



## **Approval Sheet**

Donald Robinson and Biblical Theology at Moore Theological College

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**Donald Robinson and Biblical Theology at Moore Theological College**

A Dissertation Submitted to  
the Faculty of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary  
in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

by

**Nathaniel Bruce Parker**

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## **Abstract**

This dissertation examines the reception of Donald Robinson's legacy in Moore Theological College's biblical theology program. It answers the question: Is it feasible to speak of a Moore School of Biblical Theology? What is distinctive about its teachings, and how has it been shaped by the scholars who have contributed to it? The biblical theology program at Moore Theological College can be traced back to Donald Robinson. One unique contribution of Robinson to Moore College's biblical theology program was his "distinction theology" concerning the role of Israel in redemption history as an alternative to dispensationalism and covenant theology. By examining Robinson's view of Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church and by tracing how his view has been affirmed, revised, rejected, or ignored by biblical theologians at Moore College who were influenced by or who followed Robinson (including Graeme Goldsworthy, Lionel Windsor, D. Broughton Knox, and William Dumbrell), this dissertation seeks to clarify the reception of Robinson's legacy at Moore College as well as offer an assessment on the plausibility of a distinct Moore School of Biblical Theology.

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I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Faye Parker, who has been there for me during my entire life and studies, to Dr. Craig Blaising, my PhD supervisor who has guided me through my PhD program, and to Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, who gave me the gift of everlasting life.

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## **Preface**

The seeds for this dissertation were planted in my first Biblical Theology research seminar under Dr. Craig Blaising at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Blaising handed me an article from William Dumbrell and wanted to see how well I could write a research paper on Dumbrell's position on the Abrahamic Covenant. This led to further exploratory research on various scholars at Moore Theological College. My goal was to determine if it was plausible to speak of a "Moore School of Biblical Theology" shaped by Donald Robinson's unique "distinction theology" concerning the role of Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church. The results of that labor comprise this dissertation. What I have determined is that the biblical theology that was mostly associated with Moore appears to have been more in line with the redemption-history approach commonly associated with Geerhardus Vos and those who followed him at Westminster. However, Robinson's "distinction theology" has begun to see a revival among later scholars in Moore's biblical theology program (such as Lionel Windsor), and scholars who originally ignored Robinson's unique contribution (such as Graeme Goldsworthy) later began appreciating some aspects of it.

While Robinson's "distinction theology" does not fully eliminate all forms of supersessionism (Robinson's concept of an eschatological "new man" that eliminates the distinction between Jew and Gentile still retains a form of supersessionism), he is a useful dialogue partner with those within progressive dispensationalism who, like Robinson, also include a distinction between Jew and Gentile within the New Testament church. While Robinson also rejected Christian Restorationism and advocated that God's promises to Israel are fulfilled through the spreading of the Gospel from Jewish believers



to Gentiles and reciprocally back to other unbelieving Jews, Robinson also makes a useful dialogue partner for those within Anglicanism who advocate for a positive theological interest in Israel (such as those within “New Christian Zionism”).

It has been quite a journey up this Australian Anglican mountain no less difficult than a climb up Ayers Rock. It has been rewarding to finally reach the summit and enjoy the view at the top. I pray that my efforts will be a useful contribution to the theological discussion concerning Israel’s role in redemption history. As a believer who is also one of Abraham’s physical offspring, and as one who loves Israel and her people, this research subject was dear to my heart personally. Like Paul, I can now say that “I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7).

## **Acknowledgements**

The journey through a PhD program and dissertation does not happen in isolation, and I want to thank everyone who has accompanied me on this journey through my years of study. I want to first of all thank my mother, Faye Parker, who has been there for me throughout my entire life and alongside my studies the entire time. I want to thank my late father, Bruce Parker, who provided for my family and my studies over the years. I want to thank my PhD supervisor, Dr. Craig Blaising, who guided me through the majority of my PhD program, seeing me through until the end. I want to thank my PhD dissertation committee members Dr. Jeffery Bingham and Dr. Robert Caldwell for guiding me through the completion of my dissertation. Thanks also goes to my initial PhD supervisors, Dr. Dongsun Cho and Dr. John Yeo, who oriented me through the first year of my PhD program and allowed me to smoothly transition to Dr. Blaising as my supervisor. I also want to thank all of the additional professors I attended classes with at SWBTS during my PhD program, including: Dr. Jeffery Bingham, Dr. Craig Blaising, Dr. David Dockery, Dr. Eric Mitchell, Dr. Terry Wilder, Dr. Malcolm Yarnell, and and those on my PhD comprehensive exam committee, including Dr. Jeffery Bingham and Dr. Madison Grace. I also want to thank the SWBTS PhD and Registrar's offices, including those currently serving and who previously served (such as Wynette Taylor) for answering all my questions throughout the PhD program. Thank you all for guiding me through each course and each stage in the PhD program.

I want to thank my fellow students at SWBTS who read over drafts of my PhD dissertation, provided feedback, and helped resolve some humorous typos, including: Sherrie Moore, Gayla Parker, and Joel Wright. I also want to thank my fellow M Div student from my time at Luther Rice College and Seminary, Jonathan Ray, who also read a draft of my PhD

dissertation and provided useful feedback. Special thanks also goes to those who provided feedback, including John Greathouse and the Ohm family (Judge Ralph, Derrie, and Ashlyn). Thanks also goes out to Luther Rice College and Seminary where I completed my Bachelor of Arts and M Div which laid the foundation for my PhD program at SWBTS, including professors such as Dr. Scott Moody who prayed for me every step of my PhD program.

Special thanks goes to the individuals who also assisted me during the research and writing stages of my PhD dissertation. Thanks to SWBTS Libraries (especially Dr. Craig Kubie), and Moore Theological College Library (especially Erin Mollenhauer), for providing me with research materials to utilize in my dissertation, as well as the Church of England Library. Thanks also to: Patrick Cates, Chrissy Coblenz, Paul Hames, Alex Jacob, Philip Kern, Meredith Lake, Gerald McDermott, Marlon Patterson, Russell Powell, Rory Shiner, Vincent Williams, and Lionel Windsor, and anyone else I have communicated with during the research stage of this dissertation. Thanks also to Rick Mansfield, Michele Bozzacco at Accordance Bible Software, Todd Cullop and Fern Anderson at Logos Bible Software, John Fallahee at LearnLogos.com, Anne Putnam and Steve Siebert at Nota Bene, and Ori Redler at Mellel for providing me with resources, training, and the technology necessary to complete this PhD dissertation.

I also want to thank my colleagues at my employers, Earth Networks/AEM and Accordance Bible Software, for graciously working with my study schedule so I could balance my work and studies. I especially want to thank my current manager at Earth Networks/AEM, Amanda Long, and my former manager, Chris Sloop, for giving me the opportunity to serve the customers at Earth Networks over the years of my studies, and I look forward to continuing to do so in the future. I also want to thank my colleague at Earth Networks/AEM, Steve Prinzivalli, who prayed for me during the duration of my PhD program, and provided some useful study

materials during my PhD program. I also want to thank my manager at Accordance Bible Software Richard Perry, and his wife Linda Perry, for giving me a chance to begin my new job at Accordance while I wrapped up my PhD dissertation.

Finally, I want to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the One who gave me everlasting life and the One who called me into the years of studying that allowed me to complete this PhD, all for His glory. This dissertation would have never made it across the finish line if it were not for the daily grace of Jesus Christ.

## **Abbreviations**

<b>CMJ</b>	Church's Ministry Among the Jewish People
<b>ETS</b>	Evangelical Theological Society
<b>IVF</b>	InterVarsity Fellowship
<b>JBL</b>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<b>LMS</b>	London Missionary Society
<b>LSJ</b>	London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews
<b>SBJT</b>	<i>Southern Baptist Journal of Theology</i>
<b>SESU</b>	Sydney University Evangelical Union

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

The Australian institution Moore Theological College offers a vibrant biblical theology program.<sup>1</sup> By all accounts, the biblical theology program at Moore can be traced back to Donald Robinson. Moore's biblical theology program has been carried forward through the students who have been given the opportunity to study there.

Is it feasible to speak of a Moore School of Biblical Theology? What is distinctive about its teachings and how has it been shaped by the scholars who have contributed to it?

One of Robinson's unique contributions to Moore's biblical theology program was his "distinction theology" on the role of Israel in redemption history. He provided a different and provocative answer on the fulfillment of Israel's promises in redemption history (different from typical covenantal and dispensational answers on the same question), and thus provided a distinctive interpretation of the shape and framework of redemption history biblical theology in Moore's biblical theology program that developed around his core course. By examining Robinson's view of Israel and its relation to the church in redemption history and by tracing how his view has been affirmed, revised, rejected, or ignored by biblical theologians at Moore College, this dissertation provides a historical survey on the reception of Robinson's legacy in Moore's biblical theology program, as well as offer an assessment on the plausibility of a distinct Moore School of Biblical Theology.

### **Survey of Literature**

At the 2011 conference of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS), Constantine Campbell read a paper by Graeme Goldsworthy entitled "Origins and Guiding Principles" as one

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<sup>1</sup> *Moore Theological College* will be abbreviated as *Moore* or *Moore College* throughout all successive uses in each chapter.

of a three-part series on “Biblical Theology at Moore.” In his paper, Goldsworthy alluded to a “Moore School of Biblical Theology.” While defining the “Moore College School of Biblical Theology” as an annual conference held by Moore College, Goldsworthy implied that the conference stems from an underlying “Moore School of Biblical Theology” founded by Donald Robinson. Goldsworthy was one of Robinson’s students and successors in further developing and carrying on some of the teachings of Robinson. He also brought greater attention and popularity to Moore’s biblical theology program. Richard Gibson also presented a paper examining what Moore’s present-day teaching of biblical theology comprises (specifically concerning Goldsworthy’s contributions to the program). Brian Rosner finished off the conference papers by examining one scholar’s (his personal) reflection on biblical theology at Moore College, attempting to uncover major themes within biblical theology, the relationship between the Old and New Testaments, and the relationship between continuity and discontinuity (with one brief mention regarding the role of Israel in redemption history) in biblical theology.

Donald Robinson’s writings concerning the relationship between Jew and Gentile plus Israel and the church can be accessed in the recently published edition of his writings, which includes many that were formerly unpublished.<sup>2</sup> Robinson’s student and successor Graeme Goldsworthy carried some of Robinson’s teaching to the masses (while ignoring Robinson’s “distinction theology” in his earlier writings) in a series of works.<sup>3</sup> Lionel Windsor contributed to

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<sup>2</sup> Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, eds., *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God’s People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), see especially “Jew and Greek: Unity and Division in the Early Church,” 79–109.

<sup>3</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1991), *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2012), *Gospel and the Kingdom* (London: Paternoster Press, 2001), *Gospel and the Revelation* (London: Paternoster Press, 2001), *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2012), *Jesus Through the Old Testament* (Abington, Oxford: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2017), “The Kingdom of God as Hermeneutic Grid,” *SBJT* 12 (2008): 4–14, “Lecture 1: The Necessity and Viability of Biblical Theology,” *SBJT* 12 (2008): 4–17, “Lecture 2: Biblical Theology in the Seminary and Bible College,” *SBJT* 12 (2008): 20–33, “Lecture 3: Biblical Theology in the Local Church and the Home,” *SBJT* 12 (2008): 36–49, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), *The Son of God and the New Creation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011).

a revival of Robinson's "distinction theology" with his "evangelical, post-supersessionist" understanding of the relationship between Jew and Gentile and Israel and the church.<sup>4</sup>

Other publications from Robinson's contemporary (D. B. Knox), as well as Robinson's successors, will be examined. Some of Robinson's successors or scholars who studied at Moore whose contributions are useful for examination include: Barry Webb, William J. Dumbrell, Peter O'Brien, Michael P. Jensen, Robert Banks, Vaughan Roberts, Richard Gibson, Paul Williamson, Kevin Giles, David Peterson, Malcolm Richards, John Pryor, Glenn Davies, and Phillip Jensen.<sup>5</sup> These publications contribute to how well Robinson's "distinction theology" about Israel's role in redemption history has been received by post-Robinson scholarship at Moore.

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<sup>4</sup> Lionel Windsor, *Paul and the Vocation of Israel: How Paul's Jewish Identity Informs His Apostolic Ministry, with Special Reference to Romans* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism: Christ's Mission Through Israel to the Nations* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017), "The Formation of Gentile Christ-Believing Identity Vis-à-Vis Israel in Ephesians and Barnabas," *Biblica et Patristica Thoruniensia* 11 (2018), 377–390.

<sup>5</sup> D. B. Knox, "The Church and the People of God in the Old Testament," *The Reformed Theological Review* 10 (1951): 12–20, Barry Webb, "The Role of OT and of Biblical Israel – School of Theology 1987. Church and Society," Moore Theological College, 1987, *The Message of Zechariah: Your Kingdom Come* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), William J. Dumbrell, "The Covenant with Abraham," *The Reformed Theological Review* 41 (1982): 42–50, *The End of the Beginning: Revelation 21–22 and the Old Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001), *The Search for Order: Biblical Eschatology in Focus* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001), *The Faith of Israel: A Theological Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002), "Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4," In *Out of Egypt: Biblical Theology and Biblical Interpretation*, Elaine Botha and Craig G. Bartholomew (Bletchley, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004, 286–312), *Covenant and Creation: An Old Testament Covenant Theology* (London: Paternoster, 2013), Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, eds., *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), Peter O'Brien, *God Who is Rich in Mercy: Essays Presented to Dr. D.B. Knox* (Sydney: Anzea, 1986), "The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity," In *The Church in the Bible and the World: An International Study*, ed. D. A. Carson (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002,) 88–119, Michael P. Jensen, *Sydney Anglicanism: An Apology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2012), Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), Vaughan Roberts, *God's Big Picture: Tracing the Storyline of the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2002), Richard Gibson, ed., *Interpreting God's Plan: Biblical Theology and the Pastor* (London: Paternoster Press, 1997), Paul Williamson, "Abraham, Israel, and the Church," *Evangelical Quarterly* 72 (2000), 99–118, "Covenant." In *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), "Covenant," In *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000), *Sealed with an Oath: Covenant in God's Unfolding Purpose*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007), Kevin Giles, *What on Earth is the Church? an Exploration in New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1995), David Peterson and John Pryor, eds., *In the Fullness of Time: Biblical Studies in Honor of Archbishop Donald Robinson* (Homebush West, NSW, Australia: Lancer Books, 1992), Glenn Davies, "William John Dumbrell: An Appreciation," In *Covenant and Kingdom: A Collection of Old Testament Essays by William J. Dumbrell*, Gregory R. Goswell and Allan M. Harman (eds.) (Doncaster: Reformed Theological Review Supplement Series #2, 2007), v–ix, Phillip Jensen, "Israel's Future," City Night Church, 2007.



Additional literature that has contributed a better understanding of these issues include publications by scholars who have studied Robinson's legacy (such as Rory Shiner and Chase Kuhn), who provide additional context to the history of Moore College from its founding through Robinson's tenure (such as John McIntosh, Edward Loane, Peter Bolt, T. C. Hammond, and F. B. Boyce), or who provide a critique of Moore's biblical theology program (such as Barry Horner).<sup>6</sup>

In order to better understand the theological context within Anglicanism in which Donald Robinson made his unique contribution, research literature concerning the role of Israel in redemption history within Anglicanism will be examined. Contributions from Donald Lewis, William Hechler, Enzo Maass, Benzion Netanyahu, David-Fuse Roberts, Roland Ward, J. M. Yeats, Yaakov Ariel, Sarah Lebner Hall, and Gerald McDermott contribute to the discussion on Christian Restorationism within Anglicanism.<sup>7</sup> Publications from W. D. Davies, J. I. Packer, R.

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<sup>6</sup>Chase Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox: Exposition, Analysis, and Theological Evaluation* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), Rory James Wilson Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia: An Historical Account of the Origins, Development, and Influence of D. W. B. Robinson's Biblical Scholarship," PhD Dissertation, Macquarie University, 2017, John Alan McIntosh, "Anglican Evangelicalism in Sydney 1897–1953: The Thought and Influence of Three Moore College Principals – Nathaniel Jones, D.J. Davies and T.C. Hammond," PhD Dissertation. Sydney: UNSW, 2014, Edward Loane, ed., *Donald Robinson Selected Works Volume 4: Historical Studies and Series Index* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2018), 202–219, Peter Bolt, *A Portrait in His Actions: Thomas Moore of Liverpool (1762–1840) Part 1: Lesbury to Liverpool*, In Studies in Australian Colonial History No. 3. Sydney: Bolt Publishing Services Pty. Ltd. 2010, F. B. Boyce, *Thomas Moore: An Early Australian Worthy*, London, NP, 1922, *The Cross from a Distance: Atonement in Mark's Gospel*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2004), T. C. Hammond, *In Understanding Be Men* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1936), Barry E. Horner, *Eternal Israel* (Nashville: B&H, 2018).

<sup>7</sup>Donald Lewis, "Evangelicals and Jews Together?: Exploring the Roots of Christian Zionism," *Crux* 45 (2009), 2–9, *The Origins of Christian Zionism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), *A Short History of Christian Zionism* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2021), William Hechler, *The Restoration of the Jews to Palestine*, NP, 1884, Enzo Maass, "Forgotten Prophet: William Henry Hechler and the Rise of Political Zionism," *Nordisk Judaistik* 23 (2003): 157–193, Benzion Netanyahu, *The Founding Fathers of Zionism* (Jerusalem: Balfour Books, 2012), David Fuse-Roberts, "The Victorian Evangelical Shaftsbury: A Son of the Clapham Sect or a Brother of the Recordites?" *The Churchman* 128 (2014), 119–132, Roland S. Ward, "A Passion for God and a Passion for Jews: The Basis and Practice of Jewish Mission 1550–1850," *The Reformed Theological Review* 70 (2011), 1–24, J. M. Yeats, "'To the Jew First': Conversion of the Jews as the Foundation for Global Missions and Expansion in Nineteenth-Century British Evangelicalism," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 47 (2005), 207–223, Yaakov Ariel, "An Unexpected Alliance: Christian Zionism and Its Historical Significance," *Modern Judaism* 26 (2006), 74–100, "Israel in Contemporary Evangelical Christian Millennial Thought," *Numen* 59 (2012), 456–485, Gerald R. McDermott, *The New Christian Zionism: Fresh Perspectives on Israel and the Land* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2016), *Israel Matters: Why Christians Must Think Differently About the People and the Land* (Ada, MI: Brazos Press, 2017), "Can Evangelicals Support Christian Zionism?" *Evangelical Review of Theology* 43 (2019): 253–62, Sarah Lebharr Hall, "Anglicans and Israel: The (Largely) Untold Story," in *Understanding the Jewish Roots of*

Newton Flew, and John Stott provide examples of a typical Covenant Theology that exemplified a form of supersessionism that was prevalent within Anglicanism.<sup>8</sup> The writings of John D. Hannah, W. H. Griffith Thomas, William Lawton, Larry Crutchfield, J. N. Darby, C. Bass, Donald Durnbaugh, C. Norman Kraus, Charles Gallaudette, C. I. Scofield, Craig Blaising, and Darrell Bock provide a history of dispensationalism from J. N. Darby through Scofield.<sup>9</sup> Franz Rosenweig and James Parkes are two additional examples besides Hechler that contribute to the discussion on two-covenant theology.<sup>10</sup> J. Y. Campbell was a contemporary of Robinson who

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*Christianity: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Essays on the Relationship Between Christianity and Judaism*, ed. Gerald R. McDermott (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2021), 169–83.

<sup>8</sup> W. D. Davies, *Gospel and Land* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974), J. I. Packer, *'Fundamentalism' and the Word of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1958), "Introduction: On Covenant Theology," In *Revelations of the Cross* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2013), 9–21, "Basic Christian Doctrines: 36: The Nature of the Church," *Christianity Today* (1962), 886–887, "One Body in Christ: The Doctrine and Expression of Christian Unity," *The Churchman* 80 (1966), 16–26, "The Nature of the Church," In *Basic Christian Doctrines: Contemporary Evangelical Thought*, ed. Carl F.H. Henry (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston), 1962, 241–247, *Knowing God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1973), *Concise Theology* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2001), John Stott, *Understanding the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1972), *One People* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1982), *The Message of Romans: God's Good News for the World*, *The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), "The Place of Israel," In *Zion's Christian Soldiers: The Bible, Israel, and the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007, 164–72), *Basic Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2008), *The Cross of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1986), R. Newton, Flew, "Some Outstanding New Testament Problems: IV. Jesus and the Kingdom of God," *The Expository Times* 46 (1935): 214–18, *Jesus and His Church: A Study of the Idea of Ecclesia in the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1956).

<sup>9</sup> John D. Hannah, "The 'Thomas' in the W.H. Griffith Thomas Memorial Lectureship," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 163 (2006): 3–17, W. H. Griffith Thomas, "Great Facts About Our Lord's Coming," *The Sunday School Times* 65 (1923), 792–93, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans: A Devotional Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1946), William Lawton, "The Winter of Our Days: The Anglican Diocese of Sydney, 1950–1960," *Lucas: An Evangelical History Review* 9 (1990): 11–31, Larry V. Crutchfield, *The Origins of Dispensationalism: The Darby Factor* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992), C. Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism: Its Historical Genesis and Ecclesiastical Implications* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1960), David F. Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine, A History of the Brethren 1708–1995* (Philadelphia: Brethren Press, 1996), J. N. Darby, "Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ," In *The Collected Writings of J. N. Darby*, 34 vols, ed. Wm. Kelly, Reprint ed. (Sunbury, PA: Believers Bookshelf, 1971), 1:20–35, C. Norman Kraus, *Dispensationalism in America: Its Rise and Development* (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1958), C. I. Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15): Ten Outline Studies of the More Important Divisions of Scripture* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia School of the Bible, 1921), Charles Gallaudette Trumbull, *The Life Story of C. I. Scofield* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1920), Craig Blaising, "The Future of National Israel as a Theological Question," *JETS* 44 (2001): 435–450, Craig A. Blaising, and Darrell L. Bock, eds, *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1993).

<sup>10</sup> Franz Rosenweig, *The Star of Redemption* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 1921), James Parkes, *The Foundations of Judaism and Christianity* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1960).

interacted with Flew concerning how to interpret the use of ἐκκλησία throughout the New Testament.<sup>11</sup> R. Kendall Soulen and Craig Blomberg provide some additional background material for studying Windsor’s “evangelical, post supersessionist” position.<sup>12</sup>

### Research Question

How was Donald Robinson’s view of the role of Israel in redemption history received by his successors at Moore College? Did it shape Moore’s biblical theology program and contribute to the distinctiveness of its biblical theology program? Is it feasible to speak of a Moore School of Biblical Theology developed by Robinson’s “distinction theology”?<sup>13</sup>

### Thesis

Donald Robinson’s “distinction theology” concerning the role of Israel in redemption history was his attempt at offering a mediating position between dispensationalism<sup>14</sup> and supersessionism.<sup>15</sup> His “distinction theology” can be summarized as “God’s distinctive promises

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<sup>11</sup> J. Y. Campbell, “The Origin and Meaning of the Christian Use of the Word *Ekklesia*,” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 49 (1948): 130–42.

<sup>12</sup> R. Kendall Soulen, “Post-Supersessionism,” In *A Dictionary of Jewish–Christian Relations*, ed. Edward Kessler and Neil Wenborn (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005, 350–51), Craig L. Blomberg, “Freedom from the Law Only for Gentiles? A Non-Supersessionist Alternative to Mark Kinzer’s ‘Postmissionary Messianic Judaism,’” In *New Testament Theology in Light of the Church’s Mission: Essays in Honor of I. Howard Marshall*, ed. Jon Laansma, Grant R. Osborne, and Ray Van Neste (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 41–56.

<sup>13</sup> *School* in this dissertation refers to a *school of thought* consisting of a coherent theological interpretation that carries forward distinctive features of a founding figure. An example of this use of *school* can be found in Edward W. Klink, III and Darian R. Lockett, *Understanding Biblical Theology: A Comparison of Theory and Practice* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2012), 67. A helpful definition of *biblical theology* from a Moore Theological College scholar is provided by Brian Rosner: [Biblical theology] “proceeds with historical and literary sensitivity and seeks to analyze and synthesize the Bible’s teaching about God and his relations to the world on its own terms, maintaining sight of the Bible’s overarching narrative and Christocentric focus.” Brian S. Rosner, “Biblical Theology,” in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000), 3–10.

<sup>14</sup> For more information on *dispensationalism*, see Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, eds, *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), and Craig A. Blaising, and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1993).

<sup>15</sup> *Supersessionism*, also known as “replacement theology,” views the church as the replacement of Israel.

to Israel are in the New Testament fulfilled, not to all believers, but to Jewish believers who constitute the restored remnant of Israel and that Gentile believers are the inheritors of other promises altogether, that is, the promises made in the Old Testament to the nations who should come to Israel's light."<sup>16</sup> Robinson's "distinction theology" was initially ignored by scholars who followed Robinson, brought attention to, and popularized Moore's biblical theology program (such as Graeme Goldsworthy and William Dumbrell). However, Robinson's "distinction theology" re-entered the biblical theological discussion at Moore College by an appreciation of Robinson's contribution in some of Goldsworthy's later writings, as well as through the contribution of scholars such as Lionel Windsor. In its current state, a Moore School of Biblical Theology would fall within a Reformed redemption history biblical theology in the Westminster tradition following the teachings of Geerhardus Vos. With the revival of an interest in Robinson's "distinction theology" concerning the role of Jew and Gentile within the New Testament church, the teachings that comprise a Moore School of Biblical Theology could potentially be shaped by Robinson's unique contribution through the scholars who have brought attention to Robinson's "distinction theology" back into the theological discussion.

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The church has become a "new Israel." One such work which summarizes this viewpoint is O. Palmer Robertson, *The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2000).

Supersessionism is found across a wide range of theological systems within Christian theology. One form within Christian evangelical theology in which supersessionism is prevalent is covenant theology. For more information on covenant theology, see Peter A. Lillback, "Covenant Theology," in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Martin Davie, et al. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016), 225–27, Michael S. Horton, *God of Promise: Introducing Covenant Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), and Geerhardus Vos, "The Doctrine of the Covenant in Reformed Theology," in *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos*, ed. Richard B. Gaffin Jr. (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1979).

Useful works that contrast dispensationalism with covenant theology include: Daniel P. Fuller, *Gospel and Law: Contrast or Continuum? The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), Chad Brand, Tom Pratt, Robert L. Reymond, Robert L. Saucy, and Robert L. Thomas, *Perspectives on Israel and the Church: 4 Views* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2015), and Peter J. Gentry, and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical–Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018).

<sup>16</sup> Donald Robinson, "Jew and Greek: Unity and Division in the Early Church," in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, eds., *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God's People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 81.

### **Dissertation Structure**

Chapter Two will survey a brief history of the role of Israel within Anglicanism. Various positions concerning Israel's role in redemption history and the relationship between Jew and Gentile in the church were prevalent throughout Anglican theology. There was a general position of supersessionism that the church was a "new Israel" (held by Anglican covenant theologians). There was also a positive theological interest in Israel that developed into a position of Christian Restorationism advocating for Jewish evangelism and for restoring a Jewish nation in the land of Israel. Dispensationalism was another position that developed out of a positive theological interest in Israel and shared some aspects of Christian Restorationism. Each of these differing theological positions frame the discussion for examining Robinson's unique "distinction theology" as his attempt at an alternative, mediating position.

Chapter Three will survey the history of Moore College from its founding through Robinson's tenure, as well as Robinson's establishment of Moore's biblical theology program. The chapter will also examine Robinson's "distinction theology" concerning Israel's role in redemption history, his attempt at a mediating position that was neither a supersessionist covenant theology nor dispensationalist, and whether Robinson fully eliminated all forms of supersessionism in his "distinction theology." Robinson's position in contrast to Christian Restorationism will also be discussed.

Chapter Four will examine how Graeme Goldsworthy and Lionel Windsor received Robinson's "distinction theology." Goldsworthy's development of the "three epochs" of the "kingdom of God" in a Christocentric biblical theology, his initial ignoring of Robinson's "distinction theology," and his later appreciation of some aspects of it (without fully incorporating it into his biblical theology) will be discussed. Lionel Windsor's "evangelical, post-supersessionist" position showed a revival in the discussion of Robinson's "distinction theology" in Moore's biblical theology program.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> See Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism: Christ's Mission Through Israel to the Nations* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017) 3–4, for a definition and discussion of "evangelical, post–

Chapter Five will examine D. Broughton Knox and William Dumbrell as two further examples of scholars who largely ignored Robinson's "distinction theology" and like Goldsworthy, popularized a Reformed redemption history biblical theology into Moore's biblical theology program. The contributions of Knox, Goldsworthy, and Dumbrell form the plausibility of a Moore School of Theology that primarily follows the Westminster tradition of Geerhardus Vos.

Chapter Six will survey additional scholars who have either served at Moore College, attended Moore's biblical theology program, or have read and interacted with Robinson's and Goldsworthy's teachings. How each of these scholars received, accepted, rejected, ignored, or developed Robinson's "distinction theology" comprise this survey. The scholars examined include: Robert Banks, Peter Bolt, Richard Gibson, Peter O'Brien, Vaughan Roberts, Brian Rosner, Barry Webb, Paul Williamson, as well as a handful of other scholars. A summary of the distinctives of a Moore College approach to biblical theology will also complete the chapter.

Chapter Seven will offer a summary and conclusion to the dissertation. It will also recommend future study, research, and theological development that resulted from the examination of this dissertation.

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supersessionism." See also R. Kendall Soulen "Post-Supersessionism," in *A Dictionary of Jewish-Christian Relations*, ed. Edward Kessler and Neil Wenborn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 350–51. See Chapter 4 for a definition of Goldsworthy's Christocentric biblical theology.

## Chapter 2

### A Historical Survey of Israel's Role in Redemption History within Anglicanism

#### Introduction

A brief historical survey concerning Israel's role in redemption history within Anglicanism is necessary to frame the discussion for Donald Robinson's "distinction theology" in Chapter 3.<sup>1</sup> The general position of supersessionism (that the church has become a "new Israel") has been dominant throughout church history and Anglican ecclesiology (examples during Robinson's time include the covenant theologians R. Newton Flew, J. I. Packer, and John Stott).<sup>2</sup> There was also a broad positive theological interest concerning Israel within Anglican theology that taught various ways of viewing the fulfillment of Israel's promises in redemption history and the relationship of Jew and Gentile in the church. The position of Christian Restorationism that developed into

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<sup>1</sup> This historical survey is not exhaustive but covers some significant theological positions that frame the context for Donald Robinson's contribution in Chapter 3. The arrangement of the theological positions is not necessarily chronological. This chapter places each position in a logical arrangement that allows for response and dialogue among the proponents of each position. Robinson did not necessarily respond to (or dialogue with) each theologian represented in this chapter. As shown in Chapter 3, he responded to each theological *position* covered in this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> *Supersessionism*, also known as "replacement theology," views the church as the replacement of Israel. The church has become a "new Israel." One such work which summarizes this viewpoint is O. Palmer Robertson, *The Israel of God: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2000).

Supersessionism occurs across a wide range of theological systems within Christian theology. Covenant theology is one form within Christian evangelical theology in which supersessionism is prevalent. For more information on *covenant theology*, see Peter A. Lillback, "Covenant Theology," in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Martin Davie, et al., 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016), 225–27, Michael S. Horton, *God of Promise: Introducing Covenant Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2006), and Geerhardus Vos, "The Doctrine of the Covenant in Reformed Theology," in *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos*, ed. Richard B. Gaffin Jr. (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1979).

Helpful works that contrast dispensationalism with covenant theology include: Daniel P. Fuller, *Gospel and Law: Contrast or Continuum? The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism and Covenant Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), Chad Brand, Tom Pratt, Robert L. Reymond, Robert L. Saucy, and Robert L. Thomas, *Perspectives on Israel and the Church: 4 Views* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2015), and Peter J. Gentry, and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical–Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, Second edition. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018).

Christian Zionism was a philo–Judaic movement that included members within the Anglican communion (such as Lord Shaftesbury and William Hechler in the nineteenth century) that resulted in the practical applications of evangelism to the Jewish diaspora and the advocating of the re–establishment of a modern–day Jewish nation in the land of Israel.<sup>3</sup> The teachings of some leaders within Christian Zionism (such as Hechler) further developed the concept of a two–covenant theology (separate ways of salvation for Jews and Gentiles).<sup>4</sup> Some traditional evangelical Anglican leaders (such as Stott) criticized two–covenant theology as an extreme position.<sup>5</sup>

The position of Dispensationalism (that Israel and the church are distinct) shared some aspects of Christian Restorationism’s positive theological interest in Israel.<sup>6</sup> It was developed in reaction to Anglican ecclesiology by theologians who left the Anglican

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<sup>3</sup> The term *Christian Zionism* began to be used in the same context as *Christian Restorationism* around March 10, 1896. See Paul C. Merkley, “Zionists and Christian Restorationists,” *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies* (1993): 93–94. Robinson primarily used the older term “restorationism” in his essay “Biblical Understanding of Israel – The Geographical Entity: Some Prolegomena,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, eds., *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God’s People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 182, 184, although he also used the newer term “Zionism” to describe the movement in its later developments. This dissertation primarily uses term *Christian Restorationism* to refer to the movement, but will occasionally use the term *Christian Zionism* in places where Robinson himself used it. A helpful definition of *Christian Zionism* (which is also an accurate definition of *Christian Restorationism*) is provided by Donald Lewis: “the belief that the Jewish people were destined by God to have a national homeland in Palestine and that Christians are obliged to support the Jewish state.” See Donald Lewis, “Evangelicals and Jews Together?: Exploring the Roots of Christian Zionism,” *Crux* 45 (2009): 2. For a brief history of Christian Zionism, see Donald M. Lewis, *A Short History of Christian Zionism: From the Reformation to the Twenty–First Century* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2021). For a discussion on the current theological orientation of Christian Zionism as a non (traditionally)–dispensational response to critics who have alleged Christian Zionism as theologically dispensational, see Gerald R. McDermott, *The New Christian Zionism: Fresh Perspectives on Israel and the Land* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2016).

This dissertation uses *Philo–Judaic* as expressing affinity or care for the Jewish people.

<sup>4</sup> See the discussion later in the chapter on the origins and development of *two–covenant theology* (also known as *dual–covenant theology*). A brief definition of two–covenant theology is: Jews are saved through the religion of Judaism, whereas Gentiles are saved through Christ. This dissertation uses the term *one–covenant theology* in contrast to two–covenant theology to refer to Jews and Gentiles as both being saved through Christ. See also the discussion on two–covenant theology in Craig Blaising, “The Future of National Israel as a Theological Question,” *JETS* 44 (2001): 440–442.

<sup>5</sup> Stott was also critical of Christian Zionism, not only the two–covenant theology that emerged from the movement.

<sup>6</sup> Robinson considered dispensationalism as one form of Christian Restorationism in his essay, “Biblical Understanding of Israel: The Geographical Entity. Some Prolegomena,” 180–81, although he also recognized there were non–dispensational Christian Restorationists.



communion (such as J. N. Darby) and formed the nucleus of the Brethren movement.<sup>7</sup> However, dispensational theology influenced some within Anglicanism who embraced many of its theological points short of ecclesiological separation. Both Christian Zionism and dispensationalism were developed in the context of Anglican theology but pushed beyond it while simultaneously exercising influence upon members of the Anglican communion.

Each of these differing theological positions frames the discussion for examining what Robinson proposed as a “distinction theology” as an alternative, mediating position concerning the role of Israel in redemption history.

### Supersessionism

The various ways of relating Israel and the church have been part of theological discussion throughout church history.<sup>8</sup> Supersessionism was a general position that considered the church a “new” or “true Israel.” It developed early in the church’s teaching and was the default position in patristic, medieval, reformation, and post-reformation theology.<sup>9</sup> It is the dominant umbrella position that informs most of the

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<sup>7</sup>For more on the early development of *dispensationalism* in the life of J. N. Darby, see Larry V. Crutchfield, *The Origins of Dispensationalism: The Darby Factor* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992). For historical works on the origins of the *Brethren*, see Dale R. Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines, 1650–1987* (Philadelphia: Brethren Press, 1989) and Donald F. Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine, A History of the Brethren 1708–1995* (Philadelphia: Brethren Press, 1996). For more on the history of the Brethren in Australia, see Kenneth John Newton, “A History of the Brethren in Australia with Particular Reference to the Open Brethren,” (PhD Dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1990).

<sup>8</sup>Three works that examine the theological discussion concerning the relationship between Israel and the church throughout church history are R. E. Diprose, *Israel in the Development of Christian Thought* (Rome: Institutio Biblico Evangelico Italiano, 2000), J. H. Charlesworth (ed), *Jews and Christians: Exploring the Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), and Brian Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

<sup>9</sup>Justin Martyr was one of the first church leaders to call Christians the “true Israel.” See Justin Martyr, “Dialogue of Justin with Trypho, a Jew,” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 261. See also Peter Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 1.

Irenaeus believed that the “true seed of Abraham” was the New Testament church, although he also believed there would remain an end-time literal city of Jerusalem. See Irenaeus of Lyons, “Irenaeus against Heresies,” in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature

theological discussion apart from theologians who seek to find a positive theological interest concerning Israel.

In his essays on Jew and Gentile, Robinson interacted with works that exemplified supersessionism. Two examples (one general and one specific to Robinson's context) are Earl Ellis' *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* and *The Report of the Joint Commission on Church Union of the Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches of Australia*.

Robinson referenced Earl Ellis' *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* in his essay "Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament" and the chapter "Jew and Gentile in the New Testament" in *Faith's Framework* as an example of supersessionism. Under "The True Israel," Ellis stated that Paul considered the Christian church the "faithful remnant of Israel, the true people of God."<sup>10</sup> He elaborated that "Christians are the true 'Jews' ... Israel ... Israel after the Spirit ... the seed of Abraham ... the Israel of God ... the

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Company, 1885), 563–566.

Origin began to popularize the view that the "true Israel" must be interpreted spiritually to refer to Christ's followers. See Origen, *On First Principles*, translated by G. W. Butterworth (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1973), book 4, 299–301. See also Origen, *Commentary on John* in *Origen*, edited and translated by Joseph W. Trigg (London: Routledge, 1998), 104.

Augustine and his followers further popularized the view that the New Testament church is the "new Israel." Augustine refers to the "elect" as the "truer Israel of God" in "Letter 149," ed. R. J. Deferrari, *Fathers of the Church: A New Translation* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1947–). See also Augustine of Hippo, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms*, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, ed. Philip Schaff, translated by A. Cleveland Coxe, First Series (New York: Christian Literature Company, 1888), 8:550, Paula Fredriksen, "Secundum Carnem: History and Israel in the Theology of St. Augustine," in *Augustine and World Religions*, ed. Brian Brown, et al. (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008), 29–30, and Marcel Dubois, "Jews, Judaism and Israel in the Theology of Saint Augustine: How He Links the Jewish People and the Land of Zion," *Immanuel* 22 (1989): 162–214.

For a brief historical sketch on Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen, and Augustine; see also Gerald R. McDermott, *Israel Matters: Why Christians Must Think Differently About the People and the Land* (Ada, MI: Brazos Press, 2017), 3–10, 33–34.

Two additional works that survey supersessionism throughout church history (while offering critiques of supersessionism) are R. Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996) and Michael Vlach, *The Church as a Replacement of Israel: An Analysis of Supersessionism* (Berlin, Germany: Peter Lang Verlag, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Earl Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1957), 136–139. See also Donald Robinson, "Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament," in *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God's People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 7–8, and Donald Robinson, "Jew and Gentile in the New Testament," in *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God's People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 412–413.

circumcision ... the peculiar people.” He considered the church to be the “continuing body of OT [Old Testament] Israel,” in which the Gentiles were considered part of the “true Israel.”<sup>11</sup> Robinson’s collection of essays on Jew and Gentile provided his alternative position in that Jewish (not Gentile) believers comprise the “true Israel,” “the seed of Abraham,” and the “circumcision” in the New Testament.

The *Report of the Joint Commission on Church Union of the Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches of Australia* is one example of supersessionism within Robinson’s context. Robinson began his essay, “The Salvation of Israel in Romans 9–11,” by stating it is “commonplace” throughout theological discussion to consider the church as the “new Israel,” referencing the language of the *Report of the Joint Commission* when he summarized that the report “speaks of the ‘continuity’ of the church ‘with the history and life of Israel’ and of its being in reality ‘the true Israel.’” In his next paragraph, he responded to the report by stating: “This theological question I believe to be mistaken.”<sup>12</sup>

### Covenant Theology

Supersessionism is found across a wide range of theological systems within Christian theology. One form within Christian theology in which supersessionism is prevalent is covenant theology.<sup>13</sup> In his essay “On Covenant Theology” J. I. Packer (an

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<sup>11</sup> Ellis, *Paul’s Use of the Old Testament*, 136–139 (bracketed text added).

<sup>12</sup> Donald Robinson “The Salvation of Israel in Romans 9–11,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, eds., *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God’s People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 47. See also Rory James Wilson Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia: An Historical Account of the Origins, Development, and Influence of D. W. B. Robinson’s Biblical Scholarship” (PhD Dissertation, Macquarie University, 2017), 85.

<sup>13</sup> For overviews on covenant theology, see Peter A. Lillback, “Covenant Theology,” in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Martin Davie, et al., 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016), 225–27 and Geerhardus Vos, “The Doctrine of the Covenant in Reformed Theology,” in *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos*, ed. Richard B. Gaffin Jr. (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1979). For an extensive study on covenant theology, see Witsius, Herman, *The Economy of the Covenants between God and Man* (London: T. Tegg & Son, 1837). William Dumbrell also overviews covenant theology throughout his work *Covenant and Creation: An Old Testament Covenant Theology* (London: Paternoster, 2013).

Anglican covenant theologian during Robinson's time) surveyed the history and position of covenant theology. Packer began his survey of covenant theology as a theological development of the Reformation (including contributors such as Huldreich Zwingli, Henry Bullinger, John Calvin, and Zacharias Ursinus). He then discussed how Johann Koch (Cocceius) developed a biblical–theological position of covenant theology consisting of three covenants (the covenant of works, the covenant of grace, and the new covenant) in redemption history. Since he wrote the article as an introduction to Herman Witsius' *The Economy of the Covenants between God and Man*, Packer concluded his history of covenant theology by elaborating on how Witsius modified and further developed Cocceius' position of the three covenants (Witsius taught that the three covenants are: the covenant of works, the covenant of redemption, and the covenant of grace).<sup>14</sup>

Packer began his survey on the position of covenant theology by defining a covenant as “a voluntary mutual commitment that binds each party to the other,” particularly a mutual commitment between God and man.<sup>15</sup> He defined covenant theology as a biblical hermeneutic in which the concept of God's covenantal relationship with mankind throughout redemption history was Scripture's unifying theme. He elaborated on the threefold covenantal arrangement in Scripture developed by Witsius and taught by many post–Witsius covenant theologians. God made a covenant of works between Adam and Eve that would have granted them eternal life, conditioned on their obedience to God not to partake of the fruit of the forbidden tree. Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and sin entered the world and mankind through Adam (as mankind's representative). God provided salvation to mankind through His eternal covenant of redemption with Christ (as the Mediator and “second Adam”). Christ fulfilled mankind's redemption through His

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<sup>14</sup> J. I. Packer, “On Covenant Theology,” in *Revelations of the Cross* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2013), 20–21.

English Puritans, including John Owen and Francis Turretin, taught covenant theology. See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 73.

<sup>15</sup> Packer, “On Covenant Theology,” 10–11.

birth, obedience, death, and resurrection. Believers (the “elect”) are saved through the covenant of grace in Christ (which rests upon the covenant of redemption). Scripture presented various covenants (such as the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants), each covenant is subsumed under a single covenant of grace.<sup>16</sup> Packer defined the “elect” who are saved through the covenant of grace as comprising a single covenantal community from “Abel, Noah, and Abraham through the remnant of Israel, to the worldwide New Testament church of believing Jews and Gentiles.”<sup>17</sup> He taught that the “elect” who partook in the covenant of grace comprised a continuity in which God’s promise to Old Testament Israel that He “will be your God, and ye shall be my people” (Leviticus 26:12) carried over to the New Testament church (both believing Jews and Gentiles together comprising one “elect” people).<sup>18</sup> Only Jews and Gentiles “in Christ” were in a covenant of grace with God and could be considered the “people of God.”<sup>19</sup> He interpreted the olive tree (Romans 11) as representing the New Testament church, comprised of both believing Jews and Gentiles, without their ethnic distinctions. Unbelieving Israel were the branches that were broken off after the death of Christ and replaced by the branches of believing Jews and Gentiles who were grafted into the olive tree. Christ represented the “seed of Abraham.” Gentiles partook of Christ in their salvation and became the recipients of the promises of the Abrahamic covenant.<sup>20</sup> Believing Gentiles and Jews together comprised one group of people who are “Abraham’s seed,” a “new Israel,” and a new “chosen people” of God, the New Testament church.<sup>21</sup> The new covenant people of God, the New Testament church, have inherited God’s promises to Old Testament

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<sup>16</sup> Packer, “On Covenant Theology,” 12–16.

<sup>17</sup> Packer, “On Covenant Theology,” 14.

<sup>18</sup> J. I. Packer, *Concise Theology* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 87–88, 199. Unless otherwise indicated, this dissertation will use the King James Version of the Bible in Scripture quotations.

<sup>19</sup> Packer, *Concise Theology*, 89.

<sup>20</sup> Packer, *Concise Theology*, 88–89; 200.

<sup>21</sup> Packer, “Basic Christian Doctrines: 36: The Nature of the Church,” 886–87.

Israel.<sup>22</sup>

Shiner noted that Robinson was “impressed” by an article Packer wrote concerning the centrality of “covenant” as Scripture’s unifying theme. However, Robinson, as well as his successors in Moore’s biblical theology program, gave less emphasis to the concept of “covenant” as Scripture’s central theme (see Chapters 3 and following).<sup>23</sup> Robinson also rejected the position of covenant theologians that the church comprised of believing Jews and Gentiles *without ethnic distinctions* inherited the promises of Israel. He instead taught that it was believing Jews in the New Testament who were the recipients of God’s promises to Israel and that believing Gentiles were the recipients of God’s other promises to the nations. He took issue with the olive tree (Romans 11) as representing the New Testament church, instead viewing the root of the olive tree as representing the blessing of Abraham in which believing Jews and Gentiles shared without eliminating their ethnic distinctions.

R. Newton Flew was a fellow student alongside Robinson in C. H. Dodd’s New Testament seminar at Cambridge.<sup>24</sup> He is an example of a covenant theologian Robinson interacted with during his education. Flew placed the origin of the “church” not in the New Testament event at Pentecost in the book of Acts but in the Old Testament at the call of Abraham in Genesis 12. He argued that Scripture taught a continuity between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church, with the New Testament church being the “true inheritors of God’s promises to Old Testament Israel.”<sup>25</sup> In *Jesus and the*

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<sup>22</sup> Packer, *Concise Theology*, 200.

<sup>23</sup> Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 56.

<sup>24</sup> Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 65.

<sup>25</sup> Flew summarized his argument concerning the continuity between the Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church: “It is true to say that for the early Christian the Church goes back to the time of Abraham. It is hardly correct even to say that Jesus founded the Church. He reconstituted it. The proud consciousness of being the true inheritors of God’s promises in the Old Testament to Israel is manifest in St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the First Epistle of St. Peter, and finds a quainter expression in the Epistle of Barnabas. In the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus the ordination prayer for the bishop has the following for its second sentence: ‘Thou hast appointed the borders of Thy Church by the word of Thy grace, predestinating from the beginning the righteous race of Abraham.’” R. Newton Flew, “Some Outstanding New Testament Problems: IV. Jesus and the Kingdom of God,” *The Expository Times* 46,

*Church*, Flew traced a biblical theology of the church as the “new Israel” and “true Israel” throughout the New Testament.<sup>26</sup> He began by stating that only one true religion offers salvation, Christianity, through belief in Christ as one’s Messiah. It was Christ who “purged” and “reconstituted” Old Testament Israel through Christ’s choosing a “little flock” who comprise a “remnant” of Israel, the apostles. After the death and resurrection of Christ, those who responded to the preaching of Peter and the apostles (the “remnant” of Israel) throughout the book of Acts became a “new community,” a new “people of God,” and a new “Israel.” His interpretation of the olive tree (Romans 11) was that it comprised a single “people of God,” the New Testament church, in which unbelieving Jews were broken off and Gentile believers (and later Jewish believers) were grafted in. The New Testament church, the “new” and “true Israel,” is comprised of a believing Jewish “remnant” and Gentile believers, together who comprise one “people of God” without any ethnic distinctions. Throughout his biblical theology, Flew drew a continuity between the New Testament church and Old Testament Israel and *ἐκκλησία* as referring to the New Testament church, viewing both as representing the same reality and equating the New Testament church with Old Testament Israel.<sup>27</sup>

J. Y. Campbell was another contemporary of and fellow student with Robinson and Flew in Dodd’s New Testament seminar at Cambridge.<sup>28</sup> Campbell wrote and presented a paper (likely in response to Flew) in which he argued against the use of the term *ἐκκλησία* as referring to the New Testament church as a new “Israel” or new

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no. 5 (1935): 217.

<sup>26</sup> R. Newton Flew, *Jesus and His Church: A Study of the Idea of Ecclesia in the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1956), 14.

<sup>27</sup> Flew, *Jesus and His Church*, 14, 30, 35, 88, 100–104, 125, 150–51, 158–59, 166, 169, 172–73, 181–82. Like Flew, Packer performed a similar exegesis which linked the use of the term *ἐκκλησία* in the Septuagint (which referred to the congregation of Old Testament Israel) to the use of *ἐκκλησία* referring to the New Testament church. He considered the *ἐκκλησία* of Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church as one continuous “covenant people of God.” See J. I. Packer, “The Nature of the Church,” in *Basic Christian Doctrines: Contemporary Evangelical Thought*, ed. Carl F. H. Henry (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962): 886.

<sup>28</sup> Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 65.

“people of God” in continuity with Old Testament Israel. Campbell taught that the term ἐκκλησία referred to an “assembly,” not the group of people the assembly represented.<sup>29</sup> The Old Testament use of the term  $\text{קָהָל}$  did not refer to the “people of God” but merely  $\text{קָהָל}$  referred to a generic “assembly” of people.<sup>30</sup> The term ἐκκλησία was never used in any key biblical texts that presented a continuity between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church or that taught the New Testament church is the “true Israel of God.”<sup>31</sup> The use of the term ἐκκλησία in the New Testament was a logical choice to refer to a general “assembly” of New Testament Christians without technical or theological significance. The term would later refer to local church congregations in a similar sense that the term συναγωγή was referred to local Jewish synagogue congregations. The term later referred to the universal church as comprising a grouping of various local churches, not to be construed as a universal church in continuity with Old Testament Israel.<sup>32</sup> Campbell summarized his position concerning the use of the term ἐκκλησία throughout the New Testament by stating: “We must conclude, therefore, that there is no good evidence for the generally accepted view that in using the word ἐκκλησία the early Christians were borrowing an Old Testament term in order to express their claim to be the true people of God, the legitimate successor of the Israel of the Old Covenant.”<sup>33</sup>

Robinson likely followed the Flew/Campbell dialogue while in Dodd’s seminar. Like Campbell, Robinson reached a similar exegetical conclusion concerning the use of the term ἐκκλησία in the New Testament as referring to a general “assembly” of Christians, not a continuity with Old Testament Israel. He would also propose an

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<sup>29</sup> J. Y. Campbell, “The Origin and Meaning of the Christian Use of the Word *Ekklesia*,” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 49 (1948): 130, 132.

<sup>30</sup>  $\text{קָהָל}$  taht deugra llebpmaC  $\text{קָהָל}$  would have been a more likely term used to refer to the “people of God.” See Campbell, “The Origin and Meaning of the Christian Use of the Word *Ekklesia*,” 133, 136.

<sup>31</sup> Two examples provided by Campbell are 1 Peter 2:4–10 and Paul’s discussion of the relationship between Christians and Israel throughout the book of Romans. See Campbell, “The Origin and Meaning of the Christian Use of the Word *Ekklesia*,” 138, 140.

<sup>32</sup> Campbell, “The Origin and Meaning of the Christian Use of the Word *Ekklesia*,” 42.

<sup>33</sup> Campbell, “The Origin and Meaning of the Christian Use of the Word *Ekklesia*,” 141.



alternative position to Flew in that it was the Jewish “remnant” of believers in the New Testament who comprised the “true Israel,” excluding Gentile believers who responded to the preaching of the apostles. While Gentile believers would come alongside Israel, they would not be equated with Israel.

### **Introducing a Positive Theological Interest Concerning Israel**

A positive theological interest concerning Israel was introduced into theological discussions around the 1580s–1590s. Protestants began rethinking the Augustinian teachings of the Medieval church that equated the church with Israel. Theodore Beza (1519–1605) was a Reformed (Calvinist) theologian who interpreted “Israel” in Romans 11 as referring to literal Jews, not the church. This position was reflected in the notes of later editions of the Geneva Bible. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the belief that a mass evangelization of Jews would occur in fulfilling Romans 11 (that “all Israel will be saved”) became popular, especially among Puritans.<sup>34</sup> Donald Lewis argues that Puritanism’s popular interpretation of “Israel” as literal Jews “resonated with the idea of the divine ‘election’ of the Jews” and further advanced the necessity of Jewish evangelism.<sup>35</sup> Within the writings of Anglicanism, John Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs* (1563), while critiquing the religion of Judaism throughout the work, taught the validity of God’s covenant with the nation of Israel.<sup>36</sup> John Bale’s *The Image of Both Churches* (1570), while a work from a supersessionist view, advocated evangelizing the Jewish diaspora and taught an eschatological role for the Jewish people.

The belief that following their mass evangelization, the Jews would also return to

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<sup>34</sup> Donald Lewis, *The Origins of Christian Zionism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 26–29. See also Mayir Vereté, “The Restoration of the Jews in English Protestant Thought 1790–1840,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 8 (1972): 15. See also McDermott, “Can Evangelicals Support Christian Zionism?,” 257. Puritanism’s evangelization of the Jewish diaspora was also considered a means to combat Roman Catholicism’s influence in Britain. Jewish converts to Christianity could align with the Puritans in a battle against Roman Catholicism’s infiltration of Britain. See Lewis, *A Short History of Christian Zionism*, 62.

<sup>35</sup> Lewis, *The Origins of Christian Zionism*, 66, 68, 156.

<sup>36</sup> McDermott, *Israel Matters*, 36.

the land of Israel became popular between 1585–1640.<sup>37</sup> This belief (like the belief in the mass evangelization of the Jews) became popular among Puritans. Britain was considered a “chosen nation” to lead the Christian world of the present age while protecting and restoring God’s Old Testament “chosen nation” as God’s “first nation,” Israel.<sup>38</sup> Within the writings of Anglicanism, Thomas Draxe’s *The Worldes Resurrection* (1618) advocated for the restoration of a Jewish nation in and the return of the Jews to the land of Israel, rebuked the church’s treatment of the Jews throughout history, and argued that God had providentially preserved the Jewish diaspora.<sup>39</sup> Two later works that reinforced the theological discussion advocating for a restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel were Thomas Scott’s *Commentary on the Bible* (1804) and Thomas Newton’s *Dissertations on the Prophecies* (1825).<sup>40</sup>

In addition to interpreting “Israel” as referring to literal Jews, a popular theological shift from postmillennialism to premillennialism occurred during the 1820s among many Anglicans who later became involved in Christian Restorationism. Prior to this shift, many Anglicans involved in Jewish evangelism were postmillennialists.<sup>41</sup> The popular shift to premillennialism began in post-Reformation Christianity through a renaissance of a literal reading of a future millennial kingdom in Revelation 20. The

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<sup>37</sup> Lewis, *The Origins of Christian Zionism*, 27–29.

<sup>38</sup> Hall, “Anglicans and Israel,” 170. See also Lewis, “Evangelicals and Jews Together?,” 6–7 and Lewis, *A Short History of Christian Zionism*, 58.

<sup>39</sup> Lewis, *The Origins of Christian Zionism*, 29. See also Thomas Draxe *The Worldes Resurrection or The Generall Calling of the Jewes* (London: G. Eld, 1608) 37, 56, and Vreté, “Restoration of the Jews in English Protestant Thought 1790–1840,” 3–50.

<sup>40</sup> McDermott, *The New Christian Zionism*, 65.

<sup>41</sup> McDermott, *Israel Matters*, 38. See also Lewis, “Evangelicals and Jews Together?,” 6. *Premillennialism* is the position that interprets Revelation 20 as Christ returning to earth before a literal, one-thousand-year millennium. Christ establishes a literal kingdom during the millennium. *Postmillennialism* is the position that interprets Revelation 20 with Christ returning to earth after a “millennium,” which is defined as an indefinite time period in which the church is active, the Gospel has spread throughout the earth, and that evil on the earth has diminished.

For a discussion on the differences between premillennialism and postmillennialism (and amillennialism), see Craig A. Blaising, Kenneth L. Gentry Jr., and Robert B. Strimple, *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond*, ed. Darrell L. Bock (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999).

Medieval church's failure to fulfill its role of ushering in the kingdom of God (a position held by some Reformers) opened the door for premillennialism to return as a popular position.<sup>42</sup> The deterioration of international affairs (such as the French Revolution) also caused some Anglicans to re-examine their eschatological position in line with a premillennial interpretation of Revelation 20 and believe an imminent, literal return of Christ would occur.<sup>43</sup> As some Anglicans began to accept a premillennial eschatology, a greater appreciation of the prophetic role concerning the nation of Israel, the Jewish people, and the importance of advocating for a restoration of a future Jewish nation in the land of Israel became popular in theological discussions.

By re-examining the teachings of the Medieval church that the church is Israel with the alternative position that "Israel" in Romans 11 is the Jewish people, coupled with the popular theological shift from postmillennialism to premillennialism, some Anglicans began accepting a positive theological interest in Israel and the Jewish people. Two theological positions further built upon this interest. The first was a position of Christian Restorationism that later developed into Christian Zionism. The second was dispensationalism (which shared some aspects of Christian Restorationism, such as a literal future for the nation of Israel).<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Craig Blaising, "Premillennialism" in *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond*, ed. Darrell L. Bock (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 176–177. For a brief history of premillennialism and how it allowed for a greater appreciation of a positive theological significance of Israel in Anglican evangelicalism, see the section "An Overview of Millennialism" in Yeats, "'To the Jew First,'" 209–212.

<sup>43</sup> Lewis, *The Origins of Christian Zionism*, 67–68, 88. See also David Fuse–Roberts, "The Victorian Evangelical Shaftesbury: A Son of the Clapham Sect or a Brother of the Recordites?" *The Churchman* 128 (2014): 125–26; and Hall, "Anglicans and Israel," 171–172.

<sup>44</sup> Sarah Lebharr Hall, "Anglicans and Israel: The (Largely) Untold Story," In *Understanding the Jewish Roots of Christianity: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Essays on the Relationship between Christianity and Judaism*, ed. Gerald R. McDermott, 171–172.

## Key Anglican Figures in Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century Christian Restorationism

Christian Restorationism was a position that built upon the positive theological interest in Israel by first popularizing Jewish evangelism (in fulfillment of the Romans 11 teaching that “all Israel will be saved”). It later expanded to include advocating for a restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel (believing that God’s land promises to Israel await a future fulfillment, including returning the Jewish people to their land).<sup>45</sup>

David Bogue preached a sermon before the London Missionary Society (LMS) in 1806 to spur British interest in Jewish evangelism.<sup>46</sup> His sermon led to the formation of the largest evangelical missionary society to the Jews, the London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews (LSJ).<sup>47</sup> The society was formed by Joseph Frey, a Jewish convert to Christianity, who evangelized Jews in Britain (and later America). Frey previously served at the LMS before branching off to form the LSJ. The LSJ began as an inter-denominational missionary society. It was later re-aligned as an Anglican missionary society after Frey departed from England to become involved in missions to American Jews.<sup>48</sup> The LSJ was formed in 1809 to fulfill the Pauline mandate that the Gospel should be given “to the Jew first.” Its members considered Jewish evangelism to be at the forefront of Protestant evangelicalism’s global missions activity.<sup>49</sup> Members of the LSJ also applied God’s Abrahamic Covenant promise in Genesis 12:3 to their work in Jewish evangelism. They believed that by evangelizing Jews, Britain would be blessed,

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<sup>45</sup> During this later expansion, Christian Restorationism began to develop into the position of Christian Zionism.

<sup>46</sup> J. M. Yeats, “‘To the Jew First’: Conversion of the Jews as the Foundation for Global Missions and Expansion in Nineteenth-Century British Evangelicalism,” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 47 (2005): 208.

<sup>47</sup> Different scholars abbreviate the London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews as either LSJ or LJS (or utilize other alternative abbreviations). Donald Lewis uses the abbreviation LSJ in *The Origins of Christian Zionism* and his journal articles. This dissertation will use Lewis’ abbreviation LSJ to refer to the society.

<sup>48</sup> Lewis, “Evangelicals and Jews Together,” 4–5.

<sup>49</sup> Hall, “Anglicans and Israel,” 172.

leading to an expansion of its political empire.<sup>50</sup> The LSJ later branched out into an evangelistic society to Jews worldwide instead of primarily focusing on the evangelization of British Jews. This new international focus caused some members of the LSJ who wished to remain focused on evangelizing British Jews to break away from the LSJ to form a new Anglican society fulfilling the LSJ's original mission, the Philo-Judaean Society (in 1827).<sup>51</sup> At its peak, the LSJ was the largest producer and distributor of English material concerning the Jews and Jewish evangelism.<sup>52</sup> The work of the LSJ continues to the present age through the Church's Ministry Among Jewish People (CMJ).<sup>53</sup>

As Christian Restorationism began to expand its focus to include advocating for a restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel, one key nineteenth-century Anglican political figure in the movement was Lewis Way. Way was a wealthy attorney and philanthropist (who inherited £300,000 from John Way).<sup>54</sup> He donated £10,000 to the LSJ in 1814, leading the way in its re-structuring in 1825. He was a premillennialist and wrote extensively defending premillennialism. He believed there was a need for Jewish evangelism and advocating for restoring a Jewish nation in the land of Israel.<sup>55</sup>

Another key nineteenth-century Anglican political figure involved in Christian Restorationism was Anthony Ashley-Cooper, Lord Shaftesbury.<sup>56</sup> Shaftesbury was a

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<sup>50</sup> Yeats, "'To the Jew First'," 207–8. Yeats offered a helpful summary of the mission work of the LSJ and the positive theological interest concerning the Jewish people that was circulating throughout Britain during the nineteenth century: "the Jews were construed as the theological axis upon which all of theology, missiology, and eschatology turned" (212–213).

<sup>51</sup> Hall, "Anglicans and Israel," 172.

<sup>52</sup> Yeats, "'To the Jew First'," 212.

<sup>53</sup> "Church's Ministry Among the Jewish People," accessed August 25, 2022, <https://www.cmj.org.uk/our-history>.

<sup>54</sup> John Way was unrelated to Lewis Way but left Lewis the inheritance due to their shared surname.

<sup>55</sup> Lewis, *A Short History of Christian Zionism*, 78–79.

<sup>56</sup> Lewis, *The Origins of Christian Zionism*, 10. Lord Shaftesbury was the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury. His previous title was Lord Ashley.

contemporary of Edward Bickersteth and witnessed Bickersteth's theological shift from postmillennialism to historic premillennialism.<sup>57</sup> Bickersteth was involved in the LSJ and, together with Shaftesbury, contributed to establishing an Anglican bishopric in Jerusalem.<sup>58</sup> While Bickersteth was involved with Jewish evangelism, he believed that a mass-evangelization of the Jewish people would primarily occur after their return to the land of Israel.<sup>59</sup> Like other members of the British aristocracy, Shaftesbury was a member of the Clapham Sect, a group of Anglicans involved in Jewish evangelism who also influenced British politics and contributed to the Anglican church's mission activity. Shaftesbury agreed with the popular position among Puritans concerning advocating for a restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel and assisting in the return of the Jewish people to their land.<sup>60</sup> He was involved in numerous philo-Judaic activities as a member of the British aristocracy, serving as the president of the LSJ and petitioning the British government concerning restoring a Jewish nation in Israel.<sup>61</sup> He wished to right Britain's past wrongs when it banned Jews in 1290. He noticed how Britain and Holland later prospered when they began taking in and assisting Jews into their nations, whereas Spain went into decline after expelling Jews from theirs. He believed national prosperity or decline resulted from how nations treated the Jews (in fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3 that He would bless those who blessed Israel and curse those

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<sup>57</sup> Lewis, "Evangelicals and Jews Together?," 7. For further discussion on *historic premillennialism*, see George Eldon Ladd, *The Blessed Hope* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), and Craig L. Blomberg and Sung Wook Chung, eds, *A Case for Historic Premillennialism: An Alternative to "Left Behind" Eschatology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2009).

<sup>58</sup> Fuse-Roberts, "The Victorian Evangelical Shaftesbury," 127.

<sup>59</sup> Lewis, *A Short History of Christian Zionism*, 108–10.

<sup>60</sup> Fuse-Roberts, "The Victorian Evangelical Shaftesbury," 121. See also Lewis, *The Origins of Christian Zionism*, 115, and Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Thiselton Companion to Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015), 246.

<sup>61</sup> Rowland S. Ward, "A Passion for God and a Passion for Jews: The Basis and Practice of Jewish Mission 1550–1850," *The Reformed Theological Review* 70 (2011): 20–21. See also Yaakov Ariel, "An Unexpected Alliance: Christian Zionism and Its Historical Significance," *Modern Judaism* 26 (2006): 74.

who cursed Israel).<sup>62</sup> He wished to reform British society by assisting various groups of people he considered to be victims of persecution. He considered the Jewish people one of the most persecuted victims throughout history. He wished for Britain to lead the way in assisting the Jewish people through Jewish evangelism, through advocating for a Jewish nation in the land of Israel, and for returning Jews to their land, in order to receive God's promised blessings (in Genesis 12:3) back upon the British empire.

One key nineteenth-century Anglican clergy figure who contributed to developing Christian Restorationism into a position of Christian Zionism was William Hechler. Hechler (who, like Shaftesbury, served in the LSJ) believed that the land of Israel still belonged to the Jewish people based on God's promises to Abraham throughout the book of Genesis.<sup>63</sup> He wrote a pamphlet in 1882 entitled *The Restoration of the Jews to Palestine*.<sup>64</sup> In it, he argued that it is the role of Christians to love the Jewish people and to labor toward advocating for restoring a Jewish nation in the land of Israel to usher in the second coming of Christ. He also believed there was an ethnic distinction between Jew and Gentile that went beyond Jewish assimilation into Gentile culture, considering the Jewish diaspora a "distinct and separate people" from the Gentiles.<sup>65</sup> Hechler's development of Christian Restorationism into a position of Christian Zionism originated when he was introduced to the father of political Zionism and Jewish Zionist leader Theodor Herzl.<sup>66</sup> Hechler read Herzl's work *Der Judenstaat*, eventually becoming a valuable adviser to Herzl and introducing Herzl to the Grand Duke of Baden

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<sup>62</sup> McDermott, *Israel Matters*, 38–39.

<sup>63</sup> Enzo Maass, "Forgotten Prophet: William Henry Hechler and the Rise of Political Zionism," *Nordisk Judaistik* 23 (2003): 161, 185.

<sup>64</sup> Maass, "Forgotten Prophet," 162.

<sup>65</sup> William Hechler, *The Restoration of the Jews to Palestine* (NP, 1884), "II. Dispersion Fulfilled."

<sup>66</sup> Yaakov Ariel, "Israel in Contemporary Evangelical Christian Millennial Thought," *Numen* 59 (2012), 463. See also Maass, "Forgotten Prophet," 165. For more on Herzl, see the chapter "Theodor Herzl" in Ben Zion Netanyahu, *The Founding Fathers of Zionism* (Jerusalem: Balfour Books, 2012) and "Crash Course in Jewish History," accessed July 11, 2023, <https://www.jewishhistory.org/crash-course/>.

to further advocate for restoring a Jewish nation in the land of Israel.<sup>67</sup> Herzl called for the assembly of the First Zionist Conference, with Hechler playing a role in securing philo-Judaic Christians to attend. The conference was to be held in Munich but was transferred to Basel due to opposition in Munich by its Jewish population. The conference occurred on August 28, 1897, in which Herzl was elected President of the newly formed World Zionist Organization. The organization's goal was to unite and resettle the Jewish people in the land of Israel, to strengthen a Jewish national movement within the land of Israel, and to work with other foreign governments to fulfill Zionism's goals.<sup>68</sup> While Herzl was the architect of the World Zionist Organization, without the assistance of Hechler, Herzl would not have had access to prominent foreign dignitaries to help launch his political Zionist agenda, and Herzl's role in bringing philo-Judaic Christians into a movement of Zionism helped to further Herzl's political Zionist goals.<sup>69</sup>

Shaftesbury and Hechler's efforts helped contribute to the eventual drafting of the Balfour Declaration in the twentieth century, which was Britain's most important development concerning the land of Israel between the First Zionist Conference and the 1948 establishment of a modern-day Jewish nation in the land of Israel.<sup>70</sup> The Balfour Declaration was written by British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour, writing to Baron Lionel Walter Rothschild to support establishing a Jewish nation within the historic land of Israel.<sup>71</sup> While there were political motives in Britain and advocates from secular Zionism which contributed to the drafting of the Balfour Declaration, the efforts

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<sup>67</sup> Jerry Klinger, "Reverend William H. Hechler – The Christian Minister Who Legitimized Theodor Herzl," accessed October 19, 2021, [http://jewishmag.com/145mag/herzl\\_hechler/herzl\\_hechler.htm](http://jewishmag.com/145mag/herzl_hechler/herzl_hechler.htm). See Also Ariel, "An Unexpected Alliance," 78. *Der Judenstaat* is also available in an English translation, *The Jewish State*.

<sup>68</sup> "Zionist Congress: First Zionist Congress and Basel Program," accessed October 19, 2021, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/first-zionist-congress-and-basel-program-1897>.

<sup>69</sup> Jim Gerrish, "Christians Remember Zion—Does God Play Favorites?," accessed October 19, 2021, <http://www.churchisraelforum.com/favorites-13/>.

<sup>70</sup> Lewis, *The Origins of Christian Zionism*, 1.

<sup>71</sup> Klinger, "Reverend William H.," 72.



of Christian Restorationists (which further developed into Christian Zionism) also contributed toward Britain's support the restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel.<sup>72</sup> Lord Balfour's Christian background included respect for the Jewish people. He wished to give back to the people who birthed the foundation of Christianity, and he did so by drafting the Balfour Declaration.

Hechler eventually ventured into theological territory that conservative Anglicans would consider extreme. As he attached himself to Herzl's Zionist efforts, he prioritized advocating for a restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel and assisting Jews returning to their land over Jewish evangelism. He believed that Jews would only fully embrace Christ as their Messiah after they returned to their land. He eventually ceased all efforts concerning Jewish evangelism, assisting in developing a two-covenant theology within Christian Zionism. He believed there were two differing salvation covenants, one for Gentile Christians and a separate one for Jews, that nullified *any* need for Jewish evangelism. Two-covenant theology was also proposed in *The Star of Redemption*, the work of Jewish author Franz Rosenzweig. In his work, Rosenzweig argued that Jews are already born in a relationship with God through a Jewish salvation covenant. In contrast, Gentile Christians are "made" instead of "born" in a relationship with God in a Christian salvation covenant.<sup>73</sup> He used the illustration that in the "star of redemption," Judaism (the Jewish salvation covenant) is its "core," whereas Christianity (the Christian salvation covenant) is its "rays."<sup>74</sup> Anglican minister James Parkes proposed a similar two-covenant theology to Hechler's. In his work *The Foundations of Judaism and Christianity*, he argued against any attempt or need for evangelizing Jews, viewing Judaism and Christianity as comprising two separate and parallel salvation "tracks," in which neither religion should replace the other.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Ariel, "Israel in Contemporary Evangelical Christian Millennial Thought," 79.

<sup>73</sup> Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame Press, 1921), 396.

<sup>74</sup> Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 397.

<sup>75</sup> James Parkes, *The Foundations of Judaism and Christianity* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books,

Two-covenant theology was rejected by many within Anglicanism as an extreme theological position. Anglican minister and covenant theologian John Stott provided a clearly-articulated refutation of two-covenant theology. Stott considered both Jew and Gentile as being under a single calling of God (the covenant of grace) and that the “covenant of God is the same throughout, from Abraham to Christ.”<sup>76</sup> Only those “in Christ” are genuinely saved. There are no ethnic barriers or ethnic distinctions in salvation.<sup>77</sup> In his commentary, *The Message of Romans*, he refuted two-covenant theology’s position concerning different salvation tracks for Jews and Gentiles. He appealed to the olive tree (Romans 11) as one olive tree comprised of both Jewish and Gentile believers, without their ethnic distinctions. Non-believing Jews were broken off from the olive tree because they rejected Christ as their Messiah. The only way for Jews to become grafted back into the olive tree is through salvation in Christ.<sup>78</sup>

Like Packer, Stott is an Anglican covenant theologian. Those Stott deemed as “in Christ” are not only the individuals who are genuinely saved, but they also comprise “Abraham’s seed.”<sup>79</sup> They are the “heirs of the promises God made him” (Galatians 3:29).<sup>80</sup> “Israel” (according to Stott) is comprised of “neither Jews nor Israelis, but believers in the Messiah.”<sup>81</sup> He considered both believing Jew and Gentile, without their ethnic distinctions, to “belong to the covenant people of God.”<sup>82</sup> Israel’s national failure

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1960), 330.

<sup>76</sup> John Stott, *One People* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1982), 21, John Stott, *Understanding the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1972), “The Living and Consistent God.”

<sup>77</sup> John Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (Downers Grove, MI: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 188–89.

<sup>78</sup> John Stott, *The Message of Romans: God’s Good News for the World*, *The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), 304–5. Stott believed there would be a widespread salvation of the Jews as they turned to Christ as their Messiah. See John Stott, “The Place of Israel,” in *Zion’s Christian Soldiers: The Bible, Israel, and the Church*, ed. Stephen Sizer (Nottingham: IVP, 2007), 170.

<sup>79</sup> John Stott, *Basic Christianity* (Nottingham, England: IVP, 2008), 155.

<sup>80</sup> Stott, *Understanding the Bible*, “The Living and Consistent God.”

<sup>81</sup> Stott, “The Place of Israel,” 167.

<sup>82</sup> Stott, *The Message of Romans*, 55–56.

to accept Christ as their Messiah opened the door to the Gentile nations, with a new “spiritual Israel” becoming the true inheritor of the promises of God.<sup>83</sup> The calling to a physical, national Israel has now been extended to all Gentile nations, fulfilled by “one new humanity” that eliminates ethnic distinctions.<sup>84</sup> The New Testament church is the true “children of God” and spiritual “descendants of Abraham.”<sup>85</sup> Not only did he refute two-covenant theology as an extreme position, but he extended his critique to Christian Zionism on multiple grounds. First, the New Testament lacks any discussion concerning the restoration of a Jewish nation. Second, Christ fulfilled Israel’s promises, and the “new international community” in the New Testament, comprised of believing Jews and Gentiles (without any ethnic distinctions), are the inheritors of Israel’s promises.<sup>86</sup> Finally, the church is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant’s blessing concerning “all the families of the earth,” with a future land promise not fulfilled in a literal (Jewish) nation of Israel but in an eschatological, heavenly reality (a “New Jerusalem”).<sup>87</sup>

Christian Restorationism began with a focus on evangelizing the Jewish diaspora. Believing Jews joined Gentile churches. Eventually, its focus expanded to include advocating for a future Jewish nation in the land of Israel and returning the Jewish diaspora to their ancestral homeland in Israel to fulfill biblical prophecy. Hechler ventured further by eliminating a need for Jewish evangelism in his two-covenant theology. Robinson interacted with Christian Restorationism in his essay “Biblical Understanding of Israel.” He summarized Christian Restorationism’s position concerning the restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel. He also noted the role of key nineteenth-century figures in the movement (such as Lord Shaftesbury), as well as the

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<sup>83</sup> Stott, *The Message of Romans*, 266–67.

<sup>84</sup> Stott, *One People*, 24.

<sup>85</sup> Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, 188–98, 249.

<sup>86</sup> Stott, “The Place of Israel,” 170–71.

<sup>87</sup> Stott, *Understanding the Bible*, “God’s Promise to Abraham.”

efforts of the LSJ concerning Jewish evangelism. He was comfortable with efforts to evangelize Jews. However he disagreed with Christian Restorationism's position concerning the restoration of a modern Jewish nation in the land of Israel and in assisting the return of the Jews to their land as the fulfillment of God's land promises to Israel. He believed there was a difference between God's plan of not abandoning the Jewish people (including Jewish salvation in Romans 9–11) and the Christian Restorationist position that the Jews continue to have a God-promised right to the land of Israel in the present age. He rejected Christian Restorationism on four grounds. First, he believed the Old Testament land promises to Israel extended further than the modern nation of Israel. He cited Genesis 15:18–21 as evidence that the land promises to Israel included Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and northern Sinai.<sup>88</sup> In contrast to Christian Restorationism, he did not consider the current modern nation of Israel as fulfilling the Old Testament land promises. Second, he believed the land promises to Israel were conditional upon obeying God's laws. Due to their disobedience, the Jews forfeited their land promises. Third, he did not believe the New Testament contained any explicit language concerning the carrying forward of any Old Testament land promises concerning the nation of Israel. Finally, he considered Jewish salvation (what Robinson referred to as their heavenly inheritance) as the fulfillment of God's promises to them. He did not consider God's promises to the Jews requiring a literal land promise. He would agree with covenant theologians that no future return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel is biblically-warranted. He would modify the position that the church, comprised of both a "Jewish nucleus" and Gentile believers, together comprise a "new Israel." He limited the "true Israel" to the "Jewish nucleus" and instead labeled the church (composed of Jews and Gentiles) a "new Adam" (see Chapter 3). He also rejected two-covenant theology, believing instead that Jews and Gentiles shared a common salvation in Christ. He did believe that the one Gospel of Christ was presented in two distinct missions (aspects) to

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<sup>88</sup> Other passages Robinson cited for evidence include Numbers 13 and 34, Joshua 10–19, 1 Kings 4:21–24 and 8:65, 2 Kings 14:25, Amos 6:13, Psalm 72:8, Ezekiel 47, and Zechariah 9:10.

Jews and Gentiles. Jews and Gentiles would each be given a different presentation of the same Gospel of Christ based on their prior knowledge of God. <sup>89</sup>While Robinson did not directly mention the term “two-covenant” theology in his writings on Jew and Gentile, he did teach that Jew and Gentile share a common salvation in Christ. However, the Gospel presentation should be different for Jews and Gentiles (depending on their prior knowledge of God).

### Dispensationalism

Dispensationalism also developed from a positive theological interest in Israel. It shared some aspects of Christian Restorationism (such as a literal future for the nation of Israel). Dispensationalists were also premillennialists and disagreed with a supersessionist view that the church was a “new Israel.”<sup>90</sup> Dispensationalism was

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<sup>89</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Understanding of Israel,” 182, 184–186, Robinson, “Jew and Greek,” 81–85.

<sup>90</sup> Robinson includes dispensationalism as a form of Christian Restorationism in “Biblical Understanding of Israel,” 182, 184–186. For more on dispensationalism as a form of premillennialism, see Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), 19, and see page 21 for the relationship between dispensationalism and Christian Zionism: “One of the most well-known features of the dispensational tradition is the belief in a future for national Israel. That future includes at least the millennial reign of Christ and for some dispensationalists, extends into the eternal state as well. Because of this strong belief, some early dispensationalists, such as W.E. Blackstone, played a key role in garnering support for the Zionist movement.”

See the comments of “Dispensationalism, Classical,” in Daniel J. Hays, J. Scott Duvall, and C. Marvin Pate, *Dictionary of Biblical Prophecy and End Times* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 118: “Its adherents make a sharp distinction between Israel and the church. God made an unconditional covenant with Israel, and they will always be his special people. Even in the New Testament ‘Israel’ means ethnic, national Israel and should never be spiritualized to refer to the church. The church is a parenthesis in God’s plan, coming into existence after Israel rejected the kingdom. When the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled, God will offer the kingdom again to Israel. The purpose of the millennium in Revelation fits into God’s plan at this point. During the millennium, God’s unconditional promises will be kept and other prophecies will be fulfilled through the restoration of Israel.”

Blaising noted that dispensationalism “is especially noted for strong rejection of certain forms of supersessionism or replacement theology—that is, rejection of the belief that the church fulfills and replaces Israel in the divine plan ... Dispensationalists did not believe that the dispensation with Israel was simply a ‘shadow’ of reality revealed in the church; rather, Israel and the church revealed distinct purposes in God’s plan. The dispensation with Israel set forth an earthly, political purpose, whereas the dispensation with the church set forth God’s spiritual, heavenly purpose in which there is no ethnic distinction. These two purposes not only account for structural differences between the two dispensations but also give rise to distinct sets of promises, each pointing to its own form of eschatological fulfillment. Consequently, dispensationalists expect a future dispensation in which these promises can be distinctly fulfilled. Since promises from the last dispensation concern Israel specifically, there must be a future for Israel in a dispensation to come.” See Craig Blaising, “Dispensation, Dispensationalism,” ed. Daniel J. Treier and Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 248.

developed in reaction to Anglican ecclesiology by theologians who left the Anglican communion (such as J. N. Darby) and formed the nucleus of the Brethren movement (during the nineteenth century in Britain and expanding into other countries including the US).<sup>91</sup> John Nelson Darby was an Anglican priest in Ireland who became dissatisfied with the Church of England. He had issues with what he believed was the Anglican's church's failure to teach salvation by grace, as well as the Anglican's church's establishment religion from its uniting with the state. He believed Anglican church ecclesiology was a "visible," worldly, and manmade form of church government.<sup>92</sup> Believing that the church had "failed," he joined a group of believers who referred to themselves as the "Brethren" and taught that all believers shared a common unity in Christ, and they are led by the Holy Spirit.<sup>93</sup> The Brethren were critical of denominational divisions throughout churches

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<sup>91</sup> For more on the early development of dispensationalism in the life of J. N. Darby, see Larry V. Crutchfield, *The Origins of Dispensationalism: The Darby Factor* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992) and C. Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism: Its Historical Genesis and Ecclesiastical Implications* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960). For historical works on the origins of the Brethren, see Dale R. Stoffer, *Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines, 1650–1987* (Philadelphia: Brethren Press, 1989) and Donald F. Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine, A History of the Brethren 1708–1995* (Philadelphia: Brethren Press, 1996). For more on the history of the Brethren in Australia, see Kenneth John Newton, "A History of the Brethren in Australia with Particular Reference to the Open Brethren" (PhD Dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1990).

<sup>92</sup> Erich Geldbach made the comment that Darby's position concerning unity in Christ "lay outside all the denominations and involved a rejection of everything hierarchical, institutional, liturgical, and sacramental. It would come to expression every Sunday in the breaking of bread at the Lord's Table, where 'two or three' (Matt. 18:20) would gather together. See Erich Geldbach, "Plymouth Brethren," ed. Erwin Fahlbusch et al., *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 247.

<sup>93</sup> Mark Galli and Ted Olsen, "John Nelson Darby," in *131 Christians Everyone Should Know* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 98–99, W. Andrew Hoffercker, "Darby, John Nelson," ed. Daniel J. Treier and Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 228.

Galli and Olsen observed that "Darby saw history as a 'progressive revelation,' and his system sought to explain the stages in God's redemptive plan for the universe. There was nothing especially radical about dividing history into periods. What separated Darby's dispensationalism was ... the absolute separation of Israel and the church into two distinct peoples of God." Galli and Olsen, "John Nelson Darby," 99–100.

Craig Blaising noted that "the church is supposed to know that she has a heavenly future and is called to a heavenly way of life. The failure of this dispensation comes when the church thinks that it has an earthly purpose, when it begins to think of itself as an earthly people and becomes preoccupied with earthly things. Such preoccupation has brought about what is called 'Christendom'—that political cultural phenomena of the Western 'Christian' nations. Classical dispensationalism viewed Christendom as a perversion of sinful humanity which tries to substitute itself for the real church of God. Christendom, the human failure of this dispensation, will be judged at the return of Christ." See Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 25–26.

and the failure of various churches to attempt such a common unity.<sup>94</sup> They rejected the divisions of denominations and the establishment religion of churches who united with the state (such as the Anglican church). They rejected the ordained clergy's role in the ministry and emphasized lay believers.

Darby's belief concerning the church as a "failure" resulted in his placing the church and Israel into separate dispensations. He made a distinction between the heavenly people (the church) who would be taken up to heaven in order for the early people (Israel) to take part in a literal restoration during Christ's return and reign.<sup>95</sup> The heavenly people are the saints throughout the ages (the true church is "heavenly" and "invisible") who are resurrected and receive their heavenly blessing. The earthly people (the "visible" people, primarily Israel, plus Gentiles on the earth during Christ's reign) occupy Christ's kingdom and partake in literally restoring the earth (lost during the sin of Adam). God restores the earth and grants immortality to the earthly people. The heavenly people will not participate in the earthly people's fulfillment of God's promises during Christ's reign, nor will the earthly people participate in the heavenly people's blessing in heaven.<sup>96</sup> Darby's separation of the earthly and heavenly people taught an eternal duality in which the church would eternally occupy heaven whereas Israel would be physically restored and eternally occupy earth. One critical element missing from Darby's theology was Jewish believers within the New Testament church. One can infer that Jewish believers within the church would be considered part of the heavenly people and not participate in the restoring of Israel or the earth.

The Bible conference movement shared some aspects of the Brethren movement (such as members of multiple denominations freely studying the Bible together under a

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<sup>94</sup> J. N. Darby, "Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ," in *The Collected Writings of J. N. Darby*, 34 vols., ed. Wm. Kelly, reprint ed. (Sunbury, PA: Believers Bookshelf, 1971), 1:20–35.

<sup>95</sup> N. Dickson, "Darby, John Nelson," ed. Timothy Larsen et al., *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), 179.

<sup>96</sup> Stephen R. Spencer, "Dispensationalism," in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999–2003), 854.

common unity in Christ led by the Holy Spirit) while supplementing the work of existing denominational ministries (unlike the Brethren, the Bible conference movement did not reject the role of ordained clergy or existing ministries).<sup>97</sup> The Niagara Bible Conference in the late nineteenth-century was an American Bible conference that contributed to the development of the position of dispensationalism.<sup>98</sup> Various teachings resulted from the Niagara Bible Conference. One was that Christ (the one who unites believers) is the focal point of interpreting Scripture. Another was that postmillennialism (the popular eschatological position during its time) did not emphasize the centrality of Christ as the one who would usher in the kingdom (postmillennialism believed that Christ returned after the kingdom arrived through the preaching of the Gospel and the Christianizing of society). In its place, members of the conference began to re-popularize the position of premillennialism (that Christ would return before the kingdom in order to usher in the kingdom). Various teachers at the conference outlined numerous dispensations (usually seven).<sup>99</sup> One teaching of the conference that further developed Brethren theology and dispensationalism was the distinction between the heavenly and earthly people. The heavenly people (the church) will eternally occupy heaven so that the earthly people (primarily Israel but also including Gentiles during the millennium) will occupy Christ's earthly kingdom and eternally occupy a literally-restored earth.<sup>100</sup> There is a positive

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<sup>97</sup> Craig Blaising noted one difference between the Brethren movement and the Bible conference movement: "While the Brethren had focused their attention on the local church, the leaders of the Bible conferences sought to draw out the practical significance of the universal church, that one body of Christ which transcended local churches and denominations. The Bible conference was a visible, tangible Christian communion based solely on the reality of the universal church. It could not and did not try to replace local church communion and ministry." See Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 17–18.

<sup>98</sup> For more on the *Niagara Bible Conference*, see C. Norman Kraus, *Dispensationalism in America: Its Rise and Development* (Richmond: John Knox, 1958) and E. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism, British and American Millenarianism, 1800–1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970). See also "Declaration of Doctrinal Belief of Niagara Bible Conference" in *Truth* 20 (1894): 509–511.

<sup>99</sup> See H. M. Parsons, "Dispensations," in *Truth* 11 (1885): 460–66, and "The Dispensations and the Second Coming of our Lord," in *Truth* 11 (1885): 314.

<sup>100</sup> Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 10, 14–15, 23–26. Blaising defines *dispensation* as "a particular arrangement by which God regulates the way human beings relate to Him. Dispensationalism believes that God has planned a succession of different dispensations throughout history,



theological significance for Israel in dispensationalism concerning a literal restoration of Israel on the earth (similar to Christian Restorationism). However, what is absent is any distinction between Jewish and Gentile believers within the New Testament church. One can infer that Jewish believers comprise the heavenly people along with Gentile believers without an ethnic distinction between the two, whereas the Jews that comprise the earthly people are an entirely distinct reality.<sup>101</sup>

Dispensationalism was made popular by C. I. Scofield's *Scofield Reference Bible*, produced in 1909.<sup>102</sup> Scofield was a member of the Niagara Bible Conference, and the notes in his reference Bible helped to circulate the teachings of a Bible conference (such as the Niagara Bible Conference) to readers.<sup>103</sup> Scofield came from an Episcopal background and in 1882 began pastoring a congregational missional church in Dallas, Texas.<sup>104</sup> During his pastorate, he became friends with James H. Brooks (who extensively read Darby) who introduced Scofield to dispensationalism and premillennialism. Scofield wrote *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth* (a work from a dispensationalist and premillennialist view) in 1888, later offering his own correspondence Bible study course. He also pastored a congregational church in Northfield, Massachusetts, in 1895, later becoming the President of Northfield Bible Training School.<sup>105</sup> He returned to Dallas in

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both past, present, and future. Furthermore, dispensationalists believe that these dispensations are revealed in Scripture, in both biblical history and prophecy" (11). See also Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, eds., *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 16–17, 19–20.

<sup>101</sup> See H. H. Rowdon, "Dispensational Theology," ed. Martin Davie et al., *New Dictionary of Theology: Historical and Systematic* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2016), 259: "Dispensationalists accept that believing Jews—as individuals—find their place in the church during the dispensation of grace, but the promises made to the natural seed of Abraham await the premillennial return of Christ with his church for their fulfilment. Then will be initiated the dispensation during which the material blessings promised to Israel will be bestowed and will be characteristic, though not to the exclusion of the spiritual dimension."

<sup>102</sup> For more on the life of C. I. Scofield and the development of the *Scofield Reference Bible*, see Charles Gallaudette Trumbull, *The Life Story of C. I. Scofield* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1920).

<sup>103</sup> Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 10–11, Blaising and Bock, *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, 21–23.

<sup>104</sup> He was ordained as a Congregationalist in 1883 but later transferred to the Presbyterian Church in the US in 1910. See Stephen R. Spencer, "Scofield, C(yrus) I. (1845–1921)" in Stephen R. Spencer, Donald K. McKim, editors, *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters* (Grand Rapids, MI: IVP, 2007), 906.

<sup>105</sup> B. Hankins, "Scofield, Cyrus Ingerson," ed. Timothy Larsen et al., *Biographical Dictionary of*

1902, where he began work on the *Scofield Reference Bible*. Based on the King James Version text with footnotes clarifying the meaning of some biblical texts, the reference Bible utilized a “chain reference” system to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture and organize all of the Scripture passages on particular biblical themes. It defined major doctrines of Scripture (such as atonement, kingdom, and church) and outlined each book of the Bible. It also incorporated a dispensational interpretation of Scripture similar to Darby. The Bible Conference movement and *Scofield Reference Bible* were instrumental in popularizing dispensationalism among American fundamentalists, especially among Presbyterians, Baptists, and Congregationalists.<sup>106</sup>

Like Darby, Scofield taught a distinction between the heavenly people (the church) and the earthly people (Israel). The church would be removed from the earth in order to fulfill God’s promises to Israel concerning the Abrahamic Covenant in a literal restoration of Israel and the earth after Christ returns to usher in His kingdom.<sup>107</sup> Scofield also offered the clearest language concerning dispensationalism’s position on Jewish believers within the New Testament church. S. R. Spenser noted Scofield’s distinction between Jew and Gentile is “lost” in the church:

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*Evangelicals* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP 2003), 589–590.

<sup>106</sup> B. Hankins, “Scofield, Cyrus Ingerson,” 590–591, M. Fackler, “Scofield, Cyrus Ingerson,” ed. J. D. Douglas and Philip W. Comfort, *Who’s Who in Christian History* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1992), 616, Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 10–11. William Nigel Kerr, “Scofield, Cyrus Ingerson,” ed. Daniel J. Treier and Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 787.

<sup>107</sup> C. I. Scofield, *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15): Ten Outline Studies of the More Important Divisions of Scripture* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia School of the Bible, 1921), 15–19. Craig Blaising noted that “Classical dispensationalists saw God’s covenant with Abraham (in Gen. 12 and following) as the foundational covenant in Scripture.” Classical dispensationalists applied the Genesis 13:16 promise of “I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth” to the earthly people, first to the physical offspring of Abraham (Israel) who would then bless the Gentile nations. They also interpreted the Abrahamic Covenant spiritually, citing the Genesis 22:17 promise of “I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens” as referring to the heavenly people, the church, as Abraham’s spiritual offspring. Scofield differed with Darby in his interpretation of the New Covenant. Darby taught that the New Covenant (Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel) applied to Israel, the earthly people, not the church, the heavenly people. Scofield interpreted the New Covenant as he did the Abrahamic Covenant, both literally applying to Israel, the earthly people, and spiritually applying to the church, the heavenly people. See Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 27–30.

The anthropological distinction of Jew, Gentile and the church of God, involving a heavenly (church) and earthly (Jew) dichotomy of their character and destiny, characterizes Scofield's thought, echoing J. N. Darby. Israel is God's national people, but in the church the distinction between Jew and Gentile is "lost" (Scofield 1965, 12) or "disappears" (Scofield 1965, 14). For Scofield "Israel stands connected with earthly and temporal things" but the church "with spiritual and heavenly things" (Scofield 1965, 12).<sup>108</sup>

In his essays on the relationship between Jew and Gentile, Robinson primarily interacted with Scofield as a representative of dispensationalism, sometimes referring to the position of dispensationalism as the "Scofield position" or "Schofield position."<sup>109</sup>

In addition to his interactions with Scofield, Robinson also interacted with dispensationalists through members of the Brethren who were involved in the Katoomba Convention (a Bible teaching convention that began in the Blue Mountains of Australia in 1903) and the Sydney University Evangelical Union (SESU, formerly known as the Sydney University Bible League).<sup>110</sup> While Anglicans primarily comprised the

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<sup>108</sup> Spencer, "Scofield, C(yrus) I. (1845–1921)," 908.

<sup>109</sup> Robinson, "Jew and Greek," 81–85. Robinson's interaction with Scofield was likely due to his observation in Donald Robinson, "Origins and Unresolved Tensions," in Richard J. Gibson (ed.), *Interpreting God's Plan: Biblical Theology and the Pastor* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997), 9, that the *Scofield Reference Bible* was "familiar to many Australian evangelicals, not least when its sale was subsidised by a Sydney businessman prominent among the Brethren." As he was discussing his "three stages" of redemption history in "Origins and Unresolved Tensions" (see Chapter 3 for further elaboration on Robinson's "three stages"), he also made the following comment on page 10 concerning Dispensationalism: "However, I do not think this kind of Dispensationalism [referring to the *Scofield Reference Bible*] had any influence in the circles that were looking for biblical structures in the 1940s and 1950s" (bracketed text added).

Spencer noted that "Scofield so effectively distilled American dispensationalism that it was often called Scofieldism." See Spencer, "Scofield, C(yrus) I. (1845–1921)," 910. Craig Blaising also noted that the term "dispensationalism" was first used concerning the *Scofield Reference Bible*'s interpretations, so Robinson was not the only one who referred to dispensationalism as the "Scofield position." See Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 22.

<sup>110</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 34, 86. Shiner cited Marcia Cameron, "Interview 10 with Bishop D. W. B. Robinson," 16 May 2007, 11, as evidence that dispensationalism was that "the atmosphere I [Robinson] was brought up in," (bracketed text added). He also noted: "According to Robinson, the influence was largely through the Brethren, and when he was growing up 'about half' of the Katoomba Convention was dispensationalist. Robinson felt that his own father was probably 'betwixt and between' on the issue, though he never talked about it." For more on the Katoomba Convention, see Stuart Braga, *A Century Preaching Christ. Katoomba Christian Convention 1903 – 2003* (Sydney: Katoomba Christian Convention, 2003). For more on the SESU, see Meredith Lake, *Proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord: a History of the Sydney University Evangelical Union* (Sydney: Evangelical Union Graduates Fund, 2005).

membership of the SESU, members of the Brethren still taught in the SESU and comprised about half of the members of the Katoomba Convention.<sup>111</sup> Howard Guinness was an Anglican ministry leader who came from a Brethren background and a contemporary of Robinson in the SESU and Katoomba Convention. Guinness was a premillennialist, and Shiner labeled him in agreement with many of dispensationalism's teachings.<sup>112</sup> The majority of his ministry service focused on student mission activity. He frequently preached that the return of the Jews to the land of Israel would usher in the second coming of Christ.<sup>113</sup>

W. H. Griffith Thomas was another Anglican minister who was a premillennialist and moderate dispensationalist.<sup>114</sup> He began his ministry serving as a lay curate in London. He was ordained as an Anglican deacon in 1885, later becoming a senior curate at St. Aldate's Church, Oxford, in 1889. Beginning in 1896, he served at St. Paul's, Portman Square, London. He became principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, in 1905. He was also one of the editors of *The Churchman*.<sup>115</sup> He wrote a series of articles in popular

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<sup>111</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 34, 86.

<sup>112</sup> Shiner cited William Lawton, "The Winter of Our Days: The Anglican Diocese of Sydney, 1950–1960," *Lucas: An Evangelical History Review* 9 (1990): 24, commenting: "Lawton claims Howard Guinness as an Anglican who held to the position [dispensationalism]," (bracketed text added). Shiner's label seemed to stem from Lawton's paragraph: "Howard Guinness expounded the same prophetic imagery. He told the gathering for the 66th Anniversary of the Methodist Central Mission that nuclear warfare was the fulfilment of Jesus' prophecy about the end of the age. The signs of that end were upon them as they witnessed the return of the Jews to Palestine, the growth of the missionary movement, and anxiety and world calamity 'in which the forces of nature would become out of control.' ... His reference to Jewish nationalism binds him into a long tradition of evangelical eschatology. Many Protestant Christians believed that a return of the Jews to Palestine would herald the second coming of Jesus." Guinness' exposition on the Jews return to Palestine, coupled with him coming from a Brethren background, is what Shiner considered as sufficient grounds to label Guinness a dispensationalist. Shiner asserted that those are the grounds by which many Australian Anglicans would label one a dispensationalist. However, with the exception of Guinness' coming from a Brethren background and his belief in premillennialism, there does not seem to be an explicit statement concerning if Guinness would consider himself a dispensationalist or if he agreed with a dispensational view of the church.

<sup>113</sup> Lawton, "The Winter of Our Days," 11–31.

<sup>114</sup> See John D. Hannah, "The 'Thomas' in the W.H. Griffith Thomas Memorial Lectureship," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 163 (2006):, 12–13. See Chapter 3 on Thomas' interactions with John Davies (a principal at Moore College who was also a premillennialist. Davies would later nominate Thomas as a candidate for the archbishop of Sydney in 1909.

<sup>115</sup> Thomas H. Cragoe, "W. H. Griffith Thomas," ed. Walter A. Elwell, *Handbook of Evangelical Theologians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998), 68–70.

periodicals (including *The Churchman* and *The Sunday School Times*) arguing for a personal, premillennial second coming of Christ that included a future national salvation for Israel during Christ's second coming.<sup>116</sup> In his work *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, Thomas taught that the olive tree (Romans 11) was the nation of Israel. He defined "spiritual Israel" as believing Jews (from "natural, national Israel"). The fulfillment of "all Israel will be saved" would occur during a future national salvation of Israel at Christ's second coming.<sup>117</sup> God's promises to Israel await a future fulfillment. They were not limited to Jewish believers within the New Testament church.<sup>118</sup>

Robinson agreed with dispensationalists that the church was not a "new Israel." However, he did not fully accept all of the theological conclusions taught by dispensationalists. He differed with dispensationalists concerning the composition of Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church. He believed that dispensationalists taught no significance for Jewish believers in the New Testament church since dispensationalists considered all believers in the church (including Jewish believers) as separate from Jews who comprise "Israel."<sup>119</sup> As an alternative, he believed that the New Testament church

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<sup>116</sup> One example is W. H. Griffith Thomas, "Great Facts About Our Lord's Coming," *The Sunday School Times* 65, no. 1 (1923): 792–93.

<sup>117</sup> W. H. Griffith Thomas, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans: A Devotional Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1946), 298. See also Hannah, "The 'Thomas' in the W.H. Griffith Thomas Memorial Lectureship," 250–51.

<sup>118</sup> Thomas, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, 238–39, 289. On page 313, Thomas, citing Scofield, elaborated: "A clear distinction is made throughout between Jew and Gentile. Although in the present Christian dispensation, individual Jews and individual Gentiles combine to form one church, the body of Christ, yet in the great future to which the Apostle [Paul] looks, national distinctions will remain, and the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God will be kept separate until that day when 'God shall be all in all,'" (bracketed text added).

<sup>119</sup> Robinson, "Jew and Greek," 81–85.

Shiner referred to dispensationalism as the "joker in the pack" in Australian evangelicalism (See Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 34) by observing that Anglicans viewed dispensationalism negatively due to the disruptive nature of dispensational eschatology to Anglicanism's establishment religion and established eschatology. Australian Anglicans such as Robinson, while rejecting the theological system of dispensationalism, dialogued with dispensationalism's position concerning Israel's role in redemption history.

Robinson critiqued Scofield's dispensational interpretation of James' speech in Acts 15 in "Jew and Greek" by discussing that Scofield reversed the missions of restoring Israel through a Jewish remnant and offering the Gospel to the Gentiles, plus Scofield placed the rebuilding of the temple in a future millennial kingdom. See Robinson, "Jew and Greek," 88.

consisted of a believing “Jewish nucleus” distinct from Gentile believers in the church. The “Jewish nucleus” of believers constituted the “true Israel” (see Chapter 3). Like his disagreements with Christian Restorationism, he also disagreed with dispensationalism’s position concerning a future fulfillment of Israel’s Old Testament land promises.<sup>120</sup>

### Conclusion

Various positions concerning Israel’s role in redemption history and the relationship of Jew and Gentile in the church were prevalent in Anglican theology. There was a general position of supersessionism that the church was a “new Israel” held by Anglican covenant theologians (such as Packer, Flew, and Stott during Robinson’s time). There was also a positive theological interest in Israel that developed into a position of Christian Restorationism that advocated for Jewish evangelism and restoring a Jewish nation in the land of Israel (through the efforts of the LSJ and nineteenth-century leaders such as Shaftesbury and Hechler). Dispensationalism (through the works of leaders such as Darby and Scofield) was another position that developed from a positive theological interest in Israel. Supersessionism and dispensationalism shared a similarity in that both failed to give a distinction between Jew and Gentile within the New Testament church. It is within this theological context that Robinson proposed his unique “distinction theology” as an alternative, mediating position.

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F.F. Bruce is a contemporary of Robinson who came from a Brethren background but rejected dispensationalism. See *F. F. Bruce: A Life* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012).

<sup>120</sup> In the 1950’s and 1960’s, “revised dispensationalism” was popularized by Charles Ryrie. Revised dispensationalists dispensed with the eternal dual states of the heavenly and earthly people and also dispensed with the terms “heavenly people” and “earthly people.” They used the terms “Israel” and “the church” to refer to the two groups of people. Revised dispensationalism retained the loss of a distinction between Jew and Gentile within the New Testament church, as believing Jews were considered part of “the church,” but not “Israel.” While there is no interaction between Robinson and revised dispensationalists, Robinson would have likely taken a similar issue with revised dispensationalists as he did with Scofield and classic dispensationalists. See Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), Blaising and Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 31–32.

## Chapter 3

### A Brief History of Moore College and Donald Robinson's "Distinction Theology"

#### Introduction

This chapter will begin by offering a brief history of Moore College from its origins to Robinson's tenure. This chapter will also include a biographical sketch of Robinson, his understanding of ecclesiology, his contribution to the origins of the biblical theology program at Moore, and his "distinction theology" concerning Israel's role in redemption history.

#### A Brief History of Moore College From its Origins to Robinson's Tenure

Moore College was founded in 1856 by Bishop Frederic Barker, the second bishop of Sydney, after the death of its namesake, Thomas Moore.<sup>1</sup> The roots of Moore College originated from Bishop William Broughton's desire to found an Anglican college.<sup>2</sup> Like Broughton, Moore expressed his desire to found a college (stating the desire in his will). He wanted a college "for youths of the 'Protestant persuasion according to the principles of ... the United Church of England and Ireland.'" <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John Alan McIntosh. "Anglican Evangelicalism in Sydney 1897–1953: The Thought and Influence of Three Moore College Principals – Nathaniel Jones, DJ Davies and TC Hammond," (PhD Dissertation, UNSW, 2014), 2, 129. Moore died on Christmas Eve in 1840. See "Thomas Moore and the Early Life of Sydney" in Edward Loane, ed., *Donald Robinson Selected Works Volume 4: Historical Studies and Series Index* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2018), 36, and "Thomas Moore of Moore Bank 1762–1840. The Father of Liverpool, Benefactor of Mankind," in Edward Loane, ed., *Donald Robinson Selected Works Volume 4: Historical Studies and Series Index* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2018), 75. For additional history on Thomas Moore, see Peter Bolt, *A Portrait in His Actions: Thomas Moore of Liverpool (1762–1840) Part 1: Lesbury to Liverpool*, in *Studies in Australian Colonial History* No. 3 (Sydney: Bolt Publishing Services Pty. Ltd. 2010).

<sup>2</sup> One previous attempt was St. James College at Lyndhurst, a short-lived college founded in 1846.

<sup>3</sup> F. B. Boyce, *Thomas Moore: An Early Australian Worthy* (London, N.P. 1922). Moore had wished to call the college St. Thomas College. See "Thomas Moore and the Early Life of Sydney," 36–37.

Moore was one of the first colonists to arrive in Australia, arriving at Sydney in 1792.<sup>4</sup> He was best known for his shipbuilding work, becoming a master boatbuilder in Sydney in 1796.<sup>5</sup> He later relocated to Liverpool in order to help establish the town.<sup>6</sup> He served as the town's magistrate in 1810. He was involved in the funding of numerous building projects throughout Liverpool, including his estate Moore Bank, the town's first school, courthouse, and three churches: a Roman Catholic Church, a Presbyterian Church, and an Anglican church (St. Luke's Church, the church he attended).<sup>7</sup> He was involved in other philanthropic contributions throughout Liverpool over the years, including donating a pipe organ to one of Liverpool's churches in 1831 (the organ was eventually sold to Moore College in 1970 for their chapel use). In his later years, he moved into a house on Elizabeth Street in Liverpool (where he passed away), as he wished Moore Bank to be left to the Anglican church to house Australia's bishop (a wish never fulfilled). His namesake continues through his Moore Bank estate, Moore Street, and his most lasting legacy, Moore College.<sup>8</sup>

Moore College began in Moore's Elizabeth Street house in Liverpool, with the goal of training ministers, one specific area of education not covered by the University of Sydney.<sup>9</sup> The goal of the college was to become the primary college for training ministers in the Diocese of Sydney.<sup>10</sup> The college relocated to Newtown in 1891.<sup>11</sup> Moore left an

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<sup>4</sup> Boyce, *Thomas Moore*, 3. See also Constantine Campbell, "Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles," ETS, San Francisco, November 17, 2011.

<sup>5</sup> He was one of the carpenters of the ship *Britannia*. See "Thomas Moore and the Early Life of Sydney," in Edward Loane, ed., *Donald Robinson Selected Works Volume 4: Historical Studies and Series Index* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2018), 39, 46.

<sup>6</sup> Boyce, *Thomas Moore*, 8.

<sup>7</sup> The estate's name *Moore Bank* was eventually revised as *Moorebank*. This dissertation will use the original term *Moore Bank* for consistency. For additional history on Moore's time in Liverpool, see Boyce, *Thomas Moore*, 10, and "Thomas Moore of Moore Bank 1762–1840," 76–77.

<sup>8</sup> "Thomas Moore of Moore Bank 1762–1840," 75–79.

<sup>9</sup> "Thomas Moore of Moore Bank 1762–1840," 76.

<sup>10</sup> McIntosh, "Anglican Evangelicalism in Sydney 1897–1953," 2.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Bolt, "The Family Correspondence of Thomas Moore, Esq., of Liverpool," in Peter G. Bolt



endowment including a series of farms he hoped would raise enough income to help start and fund the college during its early years. However, Moore College would need to postpone its official launch until its leadership raised additional funding.<sup>12</sup> When Moore College had enough funding to launch, Dean Cowper served as the college's interim principal. William Hodgson served as the college's first full-time principal, a position he served in for eleven years (until 1867).<sup>13</sup> Marcus Loane noted that during Moore's early years, the curriculum primarily comprised instruction in the Old and New Testaments, the third through seventh centuries of church history, evidence for the Christian faith (such as Butler's *Analogy* and Paley's *Evidences*), the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, and the *Book of Common Prayer*.<sup>14</sup> The town of Liverpool demolished Moore College's original building, and the property is now part of the town's hospital.<sup>15</sup>

In 1897, Nathaniel Jones (who attended Oxford for his M. A.) became principal at Moore. Like Robinson, Jones participated in the Katoomba Convention. He interacted with dispensationalists in the convention (primarily members of the Brethren). He was a premillennialist and introduced premillennialism into the curriculum at Moore through his work *The Teaching of the Articles*.<sup>16</sup> Under "The Return of Christ," he taught that Christ's second coming is "literal not figurative," and he appealed to Revelation 20 as

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and Mark D. Thompson, eds, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 279.

<sup>12</sup> Boyce, *Thomas Moore*, 13–14. The series of farms Moore left as part of the endowment did not produce enough income (due to a recession occurring throughout Australia) to successfully start and fund Moore College. See "Thomas Moore of Moore Bank 1762–1840," 79.

<sup>13</sup> Boyce, *Thomas Moore*, 14–15.

<sup>14</sup> Marcus Loane, *A Centenary History of Moore Theological College* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1955), 36. Loane briefly elaborated on some of the minor adjustments to Moore's curriculum under various principals on pages 49–50 and 92–93. Absent from Moore's early years was any course on biblical theology or any course that taught a unity between both testaments.

<sup>15</sup> "Thomas Moore of Moore Bank 1762–1840," 81.

<sup>16</sup> McIntosh, "Anglican Evangelicalism in Sydney 1897–1953," 124, 169. McIntosh considered Jones a "historicist premillennialist" as defined by A. R. Fausset, not a futurist or dispensational premillennialist.

For more on the Katoomba Convention, see Stuart Braga, *A Century Preaching Christ. Katoomba Christian Convention 1903 – 2003* (Sydney: Katoomba Christian Convention, 2003).

support for Christ's judgement of the nations after His return.<sup>17</sup> Jones was also a close friend of W. H. Griffith Thomas. He nominated Thomas as a candidate for the archbishop of Sydney in 1909 (due to Jones and Thomas sharing a common belief in premillennialism), a position which Thomas failed to win the election.<sup>18</sup> There is no evidence that Thomas taught or lectured at Moore (even during Jones' tenure), but Jones and Thomas did correspond with each other.<sup>19</sup>

John Davies became principal at Moore in 1911 until he died in 1935. He studied at Alderman Davies School, Cambridge University, and Ridley Hall Cambridge. According to Stephen Judd's biographical sketch on Davies, the goal of the new principal was to increase Moore College's academic standards by strengthening Moore's partnership with the University of Sydney (a nearby college where many students began their education before completing their ministry training at Moore) and adopting some of the curriculum requirements of the Australian College of Theology (a network of Bible colleges throughout Australia and a partner of the Australian Anglican church).<sup>20</sup> Judd (in his biographical sketch) and John McIntosh (in his dissertation) labeled Davies as somewhat theologically liberal. For example, McIntosh argued that Davies considered the Bible a "record" of revelation. He also argued that Davies believed the Bible should be studied the same as other literature.<sup>21</sup> In terms of Davies' position on eschatology,

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<sup>17</sup> Nathaniel Jones, *The Teaching of the Articles* (Sydney: W. M. Madgwick and Sons, 1904), 30–33.

<sup>18</sup> Brian Dickey, "Jones, Nathaniel," in *Australian Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*, ed. Brian Dickey (Sydney: Evangelical History Association, 1994), 192, McIntosh, "Anglican Evangelicalism in Sydney 1897–1953," 184.

<sup>19</sup> See "Griffith Thomas, W.H.," accessed February 17, 2023, <http://atom.library.moore.edu.au/index.php/griffith-thomas-w-h>.

<sup>20</sup> Stephen Judd, "Davies, David John," in *Australian Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*, ed. Brian Dickey (Sydney: Evangelical History Association, 1994), 88–89. For more on the Australian College of Theology, see "Australian College of Theology—About," accessed February 16, 2023, <https://www.actheology.edu.au/about/strategy/>. While Moore College adopted some of the Australian College of Theology curriculum requirements, it did not become a member of it. For more on the life of John Davies, see Janet West, "D. J. Davies: A Principal Embattled," (Moore College Library lecture 1988).

<sup>21</sup> Judd referred to Davies as "a protestant in churchmanship but a liberal in scholarship" in "Davies, David John," 88–89. McIntosh referred to Davies as an "evangelical liberal." He cited D. J. Davies, "The Interpretation of Scripture," MS in "Rev David J. Davies Papers, 1902–1935," MitchLib

McIntosh argued that, contrary to Jones, there was no evidence that Davies accepted premillennialism.<sup>22</sup> Moore College suffered funding issues during Davies' time as principal, during which the board of trustees appointed a committee of management and control to oversee the college. However, the committee went beyond managing Moore College's finances and weakened Davies' authority by becoming involved in student admissions. Instead of students being admitted based on the principal's decision, the committee ruled that the archbishop, not the principal, held the final approval of all student admissions.<sup>23</sup> The committee included members Judd labeled more "conservative evangelicals" (in contrast to Davies). Judd considered their involvement in student admissions a vote of no confidence against Davies' liberal scholarship.<sup>24</sup>

In 1936, T. C. Hammond became principal at Moore under the appointment of archbishop Howard Mowll (a position Hammond held until 1953). Hammond received philosophical training at Trinity College Dublin, later studying theology at the college's Divinity School. He raised the college from its financial and enrollment slump under Davies. During his time as principal, the college trained over 200 students, constructed three new building wings, and constructed a chapel. He was also respected throughout Australian Anglicanism and spoke at the Katoomba Convention.<sup>25</sup> Shiner considered Hammond to be theologically a "centrist" who avoided either fundamentalism or liberalism. For example, Shiner argued that Hammond affirmed the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture in the words of Scripture but that he denied the necessity of the doctrine of inerrancy.<sup>26</sup> In Hammond's *Inspiration and Authority*, he stated that Scripture

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(Local Number: MLL MSS 3179) Box 1(1), largest bundle in "Chapter 9: Liberal Evangelicalism Maintained" of "Anglican Evangelicalism in Sydney 1897–1953," 384, concerning Davies' position on the Bible as a "record" of revelation. He discussed the theologically liberal education Davies received in "Chapter 7– Liberal Evangelicalism Embraced," 295–334.

<sup>22</sup> McIntosh, "Anglican Evangelicalism in Sydney 1897–1953," 296–297.

<sup>23</sup> Loane, *A Centenary History of Moore Theological College*, 122–123.

<sup>24</sup> Judd, "Davies, David John," 88–89.

<sup>25</sup> Nelson, "Hammond, T(Homas) C(Hatteron)," 152.

<sup>26</sup> Rory James Wilson Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia: An Historical Account of

was preserved with “substantial accuracy” and that “it is essential that the existent book in any translation should be in a real sense the Word of God.”<sup>27</sup> However, he summarized his position on inerrancy as: “No particular text or translation of the Sacred Scriptures is wholly free from error. Every honest text and translation contains the message of God in such purity that the errors scarcely dim its lustre and do not at all impair its life-giving quality.”<sup>28</sup>

Hammond used W. H Griffith Thomas’ work *The Principles of Theology* as one of Moore’s theological textbooks.<sup>29</sup> However, unlike Jones and Thomas, he was not a premillennialist, with eschatology only briefly mentioned in his work *In Understanding Be Men*.<sup>30</sup> The work comprised his theological textbook, geared initially to introduce students in other academic fields to Bible doctrines. It quickly became a standard textbook for theological education in Bible colleges, which helped to provide structure to the students’ Christian faith.<sup>31</sup> While Robinson did not study directly under Hammond, he regularly communicated with Hammond.<sup>32</sup> Hammond left Robinson an academic legacy which Robinson would question traditional interpretations of the biblical text and allow him to become a pioneer of various theological innovations. His “distinction theology” concerning Israel’s role in redemption history was one area in which Robinson would

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the Origins, Development, and Influence of D. W. B. Robinson’s Biblical Scholarship,” (PhD Dissertation, Macquarie University, 2017), 22. Shiner cited T. C. Hammond, *Inspiration and Authority: The Character of Inspiration and the Problem of Authority* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, n.d.), InterVarsity papers, no. 3, 32–33 (First published in “Evangelicalism,” ed. by J.R. Howden, 1925). McIntosh presented Hammond’s position on the doctrine of Scripture in “Anglican Evangelicalism in Sydney 1897–1953,” 446–456, using a similar description to Shiner concerning Hammond’s theologically “centrist” position on page 467.

<sup>27</sup> Hammond, *Inspiration and Authority*, 37.

<sup>28</sup> Hammond, *Inspiration and Authority*, 38.

<sup>29</sup> McIntosh, “Anglican Evangelicalism in Sydney 1897,” 594, Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 27.

<sup>30</sup> McIntosh, “Anglican Evangelicalism in Sydney 1897,” 433, and T. C. Hammond *In Understanding Be Men* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1936), 188–189.

<sup>31</sup> Nelson, “Hammond, T(Homas) C(Hatteron),” 151.

<sup>32</sup> Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 26.

pioneer one of his well-known theological innovations.<sup>33</sup>

Marcus Loane became the principal of Moore in 1953 as Hammond's successor.<sup>34</sup> Loane's main leadership goal was the spiritual formation of Moore's student body, a role in which Loane was personally involved. He would directly visit with individual students at Moore, praying for and with them.<sup>35</sup> Robinson began serving at Moore while Loane was principal. Moore's biblical theology program began under Loane's leadership and Robinson's supervision (this will be discussed later in the chapter).

### **Biographical Sketch on Donald Robinson**

Donald Robinson laid the foundation for the biblical theology program and theological methodology that scholars and students at Moore College utilize today. During his time at Moore, Robinson began as an Old Testament lecturer. He also served as a senior New Testament lecturer in 1954 and as the college's vice principal in 1959 (when D. Broughton Knox became principal). Robinson spent time with T. C. Hammond at Moore when he was a child. In addition to his ministry service, he also served in World War II.<sup>36</sup> Concerning his education, Robinson first attended the University of Sydney, studying under G. P. Shipp.<sup>37</sup> Robinson was indebted to Shipp's course on the semantic differences between the vocabulary of Mark in contrast to Matthew and Luke. In his *Reformed Theological Review* article, "The Church' Revisited," he mentioned that Shipp's course taught him "how to assess the actual semantic value of words as they are used by individual writers and in particular contexts, without simply importing a

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<sup>33</sup> Mark D. Thompson, "Donald William Bradley Robinson," in Bolt and Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 5.

<sup>34</sup> Loane later became the first Australian-native Archbishop of Sydney. See Graeme Goldsworthy, "Lecture 2: Biblical Theology in the Seminary and Bible College," *SBJT* 12 (2008): 17–21.

<sup>35</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 52–53.

<sup>36</sup> Thompson, "Donald William Bradley Robinson, 4, Shiner, "An Appreciation of D. W. B. Robinson's New Testament Theology," 11.

<sup>37</sup> "Richard Johnson Faithful Minister," in Edward Loane, ed., *Donald Robinson Selected Works Volume 4: Historical Studies and Series Index* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2018), 11.

dictionary meaning into them with a heavy hand.”<sup>38</sup> He noted that “commentators and theologians tended to read more into the meanings of words than either context or usage warranted, and did not allow for subtle changes of meaning of words from one writer to another or even from one context to another in the same writer.”<sup>39</sup> Robinson graduated from the University of Sydney in 1946. While a student there, Robinson was a member of (and later president of) the Sydney University Evangelical Union (SESU, formerly known as the Sydney University Bible League).<sup>40</sup>

After graduating from the University of Sydney, Robinson attended Cambridge University (graduating in 1950).<sup>41</sup> He studied under scholars comprising what Kuhn referred to as the “Cambridge evangelical tradition,” including C. F. D. Moule (who sharpened Robinson’s eye for linguistic details in the biblical text) and C. H. Dodd (who taught Robinson a biblical theology concerning the concepts of “promise and fulfillment” and introduced Robinson to the doctrine of ecclesiology).<sup>42</sup> It was in Dodd’s seminar that Robinson would learn of the theological dialogue between R. H. Newton Flew and J. Y. Campbell concerning the use of ἐκκλησία (see Chapter 2), and Robinson would reach similar exegetical conclusions to that of Campbell (discussed later in the chapter).<sup>43</sup>

Robinson served at St. Matthews Manly and St. Philips Sydney at the beginning

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<sup>38</sup> Donald Robinson, “‘The Church’ Revisited *An Autobiographical Fragment*,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, eds., *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God’s People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 261–262.

<sup>39</sup> Robinson, “‘The Church’ Revisited,” 261–262.

<sup>40</sup> Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 21. For more on the SESU, see Chapter 2 of this dissertation, and Meredith Lake, *Proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord: a History of the Sydney University Evangelical Union* (Sydney: Evangelical Union Graduates Fund, 2005).

<sup>41</sup> “Richard Johnson Faithful Minister,” 11.

<sup>42</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox: Exposition, Analysis, and Theological Evaluation* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson.” Kuhn notes that the foundation for the “Cambridge evangelical tradition” began with scholars such as B. F. Wescott, J. B. Lightfoot, and F. J. A. Hort, later carried forward by their successors. See also Shiner, “An Appreciation of D. W. B. Robinson’s New Testament Theology,” 12.

<sup>43</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson.”

of his ministry service. It was in this ministry context that Robinson began teaching at Moore College from 1952–1982.<sup>44</sup> While at Moore, Robinson became the second bishop of Parramatta in the diocese of Sydney in 1973. After serving at Moore, Robinson became the ninth archbishop of Sydney from 1982–1993, retiring as archbishop in 1993 and returning to teach part-time at Moore.<sup>45</sup>

Robinson's first published work was on the semantic range of the term *παραβολή* throughout the Synoptic Gospels in the 1949 edition of the *Evangelical Quarterly*. Contrary to Loane, Robinson argued for Markan, not Matthean priority. Shiner summarized Robinson's work that "the common modern English understanding of the word 'parable' as a short story illustrating a specific point needs to be tested against actual usage in the Synoptic Gospels," and that the word *παραβολή* shifts usage "from Mark to Luke, and finally to Matthew. Matthew emerges as the 'first Form critic' with novel usage of *παραβολή* as meaning something like the modern definition of a didactic story."<sup>46</sup> Robinson also wrote nine academic articles on the relationship between Jew and Gentile in redemption history, his most substantial work being his 1961 article "Jew and Greek: Unity and Distinction." While most of Robinson's published writings were a collection of articles, many academic in tone, Robinson made a single substantial written contribution for both an academic and non-academic audience in his 1985 publication of *Faith's Framework*, the text of his 1981 Moore College Annual Lectures.<sup>47</sup>

As an Anglican living in Australia, Robinson pioneered scholarship that shaped Anglicanism.<sup>48</sup> In contrast, Anglican church leaders in the United Kingdom (UK) tended to make the majority of their contributions within the existing, established theological

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<sup>44</sup> "Richard Johnson Faithful Minister," 11.

<sup>45</sup> Thompson, "Donald William Bradley Robinson," 5–6, Shiner, "An Appreciation of D. W. B. Robinson's New Testament Theology," 9.

<sup>46</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 54.

<sup>47</sup> Shiner, "An Appreciation of D. W. B. Robinson's New Testament Theology," 10, 15.

<sup>48</sup> One example is Robinson's work on reviving the Anglican prayer book for an Australian context. See Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 25.

boundaries of the Anglican church.<sup>49</sup> Shiner contrasted Robinson's work with UK Anglicans: "Whilst UK evangelicals were working *in* the Church, figures like Donald Robinson were also working *on* the Church."<sup>50</sup>

### **Donald Robinson's Understanding of Ecclesiology**

Robinson developed most of his theological positions concerning ecclesiology while he taught at Moore. Robinson's first course on ecclesiology concerned the use of the term ἐκκλησία throughout Acts. He later took over Moore's "special doctrine" course and taught on the topic of ecclesiology. This course taught ecclesiology in light of "promise and fulfillment" as Scripture's unifying theme and the church's role in redemption history.<sup>51</sup> This course developed into a course on a biblical theology of the church, which laid the foundation for Robinson to further establish Moore's robust biblical theology program (see next section). Robinson also contributed numerous theological developments concerning the doctrine of ecclesiology throughout his writings. One area of focus that began in his writings and was developed during his work in establishing Moore's biblical theology program was his "distinction theology" concerning the relationship between Jew and Gentile in redemption history.<sup>52</sup>

Robinson read various scholars who contributed to his understanding of ecclesiology. Robinson appreciated F. J. A. Hort's *The Christian Ecclesia*, stating that it

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<sup>49</sup> Two examples of UK Anglicans covered in Chapter 2 are J. I. Packer and John Stott. Shiner noted that UK Anglicans tended not to innovate theologically in their writings but kept their theological writings within the context of the established theology of Anglicanism. Australian Anglicans (such as Robinson) tended to attempt various theological innovations (such as Robinson's "distinction theology" concerning the relationship between Jew and Gentile) in their writings while remaining within the Anglican communion. See Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 25.

<sup>50</sup> A helpful explanation to Shiner's comment is that UK Anglicans remained within the boundaries of an established Anglican theology in their service to the church and their writings. However, Australian Anglicans served as theological pioneers in developing innovations in their writings and shaping the direction of the Anglican church in Australia. See Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 25 (italics added).

<sup>51</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson."

<sup>52</sup> Thompson, "Donald William Bradley Robinson," 5.



“set the lines” of his study on the doctrine of the church and considered it a “classical exposition of what the word *ekklesia* means in the Bible.”<sup>53</sup> Robinson cited Hort’s argument that the English term *church* “carries with it associations derived from the institutions and doctrines of later times” and does not “convey the full and exact force which originally belonged to *ekklesia*.”<sup>54</sup> He appreciated Hort’s historical development of ἐκκλησία throughout Scripture, particularly that Hort “concentrated attention on the biblical understanding of *ekklesia*.”<sup>55</sup> Edwin Judge (a friend of Robinson’s) wrote an article entitled “Contemporary Political Models for the Interrelations of the New Testament Churches” which compared a universal church to the local church. He applied the term ἐκκλησία to the local church (as did Robinson): “everything that can be said about the *ecclesia*, can be said equally and fully of each [local] *ecclesia*, and that there will be no other way of using the term, except by deliberate and conscious extension of the self-evident meaning.”<sup>56</sup> K. L. Schmidt’s article on ἐκκλησία in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* was a helpful research work as Robinson thought through his exegesis of the term ἐκκλησία as used throughout Scripture, although Robinson had issues with Schmidt attempting to find a single definition for the term ἐκκλησία.<sup>57</sup> J. Y. Campbell’s position concerning how the term ἐκκλησία primarily meant

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<sup>53</sup> Robinson, “‘The Church’ Revisited,” 260.

<sup>54</sup> F. J. A. Hort, *The Christian Ecclesia* (London: McMillan, 1897), 1.

<sup>55</sup> Robinson, “‘The Church’ Revisited,” 260. Hort traced the term ἐκκλησία throughout the Septuagint (comparing it with the Hebrew terms קָהָל *qahal* and קִיבוּץ *qibutz*) and the New Testament (particularly how ἐκκλησία was used to describe the early church). Kuhn noted that Hort “noticed a distinction of usage between *ekklesia/qahal* as exclusively descriptive of a human gathering and *synagoge/edah* which is often descriptive of a gathering, but also used to describe the Israelite people as whole, particularly as their representative heads gathered,” and Hort differed from Robinson in that Hort considered the “later usage of *ekklesia* in the New Testament is used to describe more of the new society that had been created in Christ, the singular church on earth, than exclusively describing singular (local) congregations.” See Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson” and “Evaluation of Robinson’s Ecclesiology.”

<sup>56</sup> Edwin Judge, “Contemporary Political Models for the Interrelations of the New Testament Churches,” *Reformed Theological Review* 22 (1963): 74 (bracketed text added).

<sup>57</sup> Karl Ludwig Schmidt, “Εκκλησία,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 502–536; Robinson, “‘The Church’ Revisited,” 261.

“assembly” or “gathering” that does not theologically link the ἐκκλησία of the New Testament church to the ἐκκλησία of Old Testament Israel was a valuable work Robinson consulted in his exegesis of ἐκκλησία. As Robinson traced the exegetical data concerning the use of the term ἐκκλησία, he reached a similar position to that of Campbell.<sup>58</sup>

At Moore College, Robinson served closely with D. Broughton Knox, whom Chase Kuhn has summarized as “the greatest theological influence on Robinson.”<sup>59</sup> While Robinson was more of a New Testament exegete and biblical theologian, and Knox was more of a systematic theologian, the two were complementary to each other’s work to the point where scholars have considered the ecclesiologies of Robinson and Knox as comprising a “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology.<sup>60</sup> The discussion of a “Knox–

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<sup>58</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson.”

<sup>59</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson.”

<sup>60</sup> Kuhn summarized a “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology in *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “Conclusion,” by first discussing the similarities. “The fundamental proposition in both ecclesiologies is that the church is a gathering; all other propositions follow from this thesis. This conclusion is built upon the linguistic analysis of *ekklesia* ... Building upon the primary premise of the church as a gathering, Robinson and Knox also agreed that the church is only ever local or heavenly; there is no third category of the universal church on earth ... Both Robinson and Knox also addressed how the church occurs in heaven and on earth. Robinson focused on the categories of place, form, and time. These categories exposed the different experiences of the earthly and heavenly church more than the similarities. Knox also examined the distinctive properties of each experience, but gave particular focus to the presence of Christ in each realm ... Robinson and Knox agreed that the Word has authority over the gathering. Questions were raised (gently) about institutional authority in the form of a denomination. Both argued that there was no external authority over the local church, because the church is only a gathering.” Kuhn next discussed their differences: “Of the minor differences, the most obvious are their style and approach. Robinson was an exegete who paid great attention to detail, while Knox was a theologian who thought more about the big picture ... First, they emphasized different matters in the relationship between the heavenly and earthly churches. Robinson demonstrated the place, form, and time of the heavenly and earthly churches, exposing the differences between them ... Knox, on the other hand, focused less on the properties of the gathering and more on the presence of Christ within those gatherings. Knox stressed that the presence of Christ constitutes the church. Robinson would have certainly agreed. But what Knox did differently was to ask *how* Christ is present in each congregation ... The second major difference—regarding the purpose for the gathering—followed on from the first. Knox carried forward his thesis that the church is where Christ is present. He concluded from this that the church’s purpose is fellowship, both with God and with other Christians. Robinson was not necessarily averse to this purpose, though he was cautious to not make this *the* purpose of the church ... The final major difference was Robinson’s inquiry into the relationship of Israel to the church. His concern throughout his study in ecclesiology was to better understand salvation history. He recognized a preservation of both Jewish and Gentile identities within the church, with the new redeemed community being part of a ‘new man.’ Knox did not include much in his study about the relationship of Israel to the church.” See also Mark D. Thompson, “Knox/Robinson for Today,” accessed December 14, 2022, <http://thebriefing.com.au/2011/12/knoxrobinson-for-today/>.

Robinson” view of ecclesiology began to be circulated during the mid–1980s (although the final term “Knox–Robinson” view took time to become widely used).<sup>61</sup> Robinson did not agree with using such a term, as he believed he and Knox sometimes varied concerning their theological conclusions and approaches to ecclesiology.<sup>62</sup> Kuhn summarized and tested the validity of a “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology in his work *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*. He presented both the unity and distinctions and the forming of a synthesis, between both scholars.<sup>63</sup> Shiner also argued for the existence of a “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology while pointing out their distinctions and the fact that the two scholars did not attempt to create such a view.<sup>64</sup>

Robinson varied with much of traditional Anglicanism concerning the concept of the “universal church” and “national church.” He considered the earthly church as restricted to the assembly of each local congregation. Any concept of a “universal church” is only in the “heavenly realm” when all believers are gathered in Christ’s presence in heaven: “The church is not ecumenical, as is commonly supposed, but supernal.”<sup>65</sup> Robinson contrasted the local church with the universal church as: “on earth, that [the church] is where two or three are gathered together in His name ... in heaven, it is where He is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 62–63.

<sup>62</sup> Robinson attempted to distance himself from the label “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology. While he agreed that he and Knox played a role in each other’s understanding of ecclesiology, Robinson believed that both he and Knox were at enough theological variance concerning their ecclesiological conclusions where the label “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology was not a fitting label concerning their ecclesiological positions. See Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson.”

<sup>63</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “Introduction.”

<sup>64</sup> Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 98.

<sup>65</sup> Donald Robinson, “The Church in the New Testament,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, eds., *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God’s People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 212–213.

<sup>66</sup> Robinson, “The Church in the New Testament,” 213 (bracketed text added). Kuhn observed that “Robinson concluded that the church on earth does not exist in traditional institutional forms such as a denomination. While a denomination may be helpful for the church, that is the local gatherings, it is not

### **Robinson's Efforts in Establishing Moore's Biblical Theology Program**

As Robinson continued to develop his understanding of ecclesiology, his efforts in establishing Moore's biblical theology program began to take shape. The goal of Moore College was to train students on what Donald Cameron referred to in his work *In the Fullness of Time* as the "clear and full knowledge of divine revelation."<sup>67</sup> However, while Moore taught classes on the Old and New Testaments, the college needed to train students on the relationship between both testaments as a unified Scripture to fulfill its goal of teaching Scripture's "full knowledge." Additionally, the college offered no courses on the doctrines of the Old Testament or how biblical doctrine laid the foundation for a student's future ministry service. These needs resulted in Moore College offering a course in biblical theology which later developed into a robust biblical theology program.<sup>68</sup> The biblical theology course was born when Loane wished for Robinson to take over teaching Moore's "special doctrine" course in 1954. Prior to Robinson, the course initially taught the doctrine of the atonement. However, because Robinson attended a "special doctrine" course on ecclesiology during his studies with C. H. Dodd at Cambridge, he requested that ecclesiology be the topic he would cover in the course.<sup>69</sup>

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itself a church and has no authority over the local church. In fact, there is no ecclesial authority beyond the local church as there is no church on earth apart from the local church ... It seems that Robinson disagreed with the institutional language of the church, but not necessarily the purpose of the institution. He believed titles like the Anglican Church of Australia were misnomers. Such institutions are service structures representative of networks of churches, but should not be called a church or the church. However, Robinson did not reject his tradition or even its notion of what/where the church is, rather he preferred to think about it under different terms. For instance, denominations need not be dismissed; they simply should not be considered 'the church.'" See Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson."

<sup>67</sup> David Peterson and John Pryor, eds., *In the Fullness of Time: Biblical Studies in Honor of Archbishop Donald Robinson* (Homebush West, NSW, Australia: Lancer Books, 1992), xii. Robinson worked on his significant contributions to biblical theology while serving at Moore (most of this doctrinal development occurred during the 1950s and 1960s). See "Richard Johnson Faithful Minister," 11, "Richard Johnson: An Unlikely Hero," in Edward Loane, ed., *Donald Robinson Selected Works Volume 4: Historical Studies and Series Index* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2018), 24.

<sup>68</sup> Peterson and Pryor, eds., *In the Fullness of Time*, xii.

<sup>69</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 56–57.

Robinson stated that the church (precisely the concept of the “people of God”) is what (in his view) gave the Bible’s story coherence. This understanding also contributed to Robinson choosing ecclesiology as the topic for the “special doctrine” course. He considered the concept of God’s covenant with Israel as a “crucial key to the structure of the biblical story,” and he was impressed by an article Packer wrote on the “pervasive presence of the covenant idea in Scripture.”<sup>70</sup> Kuhn observed that the link between Robinson’s understanding of ecclesiology and biblical theology was to examine “the movements of God to gather a particular people to himself ... a coherent movement of God amongst his people.”<sup>71</sup> God’s interaction with human beings throughout scripture, from His promises to Abraham through their ultimate fulfillment in Christ, brought structure to his understanding of biblical theology and the importance of ecclesiology in Scripture’s narrative. God not only saved human beings, but, as Kuhn noted of Robinson, God saved human beings “in order to gather them to himself.”<sup>72</sup>

Robinson’s development of Moore’s biblical theology program occurred through various scholars he interacted with, three of them being: Dodd, Cullmann, and (Australian Anglican monk) Gabriel Hebert.<sup>73</sup> Robinson studied under Dodd and Cullmann during his time at Cambridge (as mentioned earlier). While he did not elaborate on the specifics of their influence upon his understanding of what gave the Bible coherence, Robinson noted that he was impressed with Dodd’s *The Parables of the*

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<sup>70</sup> Donald Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” in Edward Loane, ed., *Donald Robinson Selected Works Volume 4: Historical Studies and Series Index* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2018), 204. Robinson’s supervisor at Cambridge, C. F. D. Moule, recommended that Robinson read H. F. Hamilton’s *The People of God*. Robinson read it when he began teaching the “special doctrine” course at Moore. He alluded to it (as well as the other writers he interacted with) in his discussion on “The significance of the covenant God made with his people Israel” as a “crucial key to the structure of the biblical story.” While Robinson did not cite the title of the Packer article, he stated that Packer’s article “reinforced” his view on the “significance of the covenant God made with his people Israel” and used Packer’s article early on in his course.

<sup>71</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson.”

<sup>72</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson.”

<sup>73</sup> Loane, “Richard Johnson Faithful Minister,” 11, Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 202.

*Kingdoms*, *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments*, and *According to the Scriptures*, and Cullmann's *Christ and Time* as he developed the biblical theology course at Moore.<sup>74</sup> Shiner noted that Robinson was similar to Dodd in that both scholars were open to considering "all possible positions" when interpreting the biblical text, and that Dodd's seminars (and Robinson's classes) allowed for the academic freedom to pursue various theological "loose ends."<sup>75</sup> Shiner also noted that Robinson's early writings were on the parables, and that Robinson continued to be interested in New Testament eschatology, both which possibly developed through his reading of Dodd's *The Parables of the Kingdom*.<sup>76</sup> Gabriel Hebert respected Hammond as a theologian, and due to Robinson's interactions with Hammond, Hebert chose to dialogue theologically with Robinson from 1952 to 1960. Robinson's dialogues with Hebert helped to shape both the theology of Moore College and the theology of Australian Anglicanism.<sup>77</sup> Robinson admitted that he developed the biblical theology course at Moore through ongoing dialogue and debate with Hebert.<sup>78</sup> Robinson's biblical theology traced redemption history through a typological series of "three stages" in the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham.<sup>79</sup> "Robinson's "three stages" concept was similar to the structure and

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<sup>74</sup> Robinson, "Biblical Theology in Sydney," 204. See also Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History*, Translated by Floyd V. Filson, Revised edition (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2018). While Robinson did not elaborate on how Cullmann affected his understanding of what gave the Bible coherence, Cullmann's position of Christ being the central point in redemption history (81–94) and his discussion of various stages of redemption history (Part II) could have contributed to such an understanding.

<sup>75</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 41.

<sup>76</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 41. Dodd examined the eschatology of the parables, placing the kingdom of God as occurring during the time of Christ, not a future apocalyptic kingdom. See C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (New York: Scribner, 1961), 157–169.

<sup>77</sup> Anglicans in the UK primarily responded to Hebert's criticisms of fundamentalism within the Anglican church instead of dialoguing with Hebert constructively. See Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 56–59.

<sup>78</sup> Robinson, "Biblical Theology in Sydney," 206.

<sup>79</sup> See next paragraph for a discussion on the "three stages."

concept developed by Hebert in his work *Christ the Fulfiller*.<sup>80</sup> The work resulted from of Hebert's 1957 lectures at Brisbane Clergy School. His goal was to outline the Bible to "show its unity as the Book of Israel's faith." He considered the Bible to be "one book" that belonged to "Israel," the "People of God," although he considered Gentile Christians ("we") as belonging to "Israel."<sup>81</sup> It is possible that Robinson's "three stages" of redemption history were developed as a result of his dialogues with Hebert (although the extent of any direct influence upon Robinson's development of the "three stages" from Hebert is unclear).<sup>82</sup>

Robinson outlined his "three stages" of redemption history as the "outworking of God's promises to Abraham." The first stage was the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham through the exodus event to its climax during the kingdom of Solomon. The exodus event is God's redemption for His people. After He redeemed His people out of bondage in Egypt, God lead them to inherit the land of Israel promised to Abraham during the conquest of Canaan under Joshua. Robinson's reading of salvation history built upon the concepts of an Old Testament "promise" and New Testament "fulfillment" to also include a "partial fulfillment" of Old Testament promises *within* the Old Testament. The Davidic Kingdom was a limited and partial fulfillment of God's promises in the Abrahamic Covenant to make Abraham's seed a "Great Nation," but the kingdom under Solomon eventually failed. The second stage was the "projection of this fulfillment in a future day of the Lord" by the prophets during Israel's exile and return. The prophets

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<sup>80</sup> Gabriel Hebert, *Christ the Fulfiller* (Sydney: The Anglican Truth Society, 1957), 10–12.

<sup>81</sup> Hebert, *Christ the Fulfiller*, 7–9. Hebert labeled the "three stages" as three "confessions of faith" throughout the history of Israel's religion. In Campbell, "Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles," Goldsworthy stated that Robinson differed from Hebert by considering the "three stages" not as "confessions of faith" throughout the history of Old and New Testament religion but as deriving directly from the biblical text. One likely reason is that Hebert was not a fundamentalist, and he embraced biblical criticism, even critiquing fundamentalism throughout his writings. His critiques on fundamentalism resulted in a response from J. I. Packer in *'Fundamentalism' and the Word of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1958). Robinson was also not a fundamentalist and was familiar with biblical criticism, but he was more cautious of biblical criticism and still drew his biblical theology from the text of Scripture rather than utilizing biblical criticism to undermine Scripture's inspiration. Robinson found it helpful to dialogue with Hebert instead of merely responding to his critiques.

<sup>82</sup> Shiner, "An Appreciation of D. W. B. Robinson's New Testament Theology," 29.

looked forward to a future “restoration of Israel” that would be fulfilled in Robinson’s third stage. The final stage was the “true fulfillment in Christ” during His birth, death, resurrection, ascension, and return to rule over a new heaven and earth.<sup>83</sup> Christ as the ultimate fulfillment brings about a restoration of Israel through a remnant of Jewish believers greater than that of the Old Testament Davidic kingdom, in which “Jewish Christianity fulfilled the Old Testament promise of God to restore the tabernacle of David and use the restored remnant of Israel as an instrument to save Gentiles.”<sup>84</sup>

Robinson acknowledged that dispensationalists also traced redemption history through a series of “stages.” However, some dispensationalists (such as Craig Blaising) define a “dispensation” as “a particular arrangement by which God regulates the way human beings relate to Him,” and dispensationalists believe that “God has planned a succession of different dispensations throughout history, both past, present, and future.” Robinson instead considered his “three stages” of redemption history as a “typology” of the “outworking of God’s promises to Abraham” in which the first two stages were “types” with a partial Old Testament fulfillment but ultimately fulfilled in the final stage with Christ.<sup>85</sup>

As Robinson continued to work through the doctrine of the church and his

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<sup>83</sup> Donald Robinson, “Origins and Unresolved Tensions,” in Richard J. Gibson (ed.), *Interpreting God’s Plan: Biblical Theology and the Pastor* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997), 9, Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 209–210.

<sup>84</sup> Donald Robinson, “Jew and Greek: Unity and Division in the Early Church,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, eds., *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God’s People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 82, 109. While Robinson laid a foundation concerning his “three stages” of redemption history, Graeme Goldsworthy (see Chapter 4) further developed and elaborated Robinson’s “three stages” into “three epochs.”

<sup>85</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 209–210. Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), 11. Robinson’s position also differed from that of dispensationalists in both the number of “stages” as well as in how a future fulfillment fits within Robinson’s stages. Robinson used “three stages” in contrast to some dispensationalists such as C. I. Scofield’s *Scofield Reference Bible*’s “seven dispensations.” Other dispensationalists also vary in the number of dispensations. W. H. Griffith Thomas affirmed a dispensational structure consisting of three dispensations. See John D. Hannah, “The ‘Thomas’ in the W.H. Griffith Thomas Memorial Lectureship,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 163 (2006): 12–13. See also Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson.” The chapter will later elaborate on the “future fulfillment” aspect of where Robinson was at variance with dispensationalism.



understanding of the “people of God” as giving the biblical story coherence, he would later expand his “special doctrine” course on the church into a broader course on biblical theology, “An Introduction to the Study of the Bible.” This course was to orient new students at Moore who were considering Anglican ministry service to understand the difference between the “study of Christian religion” (systematic and historical theology) and the “study of the Bible on its own terms” (biblical theology), particularly emphasizing biblical theology and teaching an introductory biblical theology course to Moore’s students.<sup>86</sup> Robinson stated that the “special doctrine” course on the church “quickly developed into an introduction to the theology of the Bible as a whole ... ‘the church’ as such was subsumed under the wider theme of God’s creative purpose for Adam, his promise to Abraham and his seed, the elect people of Israel and the promise to the nations beyond and through Israel.”<sup>87</sup> The course structure comprised seven lessons: The first lesson was what Robinson termed the “scope and spread” of the Bible’s character.<sup>88</sup> This lesson was an outline of the Bible’s history. While the lesson did not delve into the doctrine of the canonicity of Scripture, Robinson used broad canonical terms such as “law and prophets” and “gospel” to structure the major divisions of Scripture. The lesson also surveyed various literary genres in order for students to better understand the intentions of the biblical writers. The second lesson was on Scripture’s use of the “people of God.” Robinson considered the theme of the “people of God” to be “prominent and pervasive” and “central to God’s response to the human condition.”<sup>89</sup> The lesson also surveyed the general concept of “covenant” and examined particular covenants such as the Noahic, Abrahamic, and Mosaic Covenants and how the theme of

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<sup>86</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 206–207.

<sup>87</sup> Robinson, “‘The Church’ Revisited,” 262–263.

<sup>88</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 208–209, and Campbell, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles.”

<sup>89</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 208–209, and Campbell, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles.”

the “people of God” could be traced across the major covenants. The third lesson was on Abraham, his seed, and its significance. Robinson considered “God’s promise to ‘bless’ Abraham” as the “hope of ‘salvation’” and the “whole biblical story as the outworking of that promise.”<sup>90</sup> Robinson would begin elaborating on the first stage of his “three stages” of redemption history by discussing God’s covenant with Abraham in this course. The fourth lesson concerned the concepts of “exodus/redemption” and “land/inheritance.” This is the lesson where Robinson would continue to elaborate on the first stage of his “three stages” of redemption history by leading students through the book of Exodus, then through a brief tour of the conquest of the land of Israel in Joshua to the reign of Solomon.<sup>91</sup> The fifth lesson covered the exilic prophets’ view of “promise and fulfillment” of a coming “day of the Lord.” Robinson would elaborate on the second stage of his “three stages” of redemption history by linking the prophets’ view of “promise and fulfillment” back to the themes of “exodus” and “land” in that the prophets would “project” a “new redemption” and “new inheritance, David, Jerusalem, and temple.”<sup>92</sup> The sixth lesson was the lesson where Robinson would elaborate on the third stage of his “three stages” of redemption history concerning the New Testament’s claim that Christ is the fulfillment of everything Robinson covered in lessons 1–5.<sup>93</sup> The final lesson was on the principles of biblical interpretation, where Robinson reviewed and summarized his “three stages” of redemption history.<sup>94</sup> This introductory course in biblical theology led to the establishment of a robust biblical theology program at Moore

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<sup>90</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 208–209, and Campbell, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles.”

<sup>91</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 208–209, and Campbell, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles.”

<sup>92</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 208–209, and Campbell, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles.”

<sup>93</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 208–209, and Campbell, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles.”

<sup>94</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 208–209, and Campbell, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles.”

as Robinson further developed Moore's biblical theology curriculum, adding additional courses on biblical theology that built upon "An Introduction to the Study of the Bible," and as Moore College began requiring biblical theology courses to its students. However, Robinson published few writings concerning biblical theology. His contributions came primarily through instruction in the classroom.<sup>95</sup> Shiner considered the few publications Robinson contributed to biblical theology an "artifact" of biblical theology in Australian Anglicanism.<sup>96</sup> While Robinson began to think through the relationship between Jew and Gentile as he further developed his understanding of ecclesiology, Robinson would further develop his "distinction theology" concerning Jew and Gentile while developing his course on biblical theology. He felt that an examination of the relationship between Jew and Gentile in redemption history was an area within biblical theology that needed a theological contribution. He also wanted to reject a supersessionist covenantalism that equated the church with Israel and develop an alternative position while still avoiding an acceptance of dispensationalism.<sup>97</sup>

### **Donald Robinson's "Distinction Theology"**

Donald Robinson's "distinction theology" concerning the role of Israel in redemption history was his attempt at a mediating position between a supersessionist view (such as covenant theology) and a positive theological interest in Israel (such as dispensationalism). Robinson wrestled with how to deal with passages such as Colossians 3:10 and 1 Corinthians 12:27 which seemed to affirm Jew and Gentile as one "new mankind" and "body" while retaining the New Testament's teachings concerning an ethnic distinction between Jews and Gentiles. He thought about how he would define "Jew" and "Gentile" as groups of ethnically-distinct individuals and their relationship

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<sup>95</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 56–57.

<sup>96</sup> Shiner, "An Appreciation of D. W. B. Robinson's New Testament Theology," 24.

<sup>97</sup> Robinson, "Biblical Theology in Sydney," 213–14.

with each other throughout redemption history. He also discerned how he would define the terms “church” and “Israel” in contrast to the other existing theological positions. He began his critique of both a supersessionist view and a dispensationalist view in his essay “Jew and Greek” by writing: “Modern evangelical Christians tend to adopt one or other of two opposite positions, both of which, in my opinion, are mistaken, though not equally mistaken.”<sup>98</sup>

Robinson’s interaction with dispensationalism provided one of the pillars of his “distinction theology.” Robinson primarily interacted with Scofield as a representative of dispensationalism in his writings on the relationship between Jew and Gentile, sometimes labeling dispensationalism the “Scofield” or “Schofield” position. He did not fully accept the theological conclusions taught by dispensationalists, such as their belief in a future fulfillment of Israel’s Old Testament land promises. He observed that dispensationalists taught no significance for Jewish believers in the New Testament church. He critiqued dispensationalists in his essay “Jew and Greek” by writing: “On the one hand there is the position of dispensationalism ... which accords little or no significance to the presence of believing Jews in the New Testament churches and relegates all the Old Testament promises about the restoration of Israel to a period which is still future.”<sup>99</sup> However, he wished to sort through and answer the theological questions concerning the relationship between Jew and Gentile in redemption history asked by dispensationalists. What is church’s relationship to Israel? How does one define the ethnic distinction between Jew and Gentile)? He would agree with dispensationalists that the church is not a “new Israel.”<sup>100</sup>

Robinson’s understanding of supersessionist positions (such as covenant theology) provided the other pillar of his “distinction theology.” He was in Dodd’s

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<sup>98</sup> Robinson, “Jew and Greek,” 81–85.

<sup>99</sup> Robinson, “Jew and Greek,” 81–85.

<sup>100</sup> Robinson, “Jew and Greek,” 81–85.

seminar when R. Newton Flew presented his exegesis on ἐκκλησία (see Chapter 2) that met the focus of the debate about Old Testament Israel and ἐκκλησία as referring to the New Testament church as the same reality. He also interacted with scholars who were covenant theologians or held general supersessionist views, such as Earl Ellis. Ellis viewed Christians as the “true Jews” and “Israel after the Spirit,” and the New Testament church as the “new Israel,” while nonbelieving Jews were the old “Israel after the flesh.”<sup>101</sup> In his essay, “Jew and Gentile,” Robinson critiqued scholars who accepted such positions: “On the other hand is the more usual view which regards all Christians as constituting the new Israel in this present age, and which therefore refers the promises made concerning Israel in the Old Testament to the Christian church.”<sup>102</sup> He further elaborated his argument against scholars who accepted supersessionist positions in the chapter “Jew and Gentile in the New Testament” in his work *Faith’s Framework*: “The popular view that God rejected the Jews and that the gospel became a wholly Gentile matter is so far at variance with the New Testament as well as with the expectation of the Old Testament that a complete reappraisal of the New Testament is called for.”<sup>103</sup>

Robinson believed that both positions inadequately represented the New Testament’s teaching concerning the role of Israel in redemption history and the relationship between Jew and Gentile in the New Testament. He critiqued both positions in his essay “Jew and Greek” as: “In my judgement, neither of these views represents the

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<sup>101</sup> Donald Robinson, “Jew and Gentile in the New Testament,” in Bolt and Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1*, 412. Robinson countered by citing Burton’s position that “Israel” in the New Testament referred to the nation of Israel.

<sup>102</sup> Robinson, “Jew and Greek,” 85.

<sup>103</sup> Robinson, “Jew and Gentile in the New Testament,” 409–412. Robinson worked through a brief historical survey on supersessionism. He included the *Epistle of Barnabas* as an example of a work that transferred the promises of Old Testament Israel to the New Testament church. He also stated the position of Melito as another example of supersessionism when Melito stated that there is “no place for continuing Israel as an example of judgment.” He also referred to the Anglican church’s use of the term “true Israelites” about the church in the *Book of Common Prayer*, as well as the discussion that the church must convert Jews in order for them to become the “true Israel” as further examples of teaching supersessionism. See Donald Robinson, “Biblical Understanding of Israel: The Geographical Entity. Some Prolegomena,” in Bolt and Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1*, 180–81. See also Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 56–57, 84–89, 145.

position of St Paul and the other New Testament writers.”<sup>104</sup> His “distinction theology” as a mediating position can be summarized in that Robinson agreed with what both positions denied but rejected what both positions affirmed. Robinson summarized his mediating position in his essay “Jew and Gentile”:

The exponents of these two positions are wrong in what they affirm, but right in what they deny ... [dispensationalism] rightly denies that the distinctive Jewish promises – apart that is from the spiritual promises of the Abrahamic covenant – are inherited by Christians generally. The other view [a supersessionist view], however, rightly denies that God’s promises to Israel have to wait for the millennium or later to be fulfilled.<sup>105</sup>

He agreed with dispensationalists in that they rightly deny transferring the promises of Old Testament Israel to the New Testament church. However, he also agreed that those who held a supersessionist view rightly deny a future fulfillment of such promises. Robinson further elaborates upon his mediating position in “Jew and Gentile” as:

What neither position allows for, but what I believe to be the teaching of the New Testament is that God’s distinctive promises to Israel are in the New Testament fulfilled, not to all believers, but to Jewish believers who constitute the restored remnant of Israel; and that Gentile believers are the inheritors of other promises altogether, that is, the promises made in the Old Testament to the nations who should come to Israel’s light. These two sets of promises, though distinct, are closely related, and are both finally transfigured by a new disclosure of God’s purposes, namely that both Israel and the Gentiles should lose all their distinctiveness in the one new man which will be the end-product of the salvation of God in Christ.<sup>106</sup>

In his essay “Biblical Understanding of Israel,” Robinson discussed a modified supersessionist position that the New Testament church was comprised of a “Jewish nucleus,” but that all Christians are a “new Israel.” After their conversion, this “Jewish nucleus” was absorbed into the New Testament church. This New Testament church,

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<sup>104</sup>. Robinson, “Jew and Greek,” 85.

<sup>105</sup>. Robinson, “Jew and Greek,” 85. Bracketed text added.

<sup>106</sup> Donald Robinson, “Jew and Greek,” 85.

comprised of both Jews and Gentiles, is what constituted a “new Israel.” Robinson modified this position in his “distinction theology” by retaining an ethnic distinction between Jew and Gentile believers in the New Testament church. He proposed that it is the “Jewish nucleus” (that did not lose its Jewish ethnicity in the New Testament church), not all Christians in the church, that comprises a “true Israel.”<sup>107</sup> He believed that God’s promises to Israel are to be fulfilled not to all believers in the church but to Jewish believers who comprise Israel’s “restored remnant.” Gentile believers do not inherit God’s promises to Israel but the promises that were given to the other nations. His position rejected one aspect of a supersessionist view (the church is the “New Israel” and inheritor of Israel’s Old Testament promises in the present dispensation). While Gentile believers could be considered a spiritual seed of Abraham, they are not to be equated with Israel. In the present dispensation, the terms “Jew” and “Christian” are not mutually-exclusive terms. The New Testament (unlike the modern church) was aware of an ethnic distinction between Jews and Gentiles and a “Jewish nucleus” of believers at the core of the New Testament church. The missions to both Jew and Gentile, while sharing a common Gospel, are two ethnically-distinct missions. Jews had a priority over the Gentiles. They were presented with the Gospel before the Gentiles. Jews also had a priority over the Gentiles concerning their divine privileges as God’s chosen nation. God first made Himself known to a believing remnant of Jews. It is this believing remnant of Jews who comprise the “Israel of God” and presented the Gospel to the Gentiles. Gentiles share in the spiritual inheritance of the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant (salvation in Christ) and come alongside Israel (the believing Jewish remnant) but are not Israel.<sup>108</sup>

Robinson retained a modified supersessionist view in his eschatological

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<sup>107</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Understanding of Israel,” 184–185.

<sup>108</sup> Robinson, “Jew and Greek,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, eds., *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God’s People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 79, 81–85, “Adventures in Jewish–Christian Relations,” 192–193, and “Jew and Gentile in the New Testament,” in *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God’s People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 409. See also Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 84–89.

elimination of a distinction between Jew and Gentile believers when both believers become “one new man” through their salvation in Christ. Jew and Gentile believers do not become a “new Israel” but a “new humanity” (or “new mankind”). Robinson considered this “new mankind” as a “new creation” or “spiritual,” “heavenly reality” inaugurated at Christ’s resurrection. Jew and Gentile share a common salvation in Christ that transcends ethnic distinctions. Faith in Christ alone saves Jew and Gentile. Jew and Gentile comprise the one body of believers. Eschatologically, the “new man” eliminates ethnic distinctions between “Jew” and “Gentile.” While he taught an ethnic distinction between “Jew” and “Gentile” in the New Testament church in the present dispensation, and while he emphasized the language of a “new man” that is not a “new Israel” to refer to the eschatological group of believers, his teaching that both “Jew” and “Gentile” lose their ethnic distinctions in a “new man” retained another form of supersessionism.

Robinson’s position also rejected a dispensationalist view that awaits a future, literal restoration concerning the nation of Israel at what Robinson believed to be the expense of Jewish believers during the New Testament age. In his concept of the “three stages” of redemption history, he considered the reign of David and Solomon in the Old Testament as a “partial fulfillment” of God’s promises to Israel in the Abrahamic covenant. This kingdom in the Old Testament failed, requiring a new, ultimate fulfillment. Robinson believed this fulfillment occurred through Christ in the New Testament, who brought about a “restored Israel” (the “Jewish nucleus” of believers) that blessed the Gentiles with the gift of salvation. There is a twofold mission in the New Testament in which Israel is “restored” through a Jewish remnant who believes in Christ, then brings salvation to the Gentile nations. The “restoring” of Israel through a believing remnant of Jews in the New Testament is how Robinson viewed the “restoration” of Israel’s kingdom and fulfillment of God’s Old Testament promises. He did not view this “restoration” as a future, literal kingdom. The extension of salvation to the Gentile nations is how Robinson viewed the fulfillment of the “blessing of the nations” in the



Abrahamic Covenant.<sup>109</sup>

Robinson published numerous writings on the relationship between Jew and Gentile in redemption history, with seven of the pieces published in 1961 while he was at Tyndale House, Cambridge.<sup>110</sup> Robinson's position concerning Israel's role in redemption history went through a series of doctrinal developments.<sup>111</sup> His contributions on the subject also varied from exegetical works on key biblical texts to biblical-theological works and practical, application-level theological works (such as his critique concerning restoring a Jewish nation in the land of Israel in response to Christian Restorationism).

Robinson differed from covenant theologians who emphasized "covenant" as the unifying theme of Scripture. "Covenant" was helpful in order to "appropriate" a promise, but "promise and fulfillment" was central to Robinson's understanding of the biblical-theological grand narrative of Scripture.<sup>112</sup> While Robinson rejected the centrality of "covenant" as a unifying theme in Scripture, he found Packer's emphasis on "covenant" as a unifying theme of Scripture useful for his sorting through where to place "covenant" and "promise and fulfillment" within his understanding of the biblical-theological grand narrative Scripture. While the concept of "covenant" was not central to his contribution to biblical theology, Robinson believed that "covenantal themes" could be applied to the church (such as the expansion of the Gospel given to the Gentiles as the fulfillment of the "blessing of the nations" promise of the Abrahamic Covenant), and that the church does have a place in redemption history (to bring salvation to the nations, beginning with the

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<sup>109</sup> Robinson, "Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament," 16, 22–23, "Jew and Greek," 81, and "Jew and Gentile in the New Testament," 409. Robinson critiqued Scofield's dispensational interpretation of James' speech in Acts 15 as a theological "*tour de force*" in "Jew and Greek" by discussing that Scofield reverses the missions of restoring Israel through a Jewish remnant and offering the Gospel to the Gentiles, plus Scofield places the rebuilding of the temple in a future millennial kingdom. See Robinson, "Jew and Greek," 88.

<sup>110</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 84–89.

<sup>111</sup> Discussed throughout the chapter.

<sup>112</sup> He also emphasized other concepts, such as the "Kingdom of God" above "covenant," derived from his studying under Dodd. See Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 56–57.

“Jewish nucleus” at the center of the New Testament church).<sup>113</sup> Robinson’s concept of “promise and fulfillment” as the central theme of his biblical theology would build upon the concepts of Old Testament “promise” and New Testament “fulfillment” to include a “partial fulfillment” of the Old Testament promises *within* the Old Testament itself (such as during the reign of David and Solomon). However, even such a partial fulfillment failed and required an ultimate fulfillment in the New Testament (in Christ and a “restored remnant” of Jewish believers).

In the theological debate between Flew and Campbell, Robinson agreed with Campbell that the use of the term ἐκκλησία concerning Old Testament Israel in the Septuagint did not equate with the use of the term ἐκκλησία to refer to the New Testament church (or the New Testament church “replacing” Old Testament Israel by being in “continuity” with Israel). Robinson traced the same exegetical data as Campbell and arrived at a similar conclusion. Robinson’s exegetical conclusion concerning the term ἐκκλησία was that it is biblically inaccurate to state that “the church is Israel” in a biblical–theological, redemption historical framework.<sup>114</sup> Robinson began with a church comprised of a “Jewish nucleus” as the original ἐκκλησία (in contrast to applying the term to the Gentile churches or Gentile believers). Christ’s mission was first to “restore Israel” through a believing remnant of Jews who would comprise the “true Israel of God.” Christ’s “restoring Israel” was not to transfer the promises of Israel to the church but to include Israel (the “restored remnant” of believers) in bringing salvation to the Gentiles (as the apostles and New Testament missionaries were Jewish). Shiner referred to Robinson’s position on the New Testament church as including a “Jewish nucleus whose identity was not entirely lost.”<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson.”

<sup>114</sup> Robinson, “Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament,” 7.

<sup>115</sup> Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 68–70, 84–89. See also Donald Robinson, “The Salvation of Israel in Romans 9–11,” in Bolt and Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1*, 53. Robinson elaborated on the distinction between Jew and Gentile throughout the New Testament by Peter’s role as an apostle to the Jews alongside Paul’s role as an apostle to the Gentiles. See Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald

In addition to Robinson's "distinction theology" between Jew and Gentile, his contribution to biblical theology was Christocentric.<sup>116</sup> Christ is the representative "true Israel" who is the ultimate fulfillment of the Old Testament promises, and the believing "Jewish remnant" in Christ comprises the "true Israel." Through Old Testament Israel's failing in its covenantal relationship with God, Christ, through His believing "Jewish remnant," ushers into effect the blessing of the nations. Christ (summarized by Kuhn) is the "true Jew and true Israel" that brought salvation to the Gentiles.<sup>117</sup> To Robinson, salvation comes to the Gentiles through the Jews (through Israel), "but especially through the person Christ, Israel *par excellence*."<sup>118</sup>

One area Robinson transformed his theology concerned the application of the term "people of God." Initially, he believed the term "people of God" should apply equally to Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church. His early position is that while different terms were given for the "people of God" in the Old and New Testament (such as "congregation" in the Old Testament and "church" in the New Testament), the "concept is one and the same, which are the people joined to Christ by faith."<sup>119</sup> He later adjusted his position by not directly applying the term "*the* people of God" to the church itself but instead viewed the church as an "activity" or "gathering" of the "people of God." Kuhn summarized Robinson's later development: "'Church' is not a synonym for 'people of God'; it is rather an *activity* of the 'people of God.' Images such as 'aliens and exiles' ... apply to the people of God in the world, but do not describe the church, i.e. the

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Robinson."

<sup>116</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy further developed the Christocentrality of Robinson's contribution to biblical theology, see Chapter 4.

<sup>117</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson."

<sup>118</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson."

<sup>119</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson."

people assembled with Christ in the midst.”<sup>120</sup>

Robinson elaborated on his later position concerning the “people of God” by responding to Alan Richardson. Richardson claimed that *λαος θεου* in the Septuagint and New Testament referred to a “continuity” between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church to refer to the “people of God.” His position was similar to Flew’s claim that *ἐκκλησία* in the Septuagint and New Testament refers to a “continuity” between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church. Richardson believed that the new Testament church had taken over the “people of God,” a term once reserved for Israel. Robinson began his argument against Richardson with a background examination of the term *λαος* by stating that *λαος* refers to people “bound together by certain ties and responsibilities,” not ethnic origin (*ἔθνος* would be the word used to refer to ethnic origin).<sup>121</sup> One example he cited was Isaiah 19:25’s use of the term “my people” about Egypt. Egypt, in this context, would not become Israel, nor would Egypt replace Israel as God’s people. Robinson proceeded through a brief exegetical tour on the term “people of God” in the New Testament. He referenced Acts 7:34 and Hebrews 11:25, which referred to Old Testament Israel. He also referenced the New Testament’s quoting the Old Testament concerning the nation of Israel as the “people of God” in Matthew 2:6 (quoting Micah 5:1), Romans 11:12 (quoting Psalm 94:14), and Romans 15:10 (quoting Deuteronomy 32:43). In Acts 15:14 and 18:10, the Gentiles are a “people of God” through their common salvation with Jewish believers in Christ. However, they are not a “new Israel.”<sup>122</sup> While the term *the* “people of God” should not be transferred from Old Testament Israel to apply to the New Testament church, Robinson was comfortable with

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<sup>120</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson” (italics added).

<sup>121</sup> Robinson, “Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament,” 8, “Jew and Gentile in the New Testament,” 412–415. Furthermore, the term “the people,” when referring to Israel in either the Old or New Testament, is not always qualified with the modifier “of God.”

<sup>122</sup> Robinson, “Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament,” 12. Robinson also commented that Old Testament prophecies always distinguished between prophecies given to Israel and those given to the Gentile nations.

using the phrase “peoples of God” to apply to various redeemed “peoples,” each comprised of their distinct ethnicity, but not the phrase *the* “people of God.”<sup>123</sup>

As Robinson began to develop the relationship between the “universal church” and the “local church,” Robinson shifted the location of the church from solely being comprised of Jewish believers to include various “congregations” of believers who are saved through Christ, drawing from an Acts 1:8 model that began in Jerusalem and branched out “to the ends of the earth.”<sup>124</sup> Within his position, Robinson still retained a distinction between Jew and Gentile believers in the New Testament church: “though salvation spreads outward from Jerusalem, Jew and Gentile remain distinct ... Gentiles are not represented as becoming Israelites or a new Israel.”<sup>125</sup> Robinson’s interpretation of Acts 1:8 began with a “restored remnant” of Israel that brought salvation “to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8 presented a situation in which Jews and Gentiles are equal in their salvation in Christ but distinct in their ethnicity.<sup>126</sup>

The heart of Robinson’s “distinction theology” concerning Israel’s role in redemption history is his exegesis of various biblical texts throughout Scripture. Referencing Genesis 12:1–3, Robinson distinguished between Jewish and Gentile believers, in which Gentile believers inherit the “blessing of the nations” promise of Genesis 12 as a separate promise from the promises given to Israel (as discussed earlier in the chapter). Kuhn offered a helpful summary of Robinson’s exegesis of Genesis 12:3: “The fulfillment of God’s promises to Israel also brought fulfillment of God’s blessing to the nations.”<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Robinson, “Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament,” 12–14. Robinson summarized his argument: “Israel remains at the center of worship to the custodian of God’s law and wisdom for the nations.”

<sup>124</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “Evaluation of Robinson’s Ecclesiology.”

<sup>125</sup> Robinson, “Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament,” 17–18.

<sup>126</sup> Robinson, “Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament,” 22, 24.

<sup>127</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson.”

Mark's Gospel is where Robinson began to elaborate on his "distinction theology" in the New Testament. Robinson presented Christ as the Jewish Messiah who did not give up His role nor "abandon his mission to Israel" to bring salvation to the Gentiles. One example he referenced was the event with the Syro-Phoenician woman as evidence that the primary mission to Christ was first to the "house of Israel" and only later included mission activity to the Gentiles. While Robinson used similar language to that of Stott in that Israel was preserved in the "little flock" of disciples as a "restored Israel" in his exegesis of Mark's Gospel, he did not label the New Testament (Gentile) church "Israel." Robinson also examined the parable of the husbandmen, in which he placed it in comparison to a theme throughout the Gospel of Mark concerning a "falling Israel" and "rising Israel." Robinson argued that it is not the entire vineyard (representative of Israel) that the Gentiles replace. However, only the unbelieving leaders of Israel who rejected Christ (which comprise a "falling Israel") are replaced by a remnant of leaders (beginning with the apostles) who believed in Christ (which comprise a "rising Israel").<sup>128</sup>

Romans 9–11 (with particular emphasis on Romans 11) is one of Robinson's substantial exegetical works which presented his "distinction theology." To Robinson, Romans 9:25–26 is not evidence that Gentile believers become Israel, but that the passage references the nation of Israel as ethnic Jews.<sup>129</sup> In Romans 11, Robinson identified Israel as a nation that did not lose its national identity to the New Testament church: "He [referring to Paul] nowhere suggests that Israel has lost or changed its original character. He does not, in short, propose any new definition. Israel is the people or nation of Israel, of whose identity no one had any doubt."<sup>130</sup> Paul is speaking of "one

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<sup>128</sup> Robinson, "Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament," 20–21, Donald Robinson, "'Israel' and the 'Gentiles' in the Gospel of Mark," in Bolt and Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume I*, 32–34, 39.

<sup>129</sup> Robinson, "Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament," 12.

<sup>130</sup> Robinson, "The Salvation of Israel in Romans 9–11," 49 (bracketed text added).

Israel,” the nation of Israel (ethnic Jews). There is no “old” or “new Israel” in the mind of Paul. There is somewhat of a “purified Israel” comprised of a believing remnant of Jews, but the New Testament church itself cannot be considered a “new Israel” or a replacement of Old Testament Israel. Robinson elaborated on this position by writing:

Unity in sin and salvation does not mean, however, that Christian Jews and Gentiles form a new Israel. They form on one hand a new or purified Israel—or an elect remnant—and a group of converted Gentiles on the other, conscious of their relationship to and interaction with each other ... but this unity is plainly not something that can be called ‘Israel.’ The Gentiles remain Gentiles, even under the Gospel, and Jerusalem remains Jerusalem.”<sup>131</sup>

Robinson viewed the root of the olive tree (Romans 11) being “Abraham,” more precisely the “Abrahamic blessing” (salvation), with the olive tree representing “Israel’s dependence upon the Abrahamic blessing. Gentiles are grafted in and partake of the blessing of Abraham but can never become natural branches [Israel].”<sup>132</sup> He also believed that the Jewish believer in Christ completed their Jewish faith, with Gentiles partnering with Israel without being Israel: “Christian confession meant the completion of Jewish faith, according to Paul ... The Gentiles were to become partners of Israel but not part of Israel.”<sup>133</sup> To Robinson, Romans 9–11 focused on the nation of Israel, with Paul writing to Jewish believers. The passage originated with natural Israel, then expanded to include a believing remnant of Israel within natural Israel. This believing remnant of Israel is Israel’s hope of their salvation. Paul brought Gentiles into his presentation of the olive tree only through their relationship with the believing remnant of Israel.<sup>134</sup>

In Romans 9–11, Robinson also believed in a reciprocal role between the Jews

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<sup>131</sup> Robinson, “Jew and Gentile in the New Testament,” 419–20.

<sup>132</sup> Robinson, “The Salvation of Israel in Romans 9–11,” 56, and Peterson and Pryor, *In the Fullness of Time*, xxii (bracketed text added).

<sup>133</sup> Peterson and Pryor, *In the Fullness of Time*, xxii.

<sup>134</sup> Robinson, “The Salvation of Israel in Romans 9–11,” 48–50, Donald Robinson, “The Distinction Between Jewish and Gentile Believers in Galatians,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God’s People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 142.

and Gentiles concerning each other's salvation. First, God's salvation for the Gentiles comes through the nation of Israel. The Gentile's belief in Christ comes directly from the "restored remnant" of Jewish believers without the Gentiles becoming Israel.<sup>135</sup> Kuhn offered a helpful summary of Robinson's position on salvation coming from the remnant of Jewish believers: "Robinson believed the church at Jerusalem (consisting of Israelites) was the dispenser of grace to the nations."<sup>136</sup> Through Christ, the Jewish Messiah representing "true Israel," salvation has been made possible for the Gentiles. However, the salvation of the Gentiles would not be "possible without the witness of those redeemed from the nation of Israel first [the believing Jewish remnant]."<sup>137</sup> Even "under the new covenant, Israel is still the vehicle for God's renown. First, this goal of reaching the nations is achieved in and through Christ, Israel *par excellence*. Second, the apostles were Israelites, and were the first missionaries carrying the gospel to the nations. Third, in the rejection of Israel as a nation a way was opened to the Gentiles."<sup>138</sup>

Not only is salvation made possible to the Gentiles through the nation of Israel, but Gentile believers also play a reciprocal role in the salvation of some of the remaining unbelieving Jews: "The mystery is that the Gentiles are beneficiaries of Israel's lapse but also their means of salvation."<sup>139</sup> Robinson's interpretation of Romans 11 that "all Israel" will be saved does not mean that "all of God's people" will be saved. Instead, the "believing remnant" of Jews expand into a "fullness" of believing Jews through the witness of the Gentiles. The reciprocal relationship between salvation being brought to the Gentiles through the Jews and the Gentiles bringing salvation to formerly unbelieving

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<sup>135</sup> Robinson, "Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament," 19.

<sup>136</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson."

<sup>137</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson" (bracketed text added).

<sup>138</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "Evaluation of Robinson's Ecclesiology."

<sup>139</sup> Peterson and Pryor, *In the Fullness of Time*, xxiii.



Jews constituted the salvation of “all Israel” in Romans 11.<sup>140</sup> This salvation is taking place now (and was taking place during the time of Paul), with no need to await a future fulfillment (in rejection of a position that placed a future national salvation for Israel).<sup>141</sup> This salvation is not a separate way of salvation that leads to a “Jewish universalism” (or two-covenant theology). Jews and Gentiles are saved through one common way of salvation, Christ.<sup>142</sup>

Galatians 6:16 is another passage in which Robinson critiqued a typical supersessionist interpretation represented by Earl Ellis. Ellis believed the New Testament church, the spiritual “seed of Abraham,” was the “new Israel.” Robinson countered his view by citing Ernest Burton’s use of Galatians 6:16 that the text refers to “believing Jews,” not a mixed Jew and Gentile audience. The book of Galatians was written to an audience of Jewish believers to reject “another Gospel.” While Gentile Christians are included in the “seed of Abraham” as inheritors of the spiritual blessings of Abraham (the Gospel), they are not “Israel.”<sup>143</sup>

Ephesians and Colossians are two additional books in which Robinson further developed his “distinction theology” by exegeting the use of the terms “the saints” and “the elect.” In Ephesians 1, he argued that the use of the term “saints” referred to the “saints of Israel,” Jewish believers. In Colossians 1, Moule applied the term “saints” as referring to the New Testament church as comprised of Gentile believers. Robinson countered that the use of the term “saints” in Colossians 1 applied to Jewish “saints” (the believing remnant of Jews), not Gentile believers. There is a relationship between Jews

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<sup>140</sup> Robinson, “The Salvation of Israel in Romans 9–11,” 49–50. Robinson stated that this “restoration of Israel” was fulfilled at Pentecost. This “restoration” of Israel included the blessing of the Gentile nations through Israel. See Robinson, “Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament,” 16.

<sup>141</sup> Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 84–89.

<sup>142</sup> Robinson, “The Salvation of Israel in Romans 9–11,” 54–55.

<sup>143</sup> Robinson, “Jew and Gentile in the New Testament,” 412–413. Robinson, “Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament,” 7–8, Donald Robinson, “Romans 9:7,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1, Assembling God’s People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008, 45, Robinson, “The Distinction Between Jewish and Gentile Believers in Galatians,” 131.

and Gentiles concerning their salvation in Christ's death as something both groups have in common. While Gentile believers are to be considered "elect" of God and "holy," they are not, however, "*the* saints" or "*the* elect." Robinson reserved these titles for Jewish believers in both contexts.<sup>144</sup>

Robinson offered a handful of brief exegetical comments throughout the New Testament concerning the relationship between Jew and Gentile in redemption history. He considered 2 Corinthians 6:16 as a possible interpolation in the biblical text, dismissing it as evidence that the New Testament church has replaced Israel or is a "new Israel." Robinson also contributed an article on Paul's use of the term "we the circumcision" in Philippians 3:2–4, which he argued referred to Jewish believers. To Robinson, the term "*the* circumcision" as a people (qualified by *the*) always referred to a group of people who have been physically circumcised. It did not refer to a group of people being circumcised figuratively (such as being "circumcised in the heart"). Robinson's exegesis of Titus 2:14 argued that it likely referred to Paul and his colleagues as Jewish believers who were witnessing to Gentiles, not to a Gentile church replacing Israel as those who are witnessing to other Gentiles. Robinson also referenced the term "the house of Israel" in Hebrews to refer to actual Jewish believers, not as referring to a mixed Jew/Gentile audience. Robinson's exegesis of 1 Peter 2:9 argued that the passage likely referred to Jewish believers, not a predominantly–Gentile church. It could refer to Jewish believers who lapsed away from Judaism into Paganism (in a similar manner to how Old Testament Israel forsook God and lapsed into worshipping Pagan deities) but who later returned to the faith through salvation in Christ.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Donald Robinson, "Who Were 'The Saints'?" in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God's People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 164–68.

<sup>145</sup> Robinson, "Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament," 10–11, 13–14, Robinson, "Jew and Gentile in the New Testament," 415–416, Donald Robinson "We are the Circumcision," in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1, Assembling God's People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 171–72. Robinson also critiqued Peter Richardson's comment that there was a shift from the Jews to a predominately Gentile New Testament church in the Pauline writings. Robinson argued that this concept would not be considered in the Pauline writings, as such a division between the Jews and Gentiles would not have occurred until the destruction of the Jewish

Robinson summarized his exegesis of Pauline passages by stating there are distinct but connected aspects of the Gospel concerning the Jews and Gentiles. This distinction does not present an entirely different *way* of salvation concerning the Jews and Gentiles (both come to the same faith in Christ). While Robinson did not directly interact with the concept, his position would reject a two-covenant theology as taught by Hechler. However, he did assert that a different *presentation* of the Gospel is warranted depending on a Jewish or Gentile evangelistic context. Paul utilized different terminology or language in his witness to a Jew or Gentile based upon how each understood redemption history. Jews were in bondage to the (Mosaic) law, while Gentiles were in bondage to their false (Pagan) religions, but Christ rescued each group of people. Paul is united to both the Jews as a believing Jew and to Gentiles he witnessed to. He is united to both through one faith in Christ.<sup>146</sup> While both Jew and Gentile shared a common salvation, both retained their ethnic distinctions. Gentiles are not “Israel”: “Gentile believers are not, in fact, represented as spiritual Israelites, or as forming part of the renewed Israel of prophecy.”<sup>147</sup> Kuhn elaborated on Robinson’s position by writing:

Robinson believed that Israel is preserved as an identity (ethnic?) in the church as a demonstration of God’s wisdom in bringing together Jews and Gentiles ... while the church is the *gathering* of the people of God, there is good reason why it is not called “Israel” ... It is also those initially redeemed from Israel that the church continued to spread to the wider world... While Israel is not superseded in the church, there remains a place of prominence for Israel in the salvific purposes of God. Robinson believed the church at Jerusalem (consisting of Israelites) was the dispenser of grace to the nations.<sup>148</sup>

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Temple in AD 70. See Robinson, “Jew and Gentile in the New Testament,” 420.

<sup>146</sup> Robinson, “Jew and Greek,” 83, Donald Robinson “The Circumcision of Titus and Paul’s ‘Liberty’,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Volume 1 Assembling God’s People* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 111, Robinson, “The Distinction Between Jewish and Gentile Believers in Galatians,” 134–38.

<sup>147</sup> Robinson, “Jew and Greek,” 85.

<sup>148</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson” (italics added). Kuhn also elaborated on Robinson’s theology in that Robinson placed the church “within the covenantal relationship God had established with Israel, yet he did not see the new covenant abolishing the identity of the Israelites or their place within the soteriological purposes of God. He believed that preservation of the Israelite identity, in distinction from the Gentile converts, was fundamental to understanding the redemptive plan of God.” See Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald*

One final application concerning Robinson's theology was how he critiqued a Christian Restorationist position concerning restoring a Jewish nation in the land of Israel. Robinson aided in the forming of the Council of Christians and Jews in 1980, also serving as a representative of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney. During this time, Robinson continued to work through various positions on what role a restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel played in redemption history. In his essay "Biblical Understanding of Israel," he referenced the efforts of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews (LSJ) and Church's Ministry Among Jewish People (CMJ) concerning Jewish evangelism, as well as the role key nineteenth-century figures in Christian Restorationism (such as Lord Shaftesbury) played in advocating for restoring a Jewish nation in the land of Israel.<sup>149</sup> He was comfortable with efforts to evangelize Jews and with the work of the LSJ and CMJ. While Robinson did not object to Jewish evangelism, he disagreed with a Christian Restorationist position concerning the restoring of a modern Jewish nation in the land of Israel and a return of the Jews to their land as a fulfillment of God's land promises to Israel. He believed there was a difference between God's plan of not abandoning the Jewish people (including Jewish salvation in Romans 9–11) and a Christian Restorationist position that the Jews continue to have a God-promised right to the land of Israel in the present age. He rejected this position on what he believed were four hermeneutical and theological grounds. First, he believed the land promises to Israel extended further than the boundaries of the modern nation of Israel (citing Genesis 15:18–21 as evidence that the land promises to Israel included Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and northern Sinai).<sup>150</sup> Second, the land promises to Israel were conditional upon obeying God's laws. Due to Israel's disobedience to God in the Old

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*Robinson and D. Broughton Knox, "Evaluation of Robinson's Ecclesiology."*

<sup>149</sup> Robinson, "Biblical Understanding of Israel: The Geographical Entity. Some Prolegomena," 185–86. See Chapter 2 for more on the LSJ and CMJ.

<sup>150</sup> Other passages Robinson cited for evidence include Numbers 13 and 34, Joshua 10–19, 1 Kings 4:21–24 and 8:65, 2 Kings 14:25, Amos 6:13, Psalm 72:8, Ezekiel 47, and Zechariah 9:10.

Testament, the Jews forfeited their land promises. Third, he did not believe the New Testament contained any explicit language concerning the carrying forward of any Old Testament land promises concerning the nation of Israel (a position similar to that of Stott). He argued that the New Testament did not give much “interest in the geographic entity of the land,” nor did it provide the grounds for restoring a Jewish nation in the land of Israel. Finally, he considered the salvation of the Jews (their heavenly inheritance), not a literal land promise, as the fulfillment of God’s promises to them. Robinson placed the application of the land promise of the Abrahamic Covenant as a “heavenly reality,” citing the “inheritance of the saints” as being “in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 1:18–21, 1 Peter 1). He considered no need for a divinely–commissioned restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel in a modern–day nation of Israel or a future fulfillment. He would agree with covenant theologians that no future return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel is biblically warranted. He would modify the position that the church, comprised of both a “Jewish nucleus” and Gentile believers, together comprise a “new Israel,” instead limiting the “true Israel” to the “Jewish nucleus” and arguing that the church is a “new Adam.”<sup>151</sup> He referred to W. D. Davies’ study, *Gospel and Land*, which Robinson summarized Davies’ position that the “appearance of Christ in the flesh—in the land, in Jerusalem, in the temple, made and engagement by his followers with these realities of Judaism unavoidable, yet the witness of the New Testament to the fulfillment of God’s purposes points to the transcending of all three.”<sup>152</sup> He directly cited Davies that during the time of Christ, “there was no one doctrine of the land” but “a multiplicity of ideas” concerning the land promises: “there were currents which would temper any concentration on the land, but a belief in the promise of the land to Israel by Yahweh, to

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<sup>151</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Understanding of Israel: The Geographical Entity. Some Prolegomena,” 182–91.

<sup>152</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Understanding of Israel: The Geographical Entity. Some Prolegomena,” 185.

whom it belonged, also persisted.”<sup>153</sup> Robinson understood this as “while the *image* of the land remained clear, it is not easy to see how far Jews, by the end of or after the Old Testament period, entertained hope of a *physical* reoccupation of the land promised to Abraham.”<sup>154</sup> He was not against Zionism solely as a secular, political movement. He was comfortable with Jewish people returning to the land of Israel, provided that the Jewish people offer “due regard for the non-Jewish communities already there.” He did reject a Christian Restorationist or Christian Zionist position that a restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel could be made on theological grounds or through an exegesis of the biblical text.<sup>155</sup>

Robinson’s ecclesiological “distinction theology” concerning Jew and Gentile affected the overall construal of biblical theology he taught in his “Introduction to the Study of the Bible” course. In lesson two of the course, Robinson taught that the “people of God” (which he considered Israel in the Old Testament and a “restored remnant” of Jewish believers in the New Testament) as that which gave coherence to Scripture’s storyline.<sup>156</sup> In lesson three of the course, Robinson taught on “Abraham, his seed, and its significance” where he examined God’s promises to Abraham and how the biblical story unfolded as the “outworking of that promise.”<sup>157</sup> Robinson taught in the sixth lesson that Christ fulfilled God’s promises to Abraham where Old Testament Israel partially fulfilled but failed to fully fulfill God’s promises. Through Christ, the representative of “true Israel,” salvation was first brought to a “restored” remnant of Jewish believers who Robinson considered the “true Israel.” This “restored,” “true” Israel then fulfilled the

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<sup>153</sup> W. D. Davies, *Gospel and Land* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 157.

<sup>154</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Understanding of Israel: The Geographical Entity. Some Prolegomena,” 187.

<sup>155</sup> Shiner, “Reading the New Testament in Australia,” 187–89.

<sup>156</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 208–209.

<sup>157</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 208–209.

“blessings to the nations” by bringing salvation to the Gentiles.<sup>158</sup>

Robinson’s “distinction theology” can be commended for preserving an ethnic distinction between Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church. Contrary to one form of supersessionism (such as covenantalism), Robinson did not consider the New Testament church as replacing Israel, nor are Jews and Gentiles absorbed into a New Testament church that eliminates their ethnic distinctions. He also corrected one form of dispensationalism that placed Jewish Christians as belonging to either Israel or the church, but that a Jewish Christian cannot belong to both groups simultaneously. He also corrected a modified form of supersessionism that considered all Christians to be a “new Israel,” but that the New Testament church contained a “Jewish nucleus.” Instead, he limited the “true Israel” to the “Jewish nucleus” of believers, not to all Christians.

However, Robinson’s “distinction theology” is not a true alternative to supersessionism (as proposed by Robinson) but still retains a modified form of supersessionism. While Robinson stated that Jew and Gentile do not become a “new Israel” but a “new man,” this eschatological “new man” eliminates the distinction between Jew and Gentile. It still replaces Israel and the Jews by absorbing their ethnic distinctions into this eschatological “new man.” Additionally, Robinson’s critiques of dispensationalism and Christian Restorationism reinterpret God’s literal land promises to Abraham solely in terms of Jewish salvation and a “heavenly,” “spiritual” inheritance. While Jewish salvation (and bringing salvation to the nations) is a part of the Abrahamic promises, God also promised Abraham that he would make of him a “Great Nation” (Genesis 12:1–3) and give him a promised land. Robinson rejected dispensationalism’s awaiting a future fulfillment of God’s land promises to Abraham and Christian Restorationism’s view on a future restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel. Instead, he reinterpreted the concept of “restoration” in terms of a believing remnant of Jews within the New Testament church. His position weakened the totality of God’s

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<sup>158</sup> Robinson, “Biblical Theology in Sydney,” 208–209.

promises to the nation of Israel by limiting some of God's promises to Jewish believers in the New Testament church.

### **Conclusion**

Donald Robinson established the biblical theology program at Moore College while further developing his understanding of ecclesiology. His education allowed him to question established viewpoints within biblical scholarship, including how supersessionist views (such as covenantalism) and views that held a positive theological value for Israel (such as dispensationalism and Christian Restorationism) considered Israel's role in redemption history. Robinson proposed an alternative, mediating "distinction theology" concerning the relationship between Jew and Gentile in God's salvation program. While Robinson did not adhere to all of dispensationalism's future-fulfillment conclusions nor affirm a future restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel as believed by Christian Restorationism, he did believe in a distinction between Jew and Gentile in that the church does not replace Israel nor inherit its promises. Israel's promises belong to a "believing remnant" of Jews, and salvation is spread worldwide by a reciprocal role between Jews and Gentiles. Jewish believers bring salvation to the Gentiles, and Gentile believers bring salvation back to unbelieving Jews. This mission of restoring a remnant of believing Israel as a "true Israel," coupled with expanding the Gospel to the Gentiles, fulfills the "blessing of the nations" promise of the Abrahamic Covenant. The reciprocal role in which Gentiles bring salvation back to unbelieving Jews fulfills the Romans 11 promise that "all Israel will be saved" without awaiting a future fulfillment. While the church is not a "new Israel," it is a "new humanity," as Shiner summarized: "the New Testament church does not become 'the new Israel,' but rather a unity of the sons of Abraham who are both Jews and Gentiles (Gal. 3:7), and who together become 'one man in Christ Jesus'."<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 69–70.



Robinson's "distinction theology" affected the construal of biblical theology taught in his "Introduction to the Study of the Bible Course" especially through how he handled Christ as the representative of "true Israel" who is the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham, and that a "restored remnant" of believing Jews comprise the "true Israel" who inherited the promises of Abraham. Robinson corrected some forms of supersessionism in his ethnic distinction between Jews and Gentiles within the New Testament church. However, contrary to his claim, he did not propose an alternative to supersessionism. His elimination of both ethnic distinctions in an eschatological "new man," as well as his reinterpretation of a "restored Israel" not in a future restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel, but to a "heavenly," "spiritual" inheritance of salvation to Jews within the New Testament church, still retained a modified form of supersessionism.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Graeme Goldsworthy's Christocentric Biblical Theology and Lionel Windsor's "Evangelical Post–Supersessionist" Position**

#### **Introduction**

Graeme Goldsworthy (one of Robinson's students) and Lionel Windsor are two scholars who contributed to the biblical theology program at Moore that further developed some of Robinson's teachings while bringing them to non-academic audiences. This chapter includes: biographical sketches of Goldsworthy and Windsor, their theological positions concerning Israel's role in redemption history compared to Robinson, and their contributions to the biblical theology program at Moore.<sup>1</sup> Goldsworthy originally departed from Robinson's "distinction theology," bringing a reformed redemptive history biblical theology (typical of the biblical theology of the Westminster tradition that follows Geerhardus Vos) to Moore's biblical theology program. He later began to appreciate some aspects of Robinson's "distinction theology" without fully incorporating it into his contributions at Moore. With Windsor's contribution, one can see the return of an emphasis on Robinson's "distinction theology" to Moore's biblical theology program.

#### **Biographical Sketch on Graeme Goldsworthy**

Graeme Goldsworthy is an Australian Anglican Old Testament scholar and former lecturer at Moore College.<sup>2</sup> He attended Moore in 1956, beginning as a student of

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<sup>1</sup> The author is grateful for the work of fellow student Joel Wright who produced a paper on the place of national Israel in the theology of Graeme Goldsworthy during a PhD research seminar. His paper provided a valuable road map in navigating through the corpus of Goldsworthy literature.

<sup>2</sup> For additional biographical information on Goldsworthy, see "Finding the Gospel in the Whole Bible: An Interview with Graeme Goldsworthy" in *Modern Reformation* (January/February 2011), 40–45.

Robinson's Old Testament class from 1956–1957. In this class setting, he learned Robinson's "three stages" typology. According to Rory Shiner, Goldsworthy did not attend Robinson's "special doctrine" class (where Robinson taught an extensive treatment of biblical theology).<sup>3</sup> In addition to studying under Robinson, Goldsworthy read Geerhardus Vos' *Biblical Theology*, John Bright's *Kingdom of God*, Edmund Clowney's *Preaching and Biblical Theology*, and G. Ernest Wright's *God Who Acts*.<sup>4</sup> He also attended schools in the US and UK including (as did Robinson), Cambridge University, where he had the privilege of studying with some of Robinson's professors (including C. F. D. Moule).<sup>5</sup>

Goldsworthy began teaching biblical theology at Moore during the 1973–1974 course year and authored numerous works on biblical theology. His first, *Gospel and Kingdom*, was published in 1981. He further developed his biblical theology in *According to Plan*, published in 1991. After a brief respite from teaching, he returned to Moore in 1995 to resume teaching biblical theology, using *Gospel and Kingdom* and *According to Plan* as the structure for the course.<sup>6</sup> Goldsworthy and Robinson contributed to the 1996 School of Theology conference at Moore, which became published in the work *Interpreting God's Plan*.<sup>7</sup> He retired from Moore in 2001. He occasionally teaches as a visiting lecturer there.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Rory James Wilson Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia: An Historical Account of the Origins, Development, and Influence of D.W.B. Robinson's Biblical Scholarship" (PhD dissertation, Macquarie University, 2017), 200–202.

<sup>4</sup> Constantine Campbell, "Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles," ETS, San Francisco, November 17, 2011, Richard Gibson, ed., *Interpreting God's Plan: Biblical Theology and the Pastor* (London: Paternoster Press, 1997), 29, 32, Graeme Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2012), 79–82.

<sup>5</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 200–202.

<sup>6</sup> In most instances, ninety-percent of the class had already read *Gospel and Kingdom* before taking his class.

<sup>7</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, "Lecture 2: Biblical Theology in the Seminary and Bible College," *SBJT* 12 (2008): 21.

<sup>8</sup> Campbell, "Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles."

### Graeme Goldsworthy's Contribution to the Biblical Theology Program at Moore

Goldsworthy popularized some of Robinson's teachings (such as Robinson's "three stages") while also making a contribution complementary to Robinson. While Robinson primarily developed his contribution to the biblical theology program at Moore within the context of classroom instruction (his written contributions were primarily articles of an academic nature and only one major written work, *Faith's Framework*, see Chapter 3), Goldsworthy's contribution to Moore's biblical theology program comprised numerous major written works, including *Gospel and Kingdom, According to Plan*, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, and *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*. Whereas Robinson's audience was primarily academic, Goldsworthy's audience was primarily preachers, although numerous non-academic lay Christians have benefitted from reading Goldsworthy's contributions to biblical theology. Moore eventually required all students to attend biblical theology courses at the college (alluding to the lasting legacy of Robinson and Goldsworthy).<sup>9</sup>

Goldsworthy summarized his appreciation of Robinson's biblical theology in *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*: "This phrase 'the study of the Bible in its own terms' is, I believe, the key to Robinson's approach to biblical theology."<sup>10</sup> Goldsworthy further outlined Robinson's legacy and reflected upon nine lessons he learned from Robinson: "a sense of the unity of the Bible without discounting its diversity,"<sup>11</sup> opening "up the Old Testament ... in a new and exciting way,"<sup>12</sup> understanding "the whole Bible as Christian Scripture,"<sup>13</sup> "understanding ... the structure of revelation that is broad enough to embrace

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<sup>9</sup> Goldsworthy, "Lecture 2," 23–24.

<sup>10</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 20–23.

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion on the unity and diversity of the Bible, See David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2010).

<sup>12</sup> See also Graeme Goldsworthy, *Jesus Through the Old Testament* (Abington, Oxford: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2017).

<sup>13</sup> See also Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000).

typology and all the other dimensions that make up the multifaceted relationship of the two Testaments,”<sup>14</sup> developing “the exegetical and hermeneutical tools for dealing with biblical texts so that the practical issues of preaching and teaching can be addressed,”<sup>15</sup> “that thematic studies are much broader than word studies and are capable of being approached with the method of biblical theology,”<sup>16</sup> demonstrating “that evangelicals need to be in touch with non-evangelicals and their thinking,”<sup>17</sup> and instilling “the importance of biblical theology in the academy and in the ministry of the local church.”<sup>18</sup> Goldsworthy also referred to Robinson as “a ‘churchman.’ He clearly loves Anglicanism, its traditions and its formularies. He is in many respects very conservative in these matters.”<sup>19</sup> Goldsworthy attempted to wade through two “challenges” to biblical theology, noting that some evangelicals reject or neglect to perform biblical theology, and that some non-evangelical biblical theologians (such as Hebert) fail to uphold the Bible as the inspired Word of God. It is within the tension of these two “challenges” that Goldsworthy attempted to offer an *evangelical* biblical theology that is faithful to the inspired Word of God, but in a way that an evangelical will engage in biblical theology instead of neglecting it.<sup>20</sup> While he popularized and built upon some of Robinson’s biblical theology, he was silent in his early writings concerning Robinson’s Jew and Gentile “distinction theology” as being central to the legacy Robinson taught him.

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<sup>14</sup> See also Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006).

<sup>15</sup> See also Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006), and Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000).

<sup>16</sup> See also Graeme Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology: Hermeneutical Foundations and Principles* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2012).

<sup>17</sup> See also Chapter 3 on Robinson’s dialogue with Gabriel Hebert.

<sup>18</sup> See also Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000).

<sup>19</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 196–98.

<sup>20</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, “Lecture 1: The Necessity and Viability of Biblical Theology,” *SBJT* 12 (2008): 13–14.

One of Goldsworthy's main works that outlined his biblical theology is *Gospel and Kingdom*, his thesis being "God's people in God's place under God's rule."<sup>21</sup> He produced a biblical theology which the Old Testament Abrahamic Covenant was fulfilled in Christ, in which "God promises the patriarchs that their descendants (God's people) will possess the promised land (God's place) and be the people of God, underneath his authority (God's rule)."<sup>22</sup> He examined the importance of grace, election, and faith. Each was an essential aspect of the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant (tracing salvation history from Old Testament Israel to its fulfillment in the Gospel of Christ in the New Testament).<sup>23</sup> While he used the term "God's people" to refer to the "descendants" of the patriarchs, unlike Robinson, he did not specify that these "descendants" are a "restored remnant" of Jewish believers. "God's people" are believers without ethnic distinctions. Goldsworthy's other major work on biblical theology that expanded his contribution to *Gospel and Kingdom* was *According to Plan*. He defined biblical theology as that which "examines the development of the biblical story from the Old Testament to the New, and seeks to uncover the interrelationships between the two parts."<sup>24</sup> After surveying the place of textual criticism, biblical criticism, exegesis, and canon, Goldsworthy defined biblical theology as Christocentric: "Biblical theology thus centers on Jesus Christ as the revealer and savior. To understand the Bible, we begin at the point where we first came to know God. We begin with Jesus Christ, and we see every part of the Bible in relationship to him and his saving work. This is as true of the Old Testament as it is of the New."<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Campbell, "Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles."

<sup>22</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom* (Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Press, 2001), 54, 67–70.

<sup>23</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, 17–18. See also Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1991), 122–23.

<sup>24</sup> Goldsworthy, *According to Plan* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1991), 23. See also See David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2010).

<sup>25</sup> Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 33–35. For a discussion on textual criticism, see Paul D. Wegner, *A Student's Guide to Textual Criticism of the Bible: Its History, Methods & Results* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006). For a discussion on various forms of biblical criticism, see Douglas Mangum and Douglas Estes, eds., *Literary Approaches to the Bible*, Vol. 4, Lexham Methods Series (Bellingham, WA:

Goldsworthy's Christocentric biblical theology united both the Old and New Testament, viewing the Old Testament through the hermeneutical lens of the Gospel of Christ. Christ is the beginning reference point when examining Scripture. Goldsworthy added three "ingredients" to biblical theology: the literature of the Bible, the specific "succession" of events in the Bible, and the Bible's revelation.<sup>26</sup>

To Goldsworthy, Christ (as presented in the Gospel) is the center of his hermeneutical approach and approach to biblical theology.<sup>27</sup> He believed an *evangelical* biblical theology should "begin with Jesus Christ and the Gospel," further elaborating: "Biblical Theology is Christological, for its subject matter is the whole Bible as God's testimony to Christ. It is therefore, from start to finish, a study of Christ."<sup>28</sup> The centrality of the Gospel is what unites and relates the Old and New Testaments in Goldsworthy's biblical theology: "What went before Christ in the Old Testament, as well as what comes after him, finds its meaning in him. So the Old Testament must be understood in its relationship to the gospel event."<sup>29</sup> The centrality of the Gospel of Christ is also the key to his hermeneutical approach to Scripture: "By referring to the gospel as the hermeneutical key I mean that proper interpretation of any part of the Bible requires us to relate it to the person and work of Jesus."<sup>30</sup> He utilized a Christological reading of the Old Testament in light of the New Testament. In one example, he believed Christ "transforms" the Old

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Lexham Press, 2016). For a discussion on exegesis, see Wendy Widder, Michael Aubrey, Jeremy Thompson, and Daniel Wilson, *Linguistics & Biblical Exegesis*, ed. Douglas Mangum and Josh Westbury, Vol. 2, Lexham Methods Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016). For a canonical biblical theology, see Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (London: SCM, 1992).

<sup>26</sup> Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 52, 55, 71, 73–76. *According to Plan* also surveyed the succession of biblical events. For a discussion on the literature of the Bible, see Douglas Mangum and Douglas Estes, eds., *Literary Approaches to the Bible*, Vol. 4, Lexham Methods Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016). For a helpful evangelical treatment of the doctrine of revelation, see David S. Dockery, *The Doctrine of the Bible* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1991).

<sup>27</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 86.

<sup>28</sup> Gibson, *Interpreting God's Plan*, 34, 38.; Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 40.

<sup>29</sup> Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 50.

<sup>30</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, 88.

Testament concept of the “kingdom of God” into a “Gospel reality.”<sup>31</sup> He attempted to distinguish between Christ and the Gospel as a “fulfillment” instead of a “replacement”: “A key point in this is that Jesus did not see himself as coming to eradicate the old and to establish something totally new. The gospel event is not *de novo* but is seen as the completion and fulfillment of all God’s saving acts and promises in the Old Testament. Jesus again and again speaks of his role as fulfilling Scripture.”<sup>32</sup> However, Goldsworthy’s use of the term “fulfillment” in his Christocentric biblical theology did not avoid all forms of a supersessionist view.

Goldsworthy agreed with Robinson’s position concerning the “kingdom of God” as an important theme in biblical theology. However, unlike Robinson (who considered “promise and fulfillment” as the central theme of biblical theology) Goldsworthy considered the “kingdom of God” as the central theme of biblical theology: “Jesus tells us that its central theme is the coming of the kingdom of God.”<sup>33</sup> He further elaborated on the concept of the “kingdom of God” as biblical theology’s central theme: “I would even suggest that this goal, *the Kingdom of God*, is a more central issue in the Old Testament than is the redemptive process of bringing people into that Kingdom.”<sup>34</sup> While not the

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<sup>31</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, 108–10. Goldsworthy summarized his position on the transforming of the Kingdom of God as a “Gospel reality”: The New Testament “repeatedly maintains that Christ is the fulfilment of these terms, images, promises and foreshadowings in the Old Testament which were presented in a way that is different from the fulfilment. For the New Testament the interpretation of the Old Testament is not ‘literal’ but ‘Christological’.” He elaborated on his position as follows: “Jesus Christ ... contains in himself the Kingdom of God. The gospel is a gospel of man restored to proper relationships in Christ. Now, these relationships involve the whole of reality: God, man, and the created order. As Eden and Canaan are in Christ, so God’s perfect world is in Christ. This truth has one vital implication often forgotten by evangelicals, but which the Old Testament reinforces by its historicity. The gospel is not simply ‘forgiveness of sins’ and ‘going to heaven when you die’. The gospel is a restoration of relationships between God, man and the world. The typology of the Bible and the transformation of Old Testament imagery by the gospel should not be misused to lift us completely outside the created world. The gospel involves us not only with God, but with our fellow men and with the world. How this fact should affect the Christian’s view of the world, politics, culture, the arts, ecology and science, should be our continuing concern.” See Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, 108, 122.

<sup>32</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, 47–48.

<sup>33</sup> Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 72–73.

<sup>34</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, 46–47. Goldsworthy elaborated on position of the “kingdom of God” as biblical theology’s central theme: “How can we characterize this history so that we are able to see the real unity within it? I suggest we look at the Old Testament as a *history of redemption*. In other words, the key to the Old Testament is not the part Israel plays—as important as that is—but the part



central themes of Scripture within his biblical theology, He did have a place for the concepts of “covenant” and “promise and fulfillment.” He placed “covenant” as an important theme without it being *the* central theme: “The covenant provides a unifying thread running the length of biblical revelation in salvation history. The covenant expressed the gracious commitment of God to his creation, a creation at the head of which he established mankind as the ruler in space and time.”<sup>35</sup> He considered the Noahic Covenant the first direct mention of a covenant in Scripture, although he believed it pointed back to an existing covenant at creation. In agreement with a typical viewpoint of covenant theology, he considered each of the covenants is a “different expression” of a single covenant: “Thus there is one covenant which has a number of different expressions in the course of redemptive history. The first of these is the initial commitment of God to the creation.”<sup>36</sup> He linked the concept of “promise and fulfillment” to his concept of salvation history: “Salvation history and typology are also connected with the thematic polarity of promise and fulfilment ... One implication of this is that the Old Testament is incomplete as to the working out of God’s purposes and thus cannot be fully understood apart from the fulfilment in the New Testament.”<sup>37</sup> Goldsworthy further defined salvation history as follows:

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God plays in redeeming a people from slavery and making them his own. The first approach would be to reduce the Old Testament to an example of ancient national history; the second interprets Israel’s history as a part of God’s redeeming activity to man. Nor is redemption the only theological idea which provides structure to the Old Testament, for redemption is a process which leads to a goal. Has not the Old Testament something to say about that goal? Indeed it has—the redeemed people of God are the people of God’s kingdom. I would even suggest that this goal, the *Kingdom of God*, is a more central issue in the Old Testament than is the redemptive process of bringing people into that Kingdom. Of course we cannot really separate the two so strictly. The process needs a goal; the goal has to have a process or method of attainment.”

<sup>35</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006), 227.

<sup>36</sup> Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 114, 192.

<sup>37</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*, 243. In the next sentence, Goldsworthy noted: “The two Testaments are interdependent, in that the New must complete the Old, but the New also needs the Old to show what it is that is being fulfilled.” Lacking from his discussion is how one should interpret Old Testament promises within their Old Testament context.

Some may question the joining of the words salvation (used adjectivally) or redemptive to history because of the problem of the relationship of theology to history. I can see no real difficulty in doing so. I understand these terms to mean that God's work of salvation or redemption is done within human history, and that the biblical account of salvation is given within the framework of historical narrative ... The incarnation of God the Son is the ultimate declaration that God works among us in space and time. Jesus of Nazareth as a historical figure establishes the validity of the story that leads to him and that flows from him. Not only does salvation take place within our history, but the purposes of God are what constitute human history in the first place.<sup>38</sup>

Goldsworthy traced salvation history throughout the Old Testament toward its ultimate fulfillment in Christ as the figure who entered human history in order to bring salvation to humanity, shifting the focus on the role Old Testament Israel plays within salvation history to the role God plays in redeeming Israel, and eventually, redeeming all of humanity: "the key to the Old Testament is not the part Israel plays—as important as that is—but the part God plays in redeeming a people from slavery and making them his own."<sup>39</sup>

Within his discussion of the "kingdom of God," Goldsworthy further developed Robinson's "three stages" typology of biblical theology (see Chapter 3), which he referred to as the "Robinson–Hebert" schema or approach to biblical theology.<sup>40</sup> In his ETS lecture (presented by Constantine Campbell), Goldsworthy wrote that while the "Robinson–Hebert" approach can be labeled a "Moore College" approach to biblical theology, he was reluctant to apply such a label to the position. He added other distinctives to what he considered comprise a "Moore College" approach to biblical theology (see Chapter 6). He placed the "Robinson–Hebert" approach at the center of his understanding of biblical theology: "It is this understanding of the 'big picture' and the role of typology that captured my imagination over fifty years ago, and that has been at the centre of my preoccupation with biblical theology ever since."<sup>41</sup> While he elaborated

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<sup>38</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 60–65.

<sup>39</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, 46–47.

<sup>40</sup> Campbell, "Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles." W. J. Phythian–Adams also developed the "three stage" approach. See Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 25–27.

<sup>41</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 20–23. Goldsworthy's reference to the "role

upon the “Robinson–Hebert” approach of the “three stages” as being central to his understanding of biblical theology, he did not include Robinson’s “distinction theology” concerning Jew and Gentile in the centrality of Robinson’s biblical theological legacy left upon him.

Goldsworthy modified the “Robinson–Hebert” approach to refer to what he termed are “three epochs” of the “kingdom of God.”<sup>42</sup> His “three epochs” used a similar structure to that of Robinson: “The proposal is that the kingdom of God is revealed in three stages: in Israel’s history from Abraham to Solomon’s building of the temple, in prophetic eschatology, and in its fulfilment in Christ.”<sup>43</sup> His “three epochs” traced the “same reality” of the “kingdom of God” through three different stages.<sup>44</sup> He formed each of the “three epochs” into an A–B–C structure which further developed Robinson’s structure:

in A (the kingdom revealed in Israel’s history) we include the whole history of God’s activity outside of eden up to and including David and the first part of Solomon’s reign. The key figures are Abraham as recipient of the promises of God, and David as the one to whom a certain measure of the fulfillment of these promises comes. This epoch becomes the first anchorage for the doing of biblical theology. The second epoch, B, takes in the historic decline of Israel, including the exile and beyond, but the major impetus in revelation is the prophetic promise of a future perfect salvation. The third epoch, C, is the fulfillment of the historic promises to Abraham and his descendants, and of the prophetic hope, in Jesus Christ.<sup>45</sup>

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of typology” is referring to Robinson’s “three stages” of redemption history.

<sup>42</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ–Centered Biblical Theology*, 45, 175–79, 190. At times, Goldsworthy used the terms “three stages” and “three epochs” interchangeably. On pages 175–179, he clarified his use of the term “epoch”: “It is clear that Robinson uses the word ‘typology’ in his own way by defining it in terms of the ‘three stages’ of revelation that he discerns in the Bible. These are not so much epochs as modes of revelation. Epoch, however, is not an entirely inappropriate term in that these stages are sequential though with some overlap of the first two.”

<sup>43</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, “The Kingdom of God as Hermeneutic Grid,” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 12 (2008): 11.

<sup>44</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, 108–10.

<sup>45</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, 245–47. Goldsworthy’s A–B–C structure is nearly identical to the structure seen in Gabriel Hebert, *Christ the Fulfiller* (Sydney: The Anglican Truth Society, 1957), 9–12.

Goldsworthy further developed two of Robinson's stages. He further developed the second stage (or second "epoch") of Israel's monarchy's (what Robinson considered a partial fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant) by considering the second epoch as an early form of the "kingdom of God." He also traced how the second "epoch" (Israel's monarchy) gave way to the third "epoch" (Christological fulfillment):

When this historical experience of Israel, which patterned salvation, reached its climax in the kingdom of David and Solomon, the rot set in. As the strength and faithfulness of Israel declined and the whole fabric which pre-figured the kingdom of God crumbled and fell apart, the truth of the kingdom was given to the prophetic word of revelation.<sup>46</sup>

Goldsworthy also developed Robinson's third stage (or third "epoch"), adding that Christ's first advent, not a future consummation, brings about the ultimate fulfillment of the "kingdom of God." This Christological fulfillment serving as the antitype to Old Testament Israel's salvation history as the type: "The kingdom of God is indeed being restored to Israel, but it will come about through the preaching of the gospel in all the world."<sup>47</sup> While Goldsworthy viewed a restored "kingdom of God" through the preaching of the Gospel, lacking in the discussion is a restoration of a literal kingdom of God in order to fulfill God's promises to Israel. In *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, he further related each of the "three epochs" to the themes of creation, the fall, the flood, Abraham, Moses and the exodus, David, Zion, Solomon and the temple, the Old Testament wisdom literature, and the New Testament mission to the Gentiles.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, 54–55, Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Revelation* (Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Press, 2001), 216.

<sup>47</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, *Jesus Through the Old Testament* (Abington, Oxford: The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2017), 44–46, Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, 238.

<sup>48</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 159–63.

### Graeme Goldsworthy's Christocentric Biblical Theology

In Goldsworthy's earlier writings, Robinson's "distinction theology" played less of an essential role in his overall contribution to biblical theology. He instead emphasized a Christocentric biblical theology with Christ as the ultimate fulfiller of the Old Testament promises: "The New Testament constantly refers, either explicitly or implicitly, to Christ as the fulfiller of the promises, prophecies and expectations of the Old Testament."<sup>49</sup> This appeared to some as deemphasizing the role of Israel in biblical theology.<sup>50</sup>

Goldsworthy traced his Christocentric biblical theology across various exegetical writings, expanding Robinson's use of the term "Israel." He applied the term "true Israel" directly to Christ (as did Robinson) but also considered Christ as the representative of the "kingdom of God," linking his Christocentric biblical theology to its unifying theme of the "kingdom of God": "Jesus is the kingdom of God that has already come in a representative though potent way."<sup>51</sup> Instead of the "kingdom of God" being fulfilled in a future, literal kingdom, Goldsworthy viewed the "kingdom of God" as being fulfilled in Christ's first coming through the preaching of the Gospel to the nations.

Goldsworthy defined the *people of God* as a remnant of Israel restored in Christ. He applied the phrase *people of God* directly to Christ as the representative of the true *people of God*.<sup>52</sup> He traced the concept of the *people of God* from Israel to a "faithful remnant of Israel" to its ultimate fulfillment in Christ and those who are "in Christ": "The people of God are defined by their union with Christ, a union that in turn is defined by who and what Christ is."<sup>53</sup> One important note is that Goldsworthy's description of those

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<sup>49</sup> Goldsworthy, *Jesus Through the Old Testament*, 51.

<sup>50</sup> Barry Horner's critique will be discussed later in the chapter.

<sup>51</sup> Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 204–6, Goldsworthy, "The Kingdom of God as Hermeneutic Grid," 14.

<sup>52</sup> Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 67–68, 204.

<sup>53</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, 110–12, Graeme Goldsworthy, "Lecture 3: Biblical

who are “in Christ” is silent on an ethnic distinction between Jew and Gentile, an area Robinson specifically elaborated upon in his “distinction theology.”

Goldsworthy traced the concept of “sonship” (“Son of God”) throughout redemption history to show how Christ ultimately fulfilled the role as the “Son of God.” He considered Adam to be the first “son of God,” viewing multiple representatives of the nation of Israel as various “sons of God” throughout redemption history, with Christ being the ultimate “Son of God” and fulfiller of God’s “sonship” role in redemption history: “The son of God, therefore, is first of all Adam, then the nation of Israel, and then this nation’s royal representative who is the son of David.”<sup>54</sup> The “son of David” in this instance refers to Christ: “Jesus, as God’s Son, fulfills the offices of prophet (speaking God’s word), priest (making purification for sins), and king (creating, and ruling at the right hand of the Majesty on high). But the Son is not only the mediator of God’s act of creation; he is also the upholder of the universe.”<sup>55</sup> Believers who are “in Christ” become “sons of God” and “sons of the resurrection” by being in relationship to the resurrected “Son of God”: “Jesus is declared to be Son of God through his resurrection; we are united to Jesus; our resurrection is established by the resurrection of Jesus. We are thus sons of God because we are sons of the resurrection.”<sup>56</sup> He further linked the concept of the “Son of God” to his definition of the “people of God”: “Matthew, Mark, and Luke demonstrate that Jesus fulfilled the calling and requirements of the people of God presented in the Old Testament—from Adam to Israel to David. ‘Son of God’ is the title that belongs to God’s people of whom the final and true Son is Jesus.”<sup>57</sup>

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Theology in the Local Church and the Home,” *SBJT* 12 (2008): 46.

<sup>54</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, *The Son of God and the New Creation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 60–70, 84.

<sup>55</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Son of God and the New Creation*, 52–54.

<sup>56</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Son of God and the New Creation*, 94–105.

<sup>57</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Son of God and the New Creation*, 54–56.

Goldsworthy's Christocentric biblical theology was his attempt to form a mediating position between covenant theology and dispensationalism (similar to how Robinson made an attempt with his "distinction theology"). Goldsworthy rejected the view that the church itself becomes the "new Israel":

It has been one of the mistakes of some Reformed theologians to emphasize the role of the church as the new Israel and the new people of God without first highlighting Jesus as the new Israel ... Yet Jesus indicated that the Old Testament was about him, and thus it is not first and foremost about us.<sup>58</sup>

While Goldsworthy agreed that dispensationalists have a "valid point" concerning the church as not a "new Israel," he did not agree with the theological system of dispensationalism. In its place, he offered a "fulfillment theology" in Christ: "the term replacement is somewhat pejorative and clouds the issue. I would rather see the emphasis on 'fulfilment theology,' with Christ at the centre as the true Israel."<sup>59</sup> However, in Goldsworthy's explanation of "fulfillment," it appears that Israel is replaced in the history of redemption by Christ himself and those "in Christ." Goldsworthy's position was not a mediating position between covenant theology and dispensationalism but still retained a form of supersessionism, and it was still within a reformed redemptive history biblical theology. He also attempted to use similar language to Robinson concerning the Gospel creating "one new man in Christ" that brings together Jew and Gentile: "The story of God's people begins with Adam, and it is to be expected that it will conclude in some way with a new Adam."<sup>60</sup> However, Goldsworthy considered the "new Adam" to be both Christ and believers in Christ. Robinson limited it to an eschatological "new Adam" (or "new man") of believing Jews and Gentiles who are ethnically distinct.

Goldsworthy believed that Christ saved Jews and Gentiles: "Evangelicals are committed to the uniqueness of Christ. We reject the notion that all roads lead to God, for

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<sup>58</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 30–33.

<sup>59</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 30–33.

<sup>60</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 60–65, 207–13.

the simple reason that the Bible expressly rejects it.”<sup>61</sup> While, like Robinson, he did not directly use the term, he did reject a two-covenant theology by stating that he did not consider the Old Testament’s “program” as salvation by works, but that the Messiah (Christ) saves Old Testament and New Testament saints:

We should be careful to understand election in its Old Testament form. If Israel was elect, does that mean that every Israelite will be in the eternal kingdom? No, it does not .... If a whole generation of Israelites perished in the wilderness, does this mean that they are all excluded from the eternal kingdom? Again, the answer is no.<sup>62</sup>

Goldsworthy asserted that salvation is found only in Christ: “Christ alone means that salvation is found nowhere else but in the person and work of Jesus Christ.”<sup>63</sup>

Goldsworthy’s Christocentric biblical theology caused some critics (such as Barry Horner) to consider it a supersessionist form of biblical theology. In his work *Eternal Israel*, Horner considered Goldsworthy’s Christocentric biblical theology to be a reformed redemptive history biblical theology (typical of the biblical theology of the Westminster tradition that follows Vos) that replaced the role of Israel in redemption history not with the church, but with Christ.<sup>64</sup> He considered Goldsworthy’s

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<sup>61</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, 16–18.

<sup>62</sup> Goldsworthy, *Jesus Through the Old Testament*, 16, Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 181. Goldsworthy elaborated on the Old Testament form of election as follows: “Undoubtedly the grace of God is the most remarkable feature of his covenant and saving acts. God chooses absolutely without condition a people who deserve nothing. In the course of their history he unfolds to them a way of salvation that not only applies to them, but that will one day in its fullness have significance for all the nations of the earth. From the beginning there can be no dispute that the grace of God means that election is unconditioned by any virtue in those who are chosen, and that salvation is a free gift received by faith alone. But free grace and unconditional election must not be allowed to obscure the place of God’s judgment. We have already seen how judgment was revealed against all wickedness in the days of Noah, against Babel and the sinful city of Sodom, against a hard-hearted Egyptian king and his nation and against the pagan Canaanites. According to the Bible no such judgment ever falls that is not deserved. Such judgments, especially when their execution appears to us to be especially barbaric, must be understood in the light of the complete biblical picture of human rebellion against God. What, then, shall we say about judgment on the elect? Once the saving grace of God is effectively displayed in the exodus from Egypt, the prophetic word concentrates on the nature of the covenant relationship. In the book of Deuteronomy particularly there are stern warnings against turning away from the covenant. Israel is saved by grace alone, but to be saved is not merely to be acquitted of guilt. It is a positive restoration to fellowship with the living God. There is always a real choice in front of the people of God: the way of life or the way of death, covenant blessings or covenant curses.” See Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 180–181.

<sup>63</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*, 47–48.

<sup>64</sup> Barry E. Horner, *Eternal Israel* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2018), “Process Biblical Theology: Anti-



Christocentric biblical theology as “hyper–Christocentric” in that Goldsworthy attempted to fit a Christocentric hermeneutic upon the biblical text, even if such biblical passages did not refer to Christ. In his discussion on Goldsworthy, Horner stated that Goldsworthy’s biblical theology “is overwhelmed with the centrality of Jesus Christ, and him as the embodiment of the gospel. Doctrinally speaking, this controls everything.”<sup>65</sup> He further elaborated on the “hyper–Christocentric” position of Goldsworthy:

There is such a thing as hyper–Christocentricity, and it is most spiritual to admit it. There is very definitely biblical Christocentricity, yet it is not for us to go to extremes in extending this emphasis, especially in terms of our hermeneutic. Adjusting to this truth requires thinking outside the box, so to speak, so as to return to what exclusively is inside the Book of God.<sup>66</sup>

In the place of a “hyper–Christocentric” biblical theology that attempted to externally force a Christocentric interpretation and fulfillment upon biblical texts, Horner argued that it is better to interpret Scripture through a literal hermeneutic that does not weaken or replace Israel’s importance in redemption history. Unlike Robinson’s “distinction theology” that retained an ethnic distinction between Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church, Goldsworthy’s biblical theology (in which Christ in His Person and in His personal ministry is the fulfillment of the promises to Israel, and those “in Christ” inherit Israel’s promises) weakened the importance of Israel’s role in redemption history and retained a form of supersessionism. Those “in Christ,” without any form of ethnic distinction between Jew and Gentile, are the replacement of Israel.<sup>67</sup>

Goldsworthy later began to appreciate Robinson’s “distinction theology” concerning Israel’s role in redemption history adopting some of its associated

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Judaic.” He used the term “process biblical theology”, to label Goldsworthy’s biblical theology.

<sup>65</sup> Horner, *Eternal Israel*, “Process Biblical Theology: Anti–Judaic.”

<sup>66</sup> Horner, *Eternal Israel*, “Process Biblical Theology: Anti–Judaic.”

<sup>67</sup> Horner also labeled Moore’s biblical theology program as a supersessionist, Reformed biblical theology with a similar theological viewpoint to Vos. He also critiqued Jensen’s history of the biblical theology program at Moore and his history of Australian Anglican evangelicalism, stating that Jensen “suggests no present distinctive interest by Sydney Anglicanism in Israel and the Jew, especially their remarkable ongoing presence in modern history, albeit in unbelief.” See Horner, *Eternal Israel*, “Process Biblical Theology: Anti–Judaic.”

interpretations of texts without fully incorporating it into his biblical theology. In one example, he changed his position concerning Revelation 7 (and he came closer to Robinson's position). He originally placed both groups together as representing the same individuals:

We notice also in this chapter of Revelation that John uses two distinct word pictures to express his meaning. In the first he portrays the sealing of a perfect number of the people of Israel. It is not his intention to refer to the literal nation of Israel. He has too frequently followed the other writers of the New Testament in applying the old Israelite terminology to the true people of God, the new Israel in Christ, to slip back into Jewish particularism.<sup>68</sup>

He later rejected transferring the title "Israel" concerning the "144,000" to Gentiles, instead interpreting the "144,000" in Revelation 7 as Jewish believers. <sup>69</sup>His revision also incorporated a distinction between the "144,000" Jewish believers and the "great multitude" in Revelation as Gentile believers. He cited Robinson's "distinction theology" as helping to revise his position concerning the "144,000" of Revelation 7:

I have been spurred on by the writings of Donald Robinson who has written a number of articles in which he cogently argues that the distinction between Jew and Gentile is not lost in the New Testament. That is, although Jew and Gentile believers are made into one new man in Christ (Eph. 2:15), this unity does not remove all distinctions until its final eschatological fulfilment. Paul still maintains that the gospel is 'to the Jew first' (Rom. 1:16; 2:9–10). His whole argument regarding his hope for the salvation of the Jew in Romans 9–11 hinges on this distinction. Galatians 3:28 does not remove this distinction any more than it removes the ongoing distinctions between male and female. Oneness in Christ does not mean that all differences are removed. A consequence of this is that I now favour a different interpretation of Revelation 7, namely that the 144,000 symbolizes the perfect number of the saved of Israel, and the great multitude represents the Gentiles saved as a result of Israel's servant status to be a light to the Gentiles.<sup>70</sup>

In *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*, Goldsworthy alluded to a "third view" between dispensationalism and supersessionism in which the church consists of a

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<sup>68</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Revelation*, 192. See also Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 168–70.

<sup>69</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 203–4.

<sup>70</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 169.

“restored Israel” of believing Jews plus Gentiles who “share in Israel’s blessings.” He incorporated some of Robinson’s position into this view, without emphasizing Robinson’s “distinction theology”:

A third view takes the Old Testament ideas of the ingathering of the Gentiles to the restored Israel as worked out in that the gospel is to the Jew first. The church then consists of the restored or spiritual Israel (Christian Jews) plus the converted Gentiles who are privileged to share in Israel’s blessings. This preserves the structure of the covenant promises to Abraham.<sup>71</sup>

In his *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, Goldsworthy provided his clearest elaboration on Robinson’s legacy concerning Israel and the church. While the “people of God” include a few Gentiles, their inclusion came about through an acceptance of the God of *Israel*. During the exile, the prophets spoke of the “day of the Lord” in which *Israel* will bless the Gentiles and become the focus of the “people of God”: “The Gentiles are not seen as replacing Israel or, it would seem, as ceasing to be Gentiles. Israel will be a light to lighten the Gentiles. Israel, the priestly nation, becomes the means through which Gentiles can become God’s people along with Israel.”<sup>72</sup> Goldsworthy also elaborated on Robinson’s concept that while the same Gospel of Christ saves Jewish and Gentile believers, Jews retain their ethnic distinctions within the New Testament church. Their salvation in Christ brings about the “fullness” of their Jewishness: “it is all the more understandable that the Jewishness of Jesus is emphasized. By embracing Jesus, Jewish Christians have not forsaken their Jewishness but rather have entered into its fullness.”<sup>73</sup>

Goldsworthy elaborated upon Robinson’s “distinction theology” as not a form of dispensationalism but a mediating position:

It would be wrong to suppose that Robinson has simply capitulated to the Dispensationalists’ view, which keeps Israel and the church separate—for distinction is not the same as separation ... Only by maintaining the distinction can we accommodate Jesus’ claim that ‘salvation is from the

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<sup>71</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*, 245.

<sup>72</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 207–13.

<sup>73</sup> Goldsworthy, *The Son of God and the New Creation*, 52–54.

Jews' (John 4:22), or Paul's insistence that the gospel brings salvation 'to the Jew first and also to the Greek' (Rom. 1:16; 2:10).<sup>74</sup>

Christianity was the "beginning of the fulfilment of the covenant promises to Abraham as these are developed in Old Testament prophetic eschatology ... salvation comes to Israel first, and only then are the Gentiles included."<sup>75</sup>

Goldsworthy also agreed with Robinson's rejection of Christian Restorationism's advocating for restoring a Jewish nation in the land of Israel on biblical, hermeneutical grounds. While Goldsworthy used the terms "renewed Canaan" and "new earth" to refer to the eschatological fulfilment of the "promised land," like Robinson, he considered the discussion of the land of Israel to have subsided in the New Testament after Christ's fulfilment.<sup>76</sup> Unlike Robinson, he did not directly cite W. D. Davies' *Gospel and Land* in his rejection of Christian Restorationism. However, Davies' position on the land of Israel seemed to shape Goldsworthy's view in a similar manner to that of Robinson.

Goldsworthy rejected the movement of Christian Restorationism (he referred to it as Christian Zionism), stating that the New Testament does not support such a "literal fulfilment of prophecy": "Christian Zionism not only reshapes the New Testament's view of the future, but also affects the present period in which such a future is anticipated."<sup>77</sup> He considered eschatological "Zion" (Israel) as "Zion is where Jesus reigns now at the right hand of God and this is where we come by faith in the gospel," applying this concept to his unifying theme of the "kingdom of God": "For the New Testament the locality of the Kingdom is Jesus Christ himself. And, lest we be misled by a misplaced and unbiblical emphasis, Jesus Christ is shown as risen and seated on the right hand of God in the heavenly places."<sup>78</sup> Both Robinson and Goldsworthy rejected

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<sup>74</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 207–13.

<sup>75</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 170–72.

<sup>76</sup> Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 192–92, Goldsworthy, *Jesus Through the Old Testament*, 68.

<sup>77</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*, 170–71.

<sup>78</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, 112–15 In addition to his rejection of a future restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel, Goldsworthy's Christocentric fulfilment of the "kingdom of God" also considered Christ to be the "new temple," eliminating the need of a future millennial temple. See

premillennialism because, in their view, there is no distinct future fulfillment in Christ's fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies:

It seems that Robinson does not subscribe to the distinction that some make between prophecies of the first coming and those of the second coming of Christ. The distinction is rather between the fulfillment of all prophecy in Christ's first coming, and the consummation of all prophecy that is yet to come at his *parousia*.<sup>79</sup>

Goldsworthy and Robinson interpreted Revelation 20 through the lens of amillennialism, referencing the Old Testament prophets as the theological grounding for such an interpretation: "That is, literalism cannot survive because the prophets did not promise a future involving both the literal restoration of Israel *and* the gospel."<sup>80</sup> While he rejected the movement of Christian Restorationism, he considered Jewish salvation to be important: "one does not have to be a Zionist to appreciate Paul's emphasis on God's method of salvation, in that the gospel is 'to the Jew first.'"<sup>81</sup> In contrast to Christian Restorationism, Goldsworthy did not believe in a future national salvation of Israel but did agree with offering salvation to both Jews and Gentiles in the present:

Some have used this statement to reinforce a view that Jesus was indicating that there are two different events to come: one is the restoration of the kingdom to Israel as a specifically Jewish salvation; the other is the world mission to the gentiles through the gospel ... This, I suggest, does not fit the biblical facts, and we should understand Jesus to be saying that the kingdom is indeed being restored, but it will come to Jew and gentile alike through the preaching of the gospel.<sup>82</sup>

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Goldsworthy, "Lecture 3," 39–40.

<sup>79</sup> Goldsworthy, *Christ-Centered Biblical Theology*, 213–15. Goldsworthy did not directly defend nor argue against Robinson's position. He merely mentioned it. However, he seemed to be in silent agreement with Robinson's position.

<sup>80</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel and the Revelation*, 292–96.

<sup>81</sup> Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*, 171.

<sup>82</sup> Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, 238. Goldsworthy referred to Acts 1 concerning "this statement": "The disciples had accepted the generally held Jewish idea that the coming of the Messiah would mean the unambiguously final advent of the kingdom of God. Jesus' death disappointed them, but their hope was revived by the resurrection. Surely the kingdom would now appear, and hence the question to that effect in Acts 1:6, 'Will you now restore the kingdom to Israel?' The answer that Jesus gives indicates that this question is misplaced. We must assume that his answer is not a put-down but a genuine answer to the question. He tells them, 'You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of

Goldsworthy popularized a Christocentric biblical theology (that shared a redemption–historical biblical theology with covenant theologians such as Vos) that incorporated some of Robinson’s teachings (such as developing Robinson’s “three stages” into his “three epochs”) but lacked any discussion of Robinson’s “distinction theology” concerning Jew and Gentile in his early writings. Goldsworthy’s popularizing of Moore’s biblical theology program occurred in tandem with the eclipsing of Robinson’s “distinction theology” into Goldsworthy’s reformed redemption historical, Christocentric biblical theology. His biblical theology in which the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant are fulfilled ultimately in Christ and in those who are “in Christ” retained a form of supersessionism (as noted by Horner). Goldsworthy later appreciated some of Robinson’s “distinction theology,” using Robinson’s position as a lens to modify some aspects of his interpretations (such as how he interpreted the “144,000” in Revelation 7). However, he never fully incorporated Robinson’s “distinction theology” into his biblical theology. Due to Goldsworthy’s biblical theology becoming popular among pastors and non–academic audiences, he attracted an interest in Moore’s biblical theology program. His contribution to Moore’s biblical theology program through his numerous published works drew the attention of the masses to Moore College, even though Robinson’s “distinction theology” cannot clearly be seen in Goldsworthy’s writings (except in minor areas where Goldsworthy “appreciated” Robinson’s legacy). Goldsworthy’s later appreciation of some aspects of Robinson’s “distinction theology” were more fully appreciated by future Moore scholars, including Lionel Windsor (below) and additional scholars (see Chapter 6).

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the earth’ (Acts 1:8).” Goldsworthy also dismissed that Acts 1:6 referred to a literal restoration of the kingdom, instead that the “restoration” of the kingdom comes about through the preaching of the Gospel equally to both Jew and Gentile.

### Biographical Sketch on Lionel Windsor

Lionel Windsor is an Anglican minister in the Diocese of Sydney and New Testament Lecturer at Moore College. He began teaching at Moore in 2006 and became a full-time New Testament Lecturer in 2015. He received his Bachelor of Divinity at Moore in 2005, also studying for his Master of Theology at Moore until 2009 under Brian Rosner. He received his PhD at Durham University in 2012 under Francis Watson (his PhD thesis was *Paul and the Vocation of Israel*).<sup>83</sup> He also taught at Durham University until 2012 and wrote numerous academic and ministry-related works, including *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism* in 2017.<sup>84</sup>

### Lionel Windsor's Contribution to the Biblical Theology Program at Moore

Windsor carried forward what he referred to as “the Robinson–Goldsworthy vision for biblical theology,” which he characterized as: “both strongly Christological and structurally Israel-shaped.”<sup>85</sup> Unlike Robinson or Goldsworthy, Windsor did not contribute a phased biblical theology structure (such as Robinson’s “three stages” or Goldsworthy’s “three epochs”). Windsor’s contribution to the biblical theology program at Moore is targeted at attempting to correct a supersessionist view through what he labeled his “evangelical, post-supersessionist” position.<sup>86</sup> Like Robinson, Windsor believed in a distinction between Jew and Gentile in redemption history, but he did not accept dispensationalism. He rejected dispensationalism’s dividing of redemption history

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<sup>83</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*, xi., “Lionel Windsor—About Me,” accessed September 22, 2022, <https://www.lionelwindsor.net/about/about-me/>.

<sup>84</sup> “Lionel Windsor—Curriculum Vitae,” accessed September 22, 2022, <https://www.lionelwindsor.net/about/curriculum-vitae/>.

<sup>85</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism: Christ’s Mission Through Israel to the Nations*, xi, 3, 21, 24.

<sup>86</sup> See Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism: Christ’s Mission Through Israel to the Nations*, 3–4, for a definition and discussion of “evangelical, post-supersessionism.” See also R. Kendall Soulen “Post-Supersessionism,” in *A Dictionary of Jewish–Christian Relations*, ed. Edward Kessler and Neil Wenborn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 350–51.

into a series of “dispensations” and its separation between the church and Israel in the current age, believing that dispensationalism “obscures” the preaching of the Gospel as coming through Israel to the Gentile nations. Windsor agreed with Goldsworthy that Christ is the fulfillment of God’s promises to Old Testament Israel. However, he rejected Goldsworthy’s position that Christ is a replacement of Old Testament Israel.

In developing his evangelical, post-supersessionist position, Windsor particularly drew upon the work of R. Kendall Soulen. Soulen rejected a Christocentric biblical theology that placed Christ’s incarnation at the center of biblical theology. He instead placed his center of biblical theology at what Windsor referred to as the “eschatological reign of the God of Israel”: “the gospel is good news about the God of Israel’s coming reign, which proclaims in Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection the victorious guarantee of God’s fidelity to the work of consummation, that is, to fullness of mutual blessing as the outcome of God’s economy with Israel, the nations, and all creation.”<sup>87</sup> Soulen also taught there is a “distinction between Jew and Gentile ... intrinsic to God’s work as the Consummator of creation, [that] is not erased but realized in a new way in the sphere of the church.”<sup>88</sup> Windsor appreciated Soulen’s emphasis on the “consummation” of God’s eschatological reign and his distinction between Jew and Gentile. However, he disagreed with Soulen’s rejection of a Christocentric biblical theology, believing that it “reduced the significance of Christ” in Ephesians and Colossians. He stated Ephesians 1:7 and 10 and Colossians 1: 14 and 20 as example passages that are “emphatically Christocentric.”<sup>89</sup>

The Messianic Judaism movement (particularly in the teachings of Mark Kinzer) also added to Windsor’s theological context. In *Postmissionary Messianic Judaism*, Kinzer rejects a supersessionist view that replaces the church with Israel: “The Jewish people are still Israel, a holy people, upon whom the redemption of the world ultimately

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<sup>87</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*, 10. See also R. Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 113, 138, 157.

<sup>88</sup> R. Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996), 169.

<sup>89</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*, 10.



hinges.”<sup>90</sup> He was comfortable with a form of continuity between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church when the church was comprised of a “Jewish nucleus,” but as the “nucleus” was absorbed into a predominately–Gentile congregation, the church began to accept a form of supersessionism:

When the *ekkelesia* contained a visible Jewish nucleus, its right to claim continuity with Israel was reasonable and not necessarily supersessionist. When that nucleus disappeared, the claim to direct continuity with Israel became spiritual and abstract, and easy morphed into a claim to be a replacement for Israel.<sup>91</sup>

Kinzer taught that Jewish believers should still participate in the Jewish community and are obligated live a Jewish lifestyle in obedience to God’s *Torah*. As Gentiles are brought into a relationship with Jews (Israel), they experience the blessings of the nations.<sup>92</sup> Windsor also interacted with a debate between Kinzer and Craig Blomberg. Blomberg had issues with Kinzer’s use of “obligated” concerning obedience to God’s *Torah*.<sup>93</sup> Windsor observed that Blomberg considered Kinzer’s Messianic Judaism as a form of two–covenant theology and responded by stating that Kinzer’s Messianic Judaism is an ecclesiological, not soteriological, position.<sup>94</sup> Jews are not obligated to keep God’s *Torah* in order to be saved, but that Jews are permitted to obey God’s *Torah* as ecclesiological distinct from Gentile Christians practicing a Gentile form of Christianity.

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<sup>90</sup> Mark Kinzer, *Postmissionary Messianic Judaism: Redefining Christian Engagement with the Jewish People* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005), 142.

<sup>91</sup> Kinzer, *Postmissionary Messianic Judaism*, 43.

<sup>92</sup> Kinzer, *Postmissionary Messianic Judaism*, 263–302. See also Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*, 10.

<sup>93</sup> Craig L. Blomberg, “Freedom from the Law Only for Gentiles? A Non–Supersessionist Alternative to Mark Kinzer’s ‘Postmissionary Messianic Judaism,’” In *New Testament Theology in Light of the Church’s Mission: Essays in Honor of I. Howard Marshall*, ed. Jon Laansma, Grant R. Osborne, and Ray Van Neste (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 41–42.

<sup>94</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*, 10.

### Lionel Windsor's "Evangelical Post-Supersessionist" Theology

Windsor articulated his "evangelical post-supersessionist" theology in his work *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism* (a work in a series of "after supersessionism" volumes by a range of authors). Windsor elaborated on a threefold definition of his "evangelical post-supersessionist" theology. First, he rejected a supersessionist position in that he did not believe the New Testament church replaced Old Testament Israel in redemption history. Second, he believed in a special "place" and "calling" for Israel that was distinct from the Gentiles in redemption history. Third, he assigned a "positive value to Jewish distinctiveness" in their relationship to the Gentiles. He considered the New Testament mission of salvation as coming from Israel and being brought to the Gentile nations.<sup>95</sup>

Windsor rejected a supersessionist view of Ephesians and Colossians in three areas he considered were incorrect interpretations of the biblical text. He first rejected the view that invalidates any form of physical circumcision (citing Ephesians 2:11–12 Colossians 2:11–13). While he rejected any theological position that required circumcision as essential to salvation (he believed that physical circumcision cannot bring salvation to anyone apart from Christ), he also interpreted Ephesians 2:11–12 and Colossians 2:11–13 as not regarding circumcision in general as invalid. Ephesians 2:11–12 and Colossians 2:11–13 tried to eliminate a hostility between Jews and Gentiles. Some Jews pushed for the physical circumcision of Gentiles or only associated with physically-circumcised individuals. He also rejected the view that Christ had abolished the Jewish observance of the Mosaic Law (citing Ephesians 2:14–15 and Colossians 2:13–23) by asserting that Ephesians 2:15 does not nullify Jewish observance of the Mosaic law. Referencing Zoccali, he viewed the death of Christ in that passage as having made some of the *functions* of the commandments of the law *according to first-century Jewish interpretation* unnecessary. Christ's death atoned for the sin of both Israel and the Gentile

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<sup>95</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*, 5–6.

nations and made both groups of believers “holy” in the sight of God. Following the law’s commandments is no longer viewed as a means to “distance” Jews from any “hostility” of the Gentiles. It is this “hostility” between Israel and the Gentile nations of the law that has been eliminated not “necessarily...other uses of the law,” such as in “demarcating Jewish identity as [an] integral subordinate identity in Christ, or...source for community praxis for Jews and [G]entiles alike.”<sup>96</sup>

Windsor also rejected an interpretation of Ephesians 2:14–16 and Colossians 3:11 in which a “new humanity” promised in Christ eliminated all Jewish/Gentile distinctions. He asserted that the “new humanity” of Ephesians 2:14–16 and Colossians 3:11 does not *replace* Israel but comprises *both* Jews and Gentiles who *retain* their ethnic distinctions. The “new humanity” did not eliminate the *distinction* between Jew and Gentile but their *divisiveness* (as some Jews considered the law as a separation between them and the Gentiles). Gentiles who believe in Christ do not *replace* Israel but “come near” to Israel and are “reconciled alongside” Israel.<sup>97</sup> Christ is not a *replacement* for Israel but the *fulfillment* of God’s promises to Israel and God’s promises to other nations through Israel. Jews and Gentiles are now in “communion” with each other but are not a “unity” that erases their ethnic distinction. The distinction of Jews has been “transformed to serve a positive purpose for the apostolic mission.”<sup>98</sup> The Gentile’s “calling” is also distinct from Israel:

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<sup>96</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism: Christ’s Mission Through Israel to the Nations*, 142. Windsor cited Zoccali, “What’s the Problem with the Law? Jews, Gentiles, and Covenant Identity in Galatians 3:10–12,” *Neotestamentica* 49 (2015): 411 (bracketed text added). Zoccali stated that Galatians 3:10–12 should not be used in a sense that the *Torah*’s significance for Jews ended with Christ’s death. He asserted that Paul believed in the *Torah*’s continuing significance as a marker of Jewish identity. However, Gentile Christians do not need to undergo conversion to Judaism, as they are already righteous due to their salvation status “in Christ” (as are Jewish Christians). When citing Zoccali, Windsor stated, “Zoccali’s comments here concern Gal 3:10–12, but are just as applicable to Eph 2:15.”

<sup>97</sup> Another essay that asserted a similar position is Carl B. Hoch, Jr., “The New Man of Ephesians 2,” in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, ed. Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 98–126.

<sup>98</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*, 61–62, 129–131 203.

The gentiles' "calling" to unity with Israel in Christ does not imply that they are made the same as Israel in every respect. Their calling is a distinctly gentile calling ... both passages occur in letters that affirm that all believers are 'called' to receive eschatological blessings through Christ (1 Cor 1:9, cf. vv. 1–8; Eph 1:18, cf. 4:4). Yet Cor 7:17, 20 refer to a distinct station in life, in which each believer is "called."<sup>99</sup>

Windsor viewed the "saints" of Ephesians as the Jerusalem apostolic community (while not ruling out that it could refer to Jews in general) while expanding the term to incorporate Christ's salvation of the nations through Israel. The "saints" refers to both the "distinctive holiness" of Israel and the "remarkable holiness" of the Gentiles. The "we/you" passages of Ephesians 1:11–14, Ephesians 2:11–22, and Ephesians 3:1–6 refer to a distinction between Jews (the "we") and Gentiles (the "you") without falling into a separate way of salvation for Jews in contrast to Gentiles: "On the one hand, Jews stand in an equal position with the non-Jews with respect to sin, judgment, and salvation through the gospel. On the other hand, Jews have a certain privilege and pre-eminence with respect to the gospel."<sup>100</sup>

Windsor agreed with Robinson's position on Romans 9–11 that referred to a "renewed Israel" as the "apostolic community of disciples."<sup>101</sup> Gentiles are blessed alongside Israel as the fulfillment of the Genesis 12:1–3 Abrahamic Covenant, but they do not replace Israel. The reason for Paul's apostolic mission is Christ's work in sharing Israel's blessings with the nations. Windsor also agreed with Robinson that Galatians 6:16 referred to actual Jews who believe in Christ as the "Israel of God," with Christ fulfilling of the role of being "Abraham's offspring." Jews and Gentiles "in Christ" allowed them to be "in Abraham" while still distinguishing Jews who believe in Christ as the "Israel of God."<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*, 179.

<sup>100</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*, 18, 61–62, 85–86, 157.

<sup>101</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*, 51, 89, 101–3, 124, 129, 144, 157, 169–70, 195–96, 209–10.

<sup>102</sup> Windsor, *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*, 56, 90–91, 153.

In Windsor's dissertation *Paul and the Vocation of Israel*, not only does Israel have a role (what Windsor termed as "vocation") in redemption history, but Paul (as an Israelite) has a direct role ("vocation") as a Jewish believer and missionary teacher to the Gentiles in order to resolve the hostility between Jew and Gentile in God's plan.<sup>103</sup> He defined the term "vocation" as applied to Israel's role in redemption history, as well as specifically to Paul's mission as a Jewish apostle:

Paul was convinced that Israel had received a special divine revelation which conferred on Jews a distinct divine vocation. Paul, in other words, was committed to the view that God's global purposes in Christ included a special place—and correspondingly a special role—for the Jewish people .... The term 'vocation' here refers to the notion that the distinct existence and concrete practice of Jewish people stems from a special divine intention and implies a special role for Jews within God's wider purposes ... the distinct existence and concrete practice of Jewish people stems from a special divine intention, an intention which can imply a particular divine role for Jews in relation to non-Jews."<sup>104</sup>

Paul's "apostolic vocation" as a missionary to the Gentiles fulfilled Israel's "divine vocation."<sup>105</sup>

Windsor argued that Paul believed that the Jews were given a particular "divine vocation" by receiving God's revelation of the Mosaic law. The Jews were the recipients and teachers of God's revelation to the Gentile nations. Windsor later redefined the Jews' "divine vocation" Christologically as a salvation message that was preached to the Gentile nations *from* and *through* the nation of Israel. Just as the Jews were given God's revelation through the Mosaic law, they were given the Gospel message through Christ. The Jews were to preach Christ's salvation message to the Gentiles. Windsor's argument is threefold. First, there is still a distinction and "positive value" for Jews, even within the Christian church. Second, this "positive value" of Jewish distinction resulted from the Scriptures and Mosaic law being "a special gift of divine revelation to Israel." Third, Paul

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<sup>103</sup> Windsor, *Paul and the Vocation of Israel, How Paul's Jewish Identity Informs His Apostolic Ministry, with Special Reference to Romans* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014) 246.

<sup>104</sup> Lionel Windsor, *Paul and the Vocation of Israel* 1, 9, 248.

<sup>105</sup> Windsor, *Paul and the Vocation of Israel*, 19.

affirmed that “God’s revelation to Israel provides Israel with a special role or task within God’s wider purposes—a divine vocation.”<sup>106</sup>

Windsor rejected a supersessionist view of Romans 9–11 that the New Testament (Gentile) church becomes a “new Israel”: “The Scriptures themselves contain no examples of non–Israelites becoming ‘Israelites’ simply by worshipping the God of Israel .... the terms ‘Israel’ and ‘Jew’ are referring to ethnic Jews throughout.”<sup>107</sup> The “olive tree” of Romans 11 is not that “Gentiles are joining Israel itself, nor to eradicate [eradicating] Israel’s ethnic distinctiveness,” but that

Paul is using the metaphor to describe the relationship between Israel and Christ–believing Gentiles: both share in the same root, and that ‘Israel’ is more ‘naturally’ related to this root than the Gentiles are, even if there has been a temporary ‘breaking off’ because of unbelief ... it is not intended to imply Gentiles are now to be regarded as members of Israel.<sup>108</sup>

Windsor made a handful of exegetical contributions concerning Israel’s role in redemption history throughout the New Testament. In Romans 2:28–29, Windsor believed that Paul placed Jewish identity “among those Jews who exist within the Christ–believing communities,” not “every member of these Christ–believing communities.”<sup>109</sup> In Galatians 3:29, Windsor argued that Paul was not referring to the New Testament church comprised of Gentile Christians as a “new Israel.” While Abraham should be considered the father of “many nations,” there is a distinction between the “seed of Abraham” as it applies to Israel and Gentile Christians. Like Robinson, Windsor believed that Gentile Christians comprise a “seed of Abraham” through their salvation in Christ but are not a replacement for ethnic Israel. He also believed that Galatians 6:16 referred to actual Jews, not the New Testament church, stating that Galatians 6:16 refers to at least one of the following possibilities: all Jews, Jews Paul wished to believe in Christ, Jewish

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<sup>106</sup> Windsor, *Paul and the Vocation of Israel*, 12, 20.

<sup>107</sup> Windsor, *Paul and the Vocation of Israel*, 49.

<sup>108</sup> Windsor, *Paul and the Vocation of Israel*, 53. Bracketed text added.

<sup>109</sup> Windsor, *Paul and the Vocation of Israel*, 61.

believers in Christ, or even Paul's Jewish opponents. In Philippians 3:3, Windsor argued that "we the circumcision" refers to Paul and Timothy, Jewish believers in Christ and missionary teachers to the Gentiles. Windsor's distinction between Jew and Gentile did not lead to a two-covenant theology: "We are contending that Paul did not conceive of a distinct value of Jewishness principally in terms of salvation, but rather in terms of a special vocation arising from their possession of a unique divine revelation (the Law, or the Scriptures more generally)."<sup>110</sup> The Jews' "special vocation" was to receive God's divine revelation in Scripture and teach it to the Gentile nations.

Windsor also refuted the idea of the church as a "third race." Windsor argued that the concept of a "third race" was a viewpoint of the *Epistle of Barnabas* (which he labeled as presenting a supersessionist view), which stated that Christians are the recipient of God's covenant with Israel and that a "new humanity" or "third race" of Christians replaced Israel. He appealed to Ephesians in his refutation that the "new humanity" is comprised of both Jew and Gentile, with both still retaining their ethnic distinctions, not comprising a "third race." The New Testament church (ἐκκλησία) does not replace Israel or become a "third race" but is a "united" gathering (assembly) of Jew and Gentile believers in Christ who retain their ethnical distinctions.<sup>111</sup>

Windsor appreciated the biblical theologies of both Robinson and Goldsworthy but primarily appreciated Robinson's "distinction" between Jew and Gentile (this was absent in Goldsworthy's earlier writings). While Windsor did not reject a Christocentric interpretation of Ephesians and Colossians, his emphasis on the "Jew/Gentile dynamic" of both books ensured that an appreciation of the distinction between Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church was not lost (an area Goldsworthy's writings were weak). Windsor's contributions to biblical theology were more targeted in that he did not provide an elaborate biblical theological structure as seen in Robinson and Goldsworthy.

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<sup>110</sup> Windsor, *Paul and the Vocation of Israel*, 14, 49, 53.

<sup>111</sup> Lionel Windsor, "The Formation of Gentile Christ-Believing Identity Vis-à-Vis Israel in Ephesians and Barnabas," *Biblica et Patristica Thoruniensia* 11 (2018): 378, 380, 383, 388.

Instead he focused on correcting specific supersessionist interpretations throughout the biblical text (such as Ephesians and Colossians) to retain the importance of Israel's role in redemption history. In Windsor, one can see the return of an emphasis on Robinson's "distinction theology."

### Conclusion

Goldsworthy popularized a Christocentric biblical theology through his various published works (especially *Gospel and Kingdom* and *According to Plan*) which helped in turn to popularize Moore's biblical theology program. While Goldsworthy incorporated some of Robinson's teachings into his biblical theology (such as developing Robinson's "three stages" into the "three epochs" of redemption history), his early writings lacked Robinson's "distinction theology" concerning Jew and Gentile into his position and instead incorporated a reformed redemptive-history, Christocentric biblical theology. While he attempted to articulate a mediating position between dispensationalism and a form of supersessionism in that Christ is the "fulfillment" (not the "replacement") of Israel's promises, his position retained another form of supersessionism (that Israel was replaced by Christ and believers "in Christ.") As critics (such as Barry Horner) began to point out that Goldsworthy did not eliminate supersessionism in his position, he appeared to rediscover and appreciate some of Robinson's "distinction theology" concerning Jew and Gentile. He used it as a lens to adjust some of his theological positions (such as the "144,000" in Revelation) while not fully incorporating it into his biblical theology.

Lionel Windsor brought more of appreciation of Robinson's "distinction" between Jew and Gentile into his published writings (such as *Reading Ephesians and Colossians After Supersessionism*). While he did not provide a phased structure to his contributions to biblical theology (unlike Robinson and Goldsworthy), his "evangelical, post-supersessionist" interpretation of Ephesians and Colossians retained the importance of a distinction between Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church.



## **Chapter 5**

### **D. Broughton Knox and William Dumbrell's Reformed Redemptive–History**

#### **Approaches to Biblical Theology**

##### **Introduction**

Like Goldsworthy, the contributions of D. Broughton Knox and William Dumbrell to Moore's biblical theology program also departed from Robinson's "distinction theology" and are two additional examples of typical Reformed redemptive history approaches to biblical theology. Unlike Goldsworthy, neither scholar showed a later appreciation of Robinson's "distinction theology" in their contributions to Moore's biblical theology program. This chapter will cover biographical sketches of Knox and Dumbrell, their contributions to the biblical theology program at Moore, and survey their positions concerning the role of Jew and Gentile in redemption history. This chapter will also survey of Knox's understanding of ecclesiology compared to that of Robinson.

##### **Biographical Sketch of D. Broughton Knox**

D. Broughton Knox studied classics and Greek at the University of Sydney. He completed his Bachelor of Divinity at St John's College, Highbury (University of London, later the London College of Divinity), under T. W. Gilbert. He completed his Master of Theology in biblical and historical theology from London University.<sup>1</sup> He completed his D. Phil in Reformation studies at Oxford in 1953 with his thesis "The Doctrine of Faith in the Reign of Henry VIII."<sup>2</sup> He contributed to the *New Bible*

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<sup>1</sup> Chase R. Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox: Exposition, Analysis, and Theological Evaluation* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), "The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox."

<sup>2</sup> See D. B. Knox, *Doctrine of Faith in the Reign of Henry VIII* (London: James Clarke Company, 1957).

*Handbook* and *New Bible Dictionary* and contributed his first journal article to the *Evangelical Quarterly* in 1941.<sup>3</sup> He was also a consulting editor of the *Reformed Theological Review* beginning in 1947.<sup>4</sup> He contributed some articles for the *Reformed Theological Review* but wrote little for an academic audience. He delivered most of his contributions outside of *Reformed Theological Review* in chapel or conference messages (except his contributions to the *Australian Church Record*).<sup>5</sup>

Knox first served as curate at St–Andrew–the–Less in Cambridge, also spending four years as a chaplain in the Royal Navy. He first taught at Cambridge, where he interacted with members of the Inter–Varsity Fellowship (IVF, including Stuart Barton Babbage). The IVF led to the formation of Tyndale House, Cambridge.<sup>6</sup> He was also a tutor and New Testament lecturer at Wycliffe Hall and an assistant curate at St Aldate’s. Most of his ministry work occurred during his service at Moore College. He began his career at Moore as a residential tutor under T. C. Hammond (later appointed vice–principal under Marcus Loane in 1954), and he became involved in Moore’s student ministry. He was later appointed principal under Archbishop Mowll. He grew the college to include degree programs in theology, working with London University on offering a B. D. and the Australian College of Theology offering a B. Th. He expanded the library at

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<sup>3</sup> His first journal article was D.B. Knox, “The Date of the Epistle to the Galatians,” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 13 (1941): 262–268.

<sup>4</sup> Peter O’Brien, *God Who is Rich in Mercy: Essays Presented to Dr. D.B. Knox* (Sydney: Anzea, 1986), xiv.

<sup>5</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of B. Broughton Knox.” See also “D.B. Knox: The Authority of the Bible,” accessed December 13, 2022, <https://www.australianchurchrecord.net/d-b-knox-the-authority-of-the-bible/>, and the series ed. Tony Payne, Karen Beilharz, and Kirsten Birkett, *D. Broughton Knox: Selected Works* (Sydney: Matthias Media, 2000–2006).

<sup>6</sup> The Inter–Varsity Fellowship (IVF) is a member of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES). For a history of the IVF and IFES, see Keith and Gladys Hunt, *For Christ and the University: The Story of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship of the U.S.A./ 1940–1990* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1991), and Douglas Johnson, *A Brief History of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students* (Lausanne, Switzerland: IFES, 1964). For more on Stuart Babbage, see “A Tribute to Rev Dr Canon Stuart Barton Babbage AM,” accessed December 13, 2022, <https://newcollege.unsw.edu.au/media-events/news/2012/a-tribute-to-rev-dr-stuart-barton-babbage-am.html>. For a history of Tyndale House, see Thomas A. Noble, *Tyndale House and Fellowship: The First Sixty Years* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006).

Moore, moving the campus near the University of Sydney. His approach to education at Moore focused on biblical scholarship instead of practical theological education. However, his emphasis on biblical scholarship was to train pastors, focusing his education for the church, not merely the academy.<sup>7</sup> He retired as Moore's principal in 1985, serving the longest term as principal of the college.<sup>8</sup> He continued lecturing at Moore until 1988 when he founded George Whitefield College in Cape Town, South Africa. He retired from George Whitefield College in 1992.<sup>9</sup>

Knox was a member of the Faith and Order Commission in the World Council of Churches and participated in the 1952 Commission at Lund, attending as a representative for the Australian Church of England at the World Council of Churches Assembly at Evanston and the 1954 Anglican Congress at Minneapolis.<sup>10</sup> He became a Canon of St. Andrew's Cathedral in 1959, serving on the Prayer Book Commission and the Church's Doctrine Commission. He served on the Australian College of Theology, the Fellowship for Biblical Studies, and the Board of Studies in Divinity at the University of Sydney.<sup>11</sup> He was a General Synod and Synod and Standing Committee member in the Sydney Diocese.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox."

<sup>8</sup> O'Brien, *God Who is Rich in Mercy*, xi–xv.

<sup>9</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox."

<sup>10</sup> For more on the World Council of Churches, see "World Council of Churches" in F. L. Cross and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>11</sup> O'Brien, *God Who is Rich in Mercy*, xiv–xvi. For a history of the Australian College of Theology (ACT), see "History of the ACT," accessed December 13, 2022, <https://www.acttheology.edu.au/about/history/>. For a history of the Fellowship for Biblical Studies, see "History," accessed December 13, 2022, <https://www.fbs.org.au/history>.

<sup>12</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox."

### D. Broughton Knox's Understanding of Ecclesiology

Knox primarily focused on the doctrine of God in his theological contributions, but like Robinson, his most well-known theological legacy was his contributions to ecclesiology. Kuhn noted that Knox considered ecclesiology an area within Anglican evangelicalism that needed further doctrinal development.<sup>13</sup> Robinson and Knox taught ecclesiology and developed most of their ecclesiology during their careers at Moore. Their positions on ecclesiology have been collectively considered the “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology by numerous scholars, although neither Robinson nor Knox used the label to refer to their understandings of ecclesiology.<sup>14</sup> Knox contributed a handful of articles concerning ecclesiology to the *Australian Church Record*. However, he never wrote a substantial work on ecclesiology (his contributions concerning ecclesiology have been pieced together through his writings and notes).<sup>15</sup> Kuhn produced the first synthesis of Knox's understanding of ecclesiology and evaluated the “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology in his work *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*. He surveyed areas where Knox and Robinson were in agreement and where both scholars varied from each other.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox.”

<sup>14</sup> Kuhn summarized a “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology in *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “Conclusion.” See also Mark Thompson, “Knox/Robinson for Today,” accessed December 14, 2022, <http://thebriefing.com.au/2011/12/knoxrobinson-for-today/>. Shiner also referred to the “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology in “Reading the New Testament in Australia: An Historical Account of the Origins, Development, and Influence of D.W.B. Robinson's Biblical Scholarship” (PhD dissertation, Macquarie University, 2017), 98. Robinson (see Chapter 3) attempted to distance himself from the label “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology. While he agreed that he and Knox played a role in each other's understanding of ecclesiology, Robinson believed that both he and Knox were at enough theological variance concerning their ecclesiological conclusions where the label “Knox–Robinson” view of ecclesiology was not a fitting label concerning their ecclesiological positions. See Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson.”

<sup>15</sup> See the series ed. Tony Payne, Karen Beilharz, and Kirsten Birkett, *D. Broughton Knox: Selected Works* (Sydney: Matthias Media, 2000–2006).

<sup>16</sup> See Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “Conclusion.” One area both Knox and Robinson were in agreement was that “the church is only ever local or heavenly; there is no third category of the universal church on earth.” One area in which both scholars were at variance was “Robinson's inquiry into the relationship of Israel to the church. His concern throughout his study in ecclesiology was to better understand salvation history. He recognized a preservation of both Jewish and

Knox linked his understanding of ecclesiology with his understanding of the doctrine of God since he considered the church is where believers are in fellowship with each other and God. He considered the Word of God the “distinguishing mark of Christian fellowship” and a parallel between the concept of fellowship within the Trinity and human fellowship within the church.<sup>17</sup> Knox, like Robinson, defined ἐκκλησία as a “gathering,” further nuancing a Christian ἐκκλησία as a “gathering of believers around Christ” and that the church is an “activity of the people of God.”<sup>18</sup> Knox also agreed with Robinson that the ἐκκλησία is found within the local assembly of believers (by stating the “local church is essential to the nature of the church”), as well as any concept of a “universal church” is solely a spiritual “heavenly reality,” rejecting the universal church as an “earthly reality.”<sup>19</sup> Unlike Robinson, Knox sided with R. H. Newton Flew by connecting the use ἐκκλησία about Old Testament Israel in the Septuagint to the New Testament church’s use of the term ἐκκλησία as a single entity.<sup>20</sup>

#### **D. Broughton Knox’s Contribution to the Biblical Theology Program at Moore College**

Both Robinson and Knox helped to shape the theological trajectory at Moore College. While Knox was a systematic theologian focusing on Reformation theology, he read broadly both in and outside his field of study. He believed in the sufficiency of Scripture and shifted his systematic theology from a traditional position that focused on

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Gentile identities within the church, with the new redeemed community being part of a ‘new man.’ Knox did not include much in his study about the relationship of Israel to the church.”

<sup>17</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “Introduction,” “The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox,” “Conclusions.”

<sup>18</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “Introduction,” “The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox,” “Conclusions.”

<sup>19</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “Introduction,” “The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox,” “Conclusions.”

<sup>20</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, “Introduction,” “The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox,” “Conclusions.”

the theological thought of scholars throughout church history to focusing primarily on the biblical text itself. When he taught systematic theology at Moore, he used Hammond's *In Understanding Be Men* as only a supplemental textbook. Scripture was his primary textbook, as he wanted to demonstrate to his students how his theological conclusions came directly from the biblical text.<sup>21</sup>

While a systematic theologian (who studied under Hammond), Knox's theological conclusions (like Robinson's) were grounded in biblical theology. Kuhn considered Knox a type of biblical theologian due to his emphasis on Scripture as his primary focus for drawing his systematic theological conclusions.<sup>22</sup> He contributed to Moore's biblical theology program by lecturing on the New Testament. In his systematic theological contributions, he filtered all biblical doctrines through the lens of Scripture, which he considered the chief way of knowing God. Robinson and Knox played a reciprocal, complementary role to each other's contributions in which Knox drew from Robinson's biblical theological and linguistic contributions. In return, Robinson drew from the systematic theological studies of Knox.<sup>23</sup>

### **Knox's View of Israel and the Church in Redemption History**

While Knox made numerous contributions to ecclesiology, the role of Israel in redemption history and its relationship to the church was not a major issue discussed in what little comprised Knox's academic contributions. He contributed to the subject in his *Reformed Theological Review* article, "The Church and the People of God in the Old Testament." He began by surveying the nation of Israel's role in redemption history in

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<sup>21</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox."

<sup>22</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox."

<sup>23</sup> Kuhn, *The Ecclesiology of Donald Robinson and D. Broughton Knox*, "The Ecclesiology of D. Broughton Knox."

the New Testament in that early Christians in Acts were “loyal Jews,” those who “kept the law” in James and the Pauline epistles, similar to Robinson’s understanding of a New Testament church that comprised a “Jewish nucleus.”<sup>24</sup> This was the only area of minor possible agreement with Robinson. Reflecting on the Old Testament, Knox stated that “The initiative of God in redeeming His people is the keynote of the Old Testament,” in which he considered the Old Testament people of God (the nation of Israel) to be the Old Testament “church,” drawing a connection between the Old Testament “church” with the New Testament church.<sup>25</sup> Knox did believe that Old Testament Israel was the “people of God” due to God’s call upon them in the Abrahamic Covenant of Genesis 12, summarizing as follows: “We conclude then that Israel was the people of God because God called them and that the ground of this call is to be found solely in God’s character of love, justice, and mercy.”<sup>26</sup> However, he also considered the New Testament church as a continuance of an Old Testament “church” typical of a Reformed covenant theology view: “The glory of God was the purpose of the calling of the Old Testament church. It is the purpose of the church’s existence to-day.”<sup>27</sup> Knox also differed from Robinson and asserted a typical Reformed covenant theology view of redemption history since he considered the relationship of “covenant” to be the central relationship by which God operated with His people *and* the unifying theme of Scripture (instead of the concepts of “promise” and “fulfillment”), tracing various covenants throughout the Old Testament to the New Covenant in which the church is the recipient of God’s New Covenant.

Knox affirmed a Christocentric biblical theology in which the Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled in Christ. He also asserted that the New Testament church, not

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<sup>24</sup> D. B. Knox, “The Church and the People of God in the Old Testament,” *The Reformed Theological Review* 10 (1951): 12.

<sup>25</sup> Knox, “The Church and the People of God in the Old Testament,” 13.

<sup>26</sup> Knox, “The Church and the People of God in the Old Testament,” 14.

<sup>27</sup> Knox, “The Church and the People of God in the Old Testament,” 15.

only Christ, fulfilled the promises of the Abrahamic covenant to bless the nations.<sup>28</sup>

Goldsworthy also held to each of these positions. Knox considered the New Testament church as both the continuance of and the replacement of the Old Testament nation of Israel: “The early Christians were certain that the Jewish nation, by rejecting and crucifying its Messiah, had ceased to be God’s instrument.”<sup>29</sup> He used the language of “remnant” in Romans 9–11 to refer to the “true” Old Testament “church” consisting of saved Israelites while transferring this “remnant” concept to the New Testament church, even to regenerate church members in contrast to unregenerate church members. He disagreed with Robinson’s use of the concept of the “people of God” in Romans 9–11 by including Gentile believers in a way that blurred their ethnic distinctions: “In a truer sense, the people of God, once identified with the Hebrews, was now no longer confined by this natural restriction. The wild olive branch had been grafted in on to the old root.”<sup>30</sup>

Knox disagreed with Robinson by considering the entire New Testament church, both Jews and Gentiles without ethnic distinctions, the “new Israel.” He considered Old Testament Israel as a “saved nation” and “saving nation.” Unlike Robinson, he also applied the similar terms “saved community” and “saving community” to the totality of the New Testament church.<sup>31</sup> Knox also considered Israel as no longer the “people of God”: “There is no doubt that Israel was God’s chosen instrument. But for two thousand years they have been laid aside, rejected. They were His people, His church. This is no longer true.”<sup>32</sup> While Robinson retained an ethnic distinction between Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church, Knox would not.

While Knox had some minor possible agreements with Robinson’s concept of a

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<sup>28</sup> Knox, “The Church and the People of God in the Old Testament,” 16, 18.

<sup>29</sup> Knox, “The Church and the People of God in the Old Testament,” 12.

<sup>30</sup> Knox, “The Church and the People of God in the Old Testament,” 13.

<sup>31</sup> Knox, “The Church and the People of God in the Old Testament,” 16–17.

<sup>32</sup> Knox, “The Church and the People of God in the Old Testament,” 18.



the New Testament church beginning with Jewish believers, he differed from Robinson's teaching to uphold a typical Reformed covenantal redemptive–history biblical theology concerning the relationship of Israel and the church in his contribution. He also blurred any distinction between Jew and Gentile by including Gentile believers in his view of the “people of God” and “Israel.”

### **Biographical Sketch of William Dumbrell**

William Dumbrell was an Australian Anglican priest and biblical scholar who lived from 1926–2016. He studied at Moore College beginning in 1955. He completed his M. A. University of Sydney in 1958, his B. D. and M. Th. in 1966 at the University of London in 1961, and his Th. D. at Harvard University in 1970. He was ordained in February 1956, serving in the Anglican church and teaching at various academic institutions throughout his career, including Regent College (from 1984 to 1988), Macquarie University, Moore Theological College (1988–1994), University of Sydney, Trinity Theological College (Singapore), and Emmaus Bible College.<sup>33</sup> He also served as the first academic dean at Regent College.<sup>34</sup>

Dumbrell wrote numerous significant contributions to biblical theology, including *Covenant and Creation*, *The Faith of Israel*, *The End of the Beginning*, and *The Search for Order*. He also wrote commentaries on various New Testament books, including Romans, Galatians, Hebrews, the Gospel of John, and Revelation.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> “Faculty and Staff,” Emmaus Bible College, July 29, 2012 version, <http://www.rohannowell.com/projects/emmaus/faculty-and-staff/>.

<sup>34</sup> Glenn Davies, “William John Dumbrell: An Appreciation,” in *Covenant and Kingdom: A Collection of Old Testament Essays by William J. Dumbrell*, Gregory R. Goswell and Allan M. Harman (eds.), Doncaster: Reformed Theological Review Supplement Series #2 (2007), v–ix. See also “Moore Veteran Called Home,” accessed October 4, 2022, <https://sydneyanglicans.net/news/moore-veteran-called-home>, and “Faculty and Staff,” Emmaus Bible College, July 29, 2012 version, <http://www.rohannowell.com/projects/emmaus/faculty-and-staff/>.

<sup>35</sup> “Remembering Dr. William J. Dumbrell,” accessed October 4, 2022, <https://www.regent-college.edu/about-us/news/2016/remembering-dr-william-j-dumbrell>. See also William J. Dumbrell, *Romans*, a New Covenant Commentary (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005), William J. Dumbrell, *Galatians*, a New Covenant Commentary (Blackwood, Australia: New Creation Publications, 2006), *Hebrews*, a New Covenant Commentary (North Paramatta, Australia: Redeemer Baptist Press, 2009),

### William Dumbrell's Contribution to the Biblical Theology Program at Moore

Dumbrell (like Goldsworthy) was a student of Robinson who also contributed to the biblical theology program at Moore and (like Robinson and Knox) contributed to the doctrine of ecclesiology in his academic writings. Michael Jensen considered Dumbrell's contributions "crucial for shaping how Sydney Anglicans think about and preach from the Bible."<sup>36</sup> In his article "Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4," in *Out of Egypt: Biblical Theology and Biblical Interpretation*, Dumbrell offered a five-fold approach to biblical theology. First, he considered biblical theology to present a "macro view of revelation in history."<sup>37</sup> Second, one cannot construct an independent Old Testament or New Testament theology, only a biblical theology in which both testaments are "interdependent."<sup>38</sup> Third, there is no "center" to organizing biblical theology since biblical theology traces a "divine movement" from Genesis 1–3 to Revelation 21–22.<sup>39</sup> Fourth, biblical theology is a unified theology without competing "threads."<sup>40</sup> Finally, While the "final form of the text" is an ongoing scholarly discussion, an evangelical biblical theology must be a canonical biblical theology that accepts the canonical text as

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William J. Dumbrell, *John: Gospel of the New Creation, A New Covenant Exposition* (Caringbah, NSW: New Covenant Publications, 2006), William J. Dumbrell, *Revelation: Visions for Today* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017), and John A. Davies and Allan M. Harman, eds., *An Everlasting Covenant: Biblical and Theological Essays in Honour of William J. Dumbrell* (Doncaster: Reformed Theological Review Supplement Series #4, 2010).

<sup>36</sup> Michael P. Jensen, *Sydney Anglicanism: An Apology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2012), 30.

<sup>37</sup> William J. Dumbrell, "Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4," in *Out of Egypt: Biblical Theology and Biblical Interpretation*, Elaine Botha and Craig G. Bartholomew (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 287–88. Dumbrell clarified his approach in *The End of the Beginning: Revelation 21–22 and the Old Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001).

<sup>38</sup> See David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2010).

<sup>39</sup> See Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, The Old Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1961–1967). Dumbrell viewed "covenant" as a central unifying theme of Scripture, but unlike Eichrodt, he does not consider it a "center."

<sup>40</sup> In "Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4," 287–88, Dumbrell wrote: "my belief in a unitary thread of purpose connecting the whole Bible, which the biblical narratives themselves reveal, means that there cannot be within the one canon competing or differing theologies though there may be different emphases within a unitary theology." Dumbrell also clarified his approach in *The End of the Beginning: Revelation 21–22 and the Old Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001).

the study of biblical theology.<sup>41</sup>

Dumbrell, like Knox, placed the concept of “covenant” as a unifying theme. Dumbrell’s arrangement of the biblical covenants started with what he defined as the “covenant with creation” at the Noahaic Covenant in Genesis 6:18 as one of the foundational biblical covenants. The Noahic Covenant is the first time in Scripture where the term “covenant” is used. However, he viewed the Noahic Covenant as building upon an existing “covenant with creation” model in the Garden of eden. Dumbrell considered all successive covenants (including the Abrahamic Covenant) “movements forward from this creation base of Genesis 6:18.”<sup>42</sup> He placed the “covenant with creation” at Genesis 6:18 instead of Genesis 1–2 since while Genesis 1–2 was a model to the Genesis 6:18 covenant, the fall brought about the need to purge the original evil before the inauguration of a fully–developed “covenant with creation” that occurred in the Noahic Covenant: “Such a covenant would likely contain the purpose of divine engagement with the world and humanity in Genesis 1–2, particularly in regard to humanity’s benefit from, and stewardship of, creation (Gen. 1:28). Moreover, the eden account (Gen. 2:4–17), by the presence of evil in eden, cannot reflect God’s final purpose but seems to model what is to come.”<sup>43</sup> His analysis of the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12:1–3 reflected on its context in Genesis 11, contrasting God’s movement of grace toward Abraham to make of him a “Great Nation” and “great name” versus humanity’s attempt to make for themselves a “great name.”<sup>44</sup> While the explicit term “covenant” is not used until Genesis 15:18, like the relationship between the “covenant with creation” in Genesis 6:18 and Genesis 1–2, Dumbrell considered Genesis 12:1–3 as a model of the Abrahamic

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<sup>41</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 287–88. For more on a canonical biblical theology, see Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (London: SCM), 1992.

<sup>42</sup> Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 4–5.

<sup>43</sup> Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 4–5.

<sup>44</sup> Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel*, 27.

Covenant in Genesis 15:18. Dumbrell considered Genesis 15 a passage that “clearly confirms an already existing [covenantal] relationship.”<sup>45</sup> His categorization of Genesis 12:1–3 *vis a vis* Genesis 15:18 is a “summary of relationships begun by God with Abram, to which the title ‘covenant’ is later given in Genesis 15.”<sup>46</sup>

### **Dumbrell’s View of Israel and the Church in Redemption History**

Dumbrell, like Robinson, used the term ἐκκλησία in the New Testament to refer to local churches with an ultimate fulfillment in a “heavenly reality.”<sup>47</sup> However, he sided with Flew on the use of ἐκκλησία to refer to a continuity between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church, stating that ἐκκλησία in Matthew 16:18 refers to “the renewed Israel, the gathered people of God.”<sup>48</sup> Unlike Robinson’s position on the use of the term λαός as referring to the “people of God,” he used the term λαός to refer to a continuity between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church: “from the Gentiles who now belong to him as does Israel ... By using λαός, a word customarily used for Israel, James links the new people, the Gentiles, to Israel.”<sup>49</sup>

In his writings on Genesis 12:1–3, Dumbrell defined the “Great Nation” as ultimately a “redeemed” or “worshipping” community, and the story of the “Great Nation” *vis a vis* Israel is that the “redeemed” or “worshipping community” of ethnic Israel of the Old Testament is always and simply a type or representative of the “Great Nation” promised in Genesis 12:1–3:

True, the call of Israel is the initial fulfillment of divine redemptive purposes, but Israel was ever meant to be only a living example of what the Kingdom of God in political reality could mean. In her own way,

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<sup>45</sup> Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel*, 27. Bracketed text added.

<sup>46</sup> Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 73.

<sup>47</sup> Dumbrell, *The Search for Order*, 266–68.

<sup>48</sup> Dumbrell, *The Search for Order*, 172–73.

<sup>49</sup> Dumbrell, *The Search for Order*, 230.

Israel as a nation ... was to be a symbol of the final society which we meet in Rev 21–22.<sup>50</sup>

He made a similar argument in *The Faith of Israel*: “Perhaps the ‘great nation’ of this passage is to be taken eschatologically, to mean the company of the redeemed who will fulfill the call to Abram (cf. Rev. 5:11). We may therefore look to the New Testament to fulfill the concept of Israel, which failed to be realized in the OT.”<sup>51</sup> Dumbrell further elaborated on Old Testament Israel as a type or representative when he referred to Old Testament Israel as a “mere anticipation” or “image” of the “Great Nation” of Genesis 12:2:

For though Israel is certainly the nation which the Abrahamic promises have immediately in view, Israel as a nation, as a symbol of divine rule manifested within a political framework, was intended itself to be an image of the shape of final world government, a symbol pointing beyond itself to the reality yet to be ... a final world system will emerge; a ‘great nation’ will come into being of which the nation of Israel was but a mere anticipation.<sup>52</sup>

Because of national Israel’s continuing failure to obey God’s commandments and ultimately reject Christ as its Messiah, Israel was only an “ideal” or “model” of a future community: “The OT presentation is idealistic; a model is presented in the book of Exodus to which historical Israel never conformed. This inevitably translated the ideal into an eschatological hope carried by believing communities.”<sup>53</sup> Israel’s history was “a series of disappointing pilgrimages towards goals never achieved,” in which the nation of Israel in the Old Testament would not “enter the blessing of ‘rest’ attached to these promises” (referring to the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant).<sup>54</sup>

Who are the individuals that comprise Dumbrell’s concept of a “redeemed” or “worshipping community”? Dumbrell began his discussion in slight possible agreement

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<sup>50</sup> Dumbrell, “The Covenant with Abraham,” 46.

<sup>51</sup> Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel*, 28.

<sup>52</sup> Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 75–76.

<sup>53</sup> Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning*, 150, 191.

<sup>54</sup> Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning*, 128, Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 73.

with Robinson in that the individuals of a “redeemed” or “worshipping community” comprise a believing remnant of Jews plus Gentiles, which “share in the rights which were once exclusively those of national Israel.”<sup>55</sup> Dumbrell also considered Israel as the one who brings salvation to the world: “The Abrahamic covenant will (Gen. 12:3) lead to world evangelization through a chosen descendant of Abraham: Israel.”<sup>56</sup> He considered the Abrahamic Covenant as the introduction to “the course of development for all future redemptive eschatology.”<sup>57</sup> Dumbrell’s position concerning the believing remnant of Jews plus Gentiles who comprise the “redeemed” or “worshipping community” also slightly agreed with Robinson in that both groups are united together in an eschatological “heavenly reality” of a “new man.” However, Dumbrell (unlike Robinson) equated this “new man” with a new “people of God” that comprise the ἐκκλησία, the New Testament church, whereas Robinson was hesitant to apply the phrase “people of God” to the New Testament church.<sup>58</sup> Dumbrell held a Christocentric biblical theology similar to Goldsworthy that placed the fulfillment of God’s promises to Israel in Christ as the fulfillment of “Israel”: “Through the narrative of the life of Jesus, Matthew demonstrates that Israel’s vocation finds its fulfilment in Jesus ... And demonstration was necessary, for the fulfilment signifies rejection of national Israel and the realization of various prophecies in quite unexpected ways.”<sup>59</sup> However, he went further than Goldsworthy’s position by considering the death of Christ as the inauguration of a new “redeemed community” or “worshipping community,” with its final eschatological fulfillment occurring in the book of Revelation: “Both Rev 1:6 and 5:9–10 assume that a new

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<sup>55</sup> Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning*, 158.

<sup>56</sup> William J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation: An Old Testament Covenant Theology* (London: Paternoster, 2013), 62.

<sup>57</sup> Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning*, 131.

<sup>58</sup> William J. Dumbrell, *The Search for Order: Biblical Eschatology in Focus* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001), 12.

<sup>59</sup> Dumbrell, *The Search for Order*, 178–79.

worshipping community (i.e., and ‘Israel’) has arisen through the death of Christ ... A new community united by common worship has arisen in whom is realized the consummation of every eschatological hope to which humanity has been related throughout the Bible.”<sup>60</sup> Dumbrell also went further than Knox’s position of the New Testament church becoming a new Israel to instead consider Old Testament Israel as merely a type or representative ultimately fulfilled in an eschatological “redeemed” or “worshipping community” by stating: “Genesis 12:2 may initially have had Israel in view, but Israel as representative of the wider saved community to stem from her witness.”<sup>61</sup>

noitan“ mret eht fo esu eht devresbo llerbmuD” (יִלְלָה) yllareneg si 2:21 siseneG ni used for other world nations instead of Israel, continuing his exegesis by stating that the mret יִלְלָה learsI ot gnirrefer nehwxetnoc evitagen a ni desu yllacipytt si.<sup>62</sup> Dumbrell made a mret eht fo esu eht fo noitubirtsid eht gninrecnoc tnmugra dilav tahwemos יִלְלָה gnirrefer to Israel in contrast to when it is used to describe other nations. However, in contrast to fo esu evitagen dna evitisop fo noitubirtsid neve na si ereht ,llerbmuD יִלְלָה gnirrefer nehwxetnoc elpoep“ rof mret werbeH eht taht deton yltcerroc llerbmuD .learsI ot” (עַם is the term (עַם most frequently used for Israel in the OT.<sup>63</sup> dootsrednu eH יִלְלָה si taht ytinu cinhte na“ sa geographically delineated and bound by society, land, and culture.” He also observed that יִלְלָה noitan a sa learsI nehwxetnoc yrotsih sti ni no retal ”noitan taerg“ a sa learsI ot refer dluoc was contrasted with other Gentile nations (an “emergence of Israel as a political unit at a later stage and that the qualifier ‘great’ in Genesis 12:2 sets Israel off from its world”).<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning*, 159–160.

<sup>61</sup> William J. Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel: A Theological Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002), 28.

<sup>62</sup> Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 75. See also Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel*, 28.

<sup>63</sup> Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 75.

<sup>64</sup> , fo esu eht taht devresbo osla llerbmuD 82 יִלְלָה Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel* 2:21 siseneG ni “could broadly have Israel’s later political constitution in mind” as referring to Israel in contrast with other Gentile nations. See Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 75.

ehť depuorg llerbmuD ,revewoH ׀׀ eht htiw (larulp ׀׀ ,snoitan׀׀ eht) ׀׀ (noitan׀׀ eht,׀׀ singular), considering the “nations” as a collective unity of the redeemed forming a “Great Nation.”<sup>65</sup> This grouping together of the “nations” with the “nation” without a eht neewteb noitcnitsid ׀׀ susrev (sweJ eht) maharbA fo dees lacisyhp eht ot srefer ti sa eht ׀׀ of the other redeemed (Gentile) nations is an area where Dumbrell differed from ׀ Robinson’s position, as Robinson made a distinction between the promises made to the Jews and the nation of Israel and the promises made to the other redeemed Gentile nations.

fo tneumlifluf eht deterpretni llerbmuD ׀׀ cimaharbA 3–1:21 siseneG eht ni Covenant to refer not to the physical offspring of Abraham but instead to what he referred to as a “redeemed society” consisting of a “final political unity” fulfilled in Revelation 21–22.<sup>66</sup> His interpretation of Genesis 12:1–3 had a redemptive societal fulfillment in which an eschatological community of redeemed individuals forms a new political entity from a God–initiated and God–established government (using the terminology “worshipping” or “redeemed community” or “new Israel”) that “must therefore be a worshipping community called into being by a great reception, whose ideal role will be to reflect through worship the nature of God, the Redeemer.”<sup>67</sup> He placed a “wedge” between the ethnic nation of Israel and a future “redeemed community” that began to occur in Isaiah 6: “By the content of Isaiah 6, for the first time in the Old Testament, a clear wedge had been driven between the nation and a community of faith to emerge from it.”<sup>68</sup> This “wedge” became a separation at Christ’s “separation from national Israel” in Matthew: “While recognizing the ministry of Jesus as originally directed to national Israel (Matt. 10:5–6; 15:24), Matthew views the ties with Judaism as

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<sup>65</sup> Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 74–75. See also William J. Dumbrell, “The Covenant with Abraham,” *The Reformed Theological Review* 41 (1982): 50.

<sup>66</sup> See Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning*, of his treatment on Revelation 21–22.

<sup>67</sup> Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 75–76, Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning*, 122.

<sup>68</sup> Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 236–39.



having been cut. Thus, the mantle is understood as having been taken from Israel (21:43) and given to a new people of God.”<sup>69</sup> Christ rejected the nation of Israel and created “a New Community ... In Christ the new community fulfills the Exod 19:3b–6 role of Israel.”<sup>70</sup> Not only did Dumbrell understand this new community as a fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, but he also placed the concept of a “new community” as the fulfillment of the New Covenant of Jeremiah:

The term “Israel” will not be able to be used again to refer solely to the nation. Although the postexilic writings witness disappointing attempts by the returned community to set back the historical clock, the course of the future people of God has been determined. Jeremiah prepares us for Israel’s final punishment, then for a new exodus to be accomplished by the death of Christ, followed by the divine imposition of a new covenant. In effect, the proclamation of a new Israel—Jeremiah uses “Israel” predominantly as a theological term—a new covenant, and thus a new age for the people of God is the book’s message.<sup>71</sup>

For Dumbrell, there is no physical seed of Abraham or an ethnic Israel as the fulfillment of the eschatological promises given in the Abrahamic Covenant. Israel is always and simply a type of a future eschatological “redeemed community”:

Certainly, the call of Israel and her constitution may be immediately in mind, but only as a pledge of what is still to come beyond that call; namely, the final political reality—the kingdom of God ... Israel as a nation may later exhibit features of this since her constitution is God-given, but the true political structure aimed at in Gen 12:1–3 will not come into being until the whole company of the redeemed are gathered together in a New Heaven and a New Earth.<sup>72</sup>

Dumbrell also utilized similar “sonship” language to that of Goldsworthy but went further than Goldsworthy’s position by applying it to his concept of the “redeemed community”: the “children of God” is now a “new community as a replacement for

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<sup>69</sup> Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning*, 152, Dumbrell, *The Search for Order*, 155.

<sup>70</sup> Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning*, 120.

<sup>71</sup> Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel*, 150.

<sup>72</sup> Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning*, 131.

Israel” and the “concept of sonship claimed by Israel had now been given by John to Christians.”<sup>73</sup>

Dumbrell also departed from Robinson in his exegesis on Romans 9:30–10:4, concerning what he labeled a “post–cross” view on Israel’s role in redemption history: “Paul is speaking not about Israel historically (the traditional view) but about post–cross Israel still offering obedience to the Jewish law under a Mosaic covenant whose validity and institutions ceased with the death of Christ.”<sup>74</sup> He believed that the “post–cross” position of Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church shifted Israel’s “standing” as the “people of God” to the New Testament church: “In Romans 9:30–10:4, Paul is talking about Israel in a post–cross situation, and thus about the change in Israel’s national standing brought about by the death of Christ.”<sup>75</sup> In Romans 9–11, he did not believe that Paul still considered unbelieving Jews as “people of God”: “Paul’s attitude to non–Christian Israel in his day. Were they, for him, still the people of God? ... My short answer, to stem from this chapter, is no.”<sup>76</sup> Unlike Windsor, Dumbrell defined Paul’s “vocation” as a missionary to a new “people of God” that included Gentiles: “Paul’s vocational understanding, a major tenet of his theology, appeared in the form of a commitment to missionary activity that included the Gentiles in a new people of God ... Paul henceforth saw that Jew and Gentile are related as one people of God under the primacy of the Abrahamic covenant.”<sup>77</sup> Robinson and Windsor restricted the “people of God” throughout the Pauline corpus to ethnic Jews. In contrast, Dumbrell included Gentiles in his interpretation of the “people of God” without a clear ethnic distinction between the two people groups.

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<sup>73</sup> David Peterson and John Pryor, eds., *In the Fullness of Time: Biblical Studies in Honor of Archbishop Donald Robinson* (Homebush West, NSW, Australia: Lancer Books, 1992), 91.

<sup>74</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 286.

<sup>75</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 289.

<sup>76</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 287.

<sup>77</sup> Dumbrell, *The Search for Order*, 263.

In Romans 9, Dumbrell examined the role of believing Gentiles in redemption history, stating that such Gentiles would always be “incorporated” into Israel. He agreed with Robinson’s “believing remnant” of Jews along with Gentiles, but he disagreed with Robinson’s retention of their ethnical differences:

God always had in mind their incorporation into Israel, while, by the same purpose, Israel would be constituted by a believing remnant comprised of Jews and Gentiles, since salvation was always by grace and never by race, a point that Paul made clear in Romans 9:6–13 ... The fulfilment of divine purposes, which the death of Christ achieved, brought several new facts into this beginning of the kingdom of Christ.<sup>78</sup>

Believing Gentiles were now brought into a “right relationship” with God through the death of Christ in fulfillment of the New Covenant in Jeremiah: “there was the fact that the death of Jesus had introduced Jeremiah’s renewed covenant ... Paul’s statement in 9:30 then signifies that some Gentiles ... were now in a right relationship with God through faith as members of the new covenant.”<sup>79</sup> While Robinson believed the salvation mission came from Israel to the Gentiles, Dumbrell transferred the salvation mission to a “restored Israel,” the church:

the death of Christ introduced a totally new factor into the history of Israel and of the world ... With the rending of the veil of the temple immediately consequent upon the death of Jesus (Mk. 15:38), Israel and her institutions had been dismissed, and access to God was now available independently of the temple ... Israel’s commission to be a light to the nations, the world’s evangelist, was to be transferred to the new body to emerge at Pentecost, the church or the restored or remnant Israel.<sup>80</sup>

A new “Spirit-filled” Israel at Pentecost constitutes the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. Dumbrell elaborated: “the purpose of the Sinai covenant, to enable

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<sup>78</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 288.

<sup>79</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 288.

<sup>80</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 288–89.

the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant through Israel, could now be put into commission in the new Spirit-filled Israel of Pentecost.”<sup>81</sup> He equated this fulfillment with the ἐκκλησία, the New Testament church: “The ἐκκλησία that Jesus will build will in fact be this alternate profile of Israel.”<sup>82</sup>

Dumbrell elaborated on his position of Old Testament Israel as a “failed entity” in his discussion of Romans 9:30–10:4:

In the Old Testament the emphasis is almost exclusively upon nationalistic Israel as a failed entity, which never responded to its national commission to be a light to the nations (Ex. 19:5–6; Is. 49:6). But within Israel there was undoubtedly a core of faithful dedicated to obedience to the covenant ... The fact remains that the church begins on the day of Pentecost with a believing Israel called in response to national Israel’s failure. In short, the new covenant with Israel never involved national Israel but was a reality only for the new or restored Israel.<sup>83</sup>

This “believing” Israel language used by Dumbrell was similar that used by Robinson. However, he considered the new covenant with Israel to be only for a “new” or “restored” Israel that included Gentiles: “The new covenant will facilitate a restored, obedient Israel to fulfil the commission imposed by virtue of its election as the people of God (Ex. 19:5–6). That commission was, for Israel, a charge to be a light to the world.” He summarized his position as:

Israel will no longer be called upon to attract the nations to Jerusalem and her temple by her difference as a kingdom of God nation. The mission of restored Israel will now be in the wider world since, with the death of Jesus, the notion of a literal, this-world promised land had disappeared. In its place the world itself emerges as the new promised land, a type of the final antitype of the new creation.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 291.

<sup>82</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 297.

<sup>83</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 296–97.

<sup>84</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 291–92.

In his exegesis of Romans 9:30–10:4, Dumbrell also utilized the language of “sonship” in a similar manner to how he utilized such “sonship” language in his exegesis of the Abrahamic Covenant. He considered both Jew and Gentile to be considered the true “sons of God”: “all the Galatian believers, from both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds, have been brought to new experience as the true sons of God by their faith (or by this faith ... not by ethnic connection). They have inherited adoption as sons, formerly Israel’s position.”<sup>85</sup> He also referred to those in Christ as the “seed of Abraham: “if the category of belonging to Christ applies, then distinctions vanish ... As Abraham’s seed, believers share in the promises to Abraham. Thus those in Christ are the true ‘sons of Abraham,’ not Jews as such ... the full identification of believers with the faith of Abraham.”<sup>86</sup> For Dumbrell:

Romans 9:30–10:4 is a post-cross situation in which ethnic Israel stands rejected and has been replaced ... At the death of Jesus, the Jewish era had passed away and Jewish institutions had been divinely discarded. While Paul never makes this point a formal conclusion, it seems clear, particularly from Galatians, that this is the understanding that guided Paul’s thought.<sup>87</sup>

### Conclusion

D. Broughton Knox and William Dumbrell are two scholars who had only minor agreements with Robinson but mostly disagreed with him concerning Israel’s role in redemption history. Like Goldsworthy, they are two additional examples of typical Reformed redemptive-history approaches to biblical theology. Knox was a systematic theologian at Moore but grounded his theological conclusions in biblical theology, drawing his theological conclusions directly from Scripture. Unlike Robinson, he

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<sup>85</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 301.

<sup>86</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 301.

<sup>87</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 297, 310.

considered the “New Israel” to be the totality of the New Testament church, both Jews and Gentiles without ethnic distinctions. He also asserted the New Testament church is unified with an Old Testament “church.” Dumbrell considered biblical theology to present a “macro view of revelation in history” that traces a “divine movement” from Genesis 1–3 to Revelation 21–22.<sup>88</sup> He asserted that the “great nation” of Genesis 12:1–3 was only a type of an eschatological “redeemed,” “worshipping community” fulfilled in a “new Israel” of believing Jews and Gentiles without their ethnic differences. He also asserted that Romans 9:30–10:4 speaks of a “restored Israel,” but unlike Robinson, his concept of a “restored Israel” consists of all believers in the New Testament church without retaining their ethnic differences. Unlike Goldsworthy, neither scholar showed any later form of appreciation for any aspects of Robinson’s “distinction theology.”

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<sup>88</sup> Dumbrell, “Paul and Salvation History in Romans 9:30–10:4,” 287–88.

## Chapter 6

### Additional Scholars

#### Introduction

This chapter will survey contributions to biblical theology by additional scholars who served at Moore College or attended Moore's biblical theology program, and those who read and interacted with Robinson and Goldsworthy's works. Scholars in this survey include: Robert Banks, Peter Bolt, Richard Gibson, Vaughan Roberts, Brian Rosner, Barry Webb, Paul Williamson, and a handful of other scholars.

#### Robert Banks

Robert Banks, one of Robinson's students, wrote a widely-read work on the church entitled *Paul's Idea of Community*.<sup>1</sup> He considered the church to be a "new Adam" and followed Robinson's concept of ἐκκλησία as referring to an "assembly."<sup>2</sup> Shiner provided a help summary of Banks in comparison to Robinson:

With Robinson he argued that Paul resolves the Jew–Gentile relationship not in the church becoming Israel, but in Israel and the Gentiles becoming 'Adam at Last', the new humanity ... He accepted and even extended Robinson's claims that ἐκκλησία only refers to actual gatherings, even going so far as to argue that Paul's persecution of 'the church' must have involved persecution of Christians as they were gathered.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rory James Wilson Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia: An Historical Account of the Origins, Development, and Influence of D.W.B. Robinson's Biblical Scholarship" (PhD dissertation, Macquarie University, 2017), 113.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community* (London: Paternoster, 1980), 24–25, 34–37.

<sup>3</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia", 199.

While he compared the Septuagint's use of the term ἐκκλησία concerning Old Testament Israel to that of the New Testament's use of ἐκκλησία about the church, unlike R. H. Newton Flew and like J. Y. Campbell and Robinson, he did not apply any religious connotation to the term ἐκκλησία.<sup>4</sup> He also asserted that the church is primarily a local gathering with any idea of a "universal church" as only a "heavenly reality," not consisting within an earthly "universal church."<sup>5</sup> While he believed that both Jews and Gentiles receive salvation in Christ, he also agreed with Robinson's "distinction theology" between Jew and Gentile. He provided one example in his exegesis on Romans 11. The olive tree (Romans 11) is Jewish. Israel still has a future role in redemption history: "Paul does not view the Christian community, with its predominantly Gentile membership, as altogether replacing Israel in God's purposes."<sup>6</sup> Gentiles are grafted into a Jewish olive tree. It is the Jews who first gave the Gospel, both to other Jews as well as to the Gentile nations. Even after they believed in Christ, Jews and Gentiles continued some of their lifestyle customs. Paul did not object to this continuance of lifestyle customs as long as such customs were not imposed upon other ethnicities as a requirement for salvation (since salvation is through Christ alone).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, 34–35.

<sup>5</sup>Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, 43–48.

<sup>6</sup>Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, 119. Banks noted that Gentiles can only share in the spiritual blessings of Jews because they were "grafted into" the olive tree. He also observed that Jews played a role in the salvation to the Gentiles as well as to other Jews, so that there is still a role for Israel in redemption history.

<sup>7</sup>Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, 118–120. Examples Banks provided on some of the customs Jews carried over after their salvation was observance of the Sabbath, refraining from certain foods, and practicing circumcision. He noted that their observance of such customs was not an issue for Paul except for the Jews who insisted that such observances were *requirements* of salvation.



### Peter Bolt

Peter Bolt is a former lecturer at Moore College who taught in Moore's biblical theology program.<sup>8</sup> Bolt has made (and is making) numerous contributions to biblical theology, including *The Cross from a Distance*, the *Gospel of Mark* commentary in the *Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation Commentary* series, as well as other exegetical works.<sup>9</sup> He also served as one of the editors of the *Donald Robinson Selected Works* series.

While Bolt appreciated the legacy of Robinson through his work in Robinson's *Selected Works* series, he did not provide a substantial contribution concerning his position on Israel's role in redemption history. He briefly summarized a few comments in his 1991 "Vision Day" message at St. Matthias "God's Vision of Church." Like Robinson, he translated ἐκκλησία as simply meaning "gathering" or "assembly," demonstrating how the term ἐκκλησία is used generically throughout the New Testament without carrying theological weight applied to the New Testament church.<sup>10</sup> He also agreed with Robinson's position of the "144,000" in Revelation 7, viewing them as Israelites who are distinct from the Gentiles.<sup>11</sup> Unlike Robinson, he directly labeled the New Testament church as the "people of God" without a clear ethnic distinction between

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<sup>8</sup> "Associate Professor Peter Bolt," accessed March 14, 2023, <https://grs.scd.edu.au/2018/11/23/associate-professor-peter-bolt/>. Bolt is now the Academic Director of the Sydney College of Divinity.

<sup>9</sup> Associate Professor Peter Bolt," accessed March 14, 2023, <https://grs.scd.edu.au/2018/11/23/associate-professor-peter-bolt/>, "Professor Peter Bolt," accessed March 14, 2023, <https://grs.scd.edu.au/people/peter-bolt/>, "Professor Peter Bolt," accessed March 14, 2023, <https://scd.edu.au/people/peter-bolt/>.

<sup>10</sup> One example is his reference to the mob against Paul which was referred to as an "assembly" in Acts 19.

<sup>11</sup> Shiner noted that Paul Barnett held a similar position in *Apocalypse Now and Then: Reading Revelation Today, Reading the Bible Today* (Sydney: AIO, 1989), 84.; 1919, and Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 203.

Jews and Gentiles within the church.<sup>12</sup>

Bolt also commented briefly on the “end of religion” in his 2003 Moore College Annual Lectures volume, *The Cross from a Distance*. He considered Judaism (what he labeled as God’s “religion”) as abolished and superseded by Christ, believing that both Jew and Gentile now have access to God through Christ:

The coming of Jesus abolishes this distance, and so, in another of God’s great paradoxes, the Messiah’s fulfilment of the law means that Old Testament religion is superseded ... The proper response to Jesus is something completely non-religious. With the coming of the bridegroom, along with the abolition of religion, comes faith.<sup>13</sup>

Through his sermon and writings, one can glimpse Bolt’s position concerning Israel’s role in redemption history. He considered the death of Christ as the end of Judaism. Christ’s death replaced the religion of the Jews with a non-religious faith in Christ.<sup>14</sup> Bolt could further contribute a more comprehensive position on Israel’s role in redemption history that would be useful.

### Richard Gibson

Gibson, who has lectured at Moore College, contributed to the session on “Biblical Theology at Moore” at the 2011 Evangelical Theological Society (ETS)

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<sup>12</sup> Peter Bolt, “God’s Vision of Church,” Sermon given at Vision Day – St Matthias, 1991.

<sup>13</sup> Peter G. Bolt, *The Cross from a Distance: Atonement in Mark’s Gospel*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2004), 29–30. Bolt would disagree with Robert Banks’ position that Jews were able to continue to observe certain Jewish customs (such as circumcision) after their salvation. Bolt instead considered the cross as the end of practicing the Jewish religion. Faith in Christ is the replacement of Judaism.

<sup>14</sup> Bolt, *The Cross from a Distance*, 127. While he did not directly mention Gentiles or the New Testament church replacing Israel in redemption history, one can infer from his writings that he retained a form of supersessionism that the Jew’s (and Israel’s) role in redemption history ended with the death of Christ.

National Meeting. He stated that biblical theology is “deeply embedded” into him due to his time serving at Moore. His paper surveyed the “descriptive task” and provided an “informative snapshot” of the biblical theology program at Moore. The biblical theology program at Moore aims to give students a deeper understanding of “God’s message to us in the form it actually takes.”<sup>15</sup>

Gibson’s paper primarily focused on the “Introduction to the Bible” course originally developed by Robinson (which is now part of Moore’s “external studies” department to train church members or ministry leaders in theological studies). The course has also been used as a predecessor and gateway toward formal education in biblical theology at Moore College. “Introduction to the Bible” is one of five required courses at Moore, covering the message of the Bible as a whole and how the message of the Bible unfolds from beginning to end. The course also teaches how each biblical book relates to the Bible historically and theologically while also teaching the task of biblical theology. While Robinson originally taught the course, the course now surveys a Christocentric biblical theology based on Goldsworthy’s *Gospel and Kingdom*. In 2007, a course on “Promise to Fulfillment” was added to the program, which builds upon “Introduction to the Bible” and teaches an inductive approach to Bible study while providing a primer on biblical interpretation. One cannot complete a B. Div. or a B. Th. at Moore without completing the core biblical theology courses (B. Div. students can complete a course in hermeneutics further in the program).<sup>16</sup>

Gibson’s paper possibly alluded to Robinson’s legacy at Moore through the structure of Moore’s biblical theology courses but not the content of such courses. Moore continues to offer the “Introduction to the Bible” course, and the college added a course

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<sup>15</sup> Gibson, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Teaching Biblical Theology,” ETS, San Francisco, CA, November 17, 2011. “God’s message to us in the form it actually takes” is a definition of biblical theology Gibson gives in his lecture.

<sup>16</sup> Gibson, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Teaching Biblical Theology.”

on “Promise to Fulfillment” (which Robinson considered “promise” and “fulfillment” as central to his understanding of biblical theology). However, in terms of the course content in Moore’s biblical theology program, the primary position that Gibson attempted to equate with Moore is Goldsworthy’s Christocentric biblical theology (as seen in his early work *Gospel and Kingdom*). Notably absent from Gibson’s paper is any reference to Robinson’s “distinction theology” or a significant contribution concerning Israel’s role in redemption history. While Gibson served as the editor for the 1996 Moore School of Theology’s publication of its papers in *Interpreting God’s Plan: Biblical Theology and the Pastor*, a contribution from Gibson concerning Robinson’s “distinction theology” concerning Jew and Gentile would be valuable for the future development of Moore’s biblical theology program.<sup>17</sup>

### **Peter O’Brien**

Peter O’Brien is a scholar at Moore College who reached an exegetical conclusion concerning the term ἐκκλησία similar to Robinson in which ἐκκλησία is viewed as ultimately a “heavenly reality.” He also agreed with Robinson’s position on ἐκκλησία as applying to local gatherings of believers, not a “national church” or earthy “universal church” since an earthly “universal church” cannot gather all at once. The goal of the Christian is to gather in a “heavenly,” “eschatological” assembly, with the local church being “earthly manifestations of that heavenly assembly gathered around God and Christ.”<sup>18</sup> He considered Jew and Gentile as becoming a “new man” in Christ:

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<sup>17</sup> It is possible that Gibson did not consider Robinson’s “distinction theology” as a significant issue since he primarily followed Goldsworthy as the primary contributor to Moore’s biblical theology program.

<sup>18</sup> Peter O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” in *The Church in the Bible and the World: An International Study*, ed. D. A. Carson (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002), 90–93, 97.

A particularly important motif in Ephesians is the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile to God ‘in one body’ (*en heni somati*, 2:16) through the cross. In a passage which shows how Gentiles have been made heirs of God’s promises (2:11–22), the apostle focusses attention upon Christ’s peacemaking work upon the cross. God’s purpose was to create out of the two great divisions of mankind ‘a single new humanity’ in Christ (2:15 NEB). This has been effected by reconciling Jew and Gentile to God in the body of Christ (cf. 3:3–6): the expression ‘one body’ refers, not to the physical body of Christ on the cross (spoken of as ‘his flesh’ in v. 15), but to the church of which Jewish and Gentile believers are alike members, and it is equivalent to ‘the one new man’ of v. 15.<sup>19</sup>

However, unlike Robinson, his concept of a “new man” eliminated the distinction between Jew and Gentile while they were still in the church (“the church of which Jewish and Gentile believers are alike members”), not in an eschatological “new man.”<sup>20</sup>

### Vaughan Roberts

Vaughan Roberts studied Goldsworthy’s biblical theology (particularly Goldsworthy’s *Gospel and Kingdom*) and brought Goldsworthy’s biblical theology to the average lay Christian in his work *God’s Big Picture*. Roberts agreed with Goldsworthy’s Christocentric biblical theology and Robinson’s concept of “promise” and “fulfillment” by tracing “promise” throughout the Old Testament and “fulfillment” throughout the New Testament. Roberts agreed with Goldsworthy’s concept that the “kingdom of God” is the central unifying theme of Scripture, also including the importance of the idea of “covenant” in Scripture without making it his main unifying theme of Scripture. Roberts modified Goldsworthy’s thesis from *Gospel and Kingdom* in *God’s Big Picture* as “God’s people in God’s place under God’s rule and blessing.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 110–11.

<sup>20</sup> O’Brien, “The Church as a Heavenly and Eschatological Entity,” 110–11.

<sup>21</sup> Vaughan Roberts, *God’s Big Picture: Tracing the Storyline of the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2002), 9, 17, 21–22, 50.

Roberts traced Goldsworthy's concept of "three epochs" through an eight-fold grand narrative of Scripture. In the Old Testament, Roberts surveyed the "pattern of the kingdom" in the Garden of eden and the "perished kingdom" in the fall, the "promised kingdom" in the Abrahamic Covenant, the "partial kingdom" in Israel's history leading up to the monarchy, and the "prophesied kingdom" during Israel's exile and the Old Testament prophets. In the New Testament, Roberts surveyed the "present kingdom" inaugurated by Christ, the "proclaimed kingdom" after the death and resurrection of Christ, and the "perfected kingdom" in the eschaton.<sup>22</sup> He believed that a common salvation for Jew and Gentiles could be traced back to the Abrahamic Covenant: "Right from the very start God's plan of salvation was universal; it encompassed all nations," elaborating on the salvation covenant's Christological fulfillment in the New Testament: "He [Abraham] was accepted by God, not on the basis of his own goodness, but by faith in the promises of God. That has always been the way of salvation for sinful human beings...that same gospel has now been finally fulfilled in Jesus Christ."<sup>23</sup>

Like Robinson, Roberts stressed the significance of believers in Christ forming a new humanity with Christ as the new Adam: "As a result, if we trust in him, we enter into a new humanity, headed not by Adam, the sinner, but by Jesus, the righteous new Adam."<sup>24</sup> Unlike Robinson, he did not make a distinction between Jew and Gentile concerning the people of God: "He, and those from all nations who trust in him, are God's people; and we can look forward to enjoying the fullness of God's blessing, not on earth, but in heaven, the new Jerusalem."<sup>25</sup> Like Goldsworthy, he viewed Christ as the 'new Israel'. although he modified Goldsworthy's position by directly applying the

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<sup>22</sup> Roberts, *God's Big Picture*, 24–26.

<sup>23</sup> Roberts, *God's Big Picture*, 53–55. Bracketed text added.

<sup>24</sup> Roberts, *God's Big Picture*, 117–18.

<sup>25</sup> Roberts, *God's Big Picture*, 55.

language of the “new Israel” to the church in supersessionist fashion:

He is calling together a new Israel, with twelve disciples as the foundation, rather than twelve tribes ... The old Israel rejects Jesus and will, in turn, be rejected by God ... From now on the true Israel is not focused on the land of Palestine and does not consist of those who are physically descended from Abraham. It rather consists of his spiritual descendants: those, both Jew and Gentile, who follow his example and place their trust in God’s promise fulfilled in Jesus ... The new Israel is the church, all those who trust in Christ. Peter writes to a Christian audience, consisting primarily of Gentiles, and boldly applies to them some of the titles that had previously been the property of the Israelites alone ... The true Israelite, or member of the people of God, is not simply someone who is physically descended from Abraham and outwardly obeys the Jewish law, but rather the converted believer in Christ.<sup>26</sup>

Roberts further developed Robinson’s position of rejecting Christian Restorationism by placing Christ as the fulfillment of the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant while rejecting a future restoration of a Jewish nation of Israel:

The New Testament never leads us to expect that there will be any fulfilment of the Old Testament promises other than their fulfilment in Christ ... We are not encouraged, for example, to look for their fulfilment in the State of Israel ... That is to expect a renewal of the model that has now been dismantled. The permanent reality is found in Christ.<sup>27</sup>

The language of “nation,” “temple,” and “land” are to be considered symbolic language that is not to be literally fulfilled but to be Christologically fulfilled: “In a similar way, God made his promises to Israel in ways they could understand. He used categories they were familiar with, such as the nation, the temple and material prosperity in the land. But the fulfilment breaks the boundaries of those categories. To expect a literal fulfilment is to miss the point.”<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Roberts, *God’s Big Picture*, 117–18, 138–39.

<sup>27</sup> Roberts, *God’s Big Picture*, 114–15.

<sup>28</sup> Roberts, *God’s Big Picture*, 115. See Chapter 4 for more on the difference between *literal* and *Christological* fulfillment.

### Brian Rosner

Brian Rosner is a scholar at Moore College who also studied at Dallas Theological Seminary. Two of his main contributions to the biblical theology program at Moore include his work as one of the editors and contributors to the *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* and his 2011 ETS paper entitled “Biblical Theology at Moore: Reflections on One Scholar’s Research.” In his article in the *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* on biblical theology, Rosner asserted that “the task of biblical theology is to present the teaching of the Bible about God and his relations to the world in a way that lets the biblical texts set the agenda,” in contrast to systematic theology, which includes extra-biblical discussion of the Christian faith.<sup>29</sup> He further defined biblical theology as that which: “explores the Bible’s rich and many-sided presentation of its unified message. It is committed to declaring ‘the whole counsel of God ... [in order] to feed the church of God’.”<sup>30</sup> Rosner agreed with Goldsworthy’s Christocentric biblical theology in that Christ united both testaments: “Indeed, the Messiah is the theme which unites the Old and New Testaments ... If biblical theology seeks to connect text and truth ... it never forgets that Jesus is the truth.”<sup>31</sup>

In his ETS paper, Rosner considered biblical theology to be more of a “bridge” than a “destination,” a “process” more than a “product.” To Rosner, biblical theology is not the end goal of biblical studies, but it is a tool in aiding readers to understand the whole counsel of God. Biblical theology provides a “bridge” between biblical exegesis and systematic theology. Additionally, he considered the method and “approach” to biblical theology of more importance than attempting to define biblical theology. While

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<sup>29</sup> Brian S. Rosner, “Biblical Theology,” in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000), 5–6. 2013).

<sup>30</sup> Rosner, “Biblical Theology,” 9–10.

<sup>31</sup> Rosner, “Biblical Theology,” 10.



Rosner still defined biblical theology (in his *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* article), he preferred that scholars spend less time attempting elaborate definitions of biblical theology and simply go about the task of “doing” biblical theology. His goal in his contribution to biblical theology is to answer the following questions: 1. Does the Bible itself provide a “central theme”? 2. Is there a place for Jewish intertestamental literature in biblical theology?<sup>32</sup> 3. Should readers of the Bible always expect continuity between the testaments?<sup>33</sup> To answer his first question, he discussed biblical theology’s versatility by attempting to uncover a central unifying theme in how biblical theology examines the relationship between both testaments, elaborating on his article in the *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. His paper first examined the classic concepts that theologians have presented for a unifying theme of Scripture (including “covenant,” “kingdom of God,” and “promise and fulfillment”), explaining that biblical theology is versatile in that there are other major unifying themes of biblical theology. Two examples Rosner provided include clothes (from the clothing of Adam and Eve in the Garden of eden to the clothing of the resurrected bodies in the eschaton) and violence (how biblical theology begins with a fallen world in the Garden of eden that moves toward redemption in Christ).<sup>34</sup> He observed that there are multiple avenues in which one can express a “central theme” of biblical theology. Biblical theologians can choose one of the classic concepts or innovate a biblical theology around additional concepts (such as the two examples Rosner provided). Unlike Robinson and Goldsworthy, Rosner did not settle on one particular central or unifying theme of Scripture. To answer his second question, he asserted that

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<sup>32</sup> See David W. Chapman and Andreas J. Köstenberger, “Jewish Intertestamental Literature and Early Rabbinic Literature: an Annotated Bibliographic Resource,” *JETS* 43 (2000): 577–618.

<sup>33</sup> See David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2010).

<sup>34</sup> For examples of theologians who have presented classic concepts of a unifying theme of Scripture: J. I. Packer (Chapter 2) is an example of “covenant,” Goldsworthy (Chapter 4) is an example of “kingdom of God,” and Robinson (Chapter 3) is an example of “promise and fulfillment.”

Jewish intertestamental literature does provide a helpful background study for biblical theology, as Jewish intertestamental literature can shed some valuable light on the historical and ethical context of the New Testament (as New Testament ethics is Rosner's other major field of study). To answer his third question, Rosner stated that one cannot always trace a continuity between both testaments. This is possibly due to Rosner's decision not to settle on one unifying theme of Scripture. If there are multiple avenues in which scholars can present a central or unifying theme of Scripture, then the continuity between both testaments may not always be clearly traced.<sup>35</sup>

While Rosner briefly mentioned the relationship between Jew and Gentile as a significant theme within biblical theology, he did not directly address his position on Israel's role in redemption history in his paper.<sup>36</sup> Many of his other writings primarily focus on Paul's moral and ethical writings without directly addressing Israel's role in redemption history or the relationship between Jew and Gentile in the church. As one who has been involved with both Moore College and Dallas Theological Seminary, this contribution from Rosner would benefit the future development of the biblical theology discussion at Moore. It would be helped to determine how much of Dallas Theological Seminary's position on dispensationalism affected Rosner's understanding of biblical theology and where Rosner aligns with or departs from Robinson's "distinction theology."

### **Barry Webb**

Barry Webb is a lecturer at Moore College who agreed with some of Robinson's ecclesiology and Goldsworthy's biblical theology. Like Robinson, he considered the

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<sup>35</sup> Brian S. Rosner, "Biblical Theology at Moore: Reflections on One Scholar's Research," ETS, San Francisco, CA, November 17, 2011).

<sup>36</sup> Rosner, "Biblical Theology at Moore: Reflections on One Scholar's Research."

church a “new society” that is both a “local,” “earthly” gathering, but it is also a “heavenly reality.”<sup>37</sup> Like Goldsworthy, he placed a Gospel-centered hermeneutic as his foundation in constructing an evangelical biblical theology. The majority of the New Testament is an exposition of the Gospels in a similar manner the majority of the Old Testament is an exposition of the *Torah*.<sup>38</sup> He considered Christ’s “fulfillment” of the “kingdom of God” as a “central element” in his biblical theology, asserting that Mark 1:14–15’s concept of Christ ushering in the “kingdom of God” is the “hermeneutical key” to his biblical theology.<sup>39</sup> He did not consider the concept of the “kingdom of God” as being restricted to the hope of Israel, but to all nations, with the “new Jerusalem” being the new home of believers. Christ is the fulfillment of the “kingdom of God.” Like Goldsworthy, he also argued that Jesus fulfilled the role that Israel failed to fulfill:

The Israel of the Old Testament had failed to live up to its calling as the covenant people of God. But what Israel had failed to do, Jesus himself did for Israel. He loved God perfectly, with all his heart, mind, soul and strength, as Israel should have done, and then he took total responsibility for Israel’s failure and gave his own perfect life as a sacrifice to atone for their sin.<sup>40</sup>

Like Dumbrell, Webb considered Israel a “model society” and a “light to the nations” in the Old Testament. Yet he defined this “model society” as simply a “model” or “example” of a future “redeemed community.” Old Testament Israel is merely a “paradigm,” “type,” and “prototype” of a future community in which Israel is replaced by the church. The land promises to the nation of Israel have given way to a new Christian

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<sup>37</sup> Barry Webb, “The Role of OT and of Biblical Israel – School of Theology 1987. Church and Society,” Moore Theological College, 1987.

<sup>38</sup> See Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006). See also Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000).

<sup>39</sup> Richard Gibson, ed., *Interpreting God’s Plan: Biblical Theology and the Pastor* (London: Paternoster Press, 1997), 52–53, 56–57, 62–64.

<sup>40</sup> Barry Webb, *The Message of Zechariah: Your Kingdom Come* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), 175.

fellowship. The ethical laws of Old Testament Israel remain a source of Christian ethics for the church, but that is the extent of their validity. Unlike Dumbrell, he asserted that both Israel and the church are “prototypes” of a “new creation,” (Dumbrell only considered Israel as a “type” of a “new creation”) contrasting the concepts of “God,” “Israel,” and “land” in the Old Testament “prototypes” of new concepts of “God,” “redeemed humanity,” and a “new creation” in the New Testament.

To Webb, the concept of the “people of God” can “never, in the end, be merely nationalistic or racially based,” and “must ultimately be a vast, multicultural, multi-ethnic community drawn from all nations, united finally by their common acknowledgment of him as the only true God.”<sup>41</sup> As Israel’s Messiah, Christ fulfilled the promises to Israel. Israel’s rejection of their Messiah led to the forming of a “new,” “renewed” Israel: “Israel in general chose to reject Jesus and fell under God’s judgment ... but it is also a matter of record that Jesus had prepared the way for the emergence of a new (renewed) Israel, by preaching the kingdom of God, calling for repentance, and preparing the twelve apostles to lead the new community he was calling together.”<sup>42</sup> Webb retained a form of supersessionism by considering all believers (including Gentiles) as forming a “new” Israel:

Israel’s special relationship with God was brought to completion (fulfilment) in Jesus Christ, but participation in that fulfilment depended on acceptance of him as God’s Messiah. That is the essence of the powerful gospel message Peter preached to the great gathering of Israelites in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. He was offering them participation in the fulfilment of God’s covenant with Israel by accepting Jesus Christ as their Messiah. They would become members of the new reborn Israel that had emerged out of the old.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Webb, *The Message of Zechariah*, 43.

<sup>42</sup> Webb, *The Message of Zechariah*, 43, 172–75. While some scholars within traditional dispensationalism offered a similar interpretation to Webb in that the rejection of the “kingdom of God” by Israel led to the formation of the church, Webb’s position varied with dispensationalism in that Israel’s rejection of their Messiah led to a “new, renewed Israel” in which Gentiles are the replacement of the Jews.

<sup>43</sup> Webb, *The Message of Zechariah*, 175.

### Paul Williamson

Paul Williamson is another scholar at Moore who defined biblical theology as “a holistic enterprise tracing unfolding theological trajectories throughout Scripture and exploring no biblical concept, theme or book in isolation from the whole.”<sup>44</sup> Williamson carried forward a Christocentric biblical theology similar to that of Goldsworthy: “each concept, theme or book is considered ultimately in terms of how it contributes to and advances the Bible’s meta–narrative, typically understood in terms of a salvation history that progresses towards and culminates in Jesus Christ.”<sup>45</sup> Williamson placed “covenant” as his major unifying theme of biblical theology and the “theological center” of Scripture.<sup>46</sup> His significant contribution to the biblical theology program at Moore is how he defined the concept of “covenant” as that which “ratifies an already forged or existing elective relationship” and “involves the making of solemn promises by means of a verbal and/or enacted oath.”<sup>47</sup>

Williamson disagreed with Robinson’s position concerning the use of the term “people of God,” applying it not only to Israel in the Old Testament but to the church in the New Testament: “One of the obvious contrasts between the Old and New Testaments is that in each the people of God are different. In one God’s saving activity focuses primarily on a national entity (i.e. ethnic Israel); in the other such focus centres on an

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<sup>44</sup> Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath: Covenant in God’s Unfolding Purpose*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007), 17. See also Paul R. Williamson, “Covenant,” in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000), and Paul R. Williamson, “Covenant,” in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003).

<sup>45</sup> Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 17.

<sup>46</sup> Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 19–20, 29, 30–34.

<sup>47</sup> Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 42.

international community (i.e. the global Church).”<sup>48</sup> Paul served as an example of one who thought the New Testament church fulfilled the promises of the Abrahamic covenant. Not only is Abraham a father of a “Great Nation,” but a father of “many nations,” in which the “seed of Abraham” is more than a single nation. Williamson alluded to this concept of “many nations” in his explanation of the Abrahamic Covenant: “No longer is the emphasis on a national entity that will stem from Abraham. Instead, the primary focus is transferred to an international community to whom Abraham will mediate blessing.”<sup>49</sup> The fulfillment of Abraham’s offspring are the spiritual offspring of faith in Christ, with their complete fulfillment occurring in a new eschatological community as prophesied in the book of Revelation: “While certainly including biological descendants of Abraham, this new covenant community is not defined by biological ancestry but rather by spiritual descent.”<sup>50</sup> Williamson used the language of an “ideal Israel” as the fulfillment of the New Covenant in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel: “Thus the new covenant projects the ultimate fulfilment of the divine promises on to an ideal Israel (i.e. a community of faith) located in a rejuvenated universe (Isa. 65:17; 66:22),” carrying forward the concept of an “ideal Israel” fulfilled in Christ and the church into the book of Acts: “Jesus as the fulfilment of the Old Testament’s messianic hope and the church as the people of God, the genuine heirs of the covenant promises in the Old Testament.”<sup>51</sup> In agreement with Goldsworthy, Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of the promises to Abraham and the representative “true Israel” that brings salvation to the nations. Williamson also believed that ethnic identity was never the sole requirement for salvation or to inherit the promises made to Abraham, not even to Old Testament

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<sup>48</sup> Paul Williamson, “Abraham, Israel, and the Church,” *Evangelical Quarterly* 72 (2000): 99.

<sup>49</sup> Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 82–84.

<sup>50</sup> Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 146.

<sup>51</sup> Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 179–81, 185–86.

Israel. In Romans 9–11, salvation is solely in Christ. The branches of unbelieving Israel have been broken off, and they do not inherit the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant. Williamson retained a form of supersessionism by applying the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant to include the “spiritual descendants” of Abraham, the New Testament church.<sup>52</sup> He also rejected Christian Restorationism’s importance concerning the land of Israel in a similar manner to that of Robinson by stating the New Testament considered the physical (land) promises of the Abrahamic Covenant to be “subservient” to the spiritual (salvation) promises.<sup>53</sup>

### Other Scholars

A handful of other scholars who have studied, carried forward, or modified the teachings of Robinson will also be briefly discussed. These scholars include: George Athas, Kevin Giles, Phillip Jensen, Anthony Nichols, Martin Pakula, Ma’afu Palu, Jeff Read, Malcolm Richards, and W. H. (Bill) Salier.

George Athas contributed to the discussion on Jew and Gentile in the *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation*. He rejected a view of the New Testament in which readers attempt to insert themselves into the biblical text in areas that directly apply to the role of Israel in redemption history, considering the distinction between Jew and Gentile as the “exegetical key for understanding the New Testament.”<sup>54</sup> Throughout the Gospels, Athas surveyed Christ as the Jewish Messiah and the Apostles as Jewish Apostles, showing how both Israel and Christ “fit together” in the Gospels as an extension of the faith of Israel. Considering the book of Hebrews as written to a Jewish

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<sup>52</sup> Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 183–85, 188–92.

<sup>53</sup> Paul Williamson, “Abraham, Israel, and the Church,” 99, 101, 115–17.

<sup>54</sup> George Athas, “Reflections on Scripture. Using the Distinction Between Jews and Gentiles as an Exegetical Key,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, eds, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 126.

audience, its proper interpretation is not that Christians are “falling away” from the faith but that some Jews are “falling short” of the faith by failing to accept Christ as their Messiah. When Jews rejected Christ, they were rejecting that which the nation of Israel held sacred. In his explanation of the book of Galatians, he believed that Galatians 4:1–6 does not state that Jews were “rescued” from the law. Their slavery was not to the law but to the world (and worldliness). In contrast, Gentiles were never under the Jewish law. While both Jew and Gentile can call God Father through Christ, Galatians 3:28 refers solely to salvation, not an elimination of all ethnic distinctions. His exegesis of the book of Romans cautions readers that Paul’s use of “we” in Romans refers to Paul and his companions, not a passage in which current believers should import themselves into the interpretation of “we.” In Romans 9–11, Athas carried forward Robinson’s reciprocal role of the Gospel as going from Jews to Gentiles and back to Jews, salvation first going to the Gentiles through the Jewish evangelists, and salvation going back to unsaved Jews through the Gentiles. He elaborated on Jewish evangelism in Romans 12:12, stating that while the Gospel is no longer restricted to the Jews, it is still “to the Jew first,” citing Romans 1:16, 2:10.<sup>55</sup>

Kevin Giles is an Anglican scholar who studied at Moore College and read Robinson and D. Broughton Knox. While he disagreed with Robinson’s ecclesiological conclusions, his work *What on Earth is the Church?* helps to understand biblical theology and ecclesiology taught at Moore through Giles’ dialoguing with Robinson’s position. Giles disagreed with Robinson by asserting that the church is the new “people of God” and “new Israel” without any ethnic distinction. He also disagreed with Robinson’s use of the term ἐκκλησία as applied to the universal church as a “heavenly reality.” Giles linked Robinson’s interpretation to the theological thinking to J. N. Darby and

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<sup>55</sup> George Athas, “Reflections on Scripture. Using the Distinction Between Jews and Gentiles as an Exegetical Key,” 126, 136.



dispensationalism. He considered ἐκκλησία as more than just an “assembly” but a “community” that God has called into existence, while he also linked the Old Testament Septuagint’s use of ἐκκλησία to the New Testament church’s use of the term ἐκκλησία, applying it to the New Testament church being the true Israel. Like Flew, he drew a continuity between Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church and considered the New Testament church and Old Testament Israel one “people of God.” He also considered the term λαός concerning the “people of God” throughout the book of Acts as referring to Israel and the church as one “people of God.” Unlike Robinson, he considered the term “the saints” throughout the Pauline corpus to refer not only to Jewish believers, but to the entire New Testament church, both Jew and Gentile without ethnic distinctions. One area where he agreed with Robinson is that Jew and Gentile are saved through Christ through a reciprocal role of salvation in which the Gospel was given first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles, then back to unbelieving Jews who became jealous of the Gentiles. Giles considered this trajectory the fulfillment of “all Israel will be saved.” However, unlike Robinson who considered Jewish believers as the “true Israel,” Giles considered the New Testament church, both Jews and Gentiles, as the “true Israel.” He also disagreed with Robinson’s interpretation of the “144,000” in the book of Revelation. Instead of viewing the “144,000” as ethnic Jews (as Robinson did), he considered the church (the christian community) as the interpretation of the “144,000.”<sup>56</sup> Giles disagreed with Robinson concerning Israel’s role in redemption history. However, his dialogues with Robinson allude to a developing tradition at Moore College that are useful in discussing the plausibility of a Moore School of Biblical Theology.

Phillip Jensen agreed with many of Robinson’s teachings, and Shiner considered Jensen to be “the most influential Sydney Anglican preacher of his generation” and stated

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<sup>56</sup> Kevin Giles, *What on Earth is the Church? an Exploration in New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1995), ix–x, 11–12, 13–14, 24–25, 88, 92, 106, 108, 112, 127–29, 175–76.

that Jensen teaches Robinson's position "regarding the place of Israel in the NT, the identity of 'the saints' as Jewish Christians and the ongoing significance of Jewish identity today."<sup>57</sup> In his message on the book of Romans, "Israel's Future," Jensen stated that God's plan for salvation was always universal. Old Testament Jews and first-century New Testament Jews did not fully understand the concept of bringing salvation to non-Jews, especially how to incorporate non-Jewish Christians into the early New Testament church. God was always working through the Jews to bring salvation to the Gentiles and the other nations. There was a reciprocal role when God brought salvation to the Gentiles. Unbelieving Israel would be made jealous to be brought back to God. While God judged sinful Israel, Israel's failure concerning their rejection of Christ as their Messiah did not thwart the plan of God. It brought the plan of God into effect, leading to the salvation of the Gentile nations, the envy of Israel, and bringing salvation back to unbelieving Israel. The Gospel went out from Israel to the Gentile nations because as Jewish Christians fled Jerusalem, they preached the Gospel to the Gentile nations, allowing the Gospel to go out to the world. While "Israel" in Romans does not necessarily always equal "national Israel" concerning unbelieving Jews, there is a remnant and a "true Israel" in the New Testament, Jewish Christians, similar to how there was always a remnant of "true Israel" in the Old Testament. The olive tree (Romans 11) began as Israel, where the branches of unbelieving Jews were broken off and Gentiles grafted in, comprising an olive tree that is Israel plus the grafted in Gentiles. Because the olive tree began as Old Testament Israel, the New Testament church must not remove Jewishness from Christianity. God is not finished with the Jews, as they were and still are God's chosen people and will be saved through evangelization as coming from the Gentiles. Furthermore, if God judged sinful Israel, His chosen people, how much more will he judge Gentiles who reject Him?<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 203–4.

<sup>58</sup> Phillip Jensen, "Israel's Future," City Night Church, 2007.

Anthony Nichols contributed a chapter to *In the Fullness of Time*, which he appreciated Robinson challenging the “anti-Jewish” stereotype of a supersessionist view. His article contrasted how he (in agreement with Robinson) interpreted the term “Israel” (as referring to ethnic Israel) with the translators of the Good News Bible (a Bible translation heavily used throughout Australia). Nichols observed that the translators incorrectly changed the translation of or dropped the term “Israel” throughout Scripture, and such incorrect translations weakened the importance of Israel’s role in redemption history.<sup>59</sup>

Martin Pakula is an Anglican minister and a Jewish Christian, offering another contribution to the discussion on Jew and Gentile in the *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation*. His chapter argued for the need for evangelism to the Jewish diaspora, citing his debt to Robinson for bringing this need to the discussion within Anglican evangelicalism. In his discussion on Romans 9–11, Pakula refuted a supersessionist view by not equating the Romans 11 olive tree with the New Testament church. The olive tree is Jewish, and even the church that Gentile Christians join is Jewish, not primarily Gentile. He considered the Jews’ initial rejection of Christ as that which opened the door to giving the Gospel to the Gentiles, but that Jews will turn to Christ through evangelism from the Gentiles. He also considered witnessing to Jews as primary in evangelism: the Gospel is “to the Jew first.” The “natural branches” of the Romans 11 olive tree are Jews. Pakula still believed in a common salvation for Jews and Gentiles in Christ and did not consider both missions as separate soteriological tracks but

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<sup>59</sup> David Peterson and John Pryor, eds., *In the Fullness of Time: Biblical Studies in Honor of Archbishop Donald Robinson* (Homebush West, NSW, Australia: Lancer Books, 1992), 112–13, 118, 121–27. Nichols provided numerous examples of such incorrect translations. In the Old Testament, “Israel” is replaced by “Jacob” throughout Genesis 35–50, although God has already given Jacob the name Israel in Genesis 32:28 (119). In the New Testament, the Gospel of John in the Good News Bible (GNB) reduces the terms “Jew,” “Jews,” and “Jewish” from 71 in the Greek New Testament to 41 in the GNB (119). Nichols also provided a useful discussion on *hoi Ioudaioi* in the Gospel of John in which he contrasted John’s authorial intent with Bratcher’s interpretative positions (119–120). In Romans 9:4, 6b, and 31, the GNB replaces “Israel” with “God’s people” (Nichols offered an in-depth examination of this on pages 122–123). In Galatians 6:16, GNB replaces “Israel” with the general phrase “all God’s people” (124–125).

two different evangelistic emphases in which Jewish evangelism takes priority over Gentile evangelism. He argued that Galatians 3:28 affirms a common “salvation status” in Christ but does not eliminate all ethnic or gender distinctions. In Ephesians 1:11–14, Pakula considered “we” as referring to Paul plus Jewish Christians and “you” as referring to Gentiles, which current believers should not import themselves into the interpretation of “we.” Like Robinson, Pakula interpreted the “people of God” and “*the saints*” as referring to Jewish believers in Ephesians, also believing that Jews and Gentiles comprise a “new humanity” but not a “new Israel.”<sup>60</sup>

Ma’afu Palu is another contributor to the discussion on Jew and Gentile in the *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation*. The goal of his chapter is to provide “theological contextualization” concerning the distinction between Jew and Gentile in redemption history in agreement with Robinson’s “distinction theology” concerning the relationship between Jew and Gentile in the New Testament and Goldsworthy’s Christocentric biblical theology since he considered Christ to be the “interpretative key” of Scripture. To Palu, the distinction between Jew and Gentile goes beyond their ethnic distinctions and includes their “spiritual standing before God.” Jews have been given greater spiritual understanding concerning God than Gentiles. Jews are still saved through the same way of salvation as Gentiles. He also briefly exegeted Romans 11 in his chapter, agreeing with Robinson that the root of the olive tree is the “Abrahamic blessings” not to be equated with the New Testament church.<sup>61</sup>

Jeff Read is another Jewish Christian who contributed a chapter on the discussion on Jew and Gentile in the *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation*. He used

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<sup>60</sup> Martin Pakula, “A Biblical Theology of Israel in the New Testament,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 105–10.

<sup>61</sup> Ma’afu Palu “The Significance of the Jew–Gentile Distinction for Theological Contextualization,” in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 141–46.

Robinson's exegetical method to further develop Israel's role in redemption history in Romans 11. In Romans 11:11–36, Israel's rejection is not final. While the Gospel has gone out to the Gentiles due to the Jews's initial rejection of Jesus as their Messiah, unbelieving Jews accept the Gospel because of Gentiles who witnessed to them. Israel's acceptance of the Gospel parallels the "dry bones" event of Ezekiel 37. He believed that both Jew and Gentile are saved through God's mercy through their belief in Christ as their Messiah and that "all Israel" being saved in Romans 11 does not refer to every individual Israelite but a collection of Israelites who are saved through the Gospel of Christ. He considered the olive tree (Romans 11) as a Jewish tree. The Gospel had *especially* been given to the Jews. Read concluded that Christianity is not a "western" religion but a Jewish one, attempting to remind the modern western church not to forget its Jewish roots.<sup>62</sup>

Malcolm Richards preached a message at Moore Theological College, "The New Israel: Taken Over by Jesus." Richards considered the new Christians in Acts (without any ethnic distinctions) who gathered together as forming a "new Israel" This "new Israel" was formed in a new relationship with God (by worshipping and praising God) and a new relationship with each other. This new community was a "witnessing" and "worshipping" community (which Richards agreed with Dumbrell's concept of a new "worshipping" community as forming a "new Israel"). He traced a trajectory that moved from the "known" of Judaism in the Old Testament to the "unknown" of a "new Israel" in the New Testament. However, the "new Israel" in the New Testament, unlike Robinson, eliminated all ethnic distinctions within the New Testament church.<sup>63</sup>

W. H. (Bill) Salier is another contributor to the discussion on Jew and Gentile in

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<sup>62</sup> Jeff Read, "That You May Not Be Conceited," in Peter G. Bolt and Mark D. Thompson, *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation* (Camperdown: Australian Church Record, 2008), 114–22.

<sup>63</sup> Malcolm Richards, "The New Israel: Taken Over by Jesus," Moore Theological College, 2020.

the *Donald Robinson Selected Works: Appreciation*, building upon Robinson's teaching to examine the relationship of Jew and Gentile in the Gospel of John. He began with a discussion on Robinson's "distinction theology" in which Robinson did not "confound" the role of Jew and Gentile in redemption history but considered Jew and Gentile as "distinct" but "related" (see Chapter 3). Salier continued the discussion by surveying Jesus' ministry and signs to the Jews in the Gospel of John, later examining Jesus' ministry to the Gentiles in the Gospel of John. He was able to provide a parallel contribution to Robinson's discussion of a "rising" and "falling" Israel within the Gospel of Mark (see Chapter 3), outlining a similar contribution concerning a "rising" and "falling" Israel within the Gospel of John. He also compared the theme of a "restored Israel" in Isaiah, where the Greeks come to Israel, placing its fulfillment in John 12 with the Greeks coming to Christ. He also discussed the use of the terms λαός and ἔθνος in the Gospel of John, stating that the "oscillation" between the terms cannot be evidence that the New Testament church replaces Old Testament Israel. If there is any "replacement" of Old Testament Israel in Scripture, Christ would be the "replacement" (or a better term being "fulfillment") of the promises to Israel.<sup>64</sup>

## Conclusion

Goldsworthy's paper, "Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles," presented by Constantine Campbell at the 2011 ETS conference outlined

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<sup>64</sup> Richards, "The New Israel: Taken Over by Jesus," 95–101. Shiner mentioned a couple of additional areas in which the legacy of Robinson has continued to the modern day. He discussed the use of Robinson's legacy concerning the Katoomba Youth Leaders Convention (now "NextGen") and at the AFES National Training Event and the external studies course at Moore College. See Shiner, "Reading the New Testament in Australia," 200–202. For more on NextGen, see "NextGen," accessed December 16, 2022, <https://nextgen.kcc.org.au>. For more on the AFES National Training Event, see "AFES National Training Event," accessed December 16, 2022, <https://afes.org.au/national-training-event/>. For more on the external studies course at Moore, see the section on Richard Gibson earlier in this chapter, particularly the section on the "Introduction to the Bible" course.

what Goldsworthy referred to as the “commonality of a Moore College approach to biblical theology.”<sup>65</sup> Goldsworthy offered the following theological distinctives of a Moore College “approach” to biblical theology: 1. the “authority, reliability, and unity of Scripture,” 2. the “centrality of Jesus,” 3. a “redemptive–historical structure of biblical revelation,” and 4. “typology in relationship of the Old and New Testament.”<sup>66</sup> Notably absent from Goldsworthy’s four distinctives is Robinson’s “distinction theology” or any reference to the role of Jew and Gentile in redemption history. While Goldsworthy appreciated Robinson’s “distinction theology” in his later writings, he never fully incorporated it into his understanding of a Moore College “approach” to biblical theology.

This survey of additional scholars who either served at or studied at Moore College or read and interacted with Robinson and Goldsworthy helped to further the discussion on the extent of Robinson and Goldsworthy’s legacies at Moore College. All of the scholars in this chapter would agree with Goldsworthy’s four distinctives of a Moore College “approach” to biblical theology. Each would affirm the “authority, reliability, and unity of Scripture,” the “centrality of Jesus,” a “redemptive–historical structure of biblical revelation,” and “typology in relationship of the Old and New Testament.”<sup>67</sup>

However, there were numerous areas concerning Israel’s role in redemption history in these scholars diverged from each other. Many of the scholars in this chapter (Banks, Athas, Jensen, Pakula, Palu, Read, and Salier) agreed with Robinson’s

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<sup>65</sup> Constantine R. Campbell, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles,” ETS, San Francisco, CA, November 17, 2011.

<sup>66</sup> Campbell, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles.” Goldsworthy’s definition of an evangelical biblical theology, his discussion of a Christocentric biblical theology, and his concept of the “three epochs” in Chapter 4 elaborate on each of these four theological distinctives. Robinson’s concept of the “three stages” in Chapter 3 also elaborate on the third and fourth distinctives.

<sup>67</sup> Campbell, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles.”

“distinction theology” and utilized Robinson’s theological methodology in their own writings. Banks and Jensen brought Robinson’s “distinction theology” concerning the relationship of Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church to a wider audience. Athas provided a useful application of Robinson’s methodology that cautioned readers not to insert themselves into the interpretation of biblical passages that pertained to ethnic Jews. Pakula argued for prioritizing Jewish evangelism in missions by appreciating and elaborating on Robinson’s exegesis of Romans 9–11 and Ephesians 1:11–14. Paul elaborated on Robinson’s concept of the root of the Romans 11 olive tree as the “Abrahamic blessing” which Gentiles can share in alongside Jews, but that both groups retain their ethnic distinctions. Read reminded readers not to forget the Jewish roots of Christianity and agreed with Robinson’s position concerning the reciprocal role of the Gospel first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles (who were witnessed to by the Jews), and back to unbelieving Jews (who were witnessed to by Gentiles). Sailer applied Robinson’s methodology to trace a theme of a “rising” and “falling” Israel throughout the Gospel of John similar to Robinson’s tracing a theme of a “rising” and “falling” Israel throughout the Gospel of Mark.

A handful of scholars (Gibson, O’Brien, Roberts, and Williamson) were in agreement with Goldsworthy, but like Goldsworthy, were silent on Robinson’s “distinction theology.” Gibson primarily considered Moore’s biblical theology program as teaching Goldsworthy’s Christocentric biblical theology and was absent on a discussion concerning Israel’s role in redemption history. O’Brien agreed that Christ is the fulfillment of the “true Israel,” plus unlike Robinson, his concept of a “new man” eliminated the ethnic distinction between Jew and Gentile while part of the New Testament church. Roberts popularized Goldsworthy’s Christocentric biblical theology in a structure that could be understood by the lay Christian while ignoring any concept of Robinson’s “distinction theology.” Williamson agreed with much of Goldsworthy’s Christocentric biblical theology but also considered the New Testament church as the



“true Israel.”

Other scholars (Bolt, Webb, Giles, and Richards) would diverge from Robinson’s “distinction theology” concerning Israel’s role in redemption history. Bolt considered Israel’s religion to be abolished with the death of Christ on the cross. Webb considered Israel to be “type” or “prototype” of future “worshipping community,” the church. Giles rejected most of Robinson’s ecclesiology and only agreed with Robinson’s concept of the reciprocal role of salvation between Jews and Gentiles. Richards considered the New Testament church, comprised of both Jews and Gentiles, as the replacement of Israel. Finally, Rosner was absent on his position of Israel’s role in redemption history.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Moore College has now made biblical theology a required subject of all its degree and certificate programs, testifying to the importance of biblical theology at the college. The college has also applied the distinctives of a Moore College “approach” to biblical theology, such as its annual Moore College “School of Biblical Theology” conference at the college. The conference has allowed scholars at Moore College to continue further contributing to the biblical theology program at Moore. One significant application was the 1997 work produced due to the conference lectures of the Moore College “School of Biblical Theology,” *Interpreting God’s Plan*. See Campbell, “Biblical Theology at Moore: Origins and Guiding Principles.”

## **Chapter 7**

### **Summary and Conclusion**

#### **Introduction**

This dissertation provided a historical survey on the reception of Donald Robinson's "distinction theology" concerning Israel's role in redemption history in the biblical theology program at Moore Theological College. It has sought to answer the question: Is it feasible to speak of a Moore School of Biblical Theology?

#### **Research Conclusions**

After surveying some influential ways of construing the biblical theological role of Israel in Anglican thought (construals that were significant in the context of Donald Robinson) in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 discussed that the biblical theology program at Moore College can be traced back to Donald Robinson. It also examined Robinson's "distinction theology" concerning Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church. Robinson's "distinction theology" was his attempt at offering a mediating position between supersessionism and dispensationalism. However, his eschatological position of a "new man" that eliminated ethnic distinctions retained another form of supersessionism.

The scholars who popularized Moore's biblical theology program, including Graeme Goldsworthy (Chapter 4), D. Broughton Knox and William Dumbrell (Chapter 5), Richard Gibson, Vaughan Roberts, Barry Webb, and Paul Williamson (Chapter 6) largely ignored Robinson's "distinction theology" in their contributions to Moore's biblical theology program concerning Israel's role in redemption history. Their positions have more in common with a traditional Reformed redemption history biblical theology

following the Westminster tradition of Geerhardus Vos. Unlike Robinson's "distinction theology" that gave prominence to both Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church as distinct ethnicities, any ethnic distinctions were lost in the contributions of many of Robinson's successors. Goldsworthy's (and Roberts') Christocentric biblical theology viewed Christ and those "in Christ" as the "new" and "true Israel." Knox considered Israel as set aside and replaced by the New Testament church without reference to any ethnic distinctions between Jew and Gentile. Dumbrell (and Webb) viewed Israel as merely a "type" or "prototype" replaced by an eschatological "worshipping community" as the "new Israel" with no Jew and Gentile ethnic distinctions. Williamson agreed with much of Goldsworthy's Christocentric biblical theology but also considered the New Testament church as the "true Israel." Gibson primarily considered Moore's biblical theology program as teaching Goldsworthy's Christocentric biblical theology and was absent on a discussion concerning Israel's role in redemption history.

However, Goldsworthy's later writings, as well as the contributions of Lionel Windsor (Chapter 4), Robert Banks, George Athas, Martin Pakula, Ma'afu Palu, and Jeff Read (Chapter 6) show a revival in appreciating at least some aspects of Robinson's "distinction theology" into the biblical theological discussion at Moore College. While some of Robinson's successors (such as Goldsworthy) did not fully incorporate all of Robinson's "distinction theology" into their contributions to biblical theology even as they began appreciating some aspects of it, others (such as Windsor, Banks, Athas, Pakula, Palu, and Read) have given Robinson's "distinction theology" a "renaissance" in the theological discussion at Moore. It is possible that as future scholars continue to incorporate more of Robinson's "distinction theology" into Moore's biblical theology program that the trajectory of a Moore School of Biblical Theology will be shaped by his unique contribution concerning Israel's role in redemption history.

### **Additional Areas of Future Research**

Here are additional areas in which future research and development would provide a valuable contribution building upon the research conclusions of this dissertation. First, further research concerning a “Moore School of Biblical Theology” would add to the discussion presented in this dissertation. There are other areas of biblical theology in the works of the scholars covered in this dissertation that could contribute to the discussion of a “Moore School of Biblical Theology.” This dissertation examined the “lens” of Robinson’s “distinction theology” concerning the relationship between Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church. Another “lens” that could be examined is how well Robinson’s “three stages” typology of biblical theology was received and popularized by Robinson’s successors (such as Goldsworthy).

Additionally, the distinction between Jew and Gentile in the New Testament church, which Robinson postulated and defended, a distinction Robinson noted at the time was not recognized by either of the popular approaches to the question of Israel (dispensationalists or restorationists on the one hand or supersessionists such as covenantalists on the other hand) is a key feature of progressive dispensationalism. Progressive dispensationalism has developed in the dispensational tradition (away from Scofield) independently from Robinson. Two scholars who popularized progressive dispensationalism were Craig Blaising and Darrell Bock. Earlier dispensationalists taught that Jewish Christians were no longer part of Israel but were grouped together with Gentile believers in the New Testament church without emphasizing their ethnic distinctions. In progressive dispensationalism, while both Jew and Gentile share a common salvation in Christ, Jewish Christians are not excluded from receiving the fulfillment of Israel’s future promises. Progressive dispensationalism also eliminated the remaining forms of supersessionism retained in Robinson’s “distinction theology.” Robinson considered the promises to Israel not fulfilled in a future millennial kingdom but through the preaching of the Gospel from Jewish Christians (the “true Israel”) to

Gentiles, and reciprocally back to other unbelieving Jews. Additionally, Robinson's concept of an eschatological "new man" that eliminated ethnic distinctions between Jew and Gentile retained a form of supersessionism. Progressive dispensationalists instead considered a future fulfillment of Israel's promises, and unlike earlier forms of dispensationalism, this included Jewish Christians within the New Testament church. Furthermore, Paul's concept of one "new man" in Christ was a contrast between the saved and the unsaved in which both Jew and Gentile share in their salvation. It did not affirm an elimination of the ethnic distinctions between Jew and Gentile concerning the fulfillment of Israel's promises. Progressive dispensationalists also provide a useful dialog partner to Robinson due to progressive dispensationalism's connection between Israel's promises and Jewish believers in the church today. Since (contrary to Robinson) progressive dispensationalists maintains a future fulfillment of Israel's national and territorial promises, recognizing a connection between Jewish believers in the church and the promises of Israel does not necessarily require a suspension of the future fulfillment of Israel's promises. A dialogue between those who are interested in preserving Robinson's "distinction theology" with progressive dispensationalists on this ecclesiological matter and its implications for biblical theology would provide a useful contribution for future research.<sup>1</sup>

"New Christian Zionism," as popularized by Gerald McDermott, is another position in contrast to Robinson's "distinction theology" that would provide a useful contribution for future research.<sup>2</sup> McDermott defined and summarized his position on the movement of "New Christian Zionism" as follows: "God saves the world through Israel and the perfect Israelite; thus the Bible is incoherent and salvation impossible without

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<sup>1</sup> Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), 49–50.

<sup>2</sup> Donald Lewis, *A Short History of Christian Zionism* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2021), 344.

Israel. We propose that the history of salvation is ongoing: the people of Israel and their land continue to have theological significance.”<sup>3</sup> While, like Robinson, he disagreed with dispensationalism (McDermott does not believe Israel and the Gentile nations run completely on separate “tracks” within redemption history), unlike Robinson, he advocated for restoring a Jewish nation in the land of Israel and a return of the Jewish people to their land.<sup>4</sup> This return of the Jewish people to their land and the restoration of a Jewish nation in the land of Israel are the first fruits of an ultimate prophetic fulfillment concerning the nation of Israel to come.<sup>5</sup> To McDermott, “New Christian Zionism” is not a mere political Zionist movement, but is grounded in an exegetical and hermeneutical understanding of the biblical text (another area in which McDermott and Robinson varied).<sup>6</sup>

### Conclusion

Robinson’s “distinction theology” provided a different and provocative answer on the fulfillment of Israel’s promises in redemption history. It was different from typical covenantal and dispensational answers on the same question, and thus provided a distinctive interpretation of the shape and framework of redemption history biblical theology in Moore’s biblical program that developed around Robinson’s core course.

However, the reception of Robinson’s “distinction theology” among those who followed him, expanded, and popularized the biblical theology program at Moore varied.

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<sup>3</sup> Gerald R. McDermott, *The New Christian Zionism: Fresh Perspectives on Israel and the Land* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2016), 12.

<sup>4</sup> McDermott, *Israel Matters: Why Christians Must Think Differently About the People and the Land* (Ada, MI: Brazos Press, 2017), xiv.

<sup>5</sup> McDermott, *The New Christian Zionism*, 27.

<sup>6</sup> McDermott, *The New Christian Zionism*, 320–21.

Those who became well known teachers of biblical theology at Moore, like Goldsworthy and Dumbrell, show little to no knowledge Robinson's "distinction theology," instead incorporating a traditional Reformed redemption history model in line with Westminster scholar Geerhardus Vos into Moore's biblical theology curriculum.

However, Goldsworthy later began to appreciate some of Robinson's "distinction theology" (while not fully incorporating it into his biblical theology), and later biblical theologians at Moore brought a revival to Robinson's unique contribution in the biblical theological discussion at Moore. Robinson's "distinction theology" could further shape the trajectory of a Moore School of Theology through the work of future scholars who continue appreciating or incorporating more of Robinson's "distinction theology" on the serious question he pursued: how to understand the place of Israel in redemption history as one moves from the Old Testament to the New Testament (especially with respect to the fulfillment of Israel's promises) and advancing the understanding of redemption history biblical theology beyond the typical Reformed view which he found to be inadequate.

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