

# ISRAEL & THE CHURCH

## DISPENSATIONALISM RECOGNIZES THE DIFFERENCES THEIR SOTERIOLOGY & ESCHATOLOGY

**Thesis:** Israel and the Church are different and distinct in God's plan and purpose for the ages, and this distinction is clearly seen in the differences in their soteriology and resulting eschatology.

1. Eternal salvation (the taking away of sins and eternal life) is the *past experience* of a Christian based on repentance and faith alone.
2. Eternal salvation (the taking away of sins and the promise of eternal life) was offered to Israel as a *future inheritance* based on their *devotion to God*.

**Contention:** Dispensationalism is a system of theology that consistently recognizes and maintains the biblical distinction between Israel and the Church.

**Define the Terms:** The following three terms are defined here as to how they are used in this article. It is not the purpose of this article to explain and develop these definitions. They are included here as introductory material so the reader might understand my point of reference when I use them.

**Dispensations:** The word *dispensation* is found in Scripture four times in the King James Bible (1Cor 9.17; Eph 1.10; 3.2; Col 1.25).

- For purposes herein we will define a dispensation as a particular arrangement between God and man in which God charges man with a distinct and definable responsibility.
- A dispensation, therefore, is understood herein as a stewardship (e.g., Luke 12.42; 16.1-4).
- Example: Man's responsibility toward God under the Mosaic Law was fulfilled in Christ and God now deals with man outside the Law of Moses (any Antinomian overtures in that statement are completely unintentional; Rom 7.12, 22, 25).
- At this point all theological camps should be in general agreement, for even the Covenant theologian recognizes dispensations according to this general definition.<sup>1</sup>

**Dispensationalist:** As Charles Ryrie aptly points out, "...a person can believe in dispensations ... without being a dispensationalist."<sup>2</sup>

- Therefore, we shall define a dispensationalist herein as one who accepts dispensationalism as his primary system of theology.
- That naturally brings us to the final term we need to briefly define.

**Dispensationalism:** A system of theology that recognizes God's different and progressive arrangements with man in distinct and recognizable stewardships (or economies) throughout history.

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1 "Covenant theologians hold that there are various dispensations (and even use the word) within the outworking of the covenant of grace. Charles Hodge, for instance, believed that there are four dispensations after the Fall—Adam to Abraham, Abraham to Moses, Moses to Christ, and Christ to the end. Berkhof writes ... of only two basic dispensations—the Old and the New, but within the Old he sees four periods and all of these are revelations of the covenant of grace." Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1946), 2:373-377; Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1941), 293-300; cited by Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 45.

2 Ibid.

**Define Some Traits:** A dispensationalist will exhibit certain traits in his understanding of Scripture. Charles Ryrie describes these traits as the "sine qua non" (the absolutely essential parts) of dispensationalism.<sup>3</sup>

- First on Ryrie's list of the essential elements of dispensationalism is the consistent distinction between Israel and the Church.<sup>4</sup>
  - ✓ Israel became a nation based on God's promises of their dominion over the nations of the earth (Gen 12.1-3; Exod 19.5-8). Their future is inextricably tied to the promised land on earth (Deut 30.15-16, 20) and their future promised King will reign from a throne on earth (2Sam 7.12-17).
  - ✓ The Church's conversation (citizenship, life, etc.) is said to be in heaven (Php 3.20). All the blessings given to a Christian at salvation are heavenly in nature (Eph 1.3) because that is where his home is (Eph 2.6).
  - ✓ J. Dwight Pentecost claimed, "Scripture is unintelligible until one can distinguish clearly between God's program for his earthly people Israel and that for the church."<sup>5</sup>
  - ✓ Lewis Sperry Chafer says that the substance of Judaism is a "consistent and eternal earthly purpose" while the substance of Christianity is a "consistent and eternal heavenly purpose." He concludes that thought saying, "Dispensationalism has its foundation in and is understood in the distinction between Judaism [Israel] and Christianity [the Church]."<sup>6</sup>
- This distinction is based on his second *sine qua non* of a normal-literal (plain) approach to understanding Scripture<sup>7</sup> (a normal-literal hermeneutic<sup>8</sup>).

**Describe the Thesis:** In this article I would like to apply the normal-literal hermeneutic to various passages dealing with the soteriology (and resulting eschatology) of Israel as compared to that of the Church.

- **Soteriology** refers to the study of salvation.
  - ✓ The Greek *soteria* means "salvation." The suffix *logy* refers to "the study of."
- **Eschatology** refers to the study of things to come (the future).
  - ✓ The Greek *eskhatos* means "last." The suffix *logy* refers to "the study of."
  - ✓ Thus *eschatology* is "the study of last things" (or "things to come" in the future of God's plan and purpose).
- There is an obvious connection between soteriology and eschatology.
  - ✓ A large part of the doctrine we consider to be eschatology is really the consummation of soteriology because it is the realization of the promises given to those who are saved.
- Chafer says that eschatology "reflects the scope and ultimate purpose of the soteriology to which it is related."<sup>9</sup>
  - ✓ **Scope:** Eschatology reflects the scope of the soteriology to which it relates.
    - The term *scope* refers to the extent, range, span, area, or breadth of a thing.
    - What does the salvation offered to a person (or a people) include? The answer would refer to the scope of his (or their) salvation.

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3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., 46.

5 J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Academie Books, 1964), 259.

6 Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Dispensationalism* (Fort Worth, Texas: Exegetica Publishing, 2015), 43.

7 Ibid., 47.

8 See my treatment of this one essential but independent part of dispensationalism: "Dispensationalism: A Self-Evident System of Theology," <http://greg.kedrovsky.net/english-blog/dispensations/135-dispensationalism-is-self-evident> (accessed October 28, 2017).

9 Chafer, *Dispensationalism*, 58.

- For example, the scope of the salvation of a Christian during the Church Age includes the new, spiritual birth and the seal of the Spirit of God. Is the scope of salvation for Israel under the Old Testament the same?
- To understand the scope of salvation, one simply needs to study the eschatology (the end result) of the salvation because there all of what is implied by the term "salvation" is seen in full.
- ✓ **Ultimate Purpose:** Eschatology reflects the ultimate purpose of soteriology.
  - Why (for what end) did God save us in the Church Age? What is His ultimate purpose in our salvation?
  - Why (for what end) did God save Israel in the Old Testament. What is His ultimate purpose in saving Israel?
  - We see the ultimate purpose of soteriology displayed in eschatology.
- If the eschatology of one people (their future) is different from the eschatology of another people, then to that same degree their soteriology is different (how they obtain salvation and what their salvation includes).

**Didactic Questions:** The following questions are a guide to the development of the content of this study.

1. What is a biblical definition of *salvation*?
2. What does the Bible say about the salvation of people during the Church Age (us)?
3. What does the Bible say about the salvation of Israel as a nation and of individual Israelites?

### **I. Salvation in the Bible: What is a biblical definition of *salvation*?**

- A. *Salvation*, as it is used in the Scripture, is a broad and inclusive term.
- B. C.I. Scofield provides a brief and succinct definition of the word *salvation* in his study Bible: "The Heb. and Gr. words for salvation imply the ideas of *deliverance, safety, preservation, healing, and soundness*."<sup>10</sup>
- C. Both Scofield<sup>11</sup> and Chafer<sup>12</sup> give lists of doctrines that are gathered together in the one, comprehensive term *salvation*:
 

1. Redemption	4. Conviction	7. Regeneration	10. Sanctification
2. Propitiation	5. Repentance	8. Forgiveness	11. Preservation
3. Imputation	6. Faith	9. Justification	12. Glorification
- D. There are two fundamental ideas with regard to salvation that will be used as focal points in this study.
  1. To be saved means to be rescued **from** a lost estate (forgiven of sin, rescued from hell).
  2. To be saved means to be brought **into** a saved estate (made fit for eternity with God).
  3. Chafer explains that "divine salvation provides a dismissal and removal of every charge against the sinner and equips him with eternal life in the place of death, with the perfect merit of Christ in the place of condemnation, and with forgiveness and justification in place of wrath."<sup>13</sup>
- E. In this study I will focus specifically on those aspects of salvation that deal with the forgiveness and taking away of sins (saved **from** sin) and the gift of eternal life (brought **into** an eternal estate with God).
- F. What does the Bible say about salvation today, during the Church Age, and salvation for an Israelite living during the Mosaic Dispensation of the Law?

<sup>10</sup> C.I. Scofield, *The Scofield Reference Bible* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1945), 1192.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications), 3:5.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

## II. Salvation in the Church Age: What does the Bible say about our salvation today?

### A. I want to begin by briefly examining the salvation of a sinner today, during the Church Age.

1. This is something we are all familiar with, therefore it will not require much explanation.
2. It is also relatively easy to understand based on the large amount of biblical material to draw from.
  - a) Contrasting salvation today with that of the Israelite under the Law, Chafer says, "For want of specific revelation, the salvation of the individual under Judaism—with regard to the terms, time, and general character—is obscure to men."
  - b) His comment highlights the fact that the terms, time, and general character of the salvation of the individual during the Church Age is *not* obscure to men.
3. Therefore I want to briefly examine Church-Age salvation in the past, present, and future (tying in soteriology—the doctrine of salvation—with its eschatology—things to come).
  - a) In the past, a Christian was saved from the punishment of sin.
  - b) In the present, a Christian is being saved from the power of sin.
  - c) In the future, a Christian will be saved from the very presence of sin.

### B. A Christian's "Past" Salvation

1. An individual in the Church Age is totally and completely saved in the moment he believes (when he repents and places his faith and trust) in the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. In the moment of his conversion, all of his sins (past, present, and future) are forgiven and forgotten by God.

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having **forgiven you all trespasses**. [Col 2.13]

3. In the moment of his conversion, he is made alive—he receives eternal life.

And you hath he **quickened**, who were dead in trespasses and sins. [Eph 2.1]

- a) His eternal life is based on Christ and Christ's sacrifice in his place.

That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto **eternal life** by Jesus Christ our Lord. [Rom 5.21]

- b) His eternal life is a *gift* to be *received* and not in any way some sort of *reward* or *inheritance* to be *earned*.

For the wages of sin is death; but **the gift of God is eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord. [Rom 6.23]

- (1) The inheritance he can earn is his reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the **reward of the inheritance**: for ye serve the Lord Christ. [Col 3.24]

- (2) His salvation is a gift of God. It is not his inheritance.

For by grace are ye **saved** through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: **Not of works**, lest any man should boast. [Eph 2.8-9]

4. In the moment of his conversion, the Christian receives eternal life because in that same moment he is regenerated (made alive spiritually; born again; born spiritually) by the Holy Spirit of God.

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy **he saved us, by the washing of regeneration**, and renewing of the **Holy Ghost**. [Titus 3.5]

5. After one becomes a born-again Christian, he cannot lose the Holy Spirit he received and because of that his new life and salvation are eternal from their very beginning.

In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were **sealed with that holy Spirit** of promise, Which is the **earnest of our inheritance until the redemption** of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. [Eph 1.13-14]

And grieve not **the holy Spirit of God**, whereby ye are **sealed unto the day of redemption**. [Eph 4.30]

- a) The Christian has complete and eternal forgiveness of sins in the moment he is saved.  
 b) The Christian has eternal and everlasting life with God from the moment he is saved.
6. The Christian also receives all spiritual blessings in the moment he is saved and united with Christ by the Holy Spirit. It is a gift he received by God's grace. It is not something he had to work for.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who **hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings** in heavenly places in Christ. [Eph 1.3]

7. All of this happened in the "past," in the moment the lost sinner repented of his sins and placed his faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- a) All of this is clear and plain to see just by reading through a few books of the New Testament.  
 b) As far as the time, terms, and general character of our salvation with regard to the past, Scripture is clear, detailed, and abundant.

### C. A Christian's "Present" Salvation

1. We are currently "being saved" from the power of sin (its control and dominion over our lives) through the process of sanctification.

But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to **salvation through sanctification** of the Spirit and belief of the truth. [2Thes 2.13]

- a) The salvation spoken of in this verse is the salvation that comes through sanctification.  
 b) This is not the past salvation that started the process of sanctification. This is rather the perfecting process of God applying His Word to our lives through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

And that from a child thou hast known the holy **scriptures**, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All **scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God **may be perfect**, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. [2Tim 3.15-17]

- c) This is the process of being conformed to the image of Christ (growing in His likeness).

For the **perfecting of the saints**, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man**, unto the measure of the stature of **the fulness of Christ**. [Eph 4.12-13]

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be **conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. [Rom 8.29]

2. God expects us to take the salvation we received in the past and "work it out" in every area of our lives.

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling. [Php 2.12]

3. We need to understand, however, that regardless of how much this is sanctification (our "present" salvation "worked out" in our lives) is conditioned on our devotion to God (and it is), it is ultimately guaranteed in the Lord Jesus Christ. What God started in the past, He will complete.

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. [Php 1.6]

#### D. A Christian's "Future" Salvation

1. There is an aspect of our salvation that is still yet future.

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for **now is our salvation nearer** than when we believed. [Rom 13.11]

2. In the future, when Christ returns for His Church, we will be saved from the very presence of sin because in that moment we will receive our glorified bodies that will never sin.

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed**, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised **incorruptible**, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on **incorruption**, and this mortal must put on **immortality**. So when this corruptible shall have put on **incorruption**, and this mortal shall have put on **immortality**, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. [1Cor 15.51-54]

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall **change our vile body**, that it may be fashioned **like unto his glorious body**, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. [Php 3.20-21]

3. This "future" salvation is also a gift of God given to us by His grace. It does not depend on us, our works, or our devotion to God at all. It is a gift we received (a predetermined destination) in Christ.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did **predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. [Rom 8.28-29]

#### E. Salvation and Anachronisms

1. Salvation for a Christian is easy to examine, study, and understand. There is much detailed Scripture written about this gracious gift from God.
2. Salvation today in the Church Age is a gift given by God by His grace. This gift is received by faith (a repentant faith; a conversion) and it results in a new birth. Works are not *necessary* for the conversion and new birth but they are *inevitable* after it.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. [Eph 2.8-10]

3. Was an individual Israelite in the Old Testament saved the same way as you? Was he saved in the same time frame as you? Was he guaranteed the same things as you? Was his salvation conditioned the same as yours?
  - a) With regard to "time": What did the Israelite understand as his "past," "present," and "future" salvation?
    - When did (or will) an Israelite receive complete and eternal forgiveness of sins and eternal life?
  - b) With regard to "terms": What were God's terms (conditions) for an Israelite to be saved (to be forgiven completely and eternally, and to receive eternal life)?
    - What did God require of an Israelite to be forgiven completely and given eternal life (born again)?
  - c) With regard to "general character": What did an individual Israel understand to be his "salvation"?
    - When an Israel said "God saved me," what did he mean? When he referred to the salvation God gave him, to what was he referring?

## 4. Anachronisms

- a) We have a very troublesome tendency to commit anachronistic errors in our understanding of the Bible.
  - b) An *anachronism* is:<sup>14</sup>
    - (1) Something or someone not in its correct historical or chronological time.
    - (2) An error in chronology in which a person, object, event [or doctrine] is assigned a date or period other than the correct one.
  - c) The word *anachronism* is the combination of two constructs from Greek:<sup>15</sup>
    - (1) The prefix (loan word from Greek) *ana-* means *backward, up, or against*.
    - (2) The root *-chronism* which comes from the Greek word *khronos* means *time*.
    - (3) Together, *ana-chronism*, means *to make a wrong time reference*.
  - d) Anachronistic errors are common in the study of the Bible because of the nature of the revelation God gave in Scripture. It is *progressive* revelation.
    - (1) Dr. Clarence E. Mason Jr. rightly observed, "It was not God's purpose to reveal all truth concerning any one doctrine at one given time. Rather His method has been to unfold progressively the doctrine through successive writers."<sup>16</sup>
    - (2) This means "God makes the revelation of any given truth increasingly clear as the Word proceeds to its consummation."<sup>17</sup>
    - (3) Because we see this principle in our normal-literal (plain) understanding of Scripture (we naturally see that later passages of the Bible shed light on the more obscure earlier passages), we run the risk of applying doctrine given later in history to other people in separate historical contexts. For example:
      - (a) Many people read New Testament salvation (terms, time, general character) into the Old Testament by saying the Old Testament Israelites were saved the same way we are today. Is that true? Is that what the Bible teaches?
      - (b) Others may read Old Testament promises to Israel (e.g., temporal, earthly prosperity) into the New Testament by saying those promises were given to us in the Church Age. Is that true? Does the Bible teach the Church is "spiritual" Israel today?
5. When studying the soteriology (and the resulting eschatology) of Israel, we need to guard against committing these anachronistic errors.
- a) Chafer indicated this tendency to anachronistically misapply doctrine when he referred to the "all-too-common practice of imposing Christianity back upon Judaism or Judaism forward upon Christianity."<sup>18</sup> He said this practice is a cause of "dire confusion"<sup>19</sup> in much teaching today.

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14 *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1996), 73.

15 *Ibid.*, 72-73.

16 Clarence E. Mason, Jr., "Understanding the Bible, Part IV – Introduction to Hermeneutics" (Cairn University and AncientPath.net, circa 1970), under "Law of Analogy of Faith," [http://www.ancientpath.net/Bible/PBU/Mason/BI/BI\\_Hermeneutics/mason\\_BI\\_Herm\\_5.htm](http://www.ancientpath.net/Bible/PBU/Mason/BI/BI_Hermeneutics/mason_BI_Herm_5.htm) (accessed October 29, 2017).

17 J. Edwin Hartill, *Principles of Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Academie Books, 1947), 73.

18 Chafer, *Dispensationalism*, 43.

19 *Ibid.*

b) Firstly, therefore, we need to understand that Israel's doctrine of salvation was revealed prior to the Church's doctrine of salvation, therefore it will naturally be less clear since it appears earlier in the progressive revelation of Scripture.

(1) Chafer touches on this when he says that in comparison with what is said about salvation in the New Testament, "the Old Testament doctrine of salvation is more involved."<sup>20</sup>

(2) It is "more involved" because it is less clear in the progression of revelation.

c) Secondly, we need to understand that Israel's doctrine of salvation could be (and in reality is) quite different than the doctrine of salvation given to the Church.

(1) For example, Chafer describes the general character of salvation for an Israelite when he says, "In the Old Testament, the English word *salvation* presents a latitude of meaning ranging from deliverance from enemies to right relations with God."<sup>21</sup>

(2) In the following study I will touch upon the salvation of Israel from her enemies (her conditional promises of prosperity and peace in the land). Many passages in the Old Testament refer to this kind of temporal, political, military salvation (Exod 14.13; 1Sam 11.13).

(3) This study, however, focuses mainly on the salvation that encompasses the taking away of sins and the gift of eternal life.

(a) Israel's eternal salvation is not different than the Christian's with regard to the way God provided that salvation. It is by grace, ultimately through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

(b) However, it may very well be (and in reality is) different with regard to how the Israelites received salvation (the forgiveness of sins and eternal life).

6. An Israelite's salvation under the Old Testament was not received in the same way a Christian received salvation under the New Testament.

a) Dr. Chafer provides another insightful observation which serves to introduce the following section of study. He says, "The Old Testament will be searched in vain for record of Jews passing from an unsaved to a saved state, or for any declaration about the terms upon which such a change would be secured."<sup>22</sup>

b) What does the Bible say about the salvation of Israel and about the salvation of Israelites?

### **III. Salvation for Israel: What does the Bible say about the salvation of Israel and of Israelites?**

#### **A. Israel's forgiveness of sins and eternal life was a future hope.**

1. For Israel, salvation (the taking away of their sins and the gift of eternal life) "was a future expectation and related to those requirements which are particular to Judaism."<sup>23</sup>

2. The first observation to make in the previous quote is that Israelites did not have complete forgiveness of sins and the guarantee of eternal life as the Christian does today. Theirs was a *future hope* (an expectation, not a past event or guarantee).

3. The second observation we should make here is that the Israelite's future hope of eternal salvation was based on specific requirements given to the nation of Israel in their religious system called Judaism (i.e., the requirements for, the terms of, and the conditions of their salvation were contained the Scripture given to Israel).

<sup>20</sup> Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 3:3.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 6:73.

<sup>23</sup> Chafer, *Dispensationalism*, 59.

4. With this in mind, the following study will briefly examine what the Bible says about Israel's salvation in the past, the present, and the future.
  - a) Please note the context of these time references. The contextual reference is to an Israelite living before Christ, under the Old Testament.
  - b) Therefore the "present" referred to in the following study is the time before Christ.
  - c) A Jew today is saved in the same way as anyone else. During the Church Age all of God's covenants with Israel are in abeyance and all receive salvation the same way.<sup>24</sup>

## B. Israel's "Past" Salvation

1. Here we are referring to the "past" of an Israelite living before Christ, under the Old Testament.
2. The Abrahamic Covenant:

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. [Gen 12.1-3]

- a) Because an Israelite was born as a physical descendant of Abraham (in Genesis 12, still called Abram) through Isaac and Jacob, he was born into guarantees of blessing, of rule over other peoples, and of possession of the promised land (unconditionally given later in Genesis 12.7 and various other passages modifying and expanding this land grant).
- b) One important observation here is that these promises were given to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as a whole (i.e., the family and later the nation of Israel). These promises were not necessarily given to each individual of the nation of Israel; they were given to the nation.
- c) This national aspect of the promises of the covenant must be kept in mind because...
  - (1) Even though "all Israel" is guaranteed salvation by God's eternal covenants and promises to that nation (starting with the Abrahamic covenant)...
 

And so all Israel shall be saved... [Rom 11.26]
  - (2) Not all individual Israelites were counted as forming part of Israel.
 

Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel. [Rom 9.6]
  - (3) Throughout Israel's history there have always been faithful and devoted Jews who were reckoned as "true" Israel. The unbelieving and rebellious Jews were purged out of the nation and her promised blessings in spite of their forming part of the physical line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (who was later called Israel).
 

Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved. [Rom 9.27]
- d) Later in this study we will see God's conditions for the individual Israelite to participate in the national covenants and promises. At this point we are simply observing that because an Israelite was born in the physical line of Abraham through Israel, he automatically participated to some degree in the promises of God's blessing in the Abrahamic covenant.

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<sup>24</sup> Chafer explains that during the current Church Age God's covenants with Israel are in abeyance—they are in temporary inactivity, cessation, or suspension (Mat 23.38-39; Luke 21.24; Acts 15.15-18; Rom 11.25-27). He says, "...in this age, the present offers of divine grace are extended to individual Jews as they are to individual Gentiles (Rom 10:2)... the individual Jew is now divinely reckoned to be as much in need of salvation as the individual Gentile (Rom 3:9)... These facts, related as they are to the present age-purpose—the calling out of the Church from both Jews and Gentiles alike (Eph 3:6)—have no bearing upon the divine purpose for the coming kingdom age when, according to covenant promise, Israel will be saved and dwell safely in her own land (Deut. 30:3-6; Jer 28:5-6; 33:15-17." Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 3:105.

### 3. The Mosaic Covenant:

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD. [Exod 19.5-8]

- a) Because an individual Israelite was born physically as a member of God's elect nation Israel, he also participated in the conditional covenant of the Law.
- b) The Mosaic and the Abrahamic covenants formed part of Israel's "past." They guaranteed certain things to the nation of Israel that no other nation on earth received.
- c) When an Israelite living under the Old Testament (between Moses and Christ) thought of his "past salvation," these two covenants were in the forefront of his mind.

### 4. An Israelite had a special covenant relationship with God based on his physical birth.

- a) An individual Israelite, because of his physical birth, had a special relationship to God based on God's covenants and promises to the nation of Israel.
- b) This did not necessarily provide him with forgiveness of sins and eternal life, but it did place him in a standing with God that made forgiveness and eternal life possible.
- c) By way of contrast, the Gentiles (those not physically born in the line of Abraham through Israel) did not have this hope because they were complete strangers from the covenants of promise.

Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past **Gentiles** in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being **aliens from the commonwealth of Israel**, and **strangers from the covenants of promise**, having no hope, and without God in the world. [Eph 2.11-12]

- (1) Even though the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants did not provide each individual Israelite with eternal salvation (forgiveness of sins and eternal life), they did give him the hope of that salvation.
- (2) The Gentiles, being aliens and strangers from the covenants with Israel, did not even have that kind of hope of salvation.

### 5. Contrast the "past salvation" of an Israelite with that of a Christian.

- a) When an Israelite living in the Old Testament thought about his "salvation" in the "past," he never thought about his "decision" to follow God or about his "conversion" to follow God. Those are uniquely Christian concepts under the New Testament.
- b) An individual Israelite under the Old Testament looked to God's covenants and promises given to his forefathers. He looked to his participation in those covenants and promises by his physical birth (whereas the Christian looks to his participation in God's plan and purpose based on a spiritual birth).
- c) We need to also reiterate that this "past" salvation of Israel did not guarantee an individual Israelite forgiveness of sins and eternal life. To understand this, we need to look now at Israel's "future" salvation.

## C. Israel's "Future" Salvation

1. In order to understand an Israelites "present" concept of salvation (as he lived out his life under the Law in the Old Testament), we need to understand what God offered him in the future based on what God promised him in the past (based on the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants).

## 2. Israel's Salvation is Yet Future

- a) The taking away of the sins of Israel and the gift of eternal life to Israel is something promised for the *future*, not something that was obtained by them in the past.
- b) Israel's salvation—the taking away of their sins—occurs when the Deliverer comes out of Zion.

And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. [Rom 11.26-27]

- (1) (Rom 11.26) The salvation of Israel happens at the second coming of Christ (when he, the Deliverer, comes out of Zion).
- (2) (Rom 11.27) The future salvation of the individual Israelite, therefore, was based on the promise of the New Covenant.

## 3. The New Covenant with Israel

- a) The New Covenant is an unconditional covenant of life and blessing that God promised to Israel.
- b) Paul's statement in Romans 11.26-27 comes from Isaiah 59.20-21. Notice the conditions placed on those who would participate in the New Covenant.

And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is **my covenant** unto them, when I shall take away their sins. [Rom 11.26-27]

And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and **unto them that turn from transgression** in Jacob, saith the LORD. As for me, this is **my covenant with them**, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, **from henceforth and for ever**. [Isa 59.20-21]

- (1) Those of Jacob (the physical descendants of Jacob/Israel) who "turn from transgression" are those who will be accepted into this covenant.
- (2) Their acceptance into the New Covenant results in their eternal relationship of blessing with God: "...from henceforth and for ever."
- c) Before we move on, we need to make sure we understand two concepts here:
  - (1) God provided a future eternal salvation for Israel in the New Covenant and His promises in that covenant are *unconditional* ("...from henceforth and for ever...").
  - (2) Entrance into the New Covenant, however, was *conditional* (those who get in are "...them that turn from transgression...").

## 4. Israel's "Eternal Salvation" is Found in the New Covenant

- a) Though Israel, through their rebellion and disobedience, broke the Mosaic covenant, God promised them a New Covenant "after those days" of the Tribulation (i.e., at the second coming of Christ). This New Covenant results in the *eternal reconciliation* of Israel with God.

And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is **my covenant** unto them, when I shall take away their sins. [Rom 11.26-27]

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: **Not according to the covenant** that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; **which my covenant they brake**, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But **this shall be the covenant** that I will make with the house of Israel; **After those days**, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for **I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more**. [Jer 31.31-34]

- b) In the New Covenant God promises Israel *eternal forgiveness* (the "taking away" of their sins; not just the temporary "covering" of their sins like they had with the system of animal sacrifices). This refers to the "blotting out" of Israel's sins at the second coming of the Lord.

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, **that your sins may be blotted out, *when*** the times of refreshing shall come from **the presence of the Lord**; And he shall **send Jesus Christ**, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. [Acts 3.19-21]

- c) In the New Covenant God promises Israel *eternal life*.

- (1) Israel will receive spiritual (eternal) life when they receive the eternal Spirit of God.

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. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. [Ezek 36.24-28]

- (a) This is a promise that is yet future in its fulfillment; it will happen at the second coming, when Israel is restored one last and final time to their promised land.
- (b) Notice that this new life (spiritual and eternal) happens at the same time God cleanses them and gives them a new heart that is able to walk in all His ways. This is the same promise seen in Jeremiah 31.31-34, the New Covenant.

- (2) According to the Prophecy of the Valley of Dry Bones in Ezekiel 37.1-14, Israel will live when they receive the Spirit of God.

And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD. [Ezek 37.14]

- (3) This new spiritual and eternal life is the regeneration of Israel. Israel's regeneration is yet future and will happen for the entire nation at one specific point in time: the second coming, when Christ returns to establish his Messianic Kingdom (the Millennium).

And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in **the regeneration *when* the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory**, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. [Mat 19.28]

- d) Israel's eternal salvation was always a future hope, *not* a past event.

But Israel ***shall be saved*** in the LORD with an ***everlasting*** salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. [Isa 45.17]

## 5. Summary & Review: Israel's eternal salvation is yet future.

- a) The taking away of Israel's sins and their receiving of eternal life are still yet future. This eternal salvation was promised to Israel in the New Covenant and will be given to them (fulfilled) at the second coming of Christ when the Lord returns to establish his Messiah Kingdom on earth (the Millennium).

- b) God's promise is that "all Israel shall be saved" (an event yet future).

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. [Rom 11.26-27]

- c) God called the nation of Israel out from among the other nations and he gave Israel gifts (covenants and promises) that were not given to any other nation. He will fulfill all His promises He made to His elect nation, Israel.

For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. [Rom 11.29]

- d) That, however, does *not* mean every individual Israelite will receive every promised blessing. The promises in the covenants were given to the nation as a whole; they were not give to the individuals making up that nation. Therefore an individual Israelite was *not guaranteed* forgiveness of sins and eternal life based on the promises and covenants given to the nation.

Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For **they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.** [Rom 9.6]

- e) Only a very small portion of physical Israel (a remnant, a seed) will ultimately enter the promised Messianic Kingdom with forgiveness of sins and eternal life under the New Covenant.

Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, **a remnant shall be saved:** For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us **a seed**, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. [Rom 9.27-29]

- f) This begs the question: ***What must an Israelite do, then, to be saved?***

#### D. Israel's "Present" Salvation

##### 1. Remember the context:

- a) In this section we are *not* talking about the salvation of an Israelite today in the Church Age.
- Salvation today is the same for Jew and Gentile, and when either is saved today, he stops being a Jew or a Gentile and becomes an entirely new creature: a son of God by new birth (2Cor 5.17; Gal 3.28).
- b) In this section we are talking about the salvation of a Jew *outside* the Church Age, specifically the salvation of a Jew under the Mosaic Law during the Old Testament.

- (1) It is obvious that the Law of Moses could not save an Israelite in the sense of procuring complete forgiveness and eternal life.

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. [Rom 3.20]

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. [Gal 2.16]

- (2) It is also obvious that the taking away of sins and eternal life is provided for Israel under the New Covenant (Jer 31.31-34 cf. Ezek 36.24-28 and 37.1-14).<sup>25</sup>

For this is **my blood of the new testament**, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. [Mat 26.28]

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but **by his own blood** he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained **eternal redemption** for us. [Heb 9.12]

And for this cause he is the mediator of **the new testament**, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive **the promise of eternal inheritance.** [Heb 9.15]

- (3) The promise of salvation to Israel (complete forgiveness of sin and eternal life) is something yet future for them; it is a promise of God that He will fulfill at the second coming of the Lord (when Christ returns to earth to sit upon David's throne and establish the Messianic Kingdom called the Millennium).

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall **he appear the second time** without sin **unto salvation.** [Heb 9.28]

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.** [Rom 11.26-27]

<sup>25</sup> The new "testament" of these verses is the new "covenant" established with the death of Christ (his shed blood; Heb 8; 12.24; 13.20). The same Greek word (*diatheke*) is translated as both *testament* and *covenant*.

- c) The present question is this: How did an individual Israelite living under the Old Testament of the Mosaic Law "get in" to the New Testament (the New Covenant that promised complete forgiveness of sins and eternal life)?
- (1) What were the terms and conditions of eternal salvation that God placed on Israelites living under the Law?
  - (2) Today we "look back to the cross" through repentance and faith to be saved (to received complete forgiveness of sins and eternal life).
  - (3) How did the Israelite living under the Mosaic Law obtain the hope of eternal salvation?
- d) This question is what brings us to Israel's "present" salvation.
- (1) The "past" salvation of an Israelite living under the Old Testament Law was based on his physical birth into covenant relationship with God (specifically the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants that promised Israel prosperity and peace in the promised land).
  - (2) This "past" salvation, however *did not* guarantee the individual Israelite eternal (future) salvation (what we understand to be "saved": complete forgiveness and eternal life).
  - (3) Therefore, when we think of an Israelites "present" salvation (that of an Israelite living between Moses and Christ), we need to think about what he understood to be his hope of eternal salvation while he lived out his life under the Old Testament while anticipating the New.
  - (4) ***What did an Israelite have to do to be saved?***

## 2. Two Aspects of Israel's "Present" Salvation

- a) Because Israel was given past covenants *and* promised future covenants, the "salvation" of an Israelite had two aspects.
- (1) First, their current prosperity and peace in the land (blessing from God and freedom from oppression at the hand of their enemies) was based on the Mosaic Covenant and the Law.
  - (2) Second, their future participation in the eternal Messianic Kingdom (complete forgiveness of sins, eternal life, etc.) was based on the promises found in the New Covenant.
- b) Both of these systems (the Mosaic System and the Messianic Kingdom) formed part of an Israelites understanding of his "salvation," therefore both are considered below.

## 3. Israel's Temporal "Salvation" in the Land: The Mosaic System

- a) The Mosaic Covenant was entirely works-based. "If" Israel fulfilled the conditions God establish, "then" God would fulfill His conditional promises.

Now therefore, *if* ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, *then* ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD. [Exod 19.5-8]

- b) The Mosaic system was designed to govern Israel in the land and it consisted of three main parts.<sup>26</sup> These three parts make up what is referred to as "the Law."
- (1) (Exod 20.1-26) The Commandments: These governed Israel's moral life.
  - (2) (Exod 21.1-24.11) The Judgments: These governed Israel's civic (social) life.
  - (3) (Exod 24.12-31.18) The Ordinances: These governed Israel's religious life.

## c) The Sacrifices

- (1) The sacrifices under the Mosaic system (contained in the "ordinances") were given to the Jews as a way back into right covenant relationship with God after they sinned.<sup>27</sup>
- (2) As we have seen, an individual Israelite was born into covenant relationship with God by his physical birth.
  - (a) The Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12.1-3) promised him God's blessing (prosperity and peace) in the land.
  - (b) The Mosaic Covenant promised him the present experience of that blessing based (conditioned) on his obedience to the Law.
    - i) (Deut 28.1-9ff) If Israel obeyed the Law, they experienced "salvation" from their enemies and prosperity in the land.
    - ii) (Deut 28.15-19, 63-64) If Israel disobeyed the Law, they lost that "salvation" and suffered from oppression and famine.
- (3) The system of sacrifices under the Law served "as a basis for divine forgiveness and as a way back into these blessings and relationships belonging to their covenants... the sacrifices for Israel served to provide a ground for forgiveness and restoration of covenant people."<sup>28</sup>
- (4) The Mosaic system of the Law could never provide eternal salvation for the Israelite.
  - (a) No man could ever be justified by the Law because no man (except Christ) ever kept the whole Law always (hence the need for sacrifices).
 

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, **Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things** which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that **no man is justified by the law** in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. [Gal 3.10-11]
  - (b) The blood of the animal sacrifices could never "take away sins". It could only temporarily "cover" those sins in anticipation of the ultimate and perfect sacrifice of Christ (that would establish the New Covenant).
 

For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. [Heb 10.4]
  - (c) The Old Testament system of animal sacrifices, then, provided a way to forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin, but the blood of animals could never permanently (eternally) "clear the guilty."
 

And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, **forgiving** iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty... [Exod 34.6-7]
  - (d) (Heb 10.1-18) Eternal salvation (the eternal "taking away" of sins) is found in the New Covenant based on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.
 

This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And **their sins** and iniquities will I **remember no more**. [Heb 10.16-17]
  - (e) Once a person is in the New Covenant, he has eternal redemption (eternal life).
 

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but **by his own blood** he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained **eternal redemption** for us. [Heb 9.12]

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27 Ibid., 55.

28 Ibid.

## d) Summary &amp; Review

- (1) God required obedience to the Law for an Israelite to experience the temporal "salvation" of prosperity and peace in the promised land.
  - (a) God gave Israel the system of sacrifices as a means of forgiveness when they failed to keep the Law.
  - (b) Those sacrifices, however, were never meant (never able) to "clear the guilty" and provide Israel with a hope of eternal salvation.
- (2) And therefore we come back to the original question: What did God require of the Israelite to experience complete, eternal forgiveness of sins and to receive eternal life?
  - (a) Because with his first transgression of the Law, an Israelite was guilty of all.
 

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. [Jam 2.10]
  - (b) The blood of bulls and goats could never take away his sin; it could only cover it until the ultimate sacrifice was made by Christ. The shed blood of Christ ratified the New Covenant (it marked the beginning of the New Covenant; it made it officially valid).
  - (c) What did God require of an Israelite to allow him entrance into the promises of the New Covenant?

4. Israel's Eternal Salvation: A Future "Inheritance"

- a) Eternal salvation (the taking away of sins and the promise of eternal life) was offered to Israel as a future inheritance in the Messianic Kingdom.
- b) Eternal salvation is provided in the New Covenant that was established by Christ's shed blood on the cross.
 

For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. [Mat 26.28]

Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. [Luke 22.20]

And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. [Mark 14.24]

And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called **might receive the promise of eternal inheritance**. [Heb 9.15]
- c) This eternal salvation under the New Covenant was presented in the Old Testament as a future inheritance.
  - (1) Israel's hope of life for his soul was a future hope (not a past experience like the Christian). Notice in Isaiah 55.3 that the everlasting covenant (the New Covenant) is what gave the Israelite "salvation" in his "soul," that hope of salvation was something yet future for him.
 

Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and **your soul shall live**; and I will make **an everlasting covenant** with you, even the sure mercies of David. [Isa 55.3]
  - (2) The everlasting (eternal) life of the individual Israelite was something yet future for him.
 

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to **everlasting life**, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. [Dan 12.2]
  - (3) Commenting on the everlasting life mentioned in Daniel 12.2, Chafer rightly observes that the "life is nor more in their possession in this present existence than is the 'contempt.'" <sup>29</sup>

- d) This future inheritance of eternal life was inextricably tied with the promise of the future Messianic Kingdom on earth.
- (1) All of Israel's promised blessing from God under the Abrahamic Covenant was inextricably tied to the land promised them under the same Covenant.
 

And the LORD said unto Abram... **all the land** which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed **for ever**. [Gen 13.14-15]
  - (2) Their future hope was to return to their promised land and occupy it forever with the Messiah their King reigning on the throne of David.
 

And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel **to return**, and will build them, as at the first. And **I will cleanse them from all their iniquity**, whereby they have sinned against me; and **I will pardon all their iniquities**, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. [Jer 33.7-8]

In those days, and at that time, will I cause **the Branch of righteousness** to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness **in the land**. In those days **shall Judah be saved**, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness. For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon **the throne of the house of Israel**. [Jer 33.15-17]
  - (3) For an Israelite under the Old Testament, when he thought of "eternal life," he immediately thought about *the future* and his *inheritance* of complete forgiveness of sins and of eternal life *in the land* under the Messiah; **he thought about the Kingdom**.
  - (4) This future hope of inherited eternal life in the Messianic Kingdom was based on the "Land and Life" (i.e., Palestinian) Covenant.

#### 5. Israel's Eternal Salvation: Conditioned in the Palestinian Covenant, Deuteronomy 29-30

- a) Israel's promise of "life" with God in the future was *conditioned* in the Palestinian Covenant
  - (1) Their participation in the future kingdom that was later revealed to be based on the New Covenant was *conditioned* by the Palestinian Covenant.
  - (2) The Palestinian Covenant gives the *conditions* under which the individual Israelite received the *land* and eternal *life* as his *inheritance* under the New Covenant.
- b) The Palestinian Covenant was "beside" (in addition to) the Mosaic Covenant (i.e., it is a covenant God established with Israel within the context and confines of the Mosaic Dispensation).

These are the words of **the covenant**, which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, **beside the covenant** which he made with them in Horeb. [Deut 29.1]

- (1) The Palestinian Covenant promises a return to the *land* (after the dispersion spoken of because of their anticipated disobedience; Deut 28.63-64).
 

That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And **the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it**; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. [Deut 30.3-5]
- (2) The Palestinian Covenant promises *life*.
 

And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, **that thou mayest live**. [Deut 30.6]
- (3) Each *individual* Israelite was offered the *choice* of life and land in this covenant.
 

See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil. [Deut 30.15]

I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore **choose life**, that both thou and thy seed may live. [Deut 30.19]

c) The conditions of the Palestinian Covenant are clear.

(1) Those Israelites who would "choose life" and possess the promised land in the future are those who exhibited the following:

And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. [Deut 30.2]

And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. [Deut 30.8]

If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. [Deut 30.10]

In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. [Deut 30.16]

That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. [Deut 30.20]

(a) **Repentance** (of sin... toward the Lord)

i) (v2) "...return unto the Lord..."

ii) (v8) "...return..."

iii) (v10) "...turn unto the Lord..."

(b) **Faith** (in the Lord)

• (v20) "...cleave unto him..."

(c) **Submission** (to the Lord)

• (v10) "...hearken unto the voice of the Lord..."

(d) **Obedience** (to the Mosaic Law)

i) Observe here the connection between the two covenants:

- The Palestinian Covenant required obedience to the Mosaic Law as a condition of receiving what God promised in the Covenant.
- The Palestinian Covenant was dependent on the Mosaic Covenant (it was a covenant made within a covenant).

ii) (v2) They were to obey the Lord's voice in all He commanded them that day (that day when Moses was reading through the Law in Deuteronomy).

iii) (v8) They were to obey the voice of the Lord and do all the commandments that were commanded that day (the commandments of the Law of Moses).

iv) (v10) They were to obey God's commandments and statutes written in the Book of the Law.

v) (v16) They were to keep God's commandments, statutes, and judgments.

vi) (v20) They were to obey God's voice (i.e., His words).

(2) These four conditions (repentance, faith, submission, and obedience) are summed up in one word: *devotion*.

(a) The *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* defines *devotion* as "profound dedication, consecration; earnest attachment to a cause, person, etc." It gives as synonyms "zeal" and "ardor." And at the very end of the definition in this unabridged dictionary are these words: "See **love**."<sup>30</sup>

(b) Israel was required to love God by keeping His commandments, and when they loved God in devotion to Him (obeying Him), God promised to love them.

He that hath my commandments, and **keepeth** them, he it is that **loveth** me: and he that loveth me **shall be loved of my Father**, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. [John 14.21]

(c) God required of the Israelite the *utmost* love and devotion. He required all his heart and all his soul—complete devotion to the Lord.

And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with **all thine heart**, and with **all thy soul**. [Deut 30.2]

If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with **all thine heart**, and with **all thy soul**. [Deut 30.10]

In that I command thee this day to **love the LORD thy God**, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. [Deut 30.16]

d) The *realization* and *fulfillment* of the "life and land" promises of the Palestinian Covenant is the second coming of the Lord (when the Lord returns to restore Israel in the land).

That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and **will return** and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. [Deut 30.3]

(1) This is the time of Israel's final and permanent *restoration* to the land.

If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the LORD thy God will **bring thee into the land** which thy fathers possessed, and **thou shalt possess it**; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. [Deut 30.4-5]

In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee **in the land** whither thou goest **to possess it**. [Deut 30.16]

That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest  **dwell in the land** which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. [Deut 30.20]

(2) This is the time when Israel receives the circumcision of the heart.

And the LORD thy God will **circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed**, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, ... [Deut 30.6a]

(3) This is the time when Israel is regenerated by the Spirit of God.

...that thou mayest **live**. [Deut 30.6b]

30 *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1996), 544.

e) By this, therefore, we understand that the Palestinian Covenant establishes the conditions each individual Israelite had to meet in order to participate in the New Covenant.

(1) The Time: The New Covenant goes into effect for Israel "after those days" of the Tribulation (i.e., at the second coming of the Lord to the earth to establish the Messianic Kingdom of the Millennium). This is the same time as the realization of the Palestinian Covenant (when the Lord "will return"; Deut 30.3).

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; **After those days**, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. [Jer 31.31-34]

(2) The Duration: The New Covenant (like the promises in the Palestinian Covenant) will be an everlasting covenant.

Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that **I will not turn away from them**, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that **they shall not depart from me**. [Jer 32.37-40]

(3) Complete Forgiveness: The New Covenant will go into effect when God takes away sin from Israel (necessary for the complete and permanent reconciliation between God and Israel that is promised in the Palestinian Covenant).

And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first. And **I will cleanse them from all their iniquity**, whereby they have sinned against me; and **I will pardon all their iniquities**, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. [Jer 33.7-8]

(4) The Kingdom: The New Covenant will mark the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom (what we call the Millennium; this is the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant made in 2Samuel 7 and was hinted at in the Palestinian Covenant with the promise of the "return" of the Lord; Deut 30.3).

In those days, and at that time, will I cause **the Branch of righteousness** to grow up unto David; and **he** shall execute judgment and righteousness **in the land**. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness. For thus saith the LORD; **David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel**; [Jer 33.15-17]

## 6. Israel's Future Salvation: An Inheritance Conditioned on Complete Devotion

a) An Israelite's inheritance of future salvation (complete forgiveness of sins and eternal life in the land God promised to Abraham) depended on his strict, devoted, wholehearted submission and obedience to God.

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto **life**, and **few** there be that find it. [Mat 7.13-14]

- (1) Few entered that strait gate; few followed that narrow way unto eternal life. This is exactly what Paul was referring to in Romans 9 when he said only a "remnant" and a "seed" would be saved from the entire physical line of Israel.

Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, **a remnant shall be saved**: For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us **a seed**, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. [Rom 9.27-29]

- (2) Faith alone was not enough for the Israelite to receive eternal life in the Messianic Kingdom. He was also required to do the will of the Father.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall **enter into the kingdom of heaven**; but he that **doeth the will of my Father** which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. [Mat 7.21-23]

- (3) The individual Israelite had to "strive" (work hard! to be zealous! to devote himself completely!) to enter in through the strait gate.

**Strive** to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. [Luke 13.24]

- (4) Observe that all of the aforementioned passages of Scripture in the Gospels were spoken to Jews living under the Mosaic Law.

(a) Their hope of salvation (forgiveness of sins and eternal life in the Kingdom with the Messiah) was given to them under the New Covenant.

(b) But their entrance (participation) in the New Covenant and in the Kingdom was conditioned upon the requirements found in the Palestinian Covenant given to Israel under the Law.

(c) None of this has anything to do (directly and doctrinally) with a Christian living during the Dispensation of Grace (during the Church Age).

- b) An Israelite will inherit eternal life *if* he is fully and completely *devoted* to God.

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, **what shall I do to inherit eternal life?** He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God** with **all** thy heart, and with **all** thy soul, and with **all** thy strength, and with **all** thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: **this do, and thou shalt live**. [Luke 10.25-28]

- (1) Notice first that eternal life for an individual Israelite is his *inheritance*. He "inherits" eternal life. It is something yet future for him, something he hopes to receive but could lose.

- (2) Chafer, commenting on this passage, says, "...the lawyer... is told by Christ in the most absolute terms that eternal life for him is gained by the keeping of that contained in the Mosaic Law—'this do, and thou shalt live.'" <sup>31</sup>

- (3) This is clearly different than the salvation given to repentant believers in the Church Age.

(a) (Eph 2.8-9) Our salvation is a gift received in a moment of time in the past and is based on *birth* (the new spiritual birth; regeneration; Titus 3.5). Our salvation is *not* a future inheritance.

- (b) (Col 3.24) Our inheritance is our reward for being faithful in our stewardship (to be and make disciples). It has nothing to do with forgiveness of sins and eternal life.
- (c) Christians *do not* "inherit" salvation. We receive it as a gift through the new spiritual birth of the regeneration by the Holy Spirit. Our "inheritance" is a "reward" for being faithful and therefore it is different than our salvation.

c) For an Israelite, eternal life was something yet future and something to be inherited.

And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, **what shall I *do* to *inherit* eternal life?** And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. **Thou knowest the commandments**, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: **sell all** that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, **follow me**. [Luke 18.18-22]

- (1) Eternal life for an Israelite was *not* a present possession (as it is today for a Christian). It was a future inheritance to be *hoped* for and for which he had to *work*.
- (2) Chafer again provides a succinct explanation of the salient points in this passage. He says, "...to this sincere man our Lord quoted the Mosaic commandments; but when the young man declared that these things had been kept by him from his youth, Christ did not chide him for falsehood but took him on to the ground of complete surrender of all he was and all he had as the way into that state which Christ termed perfect (Matt. 19:21)." <sup>32</sup>
- (3) Christ took this obedient Jew to the condition of life given in the Palestinian Covenant: complete and total *devotion* to God. He called him to forsake *all* and follow Him.
- (4) And this would bring us to a final point in this study.

#### 7. Israel's Future Condemnation: The Rebels Are "Purged Out"

a) The alternative to future, inherited eternal life for Israel (the alternative for those who are *not* fully devoted to God in repentance, faith, submission, and obedience) is the everlasting fire of hell.

Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to **enter into life** halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into **everlasting fire**. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to **enter into life** with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into **hell fire**. [Mat 18.8-9]

- b) The opposite of devotion (being willing to take the most drastic of measures to ensure obedience) is rebellion. If one is not devoted to God, he is in rebellion against God.
- c) God makes the New Covenant with those Israelites who turn from transgression—those who repent of their transgression against God and turn to Him in devotion.

And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and **unto them that *turn from transgression*** in Jacob, saith the LORD. As for me, this is **my covenant *with them***, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever. [Isa 59.20-21]

d) The rebels will be purged out of Israel.

- (1) Remember that Israel's salvation is based on the covenants God made with the nation in the past.
  - (a) In the Abrahamic Covenant the nation was promised God's general blessing in the land of Palestine.
  - (b) In the New Covenant they are promised eternal life in that land of blessing.

- (2) However, even though the covenants guarantee that "all Israel" (Israelites from all 12 tribes) will be saved<sup>33</sup>, we must remember that not all the physical descendants of Israel are counted as true or spiritual Israel.

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. [Rom 11.26-27]

Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For **they are not all Israel, which are of Israel**. [Rom 9.6]

- (3) This is why Paul said that only a remnant (a seed) would actually inherit the eternal life promised to Israel.

Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, **a remnant shall be saved**: For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us **a seed**, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. [Rom 9.27-29]

- (4) According to the Palestinian Covenant, only those who were devoted to God (through repentance, faith, submission, and obedience to the Mosaic Law) would inherit eternal life. These are those faithful few who enter through the strait gate and walk the narrow way unto life.

In that I command thee this day to **love the LORD thy God**, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, **that thou mayest live** and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it... That thou mayest **love the LORD thy God**, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for **he is thy life**, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. [Deut 30.16-20]

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which **leadeth unto life**, and **few there be that find it**. [Mat 7.13-14]

- (5) The rest who are not devoted to God will be purged out. These are those who enter through the wide gate and walk along the broad way that leads unto the destruction of everlasting fire in hell.

- e) With regard to Israel, God's *conditions of exclusion* from eternal life in the coming Kingdom are made just as clear as his conditions for inclusion.

And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: And I will **purge out** from among you **the rebels, and them that transgress** against me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. [Ezek 20.37-38]

- (1) God excludes from the coming covenant "the rebels" and "them that transgress" against him.

33 "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." [Rom 11.29] The "gifts" mentioned in Romans 11.29 are listed in Romans 9.4: "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises." In his commentary on Romans 11.29, Dr. Peter S. Ruckman says, "Note, first of all, that the direct application of this verse is to Israel *as a nation*. God gave them the gifts mentioned back in Romans 9.4. Israel was called out from the other nations of the world to **"be a peculiar treasure"** to God and **"a kingdom of priests"** and **"an holy nation"** (Exod. 19:5-6). Given that, the Lord is not going to change His mind about calling Israel or giving them the Scriptures or the adoption or the service of God, etc." Peter S. Ruckman, *The Book of Romans*, The Bible Believer's Commentary Series (Pensacola, Florida: Bible Baptist Bookstore, 2003), 455.

- (2) C.I. Scofield comments on Ezekiel 20:37-38 in his study Bible saying, "The passage is a prophecy of the future judgment upon Israel, regathered from all nations... The issue of this judgment determines who of Israel in that day shall enter the land for kingdom blessing..."<sup>34</sup>
- (3) In *Systematic Theology* Chafer says, "The nation [of Israel], but for certain rebels who are to be 'purged out' (Ezek. 20:37-38), will be saved, and that by their own Messiah when He comes out of Zion (cf. Isa. 59:20-21; Mat. 23:37-39; Acts 15:16)." <sup>35</sup>
- f) An Israelite might say "Lord, Lord" with his mouth (Mat 7:21-27), but God will judge him based on his complete devotion (repentance, faith, submission, and obedience; Deut 30:1-30), not just on the profession of his mouth. God will purge out all the rebels from among His chosen nation (Ezek 20:37-38 cf. Mal 4:1-3; Mat 3:9-12).

### **Conclusion:**

#### **There is an obvious connection between *soteriology* and *eschatology*.**

- If the eschatology of a people (their future) is different from that of another people, then to that same degree their soteriology is different (how they obtain salvation and what their salvation includes).

#### **What does the Bible say about the salvation of people during the Church Age (us)?**

- Salvation today in the Church Age is a gift given by God by His grace.
- That gift is received by faith (a repentant faith; a conversion) and it results in a new birth (regeneration).
- Works are not *necessary* for the conversion and new birth but they are *inevitable* after it.

#### **What does the Bible say about the salvation of Israel as a nation and of individual Israelites?**

- The body of Scripture that bears on Israel's salvation is extensive because it starts in Genesis 12 with the promises given to Abraham and it extends all the way through the Gospels, when the promised Son of David established the New Covenant in His shed blood.
- Past Salvation: An Old Testament Israelite would point to his "past salvation" in the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants.
  - ✓ The Abrahamic Covenant promised him a special place and blessings in God's kingdom.
  - ✓ The Mosaic Covenant conditioned those blessings on obedience.
- Future Salvation: An Old Testament Israelite would point to his "future salvation" in the taking away of his sins and the new life (regeneration and eternal life) promised in the New Covenant.
  - ✓ This future salvation was to be fulfilled at the coming of the Messiah, the Son of David.
  - ✓ This future salvation, therefore, marked the beginning of the promised Kingdom (the Messianic Kingdom Israel hoped for; the Millennium).
- Present Salvation: An Old Testament Israelite would understand his "present salvation" to be conditional.
  - ✓ His present salvation from his enemies and his prosperity in the land was conditioned on his obedience to the Mosaic Law.
  - ✓ His present hope of salvation from sin, wrath, and the everlasting fire of hell was conditioned on his complete devotion to God in the Palestinian Covenant (which in turn conditioned his participation in the New Covenant).

<sup>34</sup> Scofield, *The Scofield Reference Bible*, 861.

<sup>35</sup> Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 3:106.

Was an individual Israelite in the Old Testament saved the same way as you? Was he saved in the same time frame as you? Was he guaranteed the same things as you? Was his salvation conditioned the same as yours? No.

**Thesis:** Israel and the Church are different and distinct in God's plan and purpose for the ages, and this distinction is clearly seen in the differences in their soteriology and resulting eschatology.

1. Eternal salvation (the taking away of sins and eternal life) is the past experience of a Christian based on repentance and faith alone.
2. Eternal salvation (the taking away of sins and the promise of eternal life) was offered to Israel as a future inheritance based on their devotion to God.

**Conclusion:** Dispensationalism is a system of theology that consistently recognizes and maintains the biblical distinction between Israel and the Church (as is seen in the dispensational analysis of each people's soteriology and eschatology).

Lewis Sperry Chafer, commenting on the different systems of soteriology and eschatology found in Israel and the Church, highlights the fact that dispensationalism, rather than causing these problems, is the system of theology that actually provides a solution and an explanation for the apparent contradictions:

These systems do set up conflicting and opposing principles; but since these difficulties appear only when an attempt is made to coalesce systems, elements, and principles which God has separated, the conflicts really do not exist at all outside these unwarranted unifying efforts; in fact they rather demonstrate the necessity of a due recognition of all God's different and distinct administrations. The true unity of the Scriptures is not discovered when one blindly seeks to fuse these opposing principles into one system, but rather it is found when God's plain differences are observed. The dispensationalist does not create these differences as he is sometimes accused of doing... **Instead of creating the problems, the dispensationalist is the one who has a solution for them.**<sup>36</sup>

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36 Chafer, *Dispensationalism*, 51-52 (emphasis not in the original).