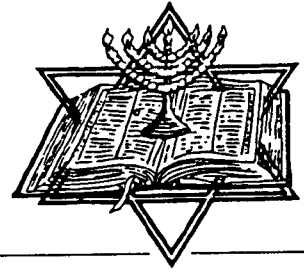


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What the Reformers Forgot

This Newsletter examines the first two of the five areas of *What the Reformers Forgot* — (1) **Hermeneutics** and (2) **Covenant and Ecclesiology**. The remaining three areas—(3) **Eschatology** and the **Return of Christ**, (4) **God's Election of Israel and His Gifts**, and (5) **Mission**, will be examined in the next issue.

For the days are coming, saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah—not like the Covenant that I made with their fathers... (Jeremiah 31:31).

Preface

TWO THIRDS OF SCRIPTURE is comprised of the Hebrew and Aramaic Old Testament writings called in Judaism by the acronym TENACH, meaning a combination of *Torah* (Pentateuch), *Neviim* (Prophets), and *Ketuvim* (literally “Writings”, such as Psalms, certain histories, and wisdom literature.)

Born again Christians generally accept that the primary aim of the Old Testament is to point to the coming New Covenant that would be implemented by the promised Messiah.

Romans 11 tells us that the invisible root of the church is Israel, so we can understand that the two thousand years of Old Testament history under the Law was laying the foundation for what would become the church.

Romans and Galatians tell us that the chief (but not only) purpose of the Law was to teach that we cannot be saved by it and so point us to the Messianic redeemer who would fulfil the law on our behalf and make atonement for our inability to uphold God's standards by His own sacrifice on the cross for our sins.

Hebrews tells that the Levitical priesthood and temple system is a typology of Jesus our High Priest. Read in light of the gospels, the Patriarch Isaac and every prophet of Israel from Moses to John the Baptist is a prophetic type of Jesus, with their ministry, words, or life experiences foreshadowing Yeshua in some way.

The entirety of the Old Testament from Genesis 1:1, the non-canonical Jewish apocryphal writings, and a total of three thousand years of history, at least, from Abraham onward (but actually from the creation onward), all point to Jesus and the New Covenant He would give.

A cursory reading of Jeremiah 31:31 and its surrounding context reveals this passage to be the clearest prophetic prediction in the Old Testament that a New Covenant would be given and that it would be unlike the then existing old one.

- With whom would the New Covenant be made?
- In what way would its character differ from the one God had made with their fathers?
- How then (if the covenants are different) is the New Covenant intended by the Lord to be understood?
- How did the Reformers correctly understand the differences, and where did they *fail to understand* the differences?
- Above all, what can be done to adjust the repercussions of their misunderstandings today?

What the Reformers Forgot about Hermeneutics

Jeremiah 31:31 is the clearest prophecy in the Tenach that God would one day make a New Covenant.

In western Protestantism we have a very western perspective of Christianity and its historical development. Yet when we read the Book of Revelation, we see that Jesus shows us the church and its history not from a western or indeed any earthly perspective, but from an eternal heavenly perspective.

Hence, however important the lessons of church history, we need to observe and contemplate that history in a spiritual context from the viewpoint of scripture and not from a Hellenistic or occidental culture, nor through the prism of a Hellenistic or occidental concept of history and how to interpret it.

Revelation reveals to us the church and its role in a salvation history that theologians call *Heilsgeschichte*, as Christ sees it and chooses to reveal it to us.

The first thing that Jeremiah 31:31 tells us is that the New Covenant was made (literally “cut”) not with the predominantly western church, but with Israel and the Jews. The Hebrew term here for covenant is *ברית* “Brit”, meaning both “covenant” and “testament”. Thus, the New Testament is a Jewish covenant document for a new covenant, the same as Torah is a Jewish covenant document for the Old Covenant.

The New Covenant as a covenant was never made with the *per se* church to begin with, and its covenant document was similarly never given to or through the Gentile church, but through the faithful remnant of Israel whom at that time constituted the primitive Jewish church.

The Reformers failed to redress and correct the replacement theology of Roman Catholicism, instead they wrongly replaced Israel with a Protestant church instead of a Roman one. They also, like Romanism, began to treat a Jewish covenant document as a Greco-Roman one in the manner in which they understood and interpreted it.

While the Book of Revelation, for instance, is in the Apocalyptic genre that evolved through combining both Hebraic and Hellenistic literary forms during the intertestamental period, its imagery and typology are strongly Judaic.

The appearance of *Yeshua* as High Priest in Chapter 1, in a Levitical setting, gives us a pictorial revelation of Jesus as High Priest that Hebrews gives us as a doctrinal revelation. Later in Chapter 3 in the message to the Church of Philadelphia we see *Yeshua* in a Davidic role.

Throughout Revelation we see thematic and typological replays of the creation motif from Genesis, and motifs from Exodus, Joshua, Daniel, Ezekiel and other Old Testament Books. Like John's Gospel, Matthew, James, 2 Peter, and Hebrews—Revelation is a book with a Hebraic literary orientation, although the church is predominantly Gentile. In other words, God relates His final message to the church through Hebrew eyes.

This relates to Paul's description of our salvation to both Jew and Gentile believer as a recapitulation of the Hebrew Exodus (1 Corinthians 10: 1-3), and to Paul's teaching on the final state of church as rediscovering its Jewish root (Romans 11:18 & 25).

The Scriptures also describe Christ's relationship to, and coming for, the church as a Jewish matrimony (Rev. 20, Song of Solomon, Ephesians 5, Matthew 25).

Repeatedly, God in His Word reveals the essential truths of His relationship to the Church within a Judaic frame of reference, and God's revelation of the eschatological destiny and history of the church as seen in Revelation is no exception.

The problem we address here is that, with a few exceptions, the mainstream Christian traditions that sprang from the Reformation depart from scripture and do not do this; they simply ignore the Judaic content and treat it as Hellenistic literature.

While we can appreciate some of Luther's reasoning (as Revelation's message was partially for an appointed time), he rejected the book of Revelation as useless and uncanonical.

The *Swiss Reformers* largely were radical preterist-historicists seeing Revelation as having had a total, instead of partial fulfilment in the early church and a continuous meaning throughout church history, simply spiritualising away the elements which had no parallel or historical fulfilment in the early centuries of Christian history.

It is both ironic and contradictory that since a cornerstone of Reformed theology (due to influences of 16th century humanism) was a stoic hermeneutical approach to biblical interpretation taking a strict grammatical-historical line, Reformed theology departs from its own principles and automatically 'spiritualizes' anything about Israel as being for the church.

It does so moreover, not seeing the text applying additionally to Israel as well as to the church, or by a qualified application to the church by way of principle or figure, while retaining the original meaning for the Jews in the *Sitz im Leben* (the cultural and historical setting a text is addressed to and written in) of the text.

It rather does so in the stated replacement of Israel and the Jews by a mainly Gentile church owing little or nothing to its biblically stated Jewish roots—in direct contravention to Romans 9-11.

This becomes particularly strange since Luther regarded Romans to be the very heart of scripture and its message, yet his thinking virtually omitted the plain teaching of chapters 9 to 11.

It is also strange that—in their proper reaction against the medieval *scholasticism* of the Roman Church with its peculiar form of papal *gnosticism* (later defined as "Sensus Plenior"), where, unlike in the Jewish Midrashic hermeneutics of the New Testament, typology and allegory were used to illustrate and illuminate doctrine and not

base doctrine on it—the medieval church formulated doctrines to please itself by wild allegorization.

Indeed, we see the same practices continuing today not only in Roman Catholicism, but in the *neo-gnosticism* employed by the Vineyard Movement and by such New Age influenced pseudo-Christian groups as 'Promise Keepers' who build their case not on exegesis (reading *from* Scripture) but eisegetical (reading *into* Scripture) allegorization.

So, reacting against these misuses and abuses of typological and allegorical method, many upright conservative evangelicals today will act in the same manner as the Reformers did—they simply throw the proverbial baby out with the bath water, and a Jewish Bible is divorced from its own cultural roots and interpreted outside of the framework in which it was given by methods devised in the 16th century by humanists.

These grammatical-historical methods are adequate for reading the epistles as letters. The epistles provide the apostolic prism through which other scripture is to be read. But the epistles themselves use Midrash, typology and allegory in commenting on other scripture such as narrative, apocalyptic and Hebrew poetry.

Grammatical-historical methods are essential and adequate to comprehend basic biblical truth such as the way of salvation and Christian conduct, but inadequate to grasp the deeper things contained in the Word of God such as Ezekiel, Revelation, Zechariah, and the invisible thread of eschatological undertone that runs through the gospels when viewed from an ancient oriental Jewish perspective instead of a Hellenistic western perspective.

Understanding the complete meaning in these texts will be increasingly important as we approach the *parousia* with more and more overt signs of the return of Jesus on the horizon.

This has nothing to do with the Alexandrian or even Antiochan schools of the early church, or the writings of *Philo*, or the Christianised gnosticism of *Origen*. Nor have Midrashic "Peshet" interpretations anything to do with a papal *Sensus Plenior*.

It has to do with interpreting the Word of God within the parameters in which God gave it.

Strict models of adherence to grammatical-historical exegesis was designed by the reformers as a safety mechanism to protect us from deception. Too often, the instrument of protection has become an instrument of deception in itself.

We must remember that the reformers were humanists and their exegetical approach is humanistic, meaning it is man-centred.

While we do ask God to guide us in the our interpretation of His Word by His Spirit, grammatical-historical exegesis applied in isolation from Second Temple Period Jewish hermeneutics has reduced understanding the Bible to a mere intellectual exercise.

Utterly atheistic liberal scholars, who are secular humanists (unlike the reformers who were Christian humanists) misuse these same grammatical-historical methods to construct Satanically inspired apostasy.

Shall we reject grammatical-historical apostasy because *James Barr* uses it to demonstrate what he sees as the folly of evangelicalism (which he derogatorily labels “fundamentalism”)? Of course we should not.

The epistles should be read as letters and no other method would be valid for interpreting the epistles. Even in handling other forms of biblical literature, while we must use Midrash, midrashic method does not invalidate grammatical-historical method; it simply sees it as the first step.

We should not reject the validity of the grammatical-historical method because of its misuse by apostates. By the same token, neither should we reject Jewish hermeneutics.

As with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Satan only corrupts things worth corrupting.

Despite its limitations, we should not reject the grammatical-historical approach of interpreting the Bible handed down to us by the Reformers simply because unbelievers corrupt and misuse such methods to engineer heresy, and neither therefore should we reject Jewish hermeneutics because cults, or Romanism, or liberal higher critics, or latter day gnostics like John Wimber or *Promise Keepers* misuse allegory and typology to engineer error and deception.

While the problem has its origins in the

Reformation, we still see it currently with other-wise good evangelical scholars such as *Dr. Walter Kaiser* (who is not even a replacementist), and various Reformed theologians (most of whom are replacementists).

These brethren, to their credit, strive to uphold biblical orthodoxy against heresy and unbelief, but in the process, like the Reformers, treat a Jewish book as a Hellenistic one, losing sight of the root and missing the depth of content which is found when the texts are read through a more Hebraic understanding of the Christian Faith.

Like certain messianic writers in the *Mishkan* theological journal, I have always found the ideas of *Roy Blizzard* and *David Bivin* implausible and the amount of attention their work receives as being out of all proportion to what it warrants. Others in the Jerusalem School, such as *Joseph Frankovic* who (while admittedly having a very long way to go in the use of Jewish hermeneutics in the New Testament) is at least asking the right questions.

Other messianic scholars such as *Dwight Pryer* and *Arnold Fruchtenbaum*, while not focused on Jewish hermeneutics, are well focused on Jewish *Sitz in Leben* and are finding parallelisms between early rabbinic and early Christian thought, and viewing the New Testament in that light.

Hence, we see some *bona fide* progress in rediscovering the Jewish roots, and not just a lot of the nonsense that transpires on the extreme axis of the messianic movement, where an attempted repackaging of Hebrew Christianity in the wrappings of “yitishkeit” (Ashkenazi diasporic Jewish culture) is attempted—lifting up Jewishness, instead of ‘Yeshua-ness’.

Yitishkeit is anyway but one expression of Jewish culture. While a proper messianic synagogue “siddur” liturgy, led by a proper messianic rabbi and cantor (such as *Stuart Dauerman* in Los Angeles or at *Netiv Ya* in Jerusalem), may be of missiological value in recontextualizing the gospel message to see Jews saved, *Yitishkeit* is not the original culture of the Bible and is of very little value in rediscovering the Hebrew roots of our faith.

Yitishkeit is no substitute for a Holy Spirit directed scholarship to unveil the

Jewish character of the Word of God, and our capacity to properly understand it as its divine author intends it to be understood.

The mysteries that the faithful church are intended to understand concerning the Last Days, and how to prepare for them, are in the Apocalyptic books of the Bible and are sealed up until the appointed time (Daniel 12:4). They will never be unsealed until the Hebraic roots of our faith, the Hebraic character of scripture, and the Jewish hermeneutics used by Jesus and the apostles are rediscovered.

Astonishingly and impressively, it was actually Reformed theologians—the Puritan fathers, such as *John Lightfoot* and *John Robinson* who at least began to realise these truths over three centuries ago.

In Reformed thinking, correct biblical exegesis is a matter of God using human intellect through the grammatical-historical exegetical method, which shuns spiritualisation in reaction to the gnosticism of medieval Roman Catholic scholasticism (which often constructed doctrines out of wild allegorical interpretations resembling *Philo*, but having little in common with the Hebrew allegory and typology of scripture or the clear uses of Jewish Midrash in the New Testament’s handling of the Old).

Yet, when it comes to Israel and the Jews, Reformation theology winds up doing the very things it set out to correct—they spiritualise the meaning, allegorically reading into the text what is not in there; Israel becomes the church to the negation of what the text literally says. Instead of Christians being spiritually grafted into Israel as the New Testament teaches (Romans 11), in this error the church *replaces* it.

Instead of applying what the text says to the church in addition to applying it to Israel, like the super-cessationist Roman church with its replacementism, they simply allegorise it in violation of their own principles.

Curiously however, they do not do this consistently (another flagrant violation of their own principles as grammatical-historical exegesis in theory demands consistency in approach); they will only do it where it pleases them.

For instance, to them the curses of the Old Testament remain literally for Israel, while the blessings are spiritualised for

the church—despite the fact that most of western Christianity is as backslidden and rejecting of the true Christ as Israel and the Jews ever were.

God is a God of justice who hates unjust scales (Proverbs 11:1). **If He is finished with the Jews, I would like to know just one reason why He should not also be finished with the church.**

Fortunately for Israel and the church, the validity of a divine covenant depends not on the infidelity of man, but rather on the fidelity of God.

True, God turns His grace for a season away from Israel towards the Gentile nations (Romans 11:19-20), but this is both partial and temporary (Romans 11:25-29).

A time comes, and is already arriving, when God turns His grace away from the nations back towards His ancient people Israel (Romans 11:25); yet who would ever suggest on this basis that Israel will replace the church?

What The Reformers Forgot about Covenant and Ecclesiology

Jeremiah 31:31 tells us the New Covenant will not be like the one God made with the Patriarchs of Israel or Moses.

Jeremiah was up against the problem of a theocratic state gone wrong. People were circumcised as babies and because they were incorporated into the national covenant, assumed that they were in a right relationship with God.

Other prophets like Amos were up against similar problems—people brought their sacrifices to the temple forgetting that these needed to be accompanied by genuine faith and repentance for their offerings to be accepted.

John the Baptist was up against the same situation of certain people thinking that, because they were biological descendants of Abraham and the fathers and circumcised into the covenant, they were automatically included in a right covenant relationship.

The New Covenant to be inaugurated by the Messiah would correct these issues because it would not be a covenant of automatic corporate inclusion based on national, ethnic, or cultural identity, nor on the faith of one's parents—but rather individual response to the gospel.

Hence, New Birth would not be of man's will. Regeneration would occur as a result of the sovereign grace of God drawing someone to Jesus personally and their individual response to Him, by which God's Law would be written on their heart.

Anglican errors

Yet, as one example, we see that in the old Anglican Book of Common Prayer in the baptismal liturgy, a baby is pronounced "Born Again", and his or her parents told that the baby is a Christian because of the parent's decision and being born English into the English National Church.

Contravening what the New Covenant was to be, baptism is wrongly equated with circumcision, and a child is pronounced a Christian through the actions of his parents—that is, being reborn by the will of man instead of by the will of God, in direct rejection of John 1:13.

Thomas Hooker proclaimed "A member of the Church of England is a citizen of the Commonwealth, and a Citizen of the Commonwealth is a member of the Church of England", equating a state church with its monarch as head, to Israel and the House of David.

What we in fact have is a Regal Papacy where the next titular head of the Anglican Church, Prince Charles, is a divorced New Ager with a combination of Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic beliefs.

For all of its errors, the Continental Reformation was the result of Christian conviction. In England however, it is an historical fact that the Church of England was born out of the whoredom of a despotic womanising king who murdered 70,000 of his own subjects. The English Reformation began as a result of the ambitions of *Henry VIII*.

Absurdly, the British Monarchy still retains for itself the title "Defender Of the Faith", a title awarded by the pope for the persecution of Protestants. Today,

members of the British Royal family convert to Catholicism, the Archbishop of Canterbury marches in a procession to Mary in Walsingham calling for reunion with Rome, while the Queen has appointed a Roman Catholic priest as Court Chaplain.

Indeed, with the mass martyrdom of Evangelical Anglicans (such as Nicholas Ridley, Hugh Latimer, John Hooper, and Thomas Cranmer) by Queen Mary at the behest of the Roman Clergy after the death of Henry VIII, a doctrinal reformation in Anglicanism did take place.

But the institution began for political and not theological or moral reasons. And now, with the theological and moral erosion of the Royal family, it is becoming politically expedient to return to Rome, as it appears there are no longer any doctrinal or ethical reasons not to do so.

Anglicanism was born from Rome (and not from scripture), it doctrinally and ecclesiologically never fully broke with Rome, and to Rome it is now returning.

The root of this dates back to the shallow doctrinal foundation laid by the reformers that finally caves in.

Many errors result from this for Anglicans, and other mainstream Protestants, that non-conformist churches holding to believer's baptism avoid.

When a young Anglican who is pronounced "Born Again" as a baby actually becomes "Born Again" and able to accept Jesus personally, which new birth proclamation does his church wish him to believe is valid?

Was his vicar telling the truth when he told him he was a Christian and born again as a baby, or rather when he actually became a new born believer?

Telling people they are Christians when they are not (and actually still need to become Christians) is a sure barrier to seeing souls saved, and the mainstream Protestant churches founded by the reformers all have this structural dilemma.

British Israel?

Another error deriving from not recognising that the New Covenant is made with Israel is the deception among Anglo Saxon and Anglo Celtic Protestants of *British Israelism*, which has no biblical or ethnological basis

whatsoever, and where, once again the throne of David is linked with a British Crown.

James McConnell (who comes from a Sabellian heresy background with a 'Oneness' view of the Trinity, instead of an Athanasian view of Three Persons in One God—it is unclear if he believes in the Trinity biblically, or if he believes that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all *Jesus*) is a case in point.

McConnell, pastor of Whitewell—the largest Elim church in Belfast, has openly challenged anyone to publicly debate him on his doctrine that the Bible teaches that the British are the ten Lost Tribes of Israel. (This idea was accepted by Elim's founder, *George Jeffries*, but rejected by Elim as a movement, even though the teaching came from *Jeffries*. Now Elim's current leadership—courtesy of *McConnell*—gives place to it.)

We have accepted the challenge to debate, but at the time of publishing *McConnell* seems to have second thoughts about debating with *Jacob Prasch* and appears to be backing down on his challenge, as Elim's *David Blake* has also backed down on debating *Jacob Prasch* about Blake's belief in "Barking in the Spirit" as a manifestation of the Holy Ghost.

State Religion & False Doctrine

Anglicanism is but one expression of the errors of the Reformers. Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Reform churches have the same built-in error—a state church where people become members, not by new birth, but by being born into a state church and culture, having an initiation ritual performed as babies.

The precedent was not established by *Hooker*, but by *Luther*. In order to genuinely reform the church along biblical lines, the first thing the reformers would have needed to do was dissolve the unscriptural Erastian marriage of church and state, and condemn as false Augustine's Cyprianic Doctrine of the Church, which sought to justify it. Along with this, they would have needed to restore a biblical understanding of believer's baptism as the Baptist sects (who the Protestants normally hated) did.

Luther instead taught *Cuis Regio Eius Religio* ("What your government is, so your religion is")—if your government is

Roman Catholic, so are you, and if Protestant, so are you, and continued sprinkling infants, pronouncing them Christian by the will of man instead of by the New Birth through the Will of God.

The Reformers failed to reform beyond a very correct but inadequate level.

Where does this error originate? "The church", by Greek definition *ecclesia*, means "the called out ones", who may have to leave their culture, family, etc., to become Christians and thus members of the true church (Matthew 10:35-37). The church is not those born into a national cultural-religious identity, but Born Again, quite possibly, *out of* their temporal, cultural and religious identity—even when that identity is nominally Christian.

The error has its source with the *Emperor Constantine* when he made Christianity into a religion of the state, and the false doctrine of *Augustine* called "The Visible and Invisible Church", which sought to justify turning biblical Christianity into a national and cultural Christendom.

Augustine drew many unbiblical and unfortunate mistakes together to rewrite Christianity as a hierarchical and Platonic religion. He drew on the errors of his mentor, *Ambrose*, the mistaken influences of *Cyprian of Carthage*, and even imported certain gnostic influences into western Christianity from Alexandria, and embraced Alexandrian ideas of Christology and Pneumatology from the *Council of Chalcedon* which, although not heretical, were plainly wrong and problematic.

This doctrine said the church was made up of the saved and unsaved, instead of an exclusive fellowship of those personally professing a saving faith through the new birth. It did this by twisting the parable of Matthew 13:38-42 out of context to say that the field where both were planted was the *church*, when in fact Jesus said it was the *world*.

Thus, instead of allowing the saved and unsaved to grow up together in the world for Jesus to sort out upon His return, true and false Christians would be together in the church for Jesus to sort out upon His return.

This is not to suggest there were not false believers in the pre-Augustinian

church, but rather entrance was to be the result of personal regeneration of which baptism was to be the emblem.

There are two types of biblical passages dealing with baptism: those supporting believer's baptism and those which are ambiguous. Instead of interpreting the ambiguous passages in light of the unambiguous, the illogical practice of casting doubt on the clear meaning of the unambiguous by seeking to interpret the unambiguous in light of the ambiguous becomes wedded to eisegesis (reading into the Bible what is not in there) as a means to construct an argument which amounted to going back under the Old Covenant.

We must remember Satan's first attempt to destroy the church was to Judaize it (see Galatians). By making the church the new Israel (Romans 11 speaks the language of incorporation, not replacement) and equating baptism with circumcision, the church is Judaized.

What Jeremiah and John the Baptist say Christ would come to undo, and what Paul says Christ did undo in Romans, Constantine and Augustine put back. From here, the medieval papacy evolved into the debacle that the Reformers reacted against. Yet, instead of truly reforming the church by removing the error, they too put it back.

Thus, in order to truly reform the church and restore biblical Christianity, the first thing the Reformers would have needed to do was to break the unscriptural marriage between church and state, reject the Augustinian error of the visible and invisible church designed to accommodate this illicit marriage, and reject the baptism of unregenerate babies (whose sins anyway God does not take into account) that was its emblem.

By failing to understand the Jewish root of the church and failing to understand the new Covenant as a *Jewish Covenant*, with the New Testament as a *Jewish Covenant* document, the Reformers failed to restore biblical Christianity.

They did restore justification by faith and the supremacy of scriptural authority against tradition, but by no means could they have restored the church to its actual Apostolic foundations without rediscovering that the foundations of the church in Christ are Jewish.

Consequently, nominal Protestantism is as much a problem as nominal Old

Testament Judaism ever was. Liberal Protestantism is also as much a problem (and a heresy) as Roman Catholicism ever was.

While the news media accurately reveals the Roman Catholic priesthood as aflood with criminal homosexual paedophiles and dangerous perverts of every description, even the Roman Church as an institution would not sanction a Homosexual and Lesbian service in one of its cathedrals as the Anglicans have done, or officially sanction sodomite clergy like the Methodists.

Howbeit, for their own self-serving reasons, the Roman Church for decades, formally at least, refused to tolerate Freemasonry, while masonic membership ran wild among the Reformed and Presbyterian clergy, and often still does.

Erasmus of Rotterdam

These failures of the Reformers were recognised by their own harbinger, *Erasmus of Rotterdam*, who advocated rebaptism in the preface to his translation of Matthew's Gospel. Erasmus wrote to the pope that it was rather the Anabaptists, who were persecuted by both Rome and the Protestants, that were the closest to a biblical Christianity. Erasmus, realising the failure of Luther on a number of grounds, called the Reformation a travesty to which he preferred to remain a spectator.

This came from one who repeatedly scorned the corruption and hypocrisy of Medieval Catholicism for its heresy on such brilliantly vitriolic and satirical works as "The Praise of Folly" and "Julius Exclusis".

While the Reformers were dynamic personalities, they were not dynamic thinkers. *Luther* drew his ideas from *John Huss*, *Staupidz*, and the humanists like *Le Fèvre*. *Calvin* drew on *Luther*, *Farel*, *Oeclampadius*, and *Bucer*. The English Reformers like *Cranmer* drew on *Calvin* and *Luther*.

All of these however were the natural result directly or indirectly of *Erasmus*, the greatest Christian humanist. Unfortunately, church history has never done him justice and blamed him for being indecisive. In fact, as we see from what became of Protestantism, he was not indecisive, but rather foresighted and

aware of how Protestantism would end up.

We must also remember that the Reformers did not rediscover the gospel as their followers abjectly claim until this day. Long before the Reformation, *Wycliffe* in England, *Huss* in Bohemia, and *Savanarola* in Italy, had large followings of imperfect, but true Christians who believed the Word of God, and were trying to get back to it.

These of course were genocidally exterminated by the papacy using the *Dominicans* and Holy Roman Empire before the Reformation, as Rome used the *Jesuits* and *Hapsburgs* in its holocausts against the true church after the Reformation.

But there was never an era when the Lord did not have a faithful people for His Own Name, whom while making mistakes did love Jesus, live for Him, die and watched their children die for Him, and tried their best to hold fast to His Word and as faithful witnesses point others back to prior to the advent of the reformers.

It was simply the collapse of feudalism and the Holy Roman Empire, together with the rise of humanism that sprung from the Renaissance and the invention of the printing press to mass produce translated Bibles that allowed the reformers to survive where others were exterminated by Rome and her agents.

During the Reformation era and what followed it, it was the Baptist sects (some good like the Menonites following *Menno Simons*, and some lunatics like the Munster Anabaptists following the *Zwickau prophets*—roughly late medieval equivalents of *Mike Bickle*, *Earl Paulk*, and *Paul Cain*) who attempted, for better or worse, to return directly to scripture.

The Protestants following the Reformers instead went back not directly to scripture, but to *Augustine*.

Thus both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism spring not directly from scripture, but from *Augustine's* Platonised reinterpretation of it to again equate Christian identity with the national and cultural identity; that is making the church the new Israel. The results were, predictably, death.

The death *Constantine* and *Augustine* brought to the early church by making the church a temporal political power, was

brought to Calvin's Police State in Geneva, Zwingli's in Zurich, Knox in Scotland, etc.

As a pagan Rome was replaced by a Papal Roman State, so a Papal Roman State was replaced by a Protestant Church State.

For all of their good points in the establishment of a parliamentary democracy founded on biblical principles, both the English Puritans and the American Pilgrim Fathers soon found themselves engaging in genocidal war crimes against poor peasants in Ireland and burning alleged witches in Massachusetts.

Jesus said His Kingdom was not of this world. *Constantine*, the Medieval Popes, and the Reformers said it was.

Central to the popular Jewish rejection of Jesus was His refusal to accept temporal political power before the millennium (which the Reformers rejected).

We must grasp the fact that the twin pillars upon which the contemporary errors of Kingdom-Now Theology with its triumphalist over-realized eschatology and Dominionism are built are both the neo-gnostic latter montanism of "charismania", and the theonomic reconstructionism of highly Reformed Protestantism, particularly hyper-Calvinism.

This is why we see radical replacementist charismatic extremists such as *Rick Godwin* (a restorationist who teaches Israel is nothing but wasted money and Jews have no right to exist in the land of Israel) drawing their anti-futurist historicist and preterist eschatology from extreme Calvinistic reconstructionists like *David Chilton*.

With both, Israel becomes the church and a theonomic regime that replays the mistakes of the post Nicean Constantinian church, and becomes the political kingdom of God on earth—a New Israel, which therefore can accord no place to the old one.

It is curious that any time an extreme Calvinism, stressing the notions of manifest destiny (stemming from an extreme view of predestination), permeated the social fabric with a church-state influence, the tragic results were gross social injustice.

This can be seen historically in the pro-

slavery and later segregationist policies of the American Southern Baptists, the Apartheid policies of the South African Dutch Reformed Church, or the anti-Roman Catholic (not against the Roman church, but against the people in it) discrimination of Orange Unionism with the Strict Presbyterians in Northern Ireland.

Hyper-reformed theonomic reconstructionism represents Protestantism at its worst, just as papal theonomy was Rome at its worst.

The replacementist super-cessationism produces a Judaized church with a theocratic government as oppressive and often as hypocritical as the Sanhedrin ever were.

Hence, the Reformation was a theologically incomplete, and thus a spiritually incomplete event. We might see it as an aborted effort to restore biblical Christianity, as opposed to an authentic reintroduction of it.

The same nominalism that threatened to destroy Old Testament Israel, and produced the false church of the Middle Ages, was a fundamental component of Protestantism from its inception due to the errors of the Reformers.

This was recognised by Protestantism itself, when, within a few generations, Zizendorf's Pietists in Germany and Wesley's Methodists in England were trying to reform Protestantism from within as the Reformers began—not by beginning Protestantism, but by trying to reform Romanism from within.

The demise of Protestantism spiritually dovetailed with the theological decline of grammatical-historical exegesis going from a humanistic tool in the hands of Christians, to a humanistic tool in the hands of atheists.

The Baptists who tried to return to the kind of genuine *sola scriptura* faith that Luther only thought he had, were terribly persecuted and not infrequently murdered by the Protestants.

Even today, such evangelicals as Baptists, Pentecostals, Brethren, and Free Church are not, by classical historical definition truly Protestant, (although they are by etymological definition in that they witness for truth).

They are not Protestant in that they do not hold to a state church or accept infant baptism. They are rather the doctrinal

heirs of the Anabaptists whom Catholic and Protestant alike persecuted.

The source of all of this tragedy once more relates back to the replacement theology that makes the church the new Israel.

The endless arguments of Systematic theology, Dispensationalism verses Covenant / Reformed dividing Evangelicals from each other, stem from this same failure to grasp Jeremiah 31:31 and what it is addressing.

Because Abraham is indeed "Father of All who Believe" (Gen. 12: 1-3, Gal. 3:8, Isa. 63:16), and we see tremendous expressions of God's grace in the Old Testament (as with King Manasseh) and tremendous expressions of His wrath in the New Covenant (as with Ananias and Sapphira), dispensational theology admittedly understates the continuity between the two covenants, and the hyper-dispensationalism of *Darby* is erroneous.

Still, more moderate expressions of dispensationalism do more justice to Jer. 31:31 and the eschatology and ecclesiology that derives from it than does Covenant theology.

Dispensationalism (for all the faults of its more extreme expressions) rightly sees a spiritual and theological relationship between Israel and the Church, but keeps the distinction between them.

The Reformed Covenant theology of Calvinism understates the discontinuity between the covenants and overstates the continuity—in its classical form making the church Israel's replacement.

From this we again have the Protestant theonomic reconstructionism, not only supposedly replacing Old Testament Israel's theocratic state, but certainly replacing the papal theocracy, with its Constantinian/Augustinian roots, with a Protestant version of the same thing.

While we should use Christian influence to be salt and light bringing a biblical influence into this fallen world, whether the Pope, *Constantine*, *Calvin*, and their latter day doctrinal heirs *David Chilton*, *Gary De Mar*, *Gary North*, *Rick Godwin*, and *William Rushdooney* approve or not, Jesus' true Kingdom is not of this world.

From the Unholy Crusades to the Seven Years War, such Dominionism has never brought us anything but bloodshed, and never will.

By equating the Church with Israel to the negation of Israel, the Reformers simply failed to correct what *Constantine*, *Augustine*, and their Papal successors got wrong. The Reformers forgot that Jesus' Kingdom was not of this world and His followers were called to be witnesses and salt and light in terms of a moral influence and a testimony in it, but they are not called to be of it—nor were they to set their hopes on it in any sense other than hoping in a resurrection and the return of Jesus.

The most sorry manifestation of these old errors still with us is the current state of much of Pentecostalism.

While Baptists sought out to restore some of the things the Reformers failed to (such as believers baptism, congregational autonomy, and a separation of Church and State) Pentecostalism, by definition and heritage, set out to restore the things that the Reformers and Baptists failed to restore, such as Gifts of the Spirit, an emphasis on the approaching return of Christ and Premillennialism.

Yet today, we see Pentecostal preachers like *Andrew Shearman* telling a Nottingham congregation in the U.K. that he repents of ever having sung the hymn "This World Is Not My Home", leading the young people to chant "This World Is Our Home".

Such false and dangerous teachings may have no connection with the classical Pentecostalism *Shearman* now denigrates, but certainly is compatible with the classical Protestantism that the early Pentecostals reacted against.

A new generation of Pentecostal ministers who reject the beliefs of their fathers, yet still define themselves as Pentecostals, are remembering to forget the things the Reformers also forgot.

Glossary

Anabaptists

Sometimes called the radicals or left wing of the Reformation, they denounced the baptism of infants. They held that only those who were old enough to understand the meaning of faith and repentance should be baptised. They were widely persecuted and many tens of thousands of them murdered during the sixteenth century.

Augustine (354-430)

Augustine of Hippo, a prolific writer who has been called the father of orthodox theology.

Cyprian (200-258)

Bishop of Carthage. Taught that the unity of the church was episcopal, not theological: To be disassociated from the bishops meant separation from the true church. Made the classic statements that "He cannot have God for his Father who has not the Church for his Mother" and "There is no salvation outside the Church".

Darby

J.N. Darby, leader (but not the founder) of the Plymouth Brethren. Played a major role in the division of the Brethren into Open and Exclusive groups.

Erasmus (1466-1536)

Desiderius Erasmus, sometimes called *Erasmus of Rotterdam*, was the leading Christian humanist of the Reformation era. Especially noted for publishing the Greek New Testament and his own translation of it in Latin.

eschatology

The study of last things; the completion of God's working in the world; the consummation of history.

evangelicalism

An informal movement committed to defending the historical Protestant understanding of the *Evangel*—(Gk.) the Good News. Emphasises the necessity of a personal commitment to Jesus and the authority of the Bible.

futurist

View of eschatology which holds that most of the 'end time' events are still in the future.

gnosticism

A religious movement which taught salvation, not by faith or works, but by the possession of secret knowledge, *gnosis* (Gk.).

heils-geschichte

German term, meaning "salvation history".

Hellenistic

Holding to a traditional Greek cultural, linguistic and historical perspective.

historicist (1554-1600)

View of eschatology which holds that the 'end time' events were taking place when the Bible was being written, and are now in the past.

Hooker

Richard Hooker. Anglican theologian. Defended Anglicanism in his eight volume *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*. Circumvented the Puritan appeal to Scripture and the Catholic appeal to church tradition by proclaiming 'natural law' as the primary source of authority. Hooker's position tended to uphold Erastianism (state control over the church) and royal absolutism.

humanism

Christian humanism teaches that individuals and their culture have value; the pursuit of secular life is not only proper but meritorious. The Christian humanist values culture but confesses that man is fully developed only as he comes into a right relationship with Christ.

Midrash

From a Hebrew word meaning "to seek, to examine, to investigate". Used to describe a rabbinic method of biblical exegesis used in the time of Jesus and Paul.

montanism

A prophetic movement occurring around 172, named after *Montanus*, and his associates. They called for people to prepare for the return of Christ by heeding the voice of the Paraclete speaking through his prophetic mouthpieces. Their confident predictions of the imminent end were shown in time to be false.

neo-gnosticism

Modern versions of *gnosticism*, which teach salvation on the basis of secret knowledge.

parousia

Greek, used with reference to the Second Coming of Jesus.

Origen (185-254)

One of the Greek Fathers of the church. One of the first textual critics of the Bible; one of the first to set forth a systematic statement of the faith; one of the first Bible commentators.

Philo

Jewish writer who lived at the time of Christ. Prolific writer. Embraced a combination of Stoicism and Platonist philosophy, while remaining committed to Judaism.

preterist

View of eschatology which holds that most of the 'end time' events were in the future when the Bible was being written but, having been fulfilled throughout the Church Age, are now in the past.

replacement

Form of theology which teaches that Israel failed God and, for their sins, have now been replaced by the Church.

Sabellian heresy

Teaching that the Trinity does not consist of three separate Persons of the Godhead, but one Person who manifests Himself in three separate *modes*—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

scholasticism

A form of Christian philosophy and theology developed during the medieval period of European history by scholars who came to be known as "school men".

Sitz im Leben

German theological term = *the setting in life*.

Tenach

Jewish acronym, used to refer to the Old Testament.

Zwickau Prophets

Three men from Zwickau who visited Wittenberg in 1521. They claimed that God spoke directly to people and revealed His will through visions and dreams, rather than the Scriptures. They made numerous prophecies which failed to come to pass.

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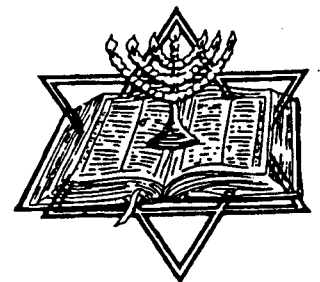
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