

6) The alleged “Church and Israel Problem”

This Pre-Wrath Rapture theory—*this variant amidst all delayed/postponed rapture theories*—has God pursuing two distinct programs on earth simultaneously, one with His earthly people and one with His heavenly people, during the 70th Week. Dr. Kurschner and company contend that demonstrating this creates a “problem” for Pre-Tribulationism because it undermines one of the foundational planks thereof (since the latter rightly asserts that such a notion is impossible, and would bring about nothing but chaos and error). Hear the Pre-Wrath claim in their own words (bracketed comments mine), which tell us all we need to know about the root of the rot at work:

“Prewrath teaches that God has only **relatively postponed** his dealings with Israel during this Church Age, **not absolutely** [*like being half pregnant or half dead!*], and that God can, and has **worked with** [*what a bait and switch word, for in that mere generic sense of ‘working,’ God is always, e.g., providentially at work!*] **both** the Church and Israel during the Church Age [*why not also add ‘Gentiles’ to the mix, and say that God has ‘worked with’ all three? Because that would make the switcheroo employed quite evident, and expose the whole ‘problem’ for the hollowness that it is*], and that He will **continue to** do so in the final 7-year period [*in truth, the Church had no part in the first 69 of the 70 Weeks decreed for Daniel’s people Israel (Dan. 9:24), and the Church will have no part in the last, i.e., the 70th Week/7-year Tribulation Period.*”

Once again, the only real “Church and Israel” problem is for all who deny Pre-Tribulation Truth.

As we can see, these Prewrath men use a sleight of hand when trying to “prove” this absurdity by appealing to examples where some event has affected the nation of Israel (**which, be it noted, has no standing before God today according to their earthly calling**), as with the destruction of their temple in 70AD . . . as if that were somehow equivalent to God pursuing His earthly program with Israel while pursuing His heavenly program with the Church! That is simply dust being thrown in the eyes. God is, of course, always at work both providentially and in setting the stage for the eventual fulfilment of His plan and purpose for earthly Israel under Jehovah-Messiah. No one denies that. **But that is NOT God working directly and dispensationally in pursuing two distinct programs on earth simultaneously, one with His earthly people and with His heavenly people.**

“Does he hold that God carries on the church on earth at the same time that he works savingly in that nation as a distinct object? Surely this were confusion and error. That God should save Gentiles as such, simultaneously with His renewed dealings with the chosen people, is exactly what the Rev. [the Book of the Revelation] attests; ***whilst all this time the church is never spoken of as on earth, but its symbol is seen in heaven. Here all is harmony.***” (W. Kelly)

“As long as the church goes on here below [*before being caught up to Christ and translated to heaven*], it is impossible, morally speaking, that God could accomplish these events of a wholly contrasted character. For it is contrary to all analogy that God

would act upon two opposite principles at the same time. For instance, how could God both give and withhold outward honour for a Jew? **How form the church at the same time that He** *[forms a distinctly godly Jewish remnant during the Tribulation Period in whom He ultimately]* **restores and owns Israel** *[upon the completion of the 70th Week]? If a Jew were to believe now, he, baptised by the Holy Ghost, becomes a member of Christ's body; whereas what we find in the prophets is, that a godly Jew in the last days remains a Jew." (W. Kelly)*

What a mass of confusion on display in the following words of one of Dr. Kurschner's colleagues (with my comments interspersed), showing a complete lack of understanding and obscuring of dispensational truth:

"Take for example, the so-called 'Tribulation Saints' idea. Whenever a Pretribber reads in the Bible about Christians *[???*] existing within the last 7-year period (which is a very frequent occurrence *[apparently only in the Pre-Wrath's mind!]*) they call those people Tribulation Saints, people of various nationalities left behind after the rapture who become Christians *[no, they do NOT become "Christians," saints "in Christ," members of the Body & Bride of Christ, the Church]*. Well if God won't work with the Church and Israel at the same time, how do they explain these Tribulation Saints? *[What has that got to do with the absurd notion of God pursuing two distinct programs on earth concurrently? Did the Church exist in the OT? No! Yet somehow OT saints were saved without the existence of the Church!]* Are they not saved? *[Certainly they are. There is a willful refusal at work, however, to see that Tribulation saints are saved Jews and saved Gentiles, NOT members of the Body and Bride of Christ, the Church.]* Do they not have the Holy Spirit? *[Not in the distinctive sense of being "indwelt" by Him as "Christians" alone are, individually (temples of God) and collectively (the temple of God), forming the heavenly Body and Bride of Christ.]* Are the Gentile believers among them not the Church? *[They absolutely are NOT!]* Is God not working with them because He won't work with them and the Jews at the same time? *[God "working" to save Jews and Gentiles, as Jews and Gentiles before God, during the 70th Week is not the same as, and does not require the presence of, the Church on earth, no more so than it did in OT times!]*"

Not to be outdone, Dr. Kurschner himself showcases the same mass of confusion with added desperation, in woefully and blatantly twisting Scripture to force it to say what he wills it to say (bracketed comments mine):

"This next one cuts to the very core of the matter, since if you can show that God in the future, works with both Israel and the Church, *specifically during the final 7-year period*, you have refuted the very foundation of this odd doctrine. And while there are many ways to show this, ***there is one in particular that I like the best since it is so ironclad. And it is found in Revelation 12*** *[how embarrassingly sad that Dr. Kurschner's "best," that which is "so ironclad," is illustrative of nothing but the extent of the havoc that a humanly-*

devised system can wreak on one's perception of simple statements of prophetic truth once we willfully refuse the truth] which says [which actually says nothing of the kind!]:

*'But the woman [which gave birth to Christ (Rev. 12:5) is Israel (Rom. 9:3-5), Israel as viewed before God according to His purpose and calling for the nation, according their future earthly kingdom glory, and represented here by the godly Jewish remnant in the land at the time] was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. Then the dragon became furious with **the woman** and went off to make war on **the rest of her offspring [or 'the remnant of her seed,' i.e., of the same 'woman,' thus they are of the same nature as the Woman and her seed whom the serpent initially sought to persecute and destroy, the latter believing remnant here apparently residing elsewhere (outside the land)]**, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus [**'the testimony of Jesus' meaning 'the spirit of prophecy,' as we are told in Rev. 19:10].'** (Rev. 12:14-17).*

*Here we have a picture of events squarely within the last 7-year period [very true!], and yet we read that after the dragon becomes furious at his inability to get to the representative of Israel i.e., the woman, **he then goes after the Church [where???** A COMPLETE FABRICATION], i.e., those that hold to the testimony of Jesus [thus Dr. Kurschner's total ignorance of the true nature and calling of those who compose the Church, the members of the heavenly Body and Bride of Christ— nowhere mentioned on earth in Rev. 12—is made unmistakably manifest; for to him the Church is nothing but those who 'hold the testimony of Jesus'! Which would mean, to him, then, that the Church began not on the Day of Pentecost after the death, resurrection, ascension of Christ into heavenly glory, and upon the arrival of the Holy Spirit on earth, but during Jesus' earthly ministry when a number of disciples, including His 11 apostles, believed on Him and 'held the testimony of Jesus.' Thus does error beget error . . . and systematic error systematically obscures the truth]."*

And this, so easily disposed of, exemplifies—so we are told in no uncertain terms—that which is his very “best”(!) “ironclad”(!!) ground for his self-induced “Problem” #6, placing the Church on earth during the 70th Week. If such is indeed the case, what value could there possibly be in his “other” supposed “ways” that he is holding in arrears (others that are not as equally great and impregnable)?!

*"The apostle Paul brings out with admirable fulness and precision, not only the call of the Gentiles, but the formation of those that belong to Christ into the church of God. **It is not simply a people who have the gospel preached to them, or who confess His name and are baptized, but really united to Him as members of His body by the Holy Ghost who is given to this end.** These are waiting for the Lord Jesus, but not to govern them on the*

earth; for this is not their relationship to Christ. They await Him to take them out of the earth to be with Himself in heaven. It is not denied that they will reign with Christ over the earth; but I say that their **own proper home - the home of their hearts, and the sphere in which they will have their brightest glory - will be with Christ in heavenly places. Such is the teaching e.g. of Ephesians 1.**" (W. Kelly)

"There are No Instructions For Christians in the Tribulation

In Matthew 24:16-26, and in the other references to the Tribulation, those who are told to flee are clearly Jews, and not Christians. If Christians are to pass through the Tribulation, why are there no instructions given to them as to how to prepare for it? The obvious answer is that there will be no Christians in the Tribulation. It is true that thousands will turn to God in faith during that time (Rev. 7:9), but they are not Christians. They will be born again and will share in the blessing of Christ's kingdom on earth, and will populate the millennial earth (Rev. 7:10-17). Christians, on the other hand, have been called out of both the Jews and the Gentiles by the gospel to spend eternity with Christ in heaven." (B. Anstey)

There is no doubt that Dispensational Truth is absolutely necessary for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture to have any sense, that is, a Pre-Tribulation Rapture of *His heavenly people, "the Church, which is His Body."* Pre-Tribulationism cannot exist apart from Dispensationalism. For a consistent and absolute distinction between Israel and the Church is just as essential to Pretribulationism as it is to Dispensationalism as a whole.

"But the revealed truth is that the heavenly people will be on high, and the earthly people on the earth. All is perfect order in the mind of God as usual; and when the Lord will have finished His heavenly work He will come back as Judge of Israel. He is now Head of the church. On earth He will be the Messiah of the Jews, who will then **resume their own earthly standing, instead of being absorbed into the church, as believers from among them are now** . . . Not to maintain the distinctively earthly glory to Israel, as their future hope under Messiah and the new covenant, invariably undermines Christianity and the church, which flourish only in proportion to firmly holding Christ and union with Him in heavenly places. The danger of the Gentiles thus becoming wise in their own conceit, and forgetting that the natural branches are only broken off in part for a season from their own olive tree, is strongly laid down in Rom. 11. Hold fast the new and heavenly glory for us with Christ dead, risen, and glorified, and you keep the promised earthly supremacy for Israel, who will (not reign with Him on high, but) be reigned over by Him when He appears again in glory, the undisputed Head of all things, heavenly and earthly. (W. Kelly)

"The doctrine of the church is clearly at the root the ONE HOPE, which is found in the intermediate part of the New Testament. For along with the truth of the peculiar calling of the church, as the body commenced by the descent and indwelling of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, and thenceforward guided and perpetuated by Him — along with this truth, it will be found that the peculiar aspect of the coming of the Lord, for which I have

contended, stands or falls . . . None of them *[including the early church fathers]* therefore has an adequate idea of the new and heavenly work which God began at Pentecost by the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The consequence is that, if they read of saints in Daniel, in the Psalms, or in the Revelation, they are at once set down as of the church. If they read of ‘this gospel of the kingdom’ in Matt. 24, or of ‘the everlasting gospel,’ — it is to their minds the same thing as what Paul calls ‘my gospel,’ the gospel of the grace of God preached now. Hence follows, and quite fairly too, a denial of any specialty in the walk and conversation of the saints since Pentecost, and a general Judaizing in doctrine, standing, conduct and hopes.” (W. Kelly)

“The chief source of difficulty and hindrance is the system which assumes that Christianity is a final condition for the earth, and that the testimony *[in the future 70th Week]* will be as now . . . the Jews being at length brought in among the rest. It is another thing with those who believe that there is another age to follow the present, characterized by the salvation of all Israel *as such*, with the Gentiles largely blessed also, *but not brought into the one body as we know now*. . . and the spared Gentiles, not possessed of exactly the same privileges, for Israel will then have the better place, but all blessed richly under Jehovah Messiah. *As it is quite a different state of things from Christianity, so there will then be two distinct positions, heavenly and earthly, instead of one and the same as now.* (W. Kelly)

This brings us to the vital distinction between the Gospel of the Grace of God and its results (during the period of the heavenly parenthesis of the Church) and the Gospel of the Kingdom and its results (during the future 70th Week):

“The Fact That the Gospel of the Grace of God Will Not be Preached in the Tribulation Shows the Rapture Will Have Taken Place

“ ‘The gospel of the grace of God’ (Acts 20:24) that is preached today and ‘the gospel of the kingdom’ (Matt. 4:23; 24:14) that will be preached by those in the Tribulation is entirely different. **They are two distinct gospels preached for two distinct purposes. The gospel of the grace of God calls people out for heaven: the gospel of the kingdom calls people for blessing on earth. The gospel that is going out today holds out a heavenly hope, calling and destiny for those who believe (Col. 1:5; 1 Peter 1:4; Phil. 3:20; 2 Cor. 5:1-2; Heb. 3:1), whereas the gospel of the kingdom that will be preached in the Tribulation holds out an earthly blessing under the reign of Christ in the Millennium (Matt. 24:14; Psa. 96).**

“The gospel of the kingdom announces the good news that the kingdom promised in the Old Testament (2 Sam. 7:16; Dan. 2:44-45; 7:9-27) is about to be set up, and those who receive the King in faith will have a part in its earthly blessing. It was first preached by John the Baptist at the time of the Lord’s first coming (Matt. 3:1-2). The Lord and His disciples also preached it (Matt. 4:23; 10:7). Their preaching was to call the nation to repentance so that it would be in a state to receive the King, and had they received Him,

He would have established the kingdom as promised by the Old Testament Prophets. But sadly, Israel rejected their King, and thereby forfeited the opportunity of having the kingdom set up in all of its power and display. When Israel rejected their King, the gospel of the kingdom was no longer announced . . . God, instead, has sent out the gospel of His grace to the Gentile world to call out of them a people for His name (Acts 13:44-48; 15:14; Rom. 11:11). This gospel is still being preached today.

“The gospel of the kingdom will be preached again by the Jewish remnant after the Church has been called away to heaven. At that time, God will pick up His dealings with Israel where He left off almost 2000 years ago. Israel will be saved (that is, a remnant among them — Rom. 9:6-8; 11:26-27) in that day, and the kingdom will be brought in by power (Rev. 11:15).

“The point we need to see in this, is that there is no mention of the gospel of God’s grace being preached during the Tribulation. The obvious reason is because this gospel calls believers to be part of the Church, and since the Church will not be in the Tribulation, it will not be announced. *God will not send out two different gospels at the same time.* It would be confusion, and would be confounding the heavenly calling with the earthly calling with their respective hopes and destinies. If we understand the gospel of God’s grace that’s preached today, we would know that it is impossible to have the Church and the believing Jewish remnant in the Tribulation period at the same time. Scripture indicates that those who believe the gospel of the grace of God are taken out of both the Jews and the Gentiles (Acts 15:14; 26:17) and put into the altogether new and heavenly thing, ‘the church of God.’ Hence, there are presently three major distinctions among men on earth; the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God (1 Cor. 10:32). The cross of Christ has terminated the distinction between Jew and Gentile for believers of the gospel (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11). Those who believe this gospel are no longer part of the two companies they formerly were in, but are now a part of the Church. Each time a Jew believes the gospel [today] he becomes part of the Church [the heavenly people of God] (Rom. 11:5; Gal. 6:16 — “the Israel of God”). How then could there be the believing [earthly Jewish] remnant of Jews at the same time? This shows that there cannot be the Church and the believing [earthly] Jewish remnant on earth at the same time.” (B. Anstey)

Note: the purpose of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel during that year covered by Acts 1-7 was to demonstrate, to prove, that the stumbling, the fall, the blindness of Israel, had indeed taken place. *It was a year of exposure of the state of Israel, with respect to the rejected One now in the glory of God.* There was thus no saving of souls as earthly Jews (and earthly Gentiles) for the earthly kingdom glory as was, and will be during the Tribulation, with the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, but solely the saving of souls as heavenly people for heavenly glory. Thus there were not two programs of God, with two different salvation callings, going on at the same time during Acts 1-7, nor will there be during Daniel's 70th Week.

In light of all the forgoing (especially the disastrous confusion exhibited by Dr. Kurschner and company), it would be most profitable for us to briefly review and reinforce what exactly the Church is (including its origin, nature and destiny), according to Scripture, along with the status of Israel while the Church is still on earth and not yet completed and gathered up to the Lord Jesus in heavenly glory.

“Give no occasion to stumbling, whether to Jews [one group], or Gentiles [a second group], or the Church of God [the third group, which came into existence on the day of Pentecost and alone includes those who are saved while it remains on this earth through completion].” (1 Cor. 10:32)

“[Teachers of dispensation truth] have always taught . . . that there are on earth now at the present time three companies in God's reckoning. They are the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God. They base this on 1 Cor. 10:32. **Before the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) there were only the first two: Jews and Gentiles; and after the Rapture (1 Thess. 4) there will again be but those two.** The Church was formed on earth by the descent of the Holy Spirit consequent to the Lord Jesus Christ having, not only been raised from the dead, but ascended and glorified (John 7:39). There could be no body on earth without its living Head being in Heaven.”

“Well, what is the Church? It is the body of Christ. What, or rather Who, has formed the body of Christ? The Holy Spirit. Now, the Holy Spirit has been sent down from heaven. 1 Peter 1:12 tells us so; Acts 2 describes the event. In 1 Cor. 12:12, 13 we read how, in the power of the Holy Spirit, all the members here on earth, where the Holy Spirit is, were baptised into the one body to form one mystical man called ‘The Christ’.”

“It has already been pointed out that there are three companies in God's dealings [from Pentecost to the Rapture] according to ch. 10:32, viz., the Jews, the Gentiles and the Church of God . . . members of the body of Christ have **ceased** in God's eyes to be either Jews or Gentiles (Eph. 2).”

“This is the Church of God, purposed by God in eternity past (Eph. 1), heavenly in its origin, character, blessings and destiny, yet on earth since the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and until the Rapture (I Thess. 4). It is the body of Christ, the fruit of His work at Calvary, deriving its character entirely from Him as the risen, glorified Man in Heaven, and, though at present on earth, will be with Him as His fulness for eternity as viewed now in the counsels of God. Hence members of the body of Christ are **no longer seen by God according to the divisions that pertain to men in the flesh, and the Church of God is thus distinct from Jews and Gentiles.**”

“The Church of God is composed of those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by divine calling (1 Cor. 1:2), purchased with the precious blood of God's own Son (Acts 20:28). It is a company distinct from Jew and Gentile (1 Cor. 10:32) and, as that which Saul of Tarsus persecuted (1 Cor. 15:9), is the body of Christ. It is thus united to the risen Christ in glory by the Holy Spirit who was sent down from heaven (1 Pet. 1:12) consequent to

the Lord Jesus having ascended there. See Acts 2. The Church as the body of Christ could never have come into existence without its living Head being enthroned in glory. **Where Jew and Gentile previously existed according to men in the flesh, both have now been reconciled (those that believe, that is) in one body by the Cross (Eph. 2:14-16).** 'By one Spirit are we all baptised into one body.' (1 Cor. 12:13.) It will be on earth until the Rapture (1 Thess. 4). As the body of Christ it is a unity (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12), and there is only the one body (Eph. 4:4). All saints form the body of Christ (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12); they are members of His body (Eph. 5:30)—the only membership for Christians—set in their place in the body by God Himself (1 Cor. 12:18). **As the body of Christ, the Church was a secret hidden in God throughout all time before it was revealed to the Apostles, in particular Paul (Eph. 3).** Yet, it was ever in the mind of God from eternity (Eph. 1). Although on earth at the present time, the Church is eternal and heavenly in character, having its origin and destiny in heaven." (M. Best)

"I have thus sought to establish from Scripture that the Church of God is a new thing, 'one body,' and peculiar to this dispensation; that it began to be formed on earth by the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, who baptized believers, and still baptizes them, into one body. This, I repeat, is going on, and will continue to go on, till every member is united to the Head, and the body fully formed. As far as we know the body may now be well nigh completed. **When it is completed, the Lord will come from heaven for us; and when the Church is removed, He will deal again with Jews and Gentiles as such.** This subject is immensely important, as giving us a knowledge of what God is about now, and fellowship with Him by the Spirit in it. **How impossible it is for a believer to understand according to God's mind what is going on in the present day, if he has not this key which God in His great love has given!** But not only is the subject important as giving us intelligence concerning God's present ways, but it influences immensely the practical ways of Christians in testimony for the Lord, in conduct to one another, and in service to Christ. Satan has certainly wrought a most impoverishing work amongst Christians, in robbing them of the plain Scripture teaching of the peculiar calling, characteristics, and hope of the Church of God **as distinct from** Gentiles and Jews. It is evident that what Satan is about, and what many Christians are connected with and helping on, to their great loss and the Lord's dishonour, is a mixture of heathenism, Judaism, and Christianity. Bear with me, beloved friends. Look at the ecclesiastical architecture of the day. What is it? Is it not often an imitation of heathen temples that were once of such magnificence and grandeur in eastern parts? And if you search into a good deal of the religiousness round about us, (I speak with the greatest respect and love for every Christian; it is the system only that I speak against,) you will find that it is more or less connected with what is legal and Jewish, but, of course, blended with some truths of Christianity. But you cannot be connected with a mixture of this kind without terrible damage and loss. **If you are a true believer in Christ, you are not now a Gentile nor a Jew. Being united to a risen Christ, you have lost your Gentile standing or Jewish standing; for you are in Him. You are formed by Him into a new thing.** You belong to the 'one new man' — the body of Christ — the Church of God . . . there are three things at this moment in the world, — Jews, Gentiles, and the Church of God . . . All those who are not Jews are Gentiles, if they are in their sins; and

those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, whether before Jews or Gentiles, are united to Christ, and because they are united to Christ they belong to the Church of God . . . Scripture teaches that you cannot belong to the Church of God unless by union with Christ. No ordinance, be it baptism or anything else, will give you a place in the Church of God. 'By one Spirit {that is, by the Holy Ghost} are we all baptized into one body.' " (H.H. Snell)

"The Gentile blessing of which the OT spoke will be fulfilled in the Millennium—when the Jewish-Gentile distinction will be in force again *[as it will be as well during the 70th Week]*. **Meanwhile God is doing another work, a work called the 'one new man' (Eph. 2:15). This is new, not having existed before. It is not an earthly work because in an earthly work the distinction of Jew and Gentile is maintained.** The present work concerning the one new man does not bring Gentile believers into the (external) nearness of Israel spoken of above. Rather, **presently, both the believing Jew and the believing Gentile have been elevated, brought into a spiritual place of nearness, in Christ, before God, as 'one new man.'** *They are removed out of their respective places (Jew and Gentile; 1 Cor. 10:32) into a new place (the assembly of God; 1 Cor. 10:32).* And this involves fellow-citizenry of saints, and of the household of God (Eph. 2:10). **All this denotes equality and sameness, not distinctiveness of place and ethnicity for certain of the fellow-citizens of the saints** *[as in the 70th Week and Millennial Kingdom]*. See also Eph. 2:21, 22. So, this is an **extraordinary work of God. It is of a different character than what will be true** *[in the 70th Week, and then]* **in the millennium concerning the saved Gentiles and the saved Jews, where the Jews will have Jewish distinctives and place, which they do not have now."**

"[Since Pentecost and until the Rapture] The Gentile Christian was not elevated to the level of a Jew, saved or unsaved, nor made an Israelite, nor made a spiritual Jew. No, both Jew and Gentile were lifted up to "sit down together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:16). God formed the two, in Christ, into "one new man" (Eph. 2:15). It was new, for it never existed before. Indeed, silence had been maintained regarding such things (Rom. 16:25, 26; Col. 1:26; Eph. 3). Though not recognized by so many Christians, or by many Messianic Jews, **God is doing a heavenly work now, forming a heavenly people** (1 Cor. 15:48) *[who by the Holy Ghost sent down are one with Christ at the right hand of God, the great high priest, gone in through the rent veil]*, who, as strangers and pilgrims here (1 Pet. 2:11), have a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1). Covenants are for the earth; this present work of God *[this unique, heavenly work of God]* is outside of the covenants of promise – which covenants belong to Paul's kinsmen according to flesh (Rom. 9:3-5), i.e., to ethnic Jews, not Gentiles. We know from such Scriptures as Rom. 11:26ff, that eventually God will have a saved nation of Israel composed of ethnic Jews to whom He will make good the covenants of promise (Abrahamic, to Phineas (priesthood), Davidic (kingship), and the New Covenant)." (R.A. Huebner)

"Also, let me remark, that it is a very important point practically for all Christians; for there is nothing more common, for instance, than to speak of Christ as if He were the king of

the church: even our fine and commonest hymns say so, - as 'my Prophet, Priest, and King.' Do I doubt that he was an excellent man who wrote it? I have not a word to say against him, but very much to urge against the thought. We must not consecrate grave errors under the shelter of the best of names: least of all does the time allow it now. It is a moment when everything is shaking, - when a great deal that is good is put in question by the bad, but (I am thankful to God) a great deal that is bad by the good. It is therefore a time when no soul can afford to treat slightly the truth of God. His children will soon require it all; they will need firm support for their feet. **I repeat, then, that the relation of king is true for Israel, but is not true for the Christian or for the church. Christ is the Lord of the Christian - the absolute Lord of all He has bought. Therefore it is not in the smallest degree to weaken subjection to Christ; for, contrariwise, the relationship of a father with his child is a closer one than that of a king with his subject. Again, take the relationship of a husband and wife: what can be so intimate as this? Such is the relationship of Christ and the church; and, therefore, to take the old notion of Christ being the King of the church is just unwittingly to be Judaized; it is to be drawn aside by a notion.** It is that which is perfectly true for an Israelite, and so will be accomplished by and by; for Christ will not in the same way espouse them. In a vague general way Jehovah will be their Husband. It is used in this way in the Old Testament; *but in no sense will it be true of them that they are 'members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.'* *He who says so is merely imagining vain things. He has no scripture for it.*

"The word of God brings in, then, this near and blessed relationship, and along with this a hope suited to it. **The hope is, that He who is our Head and our Bridegroom will come for His Bride, and receive those who are so closely united to Himself.** Thus when He does come, **it is not to reign over them as His people [Israel] in their place, but to take them as His bride** (and you can see, I may assume, that it is suitable, and must be so) **to His place.** Surely, when we think who Christ is, and what the home of Christ is in the Father's house, we can understand that more is due to the Son of God, than merely to beautify this poor world, or to banish the elements of evil out of it. That is all true, and will be for His people on earth; but He has got a home of love He has known before the earth was founded, and into the Father's house He will not be ashamed to bring those He is not ashamed even now to call His brethren." (W. Kelly)

With regard to the present status of Israel before God, until He resumes His dispensational dealings with them during their 70th Week:

"God does not recognize Israel as having a standing now. The nation is cast away (Rom. 11:15) [which is a sentence that is NOT reversed while the Church, His Body, is on this earth being formed!]. The believing Jewish remnant now is not part of that; they are part of the presently recognized people of God (see 1 Pet. 2:10; Heb. 11:25; Tit. 2:14). That believing remnant is not today a part of Israel though ethnically they are of Jewish origin. Believing Gentiles are not part of the Gentiles though ethnically they are goyim concerning their origin . . . All Christians are in the third group in the text [of 1 Cor. 10:32],

and **only** there, *spiritually*, though they are in one of the other ethnically . . . With the formation of the body of Christ, a third entity was created . . . i.e., the church.”

“The fact is that Israel, *the nation, as such*, has been excised from the olive tree (Rom. 11:15) [*representing the place of external privilege and blessing before God*]. That is Israel’s present condition. It means, in fact, that they are, for the present, put away.”

“The fact is that Paul does state in Rom. 11:15 that Israel is cast away. Paul does speak of ‘their casting away.’ Verse 1 shows that the discussion is about ‘his people.’ **This refers to the nation, not to individuals** . . . The subject is about the fallen nation, as such, and its future in relation to *the national election* (Rom. 11:26). Rom. 10:21 shows that Israel is the people; i.e., it is the nation that is in question, not the reception of individuals.”

“The word in Greek for cast away in Rom. 11:1 is different than in v. 15. In v. 1 it involves repudiation, rejection, refusal—as if this is Israel’s *final* position before God. No, that is not the case, and Paul cites himself as a proof that Israel is not definitively rejected in a final sense and that as God has had a remnant in the past He has one now [*the only nation, in fact, in which God always maintains a believing remnant*]. In v. 15 the thought is that Israel is presently put aside from present, national favor. *Of course* that people is put aside as a nation. But that is not such a casting away as an utter and final rejection; and, there is a remnant meanwhile. That is the point in Rom. 11:1, 2 concerning ‘cast away.’ *It would be absurd to base on vv. 1, 2 a notion that Israel, as a nation, is a recognized people of God at present.* Rom. 11:11 helps us here. The word for ‘fall’ in v. 11, in this context, has the thought of falling so as not to regain the former place. The answer to the question, ‘Did Israel stumble so that they should irrevocably lose their national place?’ is *no*. The second time the word ‘fall’ appears in v. 11, it means a trespass, a moral trespass, a misdeed—that trespass [*the rejection of their Messiah*] is the occasion on which salvation is brought to the nations at the present time. Rom. 11:15 is clear: the casting away refers to the nation, certainly not to all individuals. Verse 15 speaks of the nation’s reception again [in the future]. Verse 26 shows that this reception involves all Israel being saved. That will be the new Israel. [*Composed of all-believing, all-righteous, all-saved Jews, the godly Jewish remnant that, after the 70th Week, will be brought under their New Covenant and compose the nation of Israel, the new and true spiritual Israel with the law written in their hearts, in the Millennial Kingdom (see, e.g., Isa. 60:21; 66:8-9; Jer. 31:31-40; Rom. 11:26-27.)*] **Presently** it is a time of ‘blindness in part is happened to Israel’ (Rom. 11:25).” (R.A. Huebner)

As observed previously, the Church had *no part* in the first 69 of the 70 Weeks decreed for Daniel’s people Israel (Dan. 9:24); the Church will likewise have *no part* in the last, i.e., 70th Week/7-year Tribulation Period. **That final Week clearly represents the resumption of God’s dispensational dealings with Israel—in a way wholly distinct from, and incompatible with, His present dispensational dealings with His heavenly people, the Church.**

"It is only by the rapture of the heavenly people that God is free, as it were, again to take up His [dispensational] dealings with His people on the earth. **Thus when a well-known**

writer, a strong advocate of the *'Delayed-Coming Theory,'* says: *'Side by side with converted Israel, the Church goes through the Great Tribulation to the end,'* he certainly has not the slightest justification, for it is simple confusion. As long as believers in the Son of God, whether Jew or Gentile, are *'of the same Body,'* and, in Him, *cease to be* either Jew or Gentile [before God, being positionally neither earthly Jew nor Gentile—with no distinctions in regard to our position and blessings *in Christ;* rather being equal, new creation and heavenly in Him; cf. 1 Cor. 5:1; 9:20; 10:32; 12:2, 13; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:28; 5:6; 6:15; Eph. 2:11, 14-16; 4:17; Col. 3:9-11; 1 Thess. 4:5; John 15:19; 17:14; Acts 26:17], *there cannot be the two distinct and opposite operations going on side by side.* From the day of Pentecost, as soon as a Jew was 'converted' he really ceased to be a Jew . . . and although God's mercy lingered over Israel, so that offers of restoration were made to that people, and the doctrine as to the Church was not at once proclaimed, yet converted Israel and the Church have never, as yet, gone on side by side. When will they *begin* to do so? **At what moment will a Jew being 'converted,' or new-born, be separate and distinct from another Jew; like Paul, for instance, or Adolf Saphir; so that one believing Jew is a member of the Body of Christ; and as such has his mind set on Christ and the things above, whilst side by side with him another believing Jew, not a member of His Body, has his thoughts on God's dwelling on the earth?** What will cause this strange difference? **One convert, or child of God, turns away from earth and looks for deliverance by being caught up to meet his Lord in the air, and only prays for his enemies, whilst at the same moment and 'side by side' with him another convert longs only for God's 'righteous judgments to be abroad in the earth' (Isa. 26:8-11); and only looks for deliverance by the destruction of his foes!** Surely there are many things 'clearer than' this (to use the words of this same writer) in the Bible!" (F.C. Jennings, *Studies in Revelation*)

"The first thing that strikes us here [*in Rev. 11*] is that there are worshippers in the temple at Jerusalem; and, moreover, that they are *inside* worshippers, not worshippers of the outer court, and are *recognised as such by God.* This leads us definitely to the conclusion that the temple will have been rebuilt in Jerusalem, and used for Jewish worship. It is called **'the temple of God'** in four different classes or divisions of scripture:—1st, In the Old Testament prophets (Mal. iii. 1). 2nd, In the gospels (Matt. xxiv. 15—and here the holy place is named). 3rd, In the epistles (2 Thess. ii. 4). And 4th, In this book of the Revelation (chap. xi. 1). **Different Characters of Worship. In John iv.** the Lord says that the hour was coming, nay, had then come [*anticipating His death, resurrection, and Ascension, and the arrival of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost*], when neither in Jerusalem nor in the mountain of Samaria should men worship the Father. It is plain, therefore, that this [*Rev. 11*] is not the worship of the present time, nor can it be the worship of apostates. ***It is therefore the time when worship will be again restored in Jerusalem, and accepted by God from those [godly/believing] Jews gathered there as Jews. These two modes of worship are totally different, and could not exist on earth at the same time;*** and this is one of the strongest arguments to show that the Church with its worship in spirit must be taken out of the way to make room for that which is according to form and ritual." (F.C. Bland {a convert of CHM}, *Twenty-One Prophetic Papers: A*

Suggestive Outline of the Whole Range of God's Dealings with the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God)

"It is plain that all would be confusion if these two purposes of God were both in operation at the same time. Supposing, for instance, a Jew converted now, if God were forming both an earthly and a heavenly people together, might he not say with reason, 'These two callings perplex me sorely; I do not know which to choose. On the whole it seems to me that a heavenly place would be better than an earthly. At the same time an earthly place is what all my fathers have been waiting for; and so I am not exactly sure which I ought to close with.' But in the wise goodness of God there is no such confusion; for now that the earthly calling is vanished, it is a question of heaven or hell. But, more than this, such a direction would introduce the utmost doctrinal ambiguity, because the manner in which God calls the heavenly people to walk is on a different footing from that of such as are called with an earthly calling. You can understand it from your own households. You do not teach your children to do exactly what you tell your servants to do – at least I hope not. You do not put them under the same regime There is not only a difference of relationship, but a different line of conduct suited to each relationship. And let me lay it down as a weighty truth, which you will find verified in scripture and indeed in morality, that all our duties flow from our relationships. Consequently the first question is to find what is my relationship, because then I have to act accordingly." (W. Kelly)

"[Some] hold that God carries on the church on earth at the same time that he works *savingly* in that nation [Israel] *as a distinct object* [in forming a godly Jewish remnant] . . . Surely this were confusion and error. That God should save Gentiles *as such*, simultaneously with His renewed dealings with the chosen people, is exactly what the Rev. [the Book of the Revelation] attests; *whilst all this time the church is never spoken of as on earth, but its symbol is seen in heaven. Here all is harmony* . . . [But there is] the blinding error of putting the church, instead of Christ, as the object of the divine counsels in scripture. **Take Christ as the true center of all, and room is left for the Jews, and the Gentiles, as well as for the church of God, each in its own time and true relation to Him. Then Zion is Zion, and the church is itself." (W. Kelly)**

"The Christian is even now in title blessed in the heavenly places. Thence he will reign over the earth. The Jews then gathered and converted will be in their own promised land and city, on which the eyes of Jehovah rest continually; for it is the truth of God that He never withdraws a gift, and never repents of a promise . . . **But if God chose Israel or the church, He repented of neither, though both have been unfaithful; for He meant to bless, He does bless, and, no matter what the difficulty, He will bless for ever. This we have to hold fast: the purpose of God shall stand.** Changes in man and the earth may be, but the counsel of God must yet be accomplished. Hence the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. He gave the land of Israel to their fathers. He gave the promise to make their seed a blessing. He connected His own Son with Israel after the flesh, that, **spite of their sin in Christ's cross, in virtue of His grace therein an immovable basis of**

blessing might be laid, when they shall be raised to such a pinnacle of greatness on the earth as is reserved for no other people here below. When the Lord will come to reign, He will have [prior to the 70th Week] removed to the Father's house the heavenly people. He will have raised the dead from their graves, and changed the living into the likeness of His own glory. For this all Christians should be looking, as their expectation. **When they are caught up thus, then the earth is clear for the Holy Ghost to work among the Jews. *The Spirit of God does not operate to two different ends – a heavenly and an earthly – at the same time.*** But here [during the 70th Week] we find Him at work among the Jews who are not caught up to heaven, as we expect to be, but [at the end thereof] are blessed under the Messiah on the earth. **Our Lord then having first come and removed the Christians dead and living to be with Himself above, will next begin to act upon the Jews and prepare them as His people when He reigns.”**

“Thus the believing Jews of that day will utter the song in evident reference to their experience of the faithfulness of God. **They do not address God as Father in the Spirit of adoption, *for they are not Christians*; they will be believers, but believing Jews. It is gross ignorance to talk of Abel, Enoch, Abraham, David, or Daniel as Christians.** They were all saints, but none then were Christians. Not merely was it after Christ came that the disciples were first called Christians, but the place into which believers were at length brought by the work of Christ and the gift of the Spirit differs essentially. **There is hardly a worse error for a believer now; for it alike tells upon the present and the future and the past, merging all the various displays of God's mind in confusion. This blunts the edge of the word, hinders the full blessing and testimony of the church, and by its ignorance mars the glory of God as much as man can,** who is not an open adversary.

“Now, no doubt, in presence of the cross, and the Holy Ghost sent personally on earth, the old distinctions of Jew and Gentile fade before their common ruin in sin and death morally. **But when the Lord comes, He will prepare the Jewish people to receive Him according to the prophets; and they will be made the witnesses of His mercies no less than of His glory here below; as now they are the most obstinate enemies of the gospel and of His grace to the Gentiles.** Whereas in this chapter [of OT prophecy] we hear the proper language of Jews. **If a Christian were to address God as Jehovah, it is of course in itself true; but it is a very unintelligent title in our worship.** To us there is one God, the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ. Jehovah is the name of God looked at as a governor that maintains His kingdom; whereas Father is that name which first came out in connection with His beloved Son, and now, by virtue of redemption, is true of us who believe in Him.

“Hence, as often noticed, the very day that Christ was raised from the dead, He says, ‘Go to my brethren and say to them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God’ (John 20:17). Christ, by His death and resurrection, has brought us *into the same place with Himself.* This the Lord always had in view when He was here, so that He never addressed God as Jehovah, because the New Testament presents Him in view of Christianity. But the Old Testament shows that the Lord will have a people, and that they

will know Him and the Father *as Jehovah*. This suffices to indicate the difference; and these remarks have been made to show that another class of people are here spoken of, *not Christians, but Jews*, who recognise God by that title which God gave Himself in relation to Israel of old. When God chose Moses, He bade him go and make Himself known to them as Jehovah, telling them that He was not so known before. Thus was it ordered at the commencement of the public dealings of God with His people, and throughout their national history it was as Jehovah He appeared. It was not that the name did not previously exist, but He never took it before for His recognised title as the God of Israel.”

“Plainly therefore a new state of things must have come in. The prophecies may take us down to the change; but how is the change itself to be brought about? **By more tremendous judgements on Israel, and especially on their enemies, than the world has ever witnessed;** not only on a great nation, but on the east and west, their old enemies, represented in their descendants. All nations of the earth, in short, will have their representatives there and then. The result will be that God will judge all the nations, at length blessing His ancient people according to the promises He had assured to the fathers, then accomplished to the children. In order to bring about this change, not only must there be an execution of judgement, but also the removal of the heavenly saints to be with the Lord above. **As long as the church goes on here below, it is impossible, morally speaking, that God could accomplish these events of a wholly contrasted character. For it is contrary to all analogy that God would act upon two opposite principles at the same time.** For instance, how could God both give and withhold outward honour for a Jew? How form the church at the same time that He restores and owns Israel? *If a Jew were to believe now, he, baptised by the Holy Ghost, becomes a member of Christ's body; whereas what we find in the prophets is, that a godly Jew in the last days remains a Jew.* The Lord will quicken his soul, no doubt; but he will be found [ultimately] in his own land, where, instead of suffering, he will [after the 70th Week] be blessed in earthly things. Thus it is an altogether different state here below. **To this the New Testament supplies the key. Before Jehovah begins thus to work in Israel, the church is removed to heaven.**

“Hence in the Revelation the great initiatory lesson is taught, that when ‘the things that are’ (or the seven churches) terminate, when those that truly believe now are seen glorified with the Lord in heaven, *then (Rev. 7)* God takes up a new work among Israel and the Gentiles, who will be, both of them blessed, but even so, presented as distinct from each other. Without doubt the Jews will return to their land in unbelief, and Satan will induce them to install a man as their Messiah who will draw them by degrees to worship himself and an idol in the temple of God. Some might think it strange to assert that these civilised and christianised nations, which count it impossible that the educated could worship idols or the Antichrist, should fall into these very snares. But scripture is explicit, that those who now boast of progress, knowledge, and religion will at that time fall into idolatry and the anti-Christian pit. All western Europe will be drawn into perdition with the mass of the Jews. **God will have previously translated to heaven all properly called Christians. Then the apostasy will take place, though in the midst of this fearful**

evil the Spirit of God will work, specially among certain of the Jews, who will go through this scene faithful to God, some being killed for the truth, and others surviving in the flesh — a remnant God will reserve to Himself to make of it the nucleus of a new Israel. The Lord Jesus will appear in the midst of this lawlessness, and will execute judgement upon the ungodly, preserving the spared remnant who thereon become the chosen means of spreading the knowledge of Jehovah's glory for the millennial age.” (W. Kelly)

Let us hear Dr. Kurschner and company one more time in relation to what they deem a prime example (**a present-day fulfillment of Ezekiel 37**) showing that “God is also working [*note the use of that mere generic ‘working’ again*] with **both** the Church and Israel at the same time in the present.”

“God is working with Israel in the present age . . . by **God regathering** Israel back to their homeland.”

“In 1948, Israel became a nation again. It’s fulfilling... these are the dry bones, of course. The flesh, the flesh part of the prophecy has not been fulfilled. That’s going to be the spiritual regeneration of Israel. That will happen *at the end* of the 7-year period. But the ‘dry bones’ part of the Ezekiel prophecy—by the way, Ezekiel’s prophecy was made to Israel, but it’s being fulfilled during the Church Age.”

Before supplying the proper understanding of Ezekiel 37, I would first observe here that Scripture, of course, nowhere suggests that this present-day “regathering” (even with their misapplication of Ezek. 37) *had to be “fulfilled” during the mystery period* in which God is forming the Church as the heavenly Bride for His Son, nor does Scripture anywhere give it *as a sign or prophetic event for which the Church should have been looking and watching* as to its “fulfilment” prior to the coming of the Lord Jesus for His Bride.

That being said, the following represents what is actually the scripturally correct and wholly futurist understanding of the fulfillment of Ezekiel 37:

“Ezek. 37 speaks of the uniting of the two houses of Israel, i.e., Judah and Ephraim. Ezek. 37 is a very important statement and the efforts to explain it away on the part of amillennialists show its importance . . . The end of Ezek. 36 also speaks of the regathering of Israel. In Ezek. 37:1-14 resurrection is used as a figure for the restoration to national life as caused by God. Isa 18 is a previous regathering of Judah, chiefly, by man. **The resurrection to national life concerns ‘the whole house of Israel’ (v. 11)** being placed in their ‘own land’ (v. 14). Though Israel had to say, ‘Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off’ (v. 11), Jehovah says, ‘Behold, I will open your graves . . . and bring you into the land of Israel’ (v. 12). Thus when Israel speaks in such a way of itself, we can plainly see that resurrection is used as a figure for the time when God takes them out of their graves (the nations into which they were dispersed) and brings them into the land of Israel.

“The bones were ‘very dry’ (v. 12). Long has Israel been dead nationally. ***In the sight of God Israel still is dead nationally [the sentence of Rom. 11:15 has not and will not be reversed while the Church, His Body, is on this earth being formed; see previous discussion above]. The present nation (since 1948) is the result of man’s effort [under God’s providential ordering] (per Isa. 18). [Whereas] Ezek. 37 is Jehovah’s [direct, dispensational] work. This restoration to national life of ‘the whole house of Israel’ (v. 11) means that Judah and Ephraim must be reunited.*** This reunion is described in Ezek. 37:15-27. The teaching of this passage is that there was a division and yet **the two parts will be made one.** Verse 21 connects this with the regathering to the land. ‘They shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all’ (v. 22). And David, i.e. Christ, shall be king over them when they dwell in the land given to Jacob (v. 25). See also Isa 11:11-14.”

“Ezek. 37 uses resurrection as a figure for what would happen. **Israel once had a national standing, lost it, and will be reinstated [after the Church is completed and raptured out of this world].** We can understand resurrection used as a figure for this, which implies former life, then death.” (R.A. Huebner)

We close this section by way of supplementation with important truths connected on God’s dispensational dealings with Israel, particularly as to the godly Jewish remnant whom God raises up during the Tribulation Period along with Israel’s *Lo-Ammi* status before Jehovah.

Even some otherwise sound Pre-Tribulationists make confused and incorrect statements when speaking of Israel's "conversion" *upon the Lord's return in manifested glory*. For the idea that any ungodly/unbelieving Jew will be "converted" *at His Appearing* is entirely fallacious (it will be too late at that point!). Such an unscriptural notion is really a required contrivance of Post-Tribulationism, including that of the so-called Pre-Wrath variety under review.

There are two important matters that need to be reckoned with in this regard: (1) the truth of the godly Jewish remnant and their status throughout the Tribulation period; and (2) the truth of Israel's national restoration and national salvation at the Manifestation of His Coming, at the end of the Tribulation period, along with the associated subject of *Israel's earthly "calling" and "government."*

"The teaching of Scripture, and of JND, is that the godly Jewish remnant is composed of souls who are born again while going through the tribulation period. But they will not have the peace of consciously known forgiveness of sins and acceptance until they are brought into that by the returned Messiah. Saints of the present period will have been raptured previous to God’s forming this godly Jewish remnant with which, and through which, God will work, in that epoch; and finally they will form the saved nation under the new covenant." (R.A. Huebner)

Post-Tribulationists, on the contrary, necessarily hold the position that Jews will be converted at the Lord's Appearing—which means a denial of a godly Jewish remnant who are born of God

during the 70th Week, but holding to a so-called "remnant" that is preserved *in unbelief* until the Lord Jesus Appears . . . not understanding that the national repentance of the Jews at the Manifestation of His Coming is that of the remnant who have already been born of God during the Tribulation but who do not enter into the consciousness and fullness of their salvation under Jehovah-Messiah and the new covenant until He thus returns and pours out the Holy Spirit, etc.).

"For I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, of this mystery, that ye may not be wise in your own conceits, that ***blindness in part is happened to Israel, until*** the fulness of the nations be come in; and so *[in the following manner]* all Israel shall be saved *[according to His sovereign grace]*: According as it is written, The deliverer shall come out of Zion; he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And this is the covenant from me to them, when I shall have taken away their sins *[in a coming Millennial day, when 'all Israel will be saved'; that is, the new nation of Israel under their Messiah and their new covenant will, in sovereign grace, be composed of all all-believing, all-righteous, all-saved Jews—as the new and true spiritual Israel with the law written in their hearts (cf. Isa. 60:21; 66:8-9; Jer. 31:31-40)—no longer merely a remnant within Israel comprising those who are saved]."* (Rom. 11:5-10, 25-27)

"When already its branch becomes tender and produces leaves *[i.e., this points to the time when God is calling and preparing the godly Jewish remnant during the Tribulation Period]*, ye know that the summer is near. Thus also ye, when ye see all these things happening, know that it is near, at the doors *[i.e., the end of the age, and the beginning of the next under their Messiah and their New Covenant, wherein the godly Jewish remnant will form the new and true spiritual nation of Israel in the Millennial Kingdom]. [Even so, and therefore,]* Verily I say to you, This generation *[this ongoing moral class of Christ-rejecting, unbelieving, stubborn and rebellious generation of Jews]* will in no wise pass away ***until*** all these things take place *[this generation of Jews as a whole will then indeed pass away, when Christ appears in glory and executes judgment on them, and will be displaced by the new class or generation of Jews—the new and true spiritual Israel in the Millennial Kingdom (all Israel will then be comprised solely of those who are righteous . . . those who are saved), under their Messiah and their New Covenant, with the law written in their hearts; see, e.g., Isa. 60:21; 66:8-9; Jer. 31:31-40; Rom. 11:26-27]."* (Matt. 24:32-34)

The apostle Thomas (already born of God) illustrates the godly Jewish remnant of the Tribulation period being brought into ***fulness of faith and national repentance*** upon seeing the returning Jehovah-Jesus appearing in glory, their risen Messiah whom they as a people had rejected and crucified.

"On the resurrection-day the Apostles were not all present. 'But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples said [began to say], therefore, to him, We have seen the Lord. But he said to them, Except I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will in nowise believe' (verses 24, 25). His state of soul

coincided with his absence on that day. He resisted the blessed news of the Resurrection, and did not join the gathering of the disciples to share the joy of the Master's presence in their midst. Slow of heart to believe, he missed the early taste of the blessing, and abode in the darkness of his own unbelief, whilst the rest were filled with gladness. He becomes, therefore, no unmeet type of the Jew, not of the *ungodly mass* who receive another coming in his own name, but of the poor sorrow-stricken remnant who cleave to the hope of the Messiah in the latter day, and will enter into rest and joy only when they see Him appearing for their deliverance." (W. Kelly)

Moreover, it is critical to a right understanding of dispensational truth to observe that Israel as a nation is *God's publicly owned and recognized people (Ammi)* **only** when they have **both** the earthly "calling" and the earthly "government." In that connection, "the Times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24) are an intercalation into the earthly "government" (such having been handed over to the Gentiles), and thus Israel has since been reckoned as "*not My people*" (*Lo Ammi*), not publicly owned and recognized of God. However, notwithstanding her *Lo Ammi* status, God continued to work dispensationally with Israel as a nation under her "earthly calling" *until the Cross*. But then that suspended earthly calling was intercalated by the "heavenly calling" of the Church formed on the Day of Pentecost. Thus Israel was set aside, suspended at the Cross while God's mystery/heavenly purpose is being carried out. The "earthly calling" will resume after the Rapture when the heavenly calling is completed. But since the "earthly government" will not be restored to Israel as a nation until the Appearing of the Son of Man in great power and glory (for the Times of the Gentiles continues on till the end of the 70th Week), Israel as a nation is still *Lo Ammi* during the whole of the Tribulation Period, not being publicly owned and recognized *nationally* before Him as His earthly people. But the "earthly calling" will be at work in calling out the godly Jewish Remnant at that time. And under the reign of Messiah Jehovah-Jesus and their New Covenant, that Jewish Remnant will constitute the nucleus of the new and true spiritual Israel, *Ammi, My People*, when the Millennial Kingdom is established on this earth.

"Though government was introduced with Noah, **the administration of God's direct government in the earth *through kingship* began with David** . . . The throne of David (B.C. 1011) and Solomon (B.C. 971) was called the throne of Jehovah (1 Chron. 29:23). **This was the seat of God's direct government in the earth** . . . The capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar [in B.C. 605/604] was used by God to bring to an end God's *direct* government in the earth through Israel . . . This period has been called a 'parenthesis' because it is a period of time during which God's 'reign' in Israel is in abeyance . . . [It is] the Gentile parenthesis of judgment upon Israel ['the times of the Gentiles' (Luke 21:24)]."

"Israel will be at the center of God's display of His glory in Christ in the 'earthly places' during the millennium. The setting aside of Israel and **the removal of God's throne from Jerusalem** is an interruption in the development of God's ways in the earth."

"During the interval of its absence [i.e., the absence of the Shekinah, Ezek. 10:18; 11:22] the heavens rule rather than God exercising *direct* government in the earth in Israel."

" 'The Gentile parenthesis of judgment' . . . is a time of Gentile dominion brought as a chastisement, a judgment, upon Israel, but it will come to an end when God establishes His King upon His holy hill of Zion (Psa. 2). **This will end the period when God is not directly exercising government in the earth in Israel.**"

"They [Israel] were declared to be Lo-Ammi (not my people) in Hos. 1:9, 10. God had taken away government from that people and gave it to the Gentiles, for the period depicted by the image of Dan. 2, namely, *the times of the Gentiles* (Luke 21:24). When the smiting stone of Dan. 2 (Christ) smites the image, Christ will set up the kingdom on earth and Israel will again be acknowledged as the people of God."

"The period from B.C. 605/604, when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem until the time of the appearing of Christ to smite the Gentiles is the period our Lord called 'the times of the nations' (Luke 21:24) . . . during which God's direct reign in Israel is in abeyance. [After] B.C. 605/604, God continued to work with Israel, though they were not owned outwardly as His people, being under the sentence of Lo-ammi, until that work ceased in connection with the rejection of Christ. This brought about another parenthesis, from Pentecost to the rapture. After the rapture, God will commence dealing with Israel again, though they still will not be outwardly owned, the heavenly parenthesis that interrupted such dealing with Israel having terminated at the rapture. Thus there is a parenthesis within a parenthesis; a heavenly parenthesis within a wider earthly parenthesis."

"Israel is God's nationally recognized people - *Ammi* - only while they have both [earthly] Calling and Government given to them [the earthly Calling actually began with Abraham, before there even was an Israel, a *nationally* recognized people]. The reason why God continued to work with the people of Israel after declaring them *Lo-ammi* is because they still had [the earthly] Calling. This Earthly Calling [was suspended with the rejection of Christ and is] restored in the 70th Week, when Jehovah works with the [godly] Jewish remnant to form them to receive Messiah. And when He reigns, Israel, as His nationally recognized people - *Ammi* - will again be the center of His earthly seat of government."
(R. A. Huebner)