

DOMINION THEOLOGY, ISRAEL, AND JEWISH EVANGELISM
by Thomas D. Ice

The decade of the 80's has been one of phenomenal change within the American, Evangelical world. Regardless of whether one views these events as good, bad or indifferent, we are witnessing what is very likely the greatest and fastest change in the history of conservative, American Christianity. Some of the areas of change include: the role of women; the rise of "Christian Psychology;" the Wimber/"Third Wave" movement; the rise of the "New Right" and Evangelical social and political action; a shift away from support for the nation Israel; struggle for control within the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement between the traditional Wesleyan/holiness theology and the new metaphysical, word of faith teachings; and the rise to prominence of something called Dominion Theology.

Hal Lindsey, in his new book, *The Road To Holocaust*, due out in July, 1989, sees Dominion Theology as the exact antithesis of his views on Prophecy. He sees certain elements in their thought contributing to a revival of "Christian" anti-semitism. In fact, he sees this movement as perhaps the most dangerous current trend within Evangelical Christianity.

Dave Hunt, in his latest book, *Whatever Happened to Heaven?*, written as a polemic against Dominion Theology, believes that the Church is "now in the beginning stages of a growing controversy. It could ultimately prove to be as divisive and as important as the Reformation itself."¹

Pentecostal theologian, David Allen Lewis proclaims that the "hottest issue" within the Pentecostal/Charismatic churches is Dominion Theology. "Neo-Kingdom and Dominion teachers continue to shout their theologically anti-Semitic view from the housetops,"² notes Lewis.

What is Dominion Theology? Where did it come from? How does it affect Israel and Jewish evangelism? These are some of the issues I intend to address in this paper.

WHAT IS DOMINION THEOLOGY?

Dominion Theology is the belief that the Church's primary task is to regain a lost rule, which they say Adam forfeited at the Fall, before the Second Adam returns to planet earth. Dominion Theology advocates believe that dominion over every area of life has been restored by the first coming of Christ. Since we are now in the Kingdom (this is where the synonym for Dominion Theology, "Kingdom Now" arose), our task is the calling of believers to reclaim the rule of Christ on planet earth by whatever means their particular brand of Dominion Theology advocates. For Reconstructionists, this is accomplished through the ethical means of obeying the Word (Biblical law). Charismatics often teach that it is achieved through the metaphysical means of confessing the Word. Both believe that dominion is to be taken by Christians (not immediately by

¹Dave Hunt, *Whatever Happened To Heaven?* (Harvest House Publishers, 1988), 9.

²David Allen Lewis, "Church, Israel, and Prophecy," *Jerusalem Courier* (Vol. 7, No. 1), 1.

Christ, but mediately through believers), over all mankind, before Christ physically returns to planet earth.

Dominionists come from all eschatological traditions; Postmillennialism, Amillennialism, and Premillennialism.

A major passage which Dominionists believe teach their view is Genesis 1:28, "*Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.*" This verse clearly teaches that dominion has been given over the animals and the earth, which mankind has clearly fulfilled and continues to fulfill. Psalm 8:6-8, written well after the Fall, says "*Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thus hast put all things under his feet, All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, etc.*" However, it does not give justification, as Dominionists teach, that we are to take dominion over other human beings. The Scriptures do teach that Christ has dominion over all mankind (Jude 25), and that believers will reign and rule with Him (Rev. 5:10), but the question is when. Twice in the seven letters to the Churches of Revelation, Christ promises believers that they will be "reign and rule" with Him in the coming age, if they are faithful and endure in this present age. Rule with Christ will take place in the future Kingdom. This is why it is important to understand that the current age is not the Kingdom, but the Church Age and has an agenda different from the one in the Kingdom.

However Dominionists have a different agenda as noted by Reconstructionist George Grant who says,

Christians have an obligation, a mandate, a commission, a holy responsibility to reclaim the land for Jesus Christ--to have dominion in civil structures, just as in every other aspect of life and godliness.

But it is dominion that we are after. Not just a voice.

It is dominion we are after. Not just influence.

It is dominion we are after. Not just equal time.

It is dominion we are after.

World conquest. That's what Christ has commissioned us to accomplish.³

The Scripture teaches that this current age is not the Kingdom. Believers are not yet reigning and ruling with Christ, although it is their future destiny; similar to the way a Crown Prince is born to rule, but does not exercise that rule until a future stage in his life. In fact Paul scoffed at the errant Corinthian Dominionists that "you have become kings without us; and I would indeed that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you" (1 Cor. 4:8). Instead he went on to speak of the suffering, humiliation, and persecutions he suffered for Christ (4:9-13) as he preached the gospel. Humiliation is the calling of all believers during this present age before the return of Christ as can be seen by Paul's admonition to "be imitators of me" (4:16). This demonstrates the true change of our nature within, since the Adamic bent is exaltation of individual autonomy, while, like Christ, the believer desires to crucify the flesh and forego worldly exaltation.

The current church age is a time of humiliation for believers as we call people to Christ. This current destiny is similar to the career

³George Grant, *The Changing of the Guard*, (Dominion Press, 1987), 50-51.

of Christ. At His first advent, Christ came into a hostile world in order to die, as well as call out of the world a band of disciples to continue His ministry after He went victoriously into heaven following the resurrection. Christ's humiliation and abasement to the Father's will serves as a stark contrast to Adam's pride and grasping after rulership. Since the Church--the Body of Christ--is being prepared as Christ's bride, she too experiences a time of humiliation during the present age as Christ is calling out from among the Gentiles a people for God's name (Acts 15:14) through the church. Since Christ suffered rejection and hatred in this world, so also His body experiences the same (John 15:18-27). Just as Christ endured to the end and was then glorified (John 17), so rulership will be given to all believers in the future Kingdom as they overcome (Rev. 2:25-27; 3:21).

Modern Dominionists make a mistake similar to those to whom Christ spoke in Luke 24:26: "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" So it is true of His church. She must first suffer humiliation, during this age, thereby *"filling up that which is lacking in Christ's afflictions"* (Col. 1:24b), and then she will be exalted and exercise dominion with Christ after the His Return during His Kingdom.

A major split between Dominionists and nonDominionists exists over whether or not the Church will be able to achieve millennial conditions during this age before Christ returns. Here we see the error of trying to impatiently reach ahead and prematurely introduce paradise upon earth in a way that is out of sync with God's plan. This misguided effort will only lead to a waste of resources and wrong participation with the world. The question of the timing of the Millennium affects the goals and objectives of believers today. Therefore it is extremely important that we correctly understand Scripture on this important issue.

Like many issues, no two Dominionists believe exactly the same on every point. However, there are specific things which most Dominionists believe. If we were to say that there were 20 items which characterize Dominion Theology (we are not saying there are), we would not expect every advocate to hold them all. One might believe 5 items, another 10, while another 16. Only a few people attempt to be consistent in what they believe. Most tend to pick up bits and pieces of different beliefs and blend them together. Therefore, we will attempt to inform you of overall characteristics so that you will be better able to spot influences of Dominion Theology. Now I will outline the two sources of Dominion Theology. They are the Reconstructionist wing and the Charismatic branch.

WHERE DID IT COME FROM? Reconstructionists

Reconstructionists believe that Adam lost his God-given dominion over the earth to Satan when he sinned. The God/Man, Jesus Christ, gained this authority back at His first coming and established the Kingdom. Jesus Christ is now at the right hand of the Father mediating this regained dominion through the church. As the church evangelizes the world, and faithfully applies "Biblical law" to every area of life, the Kingdom of God will gradually expand to cover the whole earth before Christ's return. Gary North has summarized the distinctives of Reconstructionism as follows: 1) The sovereignty of God; 2) Cornelius

Van Til's Biblical presuppositionalism as a framework for defending the faith; 3) Biblical law or theonomy (lit. Greek: *theos* means "God" and *nomos* means "law," God's law); 4) Covenant Theology; and 5) an optimistic view of prophecy called Postmillennialism. I have no problem with the way they teach the first two areas, however, the last three points lead Christians away from God's Word.

Theonomy

Reconstructionist, Greg Bahnsen describes theonomy as follows: "The Christian is obligated to keep the whole law of God as a pattern for sanctification and that this law is to be enforced by the civil magistrate where and how the stipulations of God so designate" (*Theonomy*, p. 34). This would mean that Christians should seek to directly apply the whole Mosaic law, except in those instances where the New Testament explicitly does away with a command. For example, Israel's sacrifices would no longer be required since Hebrews 8 says they are fulfilled in Christ. Or, the Sabbath has been changed from Saturday to Sunday because of the Resurrection. Theonomists insist that Christians should use their influence to restore the death penalty for such Old Testament sins as blasphemy, rebellion to parents, homosexuality, kidnaping, incest, unchastity (adultery), witchcraft, sacrifice to a false god, and the propagation of false doctrine.

Reconstructionists believe that:

- (1) *God is changeless.*
- (2) *God's law is a reflection of His perfect character.*
- (3) *God's laws are, therefore, changeless and binding on all human endeavor from the time the laws were given to the present.*

Further, they believe that this is supported by Matthew 5:17-19, which reads in part, "*Do not think that I came to abolish the Law . . . but to fulfill.*" Bahnsen concludes that "fulfill" means "confirm," therefore, the Old Testament law is still in force and binding upon all men today.

While all Scripture is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16), and the law is good if used lawfully (1 Tim. 1:8); it does not follow that Theonomy squares with the teachings of the Bible for the following reasons: First, The law was given to Israel and Israel alone. "*He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and His ordinances to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any nation*" (Psalm 147:19-20a). It is true that Christians are wise to gain insight and wisdom from God's revelation of Himself to Israel, but the church is not *obligated* to keep the Mosaic Law. The church *is obligated* to keep Christ's commandments (John 14:15) and the Law of Christ (Gal. 6:2; I Cor. 9:21).

Second, the nations are under the obligation of the Adamic Covenant (Gen. 1:15-17) and its post-flood renewal, the Mosaic Covenant (Gen. 8:20-9:17). Paul appeals to this relationship in the New Testament (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-22) as the legal basis for sin. Theonomists are correct to note God's changeless character. However, this does not mean that details of the stipulations of His covenants (law) have to apply equally to all peoples under all covenants. Only those who are party to a covenant are *obligated* to obey the laws of that covenant. Since all men are part to the Noahic Covenant, then all are obligated to obey rulers, as Romans 13 teaches. Those who are believers

in Christ are party to the New Covenant and are obligated to obey the Law of Christ.

Third, the Law was a past, temporary feature in God's unfolding plan for history (Gal. 3:10-4:11). The Law is never said, in the Bible, to be divided into different divisions, such as moral, civil, and ceremonial, rather it is viewed as a pain of glass; if you break one you break the whole. Galatians 3:15-22 clearly teaches that the law was temporary until Christ came. Now that He has come, we are no longer under the law (Gal. 3:25). Reconstructionists say that these passages only refer to the curse of the law and law/works as an approach to salvation, but that we are under the law as a way of life. Rushdoony has said, "Salvation is by the grace of God through faith, and sanctification is by law."⁴ Once again the Bible does not make those distinctions. The law was given to Israel as a way of life for a redeemed people, therefore when it was done away with in Christ, it was done away as a way of life and as a curse. With the coming of a new covenant is a new law--the law of Christ or the law of the Spirit. We are not to return to the bondwoman, as the Jerusalem Council instructed when they decreed, "*it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden*" (Acts 15:25).

Theonomic Reconstructionists often argue that God's law cannot change without impacting His immutability. However, God's law does, has, and will change. It is God and His character that is changeless. His law has changed in accordance with His unfolding plan and covenants.

Fourth, "fulfill" in Matthew 5:17 does not mean "confirm." Jesus was unlike the Pharisees who made void God's law by their traditions, rather He fulfilled or kept the law. Matthew stresses the fact that Christ fulfilled Old Testament prophecies as can be seen in Matthew 4:14-16. Christ fulfilled, not confirmed, the prophecy of Isaiah 9:1-2 by accomplishing what the Old Testament passage predicted.⁵

Covenant Theology

Covenant is the instrument by which God carries on a relationship with man. All Christians believe that the Biblical Covenants are central to understanding the Bible. However, that branch of theology known as "Covenant Theology," which the Christian Reconstruction movement is built upon, believes that the Church has replaced Israel within the plan of God. It is this feature of Covenant Theology, often called "Replacement Theology," which I believe is in error. Since this issue is being dealt with by another paper, I will only cover it further by quoting some examples of their belief.

Ray Sutton has said,
So, the historical difference is that God's first bride was Israel of the Old Covenant. As a *people*, she was divorced and excommunicated. . .

⁴R. J. Rushdoony, "Foreword" to Greg Bahnsen, *Theonomy In Christian Ethics*, (The Craig Press, 1977), x.

⁵For a more detailed argument of these points see Wayne House and Thomas Ice, *Dominion Theology: Blessing or Curse?* (Multnomah Press, 1988), 85-138.

From the historic point of view there are two Israels, yet one true Israel. How so? The writer says God will make a "new" covenant with *Israel and Judah* (v. 8). In one sense this "newer" covenant was made with Israel when they returned from captivity in Babylon (Jer. 31:32). . . . But in a strict sense, the New Covenant was made with the Church. . . . This means the "Israel and Judah" of the New Covenant is the *Church*. The Church is the true son of Abraham and the new "Israel of God."⁶

David Chilton writes, Ethnic Israel was excommunicated for its apostasy and will never again be God's Kingdom. . . . the Bible does not tell of any future plan for Israel as a *special* nation.⁷ The Bible promises the restoration of Israel as a *people*, but not necessarily as a *State*. . . . Even assuming, however, that there is still a State of Israel when the Jews are converted, Israel would simply be one Christian nation among many, with no special blessing. The people of genetic Israel will be part of the covenantal tree of life, but there is no longer any religious significance belonging to Palestine.⁸

The father of the Reconstruction movement, R. J. Rushdoony declares,

The fall of Jerusalem, and the public rejection of physical Israel as the chosen people of God, meant also the deliverance of the true people of God, the church of Christ.⁹

The Lord stated the harsh reality: the "Jews" are not the true Jews or Israel of God any longer, but a synagogue or assembly of Satan, the opposer of God. They must be seen historically, not sentimentally or idealistically.¹⁰

Every attempt to bring the Jew back into prophecy as a Jew is to give *race* and *works* (for racial descent is a human work) a priority over *grace* and *Christ's work* and is nothing more or less than paganism.¹¹

Postmillennialism

The Reconstructionist view of Postmillennialism believes that Christ established His mediatorial Kingdom at His first coming. However, the glory of the Kingdom has yet to reach its climax. Therefore, as the Church preaches the gospel and is faithful in applying

⁶Ray Sutton, *That You May Prosper: Dominion By Covenant*, (Institute for Christian Economics, 1987), 273-4.

⁷David Chilton, *Paradise Restored: An Eschatology of Dominion*, (Reconstruction Press, 1985), 224.

⁸Ibid, 130.

⁹R. J. Rushdoony, *Thy Kingdom Come: Studies in Daniel and Revelation*, (Thoburn Press, 1970), 82.

¹⁰Ibid, 108.

¹¹Ibid, 134.

"Biblical law," then the Kingdom expands to gradually fill the whole earth. Reconstructionists teach that Deuteronomy 28 (the blessings and cursings given to Israel) explains both personal and institutional success and failure in terms of how obedient people are to its demands. This is the means, they say, by which disease and death will be all but eliminated before Christ returns to earth at the end of His rule, which will have been mediated through the Church.

Paul Lee Tan has noted that

Conservative postmillennialists believe that the kingdom will be brought in through Gospel preaching and influence. Liberal postmillennialists however think that education, social reform, legislation, and human endeavor will bring in the kingdom.¹²

I believe that the current brand of neoPostmillennialism being advocated by Reconstructionists is a strange blend of *both* the conservative and liberal elements. By Tan's definition it is conservative in that they sincerely believe that God will produce this millennial state through the power of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the Gospel. However, on the other hand, they equally believe and teach that believers are responsible for effecting social and political reform as they educate in terms of a Biblical worldview. However, they truly hate the liberal Social Gospel movement which developed out of liberal postmillennialism in the previous century. This is why they have systematically replaced it with a *conservative* social and political agenda and have reentered the arena.

Current day Reconstructionists use most of the old arguments that liberal postmillennialists have used in the past. Arguments like, we have an optimistic view of the future, while you are pessimistic. Reconstructionists call premillennialists "pessimillennialists." Reconstructionists are critical of fellow believers who "just" preach the gospel and are not involved socially and politically, as were the old liberals. Reconstructionists are busy working out social and political theory, as were the old liberals. This brings us to the issue of the historical development of postmillennialism.

Postmillennialism was the last of the three major millennial eschatologies to develop. It began to arise, especially in England, among some Puritans by 1640.¹³ John Owen would be an example of this new movement. However, it did maintain the view that the current age is now the millennium as medieval Amillennialism taught. In addition, it appears to have benefited from a few themes which had been revived by a

¹²Paul Lee Tan, *The Interpretation of Prophecy*, (Assurance Publishers, 1974), 125.

¹³See Iain Murray, *The Puritan Hope: Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy*, (Banner of Truth, 1971) for a postmillennial view of the rise and impact of postmillennialism. However, Robert G. Clouse sees premillennialism having a more influential, early role with Puritans than Murray seems willing to admit. Clouse, "Millennium, Views of the," edited by Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Baker Book House, 1984), 714-18. Also Clouse, "The Rebirth of Millenarianism," edited by Peter Toon, *Puritans, The Millennium And the Future of Israel: Puritan Eschatology 1600 to 1660*, (James Clarke & Co. LTD., 1970), 42-65.

mild form of premillennialism which came on the scene in the early 1600's. These included the idea of an earthly millennium and the future conversion of the Jews.

During the early 1600's it is sometimes hard for scholars to distinguish between the mild form of premillennialism and the early, developing postmillennialism. One example of such confusion is Thomas Godwin, whom some say was a postmil, while other say he was premil. The reason for this appears to be that early postmillennialism and mild premillennialism both stressed a future earthly kingdom, as well as the conversion of the Jews and some from both views saw a future, restored national Israel.

The systematizer and popularizer of postmillennialism was the Anglican, Unitarian Daniel Whitby in 1703. Whitby believed that the Kingdom of God "was coming closer and that it would arrive through the same kind of effort that had always triumphed in the past."¹⁴

Reconstructionist Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr. has made a similar point.

The point of Christian reconstructionism that is a main bone of contention in the wider debate today, is not that it teaches the victory of God's kingdom on earth (most standard dispensationalists teach that there will be almost 1000 years of victory), but that it teaches the victory of God's kingdom on earth *during and continuous with our present era.*¹⁵

John Cotton in the seventeenth brought postmillennialism to the American colonies. Apart from him, it appears that most of the visible Colonial theologians were not postmil, as is popularly believed, but rather premillennial or amillennial. According to one historian, premillennialism was the dominant view among the American Puritan fathers. They go on to say that "we know that for a hundred years the large mass of New England Christians knew nothing of a post-millennial advent."¹⁶

It was Jonathan Edwards, influenced by Whitby,¹⁷ who really brought postmillennialism to America in any significant way. He "emphasized the place of America in the establishment of millennial conditions upon the earth."¹⁸ Edwards saw the "Great Awakening" as the millennium breaking upon the scene.

Taylorism and New England theology in the 1800's were the primary cause for the spread of postmillennialism in the United States. From about 1825 until about 1890, postmillennialism was the most commonly held eschatology in America. However, both New England theology and its eschatology, postmillennialism, degenerated into the Social Gospel

¹⁴Clouse, "Millennium, Views of the," 717.

¹⁵Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., "The Reduction of Christianity: A review article," *The Counsel of Chalcedon*, (Vol. X, Nos. 2 & 3; April - May, 1988), 31.

¹⁶Daniel T. Taylor & H. L. Hastings, *The Reign of Christ on Earth*, (Marshall Brothers, 1893), 296.

¹⁷Ibid., Clouse.

¹⁸Ibid.

toward the end of the 1800's. The Reconstructionist movement is the first significant revival of postmillennialism since that time.

The distilled essence of Reconstructionist, postmillennialism is said to be, according to Greg Bahnsen, its essential optimism for the kingdom in the present age. This confident attitude in the power of Christ's Kingdom, the power of its gospel, the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit, the power of prayer, and the progress of the great commission sets postmillennialism apart from the essential pessimism of amillennialism and premillennialism.¹⁹

Another major feature of Reconstructionist postmillennialism is that they are *preterist*. Preterist is Latin for "past." They believe that about 90% of eschatology was fulfilled in the past, between A.D. 30 and A.D. 70. Their leading spokesman on this issue is David Chilton who has said that the Olivet Discourse and the Book of Revelation have already been fulfilled, not at the end of history, but in the middle of history.

The Book of Revelation is not about the Second Coming of Christ. It is about the destruction of Israel and Christ's victory over His enemies . . . the world coming as used in the Book of Revelation never refers to the Second Coming. Revelation prophesies the judgment of God on apostate Israel; and while it does briefly point to events beyond its immediate concerns, that is done merely as a "wrap-up," to show that the ungodly will never prevail against Christ's Kingdom.²⁰

Because of the above statement, Reconstructionists have taken away all of the passages in the New Testament which teach the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. They end up with no passages *from the Bible* which teaches the Second Coming. Reconstructionists do clearly believe in the Second Coming, however, they cannot support their belief from specific passages in the Bible. This is because they want to place all of the "coming" passages into the past.

This preterist, postmillennialism wreaks havoc with the details of Prophecy. Note the following examples:
The Great Tribulation took place in the Fall of Israel in A.D. 70.
The Great Apostasy happened in the first century and involved the Jewish rejection of Christ.

The Last Days are a term which applies only to Israel and the period leading up to their A.D. 70 judgment.

The Antichrist is a term to describe the widespread apostasy of the Church prior to the Fall of Jerusalem and not to a future person.

The Beast of Revelation was a symbol of both Nero and the Roman Empire.

The False Prophet of Revelation was the leadership of apostate Israel.

The Great Harlot of Revelation was apostate Jerusalem.

The Millennium is the present reign of Christians as kings on earth in the Kingdom established by Christ at His First Coming.

The Thousand Years of Revelation 20 is a large, rounded-off number containing the idea of a fullness of quantity, standing for manyness.

¹⁹Greg L. Bahnsen, *The Prima Facie Acceptability of Postmillennialism*, *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction* 3 (Winter 1976-77): 66.

²⁰David Chilton, *Days of Vengeance*, (Dominion Press, 1987), 43.

Armageddon will never be a literal battle, since Reconstructionists say there is no such place. It signifies the defeat of those who set themselves against God.

The First Resurrection of Revelation 20:5 is a spiritual resurrection referring our justification and regeneration in Christ.

The New Heaven and Earth has already begun as our salvation in Christ, both now and in eternity.

The New Jerusalem is the Church, now and forever.

Charismatics

Reconstructionist pastor, Joe Morecraft of Atlanta, has noted that Calvinists and Charismatics are uniting around Dominion Theology. Morecraft said,

God is mixing the *light* of the Reformed Faith with the *heat* of the Charismatic Movement. A person can be in the light, and freeze to death. He can also be warm but be in total darkness. It is the mixture of light and heart that bring forth life and growth.²¹

The Dominionist heat being generated by Charismatics is often called "Kingdom Now," because they believe that we are now in the Kingdom, as do their Reconstructionist brethren. The language of Kingdom Now often begins with a complaint about the inactivity of most Christians due to their belief in the Rapture. Instead, they say, the Church should be involved in expanding God's Kingdom now, and preparing for the great revival which is soon to sweep the globe. An example of this rhetoric comes from Earl Paulk.

Some of the strongest fundamental churches still preach that Christ will return to gather national Israel unto Himself, and I say that is deception and will keep the Kingdom of God from coming to pass! Likewise, those who are waiting for Christ to catch a few people away so God can judge the world are waiting in vain!

Jesus Christ has now done all He can do, and He waits at the right hand of His Father, until you and I as sons of God, become manifest and make this world His footstool. He is waiting for us to say, "Jesus, we have made the kingdoms of this world the Kingdom of our God, and we are ruling and reigning in Your world. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."²²

Kingdom Now Beliefs

Dominionist and Kingdom Now advocate, Dennis Peacocke is one of the most visible and vocal organizers of this movement. He has said that "Christians should go out into the world and do far more than simply evangelize: they should be preparing to rule. It is their destiny."²³ Peacocke is doing far more than simply evangelizing as he is going around the country organizing and holding conferences on how to

²¹ Joseph C. Morecraft, III, "The Christian Reconstruction Dialogue," *The Council of Chalcedon*, December, 1987, 6.

²² Earl Paulk, *The Handwriting on the Wall* (Chapel Hill Harvester Church, n.d.), 20.

²³ Dennis Peacocke, *Winning The Battle For The Minds of Men*, (Alive & Free, 1987), 147.

conquer your city for Christ. (This means far more than evangelizing.) These conferences include the nuts and bolts of social and political theory and activism. In any given area, these conference have attracted participation from over 50 churches. Not bad for a new movement. Peacocke is associated with Bob Mumford, his spiritual shepherd and Jay Grimstead of Coalition on Revival (COR).

Essentials to the Kingdom Now message is that the Church has failed. Since the Church has failed, then God is now raising up a new agenda and leaders to refocus the direction of the Church and push on to Victory before the Return of Christ. Most in the Kingdom Now movement would be considered premillennial, however, they do not believe that the Church age ends in apostasy, but rather that there will be a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit and a great revival shortly before the Return of Christ. This revival will have such a great impact on the world that even the social and political institutions of society will be affected for righteousness. This is why God is restoring the power of the Apostolic Church with the modern day return of the power gifts to aid in this revival.

Posttribulationist James McKeever is typical of this kind of talk when he declares that

It is exciting to know that those power gifts are going to be restored in a very dramatic way at the end of this age. . . . Today, in the United States also, Christian--at the command of God--are taking dominion over nature. . . . We are beginning to see occasional glimpses of the power gifts returning. There is a new thing that the Holy Spirit is going to do. It will not be a renewed charismatic movement. It will be a completely new thing. In it, the power gifts of God are going to be poured out in abundance upon His bondslaves, as they are sealed on their foreheads with the seal of God, and thus protected from much of the plagues that are coming upon the earth, and protected from the mark of the beast.²⁴

Reconstructionists and Charismatics are not the same on many issues, but they do share optimism concerning the future of the Church before the Return of Christ. This seems to account for their increasing compatibility and for the fact that they often form coalitions together and speak at each other's conferences.

A doctrine within the Charismatic movement known as the Latter Rain or the Manifest Sons of God has many teachings relating to Dominion which correspond with the notions of Reconstructionists. These are increasingly being preached in part or in whole in many Charismatic circles which creates an affinity toward Dominion Theology.

Kingdom Now teaches that the maturity of the Church will be accomplished through the restoration of the gifted men mentioned in Ephesians 4:11. This viewpoint, received as a new revelation, believes that the 1950's saw the restoration of evangelists; the 1960's the pastor; the 1970's the teacher; the 1980's the prophet; and the 1990's will see a revived office of apostles. The result of this supposed return to first century Christianity will reap the following result:

²⁴James McKeever, *The Rapture Book* (Omega Publications, 1987), 194, 196, 198.

The restoration of the apostle to full recognition and authority will bring the Church to maturity, unity, and proper Church structure. Signs and wonders will be wrought which will cause the world to look to the Church for answers and miracles needed. Whole nations will turn to God. The Church will become glorious and victorious and cause the glory of the Lord to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. When all five-fold ministries are fully restored, all the saints are moving in their membership ministry, and the Church is unified and perfected, when Jesus can reign with His Bride/Church. Planet Earth will be purified to become the headquarters for Jesus and His Church to rule and reign over His vast domain forever and ever and ever forevermore. Amen!²⁵

This branch of Dominion Theology supports many of their view by appealing to passages which refer to Israel, not the Church, and apply them to these last days of the Church Age. Passages like Acts 3:19-21, and the "period of restoration of all things," are a promise to contemporary Church Age Christians and not to Israel of their future, promised millennium. Also, Kingdom Now is very much involved in Replacement Theology. James McKeever has said that it is "time to put an end to the false teaching that the Hebrews living on the shores of the Mediterranean are Israel and for the church to recognize and claim its inheritance: the church is Israel."²⁶ Restorationist Rick Godwin, who is one of the primary influences upon evangelist James Robison, made a similar, even anti-semitic, remark when he declared concerning ethnic Israel,

they are not chosen, they are cursed! . . . Yes, and you hear Jerry Falwell and everybody else say the reason America's great is because America's blessed Israel. They sure have. Which Israel? The Israel--the church. . . . That's the Israel of God, not that garlic one over on the Mediterranean Sea!²⁷

HOW DOES DOMINION THEOLOGY AFFECT ISRAEL AND JEWISH EVANGELISM?

It is my opinion that Dominion Theology negatively impacts evangelical support for Israel and for Jewish evangelism.

Anti-Semitism

There appears to be a creeping attitude of anti-Semitism being fostered by the theology of Dominion Theology. We are seeing a decline in support among evangelicals for the nation of Israel. In "Dispatch From Jerusalem (4th quarter)," a newsletter of the pro-Israel organization, Bridges for Peace, editor Clarence Wagner "has noticed signs of diminishing support for Israel among charismatics. The change

²⁵Bill Haman, "God's Wage of Restoration for the 1980's," *Thy Kingdom Come*, (Vol. 9, No. 8; Aug., 1987), 11.

²⁶James McKeever, "Wake up Church--You Alone are Israel!" *End-Times News Digest* (Issue 121, October, 1988), 19.

²⁷Rick Godwin, taped message at Metro Church, Edmond, OK, April 11, 1988.

in attitude is due to the influence of 'Kingdom Now' or Reconstructionist theology."²⁸ Wagner adds that this theology, sees no significance in national Israel today, and denies that Israel has a place in God's plan or His covenants. According to this view, the Old Testament covenants are for the church, the true Israel, and the curses are for Israel.²⁹

Reconstructionists have argued that lack of support for modern Israel does not make one anti-semitic. Steve Schlissel, a Reconstructionist pastor of Jewish decent has written:

Dispensationalists believe that the Jewish people have a title to the land that transcends virtually any other consideration, including unbelief, rebellion and hatred toward Christ and His church. Consequently, anti-zionism is equated with anti-semitism.

The reconstructionist, on the other hand, makes a distinction. He believes that the Jewish people may exercise the title only when they comply with the condition of repentance and faith. He has nothing against Jews living in "eretz yisrael" *per se*, but he recognizes that the far more significant question is Israel's *faith*.³⁰

Schlissel makes a good point: that anti-zionism is not the same as anti-semitism. This is clearly true since some Jews are also anti-zionists. They believe that only the personal appearance of Messiah will fulfill the land promises to Israel. However, Schlissel is the only Reconstructionist that I have seen in print who views these things this way. He believes that Israel does have a special future as a nation, not the view of other Reconstructionists. He does not believe that the Church has replaced Israel and become the New Israel, not the view of other Reconstructionists. So Schlissel's argument has not removed the factors from Reconstructionist theology which have historically lead to anti-Semitism.

Schlissel has pointed out that postmillennialism does not have to stand for a replacement view of Israel. Many older postmillennialists held this view and in fact were some of the earliest Christian Zionists and founded some of the first organizations to evangelize the Jews. That type of postmillennialism, which is not on the rise today, was also more compatible with premillennialism. However, that is not the brand of postmillennialism being cultivated and developed today within Dominion Theology.

I also, believe that the Reconstructionist preterist interpretation of Prophecy adds to the fire of leading one toward anti-Semitism, because it's interpretation gives a wrong proportion of the rejection of Christ on the Jews.

²⁸Cited in "Charismatics and Israel," *Countdown*. . . , (Vol. 3, No. 1; Mar., 1988), 15.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Steve M. Schlissel, "To Those Who Wonder if Reconstructionism is Anti-Semitic," *The Counsel of Chalcedon* (Vol. X, No. 5; July, 1988), 13.

I believe that there is the *potential* for anti-semitism within the Reconstructionist movement.³¹ The danger lies in their (mis)understanding of God's plan concerning the future of the nation of Israel. Reconstructionists advocate the replacement of Old Testament Israel with the Church (replacement theology), often called the "New Israel." They believe that Israel does not have a future different than any other "Christian" nation. "Although Israel will someday be restored to the true faith, the Bible does not tell of any future plan for Israel as a special nation."³² This type of theology has in the past been responsible for creating a climate in the Church which has normally lead to anti-Semitic deeds.

Reconstructionists must be commended for their proper understanding from Romans 11 and other passages, that a large number of Jews will be saved in the future. This is an advance over amillennialism, which often does not take this prophecy seriously. However, since they reject the Bible's teaching that Israel as God's covenant nation has a destiny, they make statements that are very harsh toward that current nation. For example Gary North has boasted that he has a book already in his computer for when "Israel gets pushed into the sea, or converted to Christ."³³ One Reconstructionist pastor, in criticizing the approach to Scripture which sees a future for national Israel, reeled off the following explicatives against Israel by calling it "a sinful, apostate, Christ-rejecting, blasphemous, Middle Eastern nation as 'God's Chosen People.'"³⁴

Impact on Jewish Evangelism

I believe that Dominion Theology has/had a negative affect upon evangelism in general. This is because they believe that the Church's calling is not just evangelism, but social and political as well. They often cite the failure of the Church for not having a greater social and political impact and therefore blame those who are not involved in these issues as contributing to the decline of our culture. Because they are fighting a two-front battle, this takes resources and effort that could be spent on evangelism and spends it on other areas. You may think that this is good, nevertheless, I see it as a drain on evangelism.

Dominion Theology has a negative effects on Jewish evangelism because of their Replacement Theology and Preterist views, as already explained. This would tend to stir-up images of Holocaust and not

³¹Two essays on this subject are Gary North, "Some Problems with 'Messianic' Judaism", *Biblical Economics Today* (Vol. VII, No. 3., Apr./May, 1984). James B. Jordan, "Christian Zionism and Messianic Judaism", Appendix B in David Chilton's *The Days of Vengeance* (Dominion Press, 1987), 612-21.

³²David Chilton, *Paradise Restored* (Reconstruction Press, 1985), 224.

³³A personal letter from Gary North to Peter Lalonde, April 30, 1987.

³⁴A personal letter from John A. Gilley, of Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church of Oklahoma City, to Thomas Ice, November 9, 1987, 4.

Pentecost in most Jews minds. This will make the nonChristian Jews even more cautious of talking with a Christian.

Dominion Theology sees the Church rising to greatness and glory as they take over the world, thus making the Jews jealous, then their conversion after they have made considerable progress toward taking over the world. It would seem to me that this would cause one to put Jewish Evangelism on the back burner.

Dominionists complain that Premillennial, Christian Zionists are overly concerned with the modern state of Israel. However, the effect that this has had on Jewish evangelism has been positive, in that it tends to make Christians participate in seeing the Jews converted to their Messiah, because of their view of God's plan for His people.

It would be my opinion that the more that a Christian/Jewish evangelistic effort moves in the direction of Dominion Theology, the more it will kill their desire for Jewish Evangelism. The Dominionist tends to only be involved in evangelism as he is going about the task of reforming society, if ever.

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Is
**Dominion
Teaching
Dominance
and
Destruction
of
Israel?**

The Reconstructionists:

These extremists of America's Religious Right movement espouse a theocracy based on God's "New Covenant" which excludes the Jewish people, religion and nation. The Reconstructionists envision their U.S. "Christian Government" as based on Old Testament law, Jesus' promises and their own moral standards... they are the "new" Israel. Following are excerpts from writings of several of the leaders of Reconstructionism:



**From David Chilton's
"Days of Vengeance"**

"Modern apostate Jews have absolutely no theological, and therefore no historical right to the land of Palestine." (p. 618)

"Israel is now a sacrificial corpse [Matt. 24:28],... [Rev. 19:17-18]." (p. 489)

"The irony in Revelation, of course, is that God is now ordering the trumpets of holy war blown against Israel herself." (p.234)

"Since Israel was to be destroyed, the apostles spent most of their time during the Last Days summoning God's people to a religious separation from her, urging them to align themselves instead with the Church [cf. Acts 2:37-40; 3:19-26' 4:8-12; 5:27-32]. This is St. John's message in revelation. God's people must not seek to reform Israel, with its new religion of Judaism, but must abandon her to her fate." (p. 448)

"St. John grieves for Israel, considered as the covenant people. They are about to be disinherited and executed, never to be restored as the covenant nation [Rev. 10:8-10]." (p. 269)

"As Christians we see both Jews and Moslems as groups that have rejected Christ as Messiah, and who have opposed the true faith. If they want to convert, we rejoice. If they want to kill each other off, then that is too bad, but let them have at it — there's nothing we can do about it." (p. 614)

**From George Grant's
"The Changing of the Guard"**

"Sodom and Gomorrah were not destroyed simply because they were evil. God judged those cities with fire and brimstone because not even ten righteous men could be found to guard them.

"God made it clear to Abraham that when there are no guardians, judgement is inevitable.

"God has appointed his people to be priests, or guardians, of the earth.

"Adam was to be a priest, as were Aaron and the Levites. But each of them failed to do his duty properly, and as a result, destruction came upon the land.

"The call to the priesthood has not ever been stilled. Jesus has passed the mantle of Israel to His disciples.

"Now we are to be the salt of the earth, preserving it from sin and

serving it as faithful priests.

"The founders of the American republic understood this essential calling and thus fully integrated politics and faith.

"The dangers we face as a nation would be greatly reduced if only we had such men today." (pgs. 41, 42)

**From Gary North's
"Unconditional Surrender"**

"... he uttered this mighty prayer on the enemies of God: "Let them be confounded that persecute me, but let not me be confounded: let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed: bring upon them the day of evil, and destroy them with double destruction" (Jeremiah 17:18). That's how our king wants us to pray against His enemies: **let them be destroyed**. If they repent, of course, they are no longer His enemies, which is why it is also legitimate to pray for their conversion, meaning their formal signing of God's peace treaty." (p. 63)

"Why? Christ informed them of a new era: 'And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (Luke 22:29-30). They were now Christ's judges. They would bring the law to the nations as ambassadors who were already appointed judges. The war against Satan was about to be won, in time and on earth, at Calvary. God's institutional kingdom was about to burst the bottles of national Israel." (p. 118)

**From Earl Paulk's
"To Whom Is God Betrothed?"**

"The Church must know that she is Israel restored, the only covenant relationship that God has in the world today." (p. 3)

"...praying for the peace of Jerusalem — is to patronize a nation that has rejected Jesus Christ." (p. 4)

"...financial blessing to the Church. We have created a false mentality within the Church that one's blessings are contingent upon the attitude of blessing Israel as a nation rather than blessing the Church, God's Israel today." (p.5)

"The tremendous error of waiting for the restoration of Israel as God's 'special people' is very evident. The Church is the restoration of Israel." (p. 18)

"From the beginning when man was placed in the Garden, God com-

manded him to take dominion. That command to make the earth God's footstool has been passed on to the Church." (p. 25)

"The god of mammon rules our allegiance to Israel. More money than we would like to believe is being poured into this deception." (p. 43)

**From Dennis Peacocke's
"Winning the Battle for
the Minds of Men"**

"Christians should go out into the world and do far more than simply evangelize: they should be preparing to rule. It is their destiny." (p. 147)

"In redefining the 'separation of church and state,' liberals have temporarily gained some ground, but in the long run they have only created a much more militant kind of conservative christian activist." (p. 56)

"Whoever sets the civil laws rules the nations, this is why Christ told Christians in the Great Commission to be th ones who set them." (p. 61)

"Liberators must begin to pray for removal, and in some cases, destruction of apostate systems." (p. 166)

**Excerpts from "God and Politics,"
a documentary hosted by
Bill Moyers on Public Television
(show #10)**

Dr. Roushas John Rushdoony:
"The Constitution gives us procedural law, not a substantive morality, so anyone can use the Constitution for good or ill. So the Constitution gives us a good procedural manual, and is on the whole a very good one. But it has to be the people as they change and govern themselves; the Constitution cannot save this country."

**From Rushdoony's
"The Institute of Biblical Law"
(Vol. 1)**

"If men have unrestricted free speech and free press, then there is no freedom for truth, in that no standard is permitted whereby the promulgation or publication of a lie can be judged and punished" (p. 584)

"Whenever freedom is made into the absolute, the result is not freedom but anarchism." (p. 583)

"But a society which makes freedom its primary goal will lose it, because it has made, not responsibility, but freedom from responsibility, its purpose." (p. 581)

ed in part from the "Commentary," column of
1 from Jerusalem, 4th Quarter, 1987.

Deliver Us From Evil"

3 recently returned from a speaking tour of
during which I covered a total of 32,000
and visited 25 cities in two months. Having
a similar tour about a year ago, I was able
to a perceptible Charismatic/Pentecostal
of the evangelical Christian community,
Israel. While in the past this community
in general, be counted as a friend of Israel,
3 a new and very vocal challenge from
that not only jeopardizes this supportive
ship, but ultimately leads to an anti-
and anti-Israel position. This new wave of
comes out of the Kingdom or Dominion
y espoused by "Bishop" Earl Paulk from
GA, the Reconstructionist teachings of
orth from Texas, and their many disciples
than leadership positions.

3 teachers propose that the Church literal-
e over" religious, social, political, and
ic systems by any and every means, en-
odily living, and thereby bring about the
il Kingdom mentioned in the Bible.
ly, "Godly living" is according to their
n.

more radical "Reconstructionist" crowd ad-
execution for "evildoers" who do not
en up and repent, and even include unruly
ers in their list. In evaluating this position,
mes patently clear that ultimately an
"p" is anyone who does not agree with
While most rational people would realize
se teachings are extreme, the reconstruc-
teachers do not always present their entire
y with all of its implications. On the sur-
y teachings appear to be "righteous,"
attractive to those who want to live for God
His will on earth. Only upon a deeper in-
1 of their writings do these extreme
3s get revealed.

interesting to note that Nazism started on
sis of "right-ness." They were against
s — prostitution, homosexuality, por-
ny, etc. Unfortunately Jews and even
ns who opposed them were lumped into
gory of evildoers and exterminated.
ingdom Now and Reconstructionist stand
l and the Jewish people is a repeat of the
agement theology that has motivated the
against Jewish people since the first cen-
tically, their view is that God has cursed

the Jews and has no place for them outside of the
Church. This leaves them ultimately concluding
that "the only good Jew is a converted Jew."

They see no significance in national Israel to-
day, and deny that Israel has a place in God's
plans or His covenants. According to this view,
the Old Testament covenants are for the Church,
the true Israel, and the curses are for the Jews. To
quote Paulk, "God's dealings were no longer with
national Israel (the Jews), but instead were with
spiritual Israel (the Church)." (*Ultimate Kingdom*,
p. 231. "What was termed 'Israel' in the scripture
is now the people of God, the Church. The pro-
mises of God are fulfilled in national Israel."
(*Ultimate Kingdom*, p. 201)

Sound familiar? Knowing a bit of Church
history will convince you that this teaching is not
new at all, but the formula for disaster throughout
the ages. Even Jesus said that His Kingdom is not
of this world. When we try to play God and enforce
His law on earth, we end up with Crusades, In-
quisitions, and even the Holocaust. Why?
Because power corrupts, and absolute power cor-
rupts absolutely. Those with the power ultimately
lose sight of God, and become the task master.

While you may not think that this Kingdom or
Dominion teaching is an aberration that will not
last, it is growing quickly and finding adherents
even among these well-known Christian leaders.
Non-Charismatics may say that this will not affect
them because they don't listen to the Charisma-
tic/Pentecostals anyway. However, this is not the
case. The Charismatic/Pentecostal church has
been very effective in communicating their point
of view over the radio and TV, and if this move-
ment spreads, it will spill over onto the whole
Church, greatly supported by the anti-Semites
who will encourage it.

— Clarence H. Wagner, Jr.

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*This publication is a public service of C.P.I.
with the purpose of informing conservative
religious activists as to the many false leaders
and organizations that are using the Christian
community to further their own political ambi-
tions. We would appreciate contact from our
readers, regardless of viewpoint, to provide
additional knowledge on this movement.*

Where They Belong...

Several of the authors noted herein have their
own organizations from which they promote
Reconstructionism and raise funds for same
(Paulk's Chapel Hill Harvester Church in Atlanta
has a parish of over 10,000 and 18 full-time
pastors). Chilton is an editor for the Institute for
Christian Economics. Peacocke is founder and
president of Strategic Christian Services.

Almost all of them are also involved in, and
serving on committees of, noted conservative/
political groups. Rushdoony and North are Con-
tributing Editors to *Conservative Digest*, along
with Jerry Falwell, Jesse Helms, Orrin Hatch,
Jack Kemp, Beverly LaHaye, Tim LaHaye, Marian
Welch and Bob Weiner.

Rushdoony and North appear again, with
Peacocke, on the Steering Committee of the
Coalition on Revival (C.O.R.). Their company on
this committee includes Donald Wildmon, Peter
Waldron, Ed McAteer and David Balsinger, plus
the LaHayes and Weiner again. The Director of
C.O.R. is Jay Grimstead, a former leader of The In-
ternational Council on Biblical Inerrancy.

The C.O.R. Steering Committee membership is
much too long to list here, but the personages are
a "Who's Who" of the Religious Right. In brief,
their influence is strong in American political af-
fairs, and cross-pollinated into Christian entities.
Given the axiom: "You are known by the company
you keep," anti-semitism and a reconstructionist
militancy may encompass the whole conservative
iceberg.

Should we worry when Dr. Gary North, afore-
mentioned as to influence in C.O.R. and the *Con-
servative Digest*, writes, "... political activism for
reconstruction of society should be an ongoing
covenantal, generational process."

Or when David Chilton intones in his *Days of
Vengeance*: "The basic message of Revelation is
about the duty of the Church to conquer the
world."

*But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but
the greatest of these is love. I Corinthians 13:13*