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## **J. N. Darby's Early Years**

### OVERVIEW

*How much do you know about the man who has had the greatest impact upon the study of biblical prophecy in the last 150 years? Find out more about how God has used one of His choice servants to impact His church's understanding of biblical prophecy. The author introduces you to human influences upon the life of J. N. Darby. God used Darby's life and ministry to formulate the system of theology known as dispensationalism and to recover and develop the pretribulational rapture of the church. It has been said of Mr. Darby that he has had the greatest influence upon Evangelicalism, and yet he is virtually unknown. This essay will help you become one of the few who know J. N. Darby.*

**J**ohn Nelson Darby (1800-1882) is the acknowledged father of systematized dispensationalism and a key modern developer of the pretribulational rapture. He conceptualized God's revelation in Scripture as a world and life view comprehending all of human history. Within the framework of this worldview, Darby emphasized the uniqueness of the church as a heavenly body, its necessary disjuncture with history, and its prophetic relationship relative to Israel. Moreover, Darby came to his distinction between Israel and the church very early in his Christian ministry, and he later confessed that this opinion never changed throughout his career.<sup>1</sup> Formative ideas and forces which influenced Darby's thinking concerning Israel and the church can be found quite early in his life.

### **A Biographical Sketch of J. N. Darby**

John Nelson Darby was born in London of Irish parents on November 18, 1800. His was an honorable family, relatives and close friends accomplished noteworthy deeds in British history. Darby's uncle was Admiral Sir Henry Darby, who commanded the Bellerophon in the Battle of the Nile. He was a close friend of Lord Nelson, who "to the great delight of the parents [J. N. Darby's], consented to be one of the sponsors at the christening of his friend's little nephew."<sup>2</sup> Thus "Nelson" was given to little John as his second Christian name.

In 1815, the family returned to Ireland to live in their ancestral castle. In that year J. N. Darby was admitted to Trinity College, Dublin. While there he won premiums (monetary awards) in science as well as classics, the two streams into which premiums, medals, and scholarships were divided. At the final examination, when a class "answers for a degree," students may choose to compete for the highest honors, a science or a classical gold medal. Darby graduated in 1819 as a Classical Gold Medalist.<sup>3</sup>

Although Darby trained for a career in law for three years, and then entered the Irish Chancery Bar in 1822, he abandoned the profession after only one year. Apparently he was in the grip of a deep spiritual struggle from 1818 to 1825, which led to his conversion.<sup>4</sup> Almost immediately Darby sought to serve Christ. In discussing this time he wrote, "I longed

for complete devotedness to the work of the Lord; my chief thought was to get around amongst the poor Catholics of Ireland."<sup>5</sup>

He was ordained as a deacon in 1825, and as a priest (curate) of the Church of England in 1826, by Archbishop Magee, serving the parish of Calary in the county of Wicklow.<sup>6</sup> His devotion to proclaiming the gospel drove him to neglect his own health and appearance. "He spent his patrimony in schools and charity..."<sup>7</sup> and thus he endeared himself to the local people. Moreover, they evidently responded well both to the man and to his message, such that "Roman Catholics were passing over to Protestantism many hundreds in a week."<sup>8</sup> Certainly this man was not a cold, calculating, ruthlessly objective hairsplitter at that time!

After 27 months of labor, the young curate faced another crisis. Goddard observed, "Several things bothered him, chief of which were: the absence of a true catholicity in the Establishment, its unblushing Erastianism [the belief in state supremacy in ecclesiastical causes], and its clericalism."<sup>9</sup> The ecclesiastical crisis Darby was to wrestle with forms the backdrop for the "Great Divide"-his conclusion that the unique calling and nature of the church sets it apart from Israel as far as heaven is from earth.

## **The Great Divide**

Between 1826 and 1828, Darby came to a personally painful decision relative to the established Church of England in which he ministered. Although he did not immediately separate from it, the theological basis for such a separation was in place. His parting of the ways with the established church corresponded with his new understanding of the division between Israel and the true church. The "Great Divide" for Darby is thus true in two senses. The immediate occasion for the divide was provided by the very man who had ordained him: Archbishop Magee of Dublin.

## **The Ecclesiastical Crisis**

The Erastian controversy. Darby loved the church, which for him in 1826 meant the Anglican Church. The established church was a barrier against Popery, and so Darby did not at first despise it. Only after he became convinced that "it [the established church] has ceased to be such a barrier, and, for many, has been the road into it [Popery], and that infidel principles have been judicially pronounced to be fully permissible in it,"<sup>10</sup> did he make the break.

The occasion for Darby's serious doubts about Anglicanism was "The Metropolitan Charge and Clerical Petition." Archbishop Magee denounced the Roman Catholic Church before Parliament, and at the same time claimed special favors and protection for the Anglican Church.<sup>11</sup> Along with the Petition, Archbishop Magee "imposed, within the limits of his jurisdiction, the oaths of allegiance and supremacy"<sup>12</sup> and this caused the evangelistic work Darby maintained to cease.

Darby believed it was the duty of Christ's ministers to keep themselves free of earthly entanglements to minister God's grace. He saw the delivering of souls from Romanism as a way to partially setup the kingdom of God before Christ returned. To counter Rome by adopting its earthly method, of courting the glory of this world, would be contrary to faith. True believers must identify with Jesus Christ in His humiliation while they await His return.

Darby's treatise, "Considerations Addressed to the Archbishop of Dublin and the Clergy who signed the Petition to the House of Commons for Protection,"<sup>13</sup> was written in 1827, but it was not published until years later. Three themes, which became central truths of Christianity for him, are already seen in it 1) the purity and heavenly nature of the church; 2) the presence of the Holy Spirit in true believers to empower for ministry; 3) the future prospect of the church, i.e., the second coming of Christ. It should be noted that these themes were formulated within the matrix of his evangelistic interests, not because of mere academic pursuits.

Darby's accident and convalescence. An accidental fall from a horse turned out to be another event that propelled Darby toward the "Great Divide" as it related to the church. His horse was frightened and threw him against a doorpost. Darby's leg was injured and required surgery in Dublin. During part of 1827, he was forced into convalescence and relative seclusion. During this extended period

Darby cast himself upon God and His Word alone for support. Out of that time of reduced activity, his thinking concerning the basis for personal assurance of salvation, the authority of the Scripture, the church as the body of Christ, Christ's second coming for His church, and Israel's place in a subsequent dispensation, became clear.<sup>14</sup>

Since he was on crutches, he could not attend corporate worship or immediately make public his developing views. Although he could not then work out the details of his eschatology, he said:

In my retreat, the 32nd chapter of Isaiah taught me clearly, on God's behalf, that there was still an economy to come, of His ordering; a state of things in no way established as yet. The consciousness of my union with Christ had given me the present heavenly portion of the glory, whereas this chapter clearly sets forth the corresponding earthly part.<sup>15</sup>

Concerning his belief in the restoration of original truths to himself, Darby stated that the "truths themselves were then revealed of God, through the action of His Spirit, by reading His word."<sup>16</sup> The earthly/heavenly distinction between Israel and the church had taken form in Darby's thinking.

Separation from the Establishment. Darby published his first tract in 1828, titled "Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ."<sup>17</sup> Crutchfield aptly noted, "It is important to observe here that Darby's disaffection for the Church of England was not precipitated by prophetic teachings."<sup>18</sup> Darby's eschatology grows out of his ecclesiology. He did not publish his first work on prophecy, "Reflections upon the Prophetic Inquiry and the Views Advanced in It," until 1829.<sup>19</sup>

In his "Considerations" of 1828, Darby expounded his thesis that the real unity of the church is not in outward form but in inward faith in Jesus Christ. Darby reasoned that the Anglican Church had been delivered from the secular dominion of the Roman Church, but that it had not been delivered from the spirit of apostasy that gave rise to Romanism. Instead of rendering a witness of a heavenly Lord and His coming to the earthly system, the established church and the dissenting ones were "using the advocacy of... unbelievers... to obtain a share in, or keep to themselves the secular advantages and honors of that world out of which the Lord came to redeem us."<sup>20</sup> The only way Christ's church can avoid the world and be united is by a work of the Spirit, following the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the Word, and living with a view to the Lord's return.<sup>21</sup> The central-ity of the Lord's table appears in association with this last theme. Darby summarized his belief: "In a word, we find His death is the centre of communion till His coming again .... Accordingly, the out-ward symbol and

instrument of unity is the partaking of the Lord's supper..<sup>22</sup> Even in this tract, the church's heavenly character differentiates it from Israel, whose portion is earthly.

The exact time of Darby's renunciation of the Establishment is difficult to determine. Neat by suggested that Darby was not comfortable in breaking entirely with the Church of England as late as November, 1829.<sup>23</sup> Soon thereafter the Brethren at Dublin "broke bread" together and thus broke fellowship with the Establishment. Darby could not stay in a system which would, in his mind, exclude the apostle Paul from preaching because "he had no letters of orders."<sup>24</sup> The system was wrong and had to go.

A spiritual church, joined to a heavenly Christ, indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit, and awaiting their Lord's return: This is the heart of Darby's doctrine, resulting from his passing through the ecclesiastical crisis.

## **The Eschatological Climate**

The early Darby. As the details of Darby's new ecclesiological decisions began to take shape in his mind, their impact on his eschatology started to show. The ecclesiological-eschatological synthesis that so characterizes later dispensationalism became clearer as his thinking progressed. Thus Darby before the Powerscourt conferences (1831-33) deserves special attention.

In a letter dated 1863, Darby summarized truths clarified in his mind in the course of his conversion experience. Among them are juxtaposed: "the church as His body; Christ coming to receive us to Himself; and collaterally with that, the setting up of a new earthly dispensation, from Isaiah 32."<sup>25</sup> From his earliest statements, Darby recognized the earthly/heavenly distinction between Israel and the church as the key to his ecclesiological-eschatological synthesis.<sup>26</sup>

From his first tract on prophetic themes, "Reflections upon 'The Prophetic Inquiry' and the Views Advanced in It,"<sup>27</sup> dated 1829, Darby is openly premillennial. What is rarely mentioned is that the early Darby espoused a premillennial historicism before the famous Powerscourt prophetic conferences of 1831-33. Years later, he added a footnote to his paper "On 'Days' Signifying 'Years' in Prophetic Language," written in 1830, disclaiming the historicism taught in it, but honestly leaving the paper unedited because it "may serve to shew historically the progress made in the apprehension of truth."<sup>28</sup> Apparently, Darby saw no immediate connection between futurism, the pretribulational rapture of the church, and his new synthesis which so differentiated Israel and the church.

In his "Reflections upon 'The Prophetic Inquiry'" (1829), Darby took to task both the extremists among the premillennial historicists<sup>29</sup> and the postmillennial historicists. Edward Irving received special criticism at this early date. It is difficult to see how Darby would have been influenced by him after making such statements about his work as, "The observations from the Apocalypse are a total misapprehension of its force."<sup>30</sup> For Darby, the extremists refused to submit their own novel ideas to the control of Scripture.<sup>31</sup> He believed that most of the problems for these extremists stemmed from "a confusion of the Jewish and Gentile dispensations a hinge upon which the subject and the understanding of Scripture turns."<sup>32</sup>

At this time, Darby was looking, as his hope, for the powerful appearing of Jesus Christ to judge the earth, and not for the secret rapture of the church. In light of this, when he did speak of the rapture, he most naturally could be understood as referring to a posttribulational, yet pre-wrath, rapture. Thus he concluded "On 'Days' Signifying 'Years'" with "I am persuaded that this will lead more... to the deep conviction that we are within the verge

of the end of all, so as to be daily looking for the Lord, i.e., to be caught up to meet Him in the air in order to His judging of the nations."<sup>33</sup> Being posttribulational, he saw the entire "Gentile dispensation" as a time of trial, fitting the historicist approach, with the resurrection and rapture occurring after Christ had in power put down evil.<sup>34</sup> He also understood that, although Israel and the church were distinct, Jewish and Gentile saints would share the kingdom bliss, glorified and natural saints together on earth. In his mind, the Jews could be restored to their land and the church could reign with Christ in the kingdom age without a conflict of concepts.

Powerscourt developments. Millenarian expectations and spec-ulations were rampant at the turn of the century when Darby was born. The French Revolution gave a powerful push to millennial hope, and Napoleon's treatment of Italy and the Pope fueled end-time date-setting fanaticism.<sup>35</sup>

English millenarian traditions from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are of two varieties, following social class structure. Both varieties accepted the Bible to be divinely inspired and the unquestionable authority. The popular millennial move-ments among the lower classes, however, were also characterized by the following: 1) a distrust of the paid clergy; 2) a belief that God spoke directly to believers, women as well as men; 3) a use of the Bible as a handbook to contemporary events; 4) a hope for cata-strophic social changes soon.<sup>36</sup>

In contrast to this, Hempton described the millenarian ideologies of the upper classes: However, the first half of the nineteenth century saw the growth of a different type of millenarianism. This was not a popular movement led by religious psychotics claiming special revelations from God, but a development from within the traditional churches which proceeded through the perfectly sensible channels of theological pamphlets, special periodicals, and conferences in aristocratic homes. Far from being an underground movement, by the 1840s it had attracted the attention of leading Anglican evangelical clergy men like Bickersteth, Marsh, and Wilson, and the parliamentarians, Shaftesbury, Drummond, and Plumptre.<sup>37</sup>

It is in one such "development from within the traditional churches" that the prophecy conferences which were probably most influential on Darby's early thinking took place.

The Albury Park prophetic conferences of 1826-28 in Surry were hosted by Henry Drummond, an ex-member of the House of Commons and a benefactor of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews.<sup>38</sup> With only a few exceptions, Drummond invited laymen and clergy from the English and Scottish national churches. Concerning the proceedings, Sandeen remarked:

In the conference sessions themselves, the program was about equally divided between the three chief concerns of the day-prophetic chronology, the second advent, and the restoration of the Jews. No appeal to authority or argument was allowed in these sessions except the authority of direct biblical quotation or an argument designed to reconcile scriptural references.<sup>39</sup>

Darby never attended the Albury conferences, but news of the prophetic revival in London was brought to him in 1827 by Bellett.<sup>40</sup>

Three important prophetic conferences were held at Powerscourt House on Irish soil in the parish next to the one served by Darby when he had been a priest. These convened on October 4-7, 1831, September 24-28, 1832, and September 23-28, 1833.<sup>41</sup> (Others of lesser importance were held until 1838.) These paralleled the Albury conferences, probably by design of their hostess, Lady Theodosia Powerscourt.<sup>42</sup> She had attended with delight the Albury conferences, visited with Drummond, and entertained Irving. Irving himself never

attended the Powerscourt conferences. A few Irvingites were present at least at the second and third conferences, but their ideas were not warmly received.<sup>43</sup> Bishop Robert Daly, rector of the parish, presided over the meetings until 1833. At that time the anticlericalism and despair over the state of the church was so great that he feared division<sup>44</sup> The Brethren dominated the third conference in 1833.

The topics of discussion at the Powerscourt conferences indicate a shift in some details of Darby's eschatology. In general, the corrupt state of the church, the 1260 days of Daniel and Revelation, and the imminent return of Christ were favorite themes. The proceedings of the second conference, however, shed considerable light on Darby's shift.<sup>45</sup>

Darby, acting as correspondent, gave a detailed agenda of the second conference to the editor of the Christian Herald, who apparently refused to mention it because he was growing disgusted over controversies occasioned by millenarian disputes.<sup>46</sup> Specific agenda topics included the use of Old Testament quotations in the New Testament, the prophetic character of each book of the Bible, whether a personal Antichrist is to be expected, the connection between Daniel and Revelation, and what light Scripture gives on present events.

Lacking transcripts of the discussions at the second Powerscourt conference, one can only surmise in what direction the thoughts of the participants were headed. The agenda questions listed by Darby, however, do suggest clues concerning certain points of debate. On September 24, the literalness of the fulfillment of the Old Testament citations in the New Testament was dealt with. Twenty-three pairs of references were examined, "with their connections and explanations," to see if there was "accommodation," or whether they were quoted according to the mind of the Spirit in the Old.<sup>47</sup> This statement suggests that the participants were exploring whether there is a single-intended meaning of Scripture or whether the New Testament authors were giving new and expanded meaning to the Old Testament references.

Day two of the conference got into the prophetic nature of "the three great feasts of the Jews, the blessings pronounced on Jacob's sons, the Parables in the Gospel, and the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Revelation."<sup>48</sup> A possible connection among these topics relates to the historicist approach to prophecy: does the Bible record the present course of world and church history ahead of time?<sup>49</sup> Darby, having been somewhat historicist up to 1830, never completely relented of that approach (at least as to church history), as is seen in his interpretation of Revelation 2 and 3.<sup>50</sup> Since Darby's subsequent futurism is well known, one can only guess that in discussing these topics he began to shift away from his earlier historicism.

On day three, in deliberating on whether to expect a personal Antichrist, the participants discussed finer points of prophetic detail surrounding him:

Should we expect a personal Antichrist? If so, to whom will he be revealed? Are there to be one or two great evil powers in the world at that time? Is there any uniform sense for the word Saint in the Prophetic, or New Testament scripture? By what covenant did the Jews, and shall the Jews, hold the land?<sup>51</sup>

The question over "any uniform sense for the word Saint" is suggestive. Prior to 1830, Darby had come to believe that the church was a heavenly body, and that a remnant from Israel would have a future on earth in a dispensation subsequent to the church's. It would be a logical step, as he worked through applying this cedesiological distinction to the eschatological studies at Powerscourt, to see at least two senses for saint one applies to the church, and one applies to the remnant of Israel. In fact, Darby eventually would see more than two senses of the word.<sup>52</sup>

Day four of the second Powerscourt conference dealt with the relationship between Daniel and Revelation. The wording of Darby's note, "An inquiry into, and a connection between Daniel and the Apocalypse,"<sup>53</sup> suggests that a connection was certainly seen. How much of a connection was the battleground between the historicists and futurists. Besides seeing the events of Revelation fulfilled in European history, the historicists "judged that much of Daniel was recapitulated in the book of Revelation and that the two accounts could and should be used to interpret each other."<sup>54</sup>

The futurists interpreted everything after Revelation 3 as yet unfulfilled. They also rejected the day-for-a-year interpretation of the 1260 days of Daniel and Revelation. Sandeen reported that an announced topic at the first Powerscourt conference was "proof if '1260 days' means days or years."<sup>55</sup> In light of Darby's 1830 defense of the historicist position on this topic, he most probably shifted his view due to the influence of the first two Powerscourt conferences. What appeared to be a more consistent reconciling of prophetic Scriptures could have led him to futurism. Since Darby critiqued and spurned works on futurism before 1830, to seek a direct influence on his thinking from the writings of Lacunza, Maitland, and Irving before Powerscourt seems inconclusive and unfruitful.<sup>56</sup>

The last day of the second Powerscourt conference was devoted to the relationship of Scripture to the present evil situation in the world and church. Darby's note suggests the failure of the church. "What is next to be looked for and expected?"<sup>57</sup> is followed by questions and Scriptures considered, which point out the degeneration of the age since apostolic times. No revival was anticipated. From consideration of these points, Darby's statement years later, "There is no event between me and heaven,"<sup>58</sup> could easily have been a logical conclusion at this early date.

Darby introduced the doctrine of the secret rapture of the church, and clearly articulated the prophetic gap between the sixtyninth and seventieth weeks of Daniel 9, at the third Powerscourt conference in 1833. Sandeen called these two concepts "basic tenets of the system of theology since referred to as dispensationalism."<sup>59</sup> His statement appears misleading, however, since the two concepts are really outgrowths of Darby's more basic tenet that distinguished the earthly and heavenly peoples of God. The rapture gathers the heavenly people to glory before God resumes dealings in an official way (the seventieth week) with His earthly people, the remnant of Israel.

Moreover, Sandeen seems to have mistakenly interpreted Darby's comments about how he came to believe in the secret rapture of the church.<sup>60</sup> Most probably by 1827, Darby came to believe in the fact of a rapture; but it was not until 1833 that he worked out the timing of the rapture. This explanation fits with Darby's own testimony about his conversion and enlightenment in 1827, concerning certain great ecclesiological and eschatological truths. "I was not able to put these things in their respective places or arrange them in order, as I can now [1855]; but the truths themselves were then revealed of God."<sup>61</sup> The eschatological conclusions from the second conference certainly pointed in that direction, even if Darby had not voiced his opinions concerning them at that time. By 1843, B. W. Newton actively opposed Darby on the same two points.<sup>62</sup> Darby apparently was not contentious over the pretribulational rapture in his early years but became more convinced of that position from consistently applying his hermeneutical key, which distinguished the heavenly and earthly peoples of God.<sup>63</sup>

## **Antecedents to Darby's New Synthesis**

Certainly Darby's thinking was influenced by those students of Scripture with whom he accompanied in his early years. The immediate occasion for fresh theological thinking for Darby was the ecclesiastical crisis he went through over Erastianism and church corruption. This was followed by a study of eschatology at Powerscourt, which helped crystallize his position on the earthly and heavenly peoples of God-his new synthesis of ecclesiology and eschatology.

It seems unwise to assert with any high degree of certitude that forces antecedent to those above had direct influence on Darby's new dispensational understanding. The synthesis represents the framing of a set of ideas in a unique manner. Nevertheless, the individual ideas comprising the set had historical precedents. Darby is an innovator of a system, but not a creator of the parts making up the system. That world of ideas which most likely could have formed the pool of possibilities in Darby's mind (his theological preunderstanding) will now be explored.

### **Difficulties in the Search for Sources**

Acknowledgments given too infrequently. A premium placed on personal Bible study, a conscious effort to break with the assumptions of the past, and a failure to acknowledge sources from which help was derived, make searching for the extra-biblical sources of Darby's ideas difficult. Darby is clear as to the priority of the Word and the Spirit to attain to truth. He is equally clear in his disdain for the fathers of the church and past scholarship. He asserted, "None are more untrustworthy on every fundamental subject than the mass of primitive Fathers."<sup>64</sup> He confessed that he had profited from others on certain specific points, but that he rejected the system they had erected around those specifics. He rarely, if ever, acknowledged which specifics and what sources.<sup>65</sup>

Similarities perceived too superficially. Out of zeal to defend the historical nature of Darby's dispensational synthesis, and to downplay its novelty, some modern dispensationalists have sought to show dispensational schemes in selected writers since the apostolic period.<sup>66</sup> These well-meaning efforts fail on several accounts. Since Darby himself would not seek to demonstrate his synthesis from the fathers and later theologians, little is gained by trying to do so. Most attempts merely demonstrate that specific ideas used by Darby in his synthesis were around centuries earlier. But his synthesis was not, and has not been shown to exist, before the late 1820s. That Israel and the church are distinguished in the writings of early church fathers does not point to a source for Darby's synthesis.<sup>67</sup> How they are distinguished (earthly/heavenly) is the concept to be located in the family tree of ideas. Looking for sources long distance is inconclusive at best.

Cultural concerns related too hastily. Placing Darby in the context of the world of theological concerns debated in his youth and early ministry would appear to be a better starting point than would the church fathers. A few key concepts may serve to explain the time period during which Darby came to his ecclesiastical- eschatological synthesis. Chadwick summarized "the leading questions before the nation, in the succession by which they troubled England" during the Victorian period as follows:

First, whether representative government was compatible with an established church; that is, how religious inequality could be married to political equality. Second, whether Christian churches, established or dissenting, could adjust themselves to industrial revolution, speedy growth of population, and empire overseas. Third, whether the Christian church taught the truth.<sup>68</sup>

If these are accurate, Darby's concern over the nature and unity of the church is just a specific example of a general cultural concern.

Three religious forces infused the theological atmosphere of this period as well: the High Church tradition, the Oxford Movement, and the Dissenters. From Darby's personal testimony about his spiritual pilgrimage, it seems that Newman and the Oxford Movement had little influence on him. He claimed to have wrestled through the issues of their concern before the movement got started.<sup>69</sup> The third religious force—the Dissenters—may have emboldened Darby for his decision to break with the Establishment. He respected many dissenters "for their integrity of conscience, and often deep apprehensions of the mind of Christ."<sup>70</sup> He abhorred, however, their glorying in their distinctiveness, which to him contributed to the disunity of the church.

Some Dissenters were associated with Trinity College, Dublin, in the early nineteenth century and may have contributed to Darby's developing ecclesiology. John Walker, for example, was a fellow of the college until 1804. He taught the idea of a gathered church, held to weekly observance of the Lord's supper (which he called the breaking of bread), engaged in teaching and admonishing one another without distinction between clergy and laity, exercised discipline, sought to gather all true disciples together in separation from the world and the false church, denied that the gospel was intended to improve the condition of the world, and focused the believers' hope onto the second coming of Jesus Christ to earth.<sup>71</sup>

In spite of whatever influence they might have wielded on Darby's thinking, he distanced himself from the dissenting bodies. Darby believed that the Brethren provided a "third way," avoiding the problems of both the established church and the dissenting groups. To seek for sources for Darby's ideas among the Dissenters is potentially rewarding but difficult to establish with certainty.

In surveying the general concerns of the ecclesiastical world of Darby's developmental years, little of a conclusive nature appears. The closest possibility for an antecedent that might have contributed to his new ecclesiology is found in John Walker. That he was associated with Trinity College, Dublin, may provide a clue for more fruitful investigation.<sup>72</sup>

## **The Trinity College Connection**

"To soil and clime no plant can be indifferent, the seed may fall on good or stony ground, and with good reason, therefore, do the Universities claim a share in the intellectual victories of their children."<sup>73</sup> If this sentiment be true, then Darby and Trinity College cannot be divorced. The intellectual climate of this institution most probably sustained an influence on young Darby's approach to study in general, and very possibly on the concepts that formed the reservoir of ideas out of which he later developed his unique formulations. From the college records and from the history written about the college, certain interesting facts emerge.

A proud heritage. Trinity College was known to be an innovative institution, first "to read the signs of the times, and show the way to her elder sisters,"<sup>74</sup> Oxford and Cambridge. Roman Catholics and Protestants alike contributed to the endowment of the college. A leader in open admission policy, Trinity never instituted religious tests for students. It was so open that it was the first university in the United Kingdom to grant degrees to Jews.<sup>75</sup>

Educational requirements. Open access to an educational opportunity at Trinity College did not lead it to lower its standards. Once admitted, the undergraduate studied philosophy, history, mathematics, composition, and rhetoric, besides his specialization.

Emphasis was placed on debating, a feature which had continued since Edmund Burke founded the Historical Club in 1745 as a debating society at the college.<sup>76</sup>

In 1808, Dean Richard Graves (1763-1829) moved the college to include instruction in Bible for all students as a part of their academic education. Saturday lectures in Scripture "for the first time [were] set on a public and permanent footing."<sup>77</sup> Dixon explained: "The religious instruction of undergraduates was in the hands of the Catechist, while all resident Bachelors were obliged to attend lectures either with the Regius Professor of Divinity or Arch-bishop King's lecturer."<sup>78</sup> Graves was the Regius Professor of Divinity from 1815 to 1829, covering the period in which Darby was a resident student.

Prizes, as incentives to study, were first instituted in 1731, and from 1815 it was "customary to award a gold medal to the best answerer at the degree examination in mathematics and classics respectively."<sup>79</sup> Darby, as noted above, graduated Classical Gold Medalist in 1819. Interestingly, Richard Graves tutored classics and was popular among the students.<sup>80</sup> This man most likely had a direct influence on Darby, through lectures in both the classics and the Scriptures. Further investigation of those professors and tutors whose ideas could have informed Darby's thinking follows.

Darby's professors and tutors. Although Darby studied law, legal and theological training were not sharply divided during his days at Trinity College. Before 1850, the professorship of Civil Law was often held by a clergyman.<sup>81</sup> It was during Darby's early years that the requirements for taking Orders in the Church of England and Ireland were tightened. The deplorable state of the episcopacy from the 1790s into the early nineteenth century apparently motivated the administrative powers at Trinity College to promote the innovative and fervent-spirited Dean Richard Graves to Regius Professor of Divinity in 1815, to try to turn things around.<sup>82</sup>

In his first address in his new capacity, Graves outlined reforms and requirements. He desired to institute an annual examination of graduates who were preparing for ministry, requiring proof of attendance of a year's course of divinity lectures and attainment of a level of theological knowledge "suited to the importance of the sacred profession which they proposed to undertake."<sup>83</sup> Darby, who was ordained a priest in 1826, must have met these requirements. When he had a crisis of faith in 1822 and left the legal profession, "His father disinherited him, but thanks to the support of his uncle he was able to complete his theological studies."<sup>84</sup> Darby must have come under the instruction of Richard Graves, even though he rarely references him in his writings. Darby does indicate, however, a familiarity with Grave's work on the Pentateuch, in which his professor presented his clearest teachings on the future conversion and restoration of the Jews.<sup>85</sup>

The degree of influence a teacher wields over a student is hard to measure. The following observations about Graves' life and teaching are only meant to suggest possible sources for Darby's concepts concerning Israel and the church. Darby rejected some elements of Graves' teaching-notably his Arminianism.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, he adopted other elements of this man's lifestyle and teaching.

Richard Graves was a favorite with the students, for he cared for their spiritual and temporal welfare. He "put heart into his sermons... [and] gave unction to academic preaching."<sup>87</sup> He exemplified missionary zeal without political considerations for the conversion of Irish Catholics. Moreover, Graves wholeheartedly supported the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews. In 1811, he preached a remarkable sermon to sway people from contemporary anti-Jewish sentiments and to incite them to

support Jewish evangelism.<sup>88</sup> In these respects, Darby was a model disciple of his teacher, whose example of devotion in evangelistic ministry he followed.

Of other professors and tutors who might have influenced Darby during his formative years of training, the records of Trinity College refer to two who seem to have had the greatest influence: Edward Hincks, who became sub-librarian of Trinity College in 1814, and Thomas Elrington, who served as Provost from 1811 to 1820.<sup>89</sup>

Edward Hincks was a brilliant man whose major interests were apologetics and ancient near eastern languages. The German Professor Tiele of Leyden, a contemporary of Hincks, acknowledged him as "that great pioneer in Oriental research and discovery."<sup>90</sup> He followed this with a list of nine published works by Hincks on Egyptian, Akkadian, Assyrian, and Babylonian languages, customs, and mythologies. Darby's translating skills, familiarity with the latest Old Testament scholarship of his day, and his penchant for apologetics might be traced back to Hincks. It was at this time also that the Grimms brothers were propounding their linguistics laws and espousing historical sensitivity and anthropological awareness for anyone studying ancient texts.<sup>91</sup> Darby's historical sensitivity as he read and interpreted the Old Testament led him to acknowledge the progressive stages in God's self-revelation. This biblical-theological slant is crucial to an understanding of Darby's view of Scripture. His sensitivity to the historical contexts of passages is marked throughout his Synopsis. Perhaps his tendency to distinguish among dispensations in order to preserve the historical integrity of passages (especially those dealing with unfulfilled prophecies) is dependent upon the linguistic influence of Edward Hincks.

Thomas Elrington had a special interest in Old Testament typology. Graves acknowledged the help he had received from Elrington on the typology of the Jewish feasts. Both Elrington and Graves stressed the typical character of the Old Testament for the gospel, yet they believed in a literal restoration of the Jews to Palestine in fulfillment of prophecy and the typology of the feast of tabernacles!<sup>92</sup> Darby's teachings on typology are well known. Very possibly Elrington was the one who first fired Darby's imagination in this area of biblical interpretation.

## **Millenarian Expectations**

The eschatological climate of 1827-33, previously surveyed, revealed that Darby arrived at his new synthesis in a time of heightened millennial expectations in the British empire. The French Revolution, and especially the Napoleonic wars, had stimulated speculation among premillennialist about the exact time of the coming of Christ. Darby shifted from a more historicist approach, to the interpretation of the 1260 days of Daniel and Revelation, to a futurist approach. In doing this he avoided date-setting pitfalls but preserved a doctrine of imminency.

The way in which Darby conceptualized the Christian's hope was only one of many different varieties of millenarian expectation to which he could have been exposed. As will be seen, both post-millennialists and premillennialist in Darby's student years expected an imminent change of dispensation. What is of special interest for this study is that the ordering of future events among post-millenarians at Trinity College, Dublin, was amazingly similar to the order of events among pre-millennial futurists. The millenarian ideas of the Anglican divines, and of the Puritans which influenced the intellectual history of Trinity College, are especially noteworthy.

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Darby's alma mater became the spawning ground of much prophetic writing, for reasons which remain unclear.<sup>93</sup> Trinity College graduates "were among the earliest and most able defenders of futurism."<sup>94</sup> Although it may be impossible to discover a direct link between Darby's concepts and those who most probably taught him at Trinity College, some very interesting eschatological notions are found in the works of Richard Graves, professor of divinity while Darby was a student.

That Graves was not the originator of most of the eschatological specifics that he taught is almost certain. Richard Watson (d. 1833) wrote of widely held opinions with which he disagreed: "It is common with divines to speak of the Jewish and Christian churches, as though they were two distinct and totally different things; but that is not a correct view of the matter."<sup>95</sup> In 1844 in America, Alexander reviewed a book on the conversion and restoration of Israel, commenting about those doctrines that "in the Church of England it has long been a favorite opinion, and among the Presbyterians of Great Britain a strong impulse has been given to it by the mission of the Scottish Deputation to the Jews..."<sup>96</sup>

The Puritan influence upon Trinity College was quite marked.<sup>97</sup> They had for a long time taught the future conversion of the Jews, as evidenced in the annotations on Romans 11 in the 1560 edition of the Geneva Bible.<sup>98</sup> Toon observed that in the seventeenth century, Moses Wall sought to persuade the English Parliament to readmit Jews to England. He provided eight reasons for doing this, one of which was that "God's covenant with the descendants of Abraham is not canceled; rather it is suspended and will begin to operate again in the last days."<sup>99</sup> One is almost startled by a sort of "postponement theory" at such an early date! Sandeen noted, "The most recent antecedents of the early nineteenth-century millenarians had been the Puritans, particularly that radical party known as the Fifth Monarchy Men."<sup>100</sup> Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676), a Dutch theologian, stated that he differed from Calvin's interpretation of Romans 11:26 and favored the interpretation of the majority of the exegetes, especially "the English theologians-that the text points toward a general and future conversion of the Jews."<sup>101</sup> Van Den Berg added that "the idea of a general conversion of the main body of the Jewish people had become *communis opinio* in the circle of Reformed theologians in the"<sup>102</sup> Therefore, the Anglican theological tradition in general, and the influences on Trinity College specifically, indicate that Graves' eschatology was probably within the mainstream in his time.

Graves was a postmillennialist who rejected the historicism of earlier forms of postmillennialism. For example, Voetius believed in a millennium "in which Christ's reign became clearly visible in the conversion of the nations to the Christian faith-possibly the period between [a.d.] 73 and 1073."<sup>103</sup> Graves, on the other hand, was a futuristic postmillennialist; that is, he expected a future literal kingdom of Christ universally extended over the earth. "The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15) and would be accomplished "by the extension of the Gospel" and fulfilled "in the fullness of"<sup>104</sup>

The elements of Graves' postmillennial scheme assume a literal approach to the interpretation of Scripture. Unfulfilled prophecies must yet be fulfilled. He used Isaiah 11:11 ("the second time to recover the remnant of his people") as a key support in his plea for Jewish evangelism.<sup>105</sup> Even the 1260 days, which for him were years, are still literally applied, for there will be 1260 real years which will come to a close before the Jews convert in mass and the millennial age dawns.<sup>106</sup>

As odd as it may seem to modern dispensational premillennial literalists, postmillennialists in Graves' day were known for their literalism with respect to prophecy.

Alexander Keith (1791-1880), a contemporary of Graves, wrote a book in 1828 with "the Literal Fulfillment of Prophecy" as part of its title.<sup>107</sup> That this book ran through six editions in four years (1828-32) testifies to the interest and belief in the literal fulfillment of unfulfilled prophecies. "It is recognized," said Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847), another contemporary, "in our halls of theology as holding a high place in sacred literature, and it is found in almost every home and known as a household word throughout the land."<sup>108</sup>

Keith's was no obscure work. He not only held out a literal future for Israel, he also used a literal hermeneutic on prophecy as a genre. He filled his footnotes with Scripture, often emphasizing that "the prophecies... admit of a literal [Keith's emphasis] interpretation,"<sup>109</sup> and "in very truth the prophecy savours not in the least of hyperbole."<sup>110</sup> Certainly for Graves and Keith, unfulfilled prophecy was not to be explained away typologically, or interpreted figuratively, as if already being fulfilled in a different sense. Unfulfilled prophecy was yet to take place in space-time history.

Graves used the irrevocable promises of God to Abraham in conjunction with unfulfilled prophecy to defend the future conversion and restoration of Israel to Palestine. At present, explained Graves, the Jews may be experiencing chastisements, but these "were not to terminate in a final and irremediable destruction."<sup>111</sup> Graves' literal interpretation of Deuteronomy 28,30:1-6; and Leviticus 26:44 led him to expect a worldwide, protracted dispersion of the Jews, as well as certain reestablishment in Palestine, "secured to them in the original covenant with their great ancestor."<sup>112</sup> Keith also taught the unconditionality of the Abrahamic covenant: "The Scriptures also declare that the covenant with Abraham-that God would give the land of Canaan to his seed for an everlasting possession,-would never be broken ...."<sup>113</sup>

For Graves, Israel's future national restoration would be her second and final return to Palestine (Isa. 11:10-16). It had been delayed so long in order that the fullness of the Gentiles might come in (Rom. 11:25).<sup>114</sup> This fullness would be brought in, and the time of Jewish conversion and restoration would occur after the 1260 years (he followed the day-for-a-year interpretation) of Daniel and Revelation were fulfilled.<sup>115</sup> Graves believed that the Christian could not know the dating of the 1260 years with precision, so that he "should pronounce his opinion with great caution and reserve."<sup>116</sup> But in 1811, he admitted that "the circumstances of the present time... [indicate] a rapidly approaching fulfillment of prophecy."<sup>117</sup>

Since the conversion of Israel (not the personal return of Christ) would mark the future change of dispensation to usher in a glorious period of earth history, Graves threw himself wholeheartedly behind the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews. Through the church, the gospel would be "re-echoed back again from us to them... repaying to her parent the means of existence."<sup>118</sup> Giving an exposition of Romans 11:15,30, and 31, Graves included a gathering of Gentiles into the church after the ascension of Christ and the fall of Israel. The Gentile church would then be instrumental in Israel's rising again as a nation. Thus the conversion and restoration of the Jews would be "a necessary preliminary to the final great and universal conversion of the Gentile world."<sup>119</sup> In other words, there would be two gatherings of Gentiles. The second could be considered another "fullness of the Gentiles," in that glorious time on earth when the Jews, now converted, would be "a multitude of preachers, missionaries already dispersed through every<sup>120</sup> culturally and linguistically suited for future gospel diffusion. This scenario of Jewish evangelists effectively finishing the job, which the church up to that point had been unable to do, is often recited by premillennialists. They usually relate the 144,000 of the Tribulation period to the picture.<sup>121</sup>

In his Sermon, Graves pointed out the "signs of the times which encourage us now to hope for success in attempting the conversion of the Jews rather than at any preceding period of the world." <sup>122</sup> Then would a new dispensation (a word Graves used quite frequently) be inaugurated on planet earth. Graves anticipated the rapid approach of this time, calling it a "grand era in the Divine dispensations." <sup>123</sup> The conversion of Israel was imminent, and it was in such a theological atmosphere of expectancy that Darby was schooled!

Graves called the evident reciprocity between Israel and the church, which will be fulfilled in the "grand era," "a wonderful harmony of the various parts of the divine economy." <sup>124</sup> Graves distinguished between "the Jewish scheme" (a phrase Darby would nearly wear out in years to come!), or dispensation, and the Gentile or Christian dispensation. <sup>125</sup> All the dispensations are:

...the scheme carried on under this Supreme Lord and King, according to the Scriptures, with an uninterrupted progress from the creation to this hour, and still evidently progressive; exhibiting the Church of Christ, and the Jewish Nation which rejects that Christ, as rendered equally subservient to this grand design of Providence; by which "the kingdoms of this world will finally become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ:" and the triumph of grace here will prepare for the kingdom of glory hereafter. <sup>126</sup>

For Graves, one should contemplate "the Jewish and Christian dispensations united in one system," <sup>127</sup> yet having distinction and progress within the historical outworking of that system. "The Church of Christ" and "the Jewish Nation" will be together in "the grand era."

Graves apparently followed many Anglican divines in distinguishing the Jewish and Gentile dispensations and the Jewish and Gentile (or Christian) churches. Secker, <sup>128</sup> writing before 1771, spoke of the church in its largest sense as comprehending "the whole Number of good Persons, in every Age. . . under whatever Dispensation of true Religion. •" <sup>129</sup> He explained that the Scriptures usually apply the word "church" to the Christian assemblies after the ascension of Christ. He said, "But the Church, more especially meant here in the Creed, is the Christian: which, though in some Respects the same with the Jewish, in others differed from it." <sup>130</sup> Thus distinguishing Israel and the church in some respects was customary, while not a few drew the conclusion that "they were two distinct and totally different things." <sup>131</sup>

## Conclusion

The theological grist for Darby's later synthesis was certainly present at Trinity College in his student days. Darby was trained in an atmosphere in which it was commonplace to refer to "the Church of Christ" and "the Jewish Nation" fulfilling different but related future roles. He was primed to anticipate a future dispensation in which Israel would play a distinctive part among the nations of the world, living in prosperity in their ancient land. Believing that the Gentile dispensation interposed between the Jewish dispensation and the future millennium, in which Israel would have her earthly portion, Darby called the Gentile dispensation "the Gentile parenthesis in their history." <sup>132</sup> It is a small step from the Gentile church and the Gentile parenthesis to the parenthesis church. The imprecise language for the church (the Jewish church, the Gentile church) of his Anglican forebears, and their distinguishing of the Jewish and Gentile dispensations possibly underlie Darby's earthly/heavenly insight.

Darby's Trinity College background cannot be discounted when analyzing his later doctrinal formulations. The atmosphere of millennial expectancy in which he was trained certainly affected his eschatology. The postmillennialism of Graves dealt very literally with unfulfilled prophecy and spawned an attitude of anticipation for an imminent change of dispensation. Israel would come into her rightful portion at that time. Within such a conceptual scheme, Darby made certain exegetical decisions. The literal return of Christ to earth, at which time Israel would be converted, was imminent for Darby, and not merely the conversion of the Jews. The change of dispensation would be accompanied by the rapture of the living saints and the resurrection of the dead saints. The change of body occasioned by these events for the saints carried the idea of a heavenly people in glorified bodies and an earthly people in natural bodies as being together in Christ's kingdom, the new dispensation.

How to get these two kinds of saints (heavenly and earthly) into the kingdom kept Darby open to further reflection on Daniel's seventieth week. Abandoning an earlier historicist interpretation for the 1260 days, he moved to a futurism with respect to Daniel's seventieth week. Here he had the clue as to how both kinds of saints could be in the kingdom at the same time. The rapture for glorification occurred prior to the 1260 days at least, allowing time for a remnant of Israel to develop and enter the kingdom in natural bodies

Thus exegetical decisions on certain specifics overlay the basic Anglican ecclesiology and eschatology of Darby's mentors. A new synthesis was born. Possible antecedents have pointed to pieces of the new synthesis he arrived at by 1833. These pieces were the raw material with which Darby worked. No one up to Darby, it appears, had espoused the exact finished product as he articulated it. Darby's ecclesiological decisions led him to emphasize the heavenly nature of the Christian church in the Gentile dispensation over against the earthly nature of the Jewish nation in the Jewish dispensation. The eschatological decisions which followed later moved him toward clearing the way for consistently holding to two kinds of saints- two peoples of God-in the coming dispensation of the kingdom.

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<sup>1</sup> See John Nelson Darby, *Letters of J. N. Darby* (London: Stow Hill Bible and Tract Depot, n.d.; reprint, Sunbury, Pa.: Believers Bookshelf, 1971), 1:73, 205, 431, 451, and 524. An excellent recent biography on Darby is by Max S. Weremohuk, *John Nelson Darby: A Biography* (Neptune, NJ.: Loizeaux Brothers, 1992), 256.

<sup>2</sup> W.G. Turner, *John Nelson Darby* (London: C. A. Hammond, 1944), 12.

<sup>3</sup> Stuart O. Seanoir, personal letter, Dublin, Ireland, 26 January 1989. Mr. Seanoir is an assistant librarian in the Manuscripts Department at Trinity College, Dublin. He took this information from the *Alumni Dublinenses*.

<sup>4</sup> See Dathy, *Letters*, 2:310.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 3:297.

<sup>6</sup> Turner, *Darby*, 13-15.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>8</sup> John Nelson Darby, *The Collected Writings of I. N. Darby (CW)*, ed. William Kelly, new ed. (London: G. Morrish, n.d.; reprint, Sunbury, Pa.: Believers Bookshelf, 1971), 20:288. (Pagination in the new edition is different from the original.)

<sup>9</sup> John Howard Goddard, "The Contribution of John Nelson Darby to Soteriology, Ecclesiology, and Eschatology" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1948), 15-16.

<sup>10</sup> Darby, *CW*, 1:36.

<sup>11</sup> William Blair Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1901), 15.

<sup>12</sup> Darby, *CW* 1:1.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 1:1-19.

<sup>14</sup> See Dathy, Letters, 1:344; 3:298.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 3:298-99.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 3:299.

<sup>17</sup> Darby, CW, 1:20-35.

<sup>18</sup> Larry Vance Crutchfield, "The Doctrine of Ages and Dispensations as Found in the Published Works of John Nelson Darby (1800-1882)" (Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1985), 10.

<sup>19</sup> Darby, CW, 2:1-31.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 2:32.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 2:31.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 2:27.

<sup>23</sup> Neatby, History, 20. Compare, however, Darby's own statement: "When I left it [the Establishment], I published the tract on "The Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ" (CW, 1:36). This tract is dated 1828.

<sup>24</sup> Darby, CW, 1:37.

<sup>25</sup> Darby, Letters, 1:344.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 3:298-99.

<sup>27</sup> Darby, CW, 2:1-31.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 2:32.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 2:7-9.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 2:9.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 2:4.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 2:18.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 2:40.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 2:23.

<sup>35</sup> See Richard Graves, A Sermon Preached in St. Andrew's Church, Dublin, on Sunday, 21st

April, 1811. 1Aid of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews (Dublin:

J. Jones, 1811), 38, 40; John in F C. Harrison, The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism (1780-1850) (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1979), 78; and D. N. Hempton, "Evangelicalism and Eschatology," Journal of Ecclesiastical History 31 (April 1980): 182-83. On the little horn of Daniel 7, even Darby remarked, "Napoleon may serve to give us an idea of this state of things" (CW, 5:147; cf. 11:386-87).

<sup>36</sup> John in F C. Harrison, The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism (1780-1850) (New Brunswick, NJ.: Rutgers University Press, 1979), 6-14.

<sup>37</sup> Hempton, "Evangelicalism and Eschatology," 182.

<sup>38</sup> See Ernest R. Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1930 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), 18-21.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 20-21.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>41</sup> See Nearby, History, 39; and Harold H. Rowdon, The Origins of the Brethren, 1825-1850 (London: Pickering and Inglis, 1967), 87.

<sup>42</sup> See Erich Geldbach, Christliche Versammlung und Heilsgeschichte bei John Nelson Darby, 2d ed. (Solingen: Herm. Weck Sohn, 1972), 26-27.

<sup>43</sup> Darby, Letters, 1:5-7; Neatby, History, 39; and Sandeen, Roots, 38.

<sup>44</sup> See Turner, Darby, 34.

<sup>45</sup> Darby, Letters, 1:5-7.

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- <sup>46</sup> Sandeen, *Roots*, 36.
- <sup>47</sup> Darby, *Letters*, 1:6-7.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:7.
- <sup>49</sup> For a modern historicist approach, see Oral Collins, "Premillennial Historicism," *Henceforth* 11 (Fall 1982-Winter 1983): 29; and the "two-books-in-one" booklet by Edward C. Whisenant, *On Borrowed Time (and) 88 Reasons Why the Rapture Could Be In 1988* (Nashville, TN: World Bible Society, 1988).
- <sup>50</sup> See John Nelson Darby, *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*, new ed. (London: G. Momsh, n.d.; reprint, London: Stow Hill Bible Tract Depot, 1965), 5:371-72.
- <sup>51</sup> Darby, *Letters*, 1:7.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:58. See also Daiby's article, "What Saints Will be in the Tribulation?" (*CW*, 11:110-17).
- <sup>53</sup> Darby, *Letters*, 1:7.
- <sup>54</sup> Sandeen, *Roots*, 36-37.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.
- <sup>56</sup> For a different opinion, see Sandeen, *Roots*, 37-38.
- <sup>57</sup> Darby, *Letters*, 1:7.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:330.
- <sup>59</sup> Sandeen, *Roots*, 38.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.
- <sup>61</sup> Darby, *Letters*, 3:299. See also *Letters*, 1:345, written in 1863.
- <sup>62</sup> Rowdon, *Origins*, 96-97.
- <sup>63</sup> Dathy, *Letters*, 1:58.
- <sup>64</sup> Darby, *CW*, 14:68. See also Darby, *Letters*, 3:259; *CW*, 2:166.
- <sup>65</sup> See Robert Gundi, *The Church and the Tribulation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1973), 186-87; and Crutchfield, "The Doctrine of Ages and Dispensations," 35.
- <sup>66</sup> See Charles C. Ryrie, "The Origins of Dispensationalism," in *Dispensationalism Today* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), 65-85; Ralph Franklin Potter, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine of the Distinction Between Israel and the Church" (Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1969); and Max Allen Wiley, "Historical Antecedents of Dispensationalism" (Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1960).
- <sup>67</sup> For an opposing opinion, see Larry Vance Crutchfield, "Rudiments of Dispensationalism in the Ante-Nicene Period-Part 1: Israel and the Church in the Ante-Nicene Fathers," *BSac* 144 (July-September 1987): 254-76.
- <sup>68</sup> Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, 3d ed. (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1971), 1:6.
- <sup>69</sup> Darby, *CW*, 18:146, 156.
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:33.
- <sup>71</sup> See Harold H. Rowdon, "Secession from the Established Church in the Early Nineteenth Century," *Vox Evangelica* 3 (1964): 76-78; and Larry Edward Dixon, "The Pneumatology of John Nelson Darby (1880-1882)" (Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1985), 24-30.
- <sup>72</sup> Sandeen, *Roots*, 90.
- <sup>73</sup> W. MacNeile Dixon, *Trinity College, Dublin* (London: F. E. Robinson and Co., 19(Y2), 234.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, xii.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.
- <sup>77</sup> *The Whole Works of Richard Graves, D.D.*, compiled with a Memoir by his son, Richard Hasting Graves, 2d ed., vol. 1, *Memoir-Essay on the Apostles and Evangelists* (Dublin: William Curry, Jun. and Co., 1840), lxxvii.
- <sup>78</sup> Dixon, *Trinity College*, 186.

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- <sup>79</sup> Ibid., 185.
- <sup>80</sup> Graves, Works, 1:liv.
- <sup>81</sup> Dixon, Trinity College, 194.
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid., 123, 186. See also Graves, Works, 1:xcviii.
- <sup>83</sup> Richard Graves, *The First Praelection, Delivered as Professor of Divinity* (Dublin: Graisberry and Campbell, 1815), 8. This address has appended to it the regulations for the annual examination of graduates and a list of recommended books to prepare students.
- <sup>84</sup> "Assemblies of Brethren," *Ecumenical Review* 24 (April 1972): 132-33.
- <sup>85</sup> Darby, CW, 6:205-6.
- <sup>86</sup> Darby was a moderate Calvinist (see Darby, CW, 1:252-53). Graves was an avowed Arminian (see Graves, Works, I :cxlix).
- <sup>87</sup> Graves, Works, 1 :xxxi.
- <sup>88</sup> Richard Graves, *A Sermon Preached in St. Andrew's Church, Dublin, on Sunday, 21st April, 1811. In Aid of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews* (Dublin: I. Jones, 1811).
- <sup>89</sup> Stuart O. Seanoir, personal letter, Dublin, Ireland, 26 January 1989; and Dixon, Trinity College, 232.
- <sup>90</sup> Dixon, Trinity College, 259.
- <sup>91</sup> Geldbach, *Christliche Versammlung*, 9.
- <sup>92</sup> Graves, Works, 2:390-92.
- <sup>93</sup> See Hempton, "Evangelicalism and Eschatology," 185.
- <sup>94</sup> Sandeen, *Roots*, 38.
- <sup>95</sup> Richard Watson, *A Biblical and Theological Dictionary* (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane, 1840), 241 (emphasis added).
- <sup>96</sup> J. Addison Alexander, review of *The Valley of Vision: or the Dry Bones of Israel Revived An Attempted Proof* (from Ezekiel 37:1-14 of the Restoration and Conversion of the Jews by George Bush, *The Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 16 (1844): 380.
- <sup>97</sup> See Dixon, Trinity College, 27, 30.
- <sup>98</sup> See James R. Payton, Jr., "The Emergence of Postmillennialism in English Puritanism," *Journal of Christian Reconstruction* 6 (Summer 1979): 87-106.
- <sup>99</sup> Peter Toon, "The Question of Jewish Immigration," in *Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel: Puritan Eschatology 1600 to 1660*, ed. Peter Toon (Cambridge, England: James Clark and Co., 1970), 119.
- <sup>100</sup> Sandeen, *Roots*, 4.
- <sup>101</sup> J. Van Den Berg, "Appendix III: The eschatological expectation of seventeenth-century Dutch Protestantism with regard to the Jewish people," in *Puritans*, 141 (emphasis added).
- <sup>102</sup> Ibid., 148.
- <sup>103</sup> Ibid., 141.
- <sup>104</sup> Graves, Works, 2:438.
- <sup>105</sup> Graves, *Sermon*, 37.
- <sup>106</sup> Graves, Works, 2:435.
- <sup>107</sup> Alexander Keith, *Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion, Derived from the literal Fulfillment of Prophecy*, 6th ed. (New York: J. J. Harper, 1832).
- <sup>108</sup> Leslie Stephen and Sydney Lee, eds., *The Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1922), s.v. "Keith, Alexander (1791-1880)," by George Clement Boase.
- <sup>109</sup> Keith, *Evidence*, 83.
- <sup>110</sup> Ibid., 109.
- <sup>111</sup> Graves, Works, 2:407.

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 2:421. Other passages Graves used to defend the restoration of Israel are Isa. 11:10-11; 14:23; 18:8; 30:18; 35:10; 43:13-16; 47:5,6,11; 54:7-11; 60:8-12; 61:1-8; Jer. 23:5-8; 46:28; and Ezek. 29:15. (See Sermon, 30).

<sup>113</sup> Keith, Evidence, 78.

<sup>114</sup> Graves, Works, 2:399.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 2:435.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 2:420.

<sup>117</sup> Graves, Sermon, 35. Graves followed Buchanan's Christian Researches (226), which said that "Mr. Lee, a scholar of enlarged views, who published a tract called 'Israel Redux,' in the year 1677, has calculated, from the prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse, that in the year 1811 the times of happiness to Israel should begin" (Works, 2:433).

<sup>118</sup> Graves, Sermon, 49-50.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>120</sup> Graves, Works, 2:399. See also his Sermon, 54. Kik quoted H. Witsius' Economy of the Covenants (3:3520, written in 1775, in which Witsius laid out a similar scenario. (See Kik, An Eschatology of Victory, 8).

<sup>121</sup> See, for example, J. Dwight Pentecost, Things to Come (Grand Rapids: Dunham Publishing Co., 1958), 214, 238; and Alva J. McClain, The Greatness of the Kingdom (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1959), 458.

<sup>122</sup> Graves, Sermon, 37.

<sup>123</sup> Graves, Works, 2:420.

<sup>124</sup> Graves, Sermon, 52.

<sup>125</sup> Graves, Works, 2:360-61, 436.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 2:437 (emphasis added).

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 2:436.

<sup>128</sup> Graves put Secker on the recommended reading list for theology students. See Graves, First Praelection, 35.

<sup>129</sup> Thomas Secker, Lectures on the Catechism of the Church of England, 3d ed. (London: John and Francis Rivington, 1771), 110.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Watson, A Biblical and Theological Dictionary, 241. While Watson rejected this conclusion, he declared that it was "common with divines" to speak in such terms.

<sup>132</sup> Darby, CW, 2:35.