecy given by Ezekiel to people who lived in the 580’s BC is thus nonsense: it is not a fulfillment of promises and warnings that were part of God’s relationship with *those* people.”⁶²³ The notion of Jews being in the same identical land with similar boundaries as in the days of the Bible does exist. This might argue strongly that the nation of Israel today serves as a visible apologetic to the truthfulness of the Bible as the Word of God. Goldingay’s position on Israel affirms that some theologians struggle to explain it. Most expositors do not address the current day state of Israel in their commentaries or in survey texts because it is not viewed as having theological significance.⁶²⁴ For example, Andrew Hill and

⁶²¹ Odle, *Is Christ Coming Soon*, xv.

⁶²² Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 501. See also Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 861; Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1053; and Robert L. Gundry, *A Survey of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 386.

⁶²³ Goldingay, “The Land, the Jews, and the Kingdom,” 17, (emphasis in original).

⁶²⁴ For example, there is no discussion of present-day Israel in Wellum and Parker’s book, *Progressive Covenantalism*, especially in four chapters and an introduction that deal specifically with Israel and the land covenant. There is only one reference to Christian Zionism and that as a political threat (pp. 42, 286).

John Walton in their *Survey of the Old Testament* do not directly advocate supersessionism *per se*, but their section on “The Theological Importance of the Land” evades a literal fulfillment of the land promises as a present-day reality in modern Israel. This is not uncommon in contemporary theological and biblical works.⁶²⁵

Scotfield and dispensationalists do not face the same challenges with respect to the Jewish nation and there is no problem with a literal Israel existing today in the same geographical location as in the days of the Old Testament. Reformed Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann writes, “The conviction that the Jews are God’s chosen people is not in doubt in the Bible.”⁶²⁶ Brueggemann rejects replacement theology numerous times in his book, *Chosen? Reading the Bible Amid the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. He also argues that there is a precedent for Zionism in the Old Testament (pp. 47-52). He writes that there is a biological identity in the Old Testament that can be argued today in Israel: “The factor of biological descent was certainly

⁶²⁵ See Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 51-52. Blaising has noted that many supersessionist publications omit key passages that challenge their system of interpretation. He says that “failure to address these texts is evidence that the interpretation may be weak.” See Craig Blaising, “Israel and Hermeneutics,” in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel*, 158-59. In the research for this dissertation, there have only been about three or four non-dispensationalists who actually attempt to deal with present-day Israel and only John Goldingay has stated that Israel’s current state may be a fulfillment of prophecy. See Goldingay, 21. But Goldingay is inconsistent within the same article (or he has changed his view) on the subject as seen one year later in the entry, “Israel,” in *New Dictionary of Theology*, eds., Sinclair B. Ferguson, David F. Wright, J. I. Packer (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 345. Robert Mounce plainly writes that “This passage (i.e., Romans 11) says nothing of the reestablishment of the modern nation of Israel. What is envisioned is a dramatic fulfillment of God’s ancient promise to his people Israel that will take place at or immediately following the second coming of Christ.” Again, Mounce’s statement seems to evade the question or leave the door open for a national restoration after the second coming of Christ. See Robert Mounce, *Romans: The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 225. Kaiser notes that many who adopt replacement theology find it more convenient to ignore Romans 11 altogether, and instead “build their positions on logical extrapolations of their theologies, rather than on explicit exegesis of texts of Scripture at that point.” See Walter Kaiser, “An Assessment of ‘Replacement Theology’: the Relationship Between the Israel of the Abrahamic-Davidic Covenant and the Christian Church,” *Mishkan 21* (1994): 13. In his commentary on Romans, Douglas Moo teases the reader at the beginning of his Chapter 15 in his shorter commentary, *Encountering the Book of Romans* with a reference to the modern-day state of Israel, but completely evades the issue in his commentary of Israel’s salvation. See Douglas J. Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 150-58. In the discussion of the various interpretations of Romans 11:26, Moo does not even mention the dispensational position, even though he is almost in total agreement with Scotfield.

⁶²⁶ Brueggemann, *Chosen*, xiv.

important and continues to be so, as is clear from the juridical definition of Jewish identity in the State of Israel today. What this means is that unlike Christianity, Judaism has continued to think of itself in terms of peoplehood.”⁶²⁷ What he is implying is that there is a clear biological connection between the Jews of the Old Testament and the Jews in the land of modern Israel today. Brueggemann argues that Israel is a legitimate nation and has a right to exist as any other nation, but, strangely, he argues that one cannot use the Old Testament or the Bible to argue for modern day Zionism.⁶²⁸ This paradox reveals a clear problem inherent in the theology of non-dispensationalists when they reject the restoration of a national/ethnic Israel.

What fueled Scofield’s belief in a Jewish national restoration was a literal interpretation of the Bible and a strong belief in the inerrancy of the Bible. As presented in Chapter Three, Scofield believed that the Jewish people would be brought back into the land in unbelief as prophesied in Ezekiel 37. He understood it as a prophecy of the Jews returning first to the land, and then salvation would occur later at the end of the tribulation period at the return of Jesus Christ. Non-dispensational theologians also teach that the Jews will be saved at the coming of Christ. Scofield’s teaching that the restoration of a literal Jewish nation before the return of Christ was an anomaly at the time for non-dispensationalists. He did not believe in a mass conversion of Jews through the medium of the Church as was held by most proponents in the Reformed tradition, but a literal restoration of the Jewish nation to fulfill the promises made to David in the Old Testament covenants. Israel would be the restored elect nation of God during the earthly millennium: restored to her earthly glory as in the days of David and Solomon.⁶²⁹

⁶²⁷ Brueggemann, *Chosen*, 5-6. Here Brueggemann quotes from Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah: a Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988), 176.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, 37-39.

⁶²⁹ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1206.

Later in the twentieth century, in the aftermath of the Holocaust, some in the Church have re-evaluated their position on the Jewish people in God's prophetic program. Now, according to many in the Reformed and other non-dispensational traditions, Romans 11 is believed to teach a salvation of the Jewish nation, yet non-dispensational theologians continue to reject a literal nation. Historically, Christianity has taught a replacement or a displacement of the Jews by the Church. For dispensationalists, the return of the Jewish people to their historic homeland in 1948 and the re-establishment of the present-day nation-state is considered by many to be a precursor to the final salvation of the nation.

The rejection of national Israel as prophetically significant stems from the structural nature of supersessionism and one response is to advocate for a return to the literal method of interpretation. A new consensus of Christian theologians is considered in this study to be a positive step in rejecting supersessionism. Many scholars, Roman Catholic and Protestant agree that neither Jesus nor Paul taught that God's covenant with Israel had ended. However, as Gerald McDermott points out, that is only half of supersessionism. The other half of supersessionism still prevails, and that is a rejection of the land covenant (e.g., Gen. 15:18-21).⁶³⁰ McDermott, a former supersessionist, agrees that supersessionism still remains a stronghold in the Church.

This chapter has noted that there are inconsistencies in non-dispensational traditions and a comparative study of a sampling of contemporary theologians in Romans 11 reveals that many of them are in agreement with aspects of Scofield's chronological and eschatological time frame. For example, non-dispensational theology insists on keeping Israel distinct from the Church and insists that the promises made to a national Israel will be fulfilled by God. However, for them, in reality, there will be no literal national Israel. This distinction will exist until the time that the

⁶³⁰ McDermott, *Israel Matters*, 15-17.

Jews are absorbed into the Church, the one people of God in the eschaton. This is the salvation alluded to by much of Reformed Theology based on an interpretation of Romans 11:26, “All Israel shall be saved.” There is an inconsistency in the identification of Israel in Scripture. Theologians may posit three or four different Israel’s in this same passage. Many Reformed theologians agree that if the Old Testament prophecies are taken literally as dispensationalists argue, the result will be the restoration of a literal nation in the future. In contemporary theology, the Church continues to identify itself as the Israel of the Old Testament. Oliver observes this contradiction: “The kingdom of Christ makes no distinction in terms of race or nationality, though its new representatives (i.e., the church) are free to appropriate Israel’s title and distinctive prerogatives.”⁶³¹ This appears to be an inconsistency in identification.

There is a diversity of opinions regarding the national restoration of Israel/Zionism with at least four different positions of biblical and theological interpretation. The two most prominent are non-dispensational theologians who believe that Israel will be saved, but not restored as a nation, and dispensationalists who believe that Israel will be restored literally and all the land promised to Abraham’s descendants will be fulfilled in a future millennial kingdom on earth.

Blaising concludes:

With the reconstitution of Israel as a political reality after more than 1800 years, the providential-historical argument for the end of Israel nationally has been thrown into question as well. In conclusion, Israel does have a future in the plan of God. This ‘yes’ needs to be worked through our theological thinking, removing the ‘no’ that has been deeply embedded in traditional theology by supersessionism.⁶³²

⁶³¹ Oliver, *Luke’s Jewish Eschatology*, 4.

⁶³² Blaising, “The Future of Israel as a Theological Question,” 450.

Zionism in its theological permutations has posed a theological problem for non-dispensationalists. National and ethnic Israel is not merely theoretical but a reality that is of vital importance in our world today.⁶³³

Even though there are disagreements with non-dispensationalists, there are common agreements with Scofield in the general eschatological template as given in Chapter Three, especially in his understanding of Romans 11, which will be the focus of the next chapter.

⁶³³ Craig Blaising, “Israel and Hermeneutics,” in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel*, Darrell L. Bock, Mitch Glaser, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2014), 152.

Chapter Five

Romans 11: Assessing the Biblical and Theological Similarities of C. I. Scofield with Non-Dispensationalists

Purpose of the Chapter

This dissertation seeks to answer the research question “What were the teachings of C. I. Scofield with respect to the conversion and restoration of the Jewish nation in fulfillment of Old and New Testament prophecies and how might his understanding be used in a way similar to a minimal facts apologetic?”

The minimal facts apologetic approach is to utilize data that is well evidenced and admitted to by a general consensus of scholars, even critical scholars.⁶³⁴ Most critical and skeptical scholars who reject the resurrection of Jesus admit to a minimal core of facts pertaining to Jesus’ death and post-resurrection events. The strength of these facts is capable of providing the best arguments for the resurrection - even though they do not attempt to argue for proving it. They do so with a minimal amount of ascertainable data. In other words, the historical data and the consensus of critical scholars would strengthen the case that a resurrection did in fact occur.⁶³⁵ The minimal facts approach would be considered a bare-bones level of historical evidence. Evidentialist apologists operate on the ground of probability.⁶³⁶ For example, one of the most

⁶³⁴ Gary Habermas, “Evidential Apologetics,” in *Five Views on Apologetics*, Steven Cowan, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 100.

⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁶³⁶ Joseph Butler, (1692-1752), the recognized pioneer of the evidentialist approach, originally wrote to defend Christianity against the attacks of deism. Butler did not attempt to prove that Christianity is true, nor to provide a foundation for revealed religion, but to answer the objection that revealed religion is irrational. In his

popular approaches to historical Jesus studies is to begin with a list of historical facts that are accepted by virtually all researchers.⁶³⁷ Evidential apologists rely more on the nature of evidence rather than taking a more rational approach as do the other apologetic methods. The insistence of probability is high in evidential apologetics. Evidential apologists of all stripes hold in common a crucial aspect: the conclusions of the apologetic arguments they employ are shown to be probable rather than certain.⁶³⁸

However, a minimal facts study would need to be quite exhaustive and beyond the scope of this dissertation. It is not necessary to argue from a minimal facts methodology in regard to Israel's existence. Israel's national restoration is not a probability or possibility; it is a reality. The current nation-state of Israel exists beyond the realm of possibility or probability required by the evidentialist apologetic method. The amount of scriptural evidence to support it being from God is overwhelming. The only time in history that the resurrection of a nation occurred happened to have been the only nation of which specific claims of resurrection were previously prophesied in the Old Testament. This would also apply to the resurrection claims of Jesus.⁶³⁹

A consensus of agreement with Scofield from non-dispensationalists would strengthen his argument for the restoration of the Jewish nation given the minimal fact that a physical, literal,

introduction, he explained that his argument deals with *probability*. Butler's method and approach was empirical, not rationalistic. His dictum that "probability is the very guide of life" is a classic expression of the evidentialist perspective. See Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman, Jr., *Faith Has Its Reasons* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2001), 162, 164.

⁶³⁷ Gary Habermas, *The Risen Jesus and Future Hope* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 8-9.

⁶³⁸ Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman, Jr., *Faith Has Its Reasons* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2001), 181.

⁶³⁹ Habermas, "Evidential Apologetics," 119. Actually, Habermas is referring to Jesus' resurrection, not Israel's here. But, the point is that the prophecies predict both.

restoration did in fact occur in 1948. Non-dispensationalists are in agreement that Old Testament prophecies, if taken literally will lead to the truthfulness of Scofield's position.⁶⁴⁰

Scofield's beliefs and teachings regarding a literal and national restoration of the Jewish people in fulfillment of Old and New Testament prophecies can be argued through the writings of Reformed theologians and those hostile to dispensationalism by utilizing a comparative biblical/theological approach on a key eschatological passage, Romans 11, which is similar to a minimal facts methodology although not as broad or extensive in scope and time. Non-dispensationalists acknowledge or are in agreement with many of the teachings of Scofield but reject his conclusions regarding the restoration of a literal Jewish nation as being evidence of an accurate interpretation of the biblical text. A literal restoration has in fact occurred.

Even though there are disagreements with non-dispensationalists, there are common agreements with Scofield in the general eschatological template as given in Chapter Three, especially in his understanding of Romans 11:26 and the salvation of all Israel. This present chapter will demonstrate that dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists practically argue the same facts on Romans 11 regarding an eschatological time frame for Israel and the Jews.

From a selected sampling of current and past authors,⁶⁴¹ the following consensus of non-dispensationalists will argue that from a study of Romans 11, the following eschatological time frame of Scofield can be agreed upon:

- God has not replaced the Jews nor abrogated the covenants; they are still the chosen people.

⁶⁴⁰ For a sampling of non-dispensational scholars who admit that the prophecies, if taken literally, do in fact argue for a literal, national Israel in the end-time, see Chapter Four, pages 130-133.

⁶⁴¹ As stated in Chapter One, this sampling will be mostly limited to around the past 100 years or so since 1909, the publication of *The Scofield Reference Bible* even though it may include several contributions more recent.

- Romans 11 presents a clear distinction between the salvation of Gentiles/Jews/Israel up to the point of salvation, even though Reformed Theology rejects the belief that there could be two peoples of God.
- Romans 11 definitely refers to ethnic Jews.
- Romans 11 is in fact referring to a national Israel.⁶⁴²
- Israel's salvation is yet future from the time of Paul's writing.
- Israel's salvation will take place at the second coming of Jesus Christ or Eschaton (the end of time).⁶⁴³
- There is a gap or delay between Israel's unbelief and their restoration as God's people.
- Israel's salvation will take place after that of the Gentiles.
- Israel's salvation appears to be a direct act by God himself without the aid of evangelization methods or techniques (i.e., the Church is not going to accomplish this great feat of Israel's salvation).
- The means of Israel's salvation is not defined.

These agreements help to strengthen the fact that Scofield's position is more tenable to biblical teaching since a Jewish nation was established in 1948 in almost the same identical boundaries as promised in Genesis 15:18-21.

Regarding Romans 11, Scofield wrote:

The eleventh chapter of Romans is an elaborate discussion of the relation of Israel to this dispensation in view of the promises to the fathers. It is expressly asserted that God 'hath not cast away his people,' that 'blindness in part hath happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in,' and that 'all Israel shall be saved' by the appearance of the Deliverer out of Zion.⁶⁴⁴

⁶⁴² Non-dispensational theologians believe that the Jewish nation will metamorphosize into the Church, even though most of them refer to the Jews as a nation, implying national salvation. But in reality, there will be no nation in the normal sense of the word. See Chapter Four, pages 150-155.

⁶⁴³ Defined as a time associated with events prophesied in Scripture, to occur at the end of the world and the second coming of Christ. See Jared Wilson, *Romans* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 74. See specifically the position of Thomas Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998).

⁶⁴⁴ C. I. Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain* (Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis, Printers and Publishers, n.d.), 88.

For Scofield and dispensationalists, Israel's salvation will be a full restoration and conversion of the nation itself, clearly distinct from the Church. Anglican theologian John Goldingay admits: "A very broad consensus of commentators agrees that in Romans 9-11 Paul does come to the conclusion that God is still committed to the salvation of the Jewish people."⁶⁴⁵

The statement by Paul, "All Israel shall be saved," has been answered either one of three ways: 1) The salvation of Israel has been ongoing throughout history via the mission of the Church,⁶⁴⁶ 2) A mass conversion of Israel will take place at or just before the Parousia of Christ: Jews *en masse* will be incorporated into the Church⁶⁴⁷ and, 3) Jews living on earth at the end-time will be saved, which will occur to the nation as a whole, and it will be a comprehensive eschatological recovering of unbelieving Jews in a national sense.⁶⁴⁸

Paul is not highlighting individual salvation during the ongoing Church age (even though he does acknowledge that is happening as he is writing), but what comes after the Church, namely the salvation of Israel, as soon as God's plan with the Gentiles is over. God's faithfulness to Israel does not merely ensure the salvation of a remnant but a future ingathering of Israel will fulfill God's covenant with his people.⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴⁵ John Goldingay, "The Jews, the Land, and the Kingdom," *Anvil* vol. 4, no. 1 (1987): 10.

⁶⁴⁶ There are still a few Reformed theologians who teach this today, but it is not a consensus as the context of Romans 11 does not allow it. One current New Testament scholar who still interprets the phrase, "all Israel" as the Church, however, is N. T. Wright, even though Wright himself admits that this places him at variance among current New Testament scholarship. See N. T. Wright, "Romans," in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. x, Leander E. Keck, ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 689. This was also the position of John Stott in his commentary, *Romans: God's Good News for the World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 305, but it is a minority opinion today. For a critique of N. T. Wright's position, see Roman Catholic scholar Scott Hahn, "All Israel Will Be Saved," *Letter & Spirit* 10 (2015): 65-108.

⁶⁴⁷ Scott Hahn, "All Israel will be Saved: The Restoration of the Twelve Tribes in Romans 9-11," *Letter & Spirit* 10 (2015): 65. This is the consensus of most of the non-dispensationalists and Reformed theologians revealed in this sampling.

⁶⁴⁸ William Hendriksen, *Exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), 307, 379-80.

⁶⁴⁹ Thomas Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 591.

Since a great number of Jews rejected the gospel as Paul makes plain in Romans 9:31-33, 10:1-3, 11:20, the question could be asked: “Was the judgment on Israel a corporate rejection?” or, “Did God reject the nation because *individuals* had rejected Christ and the gospel?” Paul’s answer here is “No way!” (Rom. 11:2). In other words, there was still a corporate or national aspect. Ultimately, there would indeed be a national restoration which would fulfill that aspect of prophecy.⁶⁵⁰ The remnant to whom Paul belongs offers tangible proof for Paul that God stands by his promise and election with unswerving faithfulness.⁶⁵¹ Donaldson writes, “The thrust of Romans 11 is that Gentiles join the Jews who believe, not that they replace the Jews who do not. However the riches of the Gentiles are linked to the failure of the Jewish majority, they are linked just as tightly to the success of the believing remnant.”⁶⁵²

Jim Sibley agrees, “The possibility that someone could conclude that God had rejected Israel was also just as repugnant to Paul as the notion that we could sin in order that grace might increase (Rom. 6:1-2).” In both of these instances Paul uses the phrase, “God forbid” (*King James Version*), or, “May it never be!” Paul is declaring that he has zero tolerance for the view considered.⁶⁵³ However, the exact opposite occurred; instead of heeding the Apostle Paul’s warning, much of the Church has followed the identical path he warned against.

⁶⁵⁰ Michael A. Harbin, *The Promise and the Blessing* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 518-19, (emphasis in original).

⁶⁵¹ Otfried Hofius, “All Israel will be Saved: Divine Salvation and Israel’s Deliverance in Romans 9-11,” *Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, Supplementary Issue #1 (1990): 29-30.

⁶⁵² Terence Donaldson, “Riches for the Gentiles: (Rom. 11:12): Israel’s Rejection and Paul’s Gentile Mission,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 112/1 (1993): 84.

⁶⁵³ Jim R. Sibley, “Has the Church Put Israel on the Shelf: The Evidence From Romans 11:15,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* vol. 58, no. 3 (September 2015): 578.

According to Scofield, there are six reasons to argue for Israel's future status from Romans 11:26: 1) The salvation of Paul proves that there is a remnant within Israel, 2) The doctrine of the remnant of Jews proves it, 3) The present national unbelief was foreseen, 4) Israel's unbelief is the Gentiles opportunity, 5) Israel is judicially broken off from the good olive tree which is Christ but are to be grafted in again and, 6) The promised Deliverer will come out of Zion and the nation will be saved.⁶⁵⁴

Introduction to the Theological Importance of Romans 11

New Testament scholar Douglas Moo writes, "At few points do biblical teaching and contemporary news stories intersect so directly as on the status of the State of Israel."⁶⁵⁵ Non-dispensationalist George Eldon Ladd referred to Romans 11 as a passage that cannot be avoided to argue for a premillennial perspective.⁶⁵⁶ Romans 11 is a crucial passage with regard to the New Testament teaching concerning the present nature and destiny of national Israel.⁶⁵⁷ Verses 25-26 can be used as a case study for revealing how a particular hermeneutical system sees Israel and its future.⁶⁵⁸ Walter Kaiser agrees that Romans 11 is the *crux interpretum* for all who tackle the problem of the relationship between Israel and the Church.⁶⁵⁹

⁶⁵⁴ Summarized from C. I. Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1909, 1917), 1204. For a similar argument, see A. C. Gaebelein, *The Jewish Question* (New York: Our Hope Publications, 1912), 1-18.

⁶⁵⁵ Douglas J. Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 150.

⁶⁵⁶ George Eldon Ladd, "Historic Premillennialism," in *The Meaning of the Millennium*, Robert G. Clouse, ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977), 27.

⁶⁵⁷ Barry Horner, *Future Israel* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2007), 253.

⁶⁵⁸ H. Wayne House, "The Future of National Israel," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 166:664 (October 2009): 476.

⁶⁵⁹ Walter Kaiser, "An Assessment of 'Replacement Theology: The Relationship Between the Israel of the Abrahamic-Davidic Covenant and the Christian Church," *Mishkan* 21 (1994): 13.

Reformed scholars will admit the fact of the eschatological teaching of this passage. Keith Mathison agrees that, “Romans 11:11-32 is one of the most significant eschatological texts in the New Testament and like most eschatological texts, its interpretation is disputed. Most commentators believe that Paul teaches here that Israel’s present condition is not permanent, that Israel as a whole will come to Christ, that there will be some kind of eschatological conversion of the nation.”⁶⁶⁰ Progressive covenantalists Scott Wellum and Brent Parker admit that Romans 11 teaches that there is a future for ethnic Israel, even though they argue that it does not require a restored national Israel as taught by dispensationalists.⁶⁶¹

Romans 11 is problematic to non-dispensationalists as it demands that Israel’s salvation as a nation be separate from the Church according to the exegesis of the passage, preserving and validating the distinction between both as argued by Scofield and dispensationalists. Yet the salvation they argue for can only be accomplished through the instrumentation of the Church, the one people of God. This belief denies a future restoration of a literal nation, even though many theologians argue for Israel’s national distinction in Romans 9-11.

The Structure of Romans

According to most scholars, the book of Romans is divided into three parts: the first section extends from chapters 1-8; the second section contains chapters 9, 10, and 11; the last section contains chapters 12-16. Romans 9-11 unfolds the purposes of God concerning the Jewish race. From this chapter one can look back over the entire history of Israel and from here one can learn

⁶⁶⁰ Keith Mathison, *From Age to Age: The Unfolding of Biblical Eschatology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 2009), 570.

⁶⁶¹ Stephen J. Wellum and Brent E. Parker, *Progressive Covenantalism* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2016), 252.

Israel's present condition, and above all their future and what God will do in fulfillment of his earthbound covenants.⁶⁶² Having unfolded the account of God's plan of salvation in Romans 1-8, Paul finds it necessary to explain the almost complete absence of Israel in that account.⁶⁶³ The unbelief of the Jews has called forth these chapters and continues to be Paul's primary concern (Rom. 10:1-4, 21, 11:1).⁶⁶⁴

Romans 9 - 11 helps the Bible reader understand Israel's role in the Bible's storyline and what role an ethnic Israel will play in the future. Victor Paul Furnish notes, "Because there are so few Christians of Jewish descent, the primary question is not about the relation of Jewish and Gentile Christianity within the Church. It is about Christianity's relationship to Judaism."⁶⁶⁵ The question before us is not whether an individual Jew can be saved or not; it is a national question with which we have to deal.⁶⁶⁶

At the center of the biblical storyline and debate regarding ethnic Israel and the future is Romans 11:26-27: "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."⁶⁶⁷ Romans 11:25-27 seems to be a summary of key ideas developed in chapters 9-11.⁶⁶⁸ Some interpreters see chapters 9-11 as the climax and real center

⁶⁶² A. C. Gaebelein, *The Jewish Question* (New York: Our Hope Publications, 1912), 1, 3.

⁶⁶³ S. Lewis Johnson, "Evidence from Romans 9-11," in *A Case for Premillennialism: A New Consensus*, Donald K. Campbell, Jeffrey Townsend, eds. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992), 199, 203.

⁶⁶⁴ Schreiner, *Romans*, 569.

⁶⁶⁵ Victor Paul Furnish, *Journey through the Bible (Vol. 14): Romans – Philippians* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1995), 25.

⁶⁶⁶ Gaebelein, *The Jewish Question*, 13.

⁶⁶⁷ Holy Bible, *King James Version*; Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1206.

⁶⁶⁸ Reidar Hvalvik, "A 'Sonderweg' for Israel," *Journal of the Study of the New Testament* 38 (1990): 89.

of the epistle as a whole, and as an integral part of the working out of the theme of the epistle.⁶⁶⁹ Everything in Romans 9-11 has been leading up to vss. 25-32 where Paul is ready to express clearly the revelation that makes sense of everything that has happened to Israel (v. 25).⁶⁷⁰

The view was once held that these chapters disrupt the argument of the epistle and are a parenthesis. But Romans 9-11 are viewed as a vital part of the epistle and have been referred to as the climax of Paul's argument.⁶⁷¹ According to Douglas Moo, Israel is not the main topic of Romans 9-11; the main topic is the integrity of God's promises. Since Israel's salvation had not occurred, some believed that Paul wanted to show that God had not reneged on the promises made to Abraham's descendants.⁶⁷² Likewise, Schreiner believes that the fundamental issue in Romans 9-11 is not the place of Israel, though that is crucial to the argument, but the question revolves around the faithfulness and righteousness of God. Is the God who made the saving promises to Israel faithful to keep his pledges and promises?⁶⁷³ John Stott believes that the theme of Romans 9-11 is Jewish unbelief and the problems it raised.⁶⁷⁴

⁶⁶⁹ Krister Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 4, 28.

⁶⁷⁰ Peter T. Ellis, *Seven Pauline Letters* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1982), 252.

⁶⁷¹ Schreiner, *Romans*, 469, 472.

⁶⁷² Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans*, 130-33.

⁶⁷³ Schreiner, *Romans*, 471.

⁶⁷⁴ John Stott, *Romans: God's Good News for the World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 262.

One Olive Tree (Romans 11:13-24)⁶⁷⁵

Paul compares Israel to an olive tree. The olive tree is the oldest tree on earth and is the hallmark of the Holy Land, and an eternal symbol of peace. Because of its potential to live over 1,000 years and still bear fruit, the olive tree has long symbolized longevity and immortality. It is an evergreen tree and can flourish in rocky areas.⁶⁷⁶ No matter how desperate the climate, olive trees produce fruit; this is one of the resilient attributes that distinguish the olive tree from other species.⁶⁷⁷

Paul's analogy with the olive tree reverses a normal practice: a cultivated olive branch is normally grafted into a wild stock; a wild sprig is not grafted into a garden tree. However, some have suggested that the grafting in of a wild olive sprig was a means of stimulating an unproductive tree into fruiting.⁶⁷⁸ Ordinarily, good branches are grafted into a wild tree that they may continue to bear their own good fruit. But in this case, the Gentile branches are cut out of the wild olive tree and grafted "contrary to nature" into the good olive tree so that they may bear good fruit. Paul is not interested in arboriculture but in using an illustration to make a theological point. Even if branches from wild olive trees were never grafted onto a cultivated olive tree, this would not affect the interpretation according to Schreiner.⁶⁷⁹

⁶⁷⁵ The format of this chapter will not be an exegetical verse-by-verse study but key aspects of the passage will be addressed topically as they appear in the main flow of the passage (e.g., "The New Covenant," "Life from the Dead," "The Mystery," "The Deliverer").

⁶⁷⁶ Ellen Frankel and Betsy Teutsch, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson Inc., 1992), 123.

⁶⁷⁷ Dan Goldberg, "The Olive," *Eretz* 54 (September- October 1997): 22.

⁶⁷⁸ David J. Williams, *Paul's Metaphors* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), 41-42.

⁶⁷⁹ Schreiner, *Romans*, 605.

The difficulty remains of Paul's reference to grafting back the natural branches (the Jews) that had been broken off from their own tree. As Williams notes, "This is nonsense. Did Paul not know that it was?" Paul's analogy is contrary to nature and would be based on God's sovereign grace. If Gentiles had been brought into Israel by God's sovereign grace, then God was able to enact a miracle and bring Jews back into their own tree and into their own rights and privileges. A miracle of divine grace would be involved.⁶⁸⁰

According to much of Reformed Theology, the Jews are to be grafted into the Church.⁶⁸¹ Instead of viewing Gentiles as being grafted into the stock, root, and trunk of the Jews, it reverses the imagery. Jewish salvation through the medium of the Church was a common interpretation and still is a somewhat accepted interpretation among Reformed scholars and non-dispensationalists as this sample from the early 1900s proves, "There is hope for the Jews because (though today like dead branches) they spring from a holy root (i.e. the people of God's covenant – the Jewish Church of which the Christian Church has inherited the privileges); and so are capable of redemption."⁶⁸² As is clear from this early example of supersessionism, the hope of the Jews' salvation really depends on the covenant Church. Reformed author and pastor William Hendriksen provides the common Reformed interpretation of Romans 11: "The Apostle Paul recognizes *only one (cultivated) olive tree!* In other words, the church is *one* living organism . . . *One olive tree* represents *all* the saved, regardless of their origin. . . Remember: ONE OLIVE TREE!"⁶⁸³ Previously in his commentary, Hendriksen had referred to the Jews as

⁶⁸⁰ Williams, *Paul's Metaphors*, 42.

⁶⁸¹ Kaiser, "An Assessment of Replacement Theology," 20.

⁶⁸² K. E. Kirk, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), 228.

⁶⁸³ Hendriksen, *Exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, 376, (emphasis in original).

the children of the covenant who were in possession of the covenant privileges mentioned in Romans 9:4-5, and believes they will be grafted back into their own olive tree.⁶⁸⁴ But according to Hendriksen's Reformed position, Israel will be grafted into the Church. This theology is backward from a historical perspective, much less an exegetical one. The cultivated olive tree (vss. 17, 24) is Israel and the root is Abraham as the bearer of the promise of salvation fulfilled in Christ. Abraham is the elect root of the plant of righteousness (vss. 16, 18).⁶⁸⁵ According to Gaebelien, "The root is the one with whom the covenant was made: Abraham, but not alone he, for the root is threefold, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."⁶⁸⁶ Israel's future and the extension of salvation to the Church are tied in with the ancient promise-plan of God offered first to the patriarchs.⁶⁸⁷ Jewish authors referred to the patriarchs as the root (e.g. I Enoch 93:5, 8), and Paul bases Israel's hope for the future on the patriarchs (Rom. 9:5, 11:25). The idea of the root becomes the full-fledged metaphor of the olive tree in Romans 11:17-24.⁶⁸⁸ The apostle seems to have followed the prophet's lead in comparing the Jewish people to an olive tree. Jewish Christians, by virtue of their ethnic origin, are the natural branches (v. 21). They belong to the olive tree which represent the true people of God by birth (i.e., Jews).⁶⁸⁹ Further, Moo states that the olive tree is a symbol of the people of God – Jew and Gentile alike both in faith.⁶⁹⁰ Moo does seem to imply that the olive tree is Israel; at least at no point does he state that Jews will be

⁶⁸⁴ Hendriksen, *Exposition of Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, 376.

⁶⁸⁵ Hofius, "All Israel Will Be Saved," 32, (see his footnote #80). See I Enoch 93:5.

⁶⁸⁶ Gaebelien, *The Jewish Question*, 68.

⁶⁸⁷ Walter Kaiser, *Back Toward the Future* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 114.

⁶⁸⁸ Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans*, 155.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 156.

incorporated into the Church, but this is not totally clear from his commentary. John Stott acknowledges that the olive tree is a symbol of Israel, but just a few sentences later claims that the olive tree represents the people of God.⁶⁹¹ After concluding that the root of the olive tree refers to the patriarchs (pp. 600-601); the branches refer to ethnic Jews and the Jewish remnant (pp. 604, 606); the olive tree as a symbol refers to Israel in the Old Testament (p. 605); Schreiner then concludes that the olive tree symbolizes the people of God (p. 605).

However, according to David Williams, Paul would not have thought of this olive tree in ecumenical terms. For him it had a quite different significance. Like the fig tree and the vineyard, the olive tree was a symbol of Israel.⁶⁹² In Jeremiah 11:16, the olive tree symbolized the nation of Israel: “The Lord called thy name a green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit...” As an olive tree, the prophet metaphorically spoke of the house of Judah and Israel (Jer. 11:10, 17); the people of Israel (Jer. 11:14); and of God’s beloved (Jer. 11:15). Interestingly, the same terminology used by Paul in Romans 11 is used with reference to the covenant made with the house of Israel and Judah (11:10), the fathers (11:10), and the branches of unbelief and wickedness broken off (Jer.11:16). In Joel 1:5-7, 12, the chosen nation Israel is thought of as first a vine, then a fig tree (v. 12).

In Roman’s 11:28, Paul referenced Israel as “beloved on account of the patriarchs” (NIV). The root is holy and separated, and then so are the branches that spring out of the root (Rom. 11:16). God’s purpose with Israel is that they be a holy, separated people. The root vouches for the final outcome.⁶⁹³ The root here said to be holy is the same as the “fathers” in Romans 11:16-

⁶⁹¹ Stott, *Romans: God’s Good News for the World*, 299.

⁶⁹² Williams, *Paul’s Metaphors*, 41.

⁶⁹³ Gaebelien, *The Jewish Question*, 69.

18, Abraham and others and it is asserted that the same holiness which distinguished the patriarchs also distinguishes their descendants. The holiness here is not a reference to personal holiness, but the consecration arising from God's estimate and act of choice – (i.e. their election).⁶⁹⁴ Some Bible scholars insist that Jesus is the root of the olive tree.⁶⁹⁵ When making this argument, they come close to endorsing supersessionism of which the olive tree then becomes the new Israel, the Church, or Jesus. But Jews will be grafted back into their own tree.⁶⁹⁶

Gentile believers do not stand on their own. They are saved only by being a part of Israel. Israel is still a Jewish tree with Jewish roots. The supersessionist belief that the Church has replaced Israel is precisely the illusion that Paul warns against in Romans 11.⁶⁹⁷

The Church has been grafted onto the tree of salvation whose trunk was Judaism. Such imagery surely implies continued vibrancy for Judaism from a Christian theological perspective. Roman Catholic scholar John Pawlikowski observed, "For if the trunk has died, as has been claimed in the past, the branches can hardly stay healthy."⁶⁹⁸ Scott Bader-Saye affirms, "God's faithfulness to the church is predicated on God's faithfulness to Israel, and the church's own place in the covenant is secure only if Israel remains part of the covenant. The limbs are no sturdier than the trunk that upholds them."⁶⁹⁹

⁶⁹⁴ A. B. Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1912), 485-86.

⁶⁹⁵ This is even the position of Scofield. See Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1204.

⁶⁹⁶ Even progressive covenantalists, Wellum and Gentry admit this. See Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 498-99, 501.

⁶⁹⁷ Gerald McDermott, *Israel Matters* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2017), 28.

⁶⁹⁸ John Pawlikowski, *Jesus and the Theology of Israel* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1989), 12.

⁶⁹⁹ Scott Bader-Saye, *Church and Israel after Christendom* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005), 26.

In Romans 11:25, the word “Israel” clearly refers to the ethnic people of Israel, and there is no indication that Paul redefines the term in verse 26 to mean the Church ... The Church is not in view.⁷⁰⁰ Paul never suggests that Gentiles have displaced Israel or that Israel has no role to play in God’s future. Campbell notes, “There is no clear or explicit evidence prior to Romans 9-11 that suggests either an identification of the Church with the ‘new Israel’ nor of a theory of displacement of the ‘old Israel’ by the new. Only historical Israel can properly claim the title ‘Israel of God.’”⁷⁰¹ Romans 9-11 contains 11 occurrences of the word Israel and in every case it refers to ethnic, or national Israel. Never does the term include Gentiles within its meaning.⁷⁰² John Goldingay admits: “There is, actually, no point in the New Testament where Israel denotes the Church . . . It does not describe the Church as Israel or the New Israel or the true Israel.”⁷⁰³ According to Schreiner, “To see these privileges as passed on to the church badly misconstrues Paul’s argument since his grief is due to the promises made to ethnic Israel.”⁷⁰⁴ Adventist scholar Wilson Paroschi does admit that Romans 11 is referring to ethnic Jews, but he believes that this salvation would most likely come about through the medium of the Church, “if the Gentiles increase their missionary efforts towards them.”⁷⁰⁵ Paroschi is taking the non-dispensational, Reformed position that in reality, ethnic Jews who will be saved in the future will become

⁷⁰⁰ Michael Rydelnik, Michael Vanlaningham, eds., *The Moody Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014), 1764.

⁷⁰¹ W. S. Campbell, “Israel,” in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 442, (emphasis in original).

⁷⁰² Johnson, “Evidence from Romans 9-11,” 203.

⁷⁰³ Goldingay, “The Jews, the Land, and the Kingdom,” 10, (emphasis in original).

⁷⁰⁴ Schreiner, *Romans*, 485.

⁷⁰⁵ Wilson Paroschi, “The Mystery of Israel’s Salvation: A Study of Romans 11:26,” *Ministry Magazine*, (May 2011): 4, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2011/05/the-mystery-of-israel’s-salvation>.

members of the Church, the true people of God.⁷⁰⁶ If one rejects a national restoration of Israel, then this position is the only alternative. Even though the comparative study will show an almost identical agreement with dispensationalists exegetically through a study of Romans 11, Reformed theologians are hesitant to acknowledge a restored, literal, national Israel in fulfillment of prophecy, which has been in existence since 1948.

In sum, historic Israel is portrayed as a cultivated olive tree whose branches (unbelieving Jews) have been cut off. This allows way for the branches of a wild olive tree (Gentiles) to be grafted in with believing Jews. Gentiles have come to share in the riches of God's promises to historic Israel.⁷⁰⁷ Victor Furnish adds, "Paul wasn't thinking of what he or other apostles might be able to accomplish by stepping up their mission to the Gentiles, and then turning to an equally vigorous evangelization of the Jews. Israel's salvation is not the work of the Church but by direct intervention of God Himself."⁷⁰⁸

In Romans 9-11 there is indeed a future in the plan of God for Israel- not a redefined Israel, but an ethnic, national Israel.⁷⁰⁹ The unbelieving branches that have been cut off the olive tree represent ethnic Jews.⁷¹⁰ This is agreed upon by most theologians and biblical scholars.

⁷⁰⁶ Paroschi, "The Mystery of Israel's Salvation," 4.

⁷⁰⁷ Furnish, *Journey Through the Bible (Vol. 14): Romans-Philippians*, 23.

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁹ Craig Blaising, "The Future of Israel as a Theological Question," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44/3 (September 2001): 437.

⁷¹⁰ Schreiner, *Romans*, 604.

“All Israel Shall be Saved” (Romans 11:26)

The statement, “And so all Israel shall be saved. . . ,” (και ουτως πας Ισραηλ σωθησεται), is an expression that has caused unending discussion among Bible students. Barry Horner refers to this passage as the quintessential New Testament passage concerning the future of national Israel.⁷¹¹

There are five possibilities as to the interpretation of the phrase, “All Israel shall be saved:” 1) Paul may mean the nation of Israel and all individuals who belong to it, 2) He may mean the nation as a corporate entity while allowing that individual members may be excluded, 3) He may mean spiritual Israel as referenced in Galatians 6:16, 4) He may mean the elect or remnant of Israel in Romans 9:6 or, 5) He may mean the Church, the elect comprised of both Jew and Gentile.⁷¹²

Of the five, the second option is agreed upon by many scholars, dispensational and non-dispensational. It must be pointed out that Paul is not suggesting the salvation of all Jews any more than he is suggesting the salvation of all Gentiles. In both cases, only some are concerned.⁷¹³ That will be the position that best represents Scofield’s position as well as the scholars who will be used here in agreement of the dispensational position.

There is a parallel in Paul’s phrase here in *Sanhedrin* X.I., which believed that all Israelites have a share in the world to come. This statement is not taken to mean each and every Israelite, as there will be exceptions in the age to come, but it refers to Israel as a whole.⁷¹⁴ Paul may be

⁷¹¹ Barry Horner, *Eternal Israel* (Nashville: Wordsearch Academic, 2018), 244.

⁷¹² Howard Rhys, *The Epistle to the Romans* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), 145.

⁷¹³ Jacques Doukhan, *The Mystery of Israel* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Association, 2004), 69.

⁷¹⁴ C. K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1957), 223-24. See also Abraham Cohen, *Everyman’s Talmud* (New York: Schocken Books, 1949), 368.

using a fixed rabbinical formula that occurs in Jewish literature in the Mishnah, for example, which is a compilation of the Jewish oral law dating from the second century.⁷¹⁵ Even the rabbis who taught that all Israelites have a share in the world to come listed in the next breath numerous categories of sinners who would not.⁷¹⁶ A look at the way the Old Testament uses the phrase “all Israel” almost never refers to every single Israelite but rather a significant number.⁷¹⁷ In other words, the term designates the majority of Jews.⁷¹⁸

From the mid-to-late patristic era to the time of the Reformation the majority view of the Church Fathers and early reformers identified the phrase “all Israel” with the Church.⁷¹⁹ But the idea that Israel in Romans 11:26 refers to the Church has very little basis from an exegetical standpoint.⁷²⁰ Roman Catholic scholar Scott Hahn acknowledges that taking Israel as the Church is contrary to the use of the word in all of Romans and especially Romans 9-11, and Israel is a reference that almost certainly points to ethnic Israel.⁷²¹

Jewish Seventh-Day Adventist scholar Jacques Doukhan clearly believes that there are at least two salvations implied in Romans 11, and the phrase, “All Israel will be saved” has an eschatological connotation. But then he argues that the Israel in view here is a reference to all

⁷¹⁵ Paroschi, “The Mystery of Israel’s Salvation,” 6.

⁷¹⁶ McDermott, *Israel Matters*, 103.

⁷¹⁷ Moo, *Encountering Romans*, 157.

⁷¹⁸ Schreiner, *Romans*, 615.

⁷¹⁹ Hahn, “All Israel Will Be Saved,” 66-67.

⁷²⁰ Paroschi, “The Mystery of Israel’s Salvation,” 2, 5. Paroschi writes: “Though still quite popular in some circles, the idea that Israel in Romans 11:26 refers to the church at large has little if any exegetical warrant. . . Here the term ‘Israel’ indisputably refers to ethnic Israel in each of its occurrences, especially the immediate context in chapter 11, which clearly distinguishes Gentiles from Israel (v. 25).”

⁷²¹ Hahn, “All Israel Will Be Saved,” 68-69.

saved people, Jews and Gentiles who will inherit the kingdom of God. From the perspective of salvation, Gentiles have now joined Jews in becoming Israel.⁷²² Doukhan gives two different meanings to the word, Israel, as many non-dispensationalists do. Throughout the entire section Paul had been comparing Gentile and Jew as separate ethnic groups. It would have been highly unlikely for him to have blurred this crucial distinction when it came time for a summarizing conclusion.⁷²³ Robert Mounce interprets that this salvation refers timewise to a period of Israel's unbelief, a time in the future, a time when Jews would turn to Christ in faith, and at the eschatological coming of the Messiah. However, Mounce does not say that their salvation occurs at church membership, but he is sure to point out that this passage says nothing about the re-establishment of the modern nation of Israel.⁷²⁴

Leon Morris also notes that there is considerable agreement that all Israel does not mean each and every Israelite without exception. The term refers to the nation as a whole. But what seems decisive according to Morris, is the fact that Israel in verse 25 plainly means the nation (it is physical Israel, not spiritual Israel) that is hardened in part. Paul then is affirming that the nation of Israel as a whole will ultimately have its place in God's salvation.⁷²⁵

Matthew Black understands all Israel to refer to the whole nation, ethnic Israelites, and the final salvation of all Israel will be, not on this earth by their inclusion in the Church of Christ, but at the *eschata*, the last judgment. However, on the very next page the same author writes, " By

⁷²² Doukhan, *The Mystery of Israel*, 70-71.

⁷²³ Robert Mounce, *The New American Commentary: Romans* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 224-25.

⁷²⁴ *Ibid.*, 225.

⁷²⁵ Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), 420.

the removal of Jacob's sin, Jacob, who is Israel will, finally, at the Parousia, be brought within the new covenant community of the Christian church."⁷²⁶ Black seems to confirm that this salvation described by Paul is future and will occur at the second coming of Jesus (Parousia), even if he espouses that Jews will become members of the Church, which in itself is backward but it does give some credibility to Scofield's teaching that Israel's salvation would take place at the said time. C. K. Barrett also confirms the eschatological aspect of Israel's salvation, and the unlikelihood that Israelites would become members of the Christian community:

It is no doubt true that Paul expected the full eschatological end to fall within his own generation but it seems in the highest degree unlikely that he actually contemplated a successful operation of rapid missionary work, culminating, in the very near future, in the conversion of every single Jew. He is, rather, speaking of the end, of that which is beyond history and beyond all understanding of God, all in all, the merciful God.⁷²⁷

Grant Osborne at least refers to Israel's future salvation to take place at the Parousia: all Israel refers not to the Jewish people down through the ages but to the nation at the end of history who will be saved . . . Israel will experience a national revival and come to Christ. The Jewish people will realize who Christ is, repent of their transgressions and hardness, and be restored to the covenant."⁷²⁸ Osborne also notes, "Since the restoration of Israel will be at the end of history, the life from the dead must follow that and occur at the eschaton."⁷²⁹ According to Osborne, Paul tells us what, but not how Israel will be saved. We will have to leave the method up to God.⁷³⁰ "The text clearly does not detail how this will come about but rather promises the

⁷²⁶ Matthew Black, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1973), 160-61.

⁷²⁷ Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 226-27.

⁷²⁸ Grant Osborne, *Romans* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004). 306.

⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷³⁰ *Ibid.*, 308.

event itself with the Isaianic quote in verses 26-27 indicating that it will be connected to the Parousia of Christ.”⁷³¹ According to Moo, “Since we are justified in thinking that Paul builds his teaching here on apocalyptic, a reference to resurrection at the end of history seems likely.”⁷³² Hofius places Israel’s salvation in the future at the general resurrection of the dead, and he notes that the Israel here refers to Israel which at the present time does not yet believe in Christ and thus does not yet participate in salvation.⁷³³ It is very important to note that Osborne places this salvation and conversion of Israel at the Parousia, and not through Church entrance when he concludes, “All we can know is that it will happen, not how it fits into other details.”⁷³⁴ Osborne’s belief here is that Israel’s salvation will take place at the second coming of Christ, a belief consistent with Scofield and almost all other dispensationalists.

Likewise, Reformed scholar Leon Morris adds: “Paul is talking about the place of the nation in God’s plan, and not the fate of individuals. The reference is to the nation, not the remnant.”⁷³⁵ Paul is referring to the nation in its capacity as the covenant people, the people of God.⁷³⁶ Many theologians are in agreement that the reference to Israel in Romans 9-11 is national in scope. Non-Reformed scholars such as Grant Osborne and Millard J. Erickson also argue that Israel in Romans 9-11 constitutes a nation.⁷³⁷ Erickson uses the word national Israel on three separate

⁷³¹ Osborne, *Romans*, 306.

⁷³² Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 696.

⁷³³ Hofius, “All Israel will be Saved,” 35-36.

⁷³⁴ Osborne, *Romans*, 306, 308.

⁷³⁵ Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 423.

⁷³⁶ *Ibid.*, 345.

⁷³⁷ See also Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 1053.

occasions. Osborne adds: “The progression of thought requires that Israel’s salvation should be understood synchronically to refer at the end of history and occurs after the full number of the Gentiles has come in, referring to the end of the Gentile mission.”⁷³⁸

If there is a salvation for a national or literal Israel, then there must be a nation or people in existence at the time of this occurrence and this strongly argues that Israel and the Church are entirely distinct entities – a confession to which Ladd himself acknowledges is a distinctive of dispensationalism.⁷³⁹ Not only does it imply that a national Israel will be in existence at the time of Christ’s return, but it also implies that the plan for Israel (ethnic Jews) is distinct from the Gentiles as discussed in Romans 11. Herman Hoyt points out that Ladd shifts from spiritualizing Old Testament passages which he claims apply to the Church, but then shifts to interpreting Romans 11 literally in which he clearly distinguishes God’s plan for Israel and the Jews distinct from the Gentiles.⁷⁴⁰

Grant Osborne in his commentary completely avoids the debate over Israel’s current existence as a nation, but if one were to summarize his conclusive points, or his agreements with dispensationalism, it might be as follows:

- Israel is still the elect of God: “There is no truth in the notion that the church has replaced Israel” (p. 303).⁷⁴¹
- Israel is a reference to ethnic Jews (not the Church or all believers) (pp. 305-6).

⁷³⁸ Osborne, *Romans*, 307.

⁷³⁹ Ladd, “Historic Premillennialism,” 19.

⁷⁴⁰ Herman Hoyt, “A Dispensational Premillennial Response” in *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views*, Robert G. Clouse, ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977), 43.

⁷⁴¹ Osborne writes, “Throughout the Old Testament, Israel is the chosen people because of God’s unswerving love for them . . . So even though many have rejected Christ and become his enemies, God’s love is still upon the nation. It is interesting that this love is with them on account of the patriarchs” (p. 309). Note Osborne’s reference to Israel as a nation.

- Israel's salvation refers to the end of history in the future (p. 306).
- Israel's salvation will take place at the second coming of Jesus Christ (p. 307).
- It is not known how this will take place, so he does not make that claim exegetically according to the passage; Osborne does rule out that it will be through Israel's entrance into the Church (p. 308).
- Osborne uses the very same identical words that Scofield, Vlach, and other dispensationalists use to refer to Israel's salvation: "This refers to the conversion of the people" (p. 307) and, "It will be consummated in the restoration and conversion of Israel at the second coming" (p. 308).
- It will follow the Gentile's salvation, privilege, time, and blessing (p. 306).

All Israel Shall Be Saved ... But How?

Romans 11:25-26 certainly deal with Israel's salvation but the question is does it deal with Israel's national restoration. In this chapter Paul has been speaking about the setting aside of Israel as a nation, so it follows that the restoration of Israel will be as a nation.⁷⁴² Paul explicitly states that in verse 26 where he returns to the inclusion of unbelieving, ethnic Jews into their own tree. It is not the Gentiles who are yet to be grafted into the tree at a future time (they already have been), but unbelieving Jews. The Israel that is to be saved cannot be the Church; Gentiles are already saved. Israel's salvation by Paul cannot be anything but future at the time of Paul's writing here, "All Israel shall be..." Scofield confirmed this: "During this age, only the Jewish remnant will accept Christ, as there is a veil over the heart of the nation, but when Christ returns in glory, Israel will repent and turn to the Lord (Zech. 12:10)."⁷⁴³

⁷⁴² Charles Ryrie, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith* (Neptune: Loizeaux Brothers, 1953), 72.

⁷⁴³ C. I. Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield's Question Box* (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1917), 119.

Paul suggested that Jews who do not accept the gospel, no less than Gentiles who do, contribute to the outworking of God's purposes. Unbelieving Jews are still God's people (11:1-2) and Paul remained confident about their salvation (11:26-32). He neither called down God's wrath on their unbelief nor presumed that the Church must try to evangelize them. Their salvation is in God's hands, and it will be by God's grace.⁷⁴⁴ The answer Furnish gives here seems to agree with Scofield's position that, 1) Paul is not referring to the salvation of the Jews as coming through the Church throughout the course of history as much of Reformed Theology has taught in the past and, 2) that Israel's salvation is due to a supernatural act of God, not accomplished by evangelistic effort or techniques. Furnish does not adamantly state that, yet that is most consistent with the teaching of dispensationalists regarding Israel's national salvation and restoration at the end of the age. If one rejects a national restoration and salvation through God's supernatural intervention as the second coming promise suggests, the only other alternative is to place the salvation of the Jews through church membership or a massive conversion of Jews at the Parousia. Israel's salvation at the Parousia is a fact agreed upon by most Reformed theologians and non-dispensationalists. However, in their theology, this massive conversion will be through the Church, considered to be the true people of God, the olive tree. Israel will metamorphosize into the Church.

W. S. Campbell argues for a future salvation for Israel in line with other non-dispensationalists and even admits that Israel cannot achieve her restoration until the fullness of the Gentiles and the Gentiles cannot participate in the resurrection without the prior restoration of Israel.⁷⁴⁵

⁷⁴⁴ Furnish, *Journey Through the Bible (Vol. 14): Romans-Philippians*, 26.

⁷⁴⁵ Campbell, "Israel," 445.

However, the entry by Campbell in *The Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* does not explain just how Israel's salvation will take place, but does suggest that, "Despite Israel's obduracy, the ongoing historical process of the Gentile mission will continue until their number is complete – perhaps when the gospel has been 'planted' everywhere."⁷⁴⁶ This suggestion is not conclusive of just how Israel's salvation could take place as it is vague enough to imply a national restoration supernaturally at God's disposal, or a conversion through the medium of the Church. The article evades the question about a modern-day Israel altogether, but does acknowledge that, "We dare not insist that everything that happens in this world is directly caused by God, but it would be naïve to suggest it is merely an accident of history that the historical people of God, the Jewish race, should continue to exist alongside Christianity."⁷⁴⁷ Like Goldingay's suggestion, it may be a supernatural act of God, at least it is not ruling out that possibility.⁷⁴⁸ A. B. Davidson admits that the passage does not deal much with the means or agencies employed by God for bringing these great results about.⁷⁴⁹

Reformed author Keith Mathison illustrates the best understanding of this contradictory reasoning. He understands the term "Israel" to have various meanings within the same passage in Romans 11 (e.g. there is literal Israel, national Israel, spiritual Israel, true Israel etc.).⁷⁵⁰

⁷⁴⁶ Campbell, "Israel," 445, (emphasis in original).

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid., 446.

⁷⁴⁸ See Goldingay, "The Jews, the Land, and the Kingdom, 22. See also John Goldingay, "Israel," in *New Dictionary of Theology*, Sinclair B. Ferguson, David F. Wright, J. I. Packer, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 345.

⁷⁴⁹ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 479.

⁷⁵⁰ Even Otfried Hofius gives the word Israel different meanings in the passage (e.g., there is Israel the people versus Israel the community of salvation (i.e., the elect). Hofius further refers to the community of God as the true Israel (see Hofius, 29, 31). Also, Wayne Grudem in his *Systematic Theology* claims that the true children of Abraham, those who are in the most true sense Israel, are not the nation of Israel by physical descent from Abraham

Mathison never states that national Israel will be incorporated into the Church at the end time, but he does acknowledge that “As with the view that understands all Israel to be the Church, there is truth in this interpretation.”⁷⁵¹ Then he confuses the situation further by stating that, “The Jews who are being saved in the present age are not any different than the Jews who are to be saved in the future.”⁷⁵² Then Mathison clearly notes, “The problem with this interpretation... is that it conflicts with the immediate context.”⁷⁵³ This is a contradiction. But in the end, the Reformed interpretation is apparent that when Israel repents, Israel herself will be regrafted into the people of God as well.⁷⁵⁴ The restoration of the nation Israel will mean their becoming part of the true Israel which is the Church. Physical Israel of the Old Testament will be restored to spiritual Israel, the Church. Strangely, in this case, Mathison only sees the unbelieving Jews as the nation. But Israel will cease to be a nation again when it becomes merged with the people of God. If, as Mathison had already stated, “The Jews who are being saved in the present age are not any different than the Jews who are to be saved in the future,” then one would have to question the whole emphasis on the national aspect and the necessity of insisting on the national. Mathison believes that the promises made to the nation need to be fulfilled as he is rightly concerned about that,⁷⁵⁵ but if his views are consistent with non-dispensational eschatology, then there would be no national promises left (e.g. a king, a land, boundaries, dominance over the

but those who have believed in Christ.” See Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 861; and Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1053.

⁷⁵¹ Mathison, *From Age to Age*, 578.

⁷⁵² Ibid.

⁷⁵³ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid., 702-3.

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid., 583. “God has made promises, and those promises cannot be revoked,” he writes.

nations) as these are all being fulfilled in the Church or they will be, so Mathison's concern is a moot point if all of Israel's promises are to be allegorized in the Church.⁷⁵⁶

It is inconsistent to keep the spiritual covenant (Israel's salvation) but reject the physical covenants (i.e., the land, king, kingdom, earthly rule). Kaiser asks, "Will Israel yet enjoy all the promises made to her by so many of the prophets, or will she continue only as a race but not as a nation?"⁷⁵⁷ However, Mathison's "Israel" is still different enough to be considered a nation by Mathison, but distinctiveness will end when Israel is assimilated back into the Church, the real people of God. This is of vital importance and a major point as it shows that even a Reformed scholar makes a necessary distinction between Israel and the Church, which is the very essence of dispensationalism. Many Reformed theologians in reality argue for the continued existence of the race of ethnic Jews as that is the consensus among Reformed and non-dispensationalists today. They are consistent in their belief that a race of ethnic Jews will be saved at the end. At the same time, they argue for a national existence in Romans 11. However, there will be no national existence in the normal sense of the word. Hvalvik acknowledges: "As to the meaning of 'all Israel,' there is today almost general agreement that 'Israel' here refers to the Jewish people, and 'all' must be taken in the proper meaning of the word, 'Israel as a whole, Israel as a nation,' and not as necessarily including every individual Israelite."⁷⁵⁸ One would have to ask the question that if the Jews or Israel have been replaced as a result of punitive supersessionism, then

⁷⁵⁶ How is a nation defined? Broadly speaking, a nation is defined as "a community of people composed of one or more nationalities and possessing a more or less defined territory and government" or "a territorial division containing a body of people of one or more nationalities and usually characterized by relatively large size and independent status." The Church has never qualified as a nation, nor does it have a national status. See Henry Bosley Woolf, *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield: G & C Merriam Company, 1979), 758.

⁷⁵⁷ Kaiser, *Back Toward the Future*, 108.

⁷⁵⁸ Hvalvik, "A 'Sonderweg' for Israel," 100, (emphasis in original).

why must there still be a place in God's plan and purposes for them, and furthermore, why they would need to be saved, or why would it be necessary for God to fulfill his covenants with them as Romans 11:27 makes plain? It is true that individual Jews are being saved, but the rest are not and that is the reason for Paul's argument. It would seem that the national promises would be irrelevant if there will be no restoration of a literal nation.

Otfried Hofius has attempted to address the manner of Israel's salvation which few have attempted to do.⁷⁵⁹ Grant Osborne admitted that the manner was not revealed but he did admit that it was not through the medium of the Church and it was within God's action, implying a supernatural act of God.⁷⁶⁰ Victor Paul Furnish, New Testament Professor Emeritus at Southern Methodist University also hinted at the same.⁷⁶¹ However, the suggestion by Hofius is quite unique for a non-dispensationalist, and it is close to that of Scofield's even arriving at the same conclusion as Scofield, that Israel's salvation will come, not through the medium of the Church, but directly by Christ himself at the second coming, another fact accepted by most of the scholars consulted in this dissertation.

George Eldon Ladd notes, "The New Testament does not give any details of Israel's conversion and role in the millennium. So, a non-dispensational eschatology simply affirms the future salvation of Israel and remains open to God's future as to the details."⁷⁶² Robert Gundry confirms that Israel's salvation will take place at the return of Christ: "All Israel will yet be

⁷⁵⁹ Hofius, "All Israel Will be Saved," 36.

⁷⁶⁰ Osborne, *Romans*, 306, 308.

⁷⁶¹ Furnish, *Journey Through the Bible (Vol. 14): Romans-Philippians*, 25-26.

⁷⁶² Ladd, "Historic Premillennialism," 28.

saved, that is, those Jews who are still living at the return of Christ will accept his messiahship and as a result receive salvation.”⁷⁶³

Israel’s future salvation as a nation has been compared with Paul’s own salvation experience on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). Their salvation will be to missionary service. Regarding I Corinthians 15:8, Scofield saw the Apostle Paul’s conversion as a preview or down-payment of Israel’s national conversion:

‘One born before the due time,’ Paul thinks of himself here as an Israelite whose time to be born again had not come nationally (cf. Matt. 23:39), so that his conversion by the appearing of the Lord in glory (Acts 9:3-6) was an illustration, or instance before the time, of the future national conversion of Israel (see Ezek. 20:35-38; Hos. 2:14-17; Zech. 12:10 – 13:6; Rom. 11:25-27).⁷⁶⁴

Paul was converted by the personal ministry of the ascended and glorified Christ. In this Paul is a type of the future conversion of Israel which will be the work of the glorified Christ at his coming.⁷⁶⁵ George Eldon Ladd agrees with Scofield. Even though not directly argued, a supernatural salvation of national Israel is hinted at by a number of non-dispensational scholars like Grant Osborne, Victor Paul Furnish, George Eldon Ladd, Leon Morris, Matthew Black, A. B. Davidson, Robert Mathison, Robert Mounce, C. K. Barrett, Douglas Moo, Thomas Schreiner, Craig Keener and others as has been previously noted. Hofius notes, “If therefore, Israel gets the gospel through a direct encounter with Christ himself, confesses Christ as the Kyrios, and comes to faith in him unto salvation, *then Israel comes to faith in the same way as Paul himself!* . . .

⁷⁶³ Robert Gundry, *A Survey of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 386.

⁷⁶⁴ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1226.

⁷⁶⁵ C. I. Scofield, *No Room in the Inn and Other Interpretations*, Mary Emily Reily, ed. (Greenville, SC: The Gospel Hour, Inc., 1941), 105-6.

Paul recognizes and understands himself to be a prototype of the Israel which is closed to the gospel and not abandoned by the electing God.”⁷⁶⁶

It is important to point out that Israel is saved in a different way than Gentile Christians and the Jews in remnant which were already believers in Christ.⁷⁶⁷ Israel’s salvation will not occur through the evangelistic preaching of the gospel throughout the course of Church history, nor will it come about through an end-time evangelistic proclamation of the gospel to Israel by the Church.⁷⁶⁸

“The Deliverer” (Romans 11:26)

Paul’s reference to the deliverer (Romans 11:26) has been taken to be a reference to the Messiah. Two aspects of this salvation are specifically mentioned: God will turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and he will take away their sins. The deliverer is surely a reference to Jesus the Messiah and some have taken this deliverance to refer to the first coming of Christ but the future tense of *apostreso* and the context must mean that this salvation has yet to occur. That is the whole point of the passage; Israel is outside of the kingdom. By the promised coming of the Messiah (i.e. the deliverer) Paul understood to refer to the Parousia of Christ, which is strictly an eschatological event.⁷⁶⁹ The reference to the redeemer or deliverer who will come from Zion points to our Lord’s second coming, not his first coming.⁷⁷⁰ What is important to note as Kaiser does, that the covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 (which Paul quotes here in reference to Israel’s

⁷⁶⁶ Hofius, “All Israel Will Be Saved,” 37, (emphasis in original).

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁸ Hofius, “All Israel Will Be Saved,” 36-37.

⁷⁶⁹ C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark Limited, 1979), 578.

⁷⁷⁰ Craig Keener, *Romans* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2009), 137-38.

future salvation) is the very context in which God promised to restore Israel to her land once more.⁷⁷¹ The reference to Jacob in Romans 11:28, “The Deliverer... will banish ungodliness from Jacob” must certainly refer to ethnic Israel and not to the Church.⁷⁷² Hvalvik agrees the term Jacob means Israel as a people, not the Church including Jews and Gentiles.⁷⁷³ There have been some who believe that Israel’s salvation is apart from Christ himself and the necessity of faith, but Paul shows how he interprets the salvation of the Jews; it means salvation from sin and ungodliness, when God shall take away their sins.⁷⁷⁴ The non-believing Jews will be grafted in if they do not persist in their unbelief. Faith in Christ is the only way to salvation, and that includes the Jews as well. Israel’s salvation is so closely connected with the Gentile mission which shows that the salvation of Israel does not take place separately apart from faith in Christ.⁷⁷⁵

Israel’s salvation has been suggested either one of two ways as noted by Keener: “First, when Jesus as the deliverer returns, Israel as a whole, on learning of his identity, will believe in him as their king truly appointed by God. The language could certainly be so construed; Paul’s citation sounds like Jesus’ return would precipitate their forgiveness (11:26-27).”⁷⁷⁶ Secondly, the completion of the Gentile mission in Romans 11:25 would in turn lead to the Jewish people turning to Christ first, thus precipitating his return. Paul expects the obedience of a number of Gentiles from the nations to the God of Israel to provoke Israel to jealousy, then to turn to Jesus,

⁷⁷¹ Kaiser, *Back Toward the Future*, 115.

⁷⁷² Hahn, “All Israel Will Be Saved,” 69.

⁷⁷³ Hvalvik, “A ‘Sonderweg’ for Israel,” 92.

⁷⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁷⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 194.

⁷⁷⁶ Keener, *Romans*, 137.

bringing about the promised restoration. Keener believed this to be the best interpretation of the context.⁷⁷⁷

Scotfield seemed to allude to Israel's repentance first, followed by Christ's return when he wrote, "The three 'untils' of Israel's blessing are: 1) Israel must say, 'Blessed is He,' (Matt. 23:39, Rom. 10:3-4), 2) Gentile world- power must run its course (Luke 21:24, Dan. 2:34-35), and 3) the elect number of the Gentiles must be brought in. *Then*, 'the Deliverer shall come out of Zion' etc."⁷⁷⁸ The time when the Redeemer shall come to Zion is fixed according to Romans 11:23-29 and follows the completion of the Gentile Church.⁷⁷⁹

According to Hofius, the salvation of all Israel will take place at the return of Jesus Christ, and through Christ himself.⁷⁸⁰ Even more specifically, Israel will hear the gospel from the mouth of Christ himself at his return –the saving word of his self-revelation which effects the faith that takes hold of divine salvation.⁷⁸¹ Hofius notes, "The Israel which will meet Christ at his return will thus believe in *him* and will call upon *his* name, confessing him as *Kyrios Iesus*, and thereby take hold of *salvation* . . . 'All Israel' is saved directly by the Lord himself."⁷⁸²

For Paul, Israel's deliverer is certainly Jesus Christ, and the reference is to his second coming, which is supplied by the context. Schreiner seems to imply that Israel's future salvation

⁷⁷⁷ Keener, *Romans*, 138.

⁷⁷⁸ Scotfield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1032, (emphasis in original). According to the prophets of the Old Testament, "Repentance . . . could effect a drastic turn in Israel's fortunes and redirect the forces of history for the shaping of the new order. That order would be geographically located in this world with Jerusalem as the religious center. To her the nations would turn in order to acquire a knowledge of the Lord." – C. Hassell Bullock, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 20.

⁷⁷⁹ Scotfield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 765.

⁷⁸⁰ Hofius, "All Israel Will Be Saved," 36.

⁷⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, (emphasis in original).

will be based on God's electing purpose since they are the elect. God will save them supernaturally. He writes, "Thus Jesus will remove the unbelief from Israel and grant them faith when he returns. The work of Israel's conversion is a divine work, and this accords with the last two lines of the Old Testament citation."⁷⁸³ Regarding the manner of their salvation, God will grant them faith at the proper time according to Schreiner.

"Life From the Dead" (Romans 11:15)

According to Walter Kaiser, the phrase "life from the dead," is the very figure that the prophet Ezekiel used to refer to the re-establishment of the Jewish people in the land of Israel as Ezekiel promises in Ezekiel 37:12-14.⁷⁸⁴ Kaiser writes, "Therefore, it would be only fair to conclude that Paul was referring to the re-establishment of Israel as God's people in the land again when he mentioned that Israel's acceptance of her Messiah in the end times will mean life from the dead."⁷⁸⁵ This figure of life from the dead could be taken in a spiritual sense, or a figurative one. Kaiser notes that many take the phrase "life from the dead" literally, to refer to the general resurrection at the end of time, in other words a physical resurrection from the dead. For example, Moo believes the phrase refers to a literal resurrection of the dead during the eschaton, so Israel's salvation and re-acceptance is an eschatological event.⁷⁸⁶ Jewish scholar Jon Levenson observes that Ezekiel 37 does not connect the envisioned resurrection of the nation with a last judgment, such as the one mentioned in Daniel 12:2 in which the dead awake "some

⁷⁸³ Schreiner, *Romans*, 620.

⁷⁸⁴ Kaiser, *Back Toward the Future*, 115. Ezekiel 37 will be addressed in the next chapter.

⁷⁸⁵ Kaiser, "An Assessment of Replacement Theology," 12.

⁷⁸⁶ Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans*, 154-55.

to everlasting life,” and “some to everlasting shame and contempt.” The vision focuses exclusively on the nation and not on individuals who comprise it in any given generation.⁷⁸⁷ The very fact that there is no judgment mentioned here would give credence to the possibility that it is only concerned with the national status. Israel is being saved, not judged. When one reads that the Lord will open the graves it means that he is bringing his people back from their graves of which they had been scattered among the nations, where they are buried nationally.⁷⁸⁸ This passage could be cited with other passages in which physical resurrection is used to symbolize the spiritual and national revival of Israel. Life from the dead means that spiritually and nationally Israel will live again and it refers to the rebirth of the nation.⁷⁸⁹ Scofield interprets the phrase “life from the dead” by referencing Ezekiel 37:1-14, Hosea 6:1-3, and Isaiah 26:16-19 in the margin of his reference Bible. These are passages he believed to refer to Israel’s national restoration.⁷⁹⁰

But according to Stott, life from the dead would be a most unusual expression for physical resurrection, especially when the word *anastasis* was a term more readily at hand, and it is doubtful that Paul thought his own ministry to Jews and Gentiles would trigger the Parousia and resurrection.⁷⁹¹ Ladd suggests that Israel’s future salvation will issue a new order of blessedness and happiness for the world at large which is likened to the emergence of life from the dead.⁷⁹²

⁷⁸⁷ Jon D. Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 163.

⁷⁸⁸ Gaebelain, *The Jewish Question*, 57.

⁷⁸⁹ Sibley, “Has the Church Put Israel on the Shelf,” 578.

⁷⁹⁰ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1205.

⁷⁹¹ Stott, *Romans: God’s Good News for the World*, 298.

⁷⁹² George Eldon Ladd, “Is there a Future for Israel,” *Eternity* (May 1964), 28.

“The New Covenant” (Romans 11:27)

Jeremiah 31:31 reads: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah...”⁷⁹³ According to Scofield, the new covenant secures the perpetuity, future conversion, and blessing of Israel and rests upon an accomplished redemption.⁷⁹⁴ Paul’s authority is in the Scriptures (“Just as it has been written”) and he quotes Isaiah 59:20-21 to prove Israel’s deliverance. Paul may also have in mind Jeremiah 31:31 which mentions the covenant that God made with the nation, specifically Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The term “for the father’s sake” is also a reference to the patriarchs in Romans 11:28. The most important point to remember is that Romans 11:26b–27 consists of quotations from Isaiah 59:20-21, and Jeremiah 31:33-34. In their Old Testament setting, these verses applied to the new covenant and to God’s restoration of Israel to the promised land covenant.⁷⁹⁵

According to the writer of Hebrews, the new covenant is not made with the Church, the elect, the faithful, or the spiritual; it was made with Northern and Southern Kingdoms (Heb. 8:8). A. B. Davidson believed that the spiritual aspect of the New Covenant as described in Jeremiah 31 will be fulfilled, but not the literal land promise: He wrote, “The Abrahamic covenant is a purely spiritual instrument, contemplating at the time when it comes into operation, namely, in Christ and Christianity, purely spiritual ends.”⁷⁹⁶ Ironically, Davidson questions his own conclusion: “How, on such a view, are the other stipulations and promises of the covenant, such

⁷⁹³ Holy Bible, *New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983), 881.

⁷⁹⁴ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1297.

⁷⁹⁵ Kaiser, *Back Toward the Future*, 114.

⁷⁹⁶ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 495, 497.

as the heritage of the land, to be explained?”⁷⁹⁷ But this does not change his conclusion to be exact – the prophecies are to be taken allegorically.

Israel’s covenant with the Messiah is yet to be accomplished and that only when their iniquity has been purged by the return of the Messiah.⁷⁹⁸ The promises and the covenants mentioned in Romans 9:4-5 refer to the pledge of future promises involved in the taking away of their sins and eschatological blessings for Israel.⁷⁹⁹ The period of the new covenant is vitally linked with the restoration of Israel to her land. According to Romans 11:26-27, Paul notes that the fulfillment of the new covenant was still future at the time of the writing of Romans. Paul mentions the covenant made with Israel in the Old Testament and it is unlikely that any Jew would have allegorized Israel’s promises in the Old Testament regarding the land and national existence over to the Church. Israel as a people will be saved and will finally experience the ultimate enjoyment of the land reaching to the full extent of the boundaries promised in the book of Genesis (Gen. 15:18-21).⁸⁰⁰

“The Mystery” (Romans 11:25)

Romans 11:25 reads: “I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.”⁸⁰¹ In the Old Testament and second temple literature a “mystery” refers to

⁷⁹⁷ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 495.

⁷⁹⁸ Ryrie, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith*, 110.

⁷⁹⁹ Schreiner, *Romans*, 485.

⁸⁰⁰ Kaiser, *Back Toward the Future*, 115. See also Horner, *Future Israel*, 233.

⁸⁰¹ Holy Bible, *New International Version* (East Brunswick, NJ: International Bible Society, 1984), 1039.

a secret element of God's plan that has been hidden from human beings but has now been revealed.⁸⁰²

The salvation that Israel will experience is not actually a mystery *per se*, for Paul goes back to the Bible to prove it (e.g., Jer. 31:31). The mystery is that part of Israel will experience a hardening while God's purpose is being worked out among the Gentiles, who have been included in God's plan. The Church is called a mystery as there is no mention of it in the Old Testament. As a mystery, it is being revealed by God to Paul as he writes, "This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 3:6).⁸⁰³ Scofield wrote extensively about the Church being a mystery. Ladd admits along with Scofield that the Old Testament does not predict the Church age.⁸⁰⁴ Likewise does Millard J. Erickson.⁸⁰⁵ The Church is first mentioned in Scripture by Christ himself in Matthew 16:18, and Jesus does not mention the Church until the rejection by Israel of the kingdom of heaven of which he as king has been rejected. He then announces a purpose hitherto hidden in God (Eph. 3:9-10).⁸⁰⁶ The Church, the body of Christ of which Jesus is the head was formed by the baptism with the Spirit on the day of Pentecost and began the building of itself through the testimony that Jesus was both Lord and Christ (Acts

⁸⁰² Schreiner, *Romans*, 613.

⁸⁰³ Holy Bible, *New International Version* (East Brunswick, NJ: International Bible Society, 1973), 1072. See C. I. Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 26-28; *What Do the Prophets Say*, 102-3; *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1252.

⁸⁰⁴ Ladd, "Historic Premillennialism," 39.

⁸⁰⁵ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1058.

⁸⁰⁶ C. I. Scofield, *Things Old and New* (New York: Our Hope Publication Office, 1920), 258-59.

2:36).⁸⁰⁷ Part of the mystery is the time element; the salvation of the Gentiles will take place prior to and will be a condition for the salvation of all Israel.⁸⁰⁸

Moo agrees with Scofield that the word “mystery” has the sense of a purpose of God that previously had not been revealed (Scofield would argue the entire Church age), but “probably it refers to the process of Jewish hardening followed by Gentile salvation followed by Jewish salvation.”⁸⁰⁹ Scofield believed that the Church was a parenthesis between Israel’s rejection and re-acceptance by God. However, Moo does not refer to this salvation of the Gentiles as an interval or parenthesis.

The meaning of the term “fullness of the Gentiles” (Rom. 11:25) cannot have a different sense from the meaning of the term, “fullness of the Jews” (v. 12). There the phrase denotes the mass of the Jewish nation, as distinguished from the small believing remnant of Jews at the present time of Paul’s writing. The fullness of the Gentiles must mean the mass of the Gentile believers who will be saved out from the Gentile world.⁸¹⁰

The same timetable can be seen in Jesus’ prediction that “. . . Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24b). The *New Living Translation* translates this phrase, “Until the age of the Gentiles comes to an end.”⁸¹¹ Even though this phrase, “times of the Gentiles” is not referencing the salvation nor the evangelization of the Gentiles as Romans 11:25 does, it does imply strongly that God’s timetable with his

⁸⁰⁷ Scofield, *Things Old and New*, 262.

⁸⁰⁸ Hvalvik, “A ‘Sonderweg’ for Israel,” 99.

⁸⁰⁹ Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans*, 156.

⁸¹⁰ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 482.

⁸¹¹ Holy Bible, *New Living Translation* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1996), 1058.

chosen nation Israel will coincide with his plan and purpose for the nations which are separate from Israel.⁸¹²

A Direct Comparison of Scofield with Non-Dispensationalists

In addition to the agreements with Scofield already presented throughout the chapter, the following will be a sampling of agreements with Scofield's position from non-dispensationalists of the past and present specifically: George Eldon Ladd, Otfried Hofius, A. B. Davidson, Millard J. Erickson, Wayne Grudem, John Goldingay, Douglas Moo, Craig Keener and Thomas Schreiner. As will be noted, the only real contrast between the positions taught by these men and Scofield will be a literal, restored Israel in fulfillment of Bible prophecy which does exist today as Scofield taught.

A. B. Davidson (1831-1902)

Professor Andrew Bruce Davidson was born in Scotland in 1831, was an ordained minister in the Free Church of Scotland and served as a professor of Hebrew and oriental languages at the University of Edinburgh where he was educated. His *magnum opus* work was titled *Old Testament Prophecy*, nearly 500 pages in length. The book was published in 1912, years after he died in 1902. This critique was chosen because it perfectly portrays non-dispensationalism's dilemma with the nation of Israel in the interpretation of prophetic passages. The last chapter of his book is titled, "The Restoration of the Jews."⁸¹³ It must be pointed out that Professor Davidson died in 1902 and never witnessed the establishment of the nation of Israel in 1948. A

⁸¹² Kaiser, *Back Toward the Future*, 114.

⁸¹³ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 468-500.

comparative approach with Scofield will be utilized to show much agreement exists with dispensationalism in spite of his contradictory conclusion.⁸¹⁴

According to Davidson, the order of the events described in Romans 11 is identical to Scofield's. The order of events should be: 1) The rejection of the Jew in order to receive the fullness of the Gentiles, 2) The fullness of the Gentiles in order for the receiving again of the Jew and, 3) The receiving of the Jew and then life from the dead.⁸¹⁵ He wrote that the apostle is explicit as to the conversion of the Jews but he is silent as to their restoration to Canaan. He notes, "Paul only argues for the spiritual effects: he infers the conversion of Israel, but not one word escapes him about their restoration to Canaan."⁸¹⁶

Davidson acknowledges that Old Testament prophecies should be taken literally as that is the way the readers would have taken them, and that is the way the apostles would have interpreted them adding, "There are many express predictions in the Old Testament, and some in the New, that the Jews as a nation shall occupy their ancient land."⁸¹⁷ He also adds:

Now, if we open the Old Testament anywhere, particularly in the prophetic books, there is hardly a passage which speaks of Israel, and promises redemption or any future blessing, which does not predict for them restoration to their own land. Such passages are both numerous and distinct . . . They predict in the most unmistakable manner the restoration of Israel to Canaan at some time in the Messianic Age.⁸¹⁸

Further, "Any hermeneutic which goes so far as to eliminate from the prophecies of the Old Testament which refer to New Testament times, the natural race of Abraham, seems to go

⁸¹⁴ Bernard Ramm heavily utilized Davidson's work in his chapter on the interpretation of prophecy. See Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970), 241-75.

⁸¹⁵ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 478-79.

⁸¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 498, 493, respectively.

⁸¹⁷ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 472.

⁸¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 474-75.

against the methods of interpretation applied by the apostles.”⁸¹⁹ He fully recognizes that if taken literally, the prophecies do in fact speak of a national restoration as there are many such passages.⁸²⁰

Israel’s restoration requires consideration of the principles on which the answer turns, and that is on the interpretation of Scripture.⁸²¹ But Davidson acknowledges that the name Israel cannot be idealized into the abstraction Church; that is a modern way of thinking unfamiliar to Scripture.⁸²² Then he claims that Israel spoken of in the Old Testament is the Church begun and permanently established in that race. Israel is the root and the beginning of a Church.⁸²³

In referencing the Jews, the race descended ethnically from Abraham, Davidson writes, “God founded a Church in Abraham,” and, “These redemptive acts, done in connection with this race were done once for all. God did not do the same acts over again with any other race – for example, at the founding of the New Testament Church” (p. 478). Here, Davidson states that the Church began in the New Testament, but he had previously stated that Israel was the beginning of the Church in Abraham (pp. 477-78). This means that if the New Testament Church began in Acts, then one must admit to two peoples of God.⁸²⁴

⁸¹⁹ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 477. See also Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, 55; Bernard L. Ramm, ed., *Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987), 98.

⁸²⁰ *Ibid.*, 475. See Chapter Four, pages 130-133.

⁸²¹ *Ibid.*, 474.

⁸²² *Ibid.*, 477-78.

⁸²³ *Ibid.*

⁸²⁴ Davidson seems to admit of Scofield’s very argument, that Israel is the earthly people of God, and the Church is the heavenly people of God. See Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., 1896), 6-7. Actually, John Goldingay essentially makes the same case. See Goldingay, “The Jews, the Land, and the Kingdom,” 12.

Non-dispensationalism's inconsistency in a viable hermeneutic is evident in Davidson's conclusion of literal promises to a literal nation and people when he concurs, "When the prophets predict restoration of Israel to Zion and restitution to their own land, these things are literal in *their* minds at least. They are not dealing with ideas merely, but with concrete things, with a literal people and with a literal land."⁸²⁵ Like many non-dispensationalists, Davidson does the same – he rejects the literal interpretation and adopts the allegorical; the nation of Israel in the Old Testament is the Church and the descendants of Abraham, the Jews were the first-fruits of that Church, even though Davidson honestly admits that the name Israel cannot be idealized into the abstraction church.⁸²⁶ Davidson refers to the Abrahamic covenant as spiritual and not literal and believes that it deals with salvation but does not promise a return to Canaan. He backtracks by stating that Canaan must be physical or literal in *their* minds at least. If the land is literal only in their mind, then there is not a return to a literal land.

Like Ladd and other non-dispensationalists, Davidson argues for the very essence of dispensationalism: a clear demarcation between Israel and the Church. Reformed Theology is insistent that God cannot have two peoples hence that destroys the unity of the Church and covenant theology. Davidson argues for this very distinction as the following quotes demonstrate regarding Romans 11:

- "The distinction of Jew and Gentile was thus a distinction of God's creation. The prophecies of the Old Testament which refer to the last time still regard it as maintained" (p. 487).
- "We cannot reason from the obliteration of some distinctions in the Gentile world to the obliteration of this great distinction of Jew and Gentile. And the New Testament still considers the distinction valid, and destined to continue till the in-bringing of the Jews" (p. 487).

⁸²⁵ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 490, (emphasis in original).

⁸²⁶ *Ibid.*, 477

- “Does it not teach a corporate unity of Israel, which was in God’s mind when He called them in Abraham? Surely it is evident that the apostle considered this corporate unity to be still subsisting actually in his day.” (pp. 486-87).
- “Now, does it not appear here that Paul is still handling Israel as a separate people? . . . He holds that prophecies which mention their names in the Old Testament refer to them as a separate people, distinct from the Gentiles . . . He called them to be in the Church; to be indeed the Church.” (p. 486).

In discussing Israel’s conversion in Romans 11, he asks, “Now, does it not appear here that Paul is still handling Israel as a separate people? They were so in his day, and he so speaks of them. He holds that prophecies which mention their names in the Old Testament refer to them as a separate people, distinct from the Gentiles. God’s election of them distinguished them” (p. 486). But then, Davidson adds, “Surely, it is evident that the apostle considered this corporate unity to be still subsisting actually in his day, and to be going to subsist, till it again entered the Church actually” (pp. 486-87). Jews were the broken branches of Romans 11 broken off in unbelief and will be grafted back again into the Church adding, that to the prophets, “Israel is never, to them, a people among the peoples; it is indeed the Church of God” (pp. 491-92).

Davidson had warned of making Israel in the Old Testament merely an allegory. This allegorization, that Israel becomes merely a symbol for the Church of God, and Canaan a mere counter that symbolizes spiritual privilege is “historically false and gives no account of the form of Scripture” (i.e., literal interpretation; p. 490). In the end, Davidson adopts the very thing he rejects: “There is no room for any restoration of the Jews to their own land. But the apostle certainly contemplates the distinction of Jew and Gentile as remaining to the end.”⁸²⁷ The promises made to the nation of Israel are now being redefined to a promise of inheriting the earth to a new earth transformed . . . all the privileges are spiritual.⁸²⁸ The Jew’s heritage of Canaan is

⁸²⁷ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 498.

⁸²⁸ *Ibid.*

transfigured and expanded; it becomes the world to come, the country which the patriarchs sought, the heavenly Jerusalem ... “Whatever eternal realities remain, after the things that can be shaken have passed away.”⁸²⁹

Davidson’s exegesis of Romans 11 and faithfulness to the literal text of the Old Testament in the area of prophecy (i.e., pp. 474-75) is something that he rejects in the end. However, he is adamant about the distinction between the Jews as a race, and the Gentiles. The Jews will remain distinct until conversion to the Church. Jewish isolationism cannot be denied and it remains a remarkable fact of history and one that must be allowed to have considerable weight. This is consistent with Scofield’s assessment that the Jews will remain a distinct people.

Davidson considers God’s dealings with the Jews to be national – there is a national rejection, and there will be a national receiving again and this view is thought to be a fair interpretation of Romans 11.⁸³⁰ Unbelieving Israel is still identified as a nation by Davidson.

Most non-dispensationalists are adamant that the Jews are still God’s chosen people, and they have not been replaced. Davidson relays the same sentiment, “In Romans 11:1-10, the apostle repudiates the idea that God has cast off the Jews from all share in the Messianic salvation... and that there was no casting away of the Jews as the Gentile Christians were supposing.”⁸³¹ Romans 11 seems expressly written to warn against the error held among the Gentiles that the Jews had forever forfeited their chance of salvation through their unbelief.⁸³²

It is important to note for this dissertation Davidson’s points of agreement with Scofield from Romans 11:

⁸²⁹ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 500.

⁸³⁰ *Ibid.*, 471.

⁸³¹ *Ibid.*, 478.

⁸³² *Ibid.*, 470.

- The Jews have not been replaced by the Church even though they are equivalent to the Church.
- The covenants with the Jews are still valid (but not the literal land aspect).
- Israel refers to ethnic Jews who actually were the first to comprise the Church.
- Israel maintains a distinction from the Church even up till the end of time.
- The references to Israel in Romans 11 refer to national Israel, even though there will be no national restoration to the land in spite of hundreds of prophecies predicting such an event according to Davidson's own words.
- Israel's salvation will take place after the salvation of the Gentiles.
- Israel's salvation is yet future at the time of Paul's writing.
- Israel's salvation will take place during the eschaton or final resurrection of the dead.
- Israel's means of salvation is not stated precisely but Davidson does seem to rule out church membership or evangelistic techniques. (He does seem to suggest the possibility of a direct intervention of God).⁸³³

Here again is an almost identical teaching of a non-dispensational Old Testament scholar with that of Scofield and dispensationalism. However, in spite of these agreements, there will be no literal, national Israel to be restored to their ancient homeland.⁸³⁴

George Eldon Ladd (1911-1982)

New Testament scholar George Eldon Ladd lays out the two main positions regarding a restoration of a national Israel in his article in *Eternity* magazine. Ladd writes that Israel is the Church, then claims that there will be a literal restoration of a nation in the millennium, but it will be a Christian nation.

⁸³³ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 479.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*, 498, 495, 497, 499.

Ladd was not a dispensationalist by his own admission,⁸³⁵ but sounds very much like Scofield regarding a literal kingdom for Israel. It is necessary to examine Ladd's conclusion regarding a future for Israel as it is pertinent to the point of this dissertation to argue that even non-dispensationalists will agree with much of dispensationalism through a comparative approach, summarizing Ladd's own words in the article (emphases in original).⁸³⁶

1. "First, I propose that the Church has taken the place of Israel and must be called the 'spiritual' Israel. This 'spiritualizing' of Israel began in the Old Testament" (p. 26).
2. "The physical seed is not the true seed. The literal Israel is not the spiritual Israel. Believers are the true sons of Abraham, the true seed, the spiritual circumcision – the spiritual Israel," (Rom. 4:11, 16, 18; Gal. 3:28f), (p. 26).
3. "Second, I propose that the New Testament takes promises which in the Old were directed to literal Israel and applies them 'spiritually' to the Church" (p. 26). (For proof texts Ladd uses Hosea 1:6, 9 to allege that God had rejected literal Israel as his people).
4. "However, Hosea foresees a restoration of the literal Israel" (Hosea 2:18-19, 23; Joel 2:27). "Literal Israel which has been rejected is to be restored. The New Testament applies this prophecy to the spiritual Israel – the Church. How can we avoid the conclusion that the Spirit of God here means to say that the promises of the restoration of literal Israel is fulfilled in the Church?" (p. 26). "Regarding Joel 2:28-29, a promise of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was a promise given to literal Israel ... fulfilled to spiritual Israel – the Church" (p. 27).
5. "Fourth, I propose that: although the Church is the spiritual Israel, the New Testament teaches that literal Israel is yet to be saved" (p. 27). "Literal Israel is still the chosen people. She is still the special object of God's care and will yet be the instrument of salvation . . . This is asserted in Romans 11:15-16. . . The people Israel continues to be a 'holy' people – a people whom God has designed for his redemptive purpose in the world" (p. 28). According to Ladd, Israel is the Church (#1 above), but Israel is still Israel, so one would have to ask which one is true.
6. "Finally, 'all Israel shall be saved.' 'Israel' here is literal Israel; and 'all Israel' does not need to mean every single Israelite, but the people as a whole." "Paul does not here tell us when or how this era of blessing will occur; but we believe it will take place during the

⁸³⁵ See Ladd, "Historic Premillennialism," 20.

⁸³⁶ George Eldon Ladd, "Is There a Future for Israel," *Eternity* (May 1964): 25, 36. Instead of footnotes, page numbers will be utilized to maximize space, the quotations coming directly from the article.

millennium” (p. 28). “The New Testament nowhere elaborates upon how this is to take place” (p. 28).

It is important to note, in spite of Ladd’s interpretations that he sees a clear distinction between Israel and the Church in spite of the fact that he had equated Israel with the Church previously in the article. Ladd continues:

7. “The Old Testament constantly envisages the salvation of Israel as a distinct entity” (p. 28). Ladd has repeatedly equated Israel with the Church, and now he believes that Israel, whom he previously labeled as the Church is a distinct entity from the Church.

Ladd then posits a theory held by Scofield when he writes:

“This does not mean that Israel will be saved on any other ground than by faith in Christ. It does suggest that the means of salvation is unusual. Saul of Tarsus was brought to faith only by a special vision of the glorified Christ; yet he was saved by faith like any believer and was brought into the Christian Church. In a similar way, perhaps, it will be the vision of the returning Christ which will be the means of convincing Israel that Jesus was actually her Messiah. If so, they will be saved by faith in Christ and in the largest sense of the word will become a part of the Church yet as a distinct people” (p. 28).

8. “Therefore, we can only suggest that the means of Israel’s conversion may actually be the Second Coming of Christ itself. . . . Apparently the appearance of the pierced Christ will convict Israel of her sinfulness.”⁸³⁷

Throughout the article Ladd has equated Israel with the Church – spiritual Israel. Then he argues that Israel is a distinct entity, obviously separate from the Church – then states that Israel, the distinct people, will become a part of the Church (p. 28). But, Israel will be a distinct nation again in the millennium, yet a Christian nation. He concludes by writing, “Perhaps during the millennium, we shall see for the first time in human history a truly *Christian nation* (Emphasis in original) – Israel converted and brought to faith in Jesus as her Messiah... The millennium will

⁸³⁷ Ladd, “Is There a Future for Israel,” 28. Ladd is here quoting Zechariah 12:10. Scofield writes, “Zechariah 12-14 form one prophecy the general theme of which is the return of the Lord and the establishment of the kingdom... The personal revelation of Christ to the family of David and the remnant in Jerusalem, not merely as the glorious Deliverer, but as the One whom Israel pierced and has long rejected” (v. 10). See Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 976.

be the final era in human history when Christ will reign over the earth” (p. 28). Strangely, Ladd, who rejects dispensationalism, accepts at least three dispensations: law, faith, and millennium (p. 27).⁸³⁸

Ladd believes in a role for Israel in the millennium. He writes, “Israel will be saved, and as a Christian nation will be the instrument of Christ’s personal reign in the world... Israel is still a holy nation and will yet be the handmaid of God for the salvation of the world” (p. 36). Scofield taught that world conversion would be accomplished by the Jews.⁸³⁹ In contrast, Scofield does not refer to Israel as a Christian nation, but Israel will evangelize “Christian nations!”⁸⁴⁰

This conclusion by Ladd is almost identical to Scofield in that Ladd, in this short article confirms the following points of agreement:

- A literal national Israel is yet to be saved.
- Literal Israel (whom Ladd had equated with the Church) is distinct from the Gentiles.
- Literal Israel will be saved at the second coming of Jesus Christ.
- Israel’s salvation will take place at the appearance of Christ (even though he states that they will become a part of the Church. Obviously this salvation is unusual and not a gradual conversion of Jews through Christian evangelistic methods).
- Israel’s salvation is not fully revealed as to how it will take place.
- Israel’s salvation comes after the Gentiles (whatever this happens to mean).

⁸³⁸ Herman Hoyt notices this inconsistency regarding the dispensations. See Hoyt, “A Dispensational, Premillennial Response,” 42.

⁸³⁹ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 128, 145. See also Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 634, 972-73.

⁸⁴⁰ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 973, (emphasis in original).

Whereas these points are agreed upon by Reformed and non-dispensational scholars, the following points are in agreement with Scofield and dispensationalism specifically. Page numbers will follow to avoid footnotes:

- Israel will be a distinct nation and people during the millennium (p. 28). (Ladd classifies himself as a historic premillennialist and he does believe in a literal, earthly millennium).⁸⁴¹
- Israel's salvation will be identical to Saul's by a special vision of the glorified Christ (Acts 9) (p. 28).
- The literal millennium will follow Israel's salvation at the second coming of Christ (pp. 28, 36).
- The millennium will be a distinct dispensation and the final dispensation (p. 28).
- Jesus will reign as King over a literal earth (p. 28).
- Society will be transformed to a degree never before known in human history (p. 36).
- Israel will be the tool and instrument of salvation for the salvation of the world (cf. Zech. 8:23) (p. 36).
- Israel will be the special servant of God during the millennium (p. 36).

Here is consistent agreement with Scofield and dispensationalists by one who is not a dispensationalist. Ladd teaches a literal Israel, distinct from the Gentiles with special status in a literal earthly millennium: converted, restored, a means of salvation to the world, and saved as a nation at the direct appearance of Christ. This salvation closely mimics the Apostle Paul's own conversion experience.

⁸⁴¹ See Ladd, "Historic Premillennialism," 17, 40.

John Goldingay (1942-)⁸⁴²

Anglican Professor John Goldingay is the most puzzling of all but he is a contemporary theologian. Regarding the argument of this dissertation, Goldingay agrees with the following points:

- The Jews are still God's people (pp. 9, 11, 21).
- All Israel will be saved (p. 10).
- God has still pledged himself in permanent covenant to Israel (pp. 10, 21).
- The Jews will come to faith in the Messiah (pp. 11, 21), but he does not address how this will occur only that it will be in the future.
- God promised the Jews a land and their return in 1948 may be God's work (p. 22).

But, the issue regarding the present-day nation-state of Israel is most confusing as he gives numerous conflicting statements. For example, he writes:

- “Regarding the land, as long as the Jews are an ethnic unit (as well as a people called to live by faith in God and in obedience to God), it is natural for them to have a land... And it seems inevitable for that land to be the one God originally promised them and the one where the great salvation story was played out” (p. 21).
- “As long as the Jews exist as a people, it is natural for their focus to be there (i.e., in their land, in Palestine)” (p. 22).
- “Taking seriously God's commitment regarding the land is involved in taking seriously God's commitment to Israel at all” (p. 14).
- “The New Testament's silence on the theme of the land of Israel may thus imply that this theme should be taken for granted, not that it should be rejected” (p. 15).
- “It is a plausible view that the return of many Jews to the land in our day is part of God's fulfillment of his purpose for the world, for the Jews, and for the Church” (p. 22).

However, Goldingay states in the same article:

⁸⁴² All quotes are coming from the article, John Goldingay, “The Jews, the Land, and the Kingdom,” *Anvil* vol. 4, no. 1 (1987). In order to avoid excessive footnotes, page numbers will be utilized.

- Israel’s coming together as a nation is no different than any other nation (pp. 20-21).
- Israel has a right to exist just like any other nation (p. 21).
- It is permissible for them to have a land of their own (p. 21).
- It seems inevitable that the land is the same land God promised to them that they had in the Old Testament (p. 21).
- “A fulfillment in 1948 of a prophecy given by Ezekiel to people who lived in the 580’s BC is thus nonsense; it is not a fulfillment of promises and warnings that were part of God’s relationship with those people” (p. 17).
- “It is natural for them to have a land that seems to be bound up in God’s commitment to them as a people, and it seems inevitable for that land to be the one God originally promised them and the one where the great salvation story was played out (rather than, for instance, Uganda, which Britain once offered to the Jews)” (p. 21).

In case anyone misunderstood his position, he clarifies, “Further, it is hardly the case that God could have purposed to give Palestine to the modern Jews in a way that overrode the natural rights of Palestinian Arabs” (p. 22).

Goldingay makes the same argument in the *New Dictionary of Theology* when he writes:

In contemporary discussion, the question of the theological significance of Israel arises in two further contexts. The first is that of the theological significance of Judaism... The second is the question of the theological significance of the return of some Jews to Palestine and of the establishment of the modern state of Israel. It is hard not to see this return as a sign of God’s further fulfillment of his promises to Israel.⁸⁴³

Yet in just a few sentences further, Goldingay makes the claim that the modern state of Israel has no particular theological significance.⁸⁴⁴ In spite of the conflicting positions, Goldingay is in much agreement with Scofield and dispensationalists.

⁸⁴³ John Goldingay, “Israel,” in *New Dictionary of Theology*, Sinclair B. Ferguson, David F. Wright, J. I. Packer, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 345.

⁸⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Wayne Grudem (1948 -)

Wayne Grudem, the Distinguished Research Professor of Theology and Biblical Studies at Phoenix Seminary, believes that there will be a future large-scale conversion of the Jewish people, yet this conversion will only result in Jewish believers becoming part of the one true Church of God, and they will be grafted back into their own olive tree (Romans 11:24).⁸⁴⁵

Grudem writes regarding Romans 9:6-8:

Paul here implies that the true children of Abraham, those who are in the most true sense 'Israel' are not the nation of Israel by physical descent from Abraham but those who have believed in Christ. Those who truly believe in Christ are now the ones who have the privilege of being called 'my people' by the Lord (e.g., Romans 9:25 quoting Hosea 2:23); therefore the church is now God's chosen people.⁸⁴⁶

According to Grudem, Israel (i.e., spiritual Israel) is equivalent to the Church. But Jewish people according to the flesh are saved in large numbers at some time in the future.⁸⁴⁷ Grudem equates the Church with the true Israel even though the terms "true Israel" and "spiritual Israel" never occur in the Bible and the Bible itself does not use that terminology. Israel is never called the Church and the Church is never called Israel.⁸⁴⁸ From Grudem's brief section on "The Church and Israel," he seems to believe in judicial supersessionism, the belief that Israel was totally replaced because of their sin in rejecting Christ as he hints that "God will reject his people who persist in rebellion against him and reject the precious cornerstone that he has established."⁸⁴⁹ His concluding statement seems to agree, "What further statement could be needed in order for

⁸⁴⁵ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 861.

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid. (emphasis in original).

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁸ See Robert L. Saucy, *The Church in God's Program* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1972), 69-74; Gerald Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, George Reid, eds., *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 441-42.

⁸⁴⁹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 863.

us to say with assurance that the church has now become the true Israel of God and will receive all the blessings promised to Israel in the Old Testament?”⁸⁵⁰ The Church completely replaces Israel in Grudem’s theology.

What is important to note here is Grudem’s belief in which he does argue that there will be a large-scale conversion of the Jewish people, and it is vitally important to note that this conversion will be in the future.⁸⁵¹ Whereas Grudem never mentions the present-day nation-state of Israel (like most contemporary theologians), he does believe that there will be a mass conversion of ethnic Jews: “Romans 9–11 seems to indicate that there will be a yet future massive ingathering of the Jewish people as they turn to accept Jesus as their Messiah.”⁸⁵² Grudem also confirms here that Romans 11:26 is a reference to ethnic Jews, which is also a current consensus of most non-dispensational scholars and in agreement with Scofield. It is hard or difficult for Grudem to interpret this passage any other way even though he previously had equated the descendants of Abraham with spiritual Israel, (i.e., Christians or the Church).⁸⁵³ Grudem posits three or four different Israel’s in the same context, which many non-dispensationalists do. However, even theologian Thomas Schreiner agrees that the term “Israel” can only refer to ethnic Israelites.⁸⁵⁴

⁸⁵⁰ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 863.

⁸⁵¹ Ibid., 861, 1099, 1104. See in Grudem, footnote 17, (p. 861). He states that he is not a dispensationalist.

⁸⁵² Ibid., 1104.

⁸⁵³ Ibid., 861.

⁸⁵⁴ Schreiner, *Romans*, 615.

Millard J. Erickson (1932 -)

Contemporary theologian Millard Erickson is in agreement with Scofield regarding the salvation of the Jews. He writes,

There is, however, a future for national Israel. They are still the special people of God ... The future is bright: 'and so all Israel will be saved' (Rom. 11:26). Yet Israel will be saved by entering the church just as do the Gentiles. There is a special future coming for national Israel, however, through large-scale conversion to Christ and entry into the church ... The church is the new Israel. It occupies the place in the new covenant that Israel occupied in the old.⁸⁵⁵

It is important to note the points of agreement here with Scofield in just this one short paragraph:

- Ethnic Jews are still the chosen people of God.
- National Israel is promised a bright future and will be saved as a nation as promised in the Old Testament. Erickson refers to Israel as a "nation" three times.
- Their conversion to Christ will be *en masse* even though Erickson does not elaborate on how this will happen, only that it will be in the future.
- God will fulfill the covenant he made with the Jews (even though they have been replaced with the Church).

Erickson's conclusion raises more questions than it answers though. For example, he states that, "Spiritual Israel has in many respects taken the place of literal Israel," and, "The church is the new Israel. It occupies the place in the new covenant that Israel occupied in the Old."⁸⁵⁶

⁸⁵⁵ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1053.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid. It is important to ask why God would need to fulfill his covenant with them if they have been replaced. This is an inconsistency of many non-dispensationalists when it comes to a national Israel.

Otfried Hofius (1937-)⁸⁵⁷

Reformed theologian Otfried Hofius is Professor Emeritus of Protestant Theology at the University of Tubingen in East Germany. Hofius has added to the dispensational argument in his conclusion agreed upon by other non-dispensationalists and Reformed scholars regarding the teaching of Romans 9-11. In summary, he argues that:

- Israel's salvation is different from the Gentiles.
- Israel is clearly a reference to ethnic Jews.
- Paul makes a distinction between the Gentiles and Israel.
- Israel's salvation is in the future.
- Israel's salvation occurs after that of the Gentiles.
- Israel's salvation will occur at the second coming of Jesus Christ (Parousia).
- Israel's salvation will not occur through the medium of the Church nor the evangelistic efforts of the Church.
- The salvation of the Jews at the Parousia will be a result of direct faith in Jesus Christ by his own mouth.⁸⁵⁸

It is important to point out that Hofius makes absolutely no mention of a restored national Israel in his article and certainly makes no reference to a modern-day state of Israel that may be fulfilling Bible prophecy.

Douglas Moo (1950-)

New Testament scholar Douglas Moo begins his Chapter 15 of the book *Encountering Romans* with the question of the modern state of Israel and its relationship to Romans 11, but

⁸⁵⁷ Otfried Hofius, "All Israel will be Saved: Divine Salvation and Israel's Deliverance in Romans 9-11," *Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, Supplementary Issue #1 (1990): 19-39.

⁸⁵⁸ Almost identical views held by Scofield, Ladd, Keener and Schreiner.

Moo is silent on the issue and does not address national Israel today even though he teases the reader at the beginning.⁸⁵⁹ According to Moo, Romans 11 does not speak unequivocally to its modern readers concerning the modern state of Israel but adds, “Nevertheless, as the New Testament text bearing most directly on the question of Israel’s future, it must be the starting point in all discussions regarding the question.”⁸⁶⁰ He does believe that the salvation of Israel for which Paul hopes is a future eschatological event.⁸⁶¹ He does assert that ethnic Jews will be saved *en masse* at the time of the end.

Moo does not address the issue of a national restoration of modern Israel. He does not deny that the present-day nation state is fulfilling Bible prophecy, and he even hints at it. Previously, Moo had confirmed that the olive tree symbolically represents the true people of God (one people of God), and that the olive tree was composed of the people of God (i.e., Jews by birth).⁸⁶² But it is interesting to note that Moo never states that the unbelieving Jews will join the Church. Instead, according to Moo they will be saved at the return of Christ. Moo refers to this on four separate occasions (e.g., pp. 157, [2 times]; 153, and 156), which implies that it is an important point of his argument.

According to Moo, Paul sees the salvation of all Israel as an end-time event. Life from the dead in verse 15 points in this direction, as does the Old Testament quotation in verse 26b which seems to refer to the second coming. All Israel would refer to a significant group of Jews living in the end time. The term would not refer to every single Israelite, but a representative collection,

⁸⁵⁹ Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans*, 150.

⁸⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 153.

⁸⁶² *Ibid.*, 155-56. He seems to be acknowledging that the olive tree is Israel in his commentary (i.e., Jews by birth).

a significant number.⁸⁶³ He clarifies, “I think that Paul here predicts that a significant number of Jews will turn to Christ and be saved at the time of Christ’s return in glory...”⁸⁶⁴ He is not certain exactly when this mass conversion will take place but does allude several times to the return of the Lord in glory. He does not take a position on whether it occurs at the rapture or at the end of the tribulation, which would imply that he may believe in both.⁸⁶⁵

Moo seems to be alluding to this dispensation when he writes: “After this era, during which God is saving many Gentiles and Jews, he will turn afresh to Israel increasing the size of the remnant. The hardening of the Jews will last ‘until the full number of Gentiles has come in.’”⁸⁶⁶

From Moo’s commentary, he seems to affirm the following points in agreement with Scofield:

- 1) God has not rejected the Jews nor abrogated the covenants: “The people that God foreknew ahead of time has not been rejected” (p. 151). “Gentile Christians should not delude themselves by thinking that they have taken the place of Israel in God’s plan” (p. 153).
- 2) Romans 11:26 definitely refers to ethnic Jews. “Everywhere else in Chapter 11, Israel means ethnic Israel, and we must assume that it has the same meaning in verse 26” (p. 157).
- 3) The phrase, “his people” (Rom. 11:1-2), is corporate and refers to national Israel (p. 151).
- 4) Israel’s salvation is yet future from the time of Paul’s writing. “The salvation of Israel for which Paul hopes is a future, eschatological event” (p. 153).
- 5) Israel’s salvation will take place at the second coming of Jesus Christ or eschaton. (pp. 153, 156, 157).
- 6) Israel’s salvation will take place after that of the Gentiles (p. 156).

⁸⁶³ Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans*, 157.

⁸⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 153.

⁸⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 157.

⁸⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 156.

- 7) The means of Israel's salvation is not defined. "Paul does not give us the detail we would need to be this specific" (p. 157).
- 8) Israel's salvation will take place in another dispensation. "After this era, during which God is saving many Gentiles and Jews, he will turn afresh to Israel increasing the size of the remnant" (p. 156).

Moo queries: "How does God remain fair and impartial even as he promises salvation in the future to a significant number of Jews?"⁸⁶⁷ If these Jews comprise a significant number and are representative of the entire nation (p. 157), it seems that Moo is arguing that Jews/Israel are the elect. He has been consistent in his argument for election in the commentary: individual election as well as Israel's national election. His statement, "A significant number of Jews have been singled out for salvation" seems to be the most consistent agreement with Scofield. Moo has been very careful to hint at a national conversion and restoration without directly saying so.

Craig Keener (1960-)

New Testament scholar Craig Keener seems to be in agreement with Scofield regarding the timing of Israel's salvation that Israel must repent first before their salvation comes, but it is important to note that Keener makes no mention of modern-day Israel or its relation to the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Keener never states that Jews will be converted to the Church, but he does confirm, "that the Jewish people as a whole will someday embrace Jesus as their deliverer, consummating his covenant with them."⁸⁶⁸ In comparison with the teachings of Scofield, Keener is in complete agreement:

- God has not replaced the Jews nor abrogated the covenants; they are still the chosen people.

⁸⁶⁷ Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans*, 158.

⁸⁶⁸ Keener, *Romans*, 136.

- Romans 11 presents a clear distinction between the salvation of Gentiles/Jews/Israel up to the point of salvation.
- Romans 11 refers to ethnic Jews.
- Romans 11 is in fact referring to a national Israel.
- Israel's salvation is yet future from the time of Paul's writing.
- Israel's salvation will take place at the second coming of Jesus Christ or Eschaton (the end of time).⁸⁶⁹
- There is a gap or delay between Israel's unbelief and their restoration as God's people.
- Israel's salvation will take place after that of the Gentiles.
- Israel's salvation appears to be a direct act by God himself without the aid of evangelization methods or techniques (i.e., the Church is not going to accomplish this great feat of Israel's salvation).
- The means of Israel's salvation is not defined completely but it appears that they will repent first as a people, thus precipitating his return.⁸⁷⁰

Thomas Schreiner (1954-)

New Testament Baptist scholar Thomas Schreiner, who has written a full exegetical commentary on Romans believes that the emphasis in Romans chapters 9-11 is upon Israel's future salvation which he believes will take place at the end of history as he writes, "God will turn ungodliness from Jacob and promises that at the end of history, probably near the second coming, all Israel will be saved."⁸⁷¹

The phrase "end of history" should not be underemphasized. Schreiner repeats this identical wording on at least seven or eight different occasions: (pp. 474, 475, 591, 596, 619, 622, 626-

⁸⁶⁹ A time associated with events prophesied in Scripture, to occur at the end of the world and the second coming of Christ. See Wilson, *Romans*, 74.

⁸⁷⁰ Keener, *Romans*, 137-38.

⁸⁷¹ Schreiner, *Romans*, 474.

627, 635). He also uses similar phraseology repeatedly in hopes that no one would miss the point. For example, he uses phrases like:

- “End-time generation” (pp. 486, 512, 601)
- “At the conclusion of history” (p. 512)
- “At the arrival of the eschaton and the final restoration” (p. 591)
- “At the climax of this age followed by the resurrection of the dead” (p. 599)
- “At the physical resurrection of the dead and the climax of history” (p. 599)
- “The end will have arrived” (p. 614)

For Paul, Israel’s deliverer is certainly Jesus Christ, and the reference is to his second coming. Schreiner, a strong Calvinist seems to imply that Israel’s future salvation will be based on God’s electing purpose since they are the elect. God will save them supernaturally. He writes, “Thus Jesus will remove the unbelief from Israel and grant them faith when he returns. The work of Israel’s conversion is a divine work, and this accords with the last two lines of the Old Testament citation.”⁸⁷² The closest thing he says to the how of Israel’s salvation is that it will occur at the second coming, and God will grant them faith.

Schreiner’s position seems to be more in agreement with Scofield that Israel’s salvation will be a supernatural event based on Israel’s election. Schreiner does not believe that this salvation is through Gentile evangelization, nor does Keener or Moo. He notes twice that the future salvation of the Jews is imminent since the time of Gentile salvation is now in process. The fulness of the Gentiles may be completed at any time and this will trigger the salvation of all Israel.⁸⁷³ No fixed

⁸⁷² Schreiner, *Romans*, 620. The Old Testament verses cited by Paul are Isaiah 59:20 and Jeremiah 31:31-34.

⁸⁷³ *Ibid.*, 628.

timeline is established as to when the full number of Gentiles would be complete and the salvation of Israel would begin.⁸⁷⁴

Schreiner makes no reference to the present-day nation-state of Israel today as fulfilling Bible prophecy so the conclusion one must draw from him is that Israel's salvation would be into the one people of God the Church which he had equated with the one olive tree previously.

In keeping with Scofield, Schreiner agrees to the following points:

- God has not replaced the Jews nor abrogated the covenants; they are still the chosen people and the elect.
- Romans 11 presents a clear distinction between the salvation of Gentiles/Jews/Israel up to the point of salvation.
- Romans 11 definitely refers to ethnic Jews.
- Romans 11 is in fact referring to Israel as a corporate people (even though Schreiner does not use the word nation).
- Israel's salvation is yet future from the time of Paul's writing.
- Israel's salvation will take place at the second coming of Jesus Christ or Eschaton (the end of time).
- There is a gap or delay between Israel's unbelief and their restoration as God's people.
- Israel's salvation will take place after that of the Gentile's inclusion.
- Israel's salvation appears to be a direct act by God himself without the aid of evangelization methods or techniques; God will grant them faith at the proper time.

It is important to point out that the most current biblical scholars in the study of the New Testament, Moo, Schreiner, and Keener are almost in exact agreement with Scofield, but none of

⁸⁷⁴ Schreiner, *Romans*, 618.

the three acknowledge a literal, restored nation in the Middle East today even though Moo hints at it. However, this is not unusual.⁸⁷⁵

Agreement with Scofield from many non-dispensationalists strengthens his argument for the restoration of the Jewish nation given the minimal fact that a physical, literal, restoration has in fact occurred in 1948. A minimal fact argument is based on the probability that something is true. Gary Habermas noted that “The probability . . . can be argued even when only a minimum number of highly evidenced, critically admitted historical facts is employed.”⁸⁷⁶

Historian Samuel Goldman, not a fundamentalist Christian nor a Reformed theologian points out that the arguments for Christian Zionism were products of the emphases on the plain meaning of Scripture and the theological significance of covenants that characterized Calvinism. He asks, “But why was it nonsensical to believe that the Jews might be reconstituted as a nation and return to their own land?”⁸⁷⁷

Larry Helyer has asked a very poignant question and one pertinent to the point of this dissertation. He writes, “Since a majority of exegetes believe that Romans 11:26 refers to a future conversion of Israel, why so much resistance to the notion of a national destiny for the Jewish people? . . . Theological presuppositions may well be hindering our ability to read some Biblical texts as they were originally intended.”⁸⁷⁸ “After all,” he continues, “Old Testament

⁸⁷⁵ Blaising notes, “Failure to address these texts is itself indication that the interpretation may be weak.” See Craig Blaising, “Israel and Hermeneutics,” in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel*, Darrell L. Bock, Mitch Glaser, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2014), 159.

⁸⁷⁶ Habermas, *The Risen Jesus and Future Hope*, 30.

⁸⁷⁷ Samuel Goldman, “The Real Reason Americans Support Israel (Hint: It’s Not AIPAC),” *Tablet Magazine* (February 15, 2019), <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/the-real-reason>.

⁸⁷⁸ Larry Helyer, “Luke and the Restoration of Israel,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 36/3 (September 1993): 324.

passages that speak of Israel's regeneration locate it in the ancient homeland (cf. Zech. 12:10-13:1, Ezek. 36:24-37) and the setting of Jesus' prediction assumes a Jewish presence once again in Jerusalem."⁸⁷⁹

Israel's current existence as a fulfillment of prophecy is a reasonable position to hold. The next chapter will focus on Israel as a visible apologetic for the truthfulness of Scripture in agreement with Scofield's teachings.

⁸⁷⁹ Helyer, "Luke and the Restoration of Israel," 325.

Chapter Six

Confirming the Biblical, Theological, and Apologetic Evidence for a National Israel as Taught by C. I. Scofield

Purpose of the Chapter

Based on the research from the comparative agreements of Chapter Five, Chapter Six will propose that Scofield's teaching of a restored literal nation of Israel composed of ethnic Jews is more consistent with a literal interpretation of Scripture and best explains the restoration of the present-day nation-state of Israel. A key to this proposal will argue for Scofield's teaching by showing that Zionism is a minimal fact in itself: the fulfillment of a Jewish nation in 1948 after 1900 years in which Israel was scattered to the nations of the world. According to Scofield, for Jesus to be Israel's future king there must be a resurrection of a Jewish nation. Israel's restoration to its land and its establishment at the head of the nations cannot be disconnected from the person of the Messiah.⁸⁸⁰ Scofield predicted Israel's resurrection nearly forty years before it occurred. While Israel's return from the graves of the Gentile nations did occur symbolically in 1948 as Scofield taught, the complete restoration of the nation in fulfillment of prophecy will take place at the second coming of Jesus Christ. Chapter Six will also include a brief discussion of fulfilled prophecy (referred to as evidential apologetics) through the lens of Israel and the Jew and will focus on the resurrection of a nation from Ezekiel 37 as an apologetic to the truth of the Bible and the Christian faith. Scofield noted:

⁸⁸⁰ C. I. Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain* (Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis, Printers and Publishers, n.d.), 89.

Fulfilled prophecy is a proof of inspiration because the Scripture predictions of future events were uttered so long before the events transpired that no mere human sagacity or foresight could have anticipated them, and these predictions are so detailed, minute, and specific, as to exclude the possibility that they were mere fortunate guesses. Hundreds of predictions concerning Israel, the land of Canaan, Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, and numerous personages – so ancient, so singular, so seemingly improbable, as well as so detailed and definite that no mortal could have anticipated them – have been fulfilled by the elements...⁸⁸¹

Evidential Apologetics and the Fulfillment of Prophecy

The field of eschatology has been an important apologetic for the infallibility of the Bible. Fulfilled prophecy argues for the evidence of God. Prophecies regarding the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ have been fulfilled literally, which means that there is no reason to reject the literal nature of prophecies that refer to his second coming. Prophecy is of vital importance to God and the Christian due to the amount of space dedicated to the subject in the Bible. Scofield believed that prophecy comprised one-fourth of the Bible.

The evidential apologetic method argues that fulfilled prophecy can be used as a verification of the supernatural, which reveals God's existence and evidences of divine activity throughout history. If one interprets Old Testament prophecies literally, this would argue for the restoration of a national Israel.⁸⁸² The eschatology of Reformed Theology has adopted to allegorize the prophecies relating to the Jews and Israel in the Old Testaments and transfer them to the Church. Scofield was very critical of the allegorical method of interpretation when he wrote, "It is enough to say that God Himself has for thousands of years been disproving it. He has been expounding prophecy by fulfilling it ... The question, therefore, is a simple question of fact, 'How does God fulfill prophecy?'" He further noted:

⁸⁸¹ C. I. Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1909, 1917), 1318. See also C. I. Scofield, *Scofield Bible Correspondence Course*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1959), 30.

⁸⁸² This is even admitted to by many Reformed theologians and non-dispensationalists in Chapter Four.

And so I might go on taking up one after another of the prophecies which have been fulfilled, and find in every instance the same truth, that prophecy invariably receives a literal fulfillment... Figures and visions, of course, abound in these writings, but when the thing signified by the figure is ascertained we may be sure that thing will come to pass. History answers to prediction as the wax to the seal.⁸⁸³

Norman Geisler believed that the return of the Jews to their land after being twice exiled and the agricultural productivity of the present-day nation-state are both a fulfillment of prophecy and also incredible evidence of the supernatural origin of the Bible. He wrote that, “No other nation in history has managed so successfully to keep a culture, identity, and language intact over hundreds of years, let alone against the genocidal hatred repeatedly encountered by the Jews.”⁸⁸⁴

All prophecy, according to Scofield, centers on the covenant people Israel. Future prophecy concerns Israel as a nation, looking especially to the last days, the day of the Lord, and the kingdom age to follow.⁸⁸⁵ Prophecy is not concerned with history as such, but only with history as it affects Israel and the Holy Land.⁸⁸⁶ Jewish history alone is told in Old Testament narrative and prophecy; the nations are mentioned only as they touch the Jew.⁸⁸⁷ Scofield understood, broadly speaking, *predictive* prophecy to be concerned with the fulfillment of the Abrahamic, Palestinian (land), and Davidic covenants.⁸⁸⁸

⁸⁸³ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 77-78.

⁸⁸⁴ Norman L. Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1999), 613-14. Geisler is one of the few authors in the scholarly arena to reference the land of Israel today as being an agricultural miracle.

⁸⁸⁵ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 804.

⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 918.

⁸⁸⁷ C. I. Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1896), 6.

⁸⁸⁸ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 711, (emphasis in original).

Arguments from prophecy have become less popular in an age characterized by critical scholarship, which claims that many apparently fulfilled prophecies were recorded after the events occurred.⁸⁸⁹ Many apologists see fulfilled prophecy as one of the clear evidences of God but most refer solely to messianic prophecies of Christ fulfilled at his first coming, not his second coming. According to Richard Mayhue, “Of the approximately 333 specific biblical prophecies dealing with Christ’s two advents, one-third deal with his first coming and two-thirds deal with his second coming.”⁸⁹⁰ On the theme of prophecy according to J. Barton Payne, there are 3,856 verses in the Old Testament, and 1,499 in the New Testament. For the entire Bible’s 31,124 verses, 8,352 contain predictive material, or twenty-seven per cent of the whole.⁸⁹¹ One verse in six in the Bible has a more or less important bearing on prophetic subjects.⁸⁹² If it is true that half of the prophecies of the Bible have already been fulfilled in a literal manner, then the authority and infallibility of Scripture would have to give credence to prophecies yet to be fulfilled in the same manner.⁸⁹³

Apologists contend that if the prophecies about Christ’s birth and death have been fulfilled literally, then that demands that the prophecies that speak of him ruling in righteousness over an earthly kingdom also be fulfilled literally. To do otherwise is to empty these prophecies of their

⁸⁸⁹ C. Stephen Evans, *Apologetics and Philosophy of Religion* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 12-13.

⁸⁹⁰ Richard Mayhue, “Why Study Prophecy?” in *Christ’s Prophetic Plans*, John MacArthur, Richard Mayhue, eds. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2012), 14.

⁸⁹¹ J. Barton Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973), 13.

⁸⁹² J. Gilchrest Lawson, *New Marked Reference Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1972), ix. Of course, it must be pointed out that not everyone interprets Old Testament passages literally. Dispensationalists do in matters of dealing with Old Testament prophecy, and that is one of the distinguishing marks of a dispensationalist. Lawson’s color-coded Bible has many blue (prophetic) sections.

⁸⁹³ John Walvoord, “The Pragmatic Confirmation of Scriptural Authority,” in *The Bible: The Living Word of Revelation*, Merrill C. Tenney, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1968), 191.

content.⁸⁹⁴ Scofield wrote, “As witnesses of Christ, we are giving an imperfect and incomplete testimony if we withhold that concerning Christ’s return and earthly reign, which must take place if God would be vindicated as to all the promises of temporal prosperity concerning Israel, and concerning Jesus Himself.”⁸⁹⁵ The prophecies regarding Israel’s messianic kingdom are the highpoint of Old Testament prophecy.⁸⁹⁶ Studying prophecies becomes very much like the design argument. Powell notes that in prophecy God designs and orders history using seemingly unconnected acts of people disconnected by time and purpose.⁸⁹⁷

The argument from prophecy is an argument from the whole Old Testament and it is in reality an appeal to the extraordinarily rational structure of Scripture itself.⁸⁹⁸ An argument from prophecy is essentially an argument that appeals to miracles.⁸⁹⁹ Prophecy is valuable because it is regarded as one type of miracle that is testable.⁹⁰⁰ Thomas Horne noted that prophecy was a miracle of knowledge, a declaration or representation of something future, beyond the power of

⁸⁹⁴ J. M. Davies, *Israel in Prophecy* (Westchester, IL: Good News Publishers, 1967), 47.

⁸⁹⁵ C. I. Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield’s Question Box* (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1917), 119.

⁸⁹⁶ Arnold Fruchtenbaum, “Messianic Kingdom,” in *The Harvest Handbook of Bible Prophecy*, Ed Hindson, Mark Hitchcock, Tim LaHaye, eds. (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2020), 237.

⁸⁹⁷ Doug Powell, *Holman Quick Source Guide to Christian Apologetics* (Nashville: Holman Reference, 2006), 238.

⁸⁹⁸ John N. Frame, *Apologetics to the Glory of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 1994), 140.

⁸⁹⁹ Evans, *Apologetics and Philosophy of Religion*, 12.

⁹⁰⁰ Powell, *Holman Quick Source Guide to Christian Apologetics*, 260.

human sagacity to discern or to calculate.⁹⁰¹ Fulfilled prophecy does not prove the existence of God. However, it does reveal possible evidence of divine activity.⁹⁰²

Whether it is the Bible, prophecy, or the resurrection, all are open for investigation of the claims. John Bloom adds, “Prophetic data are objective and written. If we worry that we misinterpreted something, we can go back and check it again. The evidence of prophecy and history does not change with our mood; we can trust this type of data as much as we can trust that the sun rose this morning.”⁹⁰³

According to Robert C. Newman, fulfilled predictions are one type of miracle that can be tested centuries after the event took place. The strength for the miracle event itself is “greatly enhanced if the event is so unusual that the apparent fulfillment cannot plausibly be explained merely as a good guess.” Certainly, Israel’s condition as predicted in Hosea 3:4-5 and other passages would make fulfillment totally unusual 2,000 years after the prediction. But Hosea is indeed a striking picture of Israel - existing in a strange sort of limbo for almost 2,000 years now.⁹⁰⁴ This would certainly fit the re-establishment of the Jewish state, especially when there are so many predictions and prophecies in the Old Testament. Scofield confirms, “The Jewish Scriptures contain predictions concerning the people of Israel so ancient and so minute and specific that the fulfillment is no less miraculous than the prophecy.”⁹⁰⁵

⁹⁰¹ Thomas Horne, *An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, vol. 1 (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1872), 119.

⁹⁰² Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*, 609.

⁹⁰³ John A. Bloom, “Truth via Prophecy,” in *Evidence for Faith*, John Warwick Montgomery, ed. (Dallas: Probe Books, 1991), 188.

⁹⁰⁴ Robert C. Newman, “Fulfilled Prophecy as Miracle,” in *In Defense of Miracles*, R. Douglas Geivett, Gary Habermas, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 215, 217.

⁹⁰⁵ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 62.

Boa and Bowman concede that Israel's return in 1948 is clearly not the case of an event occurring first and then overzealous apologists claiming only after the fact that some obscure biblical texts predicted the event. In Israel's case, Christians believed for centuries that the Bible predicted such an event but was thought to be impossible and undesirable given the hatred that many had for the Jews.⁹⁰⁶ In summary, evidentialism holds that beliefs are only rational if they are based on evidence. The strength of one's assent to a belief should be proportioned to the strength of the evidence more so than the amount.⁹⁰⁷ Israel does exist beyond a reasonable doubt.

John Feinberg argues that various end-time prophecies cannot be fulfilled unless Israel is in their own land with both political and religious control over her own destiny. This is an indirect argument Feinberg makes as he himself notes, but his point is that Israel's return and possession of the land must be in harmony with other biblical and theological teachings regarding end-time prophecies.⁹⁰⁸ There are end-time prophecies which do not predict Israel's return to the land and possession of it, but they do require it for certain prophecies to be fulfilled.⁹⁰⁹

Newman titles a chapter in the book, *Evidence for Faith*, "Israel's History Written in Advance," but it is the subtitle that is most pertinent to the point: "A Neglected Evidence for the God of the Bible."⁹¹⁰ Chapters in apologetic books may include a chapter on fulfilled prophecy

⁹⁰⁶ Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman, Jr., *20 Compelling Evidences that God Exists* (Tulsa: River Oak Publishing, 2002), 159-60. See also Mangum and Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible*, 179.

⁹⁰⁷ Evans, *Apologetics and Philosophy of Religion*, 42.

⁹⁰⁸ John S. Feinberg, "Israel in the Land as an Eschatological Necessity," in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel*, Darrell L. Bock, Mitch Glaser, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2014), 183-93, 337, (Footnote 1). In other words, other end-time prophecies insinuate that Israel will be in existence in the end-times as a nation as II Thessalonians 2:4 implies. There are passages like II Thessalonians 2:4, Daniel 9:27, Matthew 24 etc. that imply that the Jewish temple will be in existence in the end-times. Feinberg addresses some of these passages but he does not address II Thessalonians 2:4.

⁹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 189.

⁹¹⁰ Robert C. Newman, "Israel's History Written in Advance," in *Evidence for Faith*, John Warwick Montgomery, ed. (Nashville: Probe Books, 1991), 193.

but little if any emphasis on present day Israel as fulfilling that role. The restoration of national Israel is a neglected topic in contemporary apologetics books and courses.

Zionism: The First Stage of Prophetic Fulfillment

Dan Bruce writes: “One would ask if the modern ingathering of Jews to Eretz-Israel is simply a secular phenomenon with a coincidental biblical basis, or if the ingathering is actually a fulfillment of Bible prophecy.”⁹¹¹ The prophecies in the Tanak predicted the regathering of the Jews. Though definite about a future ingathering, they were not specific about the point in history when it would occur beyond saying that it would be in the latter days.⁹¹² Geoffrey Ashe observed, “The promise of the land embodied in the Jewish Scripture was never forgotten, nor was the prophecy of an eventual return, though all human probability was against it.”⁹¹³

There were two great events in the 20th century, the Holocaust and the re-establishment of the state of Israel on May 14, 1948, that have brought attention to the continued historical existence of the Jews as a distinct people and has renewed the theological debate concerning the meaning and place of Israel in relationship to God’s purposes revealing a considerable array of opinions among dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists.⁹¹⁴

To many, the present-day nation-state seems to be a sign pointing to Israel’s prophetic destiny. It seems to be a token that God is about to fulfill his word concerning the glorious future of his chosen people. According to John Walvoord, “The restoration of Israel to its ancient land

⁹¹¹ Dan Bruce, *Daniel Unsealed* (Atlanta: The Prophecy Society, 2011), 196.

⁹¹² *Ibid.*, 205.

⁹¹³ Geoffrey Ashe, *Encyclopedia of Prophecy* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2001), 188.

⁹¹⁴ Robert L. Saucy, “The Crucial Issue Between Dispensational and Non-Dispensational Systems,” *Criswell Theological Review* 1:1 (1986): 158-59.

and its establishment as a political government is almost without parallel in the history of the world. Never before has an ancient people, scattered for so many centuries, been able to return to their ancient land and re-establish themselves with such success and such swift progress as is witnessed in the new state of Israel.”⁹¹⁵ Walter Kaiser reiterates the historical relevance of the current nation-state, “No nation has ever been defunct for almost two-and-a-half millennia as Israel was from 587 B.C. to A. D. 1948, and returned to assume her national existence.”⁹¹⁶ No other nation throughout history has made such a comeback as Israel.

Many dispensationalists believe that on May 14, 1948, the political body of that nation began to form. Ezekiel had prophesied that the nation would be formed but the spirit (or breath of God) would be lacking. Eugene Merrill points out that Israel today is not the messianic nation that she will be in the future when he writes:

One mistake is to equate the modern secular state of Israel with Israel, the people of God. For those with this point of view, no matter what Israel does, it’s considered OK. Yet on this we all agree: if the present nation of Israel isn’t the nation to come, it is the foundation for it. The account of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37 describes Jews who are alive physically but not spiritually. The text says they will come to life as a miraculous act of God. We’ve got the bones – we just need the Spirit.⁹¹⁷

The body without the breath represents unbelieving Israel today, restored but not yet regenerated. According to Ezekiel the final step will be when God breathes the breath of life on these bodies, which represents the day when the entire nation of Israel turns in faith to their Messiah Jesus.⁹¹⁸

⁹¹⁵ John Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), 19-20.

⁹¹⁶ Walter Kaiser, *Back Toward the Future* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 108.

⁹¹⁷ Eugene Merrill, “God’s Heart for Israel,” *Kindred Spirit* vol. 33, no. 3 (Winter 2009): 7.

⁹¹⁸ Michael Rydelnik, “The Jewish People: Evidence for the Truth of Scripture,” in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel*, Darrell Bock, Mitchell Glaser, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2014), 260.

Even Jewish scholar and philosopher Abraham Heschel agreed that “The State of Israel is not the fulfillment of the Messianic promise, but it makes the Messianic promise plausible.”⁹¹⁹

Zionism is not the total fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies but just the first stage of that fulfillment. Scofield’s position was to argue that Israel would be gathered back into the land in unbelief and this was predicted in Ezekiel 37 with the valley of dry bones. In essence, it could be argued that Israel’s rebirth in 1948 and the Jews’ return to their ancient homeland after 2,000 years fits symbolically with a resurrection from the dead as described by the prophet Ezekiel 2,500 years ago.

Israel’s resurrection from the dead (nations) is clearly outlined in Scofield’s notes regarding Ezekiel’s vision of the valley of dry bones:

Having announced (Ezek. 36:24-38) the restoration of the nation, Jehovah now gives in vision and symbol the method of its accomplishment. Verse 11 gives the clue. The ‘bones’ are the whole house of Israel who shall then be living. The ‘graves’ are the nations where they dwell. The order of procedure is: 1) the bringing of the people out (v.12); 2) the bringing of them in (v.12); 3) their conversion (v.13); 4) the filling with the Spirit (v. 14). The symbol follows. The two sticks are Judah and the ten tribes; united, they are one nation (vs. 19-21). Then follows (vs. 21-27) the plain declaration as to Jehovah’s purpose, and verse 28 implies that then Jehovah will become known to the Gentiles in a marked way. This is also the order of Acts 15:16,17, and the two passages strongly indicate the time of full Gentile conversion. (See also Isa. 11:10).⁹²⁰

Scofield wrote in 1917 of a Jewish return to their land as promised in the Old Testament:

Did you ever notice that in Matthew 24, after speaking of the Tribulation and His own Second Coming, our Lord gives the parable of the fig tree? ‘When its branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh.’ The fig tree is everywhere, and always a symbol of Israel. According to that parable we are to watch the fig tree, not for the fullness of leaves but for the first starting buds, the first indications of renewed life in Israel, religiously and nationally. Are there any buds upon the fig tree to-day? Note that a large and ever increasing number of Jews in Russia and elsewhere have already received Jesus as Messiah. What else? They are flocking back to the Holy Land, where, according to prophecy, a remnant must be at

⁹¹⁹ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Israel: An Echo of Eternity* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1995), 223.

⁹²⁰ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 881. See also C. I. Scofield, *Dr. C. I. Scofield’s Question Box*, 66.

the beginning of the Great Tribulation. Only to-day I saw in a newspaper the statement that increasing numbers of Jews are going to the Levant, to Joppa, to Constantinople, feeling their way back, blindly, to their own land. Watch the fig tree! When you see the first buds you know that the time is at hand.⁹²¹

Israel's national anthem, *Hatikva* (the Hope) is a reference to Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37. According to some Jewish sources, the redemption of Israel would not be conditioned on repentance but would occur to prevent the desecration of God by the nations.⁹²² The Jewish view here does not precipitate a repentance of the nation before a restoration which in fact did occur in 1948, but the Jewish view seems to coincide with the Christian view of a national restoration before a conversion. Clearly, Scofield envisioned a national restoration to be followed by a national conversion of Israel at the same time as the conversion of the nations.⁹²³

Ezekiel 37 and The Valley of Dry Bones

Many Old Testament scholars are in agreement that Ezekiel 37 is a prophecy regarding the resurrection of a nation from exile and it is a passage of future Messianic scope. Walther Eichrodt notes that the passage does imply in no uncertain terms that it is reserved for a new creation or a future state.⁹²⁴ The primary concern of this vision is obviously the revival of the nation of Israel, but the manner in which the subject is presented is remarkable.⁹²⁵

⁹²¹ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 126.

⁹²² Geoffrey Wigoder, ed., *The New Standard Jewish Encyclopedia*, 7th ed. (New York: Facts on File, 1992), 322.

⁹²³ Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 1148. Note Scofield's emphasis on Jehovah's purpose above, again implying the sovereign work of God among the nations.

⁹²⁴ Walther Eichrodt, *Ezekiel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), 515.

⁹²⁵ Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25-48* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 370, 383.

Ezekiel 37 contains both a vision proper (vv. 1-10) and an oracle interpreting the vision (vv. 12-14) with verse 11 connecting the two units.⁹²⁶ In Ezekiel 37:1-14, the prophet Ezekiel was commanded to preach to a graveyard of dry bones, which symbolized the nation of Israel. That the dry bones of this vision represent Israel is definitely stated in verse 11, which says, “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.” As a nation, Israel had been dead, and their hope of national restoration seemed to be all but lost. The prophet is led around the plain, and can see nothing but dry bones, which leads him to an overwhelming realization “that this is the place where death holds triumph” (Ezek. 37:3).⁹²⁷ It is evident that in this vision physical resurrection is only used as the symbol of the national resurrection of Israel after her long dispersion among the Gentile nations as foretold in Scripture. The text indicates that these bones were very dry. Their condition visibly demonstrates that the bodies of those once slaughtered here have been reduced to decay.⁹²⁸ This resurrection of a nation could not merely refer to a restoration of a remnant of Jews from Babylonian captivity, which restoration did not involve the “whole house of Israel” but primarily those of Judah, the Southern Kingdom who had been taken into exile by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. God commanded Ezekiel to “Therefore prophesy and say unto them, ‘Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel’” (v. 12). That this prophecy was not fulfilled in Judah’s return to the land under Ezra, Zerubbabel, and Nehemiah is clear from the context. The context has messianic overtones and the reference to “David my servant will be king over them,” (v. 24) could not be a reference merely to Zerubbabel. Eichrodt

⁹²⁶ John Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbraun’s, 2000), 132.

⁹²⁷ Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 507.

⁹²⁸ *Ibid.*

acknowledges in his commentary that Ezekiel 37 is describing Israel's national restoration as a vision so full of dramatic power that one must put it beside the great visions described in chapters 1-3; 8-11; 40ff.⁹²⁹ Eichrodt notes that Chapter 37:1-14 portrays Israel's restoration from exile as a miracle of resurrection from death and as an irrefutable certainty performed by God. He writes, "Yahweh is taking all who belong to Israel from among the nations among whom they have been scattered and is bringing them back to their former homeland. There they are to be brought together so as to form one nation indissolubly united under a single prince."⁹³⁰ The word "graves" is plural which suggests that Israel would be revived to national life and placed in her own land, not just from Babylon but from many nations where they had been scattered.

Jon Levenson agrees that Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones refers to a national resurrection, and it is not focused on individual destiny. Levenson has pointed out that Ezekiel's vision of Israel's resurrection is described in stages, not on animated individuals suddenly rising from their graves. The dry bones acquire sinews, then flesh, and finally skin before the climactic moment in which God places breath and spirit into them making them alive anew.⁹³¹ Also, Levenson observes that Ezekiel 37 does not connect the envisioned resurrection of the nation with a last judgment, such as the one mentioned in Daniel 12:2 in which the dead awake "some to everlasting life," and "some to everlasting shame and contempt." Ezekiel's vision is a vision of resurrection after judgment has been passed on the nation of Israel. The vision focuses exclusively on the nation and not on individuals who comprise it in any given generation.⁹³² The

⁹²⁹ Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 506.

⁹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 513.

⁹³¹ Jon D. Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 158.

⁹³² *Ibid.*, 162-63.

very fact that there is no judgment mentioned here would give credence to the possibility that it is only concerned with the national status. If some would prefer to treat this passage as a prediction of an individual's bodily resurrection, the text itself will not permit it, for Ezekiel 37:11 states that the bones are the whole house of Israel.⁹³³ Israel is not being judged but saved.

The vision of Ezekiel 37:1-14 is a kind of re-creation – the creation of the people of Israel in a new mode. In a culture in which God's creation of humankind and his gift of life were undisputed, the proposition that he could reassemble his deadened people and bring them back to life was hardly outrageous.⁹³⁴ Not only does there appear to be a mere national resurrection, but a redemptive one as well. The vision reinforces the sense that restored Israel will be a spiritually and morally renewed Israel as well. Israel will be regenerated by God's *ruach*, his breath:

For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them" (Ezek. 36:24-27).⁹³⁵

This order seems to imply that Israel's return to the land would precede their spiritual and moral transformation, even though this cannot necessarily be argued for certain. What is certain is that Israel's restoration is a transformational one as well. They have become a regenerated people.⁹³⁶

The prophecy of the dry bones describes a process that will take place over time, as the creation itself once did, in which the helpless bones will be gathered and assembled first, then

⁹³³ Walter Kaiser, Jr., "An Assessment of 'Replacement Theology: the Relationship Between the Israel of the Abrahamic-Davidic Covenant and the Christian Church," *Mishkan* 21 (1994): 12.

⁹³⁴ Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 159.

⁹³⁵ Holy Bible, *King James Version*, quoted from Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 880-81.

⁹³⁶ Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 160.

supplied with flesh (but yet no spirit, or breath) and brought back into the restored land from which they had been exiled. Then, at last, they will be given the Spirit of God from on high. Or, they will be saved as Paul affirms.⁹³⁷ Levenson's observation is very much in line with Kutsko's below that Israel's restoration is patterned after the biblical creation of man in the Garden of Eden. McConville and Williams have noted, "Ezekiel apparently entertains hope for the land more on the grounds of something like a new creation than because of the ancient promise to Abraham, though doubtless the two cannot be entirely disconnected."⁹³⁸ According to Walther Eichrodt, God's saving act would not be complete unless it restored Israel as a whole. The election of that people once made must inevitably come to its completion.

According to Levenson, the question here is not, "Will I have life after death?" But rather, "Has God given up on his promises to his people!" "What does not die," he notes, "is the people Israel because God has, despite their grievous failings, honored his indefensible pledge to their ancestors. *Israelite people* die, like anyone else; *the people Israel* survives and revives because of God's promise, despite the most lethal defeats."⁹³⁹

John Kutsko observed that Ezekiel 37:1-8 clearly describes the process of re-vivication using the imagery of human creation. What is more, the imagery of 37:1-8 appears directly to reflect and develop the scene of the creation of man in Genesis 2, using the imagery that relates recreation with creation itself. Man is formed from the dust of the ground in Genesis 2:5-7, but becomes a living being only after God breathes life into him. God plants a garden in Eden, and sets the man there, just as God promises to set his restored people back into their land (Ezek.

⁹³⁷ Elhanan Ben-Avraham, "Replacing Replacement," *Messianic Magazine* #3 (Summer 2013): 23.

⁹³⁸ J. Gordon McConville and Stephen N. Williams, *Joshua* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 105.

⁹³⁹ Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 163, (emphasis in original).

37:14).⁹⁴⁰ The imagery very clearly is on human re-creation. Ezekiel 37:15-28 expands the image of human re-creation into the resuscitation of the kingdom of Israel (37:1-14). Section two promises the reunification of both kingdoms: Northern and Southern. Yahweh will restore his people to renewed life and repatriate them to a renewed land.⁹⁴¹ Walther Eichrodt makes no mention of the present-day nation-state of Israel as the fulfillment of this passage but does imply in no uncertain terms that it is reserved for a new creation or a future state.⁹⁴²

Preserving His people after 2,000 years of exile and even death as a nation would certainly proclaim God's glory among the nations, also alluded to in Ezekiel 38:23 and 39:7. The account of the attack and destruction of Gog and Magog (Ezek. 38-39) introduces another invasion of the promised land after the restoration had succeeded. These chapters represent a reaffirmation of a major theme of Ezekiel, Yahweh's power over the nations and the vindication of his holy name no matter what threat may come from other sources (e.g., 38:16, 23; 39:7, 21).⁹⁴³ The nations are witnesses of Israel's rebellion against their God (Ezek. 5:6), then of their distress (36:20-21), and finally of the truth about Yahweh when he restores and re-creates Israel (36:23-36).⁹⁴⁴ But Eichrodt makes clear that this is a sovereign act of God over death and his role in history. Danna Fewell observes that if God preserved his people Israel in spite of two exiles, then it would

⁹⁴⁰ Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 133-34.

⁹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 139, 141.

⁹⁴² Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 515.

⁹⁴³ Donald Gowan, *Theology of the Prophetic Books: The Death and Resurrection of Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 131.

⁹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 129.

appear that he would preserve them indiscriminately. If God could not keep his nation intact even through exile then God has failed.⁹⁴⁵ Old Testament scholar Donald Gowan notes:

When the Jews were forced to consider the possibility that they might lose their land, the thought was at first the same as thinking of their death as a people. In fact, the Jews who survived the loss of their land have become one of the most remarkable people on earth. They did cease to exist as a nation, but unlike others who suffered the same fate, they did not lose their identity. The death of Israel . . . is directly associated with the loss of the land.⁹⁴⁶

As to how Ezekiel 37 will be fulfilled prophetically, Daniel Block is inconclusive: “How these prophetic promises will be fulfilled remains an open question. Nevertheless, to reduce these oracles to symbolic language and to restrict their fulfillment to the NT church is to annul the hope that the prophet was attempting to restore.”⁹⁴⁷ While Block had persuasively argued that the valley of dry bones is a reference to Israel’s revival, he then later applies this vision to the whole world, the bones representing the entire human race under the curse of death and rebellion against God. He then adds that it “holds out hope for a defeated and moribund church.”⁹⁴⁸ Hill and Walton in *A Survey of the Old Testament* agree that “exile from the land of the promise did not necessarily signify God’s abandonment, as Ezekiel’s chariot vision testifies” (Ezek. 1).⁹⁴⁹

Arnold Fruchtenbaum has noted that when the Bible speaks of a worldwide gathering of the Jewish people it actually speaks of two distinct events. The first will be a world-wide regathering in unbelief in preparation for tribulation and the second will be a world-wide gathering in faith in

⁹⁴⁵ Danna Nolan Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty* (Sheffield, England: Journal of the Study of the Old Testament: Almond Press, 1988), 162.

⁹⁴⁶ Gowan, *Theology of the Prophetic Books*, 16.

⁹⁴⁷ Block, *The Book of Ezekiel (Chapters 25-48)*, 367.

⁹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 392.

⁹⁴⁹ Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 52.

preparation for blessing – the salvation of the messianic kingdom. This view recognizes that Israel will be gathered twice: once in unbelief and once in faith.⁹⁵⁰ As has been noted, this was Scofield’s position as well.

Isaiah’s prophecy that God will assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth (Isa.11:11-12) resemble Ezekiel’s prophecy that the four winds symbolize the illimitable potency of God’s power. No words are to be wasted on any human hope for resuscitation of the dead bones that have decayed over centuries of time. The responsibility of life must be shifted to God’s shoulders alone. Even death does not set a limit to the manifestation of God’s unlimited power.⁹⁵¹

According to these scholars this symbolic picture in Ezekiel is a picture of Israel’s return from exile/death.⁹⁵² Exile was not simply displacement from the land, but it was the experience of the end of creation, the exhaustion of salvation history, the demise of king, temple, city, land, and all those supports which gave structure and meaning to life.⁹⁵³ All of these things symbolized death itself, and Israel would need the rejuvenating life from God. Details are not really provided in this text of Ezekiel 37 except for the association of a new life with restoration to their land.⁹⁵⁴

The Bible allows for one worldwide gathering in unbelief in fulfillment of Isaiah 11:11-12 and that makes the present Jewish nation relevant to Bible prophecy.⁹⁵⁵ The present Jewish state

⁹⁵⁰ Arnold Fruchtenbaum in “Israel in Prophecy,” in *The Harvest Handbook of Bible Prophecy*, Ed Hindson, Mark Hitchcock, Tim LaHaye, eds. (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2020), 172. See also Thomas Ice, *The Case for Zionism* (Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Press, 2017), 75-85.

⁹⁵¹ Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 507-8.

⁹⁵² *Ibid.*, 509, 512.

⁹⁵³ Walter Brueggemann, “Weariness, Exile, and Chaos: (A Motif in Royal Theology),” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 34 (1972): 33.

⁹⁵⁴ Gowan, *Theology of the Prophetic Books*, 134.

⁹⁵⁵ Fruchtenbaum, “Israel in Prophecy,” 174.

is not a fulfillment of the prophecies that speak of the worldwide gathering in faith and salvation which is yet to come. Rather, it is a fulfillment of those prophecies that spoke of worldwide gathering in unbelief.⁹⁵⁶ However, Fruchtenbaum cautiously notes, “We must not see more fulfillment than is actually there. But at the same time, we must not fail to see the fulfillment that does exist.”⁹⁵⁷ The process of restoring Israel, the land and the people serve one specific goal, and that is Israel’s salvation.⁹⁵⁸

Adventist Jacques Doukhan concurred, “One could interpret the creation of the state of Israel as a miracle and even suppose that this event may play a role in the prophecy of the conversion of the Jews and yet not fall into the dispensationalist trap.”⁹⁵⁹ As a non-dispensationalist he is acknowledging that Israel today just may in fact be fulfilling Bible prophecy.

The return of Israel to their ancient land and the establishment of the state of Israel is the first step in a sequence of events which will culminate in Christ’s millennial kingdom on earth.⁹⁶⁰ The fact that in our day there is again movement and development in relation to this ancient nation is a sign that the stage is being set for the final world drama.⁹⁶¹ This restoration and salvation of Israel is agreed upon by most dispensationalists as there will be two stages and the first step in the sequence of events alluded to by Walvoord will be the gathering and return of the Jews in unbelief as Scofield was teaching over 100 years ago.

⁹⁵⁶ Fruchtenbaum, “Israel in Prophecy,” 176.

⁹⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁵⁸ Arno Froese, “The Six-Day War,” *Midnight Call* (June 2017): 27.

⁹⁵⁹ Jacques Doukhan, *The Mystery of Israel* (Hagerstown: Review and Herald Association, 2004), 103.

⁹⁶⁰ Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy*, 115.

⁹⁶¹ Ibid., 130-31. `

Israel and the Jew as an Apologetic to Scripture

Dr. Wim Malgo, founder of the premillennial Midnight Call Ministries wrote: “Israel is God’s chosen people. She is actually a substance of God’s truth on earth, because prophecy becomes reality and history in and through Israel.”⁹⁶²

Paramount to all Bible prophecy would be the Jew. Scofield argued philosophically for the election and preservation of the Jews. The philosophy of history fails to account for the Jew.⁹⁶³ It is only reasonable and logical for the Jew to survive and prosper and flourish if he has been so called by God for a specific task to be accomplished. Scofield asks, “If we say that a man is immortal until his work is done, why should it not be true of a people?”⁹⁶⁴ And further, “Why, then, should it be thought incredible that God should raise up a nation to have a special and unique ministry to all the nations, and to all times? And then, because entrusted with a perpetual ministry, that they should be preserved through all mutations and dangers?”⁹⁶⁵ Dispersed for centuries among the nations without a national capitol, government, flag, temple, land or rallying point, the Jew has never been absorbed into the culture around him. He is distinct among all people even scattered throughout the nations. He is indestructible in spite of the persecutions, sufferings, and pogroms, and this was written in 1910, some thirty years prior to the Holocaust as Scofield wrote on the eve of the Nazi rise to power. The Jew is seen by Scofield not only prophetically, but philosophically as an apologetic to the truthfulness of the Bible, as he can

⁹⁶² Wim Malgo, “From the President’s Pen,” *Midnight Call* (June 1979): 2. This dissertation is dedicated to Wim Malgo who believed in the literal fulfillment of the prophetic word regarding Israel.

⁹⁶³ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 60-61.

⁹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

never be understood except for his place in the plan and purpose of God. He must survive as a witness for God's truth (Rom. 3:1-2).⁹⁶⁶ The existence of the Jew is a miracle of history.⁹⁶⁷

The following points are summarized to argue that Israel is an apologetic consistent with Scofield's belief. The Bible itself, like the Jew is a mystery: "It is impossible to account for the Bible and for the influence it has had in the world unless you assume it is God's Book."⁹⁶⁸ The Scriptures contain in prophetic form the history of the Jewish people. Written before it was enacted – these predictions were fulfilled with absolute literalness, thus authenticating the book which contained them as from God.⁹⁶⁹ The Jew is the unanswerable proof on the one hand of the inspiration of Scripture and on the other hand of the truth of revealed religion.⁹⁷⁰

Scofield understood Genesis 12:3, "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee" as unanswerable proof that the Bible is inspired: "If I had no other proof that this Bible is inspired, the literal fulfillment in human history of that last promise would be to me the convincing, unanswerable demonstration that this Book is from God...No nation has ever persecuted the Jew and escaped national retribution."⁹⁷¹

⁹⁶⁶ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 57-67. Scofield even insinuates that because the Jews have been scattered worldwide, this may aid their endeavor to preach the gospel worldwide when that moment comes (p. 128).

⁹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 61-62.

⁹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 62-63.

⁹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 68. The concept that God judges nations today based on their treatment of the Jews was not a major emphasis of Scofield as it is today among many Christian Zionists, but he did believe it. For examples, see William Koenig, *Eye to Eye* (McLean, VA: Christian Publishing, 2017); John McTernan and Bill Koenig, *Israel: The Blessing or the Curse* (Oklahoma City: Hearthstone Publishing, 2001); Ramon Bennett, *Saga: Israel and the Demise of Nations* (Jerusalem, Israel: Arm of Salvation Books, 1993). See also Samuel Goldman, *God's Country* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 162-77.

Michael Rydelnik in a chapter titled, “The Jewish People: Evidence for the Truth of Scripture,” in *The People, the Land, and the Future of Israel* lists three ways in which the Jews testify to the truthfulness of Scripture. The first way the Jewish people constitute evidence of the truth of Scripture is by their preservation throughout history. Jeremiah 31:35-37 are verses according to Rydelnik that offer evidence from nature to support the eternal nature of the Jewish people:

The Lord provides the sun for light by day, the moon and the stars to shine at night. He stirs up the sea and makes it roar; his name is the Lord Almighty. He promises that as long as the natural order lasts, so long will Israel be a nation. If one day the sky could be measured and the foundations of the earth explored, only then would he reject the people of Israel because of all they have done. The Lord has spoken.⁹⁷²

First, God assures Israel’s preservation by pointing to the fixed order of nature. Just as God has ordained the sun, moon, and stars, as well as the waves of the sea, so he has ordained the permanence of Israel.⁹⁷³ God has preserved the Jews in spite of centuries of anti-Jewish hostility and persecution, the inquisitions, the Crusades, the Czarist pogroms, Nazi genocide, Arab hostility and communist repression which argues that the survival of Israel through the centuries can be explained only on supernatural or miraculous grounds. God’s preservation of the Jewish people provides strong evidence for the truthfulness of Scripture.⁹⁷⁴

A second evidence of the proof of Scripture according to Rydelnik is the restoration of the Jewish nation. Bible believers question how the re-born state of Israel fits into Bible prophecy. He answers: “It appears that the best explanation is that the modern state of Israel is a dramatic work of God in fulfillment of the Bible’s prediction of a Jewish return to the land, as has been

⁹⁷² Holy Bible, *Good News Bible* (New York: American Bible Society, 1976), 857.

⁹⁷³ Rydelnik, “The Jewish People: Evidence for the Truth of Scripture,” 256.

⁹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 257.

evidenced in Ezekiel's prophecy of resurrection."⁹⁷⁵ Israel has been re-born as a secular state by the Jews but this is a precursor to the day when the entire nation turns to faith in their Messiah, Jesus Christ as he notes, "The return to Zion is powerful evidence of the proof of Scripture. It is beyond remarkable that God would restore a dispersed people, despised throughout history as wandering Jews, and in literal fulfillment of biblical prophecy, bring them home to their land after 2,000 years of exile."⁹⁷⁶

A third evidence of the fulfillment of Scripture is the salvation of the remnant, and the guaranteed salvation of the entire nation. Rydelnik writes, "Besides the preservation of the people of Israel and their restoration to the land of Israel, the Jewish people provide yet another evidence of the truth of Scripture. This confirmation of the Bible pertains to Jewish believers in Jesus, namely the salvation of the remnant of Israel."⁹⁷⁷ The question of national Israel and its role in God's plan was addressed by the apostle Paul in Romans. Due to Israel's general unbelief in Christ, the question was raised, "Has God cast away his people whom he foreknew? (Rom. 11:1)." Paul's reply was to examine the physical, visible evidence standing in front of them. "God forbid!" "God has not cast away his people." Paul was one of them, showing proof that the Jew was still visible evidence of God's faithfulness to his covenant promises (Rom. 11:1).

Paul's concerns related the need to clarify whether the promises of God to national Israel have now been nullified. In other words, has national Israel sinned away the grace of God so that it is, now, and forever, *persona non grata* in His sight? Is Jewishness now a matter of receding concern in the present since it will certainly have no future validity?⁹⁷⁸ Paul argues that he

⁹⁷⁵ Rydelnik, "The Jewish People: Evidence for the Truth of Scripture," 259.

⁹⁷⁶ Ibid., 261.

⁹⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁸ Barry Horner, *Future Israel* (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2007), 1.

himself, a Jew, demonstrates that God has kept faith with Israel. Furthermore, he states that all Israel will be saved, the non-remnant. Their salvation is promised and guaranteed by covenant promise of God (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Robert C. Newman in an article, “Israel’s History Written in Advance: A Neglected Evidence for the God of the Bible” gives three wide ranging prophecies about the nation of Israel and how they have come to pass. In a slight twist from Rydelnik’s above, he identifies, 1) The covenant curses and blessings foretold in the Pentateuch and prophetic books, 2) A prophecy regarding Israel’s marital relationship based on the book of Hosea (especially Hosea 3) and, 3) A prediction of Israel’s return to her own land.⁹⁷⁹ While these are similar to Rydelnik’s above and will not be repeated, Newman adds a slight twist regarding the blessings and the curses that have come upon the nation in fulfillment of the book of Deuteronomy chapters 28-30. These curses and disasters have been demonstrated in the long history of disaster experienced by the Jews through the Babylonians and the Assyrians, and after Bible times including their scattering by the Romans in 70 C.E. Newman writes, “In the midst of these curses, however, comes a promise that Israel will not be totally destroyed. . . Thus the evidence from Israel’s predicted covenant curses points to God’s activity in history, keeping His words of both judgment and promise.”⁹⁸⁰

It is not unusual for historical evidences to be called upon by interpreters and apologists to verify the actions of God. Israel was challenged by God to do this very thing according to Isaiah 43:8-12 and Isaiah 44:6-8. God’s actions in history are legitimate evidences for validating his existence, goodness, and providence in dealing with the nations in history. Paul’s *apologia* bears this out in two specific passages: Acts 14:17 and 17:26.

⁹⁷⁹ Newman, “Israel’s History Written in Advance,” 193.

⁹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 195.

Gleason Archer noted that God points to the testimony of fulfilled predictions while the Jewish nation stands as witness, furnishing verification to all of the world that only Jehovah is God. He wrote:

God presents anew His challenge to an idol-worshipping world, asserting his eternal being and his uniqueness as the only true God. Again, he points to the testimony of fulfilled predictions (a phenomenon peculiar to the Hebrew Scriptures) as a type of evidence of divine authority no man-invented religion can ever produce. To this fulfillment of prophecy, the Jewish nation stands as witness, furnishing verification to all the world that only Jehovah is God, and there is no security in any but him.⁹⁸¹

Even Israel's exile and their scattering at the hands of Gentile nations confirmed the evidence of God's activity among the nations in history as pointed out by Danna Fewell: "God and humanity are interdependent. The faithfulness of human beings renders God visible, and that is why God cannot let the faithful ones completely perish. If God lets Daniel, or the community of Israel perish in exile, or in any other historical crisis, what becomes of the sovereignty of the God of Israel?"⁹⁸² If God lets Israel perish, then God is no longer in control, and no more sovereign than any other god.

The history of the Jews is a demonstration of God at work, sometimes miraculously, sometimes providentially in the affairs of men and nations. The particular significance of the Jews – in contrast to other nations – lies in their being declared God's special people by means of his covenants with them through Abraham, Moses, and David.⁹⁸³ God has acted in history by revealing himself to Abraham and his descendants. He created the nation of Israel as a special people through whom he has made himself known to the world. The best way to tell about God

⁹⁸¹ Gleason Archer, "Isaiah," in *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, Charles F. Pfeiffer, Everett Harrison, eds. (Nashville: The Southwestern Company, 1962), 640.

⁹⁸² Fewell, *Circle of Sovereignty*, 162.

⁹⁸³ Newman, "Israel's History Written in Advance," 193.

is to tell the story of what he has done in history.⁹⁸⁴ According to Joe Odle, “If the return of the Jew to Jerusalem is a fulfillment of prophecy, then it is a proof that the hand of God is moving in the events of history. On this basis we consider the glorious truth that God exists...”⁹⁸⁵ Josh McDowell agrees, “The God of the Bible is faithful. He has demonstrated both His existence and faithfulness by His dealing with national Israel as an objective sign to the world, testifying to His existence and verifying His promises.”⁹⁸⁶ Israel’s existence is an apologetic for theism.⁹⁸⁷

Anti-dispensationalist and Reformed church historian John Gerstner once argued that the Jews were proof of the inspiration of the Bible, not only their dispersion from the land, but their preservation by God. Ironically, Gerstner wrote, “Next to messianic prophecy, this one, which concerns the Jews is the most astounding and therefore best suited, not only to illustrate the prophetic gift, but to introduce us to our main point.”⁹⁸⁸

Jesus’ Resurrection as the Basis for Israel’s Resurrection

Inseparably tied to Israel’s existence and their national restoration is the resurrection of their Messiah. If Christian theism is correct and the Bible is true, the resurrection of Jesus not only occurred but was a planned occurrence. It was an orderly event designed by God for an eternal purpose.⁹⁸⁹ Israel’s resurrection as a nation authenticates the message and resurrection of Jesus.

⁹⁸⁴ Boa and Bowman, *20 Compelling Evidences that God Exists*, 10-11.

⁹⁸⁵ Joe Odle, *Is Christ Coming Soon?* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), xiv.

⁹⁸⁶ Josh McDowell, “Existence of the Jewish People Today is Objective Evidence That the Bible is True,” Josh McDowell Ministry (June 21, 2017), www.josh.org/answer/existence-jewish-people-today.

⁹⁸⁷ Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman, Jr., *Faith Has Its Reasons* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2001), 206-7.

⁹⁸⁸ John Gerstner, *Reasons for Faith* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), 111-12.

⁹⁸⁹ Gary Habermas, “Evidential Apologetics,” in *Five Views on Apologetics*, Steven Cowan, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 118.

Scofield put Jesus' resurrection claims, his deity, his messages and his ministry in a Jewish context and confirms his role as the minister of the Jewish covenants, not a replacement of them. He wrote, "Now the Lord Jesus Christ in His earthly ministry was a minister, the Apostle Paul tells us, of the circumcision. He came to the Jewish people in fulfillment of the prophecies concerning a Coming One, and He offered Himself as the long-expected Messiah to them."⁹⁹⁰ Like Scofield, Apologist Gary Habermas effectively puts Jesus' resurrection claims, message, and ministry in a Jewish context: "Historical occurrences are not brute facts that interpret themselves. While the event itself is objective, its meaning is also derived from the context, which involves a number of factors."⁹⁹¹ Habermas examines the historical and cultural context of biblical events as a vital element of evidential apologetics and argues context with regard to Jesus' message (e.g., acts, claims, miracles, teachings).

The miracle of the resurrection also provides strong evidence for Jesus' claims to be Israel's Messiah in order to fulfill God's covenant promises to Israel. This would not only confirm Jesus' resurrection from the dead as affirmed, but Israel's symbolic resurrection from the dead as well. Israel's restoration would be a definitive proof that God would fulfill the national promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Scofield noted, "The future blessing of Israel as a nation rests upon the Palestinian Covenant of restoration and conversion (Deut. 30:1-9), and the Davidic Covenant of the Kingship of the Messiah, David's Son (2 Sam. 7:8-17), and this gives to predictive prophecy its Messianic character."⁹⁹² The fact that the resurrection takes place "on the third day" alludes to Hosea 6:2, a passage that likewise speaks of the nation's hope for

⁹⁹⁰ C. I. Scofield, *Where Faith Sees Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1967), 8.

⁹⁹¹ Habermas, "Evidential Apologetics," 94.

⁹⁹² Scofield, *The Scofield Study Bible*, 711. See also Craig Blaising, "The Future of Israel as a Theological Question," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44/3 (September 2001): 442.

restoration after the exile.⁹⁹³ According to James Scott, Jesus' resurrection is a harbinger of Israel's national resurrection/restoration.

Scofield asks "how the Messiah can be the great Davidic monarch restoring again the glory of Solomon's house, and also a sacrifice bearing the sins and iniquities of Israel and all the people. There is only one possible answer. There is but one word which can link the glorious reigning king with the suffering and the death, and that word is 'resurrection.'"⁹⁹⁴ The resurrection is the bridge from Messiah's death to Messiah's glory.⁹⁹⁵ If Jesus came and died, and yet remained in the grave, then God promised Israel and David something that he could not perform; if he came forth out of the grave, then the earthly glory is yet possible.⁹⁹⁶

For Scofield, for Jesus to be Israel's future king there must be a resurrection of a Jewish nation. He wrote, "The future of Israel stands intimately connected with the promise of their Messiah of which it is impossible to consider it entirely apart from that promise. Israel's restoration to their land and their establishment at the head of the nations cannot be totally disconnected from the person of the Messiah."⁹⁹⁷

James Scott asks how Jesus' death and resurrection relate to his vision for the restoration of Israel. It was in the hope that the nation (all twelve tribes) would be returned to the land and be reunited under a Davidic king as it had been in the golden age in the days of David and Solomon.

⁹⁹³ James Scott, "Jesus' Vision for the Restoration of Israel as the Basis for a Biblical Theology of the New Testament," in *Biblical Theology*, Scott J. Hafemann, ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 137.

⁹⁹⁴ Scofield, *Prophecy Made Plain*, 108.

⁹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 108.

⁹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 89.

God would establish a son of David's house as the eschatological king. The hope of Israel's restoration was continually pushed into the future.⁹⁹⁸

Scott connects the suffering servant of Isaiah 53 to Israel's death and resurrection. Given the national purpose of the suffering servant's death, his exaltation/resurrection is a harbinger of Israel's resurrection-restoration as a nation.⁹⁹⁹ As Ezekiel 37 makes clear, Israel was dead in exile. Hence the resurrection of Israel from the death of exile is immediately associated with restoration.¹⁰⁰⁰ For Israel to live is a return to the land. God uses the substitutionary death of the suffering servant to affect national redemption and restoration for Israel. Jesus' resurrection recalls the exaltation/resurrection of the suffering servant in Isaiah 53:11-12. Jesus' vision for the restoration of Israel comes to expression in the writings of Paul, as Paul's ultimate goal of advancing the mission God had given him to the nations (Gentiles) was in accordance with the promise of God in Isaiah 59:20-21 that all Israel (and that would include all twelve tribes of Jacob) would be saved. This would include the so-called lost tribes of the Northern Kingdom.

According to Scott, Jesus' death for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3) alludes to the suffering servant's death for the nation's sins (Isa. 53:11-12); Jesus' burial (1 Cor. 15:4) recalls the burial of the suffering servant (Isa. 53:9); Jesus' resurrection (1 Cor. 15:4) recalls the exaltation-resurrection of the suffering servant (Isa. 53:11-12).¹⁰⁰¹

Whereas this dissertation has not argued Scofield's position from a minimal facts methodology *per se*, it does argue that the restoration of a literal nation in 1948 is a minimal fact that is easily validated by history, Scripture, and current culture. After 2,000 years of being

⁹⁹⁸ Scott, "Jesus' Vision for the Restoration of Israel," 132.

⁹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 139-40.

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹⁰⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 137- 40.

scattered throughout the entire world, Jews have come back to establish an old nation as a new nation, yet with the same name, the same former language (which had not been spoken for years but now has been revived), and with a religion still desirous of reconstructing their temple at Jerusalem. Israel's existence is not based on probability nor possibility like the evidential method of apologetics operates, but it is based on a present-day reality that has existed for over seventy years. In reality the nation of Israel serves as an apologetic for the truthfulness of the Bible. If, as Habermas notes, "the probability of the resurrection can be argued *even when only a minimum number of highly evidenced, critically admitted historical facts is employed*,"¹⁰⁰² then Israel's resurrection should be an airtight apologetic. Walvoord observes, "In the light of recent development and the fact of a partial restoration of Israel in our day, it seems only reasonable to reconsider the time-honored interpretations of the Bible which anticipated such a restoration."¹⁰⁰³ Walter Kaiser noted similarly, "The longer this state continues to exist, the more likely it is that we are seeing the fulfillment."¹⁰⁰⁴

This dissertation focused on the possible apologetic value of Scofield's work as a defense of the literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic of the Bible and the accuracy of fulfilled prophecy. Scofield's apologetic value and defense of Christian truth as taught in the Bible has been greatly overlooked over the past 100 years and this dissertation attempted to focus on his contributions in the area of evidentialist apologetics. A detailed study of Scofield's beliefs with

¹⁰⁰² Gary Habermas, *The Risen Jesus and Future Hope* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2003), 30, (emphasis in original).

¹⁰⁰³ Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy*, Preface.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Kaiser, *Back Toward the Future*, 108.

respect to national Israel will be a valid contribution to the field of apologetics since there has recently been a major emphasis in that field to defend Christianity against attacks.

Mangum and Sweetnam observed, “Scofield provided exegetical rationales for a general belief that ethnic, national Israel would be revived in the last days. It was only a matter of time before someone would come along seeking to correlate his general ideas more specifically with current events – *The Scofield Reference Bible* in one hand, and a newspaper in the other.”¹⁰⁰⁵

Scofield’s mentor A. C. Gaebelein wrote in 1942 and is a fitting conclusion: “It is the writer’s deep and firm conviction that the Reference Bible, with its faithful testimony to the fundamental truths of our faith and its prophetic interpretations, is now in these solemn days much more needed than on the day of its publication some thirty-three years ago.”¹⁰⁰⁶ When A. C. Gaebelein wrote these words in 1942, the world was in a war in which the Jewish population of Europe was threatened with extermination by Nazi Germany. However, within six years, an independent Jewish nation would arise from the ashes of that war.

¹⁰⁰⁵ R. Todd Mangum and Mark S. Sweetnam, *The Scofield Bible: Its History and Impact on the Evangelical Church* (Colorado Springs: Paternoster Publishing, 2009), 175-76.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Arno C. Gaebelein, *The History of the Scofield Reference Bible* (Spokane: Living Words Foundation, 1991), 60.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion and Recommendations

This dissertation answers the research question, “What were the teachings of C. I. Scofield with respect to the conversion and restoration of the Jewish nation in fulfillment of Old and New Testament prophecies and how might his understanding be used in a way similar to a minimal facts apologetic?” In answering this question this dissertation provided a detailed study of his views and then compared similar teachings of selected mid twentieth and twenty-first century non-dispensationalists demonstrating areas of agreement but revealing the one main area of disagreement with Scofield’s teachings.

Within the broad spectrum of contemporary evangelical theology there remains disagreement with respect to the question, “Is there a theological future for a national Israel?” “Are there theological reasons to believe that Israel has a future?” This dissertation addressed the essence of dispensationalism or the *sine qua non*, the indispensable part of the system as Scofield understood it, though *sine qua non* was not a phrase he used. For him, the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism includes a literal, national Israel which will be restored, not merely a distinction between Israel and the Church. This was the basis of Scofield’s teaching. This restoration means more than the concept of the salvation of individual Jews as they enter the Church; it refers to the return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel and a major role to the nations in an earthly millennium taking the Old Testament prophecies and promises literally. The Jews would be restored to their land in fulfillment of the promises and covenants made to

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which has become a reality, and is, in essence, a minimal fact in itself. The millennial kingdom will be Jewish in character and nature.

This study has offered a fresh reading and appraisal of Scofield's writings and his teachings by focusing on his beliefs rather than the distortions of his beliefs which are prevalent in contemporary publications and social media. This study involved the reading of all relevant writings of C. I. Scofield, whether his reference study Bible notes, his books, pamphlets, articles, and other sources. Where applicable, it also interacted with other current dispensationalists as well as some from the past such as Scofield's mentor, A. C. Gaebelein, who was highly influential on *The Scofield Reference Bible* as a consulting editor. Gaebelein influenced much of what Scofield taught regarding the Jews and Israel. The goal in this dissertation was to address Scofield's own teachings regarding the return of the Jews to their land in a literal fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies.

Because of a major emphasis in the area of contemporary apologetics, the research addressed the possible apologetic value of Scofield's work as a defense of the historical-grammatical hermeneutic of the Bible and the accuracy of fulfilled prophecy. Scofield's apologetic value and defense of Christian truth as taught in the Bible has been overlooked and this dissertation attempted to focus on his own contributions in that area.

There was also a comparison made between Scofield and non-dispensationalists on the major issue confronting the restoration of a national Israel from the New Testament as found in Romans 11:26, "All Israel shall be saved." This verse and chapter is a major contention between dispensationalists and the eschatology of Reformed theologians regarding the salvation of a future Israel. Yet, many Reformed theologians and non-dispensationalists admit of a future

salvation of national Israel; how they reconcile it with current events is problematic and contradictory.

Chapter One introduced the reader to the purpose of the dissertation and explained what the dissertation is not, as it is not a treatise on dispensationalism, nor does it address the debate regarding the rapture of the Church. Chapter One also focused on the methodology employed - a comparison similar to a minimal facts approach. Finally, the importance and uniqueness of the topic was stated to be relevant for the present due to the major distortions of dispensationalism and the current emphasis in the area of apologetics. Finally, no attempt was made to address C. I. Scofield's personal life and foibles which is often the major focus of other treatments on Scofield.

Chapter Two introduced the reader to the man, Cyrus Ingerson Scofield and *The Scofield Reference Bible*; the factors that influenced Scofield and his influences on American culture, especially his influences on premillennialism, fundamentalism, dispensationalism, Zionism, and personal Bible study. Also, it explained much of the opposition to Scofield and why it occurs. Chapter Two also showed how Scofield's apologetic has influenced the major teachings and doctrines of the Christian faith: his belief in Scripture as inspired of God; his belief in the premillennial return of Jesus Christ at a time when American culture was at a crossroads due to liberalism and waning belief in the inerrancy of the Bible; his desire to interpret the Bible from a literal, historical-grammatical perspective; and his influence on the layperson in the pew is still evident today after 100 years.

His most enduring legacy prevalent today is his influence on Christian Zionism, which is still a widely-held belief among many evangelical Christians. Scofield never saw the political restoration of the nation of Israel in 1948. He died in 1921, twenty years before that momentous

event. But, based on his study of Bible prophecy, he was predicting the return of the Jews to the land in unbelief as early as 1909, (the year *The Scofield Reference Bible* was published).

Scofield's contribution to American Christianity is acknowledged and appreciated by many but his interpretations have also invoked major opposition. Dispensationalism, which sees Israel distinct from the Church has been a major disagreement with covenant theology, which is the foundation for Reformed Theology. Many saw dispensationalism as a threat to the Church but more so as a threat to the creeds and theological dogma that had been held for centuries: – a theology that had espoused supersessionism: the belief that the Church had replaced Israel and the Jewish people in God's plans and purposes. Dispensationalism is seen by some as a threat to world peace, racist, a violation of human rights, and a belief that it relishes the destruction of Jews in a fiery apocalypse, in spite of the belief of Scofield that "all Israel shall be saved," and the Jewish nation restored to its place and purpose in God's plan for the world and the nations. Dispensationalism and Reformed Theology are in agreement that "All Israel will be saved," (Romans 11:26), but the non-dispensationalist's interpretation will pose more of a problem itself because non-dispensationalists reject a literal Israel in God's plan and purpose for the future in spite of hundreds of Bible passages stating the opposite and the current nation-state in existence today.

Chapter Three documented the teachings of Scofield as they pertained to the Old Testament Jewish prophecies. The study highlighted Israel's election by God in the past but focused on Israel's present and future prophecies centering on the resurrection of the nation according to Ezekiel 37 and also the restoration of the nation at the second coming of Jesus Christ. What is evidenced from Scofield's writings is that the Bible is a story of the history of the Jewish people

in which the prophecies focus on their future as a people and nation. In summary, Scofield taught:

1. The scope of the prophecies focus on the Jews and their return to the land.
2. The history of the biblical narrative concerns the Jews.
3. The Jews have been preserved throughout history.
4. The Jews serve as an apologetic to the truthfulness of the Bible.
5. The Jews through Abraham will bring the Messiah into the world.
6. The Church is an interval (parenthesis) between Israel's rejection and restoration.
7. Israel's future is centered in the biblical covenants regarding the land, seed, and blessing.
8. The Book of Genesis was written to show the origin of Israel.
9. The Jewish feasts are prophetic of Israel's restoration.
10. Jews have partially returned to the land in fulfillment of Ezekiel 37, the vision of the valley of dry bones.
11. A Jewish remnant, returned in unbelief will be preserved through the tribulation period.
12. Israel will be restored and regathered as a people at the second coming of Jesus Christ.
13. The Book of Acts teaches the restoration of the Jewish nation.
14. Romans 11 teaches the salvation of all Israel.
15. Israel, like Paul the Apostle will be saved directly when their Messiah appears.
16. God judges the nations based on their treatment of the Jews.
17. Israel will be restored to God's favor and her national glory restored during the millennium.
18. Jews will be the means of world evangelization during the tribulation period and the millennium.
19. Jesus' resurrection foreshadows Israel's resurrection.

20. Jews have been scattered in order to maintain God's witness in the world and as a means of world evangelization in the future.

The Scofield Reference Bible gives the chronological scheme of all of prophecy and saw Israel as the timeclock for the resumption of God's eschatological plan and purpose. All prophecy according to Scofield centers around the covenant people Israel. Future prophecy concerns Israel as a restored nation, looking especially to the last days, the day of the Lord, and the kingdom age to follow. One could say that with respect to Bible prophecy, *The Scofield Reference Bible* is a Jewish Bible in focus and scope which emphasizes Israel's election by God and confirms the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham's physical descendants. Perhaps there has been a compelling objection to it from a theological perspective for this reason. Scofield believed in the election and predestination of the Jewish nation.

Chapter Four evaluated some contemporary interpretations of Scofield's teaching regarding a future national Israel and its bearing on the present-day nation state. Scofield adamantly opposed allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament prophecies made in the Old Testament. Literal interpretation is the foundation of dispensationalism as dispensationalism follows a consistently literal method of interpretation which extends to the eschatological portions of Scripture. Many non-dispensationalists and Reformed theologians surveyed agree that literal interpretation in the area of prophecy does lead to dispensational belief.

Theological disagreement regarding the restoration of the Jews has been the focus of much of Church history with an approach known as "supersessionism" (or "replacement theology"), the belief that the Church has replaced, nullified, redefined, or inherited all the promises and covenants made to the Jewish people. As there are different varieties of supersessionism, the most dramatic has been known as structural supersessionism which stems from the belief that ethnic, national Israel has been excluded altogether from the redemptive storyline of the Bible.

Israel was seen only as a type of the redemption that would come to fulfillment in Jesus – once the fulfillment has come there is no longer a need for the type, (i.e., Israel). Supersessionism continues in present day Christian theology on the momentum of tradition and this in spite of Israel's reconstitution as a nation in 1948.

Chapter Four also surveyed the five main positions regarding the present-day nation State of Israel with most dispensationalists agreeing that Zionism is the first stage fulfillment of the biblical prophecies in agreement with Scofield. The present-day nation is not the total fulfillment mentioned in the Bible, but a guarantor of the final restoration at the end-time. Scofield believed that Jews would be brought back into the land of their forefathers in unbelief first.

Most non-dispensational theologians are in agreement that Romans 11 teaches a future salvation of the Jewish nation and people. However, there are shown to be inconsistencies within various theological positions regarding Romans 11. These inconsistencies make Scofield's position more plausible. Many non-dispensationalists are in agreement with Scofield's eschatological timeframe in Romans 11 regarding ethnic Israel.

The purpose of Chapter Five was a detailed theological study of Romans 11 against the backdrop of Scofield's eschatology, and it culled a sampling of current Reformed theologians and non-dispensationalists to compare the teachings with that of Scofield in order to prove common agreement with dispensationalism's order of eschatological events. This approach narrowed the agreement and disagreement over a restoration of a national Israel. The consensus of many Reformed theologians shows that Scofield's position is more consistent with reality and a literal interpretation of Scripture. The present-day nation of Israel serves as its own apologetic.

From a selected sampling of current and past authors over the past century to the present, the following consensus of non-dispensationalists confirmed that from a study of Romans 11, the following eschatological facts of Scofield can be agreed upon:

- God has not replaced the Jews nor abrogated the covenants; they are still the chosen people.
- Romans 11 presents a clear distinction between the salvation of Gentiles/Jews/Israel even though Reformed Theology detests the belief that there could be two peoples of God.
- Romans 11 definitely refers to ethnic Jews.
- Romans 11 is in fact referring to a national Israel.
- Israel's salvation is yet future from the time of Paul's writing.
- Israel's salvation will take place at the second coming of Jesus Christ or Eschaton (the end of time).
- There is a gap or delay between Israel's unbelief and their restoration as God's people.
- Israel's salvation will take place after that of the Gentiles.
- Israel's salvation appears to be a direct act by God himself without the aid of evangelization methods or techniques (i.e., the Church is not going to accomplish this great feat of Israel's salvation).
- The means of Israel's salvation is not defined.

The consensus regarding Paul's teaching in Romans 9-11 is that there is indeed a future in the plan of God for Israel - not a redefined Israel, but an ethnic, national Israel. However, many non-dispensationalists reject a national Israel.

Chapter Six proposed, based on the research from the comparative agreements of Chapter Five that Scofield's teaching of a restored literal nation of Israel composed of ethnic Jews is consistent with a literal interpretation of Scripture and best explains the restoration of the present-day nation-state of Israel. A key to this proposal corroborated Scofield's teachings by showing that a return to the land (either religiously or politically) is a minimal fact in itself: the

fulfillment of a Jewish nation in 1948 after 1900 years in which Israel was scattered to the nations of the world. Apologetically, the nation of Israel did experience a resurrection from the dead, as did their Messiah, and Scofield articulated from Bible prophecy this resurrection nearly forty years before it occurred. Israel's symbolic resurrection from the graves of the Gentile nations did occur.

Chapter Six also addressed the subject of fulfilled prophecy through the lens of Israel and the Jewish people and focused on the resurrection of a nation from Ezekiel 37 as an apologetic to the truth of the Bible and the Christian faith. The field of eschatology has been an important apologetic for the infallibility of the Bible. Fulfilled prophecy argues for the evidence of God. Prophecies regarding the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ have been fulfilled literally, which means that there is no reason to reject the literal nature of prophecies that refer to his second coming. Prophecy is of vital importance to God and the Christian as evidenced by the amount of space dedicated to the subject in the Bible. But in spite of the current emphasis in contemporary apologetics, the restoration of national Israel is a neglected topic.

The evidential apologetic method argues that fulfilled prophecy can be used as a verification of the supernatural, which reveals God's existence and evidence of divine activity throughout history. Fulfilled prophecies can be seen as one type of miracle that can be tested. If one interprets Old Testament prophecies literally, this would argue for the restoration of a national Israel. Reformed Theology has adopted to allegorize the prophecies relating to the Jews and Israel in the Old Testament. Literal hermeneutics has been overshadowed by Church tradition which theology has nullified promises made to a literal Israel and transferred them to the Church. As an apologetic, the present-day nation-state of Israel authenticates the theistic worldview; it authenticates the authority of the Bible; and it authenticates the message and

resurrection of Jesus as Israel's Messiah. Scofield argued that the survival of the Jewish people served as a theological, philosophical, and apologetic defense of the Scripture as the inspired Word of God.

The realization of the goals of Zionism is not the total fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies but just the first stage of that fulfillment. Scofield argued that Israel would be gathered back into the land in unbelief and this was predicted in Ezekiel 37 with the valley of dry bones. Old Testament scholars are in agreement that Ezekiel 37 is a prophecy regarding the resurrection of a nation from exile and it is a passage of future Messianic scope.

Whereas this dissertation has not argued from a minimal facts methodology *per se*, it does propose that the restoration of the nation of Israel in 1948 is a minimal fact in itself. Israel's existence is not based on probability nor possibility like the evidential apologetic method calls for; it is based on the reality that exists today. This would be a reasonable explanation of the current situation and it would give strong confirmation to C. I. Scofield's teaching.

Recommendations

Several recommendations can be made from this study:

- 1) A study of Scofield's beliefs in the doctrine of election would be recommended and contrasted with Reformed Theology's belief in the doctrine of election. Scofield's belief in the election of Israel is consistent with his hermeneutical and theological beliefs whereas Reformed Theology is not consistent biblically regarding Israel's election. The doctrine of election-predestination is the foundation and bedrock of Reformed Theology, yet it believes that to a large extent the nation of Israel lost their status as the elect upon their rejection of Christ. Scofield's belief in the election of Israel is clear. His belief in individual election is not as clear but ambiguous.

- 2) This study has focused on a comparison of Scofield's eschatological timeframe with non-dispensational beliefs to arrive at a common agreement on Romans 11, but a more extensive study of agreement with Scofield's teachings could be made especially by those who oppose him theologically and biblically. It would be a valuable study to see how many are in agreement with his teachings on the postponement theory of the kingdom, typology, dispensationalism, etc.
- 3) Since the major disagreement with Scofield and dispensationalism is over a restored literal land fulfillment of the biblical prophecies of the Abrahamic Covenant, a study could be conducted to investigate the extent of the land today in the current day nation-state of Israel to see how similar the land boundaries are today compared with the biblical promises as described in the Old Testament. Are Israel's borders today equivalent to the promises described in the Old Testament? If so, this would be a strong precedent for interpreting the Old Testament prophecies literally.

Since the 1980s the histories of American fundamentalism and American evangelicalism have received serious study from a host of accomplished historians. Some have viewed the movements as a whole and others have researched and written about particular aspects of the movements or individuals in them. Surprisingly, there have been few studies dedicated to the life, work, writings, and theology of C. I. Scofield. This dissertation has sought to help fill in those gaps while also recognizing that there remains much work that can be done in this rich and rewarding field of study.

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Appendix A

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