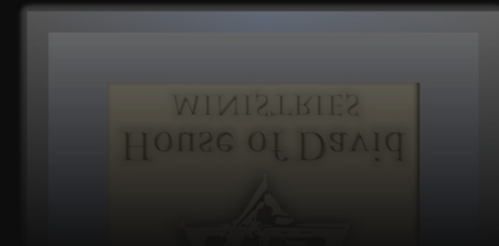
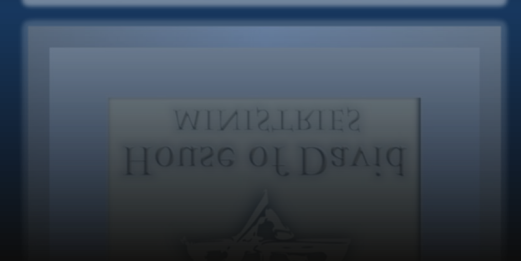


A Trip Down Theology Lane

May 26, 2022



Part 1
Dispensational Theology



Progression of God's Revelation



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❖ Dispensational theologians believe in a progression of God's revelation of Himself and His Kingdom to the creation.

Four Phases



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- ❖ They define four phases of God's unfolding story for humanity:
- ❖ creation, the fall, redemption, and restoration.

Dispensation of Redemption



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- ❖ Unquestionably, we are living in God's dispensation of redemption (salvation).
- ❖ Some theologians view God's redemption and restoration as concurrent, while others feel they are successive.

Christ is Returning



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❖ Christians believe that Jesus Christ is physically returning to establish His eternal Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Differences About the Timing



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❖ Theologians differ about the timing of Christ's return, but their arguments are about *when* not *if*.

Classical Dispensationlism



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❖ John Nelson Darby (A.D. 1800-1882), an Anglo-Irish Bible teacher, derived a new premillennial theology called “dispensationalism” (also called Classical Dispensationalism).

A Future Kingdom



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- ❖ Classical Dispensationalism (futurism) holds to a literal interpretation of scripture, dividing history into ages or dispensations, and teaching that Christ's Kingdom will not be established here on earth until He returns—the dispensation of restoration.

A Literal Premillennial View



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- ❖ Classical Dispensationalism also holds to a literal premillennial view and one-thousand-year reign of Christ before the new heaven and earth.

One Thousand Years



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α “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” (Revelation 20:6-7).

Bible Critics



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- ❖ Some scholars argue that this one verse in the Bible is insufficient by itself to justify a literal one-thousand-year Kingdom.

In Jewish Thought



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❖ But even in Jewish thought, the sages in the Talmud teach that the creation will exist for six thousand years before the universal Sabbath and one-thousand-year Messianic era.

The First Two Thousand Years



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- ❖ The rabbis label the first two thousand years as “the hidden years,” beginning at creation and lasting until Abraham.

The Patriarchs and The Law



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- ❖ The following two thousand years of “revelation,” they say, include the Patriarchs, the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai, and the two Temples in Jerusalem.

Redemption of The Messiah

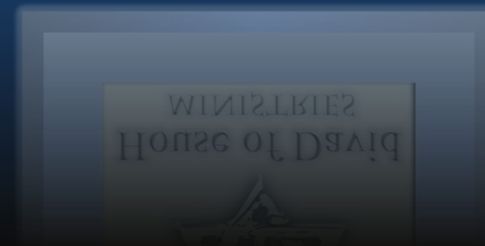


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- ❖ And the final two thousand years they consider as “preparation” of the Jewish people for the redemption of the Messiah, balanced between Divine concealment and revelation.

Part 2

Progressive Dispensationalism



Progressive Dispensationlism



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- ❖ Debuting in the 1990s from evangelical scholars Craig Blaising and Darrel Bock, a reinterpreted form of dispensationalism called Progressive Dispensationlism emerged.

Already Now but Not Yet



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- ❖ It sought to explain an “already-not yet” and “both-and” eschatology regarding the timing of God’s Kingdom.

Progressive Fulfillment



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- ❖ It also teaches that the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants are *progressively* fulfilled today and *wholly* fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom.

A Present Fulfillment



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- ❖ Therefore, the theology includes a *present* fulfillment of God's covenants made with historic Israel within the church.
- ❖ This creates a scriptural problem.

Problems with a Progressive View



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- ❖ Progressive Dispensationalism is problematic because it blurs the lines between the church and Israel.

Correctly Recognizes



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- ❖ It correctly recognizes the “one new man” in Ephesians chapter 2 as a continuation of believing Israelites in the Old Testament, along with Jewish and Gentiles Christians as “one people of God.”

But Also Fails to Recognize



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- ❖ But it fails to recognize that Gentiles and Israelites are distinct people groups, each with their unique callings and Biblical promises.

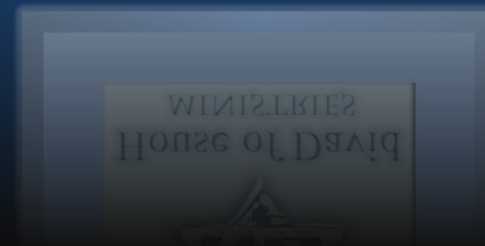
Does Not Align with Scripture



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- ❖ Progressive Dispensationalism cannot fully align with scripture unless viewed through a lens that blurs the lines between the church and Israel.
- ❖ And it can lead to a false belief that the church has somehow replaced Israel.

Part 3
Supersessionism



The New Israel



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- ❖ If restoration of the Kingdom is not predicated on the repentance of Israel, then Progressive Dispensationalism *does* work in that the Kingdom is *now* being restored through the church, which replaces Israel as the “new Israel.”

Replacement Theology



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- ❖ This belief is called Supersessionism or replacement theology.
- ❖ Supersessionism is embraced by Amillennial, Postmillennial, and Preterist theologies.

Also Appearing in Progressive Views



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- ❖ More recently, it is subtly appearing in contemporary beliefs, such as Progressive Dispensationalism.

Closer to Reformed Theology



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- ❖ Dr. Keith A. Mathison, professor of systematic theology at Reformation Bible College, says:
- ❖ “Progressive dispensationalists have moved closer to Reformed theology on a number of doctrines.”

Closer to Reformed Theology



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❖ “They now acknowledge that the Kingdom has been inaugurated and that there is a present as well as a future aspect of the Kingdom.”

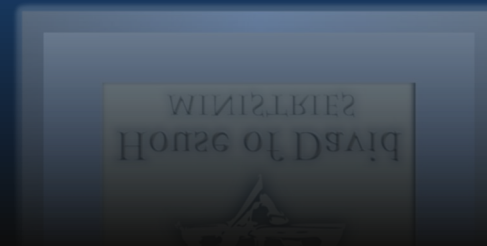
Rooted in Amillennialism



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❖ Postmillennial and Preterist theologies are all rooted in Amillennialism and Supersessionism.

Part 4
Amillennialism



Emerged from Saint Augustine



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- ❖ Amillennial theology emerged from the influential writing of Saint Augustine of Hippo (Latin name *Aurelius Augustinus*, A.D. 354-430).

City of God



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❖ In his book, *City of God* (A.D. 413–426), he redefines his understanding of the one-thousand-year Millennial Kingdom of Christ.

Changed His Beliefs



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- ❖ Augustine had previously viewed the Millennium as a literal future one thousand years but changed his beliefs, incorrectly presuming the Millennium began at the First Advent of Christ.

Incorrectly Predicted



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- ❖ Augustine also incorrectly predicted that the binding of Satan would be complete by the year A.D. 650 and that Christ would return at that time—the Second Advent.

The Present Reign with Christ



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- ❖ Augustine believed that the church saints presently reign with Christ on earth inferiorly.
- ❖ And one day in the future, in the fullness of Christ's coming Kingdom, those who have been blessed by God the Father will reign in a superior way to this present age.

A Universal Church



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- ❖ Augustine's anti-Donatist polemic held a distinct role in creating the governing relationship between the church and state, arguing for a universal church against local particularism (independent self-governing states).

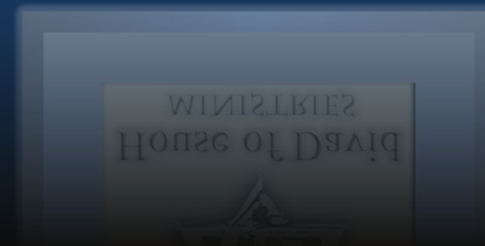
Donatism



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- ❖ Donatism was the primary form of Christianity in Africa, where Augustine spent most of his life.

Part 5
Catholicism



The Roman Catholic Church



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- ❖ The outcome of this polemic was the formation and rise to power of the Roman Catholic Church and its subservient relationship with the Roman Empire.

The Prevailing Doctrine



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- ❖ Augustinian Amillennialism became the prevailing doctrine of the Roman Church.
- ❖ After the reformation, and for almost fifteen hundred years, Amillennialism remained the dominant theology for most Christians in the West.

Luther Likewise Rejected



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- ❖ Martin Luther likewise rejected the future Millennial Kingdom and interpreted Revelation chapter 20 as a description of the historical church rather than the end of history.
- ❖ Amillennialism regained prominence in the West after World War II.

Fulfilled Through the Church



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- ❖ If the church is the “new Israel,” then all the covenant promises made with historic Israel are presently being fulfilled through the church.

The Church is Now God's Vessel



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- ❖ The church is now God's vessel to establish His inwardly personal Kingdom (salvation) and His outwardly communal Kingdom (ecclesia) on earth as it is in heaven.

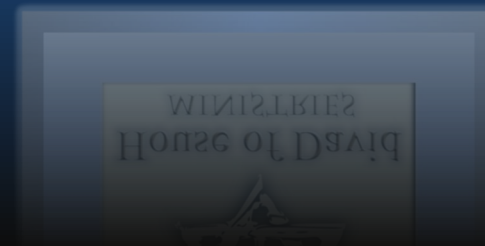
Institutionalization of The Church



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- ❖ In arguing for a universal church, here on earth and in heaven, Augustine institutionalized the Roman Catholic Church with its false Amillennial and Supersessionist theologies.
- ❖ Unfortunately, the reformers did not abandon this theology.

Part 6
Liberal Ideologies



Liberal Ideologies



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- ❖ With its revival in the 1950s, Amillennialism became the driving force behind the emergence of Realized Eschatology, supporting liberal ideologies, including Nicholas Wright's (A.D. 1948) Kingdom Now theology (a branch of Dominionism).

Dominionsim



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❖ Dominionism was central to Christian Reconstructionism in the 1960s, the rise of Christian Nationalism in the 1970s, and the establishment of the Christian Coalition in the 1980s.

An Underlying Foundation



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- ❖ Amillennialism and its underlying Supersessionist foundation (replacement theology) have been the most damaging theologies to infiltrate the church.

Perversion of God's Kingdom



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❖ While Amillennialism does *not* deny Christ, it *perverts* His Kingdom.

Covenant Promises for Israel



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- ❖ Instead of retaining the centrality of Christ's work in bringing unsaved Israel to repentance and subsequently His Second Advent, the church has partly, or entirely spiritualized God's covenant promises for Israel and has nullified their purpose in the restoration of Christ's Kingdom.

An Earthly Empire



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- ❖ Additionally, the church has built an earthly empire apart from God's covenant people and worse.
- ❖ The church became an instrument of Satan for the persecution and indiscriminate murder of the Jewish people in the name of Christ.

Other Unbiblical Theologies



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- ❖ Augustine Amillennialism has led to many other unbiblical theologies, including Postmillennialism, Preterism, Inaugurated Eschatology, and more.

All Pervert God's Promises for Israel



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- ❖ When incorporated with Supersessionism (replacement theology), they all pervert God's Kingdom by nullifying His covenant promises for Israel.

The Church Has Lost Its Understanding



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❖ D. Matthew Allen said:

❖ “The eschatological shift in the ancient church from Premillennialism to Amillennialism began when the church lost its understanding of Israel as a uniquely chosen people of God with specific promises of God yet to be fulfilled.”

The Restoration of Israel



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- ❖ The restoration of Israel, and thus, the restoration of God's Kingdom, is predicated on the return of the Jewish people to the land God promised to Abraham.
- ❖ And these promises cannot presently be fulfilled through the church.

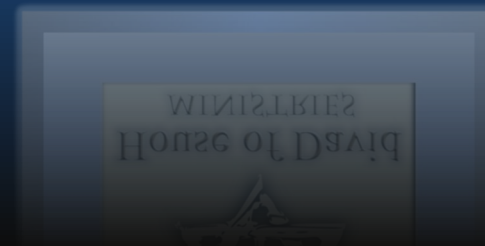
The Rebirth of Israel



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❖ We surmise that the rebirth of Israel in 1948 was for this purpose—to bring the Jewish people back to their land, and after that, to bring them to repentance.

Part 7
Classical vs. Progressive



Holds to God's Covenant Promises



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- ❖ Classical Dispensationalism holds to God's covenant promises for Israel but only realizes those promises to be fulfilled when Christ returns.

Fails to Suggest Restoration



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- ❖ Nothing suggests any repentance or restoration of Israel before then.
- ❖ Yet, we saw the rebirth of Israel in 1948, the recapturing of Jerusalem in 1967, and an explosion of Jews coming to faith in Yeshua in the 1960s and 1970s.

Revises the Core Tenants



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- ❖ On the other hand, Progressive Dispensationalism revises the core tenants of Dispensationalism and sees, at least, a partial fulfillment of God's covenant promises for Israel through the church.

The Church Supplants Israel



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- ❖ While it sees Israel and the church as uniquely different, it also suggests that the church, to a degree, supplants Israel.

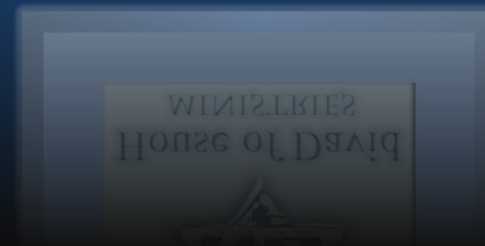
Not Very Clear



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- ❖ In other words, it teaches that Israel both symbolizes the church, and at the same time, it also sees Israel as distinct from the church.
- ❖ This is not very clear.

Part 8
Israel's Restoration



The Future of Israel



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❖ Paul said that the present believing remnant of Israel exemplifies the future, full inclusion of unsaved Israel, and the Gentiles are grafted into Israel through the spiritual promises given to Abraham.

If the Firstfruit is Holy



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α“For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches” (Romans 11:15-16).

The Key to Unlocking the Promises



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- ❖ Paul is saying that Israel's restoration is the key to unlocking all the covenant promises for the church, including those the Gentiles share with Israel.

The Key is Israel



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❖ And the key to unlocking Israel's restoration is the believing remnant of Israel who is presently in Christ.

Sanctifying the Branches



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- ❖ If the Jewish remnant (in Christ) is holy, and the foundation of the church is holy (the fathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—Christ connecting all the branches), then so are the branches holy (sanctified), including unsaved Israel.

A Cultivated Olive Tree



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❖ Paul used the analogy of a cultivated Olive tree, saying:

α “Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace”

(Romans 11:5).

The Fullness of Time



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- ❖ This remnant that God has preserved sanctifies all the branches so that Christ would redeem the *entire* Olive tree and *restore* His Kingdom in the fullness of time.

When Christ Return



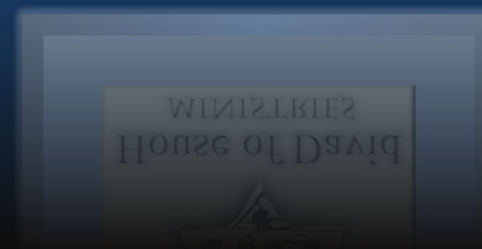
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❖ And when is this time?

❖ When Christ returns.

❖ Amen!

Questions?



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