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BETWEEN DIXIE AND ZION: SOUTHERN BAPTISTS' PALESTINE QUESTIONS

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By

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BETWEEN DIXIE AND ZION: SOUTHERN BAPTISTS' PALESTINE QUESTIONS

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY

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To my wife, KP,

and my family.

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Abstract

Today, evangelical Christians are the largest pro-Israel constituency in a United States population that is very supportive of the Jewish state generally, with evangelicalism and Christian Zionism often understood as inexorably intertwined. However, such political support for Israel was not an inevitable product of evangelicalism. It emerged, rather, out of a variety of evangelical encounters with the land, the peoples, and the politics of Palestine and Israel. *Between Dixie and Zion: Southern Baptists' Palestine Questions* explores the evangelical encounter with Palestine during what is known as the Mandate Era through a focus on the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), the largest Protestant denomination in the United States. Between the defeat of the Ottomans in World War I and the creation of Israel in 1948, Britain governed Palestine through a League of Nations Mandate that called upon the British to prepare Palestine for eventual self-government. What this self-government would look like—whether it would favor the Zionist movement or the Palestinian Arabs—was a matter of public debate referred to as "the Palestine question." While many Southern Baptists were interested in the Holy Land, most avoided engaging this political question, instead forming their own "Palestine questions" determined by how they encountered the region. Foreign missionaries raised different questions than editorialists, travel writers than Arabs, Jewish converts than the President of the United States. Across this diversity of encounters and questions, however, commonalities emerged. Southern Baptists overwhelmingly identified the Zionist movement with civilization, modernity, and progress against the Arabs, whom they viewed as quaint or backward. Even as

Baptists generally avoided or disagreed over the politics of Zionism, influential individuals—the SBC's lone missionary to the Jews, the mission study editor of the Woman's Missionary Union, and the fundamentalist rebel, J. Frank Norris—preached that the movement was a fulfillment of biblical prophecy. What mattered most, however, in shaping Baptist attitudes towards Palestine were the actual developments on the ground in the region—and what remained Southern Baptists' ultimate answer to every Palestine question was Christ.

Introduction and Historiographical Survey

On May 14, 1948, David Ben Gurion proclaimed from the Tel Aviv Museum that the State of Israel would come into being at the midnight expiration of the British Mandate over Palestine. Eleven minutes after midnight—6:11pm in Washington, D.C.—the United States became the first government to grant de facto recognition to the newly-formed state as the following statement was issued:

> This Government has been informed that a Jewish state has been proclaimed in Palestine, and recognition has been requested by the provisional Government thereof.
>
> The United States recognizes the provisional government as the de facto authority of the new State of Israel.[1]

The signature on the statement belonged to U.S. President Harry Truman, a member of Grandview Baptist Church and a Southern Baptist from the age of eighteen.

The following week, delegates from across the South gathered in Memphis, Tennessee, for the 91st Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). The Convention promised to be unusually tense, as notorious fundamentalist gadfly (and estranged Southern Baptist) J. Frank Norris had decided to hold a counter-convention of sorts at the Peabody Hotel. Though his primary focus was on castigating SBC President Louie Newton for being pro-Communist, Norris also held a May 17 address in the Peabody's Continental Ballroom on the Palestine question. The pastor had planned the occasion for months and even made inquiries about holding the talk "in the largest synagogue in Memphis", something that would "certainly draw large

[1] Draft Recognition of Israel, 14 May 1948, *Harry S. Truman Library and Museum*, http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/israel/large/documents/index.php?documentdate=1948-05-14&documentid=48&pagenumber=1

attention."[2] When the day arrived, Norris called on President Truman to raise the arms embargo against the Zionists while calling on SBC delegates to send Truman a telegram of congratulations for recognizing Israel.

Within the Convention, Norris ally E.D. Solomon of Florida proposed a motion to send the congratulatory telegram on the morning of Wednesday, May 19. It was referred to the Resolutions Committee. Solomon again raised his motion in the afternoon session. It was overwhelmingly voted down. The following day, S.G. Posey of California moved that the Convention's delegates convey their appreciation to the United Nations in recognition of its role in the creation of Israel, as well as extend congratulations to the "people of Israel in this partial restoration of their dreams and the partial answer to their prayer for over 2000 years."[3] This motion, too, was referred to the Resolutions Committee, which recommended its rejection the following day. The Southern Baptist Convention, it was clear, would not be congratulating anyone on the creation of the Jewish state.

That Southern Baptists would repeatedly and overwhelmingly shoot down resolutions expressing support for Israel would shock most observers today. It has become common knowledge that Christians—particularly the white evangelical Protestants that populate the SBC—are now the numerically dominant pro-Israel constituency in a United States population that is very supportive of the Jewish state generally. It has become a common assumption, too, that evangelicals have always

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[2] J. Frank Norris to A.B. Akein, 22 January 1948, Box 22, Folder 1010, J. Frank Norris Papers, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives (SBHLA), Nashville, TN.

[3] W. Terry Lindley, "The 1948 SBC Opposition to Israel: The J. Frank Norris Factor," *Baptist History and Heritage* 22, no. 4 (October 1987): 24.

supported the idea and reality of a Jewish state. To find that the denomination that has become effectively synonymous with conservative evangelicalism could not even muster the votes to send a congratulatory telegram to the President—himself a Southern Baptist—is to find an unexpected past, almost unimaginable from the perspective of 2015.

Between Dixie and Zion: Southern Baptists' Palestine Questions is an effort to recover that past. It offers an examination of the different ways that Southern Baptists encountered the land, the people, and the politics of Palestine during what is known as the Mandate era. Between the defeat of the Ottomans in World War I and the creation of Israel in 1948, Britain governed Palestine through a League of Nations Mandate that called upon the British to build institutions in preparing Palestine for eventual self-government. What this self-government would look like—whether it would favor the Zionist movement or the Palestinian Arabs—was a matter of public debate that was frequently referred to as "the Palestine question."

In researching how Southern Baptists engaged this question, it soon became clear that the tempting categories of "pro-Zionist" or "pro-Arab" simply did not fit the sources. Though there were exceptions, most Southern Baptists writing about Mandatory Palestine did not address the political questions raised by the conflict between Arabs and Zionists. Rather than engaging *the* Palestine question, Baptists developed their own queries when writing about the region. Digging into the sources, I found that the *types of encounters* that Baptists had with Palestine tended to determine the shape of these "Palestine questions"—each of which had their own answers. A foreign missionary had different concerns than an editorialist. A travel

writer had different priorities than an Arab Baptist in Nazareth. A Jewish convert and missionary had different responsibilities from the President of the United States. Because of this, I decided to organize this study according to the types of encounter rather than the types of politics or religious perspective. This has allowed me to both better contextualize my sources and recognize broader lessons that emerged and repeated themselves across the different types of encounter.

Most prominent among these lessons is that Southern Baptists overwhelmingly and positively identified the Zionist movement with civilization, modernity, and progress over and against the Arabs, whom they saw as quaint or even backward. This was true of travelers, of missionaries, of both premillennialists and their opponents. It was true of those who supported Zionism on prophetic grounds and those who decried the movement on political grounds. Repeated throughout all manner of Baptist writings on Mandatory Palestine were allusions to Isaiah 35—the Zionists were making the land once again "blossom as the rose." At times these references were suffused with prophetic significance. At other times they simply made for colorful allusion. Either way, such references suggested that the Zionists were fulfilling hopes long-expressed by Baptists that the Holy Land would one day be revived, that it would regain the prosperity it had held in the biblical era. Even as most Baptists refused to engage political questions or out-and-out endorse the Zionist movement, their words painted images of Palestine that could have fit nicely on Zionist posters.

Many Southern Baptists, too, evinced a sense that Zionism might *somehow* be a fulfillment of prophecy or part of God's plan for history. Though there were a

number of premillennialists with detailed understandings of how Zionism may or may not fit into various eschatological schemas, many more Baptist writers on Palestine—including several foreign missionaries—demonstrated a vague prophetic interest in the movement. Indicative of this approach was Myrtle Creasman, program editor for the Woman's Missionary Union, who asked her readers in 1932, "Who would say that the present Zionist movement is *not* in preparation for the glorious time when Israel shall again possess the promised land?"[4] Indeed, it was such hazy seers as Creasman that often proved most willing to see lasting good in Zionism. The more rigid premillennial dispensationalists (frequently associated with Christian Zionism today) were more likely to find outright enthusiasm for the movement constrained by hermeneutical or eschatological specifics.

The third major lesson, related to the previous two, is both the most obvious and the most essential—the single biggest factor in shaping the various ways that Southern Baptists understood Palestine were the realities on the ground. This is only worth mentioning because of how easy it can to be carried away by images and texts, by ideas and impressions, in studies of this sort. The most important such reality was the success of the Zionist movement in winning political legitimacy through the Balfour Declaration and in building up the Yishuv (the pre-state Jewish community in Palestine). Whatever shifts occurred in Baptist thought, whatever new methods of biblical interpretation spread, Baptists had to reckon with the very real accomplishments of the Zionists. Smaller realities also had an impact. The creation

[4] Emphasis mine. Myrtle (Mrs. C.D.) Creasman, "Program for July: Topic: DEBTOR to the JEW," *Royal Service* (July 1932), 25.

of a Southern Baptist mission in Palestine, for example, gave Baptists an unprecedented stake in the country and its peoples.

The overarching lesson of this study, though, is that there was no single Baptist approach to Palestine, that there was not even a single Baptist Palestine question. Each chapter has its own logic and conclusions, even as all are organized around the larger question of how Southern Baptists encountered the land, the people, and the politics of Palestine. Chapter One, "Before the 'Palestine Question,'" briefly examines three types of Baptist encounters with Palestine during the Ottoman era. Two of these, that of missions and premillennialism, were primarily abstract at the time. Southern Baptists had no mission to Palestine prior to World War One, but sporadically evinced interest in opening one. This interest, expressed in various Convention resolutions and in the pages of *Foreign Mission Journal* (the official organ of the Foreign Mission Board), tended to anticipate a future Palestine mission focused on Jews. Baptist premillennialists likewise encountered Palestine in the abstract, primarily through interpretation of biblical prophecies that anticipated the national restoration of the Jews to the land. Though premillennialism was not widespread among Baptists at the time, important individuals like James Robinson Graves and, later, Leonard Broughton championed the hermeneutic and eschatological system. Most Baptists in the Ottoman era, though, encountered Palestine through travel or travel writing. From the 1870s onward, when American travel to Palestine more generally took off, growing numbers of Baptist clergy and laypeople left on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Frequently, they published their impressions in state Baptist periodicals or as full-

length travelogues. While these writings primarily focused on the biblical heritage of Palestine and the religious significance of the land, many also conveyed a sense that contemporary Ottoman Palestine was a benighted land, degraded by Islamic fanaticism, Turkish misrule, Jewish helplessness, and Christian idolatry, that could only be redeemed through the arrival of Protestant Christianity—and the modernity and Western values that would come with it. Their Palestine question, often, was, "Why is Palestine behind?"

"Travelers" looks at how Southern Baptist travel and travel writing changed during the Mandate era. Baptist travelers, of course, found a much different Palestine after the Great War. Britain was in power and the conflict between the Zionists and the Arabs—*the* Palestine question—had become a topic of international dispute. Besides the political transformation, though, Southern Baptists now had a "home" of sorts in Palestine. The Foreign Mission Board (FMB) had taken over control of a small mission in Nazareth in 1919 and had begun sending foreign missionaries in 1921. Beginning in 1919, official Southern Baptist delegations began periodic trips to the region to check up on the missions. These trips frequently resulted in published reports that were different in form from more typical travelogues. Travelogues, though, remained important and were now sometimes informed by contact with Baptist missionaries and locals on the ground. In contrast to writings in the Ottoman era, Baptist travelogues in the Mandate era emphasized the vast changes sweeping the region—modernity was finally coming to Palestine. While some emphasized the role of the British in modernizing Palestine, more focused their attention on the Zionists, frequently drawing contrasts between Zionist

progress and Arab backwardness or quaintness. Though most travelers avoided overtly engaging political questions, many nonetheless offered a sort of postcard Zionism that presented Zionists as redeeming the land. Travelers in the Mandate era typically had two Palestine questions—"What is behind the region's great changes?" and "Why is Palestine so riven with conflict?"

The next five chapters focus in varying ways on missionaries and the SBC's efforts to educate the Baptist public on Palestine as a mission field. "Arabs" examines the development of the Baptist mission in Nazareth under Shukri and Munira Mosa, and the extent to which Arab perspectives on Palestine made their way to Southern Baptists Stateside. Unlike the previous two chapters, "Arab Baptists" does rely some on materials from the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, using Shukri and Munira Mosa's letters and reports to the Foreign Mission Board to get a picture of the functioning of the Nazareth mission. It examines, too, the small number of articles Shukri, Munira, and Shukri's nephew and successor, Louis Hanna, published in Baptist periodicals. "Arab Baptists" demonstrates that, even as the Mosas and Louis Hanna were anti-Zionist, they do not appear to have been interested in raising whatever political concerns they had to Southern Baptists. Far more important to them was expanding the mission and securing a livelihood. Indeed, anti-Zionist statements Shukri Mosa *did* actually make to Southern Baptists seem to have been inspired less by a desire to win Baptist sympathy to the cause of Palestinian Arabs than to stir Baptists to put more resources into the mission. For the Arab Baptists, their Palestine question was, "How do we build our mission and community?"

"Missionaries" likewise looks at the development of the Near East Mission, albeit with a focus on the foreign missionaries sent to the region from 1921 onward. It also examines the role that foreign missionaries played as spokespeople for the mission. From the arrival of W.A. Hamlett in 1921 onward, the foreign missionaries eclipsed "native workers" like the Mosas as the primary spokespeople for the mission and the mission field. Like the previous chapter, "Missionaries" depends on a mix of archival and published resources. The description of the mission itself relies on letters and reports from the missionaries to the Foreign Mission Board as well as their published comments from *Home and Foreign Fields*. The analysis of the missionaries as spokespeople, of course, relies more heavily on published articles and books. It does, though, rely too on archives containing the circular letters that missionaries sent to supporters of the work. The chapter shows that Southern Baptist missionaries generally shared Baptist travelers' understanding that Zionism was bringing progress to a blighted region. Several were inspired by premillennialist thinking to believe that the Zionist movement was somehow the fulfillment of prophecy—although they were divided on the terms of that fulfillment. Most hoped that the Zionist emphasis on Jewish nationhood would open the path towards the acceptance of Christ. For many, their Palestine question was, "What is our role in redeeming these peoples and this land?"

"Jew" looks at the role that the convert Jacob Gartenhaus, the Home Mission Board's sole missionary to the Jews between 1921 and 1949, played as a spokesperson on issues relating to Palestine. During his tenure, which effectively coincided with the Mandate, Gartenhaus was arguably the most important single

voice within the SBC on Jews and Palestine. The peculiar form of his mission meant in actual practice that the missionary spent more of his time teaching Baptists than reaching Jews. Among the things he spoke and wrote on most frequently was Zionism. Gartenhaus was a firm supporter of the movement, his support rooted both in his identity as a Hebrew Christian and his dispensationalist understanding of the Bible. In books, in lectures, in articles, in sermons, he conveyed to Baptist audiences for nearly three decades that the Zionist movement was part of God's plan for history. For Gartenhaus, the Palestine question amounted to, "What will God do with *my* people?"

"The Graded Mission Study Series" examines the Southern Baptist Convention's single largest effort to educate the Baptist public on Palestine during the Mandate era. As part of a wider effort to educate Baptists on their various mission fields, the Foreign Mission Board published a series of books on Palestine in 1936 and 1937 that were designed to be used in mission study classes at all ages. Written primarily by current and former foreign missionaries, the series demonstrates how Southern Baptists could share many views on the land and people of Palestine while disagreeing strenuously on the politics of the Palestine question. The series included the first full-length work by a Southern Baptist author, J. McKee Adams's *The Heart of the Levant*, with a decidedly anti-Zionist political stance. Written primarily for mission-minded audiences by missionaries, the series largely shared the same question that animated the FMB's foreign missionaries—how to redeem the people and the land of Palestine. J. McKee Adams's work, though, also took on the Palestine question as a political question.

"Auxiliaries" examines the role of the Woman's Missionary Union in educating Baptist laypeople, especially women, on Palestine as a mission field. In the first decade of the twentieth century the WMU had begun vigorously promoting systematic mission study in local women's societies and churches throughout the South. By the end of World War I, almost 3,000 WMU societies were conducting mission study courses throughout the South using materials developed in cooperation with the Home Mission Board. It only grew from there, both in terms of size and sophistication, becoming one of the most important pedagogical institutions in the Southern Baptist Convention. "Auxiliaries" surveys the WMU's monthly periodical, *Royal Service*, which featured twelve issues relevant to Palestine during the Mandate era, and examines the effect that the FMB's graded mission study series had on the depictions of Palestine in the periodical. The chapter examines both how the WMU served as a channel of encounter with Palestine in its own right and how WMU leaders synthesized material from outside the Union. It is also the last chapter related to missions.

"Premillennialists" focuses on the spread of premillennialism—especially premillennial dispensationalism—among Southern Baptists and considers the extent to which the hermeneutic and eschatological system shaped Baptist attitudes towards Zionism. It looks, too, at the extent to which premillennialism came to be intertwined with the fundamentalist movement, led in the South by Fort Worth pastor J. Frank Norris. The chapter shows that premillennialists were not united on the question of whether Zionism was of prophetic significance, though many did believe it was. Their Palestine question was most often, "What does the Bible say

about the restoration of Jews to Palestine?", to which they frequently found different answers.

"Fundamentalist" looks closely at the most notorious premillennialist in the South, the fundamentalist pastor J. Frank Norris of Fort Worth. Throughout the Mandate era, Norris was exceptional among both Baptists and fundamentalists in his clear, consistent, and outspoken support for Zionism. While premillennial dispensationalism accounted for the pastor's initial interest in the movement, his ongoing engagement with the movement was shaped by a number of factors—his personal interaction with Jews, understanding of international law and geopolitics, concern for persecuted European Jewry, immense personal vanity, and, most importantly, his several trips to the region. Though Norris was effectively pushed out of the SBC in the mid-1920s, the controversial pastor remained influential among Southern Baptists throughout his life. His Palestine question revealed an activism shared by few Baptists—"What is my duty as a Christian and an American in supporting the Zionist movement?"

"Interpreters of Events" examines how the Palestine question played among Southern Baptist editors and political commentators in the Convention-wide and state presses. Every state Baptist periodical had an editorial section, though the extent to which Palestine appeared in Baptist editorials varied from editor to editor. The chapter, in many ways, offers a microcosm of the rest of the study, as it shows that Southern Baptist commentators simply did not agree on what exactly the Palestine question was—or what complexities it entailed.

"'Cyrus'" stands somewhat apart from the other chapters in this study. It focuses on the place of religion in Harry Truman's decision to extend immediate recognition to the newly-declared State of Israel on May 14, 1948. Truman was a Southern Baptist from the age of 18 and a devoted student of the Bible. In recent years, historians have come to argue that his personal faith inclined him to support the Zionist cause. While "'Cyrus'" does argue that Truman's faith had a role in his decisions regarding Palestine, it challenges two contentions that historians have made in recent years—that Truman had a prophetic view of Zionism and that he self-consciously modeled himself on Cyrus, the Persian ruler who allowed exiled Judeans to return to Jerusalem in the 6th century, BCE. As President, Truman had an entirely different Palestine question from anyone else in this study—"What can *I* do to help solve *the* Palestine question?"

The question of whether or not to send a congratulatory telegram to Truman was thus one among many different Palestine questions that Southern Baptists were sorting through in 1948. Each question came with its own context. Each question came with its own tangle of associations. Above all, my goal with *Between Dixie and Zion* is to recapture these contexts and tangles, to understand the diversity of concerns, experiences, and impressions that shaped Southern Baptist attitudes towards the land, the people, and the politics of Palestine in the Mandate era.

Historiographical Survey

Because of its focus on contextualizing the many different types of encounters Southern Baptists had with Palestine, *Between Dixie and Zion* touches on several

different historiographical strands. Each chapter, in a sense, speaks to its own historiography. While some of these strands are small, able to contained within an individual chapter or footnote, a few demand a more extended look.

Christian Zionism

The most obvious historiography implicated in this study is the growing scholarship on Christian Zionism. Like the related term "Zionism," Christian Zionism can mean many things. It can signify the self-conscious movement that has developed over recent decades and taken institutional form through bodies like Christians United for Israel (CUFI). It can signify a distinct, frequently millenarian Christian ideology concerning the place of the Jews in the world and history. It can even signify, simply, the support or sympathy of Christians for the Zionist movement or Israel. The most active front in the historiography of Christian Zionism, however, concerns what I call millenarian Christian Zionism—the belief among certain groups of Christians that the Zionist movement and the establishment of the State of Israel are part of God's plan for history. Most scholarship on millenarian Christian Zionism has focused on the role of a biblical hermeneutic and eschatological system called premillennial dispensationalism in stirring up interest in the return of Jews to Palestine. Developed in 19th-century England by John Nelson Darby of the Plymouth Brethren, dispensationalism was based on making a strong hermeneutical distinction between the Church and Israel in interpreting the Bible. This meant that God's covenantal relationship with Israel had not wholly passed to the Church (as had been the mainstream Christian interpretation since, arguably, Paul). The biblical

covenants between God and Israel still stood as covenants between God and the Jews—including, most importantly, the promise of the Land. Out of their strong hermeneutical distinction between Israel and the Church, dispensationalists also unfolded a scheme of history and eschatology that affirmed the continuing centrality of Jews to God's plan for history. Without delving into the complicated specifics, dispensationalists held that the Second Coming of Christ and the establishment of his millennial kingdom would be accompanied by the return of Jews to Palestine and the mass conversion of a "faithful remnant" to Christ. They held, too, that these converted Jews would serve a special priestly function within Christ's millennial kingdom.

Scholarship on millenarian Christian Zionism has emphasized the role of both dispensationalist hermeneutics and eschatology in shaping Christian support for Zionism. Yona Malachy, who worked with the Israeli Department of Religious Affairs, was the first to pen a study devoted to millenarian Christian Zionism, *The Relationship of Fundamentalist Churches to Zionism and the State of Israel*, which was published posthumously in 1978. Malachy divided his work into four studies on distinct premillennialist (or premillenarian, as he called it) groups—Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostals, and dispensationalists—noting of the four, "By means of a literal interpretation of the prophecies, and sometimes as a result of complex eschatological reckoning, the premillenarians concluded that the return of the Jews to Palestine, and their conversion to Christianity before or after their

restoration, was a pre-condition[…] for the Second Advent of the Messiah."[5] In his chapter on dispensationalism, Malachy argued that there had been two distinct periods in terms of dispensationalists' relationship to Zionism and Israel:

> From the beginning of the Dispensationalist movement until the end of World War I, leaders of the movement tried to realize their Zionist faith in practice, even resorting to political action in order to advance the Zionist idea. Since 1920, however, there have been no signs of political activity, and even their Zionist tendency has turned into a theological-doctrinal attitude that no longer leads to contact or practical cooperation between Jewish-Zionist groups and Dispensationalists.[6]

Writing in the early 1970s, Malachy noted that the "'philo-Semitic' and 'Zionist' belief" of dispensationalists had been reduced to "a strictly eschatological significance[.]"[7] The "sole mission" of dispensationalists had become "intensive evangelization among the Jewish people."[8] Malachy viewed this apparent shift as part of a broader fundamentalist retreat from social and political engagement.[9] Malachy wrote (though was not published) before the rise of the Religious Right in the late 1970s, which heralded a renewed evangelical political engagement (or at least a broader awareness of it). Many leading figures of the movement, most

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[5] Yona Malachy, *American Fundamentalism and Israel: The Relationship of Fundamentalist Churches to Zionism and the State of Israel*, (Jerusalem: Institute of Contemporary Jewry, 1978), 6.
[6] *Ibid*., 159.
[7] *Ibid*., 161.
[8] *Ibid*., 161.
[9] The belief that fundamentalists/evangelicals had retreated from social and political engagement from the 1920s onward remained popular among scholars until recent years. For reevaluations of this, see Joel Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Beth Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009); Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt* (New York: Norton, 2011). Moreton and Dochuk place the roots of the "Christian Right" in an alliance between evangelical Christians and corporate interests forged in the waning days of the New Deal and the dawn of the Cold War.

especially the Independent Baptist Jerry Falwell, made support for the State of Israel a feature of their political agenda. This invigorated evangelical support for Israel in turn invigorated scholarly interest in Christian Zionism, particularly the millenarian variety espoused by the likes of Falwell, Pat Robertson, and, most recently, John Hagee.

Among the first scholars after Malachy to look at Christian support for Zionism was Timothy Weber, who published *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming* in 1979 (an enlarged edition was published four years later). Weber was not interested in Christian Zionism per se, but rather sought to develop a behavioral analysis of American premillennialist Christians between 1875 and 1925. In other words, Weber wanted to understand how premillennialist beliefs manifested themselves in actual behavior.[10] He dedicated one chapter to the behaviors spurred by beliefs concerning the place of Jews in prophecy—support for the evangelization of Jews, susceptibility to antisemitic beliefs and arguments, and, of course, interest in and support for the Zionist movement.[11] It was actually Weber's assertion that premillennialists' eschatology sometimes led them to write and act *like* antisemites that spurred an initial scholarly response. In a 1980 essay in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, David Rausch (himself an evangelical scholar) argued that Weber had mischaracterized premillennialists as being latent antisemites, an accusation Weber contested in the same journal.[12] Rausch's

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[10] On his approach, see Timothy Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 8-12.
[11] Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming*, 128-157.
[12] David Rausch, "Fundamentalism and the Jew: An Interpretive Essay," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (*JETS*) 23, no. 2 (June 1980): 105-112;

argument, essentially, was that pointing out the susceptibility of premillennialists to antisemitic arguments (especially as embodied in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*[13]) unnecessarily drew attention away from the essentially positive orientation premillennialists had towards Jews, manifested most clearly in their enthusiasm for Zionism. Rausch had published his own book on Christian support for Zionism, the 1979 *Zionism Within Early American Fundamentalism*. Like Weber, Rausch drew connections between premillennial dispensationalism and sympathy for the Zionist cause. Rausch was less concerned with dissecting dispensationalist engagement with Zionism on its own terms, however, than arguing his broader point that "the more Fundamentalist in theology that one is the more pro-Jewish one becomes," whereas "the more Liberal in theology one is, the more there is a chance for anti-Semitism to occur."[14]

Less agenda-driven was Yaakov Ariel's 1991 *On Behalf of Israel: American Fundamentalist Attitudes Toward Jews, Judaism, and Zionism, 1865-1945*.[15] Ariel, like Malachy, Weber, and Rausch before him, demonstrated how premillennial

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Timothy Weber, "A Reply to David Rausch's 'Fundamentalism and the Jew'," *JETS* 24, no. 1 (March 1981): 67-71. The conversation deteriorated from there. Rausch, "A Rejoinder to Timothy Weber's Reply," *JETS* 24, no. 1 (March 1981): 73-77; Weber, Timothy, "A Surrejoinder to David Rausch's Rejoinder," *JETS* 24, no. 1 (March 1981): 79-82.

[13] The *Protocols* was an antisemitic forgery produced by the Russian secret police at the turn of the 20th century that depicted a global Jewish conspiracy to control the world. In translation, it found massive popularity among antisemites worldwide, including in the United States. Leon Poliakov, "Elders of Zion, Protocols of the Learned," *Encyclopedia Judaica* 6, 2nd edition, eds. Berenbaum and Skolnik (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), 297.

[14] David Rausch, *Zionism Within Early American Fundamentalism, 1878-1918: A Convergence of Two Traditions* (New York: Mellen Press: 1979), 342.

[15] Yaakov Ariel, *On Behalf of Israel: American Fundamentalist Attitudes Toward Jews, Judaism, and Zionism, 1865-1945* (Brooklyn: Carlson, 1991).

dispensationalism had led evangelical Christians like William Blackstone to support the restoration of Jews to Palestine even before the emergence of Herzlian Zionism. Like Weber, Ariel emphasized the ambivalence towards Jews that often accompanied fundamentalist support for Zionism. Though Ariel broke little new ground in terms of analysis, he did go into greater detail in exploring the careers of two leading premillennialists, William Blackstone and Arno Gabelein. Of particular interest to Ariel was how premillennialists' interest in Zionism was almost always intertwined with a special concern for Jewish evangelism. Paul Boyer's 1992 *When Time Shall Be No More* likewise took up dispensationalism, albeit with a less direct focus on its relationship to Zionism or Israel.[16] Boyer's goal, instead, was to demonstrate the prevalence of dispensationalist thinking in 20th-century American pop culture. However, Boyer also gave particular attention to how eschatologically-minded Christians adapted their interpretations of biblical texts to critique and explain contemporary events—the threat of atomic war, the creation of the United Nations, the spread of computer technology, and, of course, the establishment of the State of Israel. Dispensationalist thought, in other words, was not set in stone, but quite plastic.

In 2004, Timothy Weber revisited the topic of Christian Zionism with a full-length study, *On the Road to Armageddon*, which again drew connections between dispensationalist thought and Christian support for Zionism/Israel.[17] This later work, though, went beyond the intellectual and cultural approaches that dominated the

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[16] Paul Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1992).
[17] Timothy Weber, *On the Road to Armageddon: How Evangelicals Became Israel's Best Friend* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Press, 2004).

above works (including his own) to also focus on the actual relationships that had developed between the Israeli right (the Herut/Likud parties) and politically-engaged American evangelicals liked Jerry Falwell in the 1970s. Like Malachy before him, Weber argued that Fundamentalists and evangelicals more broadly had retreated from politics between the 1920s and 1970s. The rise of the Religious Right in the late 1970s, though, had heralded the arrival of a more activist Christian Zionism girded by interaction with the Israeli state.

In the last decade, scholars and journalists have increasingly emphasized the deeper intellectual roots of Protestant prophetic thinking concerning Jews. While studies of Christian Zionism as far back as Malachy had noted Puritan antecedents to dispensationalism, these mentions were more prefatory than analytical. In her 2007 *Allies for Armageddon*, Victoria Clark argued that contemporary Christian Zionists are the intellectual descendants of sixteenth and seventeenth century Calvinist Restorationists like Henry Finch, who, prior to John Nelson Darby, challenged the dominant view among Christians that God's covenants with the ancient Israelites had fallen to the Church.[18] In the 2013 *More Desired Than Our Owne Salvation*, Robert Smith likewise traced the roots of contemporary Christian Zionism to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dissenters. Smith, however, took a slightly different definition of Christian Zionism that distinguished his analysis from Clark's, defining the term as "political action, informed by specifically Christian commitments, to promote or preserve Jewish control over the geographic area now

[18] Victoria Clark, *Allies for Armageddon: The Rise of Christian Zionism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

comprising Israel and Palestine."[19] Citing recent polls, Smith asserted that belief that the United States itself has a divine mission is a more reliable indicator of Christian Zionist *political engagement* than dispensationalist (or dispensational*ish*) hermeneutics or eschatological thinking on their own. It is this combination of Christian restorationism and covenantal nationalism that Smith traced back to the English Reformation, during which some Reformed scholars had begun promoting an "historicist" interpretation of biblical prophecy, viewing prophecy as fulfilled in history rather than a guide to spiritual matters. Puritan thinkers like John Bale, Thomas Brightman, and Joseph Mede constructed an historicist eschatological framework in which a Puritan England and proto-Puritan Jewry stood against the twin anti-Christs of the Pope and the Turk. This Judeo-centric interpretive framework came to America through the New England Puritans, where it cohabitated with the "civil millennialism" that emerged out of the American Revolution. Contrary to most scholarship on the subject, Smith argued that Christian Zionism (meaning, specifically, political engagement) did not evolve directly out of John Nelson Darby's premillennial dispensationalism, but out of a broader combination of Judeo-centric prophecy interpretation and a belief in America's divine mission. In this sense, William Blackstone, author of an 1891 petition calling on President Benjamin Harrison to help resettle Jews in Palestine, was most accurately the father of contemporary American Christian Zionism. He, far more than the nonpolitical Darby, combined prophetic hope in the restoration of the Jews to Palestine and belief in the United States' role in fulfilling that hope.

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[19] Robert Smith, *More Desired Than Our Owne Salvation: The Roots of Christian Zionism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2.

One among many non-historical works on Christian Zionism that have come out in recent years, Stephen Spector's 2008 *Evangelicals and Israel* offered an analysis of contemporary Christian Zionists that is nonetheless instructive for exploring earlier Christian engagement with Zionism.[20] In particular, Spector argued that dispensationalism only accounts for a small amount of evangelical Christian support for Israel, that "Christian Zionist beliefs comprise a complex system of scriptural mandate, historical justification, political conviction, and empathic connection."[21] Though not dismissive of the role of eschatology in evangelical support for Israel, Spector argued that "many dedicated born-again supporters of Israel have only the most general expectations of the end-times[.]"[22] They are not, in other words, rigid adherents to complex dispensational apocalyptic timelines. Rather, most Christian Zionists base their support for the Jewish state "on a marriage between religion and geopolitics."[23] In terms of geopolitics, Christian Zionists trend towards belief that the West—represented by the United States and Israel—is in a "clash of civilizations" with the Islamic world—represented both by the autocratic regimes of the Middle East and North Africa and Islamist and jihadist terror groups.

The past decade has also seen increasing focus on the role of Jewish-Christian interaction in shaping Christian support for Zionism. Though Paul Merkley's *The Politics of Christian Zionism* did examine millenarian Christian

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[20] Stephen Spector, *Evangelicals and Israel: The Story of American Christian Zionism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).
[21] *Ibid*., 26.
[22] *Ibid*., 113.
[23] *Ibid*., 50.

Zionists like William Hechler, the British chaplain in turn-of-the-century Vienna, and the aforementioned William Blackstone, Merkley's primary focus was on the political alliances forged between Christians and Zionists in the first decades of the 20th century.[24] Hechler, for example, was not only a devoted Christian Restorationist, but actually helped Theodor Herzl gain an audience with the German Kaiser. Zionist engagement with Christian supporters continued into the Mandate era, when the Zionist Organization of America actively cultivated support among American Christians by forming lobbies like the American Palestine Committee. The Christians of the APC, though, tended not to be of the millenarian mold. The Zionists were far more interested in cultivating support among politically influential mainline and liberal Protestants.

Though Merkley was clear that the Zionists focused their efforts on mainline Protestants, he did not elaborate on what motivated mainline support. Caitlin Carenen's 2012 *The Fervent Embrace* filled this lacuna by exploring the motives of mainline Protestant supporters of Zionism and Israel from the 1930s to the 1970s.[25] Carenen argued that mainline Protestants tended to support the movement on humanitarian grounds during the Mandate era, understanding it as one of the few available solutions in dealing with the intensifying persecution of Jews in Europe. Such humanitarian concern was frequently paired with a sense of Christian guilt over the historic persecution of Jews in Europe—Zionism thus became both a solution to contemporary problems and a way of repairing the Christian-Jewish

[24] Paul Merkley, *The Politics of Christian Zionism, 1891-1948* (Portland: Cass, 1998).
[25] Caitlin Carenen, *The Fervent Embrace: Liberal Protestants, Evangelicals, and Israel* (New York: NYU Press, 2012).

relationship. During and after the war, awareness of the horrors of the Holocaust would spur a re-evaluation of Protestant theological approaches to Judaism that would lead many away from the historically-dominant Christian doctrine of supercessionism and many towards a belief that antisemitism was a deep historical sin requiring the repentance of churches.

Shalom Goldman's 2010 *Zeal for Zion* likewise foregrounded the interrelationship between Christian and Jewish Zionists.[26] Goldman's primary goal was to intervene in the historiography of Zionism (rather than the historiography of Christian Zionism) by making the case "for a wider and more inclusive history, one that takes the Christian involvement with Zionism into account."[27] However, *Zeal for Zion* does offer insights for Christian Zionist historiography, too. Goldman's work moves beyond a focus on vaguely-defined Christian *support* for Zionism, instead focusing on Christian *engagement* with the movement. Engagement, of course, can take a variety of forms.[28] Perhaps the best example of Goldman's emphasis is a chapter on the Anglican priest and scholar Herbert Danby (of St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem), which focuses on Danby's engagement with the Zionist community of scholars in the Mandate era (most especially Joseph

[26] Shalom Goldman, *Zeal for Zion: Christians, Jews, and the Idea of the Promised Land* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2009).
[27] *Ibid*., 1.
[28] An earlier look at what I term "engagement" can be found in a 2002 article by Alan Levenson. Levenson explored how ideological affinities beyond millenarian interest could bring gentiles and Zionists together in the same cause, even as "philosemitic goals" could be "deeply embedded in antisemitic premises." Levenson, "Gentile reception of Herzlian Zionism, a reconsideration," *Jewish History* 16 (2002): 197-198.

Klausner) and the priest's contributions to the development of modern Hebrew.[29] The renewal of a Hebrew national culture in Eretz Israel was a major emphasis of the Zionist movement. Danby, far beyond supporting this renewal, was a part of it. Goldman's work thus depicts Christians not only as outside supporters of a Jewish movement, but active participants in the Zionist project.

Between Dixie and Zion addresses several historiographical questions related to Christian Zionism. My findings and approach on premillennialists' understanding of the Zionist movement most closely follow that of Spector and Goldman. Like Spector did with contemporary Christian Zionists, I found that Southern Baptist premillennialists in the Mandate era combined their prophetic concerns with a host of other factors in forming their approaches—sometimes positive, sometimes negative, and frequently ambivalent—to Zionism. Almost every Baptist, premillennialist or otherwise, conveyed a sense of civilizational gap between the Zionists and the Arabs, with the Zionists representing western progress and the Arabs representing eastern backwardness. Some—like Frank Norris—evinced a concern for international law and justice. Some—like Jacob Gartenhaus—shared real nationalist sympathies with the Zionists. Some—the foreign missionaries—intertwined premillennial beliefs with the practical work and results of their mission. Others—like missionary and traveler W.A. Hamlett—failed to draw any connections between their premillennialism and the Zionist movement at all. While premillennialists did share a belief that the Jews would be restored to Palestine prior

[29] Danby is best known for his translation of the Mishnah into English. Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933).

to the establishment of Christ's millennial kingdom, many other factors shaped whether they identified that prophesied restoration with the Zionist movement.

Building upon Shalom Goldman's focus on Christian engagement with Zionism, I give particular attention not only to whether Southern Baptists were supportive of Zionism, but how they engaged with it as an ideology. After all, beyond being a movement to establish a Jewish state in Palestine, Zionism was a collection of oft-competing ideologies centered on reimagining the place of Jews in the world. Baptist Christian Zionists like Jacob Gartenhaus did not simply advocate support for Zionism on biblical grounds, but offered their own understanding of Jewishness. This engagement with Zionist ideology can perhaps best be seen in the elaboration of a Christianized "New Jew" concept. Every form of Zionist ideology in some way emphasized the "negation of the Diaspora"—the doffing of the mentalities and habits of life as a scattered minority—and the creation of a "New Jew" in Eretz Israel. Baptists who engaged with Zionist ideology were no exception. Foreign missionaries like J. Wash Watts, Leo Eddleman, and Robert Lindsey and Hebrew Christians like Gartenhaus expressed confidence that the negation of Diaspora habits and the adoption of a secular, nationalist Jewish identity would prepare the way towards a "New Jew" that was open to the gospel. No one went farther in engaging with Zionist ideology and culture, though, than Lindsey, who among other things helped to found a "Baptist kibbutz" at Petach Tikvah in the late 1940s.

Finally, *Between Dixie and Zion* also looks at the role relationships between Baptists and Jews played in shaping Baptist approaches to Zionism. As has been

documented by Paul Merkley and Caitlin Carenen, official Zionist organizations primarily sought to cultivate support among mainline Protestants in the Mandate era. Southern Baptists were thus not a high priority. However, this did not mean that interaction did not occur. Rabbi Joseph Rauch of Louisville, who had actually attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, published an essay laying out the case for Jewish immigration and land purchasing in the *Review and Expositor* in 1930.[30] Frank Norris built a relationship with both the Zionist District and Hebrew Institute of Fort Worth shortly after World War One. In the late 1940s, he came to be involved with the American Christian Palestine Committee (ACPC), which had been organized by leaders involved in the Zionist Organization of America and Jewish Agency. Other Baptists did, too. Coleman Craig, who had traveled to Palestine in the 1920s, even gathered petitions for the ACPC. If interaction between official Jewish organizations and Southern Baptists was uncommon, however, it might be argued that converts like Jacob Gartenhaus and Hyman Appelman filled the void. As the forward to one of Gartenhaus's tracts noted, Baptists considered themselves "fortunate to have in our author the cultured Jew and the consecrated Christian."[31]

Orientalism and Travel Literature

Much of this study concerns American discourse about Palestine and Palestinian peoples. Because of this, it necessarily concerns the waves of postcolonial

[30] Joseph Rauch, "Contemporary Palestine," *Review & Expositor* 27, no. 1 (January 1930): 24-31.
[31] John Hill, foreword to *The Jew and Jesus*, by Jacob Gartenhaus (Nashville: Sunday School Board, 1934), 5.

scholarship that have spread in the wake of Edward Said's 1978 *Orientalism*.[32] Said argued that Western cultural representations and academic studies of the Orient (Near East)—particularly in Britain, France, and, later, the United States—were inexorably intertwined with the actual political and material processes of empire and colonialism. Although Said was primarily concerned with this intertwinement itself, the greatest impact of his work came in the argument that Western representations of the Orient helped to create habits of mind among Westerners that rendered sensible, even necessary, the imperialist and colonialist projects of the 19th and 20th centuries. Orientalist thought divided the world into halves. The Occident, or West, was the realm of civilization, progress, Christianity, and, later, modernity. The Orient, or East, was uncivilized, incapable of independent progress, superstitious, backward, and premodern. The Orient, according to the logic of Orientalist discourse, "needed" the civilizing influence of the West.

Since *Orientalism* and Said's later *Culture and Imperialism*, the postcolonial approach has come to dominate scholarship on the European and American encounters with the East and Global South.[33] Of particular interest to scholars has been travel literature. Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* argued that even seemingly-benign—and, often, "anti-conquest"—European travel books "gave European reading publics a sense of ownership, entitlement and familiarity with respect to the distant parts of the world that were being explored, invaded, invested

[32] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978).
[33] Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993).

in, and colonized."[34] Hilton Obenzinger's 1999 *American Palestine* turned the same critical eye towards 19th century American travel literature on Ottoman Palestine, examining it "within an overall framework that regards American society and its culture as manifestations of covenantal settler-colonialism[.]"[35] Obenzinger argued that "Holy Land literature—and the entire cultural 'mania' with the Holy Land—became a crucial forum for negotiating American settler identity" during the United States' 19th-century expansion.[36] The cultural assumptions baptized in Palestine, in other words, sanctified the American imperial project of subduing the American West and other territories.

"Between Dixie and Zion" both affirms and challenges aspects of Said's argument and the postcolonial school that followed him. Southern Baptists undeniably participated in Orientalist discourse. During the Ottoman era, Baptist writers repeatedly lamented the backwardness of the Ottoman government and local populations while expressing hope for the Christianization (meaning Protestantization) and civilization of the region. After World War I, Baptists continued to generally and favorably contrast the West against the Arab East. However, the "occidentalization" of Baptist depictions of Jews, who went from being depicted as part of the benighted Levant in the Ottoman era to an extension of the civilized West during the Mandate, demonstrates that Orientalist discourse was not so hegemonic as to preclude dramatic and swift changes in representation based

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[34] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 3. Pratt's first edition was published in 1992.
[35] Hilton Obenzinger, *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 7.
[36] Obenzinger, *American Palestine*, 5.

on developments in Palestine. The Southern Baptist case also challenges the connection between colonial discourse and geopolitics. Almost every Southern Baptist writer in the Mandate Era contrasted Zionist or British modernity with Arab quaintness or backwardness. However, this contrast did not necessarily translate to a particular political program. While the likes of Z.T. Cody and J. McKee Adams drew these contrasts, both argued for Arab self-determination. Besides that, at the same time that many Baptists extolled the role of the British in the material development of Palestine, many also blamed the conflict between Jews and Arabs on the Mandatory—or pseudo-colonial—policies of Britain. With that being said, it is clear that Baptist travelers' disparate depictions of Arabs and Zionists conveyed a sense that Zionist victory, variously construed, was inevitable, if not favorable or proper. Whether one feels that this discourse underwrote settler-colonial exploitation, however, depends on one's understanding of the Zionist project.[37]

As for Obenzinger's argument that Holy Land travel literature provided a crucial venue for American settler-colonial self-definition, his thesis only really applies to the timeframe of his study (pre-1882). By the time the British conquered

[37] Much scholarly (and political) attention has been given in the past decade to the question of whether the Zionist movement was a European settler-colonialist project. For arguments that Zionism was a colonial enterprise, see Gershon Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative Approach," *The Israel/Palestine Question: Rewriting Histories*, ed. Ilan Pappé (London, 1999), 81-96; Uri Ram, "The Colonization Perspective in Israeli Sociology," *The Israel/Palestine Question: Rewriting Histories*, 55-80; Ilan Pappé, "Zionism as Colonialism: A Comparative View of Diluted Colonialism in Asia and Africa," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 107, no. 4 (Fall 2008): 611-633. For arguments that Zionism was a colonization movement but not colonialist, see Ran Aaronsohn, "Settlement in Eretz Israel—A Colonialist Enterprise? 'Critical' Scholarship and Historical Geography," *Israel Studies* 1, no. 2 (Fall 1996): 214-229; Ilan Troen, *Imagining Zion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

Palestine in World War I, the American westward expansion and conquest had been accomplished, obviating the need for "negotiating American settler identity" through pilgrim narratives. More relevant to the case of the Baptists here studied is Stephanie Stidham Rogers's 2011 *Inventing the Holy Land*, which focused on how these narratives shaped and were shaped by an American Protestant need for self-definition. Rogers argued that American Protestants, riven by division in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, "went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land in search of new meanings, adventure, and religious self-understanding[,]" ultimately carving out "a more biblical East, a new Protestant homeland with new Protestant shrines[…]using Protestant theological frameworks."[38] These Protestant travelers first created a "Protestant Holy Land" in the Catholic and Orthodox Levant through text—the pilgrim narrative—before developing such a place in reality through alternative sites, itineraries, and interpretations. Many of the Baptists here studied, particularly in the chapter on Ottoman Palestine, participated in this process. By the time of the Mandate Era, however, an alternative Protestant Holy Land very much already existed, waiting and ready to confirm Baptists in their faith.

Additionally, although pilgrim literature remained a crucial channel through which American Christians encountered Palestine, the genre had lost its hegemonic position by the end of World War I. Large newspapers increasingly covered global events (the interwar years, for example, saw the dramatic expansion of the Associated Press overseas). Popular magazines like *Time* and *Life*, as well as the popular-yet-academic *National Geographic* increasingly brought reports and images

[38] Stephanie Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land: American Protestant Pilgrimage to Palestine, 1865-1941* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2011), 2.

from around the globe to large domestic audiences. After the war, radio journalism and, later, newsreel footage would provide new channels for the American encounter with the world. As with travel literature, postcolonial readings have dominated scholarship on these different media. Lawrence Davidson's 2001 *America's Palestine* examined reporting on Palestine in four American newspapers—*The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Chicago Tribune*—arguing that each paper's reporting was colored by a "bipolar worldview" that divided the world into two parts, "the civilized West, possessed of technological know-how and representing progress, efficiency, and good government; and the backward East, in need of 'development' and guidance."[39] Several scholars have critically examined National Geographic's discursive practices. Linda Steet's 2000 *Veils and Daggers* examined the magazine's depictions of Arabs over the course of the 19th century, offering a "discourse analysis, with popular Orientalism as its primary concern."[40] Steet found that National Geographic consistently portrayed Arabs textually and visually according to Orientalist assumptions, particular in its "constructions of *the* Arab

[39] Lawrence Davidson, *America's Palestine: Popular and Official Perceptions from Balfour to Israeli Statehood* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 1. Davidson does not present himself as a postcolonialist (indeed, none of the major works of postcolonial scholarship appear in his bibliography), but his scholarship nonetheless follows postcolonial lines.

[40] Linda Steet, *Veils and Daggers: A Century of National Geographic's Representation of the Arab World* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), 9-10.

man and *the* Arab woman."[41] As she admits, however, she was specifically looking for Orientalism and deliberately avoided non-Orientalist discourse.[42]

While these works suggest that many Southern Baptist writings on Palestine fit larger discursive patterns in American culture, they also demonstrate some of the weaknesses of the postcolonialist approach. First and foremost is the tendency among scholars critical of Orientalist discourse or the "bi-polar worldview" (in Davidson's formulation) to recreate the very binaries they find problematic. Said himself and able interpreters like Mary Louise Pratt worked, more or less successfully, to avoid this pitfall—one of their central arguments was that Orientalist binaries were constructions, that the culture products of the "metropole" could never be sealed off from the "contact zone" (to borrow Pratt's term). Davidson and Steet, however, tend to maintain a binary distinction between American discursive habits and the objects of that discourse. Relatedly, they tend to essentialize the figure of "the Orientalist" as they criticize the Orientalists' essentializing.[43] While Steet argues, "Within Orientalism, Arabs are always performing Arabs[,]" it might be also said that within much postcolonialist scholarship, Orientalists are always performing Orientalism. They always act, in

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[41] Steet, *Veils*, 5. While many critical works on National Geographic have continued to emphasize the magazine's Orientalism or complicity with imperialism (e.g., Tamar Rothenberg, *Presenting America's World: Strategies of Innocence in National Geographic Magazine, 1888-1945* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007)), Stephanie Hawkins's recent analysis of readers' letters to the magazine has shown that, "while *National Geographic's* imperial narratives could be persuasive, they also contained tensions that encouraged critical engagement with the magazine's institutional mission and its role as public icon." From *American Iconographic* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), 9.

[42] Steet, *Veils*, 10.

[43] Davidson, who does not overtly claim a postcolonial approach, does not use this language.

other words, in complicity with racist, exploitative, colonial imperatives. Their misrepresentations are always deliberate, their gazes pernicious, even "violent," in the words of Said. While it is important to be sensitive to the power of discourse, the mechanisms of representation, and the relationship of both to material and political interests, too often postcolonialist scholarship subsumes into the colonial or neo-colonial project what were often the products of historical encounters shaped by evolving epistemologies, flattening the past according to the moral and political concerns of today's academy.

Perhaps indicative of the complex realities that discourse—Orientalist or postcolonialist—can obscure is the example of Shukri Mosa, Southern Baptists' first missionary to Palestine and Edward Said's maternal grandfather, who is examined in the chapter, "Arabs." Though Baptists had discussed redeeming the benighted East through Protestant Christianization for decades, it was not until Shukri Mosa, a native of Safed, came in 1908 to Texas, converted to Baptist Christianity, and returned to build a mission in his homeland that Baptists' missionary discourse actually became a mission. The "contact zone" had come to Texas (or perhaps, in this case, was Texas). For better or worse, it was Southern Baptists' Orientalist sense that Palestine needed change that made them amenable to Mosa's program for Nazareth—for a church, for a school, for a salary with which he could maintain a livelihood and educate his sons and daughters. If not for this encounter, if not for the assumptions and prejudices that enabled it, there might still be Orientalists, but no *Orientalism*.

Hebrew Christianity

The chapter, "Jew," engages the small historiography of the Hebrew Christian movement. Hebrew Christianity was a movement among Jewish converts to Christianity who sought to maintain varying degrees of Jewish national distinctiveness within their new faith. The movement had its origins in 19th-century Britain, where a string of fraternal convert and mission associations had maintained fitful existences since at least 1813. By the turn of the century, the movement had spread among the growing number of Jewish missions in the United States, resulting in the formation of the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America (HCAA) in 1915 and the International Hebrew Christian Alliance (IHCA) in 1925. As in Great Britain, the American movement was internally diverse, ranging from those who favored establishing explicitly Jewish congregations and maintaining some Jewish rituals to others who sought to assimilate into gentile churches while maintaining an evangelistic concern for their unconverted brethren. These divisions aside, two common concerns united Hebrew Christians—to witness to the Jews the truth of Christianity and to witness to the gentiles the concerns of the converts.

The first wave of scholarship on Hebrew Christianity came in the 1960s and 1970s from Jewish scholar-activists interested in understanding and rebutting Christian missions to Jews. The first to seriously address Hebrew Christianity was sociologist B.Z. Sobel, who published two essays on the movement in the 1960s and one book-length study, *Hebrew Christianity: The Thirteenth Tribe*, in 1974.[44]

[44] B. Zvi Sobel, "Legitimation and Antisemitism as Factors in the Functioning of a Hebrew-Christian Mission," *Jewish Social Studies* 23, no. 3 (July, 1961): 170-186; "Protestant Evangelists and the Formulation of a Jewish Racial Mystique: The

Though a trained scholar, Sobel was far from dispassionate on the matter of Hebrew Christianity—he had first encountered the movement while investigating Christian missions to Jews for the Anti-Defamation League. His 1961 "Legitimation and Antisemitism as Factors in the Functioning of a Hebrew-Christian Mission" situated Hebrew Christianity within the context of fundamentalist missions to Jews. The fundamentalist Protestant, he noted, "is not concerned with the question of whether he should approach the Jew with Christian truth, but rather of how he can best reach him for Christ."[45] Thus, "any question that exists regarding the evangelization of the Jew will be methodological in nature[.]"[46] Sobel understood the peculiar claims of Hebrew Christianity—that Jewishness could and should be maintained even after conversion—primarily as a matter of missionary methodology based on the premise that it was easier to win Jews to Christ if they did not feel they were renouncing their Jewishness. Sobel was followed by David Max Eichhorn, whose 1978 *Evangelizing the American Jew* likewise interpreted the development of Hebrew Christianity and its successor movement, Messianic Judaism, as primarily shifts in missionary methodology.[47] Eichhorn went beyond Sobel, though, in acknowledging that the self-identity of converts played *some* role in giving shape to the movement. He recognized, too, that the growth of the Hebrew Christian movement in the

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Discovery of Sociology," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 5, no. 3 (Autumn 1966): 343-356; *Hebrew Christianity: The Thirteenth Tribe* (New York: Wiley, 1974).

[45] Sobel, "Legitimation and Antisemitism," 172.

[46] *Ibid*., 173.

[47] David Max Eichhorn, *Evangelizing the American Jew* (Middle Village: Jonathan David, 1978).

United States roughly coincided with the rise of Zionism, which promoted Jewish *national* identity over *religious* identity.

After the initial scholarly emphasis on mission methodology came an approach focusing on identity and practice. David Rausch's 1982 *Messianic Judaism* argued that Hebrew Christianity had existed in various forms since the birth of Christianity.[48] The earliest Christians, he noted, were Jews who followed a Jew, considered the Jewish scriptures sacred, and believed Jesus was the Jewish messiah. The development of modern Hebrew Christianity in Great Britain and the United States, then, was a "renaissance" of such forms of Christian practice and identity—not merely a missionary tactic. This renaissance had brought to the surface serious and ancient questions about how to balance Christian religious commitments with a Jewish national or ethnic identity. Indeed, the defining concern of twentieth-century American Hebrew Christians was whether to form a distinct Hebrew Christian church and adopt or adapt Jewish rituals or to simply join gentile churches. In the first half of the twentieth century, the latter view had prevailed. Since the 1960s, though, the former had come to predominate, resulting in the development of Messianic Judaism. A new wave of scholarship has come in the past decade and a half, as increased attention to evangelical support for Israel has spurred increased attention to the evangelical-Jewish encounter more broadly. Dan Cohn-Sherbok's 2000 *Messianic Judaism*, like Rausch's work, placed Hebrew Christianity within a long context stretching from the early church to the messianic

[48] David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism: Its History, Theology, and Polity* (New York: Mellen Press, 1982).

movement of the late-twentieth century.[49] Though Cohn-Sherbok's segments on Hebrew Christianity did not offer anything new in terms of understanding the movement, his work was significant in affirming from the perspective of a Reform rabbi that Hebrew Christianity and Messianic Judaism represent legitimate forms of Jewish identity rather than peculiar modes of apostasy.

Yaakov Ariel's 2000 *Evangelizing the Chosen People* combined the early emphasis on missionary methodology and with the later concern for convert identity and practice.[50] Ariel situated Hebrew Christians first and foremost as an interest group within American Protestantism. This small community—comprised primarily of missionaries and clergy—had indeed emerged out of evangelical missions to Jews, however its *raison d'être* was not reducible to evangelistic impulses. Hebrew Christians had organized for a variety of reasons—to share their experiences as converts, to build their community, to witness to Gentiles their concerns, and, of course, to witness to Jews the truths of Christianity. In some ways, Ariel's depiction of Hebrew Christianity reversed Sobel's argument that Hebrew Christians "Judaized" their faith in order to better reach Jews with the gospel. For many Hebrew Christians, the desire to evangelize other Jews was rooted in a need to confirm their identities as both Jews and Christians—not necessarily vice versa.

My own work on Hebrew Christianity has shifted focus onto the role of Hebrew Christians within the gentile churches. While Hebrew Christian organizations like the HCAA and IHCA were created to meet the needs of the convert community, individual Hebrew Christians often worked within the

[49] Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *Messianic Judaism* (New York: Continuum, 2000).
[50] Yaakov Ariel, *Evangelizing the Chosen People* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2000).

institutions of "gentile" Christianity as clergy or missionaries. In "A Meshummad in Dixie: Jacob Gartenhaus as a Convert Missionary in the Southern Baptist Convention, 1921-1949," I examined how Jacob Gartenhaus's Hebrew Christianity "as a concept itself functioned in meeting the specific needs of his mission—allowing him to defend evangelism as a matter of respect for the converted, to speak as an authoritative educator on his former religion, and to embody in his person the progress and millennial hopes of the mission."[51] In the current work, I focus less on Gartenhaus's Hebrew Christianity as a concept itself than in how his involvement in the movement colored his approach to Zionism and the Palestine question. Like many other Hebrew Christians, Gartenhaus had both a national and prophetic interest in the Zionist movement. Most importantly, this chapter demonstrates the impact that Hebrew Christians could have in shaping Christian attitudes towards Jews and Zionism.

Fundamentalism and the South

The chapter "Premillennialists" is relevant to two historiographical strands related to Christian fundamentalism. The first concerns the role of premillennialist hermeneutics and eschatology in the formation of the movement. Ever since Ernest Sandeen published *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930* in 1970, scholars have been attentive to the relationship between premillennialism and the fundamentalist movement that coalesced in the

[51] Walker Robins, "A Meshummad in Dixie: Jacob Gartenhaus as a Convert Missionary in the Southern Baptist Convention, 1921-1949," *Konversion in Räumen jüdischer Geschichte*, eds. Carsten Schapkow and Martin Przybilski (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Academic Press, 2014), 136.

1910s.[52] Sandeen argued that premillennialism (specifically premillennial dispensationalism) provided both an intellectual basis and an organizational occasion for the development of movement. It figured prominently in the prophetic conferences, print culture, and educational institutions that provided the building blocks of Christian fundamentalism around the turn-of-the-century. Later scholars like George Marsden have retreated from Sandeen's out-and-out emphasis on premillennialism as *the* guiding force in the development of the movement, viewing its popularity as part of a multi-pronged response to the threat of modernism in the churches and broader American culture.[53] Still, any discussion of fundamentalism must necessarily engage the role of premillennialist thinking, while any discussion of premillennialism in the first decades of the twentieth century must necessarily engage its relationship to the fundamentalist movement.

The second historiographical strand relevant to "Premillennialists" concerns the spread of fundamentalism to the American South and, more specifically, the Southern Baptist Convention. While early accounts of fundamentalism tended to assume that the movement was southern and rural (often by eliding fundamentalism and anti-evolutionism), the first wave of serious academic studies on the topic—that of Sandeen and Marsden—focused on the northern, urban roots of the movement. Sandeen essentially ignored the South while Marsden, who interpreted fundamentalism as a militant response to the spread of modernism in the northern

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[52] Ernest Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).
[53] George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

denominations, argued that the Southern denominations simply had too few modernistic tendencies to inspire a fundamentalist reaction in the first decades of the twentieth century. While Marsden did believe that fundamentalism had come to the South in the middle decades of the twentieth century, he did not attempt to explain how. A first step towards an explanation was made with Barry Hankins's 1996 biography of Texas Baptist J. Frank Norris, *God's Rascal*.[54] Hankins examined how Norris, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Fort Worth, developed close ties with radical northern fundamentalists William Bell Riley of the World Christian Fundamentals Association during and after World War One. Inspired by controversies in the north, Norris attempted to raise a fundamentalist-style protest against the institutions of the Southern Baptist Convention, which he perceived as succumbing to modernism. Quickly, his railings against Baylor University and prominent Texas Baptists led to his exclusion from denominational institutions. Norris was never able to foment a fundamentalist rebellion within the SBC. Still, he became a popular figure in his own right—even among many who remained in the SBC—and the leader of a fundamentalist fiefdom within the South until his death in 1952.

Joel Carpenter's 1997 *Revive Us Again* did not look explicitly at the spread of fundamentalism to the South but did integrate Southern figures (including Norris) and institutions into a broader history of the movement between the 1930s and 1940s.[55] Carpenter argued that fundamentalism did not die after the controversies of

[54] Barry Hankins, *God's Rascal: J. Frank Norris and the Beginnings of Southern Fundamentalism* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996).
[55] Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*.

the 1920s—rather fundamentalists shifted their emphasis towards building their own parachurch organizations and educational institutions and developing their own alternative fundamentalist culture, steps that laid the groundwork for the spread of the New Evangelicalism in the late 1940s and 1950s. As with Hankins's treatment of Norris, Carpenter's work depicts a Southern fundamentalism that was simply linked in institutionally to the broader movement. The same can be said for William Glass's 2001 *Strangers in Zion*, which traced earlier connections made between Southerners and northern fundamentalists in the first decades of the twentieth century. Glass focused especially on the creation of fundamentalist institutions with connections to the northern movement like the Baptist Leonard Broughton's Atlanta Tabernacle, which hosted prophecy and Bible conferences, and Lewis Chaffer's Dallas Theological Seminary, which became the leading fundamentalist educational institution in the South. Specifically concerned with the South, Glass also attempted to explain why fundamentalist revolts did not occur in the Southern denominations at the same time they did in the north, arguing that Southerners did not think their denominational institutions would succumb to modernism as had happened in the north. Until they crossed that threshold—which for Baptists came in the late 1960s and 1970s—a Southern fundamentalism would not roil the denominations.

Andrew Smith's 2011 dissertation, *"Flocking by Themselves:" Fundamentalism, Fundraising, and the Bureaucratization of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1919-1925*, took a different tack from these earlier studies of fundamentalism in the South by focusing on how Southern Baptists engaged with

ongoing fundamentalist battles in the Northern Baptist Convention.[56] Southern Baptists, he showed, were keenly aware of the issues dividing their northern counterparts. Smith argued that earlier studies had focused too narrowly on the type of radical separatist (i.e., leave-the-denominations) fundamentalism espoused by the likes of William Bell Riley and Frank Norris and so overlooked the extent to which Southern Baptist denominationalists engaged with moderate northern fundamentalists like Curtis Lee Laws. Earlier studies also overlooked the extent to which devoted SBC denominationalists used fundamentalist-style arguments to promote denominational loyalty. Indeed, denominational leaders like Lee Rutland Scarborough successfully touted denominational involvement as its own Christian fundamental. The SBC and its institutions, argued Scarborough and his allies, were themselves bulwarks against modernism.

"Premillennialists" ties these two historiographical threads—that of premillennialism and Southern fundamentalism—together. It demonstrates that, for Southern Baptists concerned about the spread of radical fundamentalism in the South, premillennialism certainly *seemed* to be a defining feature of the movement. The majority of articles that addressed premillennialism in the Baptist press between the 1920s and 1940s were not concerned with premillennialist thought *per se*, but concerned radical fundamentalist calls to make premillennialism its own fundamental—something Southern Baptist leaders feared might split the denomination. This was, indeed, a radical fundamentalist tactic in trying to peel

[56] Andrew Smith, "'Flocking by Themselves:' Fundamentalism, Fundraising, and the Bureaucratization of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1919-1925," (doctoral dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 2011).

premillennialist Southern Baptists from the denomination. J. Frank Norris was behind two efforts to create alternate Baptist institutions organized around premillennialism—the Baptist Bible Union and the Premillennial Baptist Missionary Fellowship. These efforts failed, however, to create a wedge between premillennialist Southern Baptists and non-premillennialists. In fact, the hermeneutic and eschatological system only grew more popular within the SBC. As Andrew Smith argued, I found that the response of Southern Baptist denominationalists to "Norrisism" (as they called radical fundamentalism) were shaped by their impressions of the conflict in the Northern Baptist Convention. Southern Baptists were indeed concerned about the spread of modernism in the northern church and consistently professed their sympathy toward moderate northern fundamentalists like Curtis Lee Laws, who refused to make premillennialism a fundamental and sought to reform denominational institutions rather than break them up (positive references to Laws pop up repeatedly in SBC periodicals in the 1920s). As Smith demonstrated, Southern Baptist leaders touted their faithfulness to the fundamentals while promoting the expansion of SBC institutions as the best way to promote those fundamentals. Rather than avoiding fundamentalism, then, or delaying its impact, Southern Baptists more accurately co-opted its moderate form.

Harry Truman and Israel

The chapter "'Cyrus'" intervenes in the historiographical debate over President Harry Truman's motivations in deciding to immediately extend de facto recognition

to Israel in 1948. Truman was a Southern Baptist, and in the last two decades his faith has come to increasingly factor in to historians' discussions of his decision to recognize. Prior to that, however, the historiography of the subject generally fell into one of two schools identified by Michael Cohen in 1982—a "White House school" and a "State Department school."[57] As Cohen describes it, the White House school argued "that Truman supported the Zionist cause out of genuine humanitarian concern for the Jewish refugees, in the face of stiff opposition from the State Department, concerned solely about securing Arab oil and strategic bases for the West."[58] This interpretation had been forwarded by Truman himself, his special counsel, Clark Clifford, his former Undersecretary of State, Dean Acheson, Eliahu Elath (née Epstein), the Jewish Agency representative in D.C. and the first Israeli Ambassador to the United States, as well as the historian Ian Bickerton.[59] The State Department school, on the other hand, argued "that Truman acted against the national interest, not because of humanitarian concern or affinity for the Jewish remnant, but because of his narrow political interest in the strategically-placed Jewish vote."[60] Among those who forwarded this argument were Evan Wilson (who served in the State Department under Truman), John Snetsinger, and Cohen

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[57] Michael Cohen, "Truman and Palestine, 1945-1948: Revisionism, Politics and Diplomacy," *Modern Judaism* 2, no. 1 (February, 1982): 1.
[58] *Ibid*., 2.
[59] For Truman's account of his decision, see volume two of his memoirs, chapters 10-12: *Memoirs*, vol. II, *Years of Trial and Hope* (New York: Doubleday, 1956); Clifford's account can be read in "Recognizing Israel," *American Heritage* 28, no. 3 (April 1977) and Chapter One of *Counsel to the President* (New York: Random House, 1991); Acheson in *Present at the Creation* (New York: Norton, 1969); Elath in *Harry S. Truman: The Man and Statesman* (Jerusalem: Harry S. Truman Research Institute, 1977).
[60] Cohen, "Truman and Palestine," 2.

himself.[61] Somewhat in between the schools at the time of Cohen's writing was the work of Zvi Ganin, who both emphasized Truman's humanitarian interests while acknowledging the weight of political factors in his decision.[62] Most distinctive about Ganin's approach, though, is that he argued that Truman did not understand the full significance of his actions at the time. In recent decades, scholarship on Truman's decision has largely continued to fall on one of the two sides identified by Cohen in 1982, although with some new emphases. John Judis's 2014 *Genesis*, for example, is the most recent iteration of the State Department account, albeit with greater emphasis on what Judis sees as the deleterious influence of the "Jewish lobby."[63] *Genesis*, in a sense, retrojects Walt and Mearsheimer's controversial 2007 *The Israel Lobby*, which blamed the real and perceived failings of American policy in the Middle East on the pressures generated by the "Israel lobby," onto the late 1940s.[64]

Scholars addressing the role of religion in Truman's decision-making have tended to fall in line with the White House school, which seeks to explain Truman's actions apart from narrow political concerns. Interest in the topic seems to have first been raised by Moshe Davis at a symposium held at the Harry S. Truman Research

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[61] Evan Wilson, "The American Interest in the Palestine Question and the Establishment of Israel," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 401 (May, 1972): 64-73; John Snetsinger, *Truman, the Jewish Vote, and the Creation of Israel* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1974); Michael Cohen, *Truman and Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
[62] Zvi Ganin, *Truman, American Jewry, and Israel, 1945-1948* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1979).
[63] John Judis, *Genesis: Truman, American Jews, and the Origins of the Arab/Israeli Conflict* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014).
[64] John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007).

Institute for the Advancement of Peace to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of Israel. Davis recalled in his paper, "Reflections on Harry S. Truman and the State of Israel," a 1953 encounter with Truman during which the President had drawn a parallel between his decision to recognize Israel and the decision of the ancient Persian ruler Cyrus to allow the exiled Judeans to return to their land in the 6th century BCE, an event recounted in the biblical Book of Ezra.[65] Davis also noted an earlier instance reported by Eliahu Elath in which Rabbi Isaac Herzog, first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel, had drawn the same parallel and declared to the President that God had placed him in his mother's womb for the purpose of someday helping to bring about the Jewish state. "Where did this stream of biblical—Israel consciousness start?" Davis asked, "With Rabbi Herzog? In the earliest days of character formation? In Truman's mature reading of the Bible?"[66]

Michael T. Benson, Paul Merkley, and Gary Smith have been foremost in arguing that the "biblical—Israel consciousness" identified by Davis was an important factor in Truman's decision to recognize Israel. Benson, writing in 1997, noted that his aim was to "illustrate that Truman's Palestine policy was not solely a product of internal disputes, conflicting interests, and political struggles coupled with considerations for strategic, political, and international realities," but that "Truman's support for the Zionist cause[…]was due to attitudes Truman developed as a young man in Missouri as a result of an upbringing heavily influenced by the

[65] Moshe Davis, "Reflections on Harry S. Truman and the State of Israel," *Truman and the American Commitment to Israel*, eds. Allen Weinsten and Moshe Ma'oz (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1981), 82-85.
[66] *Ibid*., 84.

Bible."[67] Among the specific motives Benson cited is that Truman "was a student of and believer in the Bible and the Old Testament promises to the Jewish people."[68] Benson, though, fit his understanding of Truman's religion into a more holistic look at the President's background and worldview. Paul Merkley has given Truman extended treatment in both *The Politics of Christian Zionism* and *American Presidents, Religion, and Israel*. Merkley argued that Truman's understanding of the Bible and history led him to self-consciously accept the "mantle of Cyrus" in deciding to "bless" Israel with recognition.[69] Gary Smith's *Religion in the Oval Office* likewise argued that Truman's understanding of biblical history and prophecy influenced his approach to the Palestine question. In an almost direct challenge to the State Department school, Smith wrote, "Refusing to take the politically expedient route, Truman, guided by his Christian faith and humanitarian instincts and willing to make tough decisions, granted diplomatic recognition to Israel."[70]

Though the chapter "'Cyrus'" does not take on the broader claim that Truman's faith played a role in his decision-making, it does challenge the arguments of Benson, Merkley, and Smith that Truman's understanding of the Bible (and prophecy, in particular) in some way predisposed him to the Zionist cause. While it is clear that Truman was a deeply religious man and a Southern Baptist, the argument that he believed biblical prophecy to be relevant to the Palestine question

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[67] Michael T. Benson, *Harry S. Truman and the Founding of Israel* (Westport: Praeger, 1997), 9.
[68] *Ibid*., 7.
[69] Paul Merkley, *American Presidents, Religion, and Israel*: *The Heirs of Cyrus* (Westport: Praeger, 2004).
[70] Gary Smith, *Religion in the Oval Office: The Religious Lives of American Presidents* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 256.

relies solely on recollections made by Clark Clifford decades after the fact. Merkley's argument that Truman self-consciously modeled his actions on Cyrus depends on offhand remarks made by Truman to a very specific set of people—Jewish theologians and Israeli diplomats—again years after his decision to recognize. "Cyrus" points out, too, that these scattered evidences that Truman might have had a prophetic understanding of his role do not accord with what we do know about how Truman interpreted the Bible—as a Jeffersonian guide to moral action. In the end, I argue that Truman's faith undoubtedly did affect his decision to recognize Israel, albeit on terms suggested to him by Zionist statesman Chaim Weizmann in April of 1948—he decided "in the spirit of the moral law."[71]

A Methodological Note

Between Dixie and Zion distinguishes itself from most other works on Christian engagement with Palestine in its focus on a single denomination. Although early histories of American religion tended to be denominational in orientation, the last several decades have seen an increasing emphasis on transdenominational, even trans-religious, trends in American Christianity. Historians of Christian Zionism, of evangelicalism, of fundamentalism, and of premillennialism have rightfully emphasized the transdenominational nature of their subjects, all of which have bearing on this study. So why just focus on the Baptists? First, the Southern Baptist Convention has been the largest Protestant denomination in the United States since the late 19th century. For that reason alone, it deserves attention. Second, throughout

[71] Chaim Weizmann, quoted in Benson, *Harry S. Truman*, 187.

the twentieth century the SBC has, in many ways, served as a denominational avatar of conservative evangelical Christianity writ large. Finally, the questions that scholars have turned up in examining transdenominational trends in American Christianity—particularly in regard to engagement with Palestine and Israel—deserve to be examined within the bounded historical context that a denomination can provide. Of course, I have undertaken this study fully aware that denominational boundaries can be porous, even mobile. That, too, is a part of this story.

Chapter One

Before the 'Palestine Question'

It was the British conquest of Palestine in 1917 and the subsequent creation of the Mandate government in 1920 that first raised the Palestine question. Once Baptists began confronting the issues surrounding the question, though, they found themselves engaging and employing ways of thinking about the land, the people, and the politics of the region that had already been circulating among Southern Baptists—and American Protestants more broadly—for decades. Palestine, after all, was the Holy Land for Southern Baptists, and occupied a special place in their images of the world. Before examining how Southern Baptists encountered Mandatory Palestine, then, it is necessary to look at their encounters with Ottoman Palestine. In the 19th- and early 20th centuries, those encounters tended to come through sporadic missionary interest in the region, prophetic speculation, or, most importantly, travel and travel literature.

Missionary Aspirations

From the very beginning of the Southern Baptist Convention itself, Southern Baptists had periodically evinced an interest in evangelizing Jews and opening mission work in Palestine. At the inaugural triennial convention of the Southern Baptists in 1846, the Committee on New Fields of Labor for Foreign Missions haltingly suggested "the propriety of making enquiries…as to the practicability of establishing, at some future, yet not far distant time, a mission in Palestine, with

reference, at least in part, to the spiritual benefit of the Jews."[1] Committee chairman C.D. Mallary asserted that the Jews remained "beloved for their fathers' sake," and were assured by prophecy of future salvation.[2] He noted, truthfully, that the "number of Jews in Palestine at this time is considerable, and it appears to be rapidly increasing[,]" though he was also clear that the question of "Whether they will, as a nation, return to Palestine" was one "which the committee have no inclination to discuss[.]"[3] Whether or not Jews did return as a nation, Mallary believed that the traditional Jewish interest in the land meant "that they will ever constitute an important part of the population of that country," and would likely outlast the reign of fading "Mohammedanism" in the region.[4] He believed, too, that a successful work among Jews in Palestine could provide a foothold for expanding work among populations in Asia Minor, Egypt, Arabia, and Persia. "Have Baptists, have *Southern Baptists* nothing to do, instrumentally, for their salvation?" he asked.[5] The answer in 1846, it seems, was *no*. Nothing came of the committee's recommendation.

The testimony of a Jewish convert to Christianity named Abraham Jaeger at the 1873 Mobile Convention briefly renewed Baptist missionary interest in Jews and Palestine.[6] So moved by Jaeger's story was M.B. Wharton of Kentucky that he immediately offered a resolution calling on the Board of Domestic Missions to hire the convert as a missionary to his people. The resolution died, though, by referral to

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[1] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1861, 18.
[2] *Ibid*., 18.
[3] *Ibid*., 18.
[4] *Ibid*., 18.
[5] *Ibid*., 18.
[6] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1873, 20.

committee. In its place the Convention adopted a resolution offered by Thomas Miller of Alabama, which endorsed the idea of Jewish evangelism in general and pledged vague support for Jaeger's work.[7] Though Miller had not been inspired to support Wharton's bolder resolution, he had nonetheless been inspired. Before the Convention closed, he submitted a letter to the Foreign Mission Board containing a gold dollar to be set aside for the eventual creation of the First Baptist Church of Jerusalem. On May 9th, the Board opened an account dedicated to that purpose. The Alabaman would continue to donate small amounts in fits and starts over the next several years, even organizing a "Friends for church at Jerusalem" group at his Mobile congregation to encourage further donations.[8] His efforts did not get far. By the 1890 Convention, the account held $5.20. That year, Miller wrote a second letter to the Board noting that he had received "no response—no intelligence of any effort to favor my wishes or carry out my views" over the years.[9] He enclosed another dollar, again in hopes of kicking off interest in an actual missionary program in Palestine. The Board replied that the $6.20 was being held in trust.

Though Miller's modest donations would not be utilized for another thirty years, the Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, Rev. Henry Allen Tupper, was himself sympathetic to opening work in Palestine. It was Tupper who publicized Miller's efforts in an 1890 article in the *Foreign Mission Journal*, perhaps hoping that news of Miller's token gesture would spur other Baptists to add to the $6.20.

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[7] *Ibid*., 35-36.
[8] "Receipts for Foreign Missions," *Foreign Mission Journal* 7, no. 3 (September, 1874), 12.
[9] Henry Allen Tupper, "The First Baptist Church in Jerusalem," *The Foreign Mission Journal* 22, no. 1 (August 1890), 9.

Ten years prior, Tupper himself had included two open letters to Jewish rabbis in his history of Baptist missions, *The Foreign Missions of the Southern Baptist Convention*, an odd step given that Southern Baptists had no mission to Jews at the time. [10] One reviewer of the work, a Dr. Winkler, commented on and explained the oddity: "The introduction of two letters written by Dr. Tupper to a Jewish Rabbi, although seemingly out of place in a historical work, is doubtless explicable by the fact that the zealous writer has at heart a mission to the Jews, and takes this method of awakening interest in that undertaking among the denomination at large."[11] Beyond simply wanting to spur interest in evangelizing Jews, though, Tupper clearly had his eyes on Palestine. His first letter, addressed to "Rabbi E.S.L. of A.G.," not only called on the rabbi to convert and be baptized, but noted, "A noble friend of Foreign Missions sends statedly a gold piece of money for the First Baptist Church of Jerusalem. We must have that church. Would that you, honored sir, might be prepared to be our missionary to establish that church in the City of David!"[12] Tupper republished these lines in his 1890 article on Miller. Like Miller, when Tupper thought of Jews—even Atlanta Jews—his mind leapt to Jerusalem.

In the following months, Tupper published two brief articles by Texan A.J. Holt, who had recently traveled to Palestine and wanted to offer his assessment of its potential as a mission field. Unlike Tupper, Holt was more concerned with

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[10] Tupper, "Mission to the Jews," in *The Foreign Missions of the Southern Baptist Convention*, ed. Tupper (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1880), 442-459. Though the SBC would have no specific mission to Jews until the 1920s, at times missionaries in various foreign fields hired temporary workers to work among Jewish communities. Two examples are the Italian mission and the Sao Paolo mission.
[11] Winkler, quoted in Tupper, "The First Baptist Church in Jerusalem," 8-9.
[12] Tupper, "Missions to Jews," 449-450.

winning the souls of Muslims and Eastern Christians. He lamented that "American Christians in general and Baptists in particular" had largely failed to establish a missionary presence in Jerusalem.[13] Such lack of effort, he thought, might lead Christians to wonder "whether the Commission spoken in this very city [Jerusalem] were superseded; or whether Mohammedanism were stronger than the gospel of Christ."[14] Holt argued that the ascent of Islam in the Levant had been the result of "degenerate and effeminate forms Christianity" and that the "Mohammedan of to-day will never be won by wither the Greek or Latin Catholic."[15] Only a "pure Christianity" could "overcome Moslemism."[16] While Holt recognized the difficulty of this task, he laid out several reasons it could be accomplished—Muslims were ignorant of true Christianity, Islamic countries were in decline, Protestant Christianity had begun to penetrate the Middle East, and Muslims themselves held Jesus in high esteem. Adding a prophetic tinge to his assessment, Holt averred the "'fullness of time' seems about here."[17] Jews were "flocking to Palestine in great numbers."[18] The Middle East was modernizing. Amidst this change, Holt had somehow intuited "a feeling on the part of the Mohammedans that they were only in temporary possession of the country"—by which he meant the entire Middle East.[19] "Moslemism is weakening, Christianity is gaining[,]" he asserted, "Let us take time

[13] A.J. Holt, "Jerusalem No. 1," *Foreign Mission Journal* 22, no. 2 (September 1890), 41.
[14] *Ibid*., 42.
[15] *Ibid.*, 42.
[16] *Ibid*., 42.
[17] *Ibid*., 43.
[18] *Ibid., 43.*
[19] *Ibid*., 44.

at its tide and plant our work again in the city from which it first set out on its career of conquest."[20]

Tupper continued to raise the topic of the Jews and Palestine over the next several years. In 1891, he published part of the "Blackstone Memorial," a petition circulated by premillennialist Methodist William Eugene Blackstone that called on President Benjamin Harrison to facilitate the restoration of the Jews to Palestine.[21] "In this day of wonderful happenings," Tupper wondered, "who knows what this now seemingly wild project may result in?" Three times in 1892 the *Foreign Mission Journal*'s "Scraps Picked Up," a recurring column that shared tidbits of news from around the globe, noted the increasing numbers of Jews coming to Palestine.[22] This increased attention did stir some Baptists to action. In 1891, J.H. Devotie of Cass Station, Georgia, donated $54 to the Foreign Mission Board for the evangelization of Jews in Palestine.[23] Tellingly, this was far more money than Devotie set aside for missions in China, Mexico, and South America that actually existed. In the summer of 1892, Philip Hough of Mississippi added $4 to Thomas Miller's Jerusalem church fund. Again, though, nothing came of these efforts. Despite Tupper's own interest, despite the increased attention, and despite the small number of donations, the Foreign Mission Board would not send a foreign missionary to Palestine until 1921.

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[20] *Ibid*., 44.
[21] Tupper, "Palestine for the Jews," *Foreign Mission Journal* 22, no. 10 (May 1891), 293.
[22] "Scraps Picked Up," *Foreign Mission Journal* 23, no. 6 (January 1892), 169; "Scraps Picked Up," *Foreign Mission Journal* 23, no. 7 (February 1892), 204-5; "Scraps Picked Up," *Foreign Mission Journal* 24, no. 3 (October 1892), 71-72.
[23] "Receipts for Foreign Missions," *Foreign Mission Journal* 22, no. 8 (March 1891), 255.

Prophetic Speculation

Others looked to Palestine in anticipation of the fulfillment of prophecy. While most Baptists held only dim expectations of the restoration of the Jews or the triumph of Christianity in the land of its birth, some elaborated detailed hermeneutical and eschatological systems. Those who did tended to hold a premillennialist eschatology, anticipating that Christ would return to earth *prior* to establishing the millennial kingdom prophesied in Revelation 20. This was in contrast to the postmillennialist perspective, which argued that Christ would return *after* Christians built his kingdom on earth, and the amillennialist perspective, which held that biblical references to a millennial kingdom were either metaphorical or uninterpretable (seemingly the most popular perspective among Southern Baptists well into the 20th century). Though far from widespread, premillennial thought and the biblical hermeneutics underpinning it were present among Baptists since the birth of the Convention. The most influential Baptist premillennialist of the 19th century was James Robinson (J.R.) Graves, who edited the *Tennessee Baptist* (later *Baptist and Reflector*) from 1848 to 1889. Indeed, Graves's position as editor of the *Tennessee Baptist* (which at times during Reconstruction was the official Baptist paper of Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, in addition to Tennessee) and father of the Landmark movement made him perhaps the most influential individual Southern Baptist of the nineteenth century, period.

Graves's premillennialism was underpinned by a system of biblical interpretation that drew a hard distinction between prophecies concerning Israel

(understood as the Jews) and prophecies concerning the Church. In other words, Graves held that God's biblical promises to the Jews were still *promises to the Jews*—they had not been transferred to the Church, as traditional Catholic and Protestant hermeneutics maintained. In this he echoed the teachings of John Nelson Darby, the father of premillennial dispensationalism, the hermeneutic and eschatological system that would contribute to the development of the fundamentalist movement in the industrial north. While the spread of Darby's system in the United States is usually traced to a series of visits the Englishman made to the states beginning in 1862, Graves published a series of articles promoting his very similar system before Darby ever set foot in North America. In this 1854 series, Graves specifically tied his method of biblical interpretation to the expectation that the Jews would be restored to Palestine prior to Christ's return, mobilizing nine proofs:

> I. From the Covenant made with Abraham, of which Circumcision is a type.
> II. From the repeated confirmation of this promise to the Fathers, from Moses to the Prophets.
> III. The Prophets most clearly foretell the final restoration of the Jews to Palestine in which they are to be planted, never more to be rooted up.
> IV. The teachings of Christ himself.
> V. The teachings of the Apostles.
> VI. The Jews have in all ages believed that God promised them the land of Canaan for an ultimate and everlasting possession.
> VII. They have sacredly perpetuated the bond of the Covenant—i.e. the rite of Circumcision and been preserved through a captivity of 1800 years, a distinct people without a nation.
> VIII. It was believed by the ancient Christians, by the Reformers, and is now by the ripest biblical scholars of both England and America.
> IX. The signs of the times indicate that their return in Palestine is near at hand—IF IT HAS NOT ACTUALLY BEGUN.[24]

[24] James Robinson Graves, "THE SCRIPTURES, No. 13: What Saith the Scriptures?—Will the Jews be Restored to Palestine?" *Tennessee Baptist* 10, no. 27 (March 11, 1854), 2.

Most of Graves's argument revolved around his first point, which reflected the crucial distinction that God's covenant with Abraham has not wholly transferred to the Church, but still refers to the Jews. This promise, he argued, was reiterated by the Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles—and confirmed by the "ancient Christians," "Reformers," and the "ripest biblical scholars." Graves also argued that the behavior of Jews themselves indicated the continuation of their covenantal relationship with God. *They* continued to believe in their promised restoration. *They* maintained the covenant through circumcision. *They* remained a distinct people, even without a state. Graves would pick up these arguments now and again throughout his forty-one years as editor. He ran a series called "Seven Dispensations" in 1878 that reiterated there would be a literal return of Jews to Palestine.[25] He published another series specifically titled "Restoration of Israel to Palestine," authored by Adoniram Judson Frost, in 1891.[26]

As Graves was pushing his hermeneutic in the South, a transdenominational movement was beginning in the northern churches among evangelical Christians who wanted to affirm the traditional authority and authenticity of the Bible in response to an increasing number of threats—chief among them Darwinism and the Higher Criticism. More than mere reaction, though, many in the nascent movement found positive inspiration in Darby's dispensationalism, which figured prominently at the increasing number of Bible and prophetic conferences that were bringing the

[25] Graves, "Seven Dispensations: Part III.—Eschatology," *The Baptist* 11, no. 8 (January 19, 1878), 2.
[26] Adoniram Judson Frost, "Restoration of Israel to Palestine," *Baptist and Reflector* 2, no. 43 (June 4, 1891), 7.

movement together. If Graves shared much with this movement—which eventually coalesced into the fundamentalist movement in the 1910s—he was not necessarily in their loop. The proto-fundamentalists defined themselves by doctrinal emphases that transcended denominational barriers. Graves, though, was utterly devoted to Baptist distinctives. Alongside (and far outnumbering) his articles on dispensationalism were his broadsides against "pedobaptists" and Methodists. As the guiding spirit of the Landmark movement, Graves believed the Baptist church with its congregational polity and full-immersion Baptism was the only true Church, existing in continuity (if under frequent suppression) from the time of Christ to the present.[27] He was exceptional in his exceptionalism.

As the century turned, dispensationalism (and premillennialism more broadly) became increasingly intertwined with the fundamentalist movement. After the death of Graves in 1893, Len Broughton emerged as the leading premillennialist in the Southern Baptist Convention.[28] Unlike Graves, Broughton was very much involved with northern fundamentalists, having attended Dwight Moody's Northfield Bible Conferences in the 1890s. Broughton's own Bible conferences, modeled after Moody's, brought fundamentalists like A.C. Dixon (brother of Thomas Dixon and a displaced Southerner), William Moody, James Gray, R.A.

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[27] Graves's Landmarkism was marked not only by appeals to Baptist distinctiveness, but a Jacksonian emphasis on the ability of the layperson and local church to settle their own matters. His exceptionalism was thus not a devotion to denominationalism. Andrew Smith, *"Flocking by Themselves*," 8-9.

[28] In a 1906 article, Albert Newman notes the spread of premillennialism among Baptists broadly. Newman cites Broughton as its representative in the South. Albert Newman, "Recent Changes in the Theology of Baptists," *The American Journal of Theology* 10, no. 4 (October, 1906), 587–609.

Torrey, and Cyrus Scofield, to the pastor's Tabernacle Baptist Church in Atlanta.[29] As in the North, these conferences were transdenominational affairs. Though he was not a *dispensational* premillennialist (he did not make the hermeneutical distinction between the Church and Israel), Broughton did bring dispensationalist speakers to his conferences.[30] The hermeneutic spread slowly. In 1914 *The Christian Workers Magazine* published an editorial listing some "Eminent Exponents of Premillennialism" that included eight Southern Baptist pastors out of 132 living premillennialists.[31] M.E. Dodd, a Southern Baptist preacher in Shreveport, included an appendix in his 1917 *Jesus is Coming to Earth Again* that listed nine.[32] That number would soon grow.

Travel and Travel Literature

Perhaps the primary way in which Southern Baptists encountered Ottoman and Mandatory Palestine was through travel and travel literature. Middle-class travel to the Holy Land had exploded in the late-nineteenth century, made possible by the ease and affordability of steam travel, the expansion of a Western diplomatic and missionary presence in the region, the increasing openness of Ottoman rulers to the West, and the consequent development of a travel infrastructure linking Europe and

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[29] Glass, *Strangers in Zion*, 42.
[30] His section on "The Jews" in *The Second Coming* anticipates their conversion at Christ's Second Coming, but makes no mention of covenantal promises or restoration to Palestine. M.E. Dodd, *The Second Coming of Christ* (New York: Fleming and Revell, 1907), 59-60.
[31] There were 227 listed in total, with the list stretching back to the Reformation. "Eminent Exponents of Premillennialism," *The Christian Workers Magazine* (December, 1913) , 223-225.
[32] Dodd, *Jesus Is Coming to Earth Again; Or* (Chicago Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1917).

America to the Eastern Mediterranean.[33] Put simply, it was easier, safer, and cheaper to travel to the Holy Land than it had ever been. By 1867, Missourian Samuel Clemens could Mark Twain his way through an all-inclusive recreational trip to the cultural capitals of Europe and the Levant, something that would have been impossible only years before.[34]

Many Southern Baptists followed in the Methodist-born Clemens's wake, both traveling and writing about their experiences in the Holy Land. Among the earliest (and most notable) was Rev. John Broadus of South Carolina, one of the founding faculty members of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, who traveled eastward in 1871. While in Jerusalem, Broadus purchased a mallet hewn from a Palestinian olive tree, which he later presented to SBC President James Boyce to use as a gavel. The "Broadus gavel," as it came to be called, has been used by every SBC president since.[35] Beyond souvenirs, Broadus also brought back his impressions of Ottoman Palestine. Shortly after returning he published a series of articles in the *Christian Herald*, a Baptist periodical out of Richmond. His biographer, A.T. Robertson, also included extended sections from Broadus's trip diary in *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus*, which the American Baptist Publication Society published in 1901.[36]

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[33] Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land.*
[34] This trip, of course, was immortalized in Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad* (Hartford: American Publishing Company, 1869).
[35] The story of the "Broadus gavel" was relayed by L.R. Scarborough at the 1939 Convention. Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1939, 112.
[36] A.T. Robertson, *Life and Letters of John Albert Broadus* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1901).

Others followed with book-length travelogues. Among them was Rev. Henry Marvin Wharton of Baltimore. A pastor, do-gooder, organizer, publisher, Confederate veteran, and author, there was perhaps "no man better known in the city of Baltimore by all denominations and the public generally than Reverend H.M. Wharton."[37] Wharton's account of his 1891 trip to the Levant was published in 1892 as *A Picnic in Palestine*, which, according to *The Review of Reviews*, made for "pleasant and sprightly reading."[38] Rev. Henry Allen Tupper, the aforementioned secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, also traveled to the region after leaving the FMB. The energetic Tupper published accounts of his 1895 trip in several forums—as excerpts in the *Baptist and Reflector* (1896), as a part of a full-length travelogue in *Around the World with Eyes Wide Open* (1898), and as part of a partially-fictionalized narrative of a family journey to the Holy Land in *Uncle Allen's Party in Palestine* (1898).[39] Thirteen years later, W.A. Hamlett published *Travels of a Father and Son*, an account of a 1910 journey taken with his ten-year-old son that eventually led to his nigh-disastrous appointment as Superintendent of the Foreign Mission Board's Near East Mission.[40] Still more published brief episodic travelogues in Baptist periodicals. State Baptist papers like the *Biblical Recorder* of North Carolina, *Baptist and Reflector* of Tennessee, the *Messenger* of Oklahoma,

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[37] Clarence Forrest, *Official History of the Fire Department of the City of Baltimore: Together with Biographies and Portraits of Eminent Citizens of Baltimore* (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1898), 332.
[38] Henry Marvin Wharton, *A Picnic in Palestine* (Baltimore: Wharton and Barron, 1892); "The New Books," *The Review of Reviews* 6 (November, 1892), 496.
[39] Tupper, *Around the World with Eyes Wide Open* (New York: Christian Herald, 1898); Tupper, *Uncle Allen's Party in Palestine* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1898).
[40] W.A. Hamlett, *Travels of a Father and Son* (Lebanon, PA: Sowers Print Company, 1911).

the *Baptist Standard* of Texas, and the aforementioned *Christian Herald* of Virginia—among the many other state publications—intermittently featured the travel writings of local notables.

Most voyages to the Levant followed itineraries established by travel agencies. The two leading agencies during the Ottoman era were Thomas Cook & Son and Henry Gaze & Sons.[41] The majority of Baptists visited Palestine as part of a broader European or Mediterranean tour. Tour parties would depart by steamer from New York City and visit the cultural capitals of Europe—London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, etc.—before continuing on to Egypt, Palestine, and Anatolia. Travelers were expected to draw contrasts between Christian Europe and the Islamic world. As Edgar Folk, editor of the *Baptist and Reflector*, noted while promoting an upcoming trip, "It is quite attractive to see some of the continent before reaching the Bible lands; the contrast in the customs, manners of living, etc., are very valuable."[42]

Before examining what travelers wrote about their journeys, it is important to understand the different sources that shaped their impressions. Many of the travelers, for instance, had read earlier travel narratives from the region.[43] Most were at least familiar with Twain's *The Innocents Abroad*; both Henry Wharton and W.A. Hamlett clearly tried at times to ape the Methodist. Two other popular works

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[41] An itinerary for a Gaze & Son tour organized with Baptist pastor Thomas Treadwell Eaton can be found in Box 3, Folder 5, Thomas Treadwell Eaton Papers, SBHLA. For other examples, see *Programmes and Itineraries of Cook's Arrangements for Palestine Tours* (London: Thomas Cook & Son, 1876); *Cook's Tourists' Handbook for Palestine and Syria* (London: Thomas Cook & Son, 1876).
[42] Edgar Folk, "A Delightful Tour," *Baptist and Reflector* (November 14, 1907), 8.
[43] Much of the humor in Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* derives from Twain's accounts of pilgrims struggling to make their experiences fit the generic pilgrimage conventions already established by the late 1860s.

were Edward Robinson's *Biblical Researches in Palestine* and Dean Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with Their History*.[44] Beyond literary influences, travelers' impressions were shaped by local contacts. Perhaps most influential was the American dragoman, Rolla Floyd, who was employed by the Cook and Gaze agencies.[45] Even when Floyd did not individually lead tours, he hired local dragomans and developed the agencies' itineraries. In the late-nineteenth century, some encountered the English Baptist missionary at Nablus, an Arab from Jerusalem named Yohanah El Karey. Henry Allen Tupper borrowed stories about the Bedouin from both Floyd and El Karey in his two 1898 publications, *Around the World with Eyes Wide Open* and *Uncle Allen's Party in Palestine*. Though El Karey's mission disappeared, by 1911 a new mission had been established at Nazareth by Shukri Mosa (then employed by the Illinois Baptists, but later brought under the SBC's Foreign Mission Board). At least one Baptist tour party met and attended services with Mosa prior to World War I.[46] Some Baptists, too, made connections with Anglican clergy through attending Protestant services at Christ Church in Jerusalem.

Without fail, Baptist travelers emphasized that Palestine was the Holy Land—that it was essentially different from other stops on their journeys. Nearly every writer included an aside describing their feelings upon arriving at either Jaffa

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[44] Edward Robinson and Eli Smith, *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai, and Arabia Petraea: A Journal of Travels in the Year 1838* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1841); Arthur Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine in Connection with their History* (London: Murray, 1856).
[45] Rolla Floyd, *Letters from Palestine: 1868-1912*, ed. Helen Palmer Parsons (Parsons, 1981).
[46] J.W. Graham, "Nazareth and Its Baptist Mission." *Baptist Standard* (September 18, 1913), 2-3.

or Jerusalem. Broadus thanked God "that the hopeless dream of many a year has become a reality. I am at Jerusalem."[47] Wharton expressed the difficulty in capturing his feelings in words: "It is utterly impossible to describe the feelings of the pilgrim Christian when he first sets foot upon the Holy Land; the land which is the cradle of Christianity; the land of which we read in God's word, where those wonderful men and women lived whose record is given us in the Book which is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path."[48] In Wharton's words can be found the themes that shaped Protestant approaches to the Holy Land—the land was the birthplace of his faith and, perhaps most importantly, the setting of the Bible. While these points are perhaps obvious, they need to be kept in mind when looking into other aspects of the texts. Baptist travel writers—especially in the Ottoman era—were first and foremost concerned with Palestine as the Holy Land. The bulk of their accounts concerned relating their experiences to the Bible. Baptist readers, for their part, were primarily seeking to vicariously join the pilgrimages or illumine their own faith. The questions motivating *this* study—how Baptists viewed and depicted Arabs, Jews, the land itself, and so on—were, for the most part, secondary concerns to both writers and readers. That they were secondary, though, makes them no less worthy of study.

Baptist writers generally viewed and depicted Palestine as economically, socially, and intellectually pre-modern. Especially relevant in terms of later discourse surrounding the Arab-Zionist conflict was how they understood Palestinian agriculture. Was the land dormant, abandoned, or misused? Or was it

[47] Robertson, *Life and Letters*, 261.
[48] Wharton, *Picnic*, 71.

capably farmed? Almost every writer who took up the topic noted that the coastal plain and the Jezreel Valley (or Plain of Esdraelon) were quite fertile.[49] Several remarked on the successful crops.[50] Yet most Baptist writers viewed local agriculture as quaint.[51] Henry Wharton described "an old mill…grinding a little yellow corn; a rude and peculiar paddle-wheel turned the upper stone and the meal fell out in an odd kind of way which made it seem more like children at play than men at work."[52] Of frequent comment was the single-handed plow used by fellahin.[53] H.A. Tupper described seeing "the single-handed plow, used from time immemorial, drawn through the rich soil by an ox and an ass, and driven by the bearded Syrian."[54] In his *Around the World with Eyes Wide Open*, Tupper included two separate pictures of Palestinian farmers behind the plow.[55] Fitting his style, W.A. Hamlett saw the plow as more backwards than quaint, signaling that fellahin were "opposed to modern improvements."[56]

Palestinian cities and villages were likewise viewed and depicted as pre-modern. Specifically, they were seen as crowded and filthy. Wharton noted of Jaffa, "It is a fair sample of all Eastern towns; the streets are narrow and exceedingly

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[49] Wharton, *Picnic*, 214; Sarah Hale, "Travels in Palestine," *Tennessee Baptist* (June 27, 1907), 3.
[50] Tupper, *Around the World*, 362, 365; Tupper, *Uncle Allen's Party*, 55;
[51] Tupper, for example, described workers in a field outside Bethlehem as providing "a vivid picture of Ruth gleaning after the reapers[.]" from Tupper, *Around the World*, 350.
[52] Wharton, *Picnic*, 285.
[53] Hamlett, *Travels*, 121; Wharton, *Picnic*, 154;
[54] Tupper, *Uncle Allen's*, 26.
[55] Tupper, *Around the World*, 331, 366;
[56] Hamlett, *Travels*, 121;

filthy, the houses small, most of them one story high with flat roofs."[57] He likewise described Shunem (now Sulam), a small village in the Galilee, as "a characteristic dirty little village such as we find every now and then, and such as we suppose could never possibly be the remains of historic places recorded in holy writ."[58] Though Wharton was genuinely impressed with the many soap factories of Nablus, he felt obliged to comment, "If they had a soap factory every hundred yards from one end of Palestine to the other, I should think they would find ready use for the whole business in washing these miserable, dirty wretches that throng every highway, pack the streets and crowd the houses."[59] Hamlett found Jerusalem "a city of magnetism" for its religious associations, though he could not help but mention the "many cases of pious poverty, of unmistakable suffering" and "abhorrent filth."[60] Indeed, the way he reconciled the Jerusalem of his expectations with the Jerusalem that he found was, basically, to delude himself into seeing the ancient city:

> One goes to Jerusalem with an unconscious viewpoint of 1900 years ago; one sees Jerusalem as it is today, after centuries of war and cruel changes. In which instance the verdict one gives is not a just one…The shock over, the mind begins to realize this and sets about to readjust itself. Then comes the third stage. The scenery is shifted. From the Jerusalem of today one forms a new viewpoint, in the same backward process as from result to cause. This settled, the mind begins to see the city of 1900 years ago, as it was when our Lord walked its streets. One begins to live in ancient times, with people of others years. In this retrospective mood, the soul begins to find relief, and doubt is transformed into faith, as it steps forth, like Lazarus, from the tomb of forgotten centuries, stronger and more glorious because of its

[57] Wharton, *Picnic*, 72.
[58] Wharton, *Picnic*, 230.
[59] Wharton, *Picnic*, 197.
[60] Hamlett, *Travels*, 161.

> transformation. Then the Turk no longer troubles, nor the awful conditions chafe, for one is not living in the to-day.[61]

Decades earlier, John Broadus had likewise recorded the disappointment that could come with seeing the "wretched hovels in which most of the people live" and "the narrow, filthy, and disgusting streets which are universal[.]"[62] He, like Hamlett, urged that travelers "by effort of imagination sweep away these disagreeable actualities and reproduce what once was here[.]"[63]

Broadly, Baptist travel writers felt that Palestine was simply *behind*. What, then, was holding it back? The overarching culprit was "Mohammedanism," which sometimes worked its injurious influence through the government of the "cruel Turk" and sometimes through the local inhabitants themselves. Though Henry Wharton did at times have positive things to say about Islam, he was comfortable criticizing the Ottoman government as "Mohammedanism at its worst[.]"[64] At several points, he criticized specific instances of Turkish misrule.[65] Hamlett found Turkish soldiers "incapable of administering law" and "a dangerous class to be

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[61] Hamlett, *Travels*, 161; such clashes between expectation and reality were extremely common in Protestant travelers' experiences of the Holy Land in the 19th century. For some other examples, see Gershon Greenberg, *The Holy Land in American Religious Thought: The Symbiosis of American Religious Approaches to Scripture's Sacred Territory* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1994), 87-112.
[62] Robertson, *Life and Letters*, 264.
[63] *Ibid*., 264.
[64] Wharton's most overtly positive statement comes on p. 147 of *Picnic*: "There are many good features in the Mohammedan religion, as there are in all religions which have grown out of the truth."; the quote regarding the Ottoman government comes from *ibid*., 207.
[65] On p. 57 of *Picnic*, he criticizes the Ottoman tax policies in Egypt as extortionate; on p. 99, he criticizes the Ottomans' extortionate rent on farm lands in the Jordan Valley.

clothed with power."[66] Elsewhere, Baptist writers decried the religion's effect on the native populations (which as of the early decades of the twentieth century were not yet uniformly characterized as Arab).[67] "Mahommedanism does nothing for the education and raising up of the poor and ignorant[,]" wrote Wharton, "The Moslem peasant lives more in the fear of his superiors than he does in the sense of accountability. He cannot read or write; goes through his prayers or counts his beads, but it all means nothing to him."[68] Similarly, the "majority of the common people, who are descended from Arab, Greek, and Syrian ancestors," wrote Tupper, "are for the most part extremely illiterate, fanatical, and indolent."[69] Hamlett likewise viewed Muslim men as particularly indolent. "One wonders what they do for a living," he noted of men gathered around Jerusalem's Damascus Gate, "for they will be an hour or more drinking a two-ounce cup of coffee. Not only at Damascus Gate, but in numerous other places in Jerusalem; also in Jericho; or, over in Egypt, they may be seen whiling away their time in the same idle fashion."[70] Rev. Millard Jenkens perhaps best summed up Baptist attitudes towards the region in a 1903 article: "The cities are filthy, the land barren, the people largely a low class of Arabs and Bedouins, are an indifferent good-for-nothing lot. The foot of the Turkish

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[66] Hamlett, *Travels*, 160-161.
[67] Baptists referred to the groups that now constitute what we would consider the Palestinian Arab population by several different names. "Syrian" was among the most prominent.
[68] Wharton, *Picnic*, 291-292.
[69] Tupper, *Uncle Allen's*, 17; other references to Muslim fanaticism: Hamlett, *Travels*, 187, 251, 275; Tupper, *Uncle Allen's*, 85, 154 (referring to Muslims in Syria).
[70] Hamlett, *Travels*, 150; he likewise castigated Arab men as lazy coffee drinkers on 170.

tyrant has mashed what little life remained out of the land. The curse of God is upon the land, and the only hope is the return of the blessed Christ."[71]

When Jenkens spoke of "the return of the blessed Christ[,]" he had a Protestant Christ in mind. Baptists did not view Levantine Christians as their co-religionists. Paired with long-standing Protestant critiques of the dominant Catholicism and Orthodoxy of Palestine, Baptists tended to view the eastern churches as tainted by Islam. "The Greek Church has existed for a long time in the Turkish empire side by side with Mohammedanism," noted Wharton, "and has sunk so low in piety and zeal that there is no religious principle set forth by its light."[72] Declaring that "Mohammedanism knows no joy[,]" Hamlett claimed "the local form of Christianity" was similar to it "in spirit, though differing in creed."[73] The religion of Jerusalem was "a religion of sadness, whether Mohammedan, Jewish or the local interpretation of Christianity."[74] Many focused their criticisms on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, jointly maintained by several eastern churches (Baptists, like other Protestants, favored the Garden Tomb as the authentic site of Christ's burial). John Broadus was especially disgusted by the Orthodox Pascha (Easter) events there, which included the annual Miracle of the Holy Fire: "No devoutness, no seriousness—frolic for the crowd, ridiculous to the persons officiating. It is ceremony run in the ground, utterly defeating its own object. I have never in my life

[71] Millard Jenkens, "A Trip Through the Holy Land," *Biblical Recorder* (April 22, 1903), 10.
[72] Wharton, *Picnic*, 206-207.
[73] Hamlett, *Travels*, 256.
[74] *Ibid*., 256.

beheld a spectacle so humiliating. This is Oriental Christianity."[75] Tupper's semi-fictional family visited the church but "turned away sick at heart to think that such folly and superstition should be associated with the most sacred events of the world's history"—even as they admired the earnestness and seriousness of Russian Orthodox pilgrims.[76] Frequently, Baptist writers suggested that Catholic and Orthodox priests cynically manipulated the piety of their flocks. Wharton claimed of the Catholic Church, "It is a pity that one of the largest and strongest ecclesiastical organizations in the world should live and fatten upon the credulity of its members by a system of humbuggery and rascality."[77] Hamlett viciously derided Eastern Christianity as "hatched in hell[,]" declaring "none but a child of hell would deal it out to ignorant, hungry souls."[78]

Baptists tended to view local Jews as sharing the deficiencies of local Christians and Muslims in the Ottoman era. Just as descriptions of native Christianity tended to revolve around the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, descriptions of local Jews and Judaism tended to center on the Western Wall (generally referred to at this time as "the Jews' wailing place"). "It is a pitiful sight to look upon these old Jews," wrote Wharton, "with their wives and daughters, clad in the worst clothing, their long hair streaming down their backs, as they place their heads against the stones and mourn and weep until the tears run down their

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[75] Robertson, *Life and Letters*, 268.
[76] On the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, see Tupper, *Uncle Allen's*, 41; Tupper was indeed struck by the many sacrifices Russian pilgrims made to come to Jerusalem. On this, see Tupper, *Uncle Allen's*, 30, *Around the World*, 334, and "Pilgrims in the Holy Land," *Baptist and Reflector* (June 18, 1896), 1.
[77] Wharton, *Picnic*, 250.
[78] Hamlett, *Travels*, 188.

cheeks."[79] Tupper was certain he had visited "no spot in Jerusalem more pathetic than the Jews' Wailing Place."[80] According to Hamlett, the Jews gathered at the Kotel "plainly show they have been persecuted for centuries[.]"[81] "I have seen mothers cling to their dead babies…I have stood by while bereaved hearts rained their tears on the glass top of a coffin, and in all cases I have been touched[,]" he added, "But I declare these cases were no more sad than the sight of those poor, outcast Jews, tenderly patting the walls, kissing the stones, crying with deep and genuine sorrow, refusing to be comforted, until Jehovah comes with restoring power."[82] If Baptists frequently saw all of Palestine as stagnated, the Jews were particularly inert, even backward. Perhaps the greatest illustration of this was a bizarre 1906 report by Sarah Hale, a FMB missionary on vacation from her post in Mexico, which was apparently found reasonably credible by *Baptist and Reflector* editor, Edgar Folk. Beyond noting the presence of "few Saduccees" and "many Pharisees[,]" Hale claimed that Jerusalem's Jews had dragged the dead body of their "high priest" across rocks "until the skull was crushed and part of the brains came out[.]"[83] The priest himself had apparently requested this treatment "on account of his great sinfulness."[84] Hale took this as evidence that the Jews' "opposition to Jesus of Nazareth, as their Messiah, seems to be as great as ever."[85]

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[79] Wharton, *Picnic*, 120.
[80] Tupper, *Around the World*, 344.
[81] Hamlett, *Travels*, 258.
[82] Hamlett, *Travels*, 259-260.
[83] Sarah A. Hale, "From Jerusalem, Palestine," *Baptist and Reflector* (October 18, 1906), 7.
[84] *Ibid*., 7.
[85] *Ibid*., 7.

Prior to World War I, few Baptist travelers mentioned the Zionist movement. Tupper mentioned as early as 1896 that "Jews are coming in large numbers, not as travelers, but as colonists."[86] However, he made no effort to analyze the movement. In his later *Around the World*, Tupper did mention that the "Rothschilds and other wealthy Hebrews" had established an agricultural school near Jaffa that was struggling because "these sons of Abraham are so intuitively biased toward commercial life that when a few pounds have been accumulated at the school, they bid good-bye to the hoe and plow and go forth as traders."[87] Even those travelers who believed the Jews were prophesied to return to the land made no explicit connections between the prophecy and the Zionist movement itself. Unlike later writers, they made no clear distinctions between Zionist Jews and Jews of the Old Yishuv (or theological imagination). Sarah Hale, whose grasp of reality was frequently tenuous, lapsed into a dispensationalist synopsis of the anticipated eschaton after describing the practices of religious Jews at the Western Wall.[88] Though she never mentioned the Zionist movement itself, she was aware of the impending conflict between Jews and Arabs, even recalling a conversation with an Arab Orthodox Christian in which she declared to him, "It is sad, I know, to give up your country. But the Lord only lent it to you, you know, until his time should come

[86] Tupper, "Pilgrims in the Holy Land," 1.
[87] Tupper, *Around the World*, 332; the school was Mikveh Israel at Holon.
[88] Hale, "From Jerusalem, Palestine," 7; Hamlett did the same, while asserting that the Jews would not inherit the land until they accepted Christ: "When they turn to God and to God's Christ, then God will turn to them and give them their land and their Temple." Hamlett, *Travels*, 263.

to restore it to his people."[89] God had prepared a place for the Arabs in America, she argued.

With the exception of Hale, Baptist travel writers did not anticipate the possible displacement of Arabs as key to the region's future or part of God's plan. What, then, was the future of Palestine? To Baptists, the region was essentially stagnant. Wharton wrote of a Galilean hillside, "there is nothing to remind us of the civilization and progress of our own busy land."[90] There were, though, signs of change. "Nothing did I say?" Wharton added:

> Yes; there is one thing—a little telegraph wire that runs along from pole to pole, and tells us that we are in touch with the loved ones at home. That trembling little iron nerve binds whole continents together. It is the herald of better days, and comes with the nimble step of the lightning only to prepare the way for the thundering steam-engine. It will soon be dashing over these slops, for they talk of a railroad from the Bay of Acre to Damascus and a canal across the plains of Esdraelon to the Red Sea.[91]

To Wharton and others, it was clear such "better days" would only come through Western influence. Where modern improvements—agricultural or otherwise—were to be found, they were positively identified as European. Tupper's account of arriving in Jaffa depicts his nieces and nephews exclaiming "How beautiful!" as they pass through orange, lemon, and pomegranate orchards. "What is done with all this fruit," the children ask, "and what nationality are the people in the gardens?"[92] "They are Germans," Allen's character replies, "I am told that eighty thousand pounds is realized annually from these fruit farms, which were formerly a barren

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[89] Hale, "From Jerusalem, Palestine," 7.
[90] Wharton, *Picnic*, 264.
[91] Wharton, *Picnic*, 264.
[92] Tupper, *Uncle Allen's*, 22.

plain."[93] The land, even if somewhat successfully farmed already, held immense potential that could be unleashed by the innovation of the West. The same was true of the cities and the people. After mentioning that Nazareth was "well built" and noting "the houses have a better appearance than the towns and villages generally[,]" Wharton went on to explain why—English Christians "have services here; a large orphanage, and an excellent school; so that the people look better, live better, and are better than perhaps in any other town in Palestine."[94] Only a Protestant Christian modernity could redeem the people and the land. Wharton, after discussing ongoing missionary efforts in Palestine, offered this assessment:

> I cannot tell what progress has been made by these different missionary efforts in the Holy Land. To the inquiring observer the whole people seem steeped in sin and wretchedness, and not only the people as individuals, but the government; the very land itself will have to be born again before ever the wilderness shall blossom as a rose, the mountains and the hills break forth into singing, and the people become the happy people whose God is the Lord.[95]

Wharton wove in the language of Isaiah 35 in hoping for a Protestant Christian rebirth of the people, government, and land. Such allusions to the same passage would become commonplace in the years after World War I. As will be seen, though, the meaning of the allusion would change. Whereas Wharton offered it in defining Christian hope for the future, post-WWI Baptist writers would increasingly use it to describe the achievements of those "New Jews"—the Zionists.[96]

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[93] *Ibid*., 22; Tupper is referring to the orchards established by the German Templars.
[94] Wharton, *Picnic*, 237-238.
[95] *Ibid*., 208.
[96] Although it was always a minority viewpoint, the hope that Jews would help in redeeming the land from Muslims had Protestant antecedents from the 16th century onward. See Richard Cogley, "The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Restoration

of Israel in the 'Judeo-Centric' Strand of Puritan Millenarianism," *Church History* 72, no. 2 (June 2003), 304-332, and Levenson, "Gentile reception," 198-199.

Chapter Two

Travelers

The Great War wrought great change in Palestine. The four-hundred-year reign of the Ottomans had ended. The British were now in power. Their Foreign Office had thrown its support behind the Zionist movement with the Balfour Declaration, which had been issued in 1917 and written into international law with the League of Nations Mandate.[1] With this diplomatic victory, thousands of Jews began to pour into Palestine. Arabs, too, had begun to stir politically, with Arab nationalism finding its way to the international stage through the short-lived Syrian Arab Kingdom of Faisal.[2] Palestinian Muslims and Christians had grown increasingly sure-footed in their identity as Arabs and Palestinians. Broadly united against Zionism, Palestinian Arabs were torn between the pan-Arab impulse and the push for Palestinian self-determination, with the latter winning out in the 1920s. There

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[1] The Balfour Declaration stated, "His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people[.]" The formula was a softening of the original Zionist proposal that Palestine be recognized as "*the* national home *of* the Jewish people" (emphasis mine). See Michael Cohen, *The Origins and Evolution of the Arab-Zionist Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1987), 53; Leonard Stein, *The Balfour Declaration* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1961), 547. The ambiguity of the phrase, which was written into Britain's League of Nations Mandate over Palestine, would draw controversy from the beginning. The British Government's White Paper of 1939, which famously walked back the promises of the Balfour Declaration, noted, "The Royal Commission and previous commissions of Enquiry have drawn attention to the ambiguity of certain expressions in the Mandate, such as the expression `a national home for the Jewish people', and they have found in this ambiguity and the resulting uncertainty as to the objectives of policy a fundamental cause of unrest and hostility between Arabs and Jews." Malcolm McDonald, "White Paper," *Israel in the Middle East* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2008), 50.

[2] Zeine N. Zeine, *The Struggle for Arab Independence: Western Diplomacy and the Rise and Fall of Faisal's Kingdom in Syria* (Beirut: Khayat's, 1960); Eliezer Tauber, *The Formation of Modern Syria and Iraq* (Portland: Cass, 1995).

was—as many Baptist travelers recognized—a Palestine question that had not been apparent or urgent before the war.

Though pilgrimage remained the main impetus for most Baptist travelers to Palestine, the Mandate era saw Baptists travel to the Holy Land for increasingly diverse reasons. The primary reason for this was missions. In 1919, the SBC's Foreign Mission Board (FMB) had brought the Nazareth mission of Palestine native Shukri Mosa under its purview. That same year, Dr. J.F. Love (Corresponding Secretary of the FMB), Dr. Z.T. Cody (editor of South Carolina's *Baptist Courier*), and Rev. Everett Gill (FMB missionary in Rome), set out to "make a general survey of the economic, social and religious conditions in Europe with a view to recommending to the Baptists of the South where and how they can aid most effectively in the reconstruction of that continent[.]"[3] On their itinerary, too, was the new mission station in Palestine. Similar official delegations would follow from that point forward, as the Near East Mission was formalized in 1921 and expanded up until World War II. Especially important was the mission survey undertaken by J. McKee Adams in 1933, which resulted in *The Heart of the Levant*, effectively a full-length treatment of the Palestine question that was published as part of the Foreign Mission Board's graded mission study series in 1937.[4] The growth of the Baptist World Alliance (and the SBC's greater involvement in it) after World War One likewise boosted the number of Baptist journeys to Palestine. Many delegates

[3] "Baptists Plan Reconstruction Program," *The Snyder Signal* 33, No. 17 (October 10, 1919), 2.
[4] Adams was there for a month and a half. Among his fellow travelers was John Bunn, who published his account of the trip in the *Biblical Recorder*. John Bunn, "A Visit to Jerusalem," *Biblical Recorder* (March 8, 1933), 8.

to the 1923 Stockholm and 1934 Berlin BWA meetings tacked on visits to the European and Middle Eastern mission fields that paired pilgrimage and denominational business.[5] Extended study visits also became more common under the British. Before performing his mission survey in the 1930s, J. McKee Adams had spent months in the region studying archaeology for his work *Biblical Backgrounds*.[6] Wake Forest graduate Percy Upchurch wrote in the *Biblical Recorder* about his time with the American Schools of Oriental Research.[7] Before becoming a missionary, Robert Lindsey of Norman, Oklahoma, spent a year studying at the Hebrew University. In the end, though, most reasons for traveling to Palestine blurred together. A pilgrimage could easily lead to engaging with Baptist missionaries. A missionary survey could not avoid becoming a pilgrimage.

Baptist travelogues also took on new forms. Though pilgrimage narratives predominated, more and more travel writings took on the form of reporting or editorializing. Travel increasingly became the *occasion* for writing about the region rather than the subject matter itself. Many of these reports dealt with the status of the mission stations. Others engaged with political questions. Z.T. Cody of

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[5] One important party to Palestine from the 1923 Stockholm meeting was the "Armstrong Party" from Texas. Among others, it included George Truett (pastor of First Baptist in Dallas and future SBC president) and L.R. Scarborough (President of SWBTS), who had both been crucial in the conversion of Shukri Mosa. The members of the party gathered $1200 for the mission, which went to the purchase of property on which the Bottoms Memorial Church would later be built; in 1934, sitting SBC President M.E. Dodd and a cohort visited Palestine after the Berlin meeting.

[6] Badgett Dillard and Lucy Adams, "Oral History Interview of Lucy Oliver Adams (Mrs. J. McKee Adams)" transcribed by Michele Fowler (February 14, 1980). *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Audio Visual Archives*, CA 1.

[7] Percy Upchurch, "Letter from Jerusalem," *Biblical Recorder* (October 4, 1933), 11.

Richmond, who had traveled to the Levant as part of the aforementioned post-war reconstruction survey, published an article evaluating Zionism in 1920. J. McKee Adams tackled both mission and politics in major articles in *Home and Foreign Fields*, published in 1929 and 1935, and *The Heart of the Levant*. Upon his return from a 1937 tour of the region (and the publication of the Peel Commission's report), W.T. Halstead penned a brief history of the conflict for readers of the Florida Baptist Witness.[8] Arch-fundamentalist J. Frank Norris's *My Fifth Trip to Palestine* contained an account of his 1947 trip to the Levant preceded by a letter to President Truman laying out the biblical and political case for Zionism.

Overall, Baptist travelers in the Mandate era were much more concerned with the present than their forebears. Part of this, of course, related to the war and its aftermath. World War I had thrust Palestine and Jerusalem back onto the world stage—the Ottoman stasis depicted by earlier travelers had been obliterated. The status of Palestine was a matter of global discussion—the country counted in the present. Most Baptist travelers were aware of this. The presence of an actual Baptist community in Palestine, however small, also made for a different travel experience.[9] In a sense, Southern Baptists now had a home. They could worship with the Nazareth congregation and share meals with the missionaries. Though some still sought to use their imaginations to slip back to the first century, for most the

[8] W.T. Halstead, "Conflict in the Land of Peace." *Florida Baptist Witness*, n.d., Box 255, Folder 30, International Mission Board Mission Minutes and Reports, 1849-2005 (hereafter "IMB Minutes and Reports"), SBHLA.

[9] Though Shukri Mosa's mission had effectively begun in Safed in 1910 before moving to Nazareth the next year, it was under the purview of the Illinois State Baptist Convention before being taken over by the FMB in 1919. During the war, 1914-1918, it was effectively shut down.

presence of Baptist work in the region meant a necessary encounter with the present.[10] Baptists began thinking about travel in ways that they had not previously expressed. Coleman Craig, who in the late-1940s would become an active member of the pro-Zionist American Christian Palestine Committee, pondered what bound and divided humanity as he walked through the crowds of Jerusalem's Old City:

> I felt the isolation that everyone feels where the people are so different, and one finds himself asking the question, Are we really after all kin? Do they have the same loves, the same hatreds, the same emotions that we do?[11]

While reflecting on his journey to Palestine aboard an Austrian steamer, J.M. Dawson noted how a conversation with an erudite Greek had convinced him "that one of the effects of travel is a broader humanism."[12] Though many Baptist travelers in the Mandate era held and broadcast the same preconceptions that their predecessors did (including Craig and Dawson), such statements reflected an increasing sense that *challenging* preconceptions was an important aim of travel. With such aims, the present necessarily became more important.

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[10] One example of the former comes from Ernest Sellers, "Where Jesus Loved to Be," *Biblical Recorder* (November 30, 1927), 4: "If the pilgrim will allow his sanctified imagination to have free reign, will overlook much that is sordid and disgusting but will recall the life and labor of Him who began His world transforming work with such simple folk as even now live in the land[.]"

[11] Coleman Craig, "What I Remember Best From a Trip Abroad," *Baptist Standard* (November 8, 1923), 9. Craig evinced no particular sympathy for Zionism during his 1923 travels, however in the late 1940s he gathered petitions in support of the American Christian Palestine Committee. File 138, American Christian Palestine Committee Collection (hereafter "ACPC Collection"), Central Zionist Archives (hereafter "CZA"), Jerusalem, Israel.

[12] J.M. Dawson, "A Pilgrimage and Some Parables – II," *Baptist Standard* (September 11, 1924), 8.

With a renewed appreciation for the contemporary, the role of local interpreters and informants was as important as ever.[13] In the Mandate era, the Baptist missionaries eclipsed the travel agency dragomans in this regard. Nearly every traveler who reported their experiences in the *Biblical Recorder* explicitly mentioned making contact with the missionaries or locals involved with the mission churches.[14] R.T. Bryan, himself a missionary to China, recalled Elsie Clor finding him a hotel in Jerusalem and Roswell Owens securing a guide that had been involved with the mission.[15] Of course, the extent of the contact between travelers and missionaries could vary. Shukri Mosa actually complained in a 1924 letter to the *Baptist Standard* that "very few [Baptists] stopped over-night at Nazareth" after the BWA meeting in Stockholm, adding that "tourists nowadays travel by motor cars and they pass the country in such a rush that they hardly have time to see anything."[16] Some passed in a rush while others took a deep interest in local life. J.J. Wicker, a Baptist minister and the director of a Richmond travel agency, recorded several instances of Baptists (and non-Baptists) sponsoring the education of local

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[13] Also important in the Mandate era were literary sources. For his 1927 trip (and articles about it), Hight C. Moore amassed a small collection of literature on the region. See Box 22, Folder 13, Box 29, Folder 3, and Box 67, Folder 11 of the Hight C. Moore Papers, SBHLA.

[14] E.F. Tatum, "Beginning (Over Again) at Jerusalem." *Biblical Recorder* (January 9, 1924), 10; John Wicker, "A Thrilling Story of a Lost Bible," *Biblical Recorder*, (January 20, 1926), 14; O.R. Mangum, "Baptist Work in Palestine and Syria," *Biblical Recorder* (August 11, 1926), 10; Kyle Yates, "Jerusalem and Judea." *Biblical Recorder* (June 5, 1929), 10; John Bunn, "A Visit to Jerusalem" *Biblical Recorder*(March 8, 1933), 8; Ernest Sellers, "A Modern Miracle at Cana," *Biblical Recorder* (April 26, 1933), 1; Mrs. Charles Leonard, "By Way of Palestine," *Biblical Recorder* (May 22, 1935), 12; Wilbur Smith, "A Notable Work Among Jewish Children," *Biblical Recorder* (January 4, 1939), 12.

[15] R.T. Bryan, "From Shanghai to New York: Second Article: Jerusalem to Beirut," *Biblical Recorder* (July 9, 1930), 3.

[16] Shukri Mosa, "Letter from Nazareth," *Baptist Standard* (October 4, 1924), 15.

children—including Shukri Mosa's daughter, Hilda (the mother of scholars Jean Said-Makdisi and Edward Said).[17] Many of the improvements to the Nazareth and Jerusalem missions were funded by donations from travelers.

As Baptist travelers engaged a more contemporary Palestine, they tended to focus their writings on three topics—the modernization of the region, the burgeoning conflict between the Arabs and the Zionists, and the growing Baptist mission. With ubiquity, they marveled that a new modernity had come to Palestine. In contrast to John Broadus, who in 1871 could complain that the carriage roads "were merely bridle paths[,]" many post-war travelers were struck by the quality of the paved roads.[18] Several were jarred by the sight of automobiles in the land of the Bible.[19] Writing of the "modern" Jerusalem outside the Ottoman walls, Walter Alexander noted, "the modern city is modern indeed, and, although built entirely of stone and native rock, possesses all the comforts and conveniences [the traveler] is accustomed to at home."[20] Palestine had a new economic and technological vitality. A power plant was being built on the Yarmouk.[21] The minerals of the Dead Sea were being excavated and processed.[22] Perhaps most striking to Baptist travelers, a

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[17] Wicker, "A Thrilling Story of a Lost Bible," 14.
[18] Bryan, "Jerusalem to Beirut," 3; Bunn, "Little Journeys in Palestine: From Jerusalem to Nazareth," *Biblical Recorder* (March 29, 1933), 1; Charles Pierce, "News from Jerusalem." *Baptist Standard* (July 25, 1929), 3; Walter Alexander, *Holy Hours in the Holy Land* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1946), 117.
[19] Alexander, *Holy Hours*, 117.
[20] Alexander traveled to Palestine in 1934, though he did not publish his travelogue until 1946. *Ibid*., 117.
[21] Bunn, "Little Journeys in Palestine: From Nazareth to Tiberias," *Biblical Recorder* (April 26, 1933), 10.
[22] Bryan, "Jerusalem to Beirut," 4.

modern port and harbor was being built at Haifa.[23] Many cited the salutary reign of the British in bringing about these improvements. R.T. Bryan, who was so enthusiastic about the modern roads that he mentioned them three separate times in a three-page travelogue, extolled the British roads for improving travel, security, and the economy.[24] John Bunn noted the government's investment in Haifa.[25]

More striking, though, was the number of Baptist travelers who specifically juxtaposed Zionist modernity against Arab backwardness. A recurring symbol of this divide was the difference between Jaffa and Tel Aviv. Norfleet Garner's 1935 description of the two is worth quoting in full:

> The old city [Jaffa] is marked by dirty, narrow streets of bad smells. It has a population of 60,000. Adjoining it, however, is Tel-Aviv, the Zionist city, with 72,000 inhabitants, built since the war. You may drive from one into the other, but are able to observe almost immediately the difference. Clean, paved streets, nice homes, good places of business, a long beach lined with bathers, whom we joined, and pleasant citizens made our brief visit here another happy step along the way.[26]

R.T. Bryan, who was sympathetic to the Arab political cause, likewise remarked that Tel Aviv offered "a striking contrast to the Moslem cities."[27] The modernity gap between Zionists and Arabs was also clear in the realm of agriculture. Again, Bryan noted "a very striking contrast between the Jewish farmer's crops and up-to-date methods and implements, and those ancient ones of the Moslems."[28] "They must certainly wake up, change and progress," he added, "otherwise their fears of

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[23] Alexander, *Holy Hours*, 17.
[24] Bryan, "Jerusalem to Beirut," 4.
[25] Bunn, "From Nazareth to Tiberias," 10.
[26] E. Norfleet Gardner, "Joppa," *Biblical Recorder* (January 30, 1935), 13.
[27] Bryan, "Jerusalem to Beirut," 4.
[28] *Ibid*., 4.

being displaced by the Jews will be realized."[29] Even those who were outright in their opposition to the creation of a Jewish state were impressed by Zionist modernity. After making the case for Arab opposition to Zionism in a 1920 article, Z.T. Cody suggested there were nonetheless "many very fine things that can be said of Zionism as it is seen in actual operation here.":

> These Jews are bringing with them a far higher civilization than they find in Palestine and a better religion. They buy the large tracts of land they occupy, and turn them from a waste into a garden. Wherever you find a Jewish colony, and you find many here and there, you find a little patch of our Western civilization set up here in the dead and dirty East.[30]

For travelers in the Ottoman Era, modernity and Christianity had gone hand-in-hand. Writers such as Cody, though, demonstrated that for Mandate-era travelers, a Jewish modernity could transform Palestine for the better and vivify "the dead and dirty East."

Even as their perceptions of Jews changed, most Baptist travelers continued to view Arabs as premodern. As did their Ottoman-era precursors, they viewed Arab men as especially lazy and exploitative of female labor.[31] Writing of the fellahin, John Bunn noted, "The men ride donkeys, and with one stick urge the donkeys along and with another stick urge the women along."[32] Echoing W.A. Hamlett, Bunn lamented that the women worked all day while the men drank coffee and told

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[29] *Ibid*., 4.
[30] Z.T. Cody, "Zionism," *Biblical Recorder* (February 4, 1920), 8.
[31] J.M. Dawson made such observations of Arabs in northeastern Egypt, generalizing them in describing the "position of women in Mohammedan lands" as pathetic. Dawson, "A Pilgrimage and Some Parables – III," *Baptist Standard*, (September 18, 1924), 8.
[32] Bunn, "Little Journeys in Palestine: Journeying Around Jerusalem," *Biblical Recorder* (May 24, 1933), 1.

"the tall stories of the day."[33] Bunn attributed this exploitative arrangement to Islam, noting, "Womanhood has no freedom where Jesus is not served."[34] When Bunn did observe Arab men working in building the Naharayim power station, he found it "interesting and pathetic[.]"[35] "Some were digging with picks," he noted, "some were using shovels, filling the little baskets of those who came to bear the dirt away. What a process of work; but it was very well for all the people to have something to do."[36] Even as Arabs helped build a modern hydroelectric power plant, their methods were, to Bunn's eyes, quaint.

Besides being struck by the country's new modernity, Baptist travelers found Palestine increasingly defined by the Palestine question in its various forms. Most were aware of the burgeoning conflict between local Arabs and the Zionists—and the awkward position of Britain between them. Writing in 1926, O.R. Mangum described standing on Mount Carmel and looking out "on this war-torn and prejudice-filled land[.]"[37] J. McKee Adams noted in *Home and Foreign Fields*, "Palestine has always been a land of varied contacts and conflicts[.]"[38] The Ottoman-era question of why Palestine was behind was, for many, replaced with the Mandate-era question of why the land was so riven with conflict. For most, though, the answer was the same—the absence of Christ. In this way, the Baptist mission became not only a way to spread the Gospel, but to bring peace to Palestine. Several

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[33] *Ibid*., 1.
[34] *Ibid*., 1.
[35] Bunn, "From Nazareth to Tiberias," 10.
[36] *Ibid*., 10.
[37] Mangum, "Baptist Work in Palestine and Syria," 10.
[38] J. McKee Adams, "The Current Situation in Palestine," *Home and Foreign Fields* (October 1929), 3.

travelers mentioned being moved by seeing Jews and Arabs worship together at Baptist services: "I have seen Jews and Arabs sitting together in the only place in Palestine where Jews and Arabs come together without fighting[,]" Claude Broach wrote of the Jerusalem mission, "Why should we not be done with the note of despair and sound the note of hope and victory!"[39]

For many, the Palestine question was strictly a matter of Zionist success or failure. The Zionists (and, frequently, the British), in other words, were actors. The Arabs, when even mentioned, were acted upon. A 1924 report from J.M. Dawson in the *Baptist Standard* is illustrative:

> The recognization of Zionism by the British government under its mandate over Palestine, the huge national fund being raised for Zion in all lands, the improved quality of the colonists, and the intense anti-Semitic spirit in America since the war, favor the realization of the Zionist hopes. On the other hand, the extreme poverty of the land, the division in Zion's own ranks, and divine retribution on the Jews as a people for rejecting Christ, discourage the prospect of the restoration of Zion.[40]

For Dawson, the Arabs did not appear as a complicating factor in the success or failure of the Zionists, not even rating above American antisemitism in affecting the prospects of the movement. Even those, like Z.T. Cody, who were supportive of the Arabs, tended to view the Zionists as the primary actors. Cody, "like all other good Americans," had been originally sympathetic towards the Zionist cause before his travels led him to reconsider.[41] "[…]I have been learning some other new things

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[39] Claude Broach, "On Visiting the Holy Land," *Christian Index* (January 20, 1938), 21, Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports, SBHLA.
[40] Dawson, "A Pilgrimage and Some Parables – IV," *Baptist Standard*, (September 23, 1924), 11.
[41] Cody, "Zionism," 8.

since I came here," he wrote in 1920.[42] While Cody found much to admire in the Zionist movement, he saw it as inevitably leading to the displacement of the Arabs. "Why do the natives detest Zionism?" he asked, "It is not merely another manifestation of anti-Jewish prejudice…The seven hundred thousand natives are looking on a movement whose avowed purpose is to supplant them. It is not difficult to imagine how they feel."[43] Cody anticipated that the British would soon "issue a proclamation in which it will be explained that there is no intention of setting up a Jewish state in Palestine."[44] Of course, the opposite turned out to be true, as the promises of the Balfour Declaration would be written into Britain's Mandate from the League of Nations in 1923. J. McKee Adams, writing in 1929 (and reprinted in the 1937 mission study manual, *The Heart of the Levant*), argued that the "general disaffection in Palestine can be attributed definitely to the implications of the Balfour Declaration…and to the alleged radical changes effected in the Zionistic organization by that pronouncement."[45] The vague language of the Declaration had empowered "the aggressive wing of Zionism" to argue that "the *nation* [meaning nation-state] of the Jews is the *one condition* of successful Zionism[.]"[46] "Zionism, political Zionism, is the line of demarcation between Palestinian Jews and Arabs and will remain so until that movement is further

[42] *Ibid*., 8. The purpose of this trip, as mentioned, was to survey the European and Levantine mission fields after the war. It's entirely possible that Cody owed his change of heart to interactions with the Mosas.
[43] *Ibid*., 8.
[44] *Ibid*., 8.
[45] Adams, "The Current Situation in Palestine," *Home and Foreign Fields*, 3; Adams, *The Heart of the Levant* (Richmond: Foreign Mission Board, 1937), 91-92.
[46] Adams, *Levant*, 93.

defined in terms more acceptable to Arab sensibilities," he added before proffering his solution:

> The elimination of the word 'national' from the Balfour Declaration would be attended by one startling result: the Arabs would fold their tents and as silently steal away, while the Jews would settle down to an era of blessedness in peace.[47]

R.T. Bryan, traveling through Palestine in the year following the Wailing Wall Riots, echoed Adams's diagnosis, even as he refrained from offering a cure.[48]

J. McKee Adams and W.T. Halstead went beyond blaming the Zionists or British in articulating a positive case for the Arabs. Adams urged that the Arabs were not only being threatened with dispossession, they had a dream of their own—the creation of a pan-Arab state.[49] This dream had "always been at the base of all Arab aspirations[.]"[50] It was "the subject matter of old men's dreams and the visions of youth, the one aspect of Arab life and thought which claims support from all factions, sects and classes, and which transcends even religious differences between Moslem and Christian, uniting both in a powerful surge of nationalistic fervor—the rebirth of an Arab State!"[51] Arabs throughout the Levant were organizing around this dream, developing political societies and working through colleges and universities. They were crafting a "new nationalism which intends to achieve the full expression of Arab independence, namely, the creation of a national

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[47] Adams, *Levant*, 103.
[48] Bryan, "Jerusalem to Beirut," 3; Bryan, as a missionary, was a likely subscriber to *Home and Foreign Fields*, where Adams's article responding to the Wailing Wall Riots appeared.
[49] In this regard, Adams was something behind the times. Pan-Arabism was largely dormant between the failure of Faisal's Syrian Arab Kingdom in 1921 and the ascent of Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt in the 1950s.
[50] Adams, *Levant*, 110.
[51] *Ibid*., 110-111.

independent government within the framework of a recognized and respected constitution."[52] Though Adams perhaps belatedly championed pan-Arabism, his work nonetheless offered a positive Arab vision for Palestine. His Arabs, like the Zionists, were *actors*—people making efforts to achieve real goals.

At times, specific political events worked their way into Baptist travelers' reflections. Amidst the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939, the Peel Commission's 1937 report—which called for the partition of Palestine into an Arab state and a Jewish state—drew comment from several Baptist travelers. T.C. Gardner of Texas reported that Baptist missionary Louis Hanna, himself an Arab, was opposed to partition.[53] Ruth Collie, whose numerous travel articles rarely engaged the political, nonetheless reported a conversation with her guide, an Arab Christian named Mr. Jamel, who told her "his people are quite disturbed about the English Mandate Commission which was published three or four days ago relative to the dividing of the Holy Lands."[54] Despite her warmth for Jamel (she noted of her party, "we already love him"), Collie nonetheless seems to have favored partition. After noting that travelers to the Holy Land would require three passports under the plan, she remarked, "Quite a situation for a country this size, but of course you realize it has come about through the promises of England to both Jews and Arabs that they may have a home here."[55] The aforementioned W.T. Halstead used the occasion of his 1937 trip to Palestine and the publication of the Peel Commission's report to lay out

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[52] *Ibid*., 112.
[53] T.C. Gardner, "At Nazareth July 21, 1937," *Baptist Standard* (September 16, 1937), Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[54] Ruth Collie, "Travels in the Holy Land," n.d. Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[55] *Ibid*.

his basic understanding of the conflict to readers of the *Florida Baptist Witness*. Halstead did not take sides, but did fear a bloodletting should the English withdraw.[56] Though he did argue that "it is Arab discontent that is causing trouble in Palestine[,]" he also sympathetically laid out Arab claims and fears.[57] More than anything, Halstead felt it was the tangle of "misunderstanding, unfulfilled hopes" and "unkept promises" that had spurred the increasingly violent conflict.[58]

One decade later another Florida Baptist, Dr. James Day of Southside Baptist Church (Lakeland, FL), gave his impressions of the conflict as the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine held hearings in Jerusalem. More than any other Baptist traveler in the Mandate era, Day expressed wariness of his position as a traveler-observer. "Certainly one should be very careful in writing about a country where one has been for only two weeks and the problems have existed for over two thousand years[,]" he wrote, adding, "I do not wish to make the mistake of those who have visited the South for two weeks or two months, and then have gone home to write 'expert' articles on the 'Negro problem in the South.'"[59] These caveats in place, Day went on to outline his credentials, noting he had "made Palestine and the Bible a detailed object of study for twenty-two years[,]" had "studied many of the old and new books written by competent authors on this much-disputed subject[,]" and, most importantly, had been in Palestine "when the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine was holding its hearings in Jerusalem, and thus secured

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[56] Halstead, "Conflict in the Land of Peace." *Florida Baptist Witness*, n.d. Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[57] *Ibid*.
[58] *Ibid*.
[59] James Day, "The Jew - The Arab - And Palestine," *Florida Baptist Witness* (November 20, 1947), 6.

information and facts in a few days which ordinarily would have taken weeks or months to compile."[60] He had also spent several days with the Baptist missionaries, dined with kibbutzniks at Ein Harod, and met with several Arabs to discuss the political goings-on. After sending weekly travel reports to the *Florida Baptist Witness*, he had been asked to publish a series of articles on the conflict between November of 1947 through January of 1948. His writings thus straddled the favorable UN vote on partition.

Over the course of three articles, Day laid out five Jewish arguments, five Arab arguments, and five possible solutions to the Palestine question. "With the Jew," he averred, "the motive is fundamentally religious, though there are many political angles, and there are some 'political Zionists.'"[61] Day argued—incorrectly, it should be noted—that the primary Jewish claim to the land rested in their belief that God "gave it to [them] and not to Ishmael or to Esau."[62] He was on firmer ground when stepping away from religion, noting the Zionists' historical argument that Jews had "never given up the religious and political ideal of Palestine as [their] national home[,]" their political argument that Great Britain was violating the promises of the Balfour Declaration, and their humanitarian argument that Palestine should be opened as a haven for persecuted European Jewry.[63] "The Jew's final argument[,]" he wrote, was that

> …he has done something with the land of Palestine when given a chance, while the Arab has not. The Jew points with justifiable pride to the Zionist

[60] *Ibid*., 6.
[61] Day, "The Jew, The Arab - And Palestine," *Florida Baptist Witness* (January 1, 1948), 5.

[62] Day, "The Jew - The Arab - And Palestine," (November 20, 1947), 6.
[63] *Ibid*., 6.

> colonies, which have made 'the desert to blossom as the rose, and which have taken swampy and malarial lands (which the Arab would not touch) and by irrigation and drainage, have made productive farms out of useless valleys and barren hills.[64]

Put simply, the Jews argued, "we have utilized the land and the Arab has not."[65] In this, Day identified a connection between the political rights claimed by the Zionists and the civilizational gap observed by nearly every Baptist traveler.

With Arab claims, Day noted, "the motive is patriotism, based upon nationalism."[66] First among Arab arguments was that they had "occupied the land of Palestine for nearly two thousand years."[67] Beyond that, they comprised the majority of the population and claimed the right "to determine the number and type of immigrants to Palestine."[68] They held that the First and Second World Wars had been fought "to give the small nations the right to determine their own affairs without the interference of outside nations."[69] The United States itself, he noted, had immigration quotas. Arabs were "willing to take [their] pro rata share of the refugee Jews of Europe but no more than [their] share."[70] Day also claimed that Arabs argued that Abraham's covenantal title to the land had actually past to his firstborn—Ishmael. Finally, they held that England had "no moral right to promise the Jews of the world a 'national home in Palestine' because the land was not theirs

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[64] *Ibid*., 6.
[65] *Ibid*., 6.
[66] Day, "The Jew, The Arab - And Palestine," (January 1, 1948), 5.
[67] Day, "The Jew - The Arab - And Palestine," (November 20, 1947), 6.
[68] *Ibid*., 6.
[69] *Ibid*., 6.
[70] Day, "The Jew—The Arab—and Palestine," *Florida Baptist Witness* (December 25, 1947), 2.

to give away[,]" and, even if they had, T.E. Lawrence had separately promised the land to the Arabs.[71]

Day's last article laid out five possible solutions. It noted, too, "some of the motives of the various groups involved."[72] Aside from the Jews and Arabs, American and British industrialists were motivated by oil interests. England was motivated, too, by a desire to protect the Suez Canal. Also of great concern to Day was the Soviet Union. Having spoken to a number of Russian expatriates during his travels, he noted:

> All Russians in Palestine with whom I talked in July, were of the opinion that, when civil war broke out between the Jews and the Arabs, Russia would fly troops in, ostensibly to police the Holy Land and to maintain order, but actually to secure oil rights, mineral rights, and warm water ports for herself. In the light of developments of the last six months, these Russians seem so far to be right.[73]

Only this could explain the curious Soviet "yes" vote on partition. After describing the tangle of motivations at play, Day laid out five different "solutions" to the Palestine question. The first two were total control for either Jews or Arabs. The third was the bi-national solution, the formation of "a united Jewish-Arab State in all of Palestine, with a legislative body composed of an equal number of Jews and Arabs."[74] While in Palestine, Day had heard Dr. Judah Magnes, president of the Hebrew University, plead the binationalist cause to the UN's Special Committee. The fourth solution was partition, which had already passed the UN. Day apparently found the UN's partition plan reasonable, since it gave "the Jew most of the farm

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[71] *Ibid*., 5.
[72] Day, "The Jew, The Arab - And Palestine," (January 1, 1948), 5.
[73] *Ibid*., 5.
[74] *Ibid*., 5.

land (for in Palestine he is primarily a farmer)" and the Arab "most of the grazing land (for he is primarily a herdsman)."[75] He was not confident, though, that it would work. The Arab nations had voted against it. "All Arabs with whom I talked in Palestine," Day noted, "stated that they would fight to the last Arab, to keep the Jews from having even a part of Palestine."[76] In the end, Day believed "no 'man-made' solution will work."[77] "The only permanent abiding peace on this sin cursed earth[,]" he wrote, "can come only through the Prince of Peace."[78] While most Southern Baptist travelers agreed with this, viewing missions as the key to bringing peace to Palestine, Day's premillennialism led him to believe only the "personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ" could bring peace.[79]

Conclusion

As the foregoing pages have demonstrated, the broad themes that united Baptist travelers in their reflections on Mandatory Palestine were progress, conflict, and mission. Most agreed that the former was attributable to the British and, most especially, the Zionists. In contrast to the Ottoman era, when Baptist travelers tended to view the Palestinian Jewish community as simply another portion of the benighted Levant, post-war travelers increasingly viewed the Yishuv as an extension of the civilized and modern West. Though most did not express political support for Zionism (most avoided engaging political questions altogether), nearly

[75] *Ibid*., 5.
[76] *Ibid*., 5.
[77] *Ibid*., 5.
[78] *Ibid*., 5.
[79] *Ibid*., 5.

all Baptist travelers exhibited a sort of postcard Zionism, painting pictures of a stagnant land revivified—the desert "blossoming as the rose"—at the tips of Zionist plows and shovels. When Baptist travelers did engage the political aspects of the Palestine question, their appraisals varied. Almost all agreed, though, that lasting peace could only come with the arrival of Christ, either from the spread of the evangelical gospel or the Parousia itself.

Chapter Three

Arabs

Among the foremost opponents of Zionism in the United States in the early-twentieth century were Protestant missionaries and Arab émigrés who had been educated in Levantine mission schools. Especially prominent were northern Presbyterians and Congregationalists, who had longstanding ties to the region. Though these groups were few in number in the Arab world, they had an influence far beyond their numbers, particularly in what is now Lebanon and Syria. Beginning in the first half of the nineteenth century, Presbyterian and Congregationalist missionaries began building an educational network throughout the Levant in effort to peel off "nominal" Christians from the Eastern Churches.[1] It was largely out of this network—which most notably included Syrian Protestant College (later the American University of Beirut)—that an Arab Christian intelligentsia had emerged in the nineteenth century, concerned with both the revival of Arabic as a modern language (the *nahda*) and the formation of modern identities that transcended religious division—particularly an Arab national identity.[2] It was such educated Syrian Christians (as they were most often referred to in the U.S.) and their

[1] Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009); A.L. Tibawi, *American Interests in Syria, 1800-1901: A Study of Educational, Literary, and Religious Work* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966).
[2] One such figure was the novelist and historian Jurji Zaidan, who was educated at SPC and later moved to Egypt: Thomas Phillipp, "Language, History, and Arab National Consciousness in the Thought of Jurji Zaidan (1861-1914)," *The International Journal of Middle East Studies* 4, no. 1 (Jan. 1973), 3-22.

missionary associates who spoke up for a variety of Arab interests in the U.S. during and after World War One.[3] In particular, they spoke out against Zionism.

Southern Baptists had far weaker ties to the region than the Presbyterians or Congregationalists. Indeed, beyond abstract hope and sentimental attachment to the Holy Land, the SBC really had no ties to Palestine at all by the turn of the twentieth century. Though delegates to the Southern Baptist Convention had expressed missionary interest in Palestine as early as 1846, it was not until the 1908 arrival in Texas of a Melkite Arab from Safed that Baptists became actively involved in the Holy Land. That man, Shukri Mosa, would develop a close relationship with the most important Texas Baptists of his day—George Truett and L.R. Scarborough, among others—and establish the first Baptist mission in Palestine in 1910. If ever there was an opportunity for an Arab perspective on the Palestine question to make its way to Southern Baptists à la the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, it was in Mosa's relationship with the Texas Baptists and the Foreign Mission Board.

The Mission

Shukri Mosa was born to a Greek Catholic (or Melkite) family in Safed in 1870. In 1905 he married Munira Youssef Badr, who had been born in the village of Schweir

[3] Joseph Grabill, "Protestant Diplomacy and Arab Nationalism, 1914-1948," *American Presbyterians* 64, no. 2 (Summer 1986): 113-124; Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810-1927* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1971); Ussama Makdisi, *Faith Misplaced: The Broken Promise of U.S.-Arab Relations: 1820-2001* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2010).

near Mount Lebanon.[4] Both had come from middle-class Arab Christian families. Shukri's father had served on the Safed municipal council as the representative of the Christian community in the city. His own first career was as a civil servant, working for the postal service in Jerusalem and Safed. Munira had grown up in the missionary milieu mentioned above, her parents having converted to Presbyterianism from Greek Orthodoxy in the 1870s under the influence of the American missionaries. Her father, Youssef Badr, had served as the first Arab pastor of the National Evangelical Church in Beirut. As a young girl she had attended the British Normal Training School for girls, where she studied English among a host of other subjects.[5] Three years after Shukri and Munira wed, Shukri left with his nephew Youssef for the United States in pursuit of new business opportunities. The two ended up as door-to-door peddlers in Texas, where they were first exposed to Baptist Christianity. Shukri soon made the acquaintance of George Truett, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, and L.R. Scarborough, then a professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, who were by then on their way to becoming the two most important and influential Texas Baptists of the first half of the twentieth century. Under Truett's guidance, Mosa converted and was re-baptized at First Baptist. He soon dedicated himself wholly to

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[4] I have chosen to transliterate Shukri and Munira's surname as "Mosa" since this is how they themselves transliterated it in corresponding with their Southern Baptist connections. It is also, thus, how their name appears in most Southern Baptist records. The family itself, though, has come to transliterate the name as "Musa."

[5] According to Jean Said Makdisi, Munira studied Old Testament, New Testament, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, history, and composition in 1893 as a 13 year old. Munira also attended the school's teaching class, which covered Criticism Lessons, Singing Drill, Drill, Plain Needlework, Fancy Needlework, and Cutting Out (pattern-making). Jean Said Makdisi, *Teta, Mother, and Me: Three Generations of Arab Women* (New York: Norton, 2006), 182-186.

religion, seeking to become a missionary to his people. After securing an appointment with the Illinois Baptist Missionary Convention, Shukri returned to Palestine in 1910. The following year he moved his family to Nazareth, "the Lord's home city," as Shukri would note in his letterhead, where they began to build their mission. He also baptized his first convert—his nephew Louis Hanna, who would shortly leave the Galilee to study for the ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

Though Mosa was officially sponsored by the Illinois Baptists, he maintained his connections with the Texans. They sent him copies of the *Baptist Standard* while he replied with reports on the mission's progress.[6] Southern Baptist travelers to the Levant, particularly Texans, sometimes sought out the missionary and attended the services he held in his house. J.W. Graham, who traveled to Nazareth in May of 1913, reported that the Mosas kept a portrait of Truett in their home.[7] Shukri had also developed a relationship with Dr. James Marion Frost (secretary of the SBC's publishing house—the Sunday School Board) during his time in the states. He used this connection to obtain Sunday School Board materials, the most important of which were the picture cards he gave to young Sunday school attendees as a reward for good attendance.[8] He also repeatedly pleaded to Frost to help bring the mission under the aegis of the SBC's Foreign Mission Board. As

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[6] Shukri Mosa, "A Letter From Nazareth," *Baptist Standard* (January 2, 1919), 31.
[7] Graham, "Nazareth and Its Baptist Mission." *Baptist Standard* (September 18, 1913), 3.
[8] Shukri Mosa to James Marion Frost, 27 January 1913, Box 25, Folder 16, James Marion Frost Papers, SBHLA.

early as one year in, it was clear the Illinois Convention would be unable to uphold its financial commitments.

A 1914 status report by Shukri gives some insight into the functioning of the early mission.[9] By then, the Mosas were holding five meetings per week with an average attendance of 26. Munira had begun her work among women, which would remain one of the mission's strong points into the late 1920s. The five meetings did not include their Sunday service and Sunday school, which had 313 boys and girls on its roll (many less attended).[10] Shukri reported having given 148 sermons over the previous year. He noted, too, that Munira played the organ for their services. They had baptized twelve since the work had begun in 1911, though three were then in America (including his nephew, Louis Hanna, who was attending Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary). Though a small group, Shukri reported that they were stirring active resistance in the community, particular among the Eastern Christian communities the mission targeted. Their rivals—chiefly the Melkites and Orthodox—"hanged papers in the streets in which were written very bad names, cursing us, our doctrines, baptism, etc."[11] The Orthodox bishop was concerned enough to thwart attempts by Shukri to purchase land for a cemetery by pressuring local Christians not to sell to the Baptists. The missionary noted that, though many "of the enlightened folk say that we have the very purest doctrine of the Bible[,]"

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[9] "Annual Report to Baptist Missionary Convention" (April 3, 1914), 2, Box 25, Folder 16, Frost Papers, SBHLA.

[10] Actual attendance could vary wildly. In 1912, they averaged 56 for both Sunday Schools. The following year, however, Shukri noted only 33 attending regularly; S. Mosa to Frost, 9 October 1912, Box 25, Folder 16, Frost Papers, SBHLA; S. Mosa to Frost, 27 January 1913, Box 25, Folder 16, Frost Papers, SBHLA.

[11] "Annual Report to Baptist Missionary Convention," 2; Mosa's children also recalled the early resistance of the Orthodox.

the question of re-baptism was keeping many inquirers away.[12] This was likely because re-baptism would be seen as a social breach with the Orthodox Christian community. Still, they were making progress.

This small progress, though, was almost totally wiped out by World War One. Palestine was thrown into general chaos.[13] The Ottoman military governorship under Jamal Pasha (known as the "blood shedder") was extremely brutal and repressive, particularly toward local Arabs. The economy ground to a halt as the fighting interrupted trade and men were drafted into the Ottoman forces. Shukri Mosa himself was conscripted and posted to Riyaq (in modern-day Lebanon). After the British and Arab forces pushed the Ottomans from Palestine, Mosa returned to Nazareth and began rebuilding the mission. Of the eighteen he had baptized prior to the war, only ten remained. Among the rest, he noted in a letter to T.B. Ray, "1 died, 1 backed, 1 because of the great tribulation of the war sheltered himself in the Roman Catholick's convent…& the rest 3 are in different parts of America[.]"[14] On August 1, 1919, though, one of the missionary's long-standing hopes was fulfilled as the SBC's Foreign Mission Board officially took over control of the mission from the Illinois Baptists.

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[12] *Ibid*., 3.
[13] Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2015); Kristin Coates Ulrichsen, *The First World War in the Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 113-118; Abigail Jacobson, "Negotiating Ottomanism in Times of War: Jerusalem During World War I Through the Eyes of a Local Muslim Resident," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40 (2008), 69-88; Donna Robinson Divine, "Palestine in World War I," *The Middle East and North Africa: Essays in Honor of J.C. Hurewitz*, ed. Reeva S. Simon (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 71-94.
[14] S. Mosa to T.B. Ray, 6 December 1919, Box 355, Folder 31, IMB Minutes and Reports.

The Mosas steadily built the mission over the next several years. By the mid-1920s, they were holding seven meetings each week in addition to their Sunday service and Sunday school.[15] Though there is not much record detailing these meetings, a 1919 letter to Isaac Van Ness (Frost's successor with the Sunday School Board) sheds some light on the Sunday schools. Each Sunday, Shukri and Munira would teach their respective classes two stanzas of a hymn, explain the day's lesson "in a very simple way," teach the golden rule, pray, and give out picture cards as rewards for attendance.[16] Another mission staple was Munira's Thursday night meeting for women, which in 1923 drew an average of 60-80 attendees. These meetings were apparently part-Bible study, part-workshop. To draw in local women, Munira provided thread for needlework, which she then purchased and attempted to sell herself, sometimes reaching out to Baptist women stateside.[17] In 1923, Shukri began a night reading and writing class for young men. By 1925 he was able to organize a Baptist Young People's Union (BYPU).

Beyond the expansion of the Mosas' own efforts in Nazareth, the Foreign Mission Board enacted a more general expansion of what was known as the Near East Mission in the first half of the 1920s. The main feature of this expansion was the placement of a superintendent from the United States over the regional missions (the Near East Mission included the stations at Nazareth, Kfarmichky, and Beirut that had already been established by local Baptists) starting in 1921. Although he had started the mission on his own, Shukri was categorized as a "native worker"

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[15] S. Mosa to Ray, 5 March1923, Box 255, Folder 31, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[16] S. Mosa to Isaac Jacobus Van Ness, 13 February 1919, Box 22, Folder 3, Isaac Jacobus Van Ness Papers, SBHLA.
[17] S. Mosa to Ray, 5 March 1923, Box 255, Folder 31, IMB Minutes and Reports.

subordinate to the rotating cast of "foreign missionaries" (i.e., Americans) that the Foreign Mission Board sent. Also classified as a native worker was Mosa's nephew, Louis Hanna, who had graduated from SWBTS and been sent by the FMB in 1921 to work among Arabs in Jerusalem. While the Mosas and Hanna were technically subordinate, they were supported and given relative autonomy by J. Wash Watts, who served as the mission's superintendent from 1923-1928.

The crowning achievement of the Mosas' mission came in 1927 with the dedication of Bottoms Memorial Baptist Church. Shukri had long pleaded to the officers of the Foreign Mission Board that Baptists needed to establish a permanent presence in the city as an act of good faith.[18] The matter of Baptist honor had become especially urgent after the failed tenure of W.A. Hamlett, who was appointed as Superintendent of the Near East mission in late 1921 but only lasted a month. Hamlett had apparently told Nazareth Baptists of plans to greatly expand the work before he suddenly returned home. His departure stoked fears of abandonment among the local Baptists. Reeling from this damage to the Baptist reputation, Shukri wrote J.F. Love in January of 1922, "Will you kindly redeem our great Baptist name and tell me openly if you are going to enlarge the work here, open schools, etc.?"[19] Concrete steps towards establishing a permanent presence were not taken until 1923, when a tour group of Texas Baptists (including Truett and Scarborough) visited the mission and pledged $2500 for the purchase of land. To that gift was soon added a ten thousand dollar donation from the Bottoms family of Texarkana,

[18] S. Mosa to Ray, 18 July 1923, Box 255, Folder 31, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[19] S. Mosa to J.F. Love, 14 January 1922, Box 255, Folder 31, IMB Minutes and Reports.

Arkansas, which paid for the construction of the church building near Mary's Well. The Bottoms Memorial Baptist Church was dedicated on May 3, 1927. As Mosa had predicted, the dedication of the church boosted the confidence of inquirers. Thirteen new members joined in 1928.

Nazarene Baptists' excitement over the dedication of Bottoms Memorial Church soon turned to despair with the unexpected death of Shukri Mosa in August of 1928. This was only the first in a wave of challenges that would beset the small community over the following two decades. The congregation, though, did not die with their pastor. Munira continued their work as a rotating cast of local Protestant ministers and laypeople shared preaching duties over the following months**.** In September, the congregation penned a letter to the FMB calling Louis Hanna as their next pastor.[20] Hanna, who was completing his B.A. at Howard Payne College in Brownwood, Texas, at the time, wrote J. Wash Watts that he felt "like Elisha when he saw Elijah taken away in the storm, for Uncle was to me what Elijah was to Elisha."[21] He promised that when he and his wife, Velora, completed their studies the following spring, they would be "ready to go anywhere the Board points the way for us, whether to return to Palestine to go to any other place."[22]

Though Hanna was the obvious choice to replace his uncle, his appointment was not without difficulty. Hanna had spent much of his life in the United States and become thoroughly Americanized. He had attended SWBTS in the 1910s before

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[20] Nazareth Baptist Church to the Foreign Mission Board, 2 September 1928. Box 255, Folder 31, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[21] Louis Hanna to J. Wash Watts, 19 September 1928, Box 62, Folder 5, International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Missionary Correspondence Files, SBHLA.
[22] *Ibid*.

joining his uncle in the mission field and had spent the previous several years in Brownwood. His wife, Velora, was herself from Texas. This, of course, challenged the FMB's formal distinction between native and missionary workers, between which lay a significant gap in pay and authority. T.B. Ray expressed his frustrations over the Hannas' status in a 1928 letter to J. Wash Watts:

> I must confess to the standing question I have about these young foreigners who are educated in America and who marry American wives. My observation has been that the largest percentage of them are failures. They become so Americanized, and have so many American connections, that it is hard to keep them on their fields. It is almost impossible for them to accept the status of regular native workers, and, when they assume a different classification, discord is aroused amongst the native working force. Furthermore, they have cultivated American taste and habits of living which increase the problem. In Hanna's case in particular, he has been in America so long that he perhaps is more American than he is Syrian. That raises the consideration that if we are going to send a native who is practically an American out there, why would it not be better to send an upright American.[23]

Just as Ray feared, the Hannas did request to be sent to Palestine as foreign missionaries. He adamantly refused the designation. The Hannas nonetheless agreed to return to Nazareth the following year as native workers, where they would remain until 1938.

Louis Hanna returned to his native Palestine on February 10, 1930. He and Velora set to work immediately, holding a woman's meeting and a prayer service in Nazareth the following day.[24] They began restructuring the church facility, installing folding doors that divided the building into classrooms. Soon, their Sunday school was averaging 150 students divided between six classes. Though the loss of Shukri

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[23] Ray to J.W. Watts, 17 September 1928, Box 62, Folder 5, IMB, Missionary Correspondence Files, SBHLA.
[24] Louis Hanna, "There He Could Do No Mighty Work Because of Their Unbelief," *Home and Foreign Fields* (July 1932), 14-15.

Mosa had been devastating to the small congregation, Louis Hanna's long experience with the mission ensured a measure of continuity. It also helped that Munira Mosa had remained employed by the FMB as a "Bible woman," something of a mission assistant and lay instructor. Munira, though, was much more than that—she had effectively kept the Nazareth mission running for two years and would remain in charge of the "woman's work" even after the Hannas' arrival.

The Hannas sought incremental, steady growth of the mission. Their early priority was to cultivate study groups among young adults, something Louis had already attempted during his earlier tenure in Jerusalem but was new to Nazareth. In 1933, they began a Vacation Bible School.[25] The first week they had 22 pupils. By the second session, it had grown to 56. The success of the D.V.B.S. made it clear to the Hannas that Shukri Mosa's unfulfilled dream of a Baptist day school in Nazareth was both possible and necessary. In 1935 they created the Nazareth Baptist School, which would become one of the most important and lasting contributions of Baptists to the community despite being forced to shut down between 1941-1949.

As had occurred during the mission's first decade, though, war again brought the Baptists' progress to a halt in the 1940s. The Hannas, who had gone Stateside on furlough in 1938, were forced to extend their stay in the States after Velora fell ill in 1939.[26] They remained in Texas as hostilities broke out in Europe and the Middle East and the rest of the Near East missionaries were recalled in

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[25] Velora Hanna, "New Life in Old Nazareth," *Home and Foreign Fields*, (December 1933), 11.

[26] That the Hannas were allowed furlough was perhaps a compromise made with the FMB over their appointment as native workers. Normally, of course, native workers did not spend furlough time in the United States. Jessie Ruth Ford, "Our Missionary Family Circle," *The Commission* 2, no. 4 (April 1939), 119.

1941. The two never returned. Hanna joined the U.S. Army as a chaplain during the war before settling down in Bryan, Texas, with Velora. They remained in Texas the rest of their days.

The Arab Baptists as Spokespeople

Shukri Mosa and Louis Hanna were among the few Arabs whose voices could penetrate the Southern Baptist Convention in the Mandate Era. Though subordinated as native workers after 1921, both had connections to the Foreign Mission Board. Both also had connections to the Texas Baptist elites that had brought Mosa to the faith. The high point in this relationship would come with the 1923 visit of the "Armstrong party" to Palestine. Led by Baylor English Chair and tour guide, Dr. Andrew Joseph Armstrong, the tour reunited Mosa with the men who had led him to conversion—George Truett and Dr. L.R. Scarborough. By then, Truett had become the most influential Southern Baptist in Texas (three years later he would be elected president of the SBC) and Scarborough had already spent a decade as president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (where Louis Hanna had attended in the 1910s). The visit also opened up new connections. Among them was J.B. Tidwell, then head of the Bible Department at Baylor, who had gathered the party's $2500 gift to the mission. That money went to the purchase of the lot on which Bottoms Memorial Church was built. In 1925, the Texans had also helped secure the Mosas' eldest son, Munir, a place at the San Marcos Academy in San Marcos, TX, with Truett serving as his caretaker in the States. As mentioned, Louis Hanna himself returned to Texas shortly thereafter to study at

Howard Payne, where he met his future wife, Velora Griffin. Whereas his uncle had connections to Texas, Hanna was sprouting roots.

Acknowledging these connections raises the question of whether they provided a greater awareness among Southern Baptists of Arab perspectives towards the Palestine question, as had occurred with the Presbyterians. The short answer is that they did not. Understanding why they did not requires examining three related points—what Mosa and Hanna themselves thought, whether they were able to effectively communicate their perspectives to Southern Baptists, and whether Baptists in the States recognized or adopted their perspectives. As will be seen below, their ability to influence Baptist political attitudes was hindered on all three counts.

Though there was something inherently political in conversion and evangelism in Ottoman society, Shukri Mosa does not appear to have been a particularly political figure. His main priorities from his return to Palestine in 1910 until his death were ensuring a middle-class existence for his family and building his mission. He wanted enough money for his family to live well. He wanted his children to be educated. He wanted to establish a church and build a Baptist school in Nazareth. These were the issues he raised when he wrote to individual Baptists in the States, when he published his infrequent articles in the *Baptist Standard*, and when he encountered travelers in Nazareth. Only rarely did he make overtly political statements. In a 1919 article in the *Baptist Standard*, for instance, he exulted in the British victory over the Ottomans, declaring "we are free of Turkey's

despotism" and noting "there is no comparison between England and Turkey."[27] Of course, it took no great political agenda for a previously-conscripted Arab Baptist to express favor for the English over the Turks to Americans in 1919.

Mosa was anti-Zionist, though he tended to phrase his concerns in terms of practical consequence for the mission. In 1920, he warned the FMB that the influx of Jews was sending rents higher and would make it more difficult for Baptists to lease property. The following year he cautioned that the Zionists were likely to open a boarding school in Nazareth. "Of course the people hate it," he noted, but they would attend if it was the only school in town.[28] Though his letter emphasized the practical implications of Zionism, it could be argued that it represented a more fundamental opposition to the movement, that the matter at hand was not simply education but having *their* kind of education, on the one hand Baptist and on the other Arab. In truth, however, Mosa seems to have been using the Zionist threat strictly to scare the Foreign Mission Board into action—there was no Zionist presence in Nazareth at the time.

The only time he wrote outright negatively of the Zionists was in a 1922 article in the Baptist Standard. He noted that the majority of "these new Jews" were "irreligious people" and "immoral[,]" adding that "they are very proud, their noses are very high up thinking that they are coming to be kings over the inhabitants."[29] He went on to recount an episode in which he had seen a Zionist Jew spit on an egg that had been decorated with an image of Christ:

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[27] Shukri Mosa, "A Letter From Nazareth," 31.
[28] S. Mosa to J.F. Love, 27 September 27 1921, Box 255, Folder 31, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[29] S. Mosa, "My Trip Through Galilee," *Baptist Standard* (July 22, 1922), 6.

> I don't believe in pictures, but it made me angry because he did spit on the picture, he meant to despise my God and Saviour. It came to my mind what a hatred this Jew had against Christ and Christianity. Such deeds they do make the people hate them. Yes, they are hated by all the inhabitants, even the ancient Jews themselves. They are more Bolshevist than Jew.[30]

Shukri's comments not only emphasized the irreligion of the Zionists but drew a negative contrast between the more aggressive "new Jews" and the more pleasant "ancient Jews" of Palestine—a common Palestinian Arab criticism of the movement as a foreign imposition. The recollections of the Mosas' children, as relayed in Jean Said Makdisi's *Teta, Grandmother, and Me*, likewise suggest that Shukri held broader political concerns over the Zionists. Still, he never seems to have translated these concerns into outright political advocacy—whether through support for Faisal's stillborn Arab kingdom or the nascent Palestinian nationalist movement (which, under Hajj Amin al-Husseini, was heavily Islamic from the beginning, anyway).[31] If Mosa saw any good in the Muslim-Christian committees that sprouted in the post-war years or in the Supreme Arab Council, he never made it clear to

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[30] *Ibid*., 6.

[31] Many collective identities were competing for Palestinian minds and hearts at the time. The development of a distinctively Palestinian national identity, according to Baruch Kimmerling, did not really occur until after the failure of Faisal to establish his greater Syrian kingdom. Baruch Kimmerling, "The Formation of Palestinian Collective Identities: The Ottoman and Mandatory Periods," *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no. 2 (2000): 48–81; on the place of Arab Christians within the nascent Palestinian national movement, see Daphne Tsimhoni, "The Arab Christians and the Palestinian Arab National Movement During the Formative Stage," *The Palestinians and the Middle East Conflict,* ed. G. Ben-Dor (Ramat Gan: Turtledove, 1978): 73-98; see also Noah Haiduc-Dale, *Arab Christians in British Mandate Palestine: Communalism and Nationalism, 1917-1948* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013); for more on the place of Arab Christians within Palestinian Arab Society, see Anthony O'Mahoney, "Palestinian Christians: Religion, Politics, and Society, c. 1800-1948," *Palestinian Christians*, ed. O'Mahoney (London: Melisende, 1999), 9-55.

Baptists.[32] It must be remembered, though, that Mosa was an outsider even within the Christian community of Nazareth, which was overwhelmingly Orthodox and Melkite, in a region in which communal identity was inextricable from religion.[33] Mosa was not only a Protestant, but a peculiar, unfamiliar type of Protestant lacking the political heft and social standing of the Syrian Presbyterians or the Jerusalem Anglicans. "I cannot forget how lonely I felt most of the time[,]" recalled their daughter, Hilda, "People found us very strange in Nazareth."[34] In an age when many Arab Christians were seeking to transcend their religion in pursuit of new national identities and political horizons, Shukri had staked his own identity on being first and foremost a Baptist.[35] He was to Nazarenes *al-qassis*—"the minister."

Louis Hanna's political perspective is essentially impossible to recover. Despite his importance to the mission itself, he barely makes a dent in the historical record. *Home and Foreign Fields* only published two articles by Hanna over the course of his two stints in Palestine (his American wife, Velora, published three). Only a fraction of his correspondence survives. By the time Hanna took over the Nazareth church in 1930, the foreign missionaries were by and large the voices of

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[32] Nazareth did not have an organized Muslim-Christian association, but Muslim and Christian communal leaders did at times unite against the Zionist movement. In 1920, the heads of both religious communities submitted a shared protest letter to the military governor. Haiduc-Dale, *Arab Christians in British Mandate Palestine*, 42-43.

[33] Said-Makdisi, *Teta*, 220.

[34] Quoted in *ibid*., 250. This does seem to have changed over time, as the mission came to be permanent fixture in Nazareth. Even as they stood out, the Mosas eventually came to be seen as respected members of the Nazareth community. *Ibid*., 229-230, 267.

[35] Chapters 14 and 15 of *ibid*. give an insightful depiction how the Mosa's faith set them apart from the Nazareth community in a variety of ways. According to their children, it was Munira who took the lead in shaping a Protestant lifestyle that stood against traditional local practices.

the mission. Even more than his uncle, Hanna kept his few writings focused on the mission and its needs. His only *Home and Foreign Fields* article from his tenure as pastor of the Nazareth church—"There He Could Do No Mighty Work Because of their Unbelief" from 1932—offered an overview of the mission's history and current work while pleading for more funding, especially for the creation of a school. Indeed, the only explicitly political statement I could find was in the a 1937 *Baptist Standard* article by T.C. Gardner (mentioned in the previous chapter) detailing the author's trip to Palestine. Writing just after the publication of the Peel Commission's report advocating partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab territory, Gardner included a quote from Hanna, whom he cited as someone who "knows Palestine and Syria a little better than any one that I have talked with."[36] "There are 1,300,000 people living in Palestine—900,000 Arabs and 400,000 Jews," he quoted Hanna as saying, "Both the Arabs and the Jews are against the division of the territory one hundred per cent strong."[37] The specifics of Hanna's own position were left out.

Beyond explicitly political statements, both Mosa and Hanna did participate in discourse relevant to the burgeoning conflict. In his first article in the *Baptist Standard*, "A Trip to Samaria" from 1912, Shukri described with admiration the fertility of the Jezreel Valley. "I believe it is the richest soil I ever saw in my life," he noted, "The people plant all things they like in it. It was spotted and striped with different colors. The barley fields are white, ready for reaping, as the Lord said in

[36] Gardner, "At Nazareth July 21, 1937," *Baptist Standard* (September 16, 1937), Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[37] *Ibid*.

John 4."[38] Within the immediate context of the article, this passage was an attempt to both emphasize the biblical history of the mission field and make the evangelistic case that the locals were ready for the Baptist gospel (John 4, which Mosa cites, is a parable concerning evangelism). Within the broader context of the unfolding Zionist-Arab conflict, it offered a counterpoint to the Zionist argument (shared by most Baptists) that the land had suffered from agricultural neglect for centuries and that the Zionists were restoring it to the fertility of the biblical era.

Also sprinkled into Mosa and Hanna's articles and letters were criticisms of Arab life and culture rooted in a mix of personal experience and American Protestant assumptions about religion, gender, and culture. They shared with their American counterparts a Protestant distaste for the dominant Orthodox and Catholic Christianities, though they were often more temperate in their critiques. In a 1924 article, Mosa described giving the gospel to the "nominal Christians" of Cana who told Mosa they were "driven as animals by the priests[.]"[39] Hanna likewise referred to the Christians of Cana as being "tightly held in their Catholic chains" in a 1932 article.[40] The Mosas and the Hannas were both especially concerned with the status of Arab women. As described in her granddaughter's memoir, *Teta, Mother, and Me*, transgressing local gender norms was a central feature of Munira Mosa's identity as a Protestant woman. She was educated. She did not cover her face in public. She favored simple clothing over the oft-elaborate Palestinian female dress and considered herself liberated from the traditions and superstitions that bound

[38] S. Mosa, "A Trip to Samaria," *Baptist Standard* (August 22, 1912), 6.
[39] S. Mosa, "The Near East Mission at Nazareth, Palestine." *Baptist Standard* (November 20, 1924), 10.
[40] L. Hanna, "There He Could Do No Mighty Work Because of Their Unbelief," 14.

Arab women. For the foreign missionaries and Velora, her American niece-in-law, Munira was a model of Protestantism's potential in the Levant. Indeed, Velora devoted a chapter of the 1937 mission study manual, *Questing in Galilee*, to Munira's life story, hailing her as "an inspiration, a counselor, and the mother of us all."[41] Most of all, Munira stood in contrast to the unconverted women of Nazareth. Describing the attendees of the women's group, Louis noted "the majority are entirely illiterate, old, superstitious, and blinded by an abundance of tradition[…] They are treated like animals by their husbands, the lords of the households."[42] In a 1934 article, Velora Hanna described with horror the engagement of the Hannas' fourteen-year-old maidservant, Fatmeh. "She cried bitterly about it," Velora noted of the girl, "but of course her father's word is law. He and the bridegroom's father arranged the entire affair, including the price the father is to receive for the girl."[43] Her concluding paragraph, which elided western gender ideals and Protestantism, is worth quoting in full:

> Such is the life of the peasant Moslem girl in Palestine! And this is only one small thing of all the unpleasant, tragic, heart-breaking experiences that enter into a Moslem girl's life—in fact, that extend from her babyhood to her grave. What will free Fatmeh, and the many thousands like her in Palestine, form such a life? Nothing but true Christianity![44]

Though Velora was of course from Texas, the quoted passage explained well the attitudes shared by her husband and embodied by Munira Mosa.

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[41] V. Hanna, "Questing in Galilee," *Questing in Galilee* (Richmond: Foreign Mission Board, 1937), 45.
[42] L. Hanna, "There He Could Do No Mighty Work Because of Their Unbelief," 15.
[43] V. Hanna, "The Moslem Peasant Girl," *Home and Foreign Fields* (September 1934), 10.
[44] *Ibid*., 10.

Like nearly all of their writings, such discourse was designed to promote the mission. Neither Shukri Mosa nor the Hannas prioritized making their political concerns known to Baptists. Between the three of them, they only published 12 articles in the *Baptist Standard* (the main outlet of their Texas connections) and *Home and Foreign Fields* (the main outlet of their FMB connections) between 1911 and 1938. Of these 12 articles, only *one* dealt directly with Zionism—Mosa's 1922 article. While this may seem surprising, it is important to keep in mind that even if Mosa or Hanna had been more politically minded, they would have seen little utility in airing their views to distant Baptists. The Southern Baptists were exceedingly weak in the region. They had no connection to the ruling power. The notion that cultivating a pro-Arab constituency in Texas (or the broader South) might ever be useful would have been essentially unthinkable. It is also likely that, in contrast to figures like Jacob Gartenhaus or W.O. Carver (examined in later chapters), Mosa and Hanna did not conceive of the Baptist journals as a proper venue for political statements. Even if they had, their writings were mere drops in a bucket of articles about the Near East Mission within an ocean of Baptist periodicals. As mentioned above, the foreign missionaries were the mission's primary spokespeople from 1923 onward. Between 1923 and 1942 (when the foreign missionaries left the field), *Home and Foreign Fields* published 28 articles from Near East mission workers, itself a small number (about 1.5 articles per *year*). Among those 28, only one was written by Louis Hanna (Mosa never published a full article in *Home and Foreign Fields*). In contrast, Jacob Gartenhaus, the SBC's domestic missionary to the Jews

(and a supporter of Zionism), published over 30 articles in the journal over the same time period.

It was possible, of course, that the Mosas' and Hannas' longstanding Baptist acquaintances and visitors to the mission could have developed a sense of fellow-feeling that would translate into political concern for the Arabs. There is circumstantial evidence for this happening in one instance. Z.T. Cody, who traveled to the region in 1920 to investigate post-war conditions for the Foreign Mission Board, claimed he had initially been supportive of Zionism but had "been learning some other new things since I came here[.]"[45] Whether it was Mosa who had taught him these "other new things", though, was left unmentioned. I have found no record of Truett or Scarborough or any other of the Nazarenes' Baptist allies even mentioning the potential consequences of Zionist settlement on the Arabs. With one exception, accounts from the handful of Baptist travelers who visited Nazareth only emphasize the material needs of the mission. That single exception, T.C. Gardner's aforementioned 1937 article that quoted Louis Hanna on partition, only claimed that partition would not work—it did not stake out a position on the conflict. Even those travelers who did comment on the expanding Zionist presence drew no connection—positive or negative—between Zionist settlements and the Arab Baptists of Nazareth.

[45] Cody, "Zionism," 8.

Conclusion

Arab Southern Baptists never developed a political voice in the vein of the Presbyterians or Congregationalists in the Mandate Era. The concerns of the Mosas were more local—the financial security and education of their family, the building of a Baptist community in Nazareth, the expansion of their mission, and the creation of a Baptist school. Louis Hanna, the Elisha to Shukri's Elijah, wanted the same. These were the priorities that Arab Baptists made known to their denominational superiors, Texas allies, and the broader Baptist faithful. These were the priorities that Stateside Baptists acted upon. While the Nazareth mission would endure its share of struggles over the next several decades, it is a testament to the Mosas' vision that a Baptist community has survived and grown in Nazareth—and that the Nazareth Baptist School has become a pillar of the "the Lord's home city."

Chapter Four

Missionaries

On June 8, 1921, a recent Episcopalian convert to Southern Baptism named E.C. Miller addressed the Foreign Mission Board at Richmond. The title of his address, later published in a pamphlet, made clear the occasion of his speaking: "The proposal to establish the First Baptist Church at Jerusalem, together with a College, a Hospital and an Orphan Asylum."[1] Though Miller had spent twenty-five years as an Episcopalian and had lived most of his life in New York City, he had been born in the South to Southern Baptist parents. Indeed, it was Miller's father, Thomas, who had been inspired in 1873 to give an initial gold dollar to the Foreign Mission Board for the eventual establishment of a Baptist church at Jerusalem. The Board had dutifully opened an account, which by 1890 held $6.20.[2] Over three decades later, E.C. Miller appeared with $15,000 dollars to add. Having already taken over financial responsibilities for Shukri Mosa's mission in Nazareth, the Board was eager to add a foreign missionary in Jerusalem that could oversee an expansion of the work. Within months it sent its first appointee, W.A. Hamlett, to Palestine.

Though Shukri and Munira Mosa had effectively built the Southern Baptist mission in Palestine on their own, as "native workers" they were considered subordinate to the handful of American missionaries who began to arrive in 1921. From the moment the Foreign Mission Board took over responsibility for Mosa's

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[1] E.C. Miller, "The Establishment of The First Baptist Church, College, Hospital, and Orphan Asylum at Jerusalem" (Richmond: Foreign Mission Board, June 8, 1921), Box 110, Folder 37, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[2] H.A. Tupper, "First Baptist Church in Jerusalem," *Foreign Mission Journal* 22, no. 1 (August, 1890), 6-10.

mission in 1919, the plan had been to send an American superintendent to oversee the ongoing missions at Nazareth, Rasheya, and Kfarmichky, and to expand the work into other Levantine cities.[3] With the arrival of American missionaries throughout the 1920s, Mosa's voice began to be crowded out in SBC circles. The publication of his articles in SBC periodicals slowed as the American missionaries began writing home. His letters to SBC personnel tapered off as he was increasingly encouraged to communicate with the Foreign Mission Board and other SBC bodies through the superintendent.

By the mid-1920s, American missionaries had become the primary representatives of the Southern Baptist mission in Palestine as well as some of the SBC's foremost interpreters of events in the region.[4] They communicated their perspectives to Baptists back home through articles in state Baptist periodicals and *Home and Foreign Fields* (the SBC's missionary digest), circular letters petitioning support for the mission, informational pamphlets, full-length books, and personal letters. Also important was the deputation work missionaries performed while on furlough—visiting churches, associational meetings, and conventions in order to drum up interest and support for the Foreign Mission Board's initiatives. Deputation entailed, too, describing the progress of the mission and informing audiences about the ever-shifting state of affairs in the region. Another channel of communication

[3] Like the Nazareth mission, the Rasheya and Kfarmichky missions had been started independently and only later were supported by the SBC.
[4] For an historical overview of the first decades of the mission, see the chapter "Baptists in Nazareth" in Rebecca Rowden, *Baptists in Israel: The Letters of Paul and Marjorie Rowden, 1952-1957* (Nashville: Fields, 2010).

between the missionaries and the wider Southern Baptist laity, of course, was direct interaction with Baptist pilgrims to the Holy Land.

The missionaries formed no single approach to the Palestine question in the Mandate Era. Each came with his or her own preconceptions—about Jews, about Arabs, about the land itself—and each had his or her own experiences that in some cases challenged those preconceptions and in others reinforced them. Even among the several missionaries who professed premillennial beliefs and understood the return of Jews to Palestine as part of God's plan for history, there was no agreement over whether Zionism as it existed was part of that plan. What was consistent—if expected—about the approaches of missionaries to the Palestine question, is that their interpretation of the question itself was inextricable from the priorities, successes, and failures of the mission.

The Failure – Dr. W.A. Hamlett

The FMB's first attempt to place an American in Palestine was nearly a disaster. In 1921 the Board selected Dr. W.A. Hamlett of Austin, Texas, as its first Superintendent of the Near East Mission. Educated at Baylor, Hamlett had pastored several churches in Oklahoma and Texas prior to his appointment. His primary qualification, it seems, was that he had been to Palestine once before. That 1910 trip, taken with his ten-year old son, had resulted in his 1913 travel narrative, *Travels of a Father and Son*, which had been publicized and reviewed favorably in state Baptist periodicals. As is clear from the work, Hamlett brought an aggressive colonial mentality to the Levant. In an extended paean to imperial Britain he averred

"'twere better to resort to the sword that an entrance might be effected for the Bible and for education, than never have them enter at all. Suppose a few thousand natives are slain in their fanatical opposition to the coming of modern ideas. Better kill them and enlighten the remaining millions than have a nation lie in darkness forever." "The enlightened portion of the earth," he added, "is responsible for the benighted."[5] A Klansman, Hamlett was a firm believer in Anglo-Saxon superiority and had a low opinion of Arabs—Christian or Muslim. His thoughts on Jews mixed racial antisemitism, traditional Christian anti-Judaism, and premillennial expectations of future glory through conversion and restoration. Hamlett wore his prejudices on his robesleeves.

If, in the era of decolonization, Western missionaries have often come to be seen as aggressive, insensitive, racist, imperial destroyers of native cultures—something Hamlett, in all honesty, aspired to—Hamlett's failures as a missionary perhaps show the degree to which a measure of tact, sensitivity, and genuine interest in the well-being of others was required to be a success. Hamlett, with all his certainties, was almost a total disaster as a missionary. Appointed in June of 1921, Hamlett and his family arrived in Palestine in September. His task was to oversee the "native workers" already there and establish a new mission station at Jerusalem, which the FMB hoped would serve as a base of operations in the region. Hamlett lasted slightly over a month. Nobody was more upset than Shukri Mosa, who had hoped Hamlett's arrival would signal a long-anticipated expansion of the work. Local Baptists had "heard him talking and assuring them of having a fine church

[5] Hamlett, *Travels of a Father and Son*, 71.

building, schools, & their buildings etc. & etc."[6] When Hamlett bolted after making these promises, "they now began to doubt our promises and suspect our talks, even the enemies of the work got a very good chance to speak bad on us and you [Secretary Love and the FMB]."[7]

Because religion was still a primary marker of identity in the Arab world, conversion—especially conversion to a tiny minority sect—had profound social implications. Beyond religious conviction, it required a certain level of confidence in the missionary churches. Unsupported converts could easily become deracinated. The reputation—the honor—of a church was thus important in winning and sustaining converts. When Hamlett made his flurry of promises and quickly departed, Baptist honor suffered and the mission itself was threatened. Mosa understood this and worked quickly on the Board to send another missionary to enlarge the work and "redeem our great Baptist name[.]"[8] In April of the following year, Secretary Love wrote Mosa, "I do not doubt that you are embarrassed and discouraged in your work and I sympathize with you in this. The Foreign Mission Board in a like manner is embarrassed."[9]

Hamlett continued to harm the cause upon his return to the States. Likely to succor his vanity, he undertook a justification tour of Texas churches explaining why mission work in Palestine was currently impossible.[10] He also published several hysterical articles in the *Baptist Standard* explaining away his failure. As

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[6] S. Mosa to Love, 14 January 1922 Box 255, Folder 31, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[7] S. Mosa to Love, 14 January 1922, Box 255, Folder 31 IMB Minutes and Reports.
[8] *Ibid*.
[9] Love to S. Mosa, 13 April 1922, Box 255, Folder 31, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[10] *Ibid*.

Love expressed to Mosa, "These articles have added to our embarrassment and have caused many of our people to lose enthusiasm for the work in Palestine."[11] In February of 1922 Hamlett asserted that a state of war still technically existed between Britain and Turkey and that recent protests in Egypt signaled trouble in Palestine: "The sons of Esau stand together, whether they are in Egypt, in Palestine, in Arabia, in trans-Jordania, in Syria, or in Mesopotamia[…]Riots in Egypt mean a riotous frame of mind in Syria, or Palestine, or wherever that race lives in numbers."[12] He proceeded to describe the political deadlock between Turkey, England, the Zionists, and the Muslims (no reference is made to Arab Christians): "In view of this, any new venture in that ravished land is not only insecure, but will also fail to obtain legalized protection to title to any property that might be purchased under the present hazard."[13] Beyond political instability and the tenuity of property rights, the obstinate mental attitudes of Jews and Arabs precluded "constructive mission work, as no such work can flourish among people whose minds are at war and whose bodies engage in daily riots somewhere in the country."[14]

It is likely that because Hamlett had a personal stake in depicting the emerging Zionist-Arab conflict as intractable, he did not overtly pick sides or anticipate a resolution. On balance, however, he does seem to have favored Arab claims to the land. Paraphrasing Arab arguments, Hamlett noted, "The Arab asserts his rights. For many centuries he has been there. It is truly the land of his fathers.

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[11] *Ibid*.
[12] Hamlett, "The Palestine of Today," *Baptist Standard* (February 16, 1922) 10.
[13] *Ibid*., 15.
[14] Hamlett, "The Palestine of Today," *Baptist Standard* (February 23, 1922), 38.

Why should his homeland be peremptorily doled out by one foreigner, an Englishman over in London, or by anyone else?[…]Thus talks the Arab, and he makes his talk sound convincing."[15] His depiction of the Zionist case was much less sympathetic. The Zionists themselves were "bolshevistic in tendency and arrogant in manner[.]"[16] The Zionist argument had been to point to their "racial connection to the banking interests of the earth" to pressure the British into issuing the Balfour Declaration.[17] Hamlett's negative attitude towards Zionism might be surprising, given that he was a known premillennialist and did anticipate the restoration of the Jews to Palestine in the Eschaton.[18] Hamlett, though, did not associate the Zionist movement with prophecy.[19] His prophetic timeline required mass conversion prior to restoration. In his 1913 travelogue he had asserted, "When they turn to God and to God's Christ, then God will turn to them and give them their land and their Temple."[20] The Zionists, as seculars (*Bolshevistic* seculars, no less), had no claim on God's promises.

Hamlett's flurry of writings and speeches slowed by the spring of 1922. His last major thrust was an apologia published in the March 2 *Baptist Standard* that cited a litany of authorities who agreed with him that mission work was impossible:

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[15] *Ibid*., 38.
[16] Hamlett, "The Palestine of Today," (February 16, 1922), 11.
[17] Hamlett, "The Palestine of Today," (February 23, 1922), 38.
[18] Hamlett, *The Book of Revelation* (Louisville: Mordecai Ham, n.d.); he is identified as a premillennialist by M.E. Dodd in *Jesus Is Coming to Earth Again*, 59-63.
[19] He did, however, resurface in the 1940s, writing for the *Florida Baptist Witness*. By then he was arguing on premillennialist terms for Zionism. See Hamlett, "Story of Two Brothers," *Florida Baptist Witness* (May 20, 1948), 4-5, and "The Palestine Question," *Florida Baptist Witness* (May 27, 1948), 3.
[20] Hamlett, *Travels of a Father and Son*, 263.

> "...our Consul advised me against undertaking what would transpire to be a very unwise thing, as well as an inevitable failure because of its impossibility. He knew. So did the British army officers know. So does anyone know who will go over there and study the situation intensely, instead of hurrying through the country with some tourist party."[21]

The Board and Mosa, it seems, did not "know." As soon as Hamlett had returned stateside in October, 1921, they had begun planning to replace him. After his vindication tour, Hamlett himself moved on. He deepened his involvement with the Ku Klux Klan, first in Texas and then in Atlanta, where he became the editor of the *Kourier*.[22] This role was likely a better fit.

Establishment – 1929 - 1942

Appointed in 1922, the replacements were not able to arrive until March of 1923. The Board chose two couples to serve as its next missionaries to Palestine—Fred and Ruth Pearson and James Washington (J. Wash) and Mattie Watts. Nearly thirty years old at the time of his appointment, Fred Pearson had grown up on a farm in Moulton, Alabama, and attended Howard College. After serving briefly as a chaplain in the Army, he had moved on to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, where he earned a Th.M. degree in 1921. It was while working towards his Th.D. that Pearson, who had initially desired to be a missionary in China, answered the Board's call to go to Palestine. His wife, Ruth Casey Pearson, had been born in Albertville, Alabama. She, too, had attended Howard College.

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[21] Hamlett, "Conditions in Palestine," *Baptist Standard* (March 2, 1922), 7.
[22] Hamlett spent the latter half of 1922 defending the Klan in Amarillo: Mika Smith, "Hooded Crusaders: The Ku Klux Klan in the Panhandle and South Plains, 1921-1925," (master's thesis, Texas Tech University, 2008), 18.

After graduating in 1921, she worked briefly as a high school teacher before becoming engaged to Fred and agreeing to go to Palestine. Mattie Watts (born Mattie Leida Reid) had been born and raised in Spartanburg, South Carolina. She had attended Limestone College in Gaffney, SC, where she earned both a Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts degree. After a brief tenure as a teacher, she had entered the Woman's Missionary Union Training School at Louisville, where she decided that she wanted to be a foreign missionary. In the summer of 1920, she married J. Wash Watts of Laurens, SC. Like Fred Pearson, Watts had been raised on a farm and educated at Baptist schools. He had earned a degree from Furman University in 1913 before moving on to seminary at Louisville, where he earned his Th.M. degree. Like Pearson, too, he had originally hoped to be assigned to China, but had been persuaded by the Board's call for new missionaries to Palestine.[23] The two couples arrived on March 17, 1923.[24]

The plan was to spend several months surveying the field, then offer recommendations to the Board as to the next step. The hope, both of the Board and the missionaries, was to begin a work at Jerusalem in accordance with E.C. Miller's wishes. Upon arriving in the holy city, though, Watts and Pearson encountered resistance from the established missions. "The belief that we are not needed seems to be unanimous," wrote Watts to Love, "And we have heard from representatives

[23] J. Wash Watts, "China's Appeal to Me," *Home and Foreign Fields* (October 1920), 15.
[24] Some biographical information taken from "Brief Biographies of Our Newest Missionaries," *Home and Foreign Fields* (April 1923), 22; also, J. Wash Watts's application can be found in Box 62, Folder 5, IMB, Missionary Correspondence Files, SBHLA; the Pearsons' can be found in Box 44, Folder 4, IMB, Missionary Correspondence Files, SBHLA.

of leading missions here these extreme expressions, 'The feverish desire of Southern Baptists to get into Jerusalem', and, 'It would really be wickedness and a criminal thing to increase the sects in Jerusalem.'"[25] He noted that the missionaries of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity Amongst the Jews, an Anglican outfit, and the Christian and Missionary Alliance had been helpful, though they did not feel the Baptists should get into Jerusalem unless they were planning a large work—another boutique mission built "to satisfy a sentimental desire" would not be worthwhile.[26] After spending the summer surveying the area and consulting with Mosa, Watts and Pearson recommended to the Board that they open work in Haifa the following year and try to develop a school. Sentimental desires, though, were powerful forces. Secretary Love wrote Watts that the Board had to "look upon the Palestine work both from the viewpoint of the work itself on the field and the interest in the work at home[…] Jerusalem is so fixed in the minds of Americans as the center and head of things Palestinian that it has a tremendous appeal for those who are asked to support a program for Palestine." The Haifa plan, he noted, "will not strongly appeal to the Board."[27] The missionaries' formal recommendation to the Board straddled the fence, calling for aggressive work in the north, especially Haifa, aimed at Muslims and "nominal Christians" and a more cautious approach in Jerusalem aimed at Jews.[28]

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[25] J.W. Watts to Love, 29 March 1923, Box 62, Folder 5, IMB Missionary Correspondence.
[26] *Ibid*.
[27] Love to J.W. Watts, 1 October 1923, Box 62, Folder 5, IMB Missionary Correspondence.
[28] "Recommendations Concerning the Near East Mission," Box 44, Folder 4, IMB Missionary Correspondence.

The plans, though, would again be waylaid. On September 27, 1923, around the same time the missionaries were negotiating with the Board, Ruth Pearson suffered a "complete nervous collapse" and had to be removed from Palestine immediately (Watts intimated to Ray the problem was "simply mental").[29] Upon the Pearsons' return to the U.S., Fred undertook deputation work in anticipating of eventually returning to the field. He never did, though, and instead the Pearsons resigned from the FMB the following year. While Fred Pearson would continue to write and speak on Palestine over the years, the work itself fell to the Wattses.

J. Wash Watts's greatest asset as mission head was that he trusted the so-called "native workers." At a time when the FMB worried that Shukri Mosa was exceeding his subordinate position and Secretary Ray was questioning Mosa's abilities as a leader, Watts had his back.[30] He frequently seconded Mosa's longstanding requests—for a church building, for a school, for an education for his son—and bought into his plan to use Nazareth as a base from which to reach out to smaller Galilean villages. He supported Mosa's work but did not interfere. When Mosa's nephew, Louis Hanna, arrived in the field, Watts similarly gave him free rein in working amongst Arab-speakers in Jerusalem. During his brief time in Jerusalem (Hanna shortly returned to the U.S. to complete his education), Hanna led

[29] J.W. Watts to Love, 6 October 1923, Box 62 Folder 5, IMB Missionary Correspondence; J.W. Watts to Ray, 17 October 1923, Box 62, Folder 5, IMB Missionary Correspondence; Pearson to Love, 19 October 1923, Box 44, Folder 4, IMB Missionary Correspondence; Pearson to Love, 19 November 1923, Box 44, Folder 4, IMB Missionary Correspondence.
[30] Love to J.W. Watts, 25 January 1924, Box 62, Folder 5, IMB Missionary Correspondence; Ray to Pearson, 9 June 1923, Box 44, Folder 4, IMB Missionary Correspondence.

English, Arabic, and Bible classes for young men in the city. In 1924, Watts reported the classes had about 30 regular attendees.

Watts took a similarly light-handed approach in overseeing efforts among Jews. In the summer of 1923 he and Pearson had recruited a converted Jew named Chaim Volkovitch (he later took the Hebrew name Negby) to work in Jerusalem. Watts allowed Volkovitch to basically function independently. Though this loose approach sometimes left Watts vulnerable to the convert's exaggerations—by February of 1924 Volkovitch claimed he had 200 young Jews interested in the work and that he might be able to win famed Revisionist Zionist and scholar Dr. Joseph Klausner to Christ—it did help Volkovitch to move more secretly and freely in Jewish Jerusalem.[31] By the summer of 1924, he had a solid community of ten. Watts and Volkovitch hoped these ten might be the vanguard in a type of Hebrew Christian movement, "a movement to lead Jews to Christ while maintaining their interest in their own people as a nation, one in which a Jew could be a nationalist and have religious freedom at the same time."[32] A movement, though, was not in the offing, as Volkovitch was soon outed among Jerusalem Jews as a *meshummad* (convert) and missionary. He was physically threatened and socially and economically isolated. His daughters faced ridicule at their Jewish school. Only Boris Schatz, famed founder of the Bezalel School of Arts and friend to Volkovitch,

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[31] J.W. Watts to Love, 9 February 1924, Box 62, Folder 5, IMB Missionary Correspondence. Klausner drew the interest of Christian missionaries and Hebrew Christians for the publication of his work *Jesus of Nazareth: His Life, Times, and Teaching*, trans. Herbert Danby (New York: MacMillan, 1925), which sought to contextualize Jesus as a Second Temple-era Jew.

[32] J.W. Watts to Love, 9 September 1924, Box 62, Folder 5, IMB Missionary Correspondence.; Watts described this group to Baptist readers in "Stirrings of the Spirit in Palestine," *Home and Foreign Fields* (June 1924), 9.

stood by the convert, threatening to remove his own daughter from the school if the harassment did not cease.[33] Though Volkovitch's exposure did damage his evangelistic efforts and standing in the community, by 1927 Watts could report that the convert was reestablishing contact with "many of the old friends who deserted him when first his missionary activity became known." Watts and Volkovitch, of course, would fall far short of their dream of igniting a widespread Hebrew Christian-style movement among the Zionists. Still, the convert's efforts did help to create a small network of Baptist sympathizers that would maintain a presence—if only a pinky toehold—in Jewish Palestine throughout the remainder of the Mandate period. Watts also oversaw the hiring of convert Elsie Clor, a self-professed Hebrew Christian, in 1927. Clor was an experienced missionary who had worked in Jewish missions and settlement houses in Chicago and Boston before relocating to Jerusalem with the Christian and Missionary Alliance. By the time the FMB hired her in 1927, she had already spent five years running a girls' club in Jerusalem. Though she would be beset by health problems and personality clashes with her coworkers over the next decade and a half, Clor nonetheless became a pillar of the Near East Mission. Her leadership was especially crucial in maintaining the Jerusalem mission after the departure of the Wattses in 1928.

Both Fred Pearson and J. Wash Watts were enthusiastic for the Zionist movement and development of the Yishuv. They were cautious, though, about giving Zionism a prophetic interpretation outright. "Aside from any interpretation of prophetical teachings as to the future of the Jews in Palestine, concerning which we

[33] J.W. Watts to Love, 25 November 1924, Box 62, Folder 5, IMB Missionary Correspondence.

doubtless have very divergent views," Pearson wrote in his 1923 report to the FMB, "it seems but reasonable to think that the Jews are bound to increase here both in numbers and influence."[34] Near the end of the same report, Pearson quoted some nigh-millenarian remarks made by British High Commissioner for Palestine Herbert Samuel (himself a Jewish supporter of Zionism) portending that "some mysterious chemistry" between England, Palestine, and the Jewish people "will yet create a spiritual product of supreme value to mankind."[35] Caught up in Samuel's own fervor, Pearson asked of the Board, "Shall we strive, then, to introduce our element – not our's either, but one we trust is the Lord's, Christianity as we understand it – into the High Commissioner's formula?[…] Shall we give ourselves into His hands for bringing of His people into His will for them, the evolving of a 'spiritual product of supreme value to mankind.'?"[36] Excitement for the mission and excitement for the Zionist movement were thus intertwined in the minds of the missionaries. They could not help but be carried away by enthusiasm for Zionist progress.

Part of this enthusiasm was rooted in the missionaries' hope that the Zionist emphasis on national identity (rather than religious) would allay Jewish resistance to conversion. In a 1922 article, "Shall Palestine Become a Jewish State?", Watts argued that religion, culture, and language no longer bound Jews together—instead it was "the idea of a holy nation that seems to be the binding tie."[37] Within this idea,

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[34] "Recommendations Concerning the Near East Mission," Box 44, Folder 4, IMB Missionary Correspondence.
[35] *Ibid*.
[36] *Ibid*.
[37] J.W. Watts, "Shall Palestine Become a Jewish State?" *Home and Foreign Fields* (April 1922), 16.

he urged, "even the Christian element may have its part."[38] By this, Watts did not mean "those Christian Jews who have been assimilated by Gentile bodies," but a type of Hebrew Christianity. "This unassimilated group," he asserted, "is the one that may exert the strongest influence in the shaping of a state."[39] In a sense, Watts was offering a Christian analogue to the Zionist principle of *shlilat ha-galut* or *shlilat ha-golah* ("negation of Diaspora").[40] In exalting the national identity and leaving behind the mental habits of Diaspora, he hoped, Jews would also leave behind their aversion to the Gospel.

Another feature of Watts's enthusiasm for the Zionism was the movement's success in bringing a familiar vision of modernity to Palestine. In November, 1926, he wrote an article describing the Zionists' progress in developing the Jezreel Valley:

> As I looked down upon [the Valley], I observed that many places in it are today laying aside the drab garments they have worn through many centuries, great stretches of time that seem to have brought no change at all. And I remembered this question that comes to me rather often now, "Will

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[38] *Ibid*., 16; the idea that the eclipse of a Jewish religious identity by the Zionist national identity presented a missionary opening would be echoed by Jacob Gartenhaus, a Hebrew Christian and the SBC's only domestic missionary to the Jews, in his 1937 *Rebirth of a Nation* (Nashville: Broadman, 1936), 126. The Zionist pioneers, he noted, "are being emptied of all mixed and man-made religions, in order to be more prepared to receive the full blessing of the faith in him, the Unchangeable."

[39] "Recommendations Concerning the Near East Mission," 16.

[40] Gideon Shimoni, *The Zionist Ideology* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1995); Eliezer Schweid, "The Rejection of the Diaspora in Zionist Thought: Two Approaches," *Studies in Zionism* 5, no. 1 (1984), 43-70; Shalom Ratzaby, "The polemic about the 'negation of the Diaspora' in the 1930s and its roots," *Journal of Israeli History* 16, no. 1 (1995), 19-38; for a recent philosophical consideration of the concept, see Nathan Rotenstreich, *Zionism: Past and Present* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), 87-100.

> the Jews remain and succeed?" Then I found myself wishing that every questioner could look upon that scene with me.[41]

Watts was clearly impressed—even inspired—by the Yishuv. "In many places there are remarkable things to see," he wrote, "Jerusalem is spreading out over its surrounding hills. Tel Aviv is spoken of as the Los Angeles of the East."[42] Haifa was soon to become a great harbor. Rail lines were expanding. Swamps were being drained. Watts, though, went further than simply praising Zionist initiative, exclaiming, "How inextricably these scenes are intertwined in Israel's history!" He went on to describe a daydream in which the great and familiar scenes of biblical history unfolded before him as he viewed the landscape. "And I dreamed of chapters in the history of Israel yet to be wrought amid these scenes."[43] Within Watts's dream can be seen how Zionism appealed to American evangelicals even without reference to prophecy—it paired the familiarity of the biblical with the excitement of the modern.

Mattie Watts offered a different vision of Palestine rooted in her office as a female missionary. Women missionaries were understood (by both themselves and the FMB) to have a particular role concerned with women and children. This, in a sense, reflected an extension of domestic ideology into the mission field. Their actual work and, consequently, their writings on the mission evidenced the division of spheres between married men and women. Mattie Watts's published articles focused on the seemingly apolitical matters of family and salvation. In an article

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[41] J.W. Watts, "In the Valley of Jezreel," *Home and Foreign Fields* (November 1926), 12.
[42] *Ibid*., 12.
[43] *Ibid*., 13.

titled "Children and Young People in Palestine," published in a special issue of *Home and Foreign Fields* dedicated to children and youth in the mission field, Watts relayed impressions of what a typical day might yield for a Bedouin, a *fellah*, an Arab Catholic, or a religious Jewish child.[44] Though she treated each child with sympathy, she also emphasized the shared deficiencies of their respective peoples—poverty, violence, superstition, misogyny, and empty ritual—that pointed to their need for Christ.

Two years later, she penned a more overtly political article for *Home and Foreign Fields* that presented an ambiguous view of the effects of secular British modernity on the children of Nazareth.[45] She noted that the "children of the Bedouins—wild fierce and dirty" were "grossly ignorant" and in need of education and correction.[46] While the British had "brought new life, new contacts, new visions of distance and the enchantment of the outside world" through their government schools, this novelty was not all beneficial.[47] The secularity of the government schools was causing the formerly-ignorant children of the Bedouin to question biblical truth. "A new era is beginning among these care-free, ignorant, and fanatical Arabs," she wrote, "Let us pray and work that their last state may not be worse than their first!"[48] In these words, Watts reflected to a greater extent than her husband a religious concern for the arrival of modernity in the region. Only a

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[44] Mattie Watts, "Children and Young People in Palestine," *Home and Foreign Fields* (December 1925), 27.
[45] M. Watts, "'Jesus Loves the Little Children of the World'," *Home and Foreign Fields* (June 1927), 2.
[46] *Ibid*., 2.
[47] *Ibid*., 2.
[48] *Ibid*., 3.

Christian modernity—perhaps a Baptist modernity—could heal the benighted Levant.

By the time the Wattses left the field in 1928, the mission had a defined shape and orientation. There is perhaps no better evidence for this than the fact that the work survived despite the departure of the Wattses and the unexpected death of Shukri Mosa in the same year. By then, it had become clear that the work would have to be divided along national/linguistic lines—as the mission expanded, some missionaries would focus primarily on Arabs and some would focus on Jews. The mission in the Galilee, with the Mosas' work at Nazareth as its center, would focus on Arabs. The Jerusalem mission, after a brief and unsuccessful flirtation with a binational approach, would focus on Jews.

Expansion (1929-1941)

The 1930s witnessed an expansion of the mission into new territories—particularly Haifa—and the reinforcement of the established stations. Roswell and Doreen Owens arrived in 1929 to replace the Wattses, bouncing between Jerusalem and Nazareth before opening the new work in Haifa in 1932. Louis and Velora Hanna (designated as native workers) arrived in 1930 to stanch the hemorrhaging Nazareth congregation. Clor was joined in Jerusalem by Eunice Fenderson, who began as a volunteer in 1931 but was hired by the FMB in 1936. H. Leo Eddleman took over the Jerusalem station in 1936 before briefly relocating to Tel Aviv with his new wife, Sarah, in 1938 and then shifting to the Nazareth station. Kate Gruver joined the Haifa mission that same year. By the end of the decade, the Baptists had strong

missions in Nazareth and Jerusalem, a toehold in Haifa, and were putting out feelers in Tel Aviv.

Even as the mission expanded, though, the missionaries found themselves amidst a conflict that was becoming increasingly insoluble and increasingly violent. August of 1929 witnessed the "Wailing Wall riots," which brought Jews and Arabs into open violent conflict for the first time. In 1936 the Arabs called a general strike that evolved into a revolt that lasted into 1939. The strike and revolt brought on an investigation by the Peel Commission, sent to find potential solutions to the conflict. In 1937 the Commission recommended partitioning the land into a Jewish state and an Arab state, a proposal that failed to satisfy the Arabs and failed to quell the revolt. Fighting only intensified. The British response only grew harsher as martial law was declared, curfews were instituted, and much of the Palestinian Arab leadership was placed under arrest. In 1939, though, exhausted by years of fighting, the Foreign Office of the British Government issued a White Paper reinterpreting their Palestine policy. The Paper effectively walked back the promises of the Balfour Declaration, instituting severe limitations on Jewish immigration and forbidding land sales to Zionist institutions. It was amidst this political and military fray that the Southern Baptist missionaries fought to win souls.

Elsie Clor and Eunice Fenderson

Elsie Clor ran the Jerusalem station, which expanded rapidly over the decade. She was aided by Eunice Fenderson, a missionary nurse that had seen Clor through a bout with influenza in 1929 before joining the mission as a volunteer. By 1933, the

two had organized the Baptist community into a small congregation (13 members), opened a Sunday school, and inaugurated the first Jerusalem Daily Vacation Bible School, which had about 70 students in attendance. Using contributions from the Lottie Moon Offering of the Woman's Missionary Union, Clor had overseen the purchase of a building for a "good will center" and the installation of a playground. Within the next two years the Jerusalem station had a church building and was hosting Sabbath and Sunday schools, boys' and girls' clubs, women's meetings, mid-week services, Bible studies, English classes, and the growing DVBS (which by then had about 130 attendees).[49] In 1936, Clor reported that the Jerusalem station served about 250 people per week.[50] Though the mission did service Jews, Arabs, Armenians, and more, its location in West Jerusalem, combined with Clor and Fenderson's special interest in Jews, resulted in a focus on the city's Jewish population.

Clor was first and foremost a Hebrew Christian—she maintained an ethnic or national Jewish identity within her adopted faith. She was actively involved in the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America and the International Hebrew Christian Alliance and believed Jews had a particular national role within Christianity. Her religious training had also led her to believe that the return of Jews to Palestine and their eventual conversion were important precursors to Christ's return to earth. Fenderson held similar beliefs, having been educated at Moody Bible Institute. Both of the missionaries understood Zionism and the mission within a premillennial

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[49] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1934, 237.
[50] Elsie Clor, "Palestine - In Retrospect and in Prospect," *Home and Foreign Fields* (August 1936), 10.

context. In a 1934 circular letter, Clor noted she had "received many letters this year asking whether we see any visible changes here in the Holy Land, especially in Jerusalem." "Yes!" she responded, noting, "The morning is beginning to dawn for 'bringing back the King,' and the deserts are beginning to 'blossom as the rose.' We are amazed at the great changes in the last ten years, yet it all speaks of his soon appearing and confirms his blessed Word all the more."[51] She published similarly eschatological comments in *Home and Foreign Fields*.[52]

As the conflict between Jews, Arabs, and the British broke out into open warfare during the 1936-1939 Arab revolt, Clor and Fenderson detected early tremors of the final conflict between God and Satan. In a 1939 circular letter, the pair wrote, "It seems to us that the stage is gradually being set for the final conflict which is to take place in this land according to His Word."[53] Clor and Fenderson viewed the local struggles of the mission as part of this conflict. "Not only in this outer conflict is Satan's power evident," the pair wrote, "but we are facing a very serious crisis right here in Jerusalem of the cunning attacks of the enemy. We sound out an urgent call to prayer on our behalf, that we may continue triumphant and victorious until He come. Rejoice for the King will soon appear 1 Thess. 4: 16-18."[54] Clor and Fenderson's inclusion of the passage from 1 Thessalonians was a specific nod to the dispensationalist doctrine of the Rapture. This clear dispensationalism, though, did not point the way to a particular political stance. The

[51] Clor, circular letter, 1934, Box 14, Folder 3, IMB Missionary Correspondence.
[52] Clor, "In Old Jerusalem," *Home and Foreign Fields* (April 1933), 10-11.
[53] Clor and Eunice Fenderson to Ford, February 1939, Box 14, Folder 3, IMB Missionary Correspondence.
[54] *Ibid*.

two did not express views, for instance, on the question of partition. They did not advocate for Zionist positions nor identify with the movement. Politics were immaterial to the two, who believed they were witnessing the world slip slowly into an apocalyptic chaos that necessarily preceded Christ's return. Though both evinced a special concern for the Jews and excitement at their return to Palestine, that concern and excitement almost wholly found expression in evangelism. Indeed, it had been Jewish resistance to the mission, which sometimes turned violent, that had initially caused the two to lament "the cunning attacks of the enemy"—Satan.

Roswell and Doreen Owens

Roswell and Doreen Owens inaugurated the Haifa station in 1932. Roswell, from Omaha, Georgia, had come slowly to missions, spending years as a pharmacist before earning a Th.M. from Southern Seminary in 1927 and entering the field. Doreen, on the other hand, had been born to missionaries in Rosario, Argentina. The pair's first brief stop in Palestine had been Nazareth, where they had noticed the increasing migration of Arabs to the growing port city of Haifa. The Owenses followed the crowd. For two years they held meetings "in any home that was opened to us"—typically single-room apartments on the outskirts of town where they "had flies and smells and illnesses to contend with."[55] By the summer of 1934, though, the new station had grown enough to justify the purchase of a storefront chapel hall downtown that the missionaries called their "upper room."[56] Though the Haifa mission would never grow to the size of the Nazareth or Jerusalem stations,

[55] Doreen Owens to Friends, 1 January 1935, Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[56] *Ibid*.

the Owenses were successful in building a small congregation (12 members by 1937) and training two young Arab pastors—Elias Saleeby, who had been born to an Orthodox family, and Augustine Shirrish, who had been raised as a Melkite—who joined the mission staff part-time.[57]

As spokespeople for the field, Doreen had a larger voice than Roswell. Her two pedagogical childrens' novellas—*The Camel Bell* and *The Village Oven*—were published as part of the Foreign Mission Board's graded mission study series (examined in the chapter "The Graded Mission Study Series"). Roswell contributed to the series as well, though only in a single chapter of *Questing in Galilee*. Beyond that, the Owenses contributed only a handful of articles to Baptist periodicals. Because of their work, the writings primarily focused on Arabs. A 1932 article by Roswell described the "open hostility" of the Greek Orthodox to Baptist efforts in Nazareth.[58] Baptist inquirers were being threatened disownment by their families. Orthodox hecklers were interrupting services. Some had even thrown stones at the mission's Arab workers. Owens's experiences paired well with his Protestant disdain for the Greek Orthodox, which he felt were "about as far from New Testament Christianity as any one could be."[59] The Nazareth clergy was "ignorant, corrupt, sensual"—"swearing, drinking, and other gross sins" meant little to them.[60]

If the Baptist mission was proving divisive among Christians, Owens nonetheless believed it could help bring Arabs, Jews, and the British together in

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[57] As will be seen in the conclusion, Shirrish's son, Anis, would come to be a prominent figure in the SBC. However, he would transliterate his name as Shorrosh.
[58] Roswell Owens, "Proclaiming the 'Good News' in Palestine," *Home and Foreign Fields* (January 1932), 9.
[59] *Ibid*., 9.
[60] *Ibid*., 9.

peace. Later that same year he shared a photograph of two British soldiers posing with two Jewish converts, all of whom had been recently baptized at the Nazareth church. "The membership of the Nazareth Church until the coming of these recent converts was wholly Arabic," he noted while adding, "if we may judge from visible appearances, all were quite happy to welcome these of other races into their fellowship[.]"[61] The acceptance of Jews and Brits into the Nazareth church was evidence that "Christ does break down partitions, override boundaries, and makes us see that down underneath the skin of all men are alike in so far as great eternal needs are concerned."[62] This theme was echoed in Doreen's *The Village Oven*. As the political situation in Palestine deteriorated during the Arab revolt, though, as the missionaries labored under the stresses of military curfews and frequent terror, Doreen came to question the kinds of hopes she and her husband had earlier expressed. "Has the day of our opportunity passed us by?" she wondered as the death toll climbed, "To see the need and yet to feel one's weakness and inability to meet it adequately—it is just about enough to break one's heart."[63] Despite the near-heartbreak, the Owenses remained in Haifa for three more years, only leaving when the outbreak of World War II forced the Foreign Mission Board to recall its workers.

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[61] Roswell Owens, "Of One Blood," *Home and Foreign Fields* (December 1932), 3.
[62] *Ibid*., 3.
[63] D. Owens, "Searchlights in Palestine," *The Commission* (November 1938), 230.

H. Leo and Sarah Fox Eddleman

The Eddlemans' tenure roughly coincided with the Arab revolt. Leo, the son of a Mississippi minister and a graduate of Southern Seminary, was only 23 when he entered the field in February 1936. One year into his appointment he returned stateside to marry Sarah Fox, who had grown up in Arkansas and Kentucky before attending Meredith College and the Woman's Missionary Union School. They came to Palestine as a couple in late 1937. Though Leo was originally brought on to lead the Jerusalem mission and serve as the growing church's pastor, the plan fell apart after repeated clashes with Elsie Clor. Eddleman agreed to continue visiting Jerusalem to serve as pastor on Sundays but refused to be stationed in the city, preferring instead to re-open work in Tel Aviv. Even as the Eddlemans made their home on the coast and excitedly proclaimed their status as the only Christian missionaries in an all-Jewish city, though, the station never succeeded. This was likely the result of bad timing. Soon after the Eddlemans moved to the Jewish city, both the Owenses and Hannas went on furlough. Because of the recent expansion of the Nazareth work, Leo had to run the school while also serving as the pastor of the Jerusalem church. Hailed as the most linguistically gifted of the SBC's missionaries (he had taught himself both Hebrew and Arabic during the tight curfew restrictions of the Arab revolt), Eddleman was never able to lay down stakes in any one locale.

Though Clor's nemesis within the mission, Leo Eddleman, and his wife, Sarah, shared some of her premillennial predilections. While they worked among both Jews and Arabs, their writings and circular correspondence largely focused on

Jews.[64] Leo was both inspired and frustrated by the Zionist movement. He professed belief in the "Zionism of the Old Testament," which held that "the Jews will return to Palestine, some day be a nation again, and look upon him who they have rejected for 2,000 years."[65] He admired the qualities of the Zionists themselves, describing the *halutzim* ("pioneers") as "most courageous," "intelligent and well educated."[66] He admired, too, the "progressiveness and tenacious spirit" that inspired Zionists to erect settlements "on mounds or plains that a few years ago were sandy rocks or fever infested swamps."[67] Eddleman even took inspiration for his own work from the Zionists' devotion and courage in the face of growing Arab violence.

Both Leo and Sarah evinced largely negative attitudes towards Arabs. Leo despised Islam, arguing that it was perhaps "the greatest sore on the body of the human family today."[68] "Its millions of women are subject to slavery," he argued, "Its men and children live in ignorance, confusion and fanaticism." Like all Southern Baptists, he viewed eastern Christians as unconverted nominal Christians. Eddleman, though, did believe that Arabs had positive traits existing in balance with negative ones. Extreme generosity in the home paired with extreme stinginess in the shop. Extreme mercy to infants paired with extreme cruelty to women. Quoting Samuel Zwemer, the leading Christian evangelist of the Muslim world, Eddleman

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[64] The main exceptions to this were his criticisms of "nominal" Christianity.
[65] H. Leo Eddleman and Sarah Eddleman, "From Our Missionaries in Palestine," *The Baptist Record* (September 30, 1937), Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[66] H.L. Eddleman and S. Eddleman to Friend, 1938, Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[67] *Ibid*.
[68] H.L. Eddleman, "The Land of Our Master," *The Commission* (February 1942), 64.

averred, "the Arabs are at one and the same time the best and worst people on the face of the earth."[69] Sarah was able at times to dispassionately report Arab customs. Writing in 1939, she noted that high and middle class Arab Christians dressed like westerners, though the revolt had led many men to adopt the kefiyyeh and women to wear the mandeel. Sarah's experiences during the revolt, though, led her to view unconverted Arab Christians and Muslims as particularly prone to violence. Perhaps writing of attacks against "collaborators" amidst the revolt, she claimed, "It is no uncommon thing to hear or read of the murder of a woman, daughter, or son, because of hatred for the husband or father."[70] Like her husband, she was particularly concerned about the status of Arab women: "Even in the nominally Christian homes, to say nothing of the Moslem homes, it is pitiful. We feel daily the great need for Christ about us."[71]

Like other Baptists, Leo Eddleman frequently contrasted Zionist modernity with Arab primitiveness, at times with prophetic gloss. In a 1941 article he remarked that the land that was once described as "flowing with milk and honey" appeared "to the casual traveler to be poor and neglected[.]"[72] Four and a half centuries of rapacious Turkish tax policies combined with Arab indolence had

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[69] *Ibid*., 65. The influence of Zwemer on American Christian attitudes toward Islam is examined in Thomas Kidd, *American Christians and Islam: Evangelical Culture and Muslims from the Colonial Period to the Age of Terrorism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 58-74.
[70] S. Eddleman, "In Jesus' Boyhood Home," *The Commission* (December 1939), 400.
[71] *Ibid*., 401.
[72] H.L. Eddleman, "The Land of Our Master," *The Commission* (December 1941), 340.

denuded the landscape.[73] The Turks, for instance, had taxed fruit trees. The Arabs—"none too aggressive in the matter of work"—had cut down their trees rather than pay the tax.[74] The Jews, however, "by fertilizing desert areas with potash from the Dead Sea and irrigating from small rivers, have converted great stretches of arid lowlands into veritable gardens."[75] Tying Zionist progress to prophecy, Eddleman noted, "Amos said that these people should return and that they should 'plant vineyards and drink the wine thereof, plant gardens and eat the fruit thereof'[.]"[76] "These people" would not be "plucked up again" from the reborn land.[77]

Eddleman's faith in prophetic "Old Testament" Zionism, though, could only be reconciled with Zionism as it existed if Jews accepted Christ. He noted of the *halutzim*, "these brave souls whose courage inspires us to deeper loyalty to our greater cause, are often without any correct ideas as to the place and purpose of Christ in history, to say nothing of their hearts."[78] In an article commenting on Jewish investment in Palestine, Eddleman averred "the Bible (whose prophecies have never been late for fulfillment) tells us that a great part of what is achieved in

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[73] For a look at the Palestinian economy in the late Ottoman era, including how Ottoman tax policies did indeed harm agricultural productivity, see Fred Gottheil, "Money and Product Flows," *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period*, ed. David Kushner (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute, 1986), 211-230; according to W.J. Stracey, writing in 1880, "Everything is taxed: every fruit-tree, so none now are planted[.]" in "Palestine—As It Is, and As It Might Be," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 12, no. 4 (1880), 241.
[74] H.L. Eddleman, "The Land of Our Master," (December 1941), 340.
[75] *Ibid*., 341.
[76] *Ibid*., 341.
[77] *Ibid*., 341.
[78] H.L. Eddleman and S. Eddleman, 1938, Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.

Palestine by the Jews before they accept Jesus Christ will be destroyed."[79] "What dangerous investments these gifts are in the face of God's word[,]" he added, almost threateningly.[80]

Like Watts and Pearson before him, Eddleman hoped the Zionist movement would open Jews up to evangelism, believing the moment was urgent in both prophetic and practical terms. Alongside his endorsement of "Old Testament" Zionism, Eddleman asserted "there is something strategic about approaching the Jew with the Gospel now."[81] Such high hopes, though, could easily turn to frustration. Especially frustrating was that the Jews Eddleman encountered in the Yishuv viewed Zionism and Christianity as utterly incompatible and evangelism as "an attack on their effort to establish their national home."[82] "They suspect us of wanting them to forsake their nation," he added, "when we want them to become believers in Christ[.]"[83] Such Jews failed to realize "a man can be Jewish by blood and Christian by faith[.]"[84] Because of this, "their attitude toward missions and preaching the Gospel to Jews is not that of a people willing to accept the truth when it is found."[85] Zionism, which Eddleman hoped would provide an opening for the Gospel, was instead proving itself a stumbling block.

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[79] H.L. Eddleman, "Jews Set a High Example in Giving," *Western Recorder*, n.d., Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[80] *Ibid*.
[81] H.L. Eddleman and S. Eddleman, "From Our Missionaries in Palestine," *The Baptist Record* (September 30, 1937), Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[82] *Ibid*.
[83] *Ibid*.
[84] *Ibid*.
[85] H.L. Eddleman and S. Eddleman, 5 February 1938, Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.

The War Years (1941-1949)

In the summer of 1941, as war spread throughout Europe and the Middle East, the Southern Baptist missionaries then remaining in Palestine—the Owenses and Gruver—were advised to leave.[86] By December, the three had returned stateside, joining Clor, Fenderson, the Hannas and the Eddlemans, all of whom had returned earlier on furlough. Only Gruver and Fenderson would later return to the field. Clor, who had battled illness throughout her time in Palestine, died in 1944. The Hannas returned to Texas. While he remained an important spokesperson for the region over the next several decades, Leo Eddleman would not return to the field, instead continuing his education at SBTS before serving as president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and, later, Criswell Bible College in Dallas.

During World War II, Kate Gruver joined Eddleman as a spokesperson for the field in the Baptist press. Gruver shared much of his perspective. She believed the successes of the Zionist movement were the fulfillment of prophecy.[87] She admired the Zionists' modernity. Her description of the development of Haifa interwove these two aspects of her enthusiasm:

> In the midst of this witness to the gradual fulfillment of prophetical Scripture stands the splendid *Technion*, the college of Haifa, where the Jew, young and old, may find classes to meet his every need. It is of special interest to note that one of the most popular courses is one on the prophecies of the Old Testament from a Messianic standpoint.[88]

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[86] It is unclear whether it was the Mandate government or the American consulate that made the request; Gene Newton, "News Flashes," *The Commission* (July 1941), 226.
[87] Kate Ellen Gruver, "A Divine Promise," *The Commission* (September 1940), 243.
[88] *Ibid.*, 243.

Gruver actually went beyond Eddleman in understanding the movement as a solution to the problem of antisemitism. "Tortured, persecuted, deprived of home and life in other countries," she wrote in 1940, Jews were "finding new life, new incentive, new hope in the land of their fathers."[89] At least in her published articles, she evinced a generally sunnier view of Zionism than Eddleman, who could never stray too far from the shadowy fringes of prophecy.

As for Judaism as a religion, Gruver joined Eddleman in the darkness. Indeed, in one article she used her recollections of a blackout to segue into a discussion of the sorry state of religion in Palestine. Orthodox Jews "shut from the eyes of their souls the Light of lights."[90] "Behind the black drapes of erroneous interpretations of the Law of Moses and of the teachings of the Talmud[,]" she continued, "they dwell in darkened spiritual houses as void of hope and promise as are their brothers who are blinded with total unbelief."[91] As dark as she found Jewish shades of error, she found Islam darker still. The same article described a short-term mission school the missionaries had conducted in Jaffa among Muslim girls. On the last day of the school, Gruver had watched the girls' don the dresses and veils they wore in public. The physical transformation, to her, had spiritual echoes:

> Changed in an instant from laughing, lovable girls into dark, sinister-looking figures, they were going back into homes and surroundings dominated by sin and evil. Those black shrouded figures seemed so terribly symbolic of the blackout of hope and light within the Mohammedan religion--a religion whose evil and degrading teachings obliterate all faith in and desire for a purer, happier way of spiritual and temporal living, and which leads its

[89] *Ibid*., 243.
[90] Gruver, "Blackout in Palestine," *The Commission* (December 1942), 401.
[91] *Ibid*., 401.

> manhood into vile and sinful lives, its womanhood into a bondage of servitude to man's lowest desires.[92]

In the clothing itself, Gruver found evidence of Islam's corruption of manhood and womanhood. Gruver would grow increasingly interested in reaching Muslims throughout her tenure. During her forced wartime furlough, she took courses on Islam at Harvard. Her expanding knowledge of the faith—and her increasing encounters with Arab-Americans in Boston—only increased her zeal for evangelism.[93]

While Gruver studied stateside, native workers and missionary allies attempted to fill the gaps left by the Baptist exodus. The FMB's 1942 annual report listed some of the accommodations.[94] A Russian Baptist refugee named Martin Doveley and a Jewish convert named Andrew Salyer attended to the Jerusalem church. Leola Davison, a non-Southern Baptist employee of the evangelical Nile Press, supervised the Good Will Center. The Nazareth work struggled as the interim pastor, Rev. Elias Saleeby, was forced to return to his home in Beirut after contracting tuberculosis. These were stop-gap measures at best. The FMB's 1944 report noted that a retired Presbyterian minister named William McClenahan was filling in at the Jerusalem station. That same year, though, Gruver returned to the field. Over the next two years, six more missionaries joined her.

None would be more important than Robert Lindsey. Born in Norman, Oklahoma, Lindsey had spent parts of 1938 and 1939 as a student at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where he learned modern Hebrew and worked for the

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[92] *Ibid*., 402.
[93] Gruver, "Back to School," *The Commission* (March 1943), 10-11.
[94] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1942, 187.

Baptist mission. While in Jerusalem he had lived with a Hebrew Christian couple, through whom he "met face to face with that bitter problem of how to be a Christian in faith and a Jew in culture and nationality and yet be accepted by the Jewish community."[95] Lindsey had also spent some time at the newly-built kibbutz Dafna in the far north, "eating 'apples of the earth' (spuds) – sleeping in a four passenger room, bathing in the cold waters of the Dan, visiting the irrigated garden, admiring majestic Hermon in the moonlight."[96] He also, of course, had explained "the Story" (the Gospel) to a handful of kibbutzniks. That same year he had returned to the States to continue his studies, knowing with clear conviction that he wanted to return. During the war years he studied at both Princeton and SBTS. In 1945, he returned to Jerusalem as a FMB missionary. He would remain there for the next four decades.

Under Lindsey's leadership, the missionaries set about rebuilding Baptist life in Palestine. The Jerusalem church had greatly atrophied during the war. In 1946, it was reorganized with Lindsey as its pastor. The church had nine members.[97] Besides overseeing the church, Lindsey proved creative in expanding the mission's reach. In 1946, he loaned mission funds for the creation of what was essentially a Baptist kibbutz (it was later purchased by the mission itself). One of the repeated concerns of Baptist missionaries to Jews in the region had been that Jewish converts to Christianity were effectively frozen out of Jewish society and, thus, frozen out of

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[95] Robert L. Lindsey, "We Have a Job to Do in Palestine," *The Commission* (November 1947), 9.
[96] Lindsey to Prayer Friend, 18 October 1939, Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[97] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1947, 94.

the economy. The purpose of the cooperative was "to provide for Jews who accept Christ a home in which those concerned will learn to labor with their hands and support themselves while growing into a fellowship of believing Christians."[98] The following year, the Lindseys opened a youth hostel at the Jerusalem mission that could house about 20 people.

As in Jerusalem, the Nazareth mission had deteriorated due to wartime neglect. The church itself had been physically damaged. In 1945, Gruver was joined by Henry and Julia Hagood, who had come to study Arabic and oversee repairs to the church before moving on to Damascus. In January of 1946, though, Henry Hagood fell suddenly ill and died.[99] Despite the tragedy, Julia elected to remain with Gruver. The same year, the two inaugurated the George W. Truett Home for Orphans. It took in six abandoned children in its first year. The Tel Aviv station remained stillborn and the Haifa work was suspended despite the promise it had shown in the 1930s. Such struggles notwithstanding, Lindsey called a conference of the Near East missionaries (including representatives from Syria and Lebanon) in 1946 to discuss moving the churches towards increased autonomy—and decreased dependence on the FMB. Lindsey hoped the churches would vote ("Unusual thing

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[98] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1947, 94. Such practical considerations had long paired nicely with millenarian Christian hopes of Jewish restoration—the idea being that Jews would return, convert, and redeem the land. A specific example of this was Kerem Avraham (Abraham's Vineyard), founded by British Consul and Christian restorationist James Finn in the 1850s. See Ruth Kark, "Millenarism and agricultural settlement in the Holy Land in the nineteenth century," *Journal of Historical Geography* 9, no. 1 (1983): 47-62.

[99] "In Memoriam: James Henry Hagood," *The Commission* (May 1946), 12-13; Gruver, "Palestine," *The Commission* (April 1946), 25-26.

in these countries!" he wrote) to form their own convention the following year.[100] This was part of the Board's increasing efforts to transition its more developed fields to "native autonomy," wherein locals would take the lead in expanding and cultivating support for their churches.[101] The following year, the churches at Nazareth, Jerusalem, Kfarmichky, and Beirut voted to form the Near East Baptist Convention.[102] Efforts at consolidating local control, though, would soon take a backseat as war came once again to Palestine.

In 1947, the British handed over the resolution of the "Palestine question" to the newly-formed United Nations. In September, the UN Special Committee on Palestine published a report recommending the partition of the land into two countries—one Arab, one Jewish—with Jerusalem coming under independent international administration. The Jewish Agency accepted the plan. The Arabs rejected it. On November 29, 1947, the UN voted in favor of partition. Lindsey, located in Jewish West Jerusalem, watched as Jews poured in the streets to celebrate the vote. He followed the crowds to the Jewish Agency headquarters, where "big circles of people had formed in the streets and were dancing and singing."[103] He recognized and congratulated a neighbor who had fled the Holocaust in coming to Palestine:

> "Here," [the neighbor] said, pouring a tiny glass of something stronger than missionaries are in the habit of drinking, "Take this. It is healthy for today.

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[100] Lindsey, "Palestine," *The Commission* (January 1947), 24.
[101] In 1937, FMB Secretary Charles Maddry published an article laying out these principles. Charles Maddry, "Changing Methods in Foreign Mission Work," *Home and Foreign Fields* (April 1937), 1.
[102] Merrel Callaway, "Epistles from Today's Apostles," *The Commission* (January 1948), 1.
[103] Lindsey, "Epistles from Today's Apostles," *The Commission* (March 1948), 1.

> *Ach, adon*, Lindsey, it is all because of the Americans. All because of your President. I really cannot believe it is true.[104]

These were heady events. As Lindsey reported in March of 1948, though, "We do not yet know fully what a Jewish State will mean to our work."[105]

That question was forced to wait as the country descended into war. Having just united into the Near East Baptist Convention, the missionaries found themselves split by moving battle lines. The Jerusalem mission was cut off from Nazareth. The missionaries tried at first to weather the conflict. Lindsey opened the hostel to Jewish refugees from East Jerusalem. At one point, they housed 26.[106] As fighting intensified, the missionaries evacuated. Lindsey tried to stay, but was trapped outside the country after escorting a new worker, Violet Long, to Cairo.[107] He returned to the States to wait out the war. A Jewish family, the Schreckingers, looked after the Lindseys' house—which was damaged by shelling—and hostel—which continued to house about 20 Jewish refugees.[108] Of the missionaries, only Elisabeth Lee, a nurse who worked at the Truett home and the Scottish mission hospital, remained behind during the worst of the fighting. It was only a matter of months, however, before Kate Gruver was able to return to Nazareth, accompanied by three new missionaries—Iola McClellan, Anna Cowan, and Mabel Summers. Before hostilities had ceased, they were able to reopen the school and establish a kitchen for children, which served 500 youths daily.[109] Once the Israelis and

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[104] *Ibid*., 1, 22.
[105] *Ibid*., 22.
[106] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1948, 125.
[107] Lindsey, "Epistles from Today's Apostles," *The Commission* (July 1948), 25.
[108] Lindsey, "Palestine Is Now Israel," *The Commission* (December 1949), 10-11.
[109] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1949, 102.

Jordanians reached an armistice, which put a de facto border through the middle of Jerusalem, Lindsey was able to return and reopen the Jerusalem work. All of the established Baptist stations found themselves within the boundaries of the new Israel. They would be Christian missionaries in a Jewish state.

The Meaning of Statehood – Two Missionary Perspectives

Even though he had left Palestine in 1939, Leo Eddleman continued to speak for the field in the Baptist press, publishing several articles in *The Commission* throughout the 1940s. Eddleman himself seems to have evolved on the Palestine question during his absence from the field. In winter of 1941-1942, he published a three-part series in *The Commission* that reflected the emphases he had developed in the late 1930s—including viewing the Zionist movement as a fulfillment of biblical prophecy. Though Eddleman never fully retreated from this prophetic perspective, his sense that fulfillment of prophecy was ongoing or imminent waned. The politics of the Arab-Zionist conflict itself, which had gnawed at the margins of his earlier writings, chewed their way to the center. In a 1945 article, he sought to explain the conflict's origins and the reasons behind both Arab and Jewish violence, focusing on both parties' responses to the divergent promises made by Britain during and after World War One. Though Eddleman contrasted Zionist modernity with Arab primitiveness—noting half-admiringly that Arabs "sustain a culture some aspects of which revert to Abraham's day"—he did present the Arabs as modernizing through the influence of the West.[110] In another contrast to his earlier writings, Eddleman

[110] H.L. Eddleman, "Middle East," *The Commission* (May 1945), 34.

deliberately sought to stake out a position as an impartial party to the political conflict. Citing his missionary experience in Tel Aviv, Nazareth, and Jerusalem, he noted, "we had the all-Jewish, the all-Arab, and the mixed environment in which to observe and study trends."[111] "The result," he added, "is that we, as individuals, have absolutely no preference on the matter."[112] Baptists, rather, "have something far greater than Pan-Arabism to offer the Arabs, and something far superior to a national homeland to offer the Jews[.]"[113] He meant, of course, the Gospel. By his 1947 article, "The Palestine Ferment," Eddleman was evaluating the Zionist-Arab conflict from an effectively political perspective.[114]

Eddleman's public drift towards political ambivalence masked a private drift towards anti-Zionism. In December of 1949—one year and a half after President Harry Truman recognized the newly-formed State of Israel—Eddleman penned a letter to the president warning against supporting the Israelis. He based his argument on political considerations. Citing his experiences in Palestine, Eddleman pointed out to the president that the Zionists were predominantly Eastern European, with their "customs, politics, outlook, and other characteristics bear[ing] the spirit and imprint of Eastern Europe."[115] He added, in capitals, "IN A CRISIS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE UNITED STATES THERE IS LITTLE, IF ANY, DOUBT WHICH DIRECTION THEIR NATURAL SYMPATHIES WOULD FALL." Further, American support for Israel was undermining the United States' standing

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[111] *Ibid*., 34.
[112] *Ibid*., 34.
[113] *Ibid*., 34.
[114] H.L. Eddleman, "The Palestine Ferment," *The Commission* (January 1947), 9-11.
[115] Eddleman letter, reprinted in *Dear Harry: Truman's Mailroom, 1945-1953*, eds. D.M. Giangreco and Kathryn Moore (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole, 1999), 148.

among the Arab states (an argument favored by the State Department and Christian anti-Zionists of the Committee for Justice and Peace in the Holy Land). Ultimately, Eddleman found the Zionists untrustworthy allies who masked their true intentions to conquer larger swaths of Arab lands:

> IF THERE IS ONE THING I FEEL CERTAIN ABOUT IT IS THAT THE POLITICAL AMBITIONS OF OUR HEBREW FRIENDS IN THE NEAR EAST ENVISION MORE LARGE AREAS OF ARAB TERRITORY UNDER THEIR DOMINION AND THAT THERE IS SO MUCH FOOLHARDINESS AND FANATICISM GROWING OUT OF THEIR COMBINATION OF NATIONALISM, RACIALISM, AND RELIGION (such as Shintoism and Nazism) THAT THIS WILL BE A MAJOR SOURCE OF GRIEF AND BLOODSHED FOR DECADES TO COME.[116]

The Israelis were treading the same destructive path that the Japanese and even the Nazis had recently trod. Unstated—but clear—is that Eddleman was increasingly understanding the new state as an enemy.

Despite this typographically loud letter, though, Eddleman largely kept quiet. His outright anti-Zionism never made it into Baptist periodicals. Nonetheless, Eddleman's case offers insights into how premillennialism, evangelism, and equal measures of Cold War *realpolitik* and paranoia could interact—even within a single mind—in shaping perspectives towards the Jewish state. Though his journey was far from inevitable, each shuffling step betrayed a certain logic. As a young missionary in the late 1930s, Eddleman had been swept up in prophetic and evangelistic enthusiasm. He, like many other Baptists, thought that the Zionist movement might herald a new willingness among Jews to hear the Gospel message, that the Zionists' revolt against Diaspora might include a revolt against diasporic attitudes towards Christ. A Jewishness organized around nationhood could easily pair with Christian

[116] *Ibid*., 148-149.

faith; Zionism and the Southern Baptist mission could be complementary forces reshaping Jewish existence. Eddleman was frustrated, then, when Jews rebuffed his message of salvation *in the name of* Zionism. Though he argued in 1938 that Zionism and Christianity were not in opposition, it seems his experiences convinced him otherwise. By 1945, he was presenting the Gospel as an alternative to Zionism—not a complement. Between 1942 and 1945, too, he largely retreated from a prophetic understanding of events in Palestine. His second tenure at SBTS may have been responsible for this. Two of the SBC's leading anti-Zionists, W.O. Carver and J. McKee Adams, were professors there at the time. Both understood the conflict on completely secular terms. Having grown to see Zionism as a rival to the Gospel, having come to see the conflict in an increasingly secular light, Eddleman wrote to Truman. Zionists were an enemy masquerading as a friend. National interests must guide the United States' approach.

Robert Lindsey's journey had much in common with Eddleman's, though he ended up in a vastly different place. The two had worked together briefly during Lindsey's first stay in Palestine. Both shared an evangelistic affinity for Jews. Both—at least at their first meeting—viewed the Zionist movement as somehow a fulfillment of biblical prophecy and personally inspiring. Both, too, shared an academic interest and aptitude for foreign language. The two also studied at two of the same institutions—Hebrew University while in Palestine and, after returning stateside, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Lindsey's only surviving circular letter from his first time in Palestine recalled spending a few days with the Eddlemans in Nazareth. He and Leo had shared "some long talks" on the difficulty

of reaching Arabs with the Gospel.[117] Clearly having imbibed some of Eddleman's frustrations, Lindsey remarked to his readers, "One who does not know the Oriental mind cannot begin to realize what difficult ground it makes for gospel seed. These people have a vastly different background from the westerner."[118]

Lindsey, though, was more likely than Eddleman to greet such challenges with a smile. He seemed to congenitally lack the latter's capacity for darkness; Lindsey's understanding of prophecy was never tinged with Eddleman's sense of doom. His enthusiasm for evangelism, new people, and new experiences flowed from a deep internal well that tended to displace obstructions rather than be stanched by them. The types of frustrations that appear to have initially turned Eddleman against Zionism—frustrations common to all mission work but especially common to work amongst Jews—were borne easily enough by Lindsey.

As Eddleman had in the late 1930s, Lindsey hoped that Zionism's emphasis on Jewish nationhood would open Jews to Christ. In October of 1944, as he prepared to return to the field, Lindsey wrote that the "forms of the old faith are not holding them and with the Zionistic national definition of the Jews has come the real possibility that a strong Jewish loyalty to Christ may develop."[119] In March of 1948, anticipating the creation of a Jewish state in May, Lindsey wrote, "…many of us feel that with Jews being able at last to define themselves in national terms only, the

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[117] Lindsey to Prayer Friend, 18 October 1939, Box 255, Folder 30, IMB Minutes and Reports.
[118] *Ibid*.
[119] Lindsey, "Palestine -- Experiences and Expectations," *The Commission* (October 1944), 11.

religious connotation will be more and more dropped."[120] In Lindsey's eyes, statehood would reify Jewish nationhood and further displace religious definitions of Jewishness. Besides simply expressing hope that Zionism and the Baptist mission could be complementary, though, Lindsey actively worked to incorporate Zionist models into the Baptist mission. The most obvious example of this was the development of the Baptist Village at Petach Tikva—which Lindsey conceived of as a Baptist kibbutz (it later developed into more of a youth camp and retreat center). His first stay in Palestine had left Lindsey truly inspired by the kibbutzim. "These young people gripped my imagination," he wrote in *The Commission*, "Here was a modern group of people living with 'all things in common'."[121] Lindsey's chosen quote (from Acts 4:32) was no idle biblical reference, but a deliberate allusion to the early Christian community. There was clearly something about the Zionist spirit that hailed back to the days of Pentecost, something Lindsey tried to harness in creating the Baptist Village.

Like Eddleman, Lindsey depicted Arabs as in the process of modernizing. To be sure, he felt they lagged behind the Zionists. In 1944 he recalled an earlier drive through the Sharon Plain, where he "passed innumerable little Arab and Jewish villages and, like all Westerners, could not help contrasting the manifest poverty and squalor of the first with the cleanliness of the latter."[122] Lindsey was careful to note, though, that there "are many different kinds of Jews and Arabs."[123] The majority of Arabs were small farmers that were "poorly organized and mostly

[120] Lindsey, "Epistles from Today's Apostles," (March 1948), 22.
[121] Lindsey, "We Have a Job to Do in Palestine," 9.
[122] Lindsey, "Palestine -- Experiences and Expectations," 10.
[123] *Ibid*., 10.

illiterate" and lived in "small villages where life is probably not greatly different from life many hundreds of years ago."[124] An urban minority, though, was "generally better educated than the majority and, of course, influence[d] their thinking."[125] Thanks to the influence of British, their education system was improving. Thanks to western missionaries and the Zionists, the health system was improving. The "fanaticism" that characterized Islam was likewise being ameliorated by the "increasing acceptance of Western ideals."[126] Despite feeling that Arabs were somehow "behind," Lindsey also felt they were "a highly intelligent people."[127] Writing again in 1947—his memories augmented by fresh experiences in the field—Lindsey recalled having marveled at both "the quaint biblical life of the peasant Arabs" and the "cultured life of the modern educated Jerusalem Arab" during his first time in Palestine.[128]

Lindsey did not explicitly take sides on the political questions raised between 1947-1949 in the way that Eddleman did.[129] He did, however, clearly identify with the Zionist movement's triumph. This should not be surprising. Besides holding a vaguely prophetic interpretation of Zionism's significance, Lindsey primarily worked among Jews and lived in the Jewish section of Jerusalem. He was also personally inspired by the movement. As mentioned above, as the results of the November 1947 partition vote reached West Jerusalem, Lindsey joined

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[124] *Ibid*., 11.
[125] *Ibid*., 11.
[126] *Ibid*., 11.
[127] *Ibid*., 11.
[128] Lindsey, "We Have a Job to Do in Palestine," 8.
[129] In a January 1949 article in the Christian Herald, Lindsey noted, "But it does seem to me that both Arab and Jewish claims have much validity." Lindsey, "Christianity's Chance in Palestine," *Christian Herald* (January 1949), 26-28.

his Jewish neighbors to celebrate in the streets. In October of 1949, months after the armistice agreements had been reached, he again seemed to take on the feelings of his West Jerusalem neighbors as he described the aftermath of the war:

> Two things impress us about the people of Jerusalem as we seem them today. One is the oft-repeated word 'miracle.' I have talked with no one who does not say that it is really a miracle that the Jews of Jerusalem were saved. We now know how little ammunition, guns and material were actually in the hands of Israelis. The great majority of people seem to believe deeply that only God saved them….The other impressive thing is the spirit of the people. With victory has come a new stability, a new hope for the future...The struggle has strengthened morale.[130]

Lindsey tied this new sense of stability, hope, and confidence to the mission, arguing that it had already helped bring a greater tolerance for both missionaries and converts. "The attitude seems to be," he wrote two months later, "Look, we now have a country of our own. We Jews always have liked friends and wanted to extend hospitality and now we can do it."[131] "I have seen no instance of maltreatment or disrespect of a Jewish Christian as yet," Lindsey added. "Today he is an Israeli whatever his faith."[132]

Conclusion

Southern Baptist missionaries were united in believing that Christ was the ultimate answer to the Palestine question. They, in their own way, understood themselves as working towards its solution. For most, the question of whether Zionism was an ally or opponent of their missionary solution shaped their approach to the day's politics.

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[130] Lindsey, "Epistles from Today's Apostles Around the World," (October 1949), 20.
[131] Lindsey, "Palestine Is Now Israel," 10.
[132] *Ibid*., 10.

The answer to that question was different for each missionary—in other words, there were Eddlemans and there were Lindseys. Though their work gave the missionaries their own unique lens through which to view the politics of Mandatory Palestine, they nonetheless shared with other Baptists a sense of civilizational gap between the Zionists and the Arabs. In the end, however, what was most important to the missionaries was that both groups lacked what Baptists sought to give them—the Gospel.

Chapter Five

Jew

Though Southern Baptists had expressed interest in a mission to the Jews since the birth of the Convention, it was not until May of 1921 that the Home Mission Board (HMB) hired its first missionary for the task. On the recommendation of W.O. Carver, the HMB chose as its first and only Field Secretary of the newly-created Jewish Department "a most excellent and consecrated young man" named Jacob Gartenhaus.[1] Gartenhaus was an ideal hire. Himself a convert, the young missionary had been raised in a traditional Jewish home in Galicia and had immigrated to New York in 1913, where he was soon led to Christianity by his older brother, Zev, and the missionaries of the Williamsburg Mission to the Jews. He had trained at three of the day's leading institutions of Jewish evangelism—the Williamsburg Mission in Brooklyn, the Chicago Hebrew Mission, and the Moody Bible Institute—and had connections to the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America, an organization of Jewish converts geared towards evangelism. While working for the Chicago Hebrew Mission's Extension Service, Gartenhaus had completed his education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. There, his ability to rally his fellow seminarians around evangelizing Louisville's Jews had drawn the attention of the Home Mission Board.

Not only was Gartenhaus the SBC's first missionary to the Jews, but for the next twenty-eight years he would effectively remain its only missionary to southern

[1] Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Home Mission Board (April 7, 1921), 96, Box 3, Item 3, Home Mission Board Minutes, SBHLA.

Jewry.[2] This presented him with a unique challenge. The South's Jews, though somewhat numerous in cities like Louisville and St. Louis, were dispersed across the region in far smaller concentrations than were found in the northern industrial centers. The methods Gartenhaus had learned in the northern missions, which focused on developing neighborhood mission centers, were "neither practicable nor desirable" in the South.[3] Instead, Gartenhaus developed a congregational approach that sought to make local churches the locus of Jewish evangelism and make Baptist laypeople his field workers. For this to work, he needed to convince local congregations that Jewish evangelism was necessary, important, and effective, and to train them for the task. Gartenhaus's mission to the Jews became, in effect, a mission to the Baptists.

In a denomination defined by its commitment to evangelism, missionaries often provided crucial channels through which Southern Baptists encountered other faiths and peoples. Throughout a tenure that roughly coincided with the British Mandate over Palestine, Gartenhaus became Southern Baptists' leading spokesperson on issues relating to Jews and Judaism—including Zionism.[4] By the

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[2] I say "effectively" because of a few months-long exceptions, such as the hiring of Mollie Cohen in 1939 and Lucille McKinney in 1948.
[3] Jacob Gartenhaus, *What of the Jews?* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, 1948), 78.
[4] Despite Gartenhaus's importance within the largest Protestant denomination in the United States, his career has received little scholarly attention. Eliza McGraw's "'How to Win the Jews for Christ: Jewishness and the Southern Baptist Convention," gives some attention to Gartenhaus's rhetorical representations of Jewishness in his writings but does not plumb the sources of Gartenhaus's teaching. In *The Mississippi Quarterly* Vol. 53, No. 2 (Spring 2000): 209–223. Daniel Goodman, in "Strangers, Neighbors, and Strangers Again: The History of Southern Baptist Approaches to Jews and Judaism" places Gartenhaus within a broader context of Baptist engagement with Jews, but does not explore the missionary's

publication of his first full-length book, *The Rebirth of a Nation*, in 1936, Gartenhaus had become the foremost proponent of Zionism within the SBC, even declaring of the movement, "To oppose it is to oppose God's plan."[5] As a Hebrew Christian and premillennial dispensationalist, the missionary brought a prophetic and national understanding of Jewishness to his Baptist audiences, an understanding shaped by Gartenhaus's own experiences as a convert, his training in the northern missions, and his ongoing connections to the Hebrew Christian movement. An understanding, too, that provided the basis for Gartenhaus's own Zionism.

Gartenhaus's Background and Training

In many ways, Jacob Gartenhaus's conversion to Christianity was typical of Jewish converts to evangelical Protestantism in the early-twentieth-century United States. He was young, culturally and socially dislocated, and had been guided to Christianity by an authority figure.[6] He uttered his first prayer in the name of Jesus "one bright Sunday morning" in 1916, a moment he would recognize as his culminating salvation experience.[7] Filled with a convert's zeal, he soon dedicated his life to the evangelization of his people. He began his training at the Williamsburg mission that had helped guide him to conversion but quickly moved on to the Chicago Hebrew Mission (CHM) that same year. He would work with the CHM from 1916 until 1921, serving at its local mission centers while attending

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background and teaching on their own terms. In *Review and Expositor* Vol. 103 (Winter 2006): 63-89.

[5] *Ibid*., 128.

[6] Ariel, *Evangelizing the Chosen People*, 38-54.

[7] Gartenhaus, *Traitor?* (Chattanooga, TN: International Board of Jewish Missions, 1980), 110.

Moody Bible Institute and continuing as a member of the mission's "Extension Service" after leaving for Louisville in 1919.[8] These institutions would serve three important functions in the development of Gartenhaus's identity as a convert and approach as a missionary—training him in the craft of Jewish evangelism, immersing him in its intellectual underpinnings, and binding him to the growing Hebrew Christian community then emerging out of the missions. The latter two would have a particular bearing on Gartenhaus's approach to Zionism.

The northern Jewish missions were not solely motivated by a desire to convert or aid Jewish immigrants, but by a premillennial interest in the Jews. Both Leopold Cohn, the founder of the Williamsburg Mission, and William Blackstone, the founder of the Chicago Hebrew Mission, were dispensationalists. Indeed, Blackstone had been among the earliest American popularizers of the Judeo-centric hermeneutic and eschatological system, penning the first edition of his popular book *Jesus is Coming* in 1878. Blackstone's dispensationalism had not only led him to found the CHM, but to circulate a petition in 1891 (known as the "Blackstone Memorial") calling on President Benjamin Harrison to help facilitate the creation of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine. Gartenhaus thus spent his formative years as a new Christian immersed in a series of dispensationalist environments.

Gartenhaus also developed connections to the Hebrew Christian movement, a movement among Jewish converts to evangelical Christianity who sought to maintain varying degrees of Jewish national distinctiveness within their new faith. The movement had its origins in 19th-century Britain, where a string of fraternal

[8] "Our Extension Work," *The Jewish Era* 28, no. 4 (October 1919), 134-135.

convert and mission associations had maintained fitful existences since at least 1813.[9] By 1903, Hebrew Christianity had spread to the American missions and resulted in the attempted formation of a Hebrew Christian Alliance.[10] This initial attempt failed, but the movement grew strong enough over the following decade to result in the formation of the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America (HCAA) in 1915.[11] While the HCAA did keep small numbers of missionaries on staff and publish periodicals, it primarily served as a meeting ground where converts worked to define the meaning of their corporate witness. Its members generally shared three main priorities—promoting Jewish evangelism, caring for converts within the church, and advocating on behalf of Jews—and tended to favor dispensationalism, which offered a biblical hermeneutic that affirmed their national distinctiveness. Gartenhaus likely became involved in the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America during his time with the Chicago Hebrew Mission. There, he worked alongside several missionaries who would become leaders in the movement, among them

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[9] On Hebrew Christianity in Great Britain, see Michael Darby, *The Emergence of the Hebrew Christian Movement in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); on connections between British Hebrew Christianity and the American movement, see B.Z. Sobel, *Hebrew Christianity*, 127-224; see also Sobel, "Legitimation and Antisemitism as Factors in the Functioning of a Hebrew-Christian Mission," and "Protestant Evangelists and the Formulation of a Jewish Racial Mystique: The Missionary Discovery of Sociology,"; on the development of American Hebrew Christianity and the subsequent Messianic Judaism movement see David Rausch, *Messianic Judaism;* also Dan Cohn-Sherbok *Messianic Judaism*, 15-59; Ariel also touches on the movement in *Evangelizing the Chosen People*, 47-50, 80-86, 94-99.

[10] *Minutes of the first Hebrew-Christian Conference of the United States, held at Mountain Lake Park, Md., July 28-30, 1903* (Pittsburgh, PA: G. Burgum, 1903).

[11] S.B. Rohold, "First Conference of the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America," *The Missionary Review of the World* 28, no. 6 (June 1915), 443-445.

Jacob Peltz (later secretary of the HCAA), Elias Newman (later on the HCAA Executive Committee), and Aaron Kligerman (later President of the IHCA).[12]

Though brief, Gartenhaus's years in the northern missions and Moody Bible Institute were crucial in shaping both his identity as a convert and approach as a missionary, instilling in him a prophetic understanding of the Jews' and converts' roles in history and binding him to the Hebrew Christian movement. In 1919, he agreed to attend Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, where he made the connections that would lead to his appointment to the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in 1921.

Gartenhaus's Mission

Gartenhaus's first challenge was clear—one man by himself could not evangelize the South's Jews. From the beginning he realized that the neighborhood-based evangelism he had trained for in the North would simply not work. Instead, Gartenhaus developed a congregational approach that sought to make local churches the locus of Jewish evangelism and make Baptist laypeople his field workers.[13] "Ours was a double task," he noted, "to win Israel for Christ and to awaken Christians to their responsibility."[14] For this to be effective, Gartenhaus needed to convince local congregations of the need for Jewish evangelism and train them for

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[12] *The Jewish Era* 28, no. 1 (January 1919), 23.
[13] Gartenhaus, *A New Emphasis on Jewish Evangelization through the Local Church* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, n.d.), Box 1, Folder 14, Jacob Gartenhaus Collection (hereafter Gartenhaus Collection), SBHLA.
[14] Gartenhaus, *Pioneer Work Among Southern Jews* (Birmingham, AL: Woman's Missionary Union, n.d.), 2, Box 13, Folder 34, Una Roberts Lawrence Collection (hereafter Lawrence Collection), SBHLA.

the task. Though based with the Home Mission Board in Atlanta, Gartenhaus spent the bulk of his time on the road giving guest sermons and clinics in churches or lecturing at associational meetings and conventions. He also composed numerous tracts, articles, and books aimed at Baptist audiences (and a far lesser number aimed at Jews). The Southern Baptists' missionary to the Jews thus spent most of his time trying to convert Baptists to his cause.

Gartenhaus became a ubiquitous itinerant. In a 1966 article commemorating Gartenhaus's conversion, Pastor Roy Mason claimed the missionary knew "more Baptist preachers and Baptist churches than anybody that I have ever met, for he has preached Christ and has pleaded for Jewish evangelism all over this nation."[15] Within seven years of his appointment, Gartenhaus had spoken to audiences in 38 states, though mostly in the heart of SBC territory.[16] He kept an exhausting pace on his sermon tours, making multiple stops in multiple cities sometimes in the span of a single day. In 1925 he reported having given 203 sermons the previous year.[17] Ten years later, he reported giving 240.[18] On a 1938 trip to New Mexico under the sponsorship of the Woman's Missionary Union, he held nine clinics on Jewish

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[15] Mason, Roy, "World's Greatest Jewish Christian Has Fiftieth Anniversary," *Grace and Life* (January 1966), 1, 4, Box 1, Folder 2, Gartenhaus Collection.
[16] "Talks on Judaism and Christianity," *Palm Beach Post* (December 14, 1928).
[17] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1925, 343.
[18] Southern Baptist Covention, *Annual*, 1935, 276. Though Gartenhaus did not give statistics in every annual report, it is possible to estimate the total number of sermons he gave throughout his 28 years. The mean for the five years he did report sermon statistics is 174. Multiplied out for 28 years, this adds up to an estimated 4,877 sermons over the course of his HMB career, not counting convention addresses and clinics.

evangelism in nine different cities across the state.[19] Gartenhaus also drummed up support for Jewish evangelism at statewide conferences and associational meetings throughout the South. In 1935, for example, he taught at six mission schools, spoke at 30 divisional and district meetings, and addressed three state conventions.[20] Gartenhaus also began planning "city-wide" or "good-will" meetings, really weekend mass meetings followed by a weeklong seminar on Jews and Jewish evangelism. Frequently, Gartenhaus's Hebrew Christian colleagues were featured as guest speakers and instructors.[21]

In addition to being a prolific speaker, Gartenhaus was a prolific writer. He produced scores of short pamphlets during his tenure with the SBC on topics ranging from *The Virgin Birth of the Messiah* to *The Jews' Contribution to the South*.[22] While some of these tracts were aimed at Jews (among them *Who is HE?* and *An Open Letter to the Jewish People of the South*), the vast majority targeted Christians, urging them to support and involve themselves in Jewish evangelism.[23] Gartenhaus also published countless articles in Baptist periodicals informing

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[19] "Missionary Believes God Using Hitler As Tool to Weld New Jewish Nation," *The Daily Current-Argus*, Box 1, Folder 2, Gartenhaus Collection. The cities included Albuquerque, Springer, Tucumcari, Portales, Hobbs, Tularosa, Carlsbad, Las Cruces, and Deming.
[20] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1935, 276.
[21] Kligerman: "Kligerman Tells His Life's Story, Gartenhaus Heard by Capacity Congregation," *The State* (May 1, 1930), Box 1, Folder 19, Gartenhaus Collection; Singer: "Jewish Services Held Next Week," Box 1, Folder 19, Gartenhaus Collection; Newman: "Jewish-Christian Meetings," *Tennessean* (January 1931), Box 1, Folder 19, Gartenhaus Collection.
[22] *The Virgin Birth of the Messiah* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, n.d.), Box 1, Folder 14, Gartenhaus Collection; *The Jew's Contribution to the South*, Box 1, Folder 13, Gartenhaus Collection.
[23] *Who is HE?* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, n.d.), Box 1, Folder 14, Gartenhaus Collection; *An Open Letter to the Jewish People of the South* (Atlanta: Publicity Department, Home Mission Board, n.d.), Box 1, Folder 14, Gartenhaus Collection.

Baptists of developments in Jewish life, updating them on progress in the mission, and again urging their support for his work and their concern for Israel. He also published four books while with the Home Mission Board: *The Jew and Jesus*, a brief study of Jewish attitudes towards Jesus, *Rebirth of a Nation*, a primer on the prophetic and practical implications of Zionism, *The Influence of the Jews Upon Civilization*, a look at how Jews (and Jewish converts to Christianity) had made beneficial contributions to western civilization titled, and *What of the Jews?*, a mission study manual (that included an extended look at Zionism).[24]

The missionary's efforts to cultivate interest in Jews and Jewish evangelism found greatest reception among Southern Baptist women. Woman's Missionary Unions (WMUs), auxiliary societies devoted to supporting and promoting the SBC's missions, were especially important. By the mid-1920s, the national WMU had begun supplementing Gartenhaus's literature budget.[25] In 1926, the WMU report to the Convention noted, "The hearts of the women have been moved, and their wills touched to action in the extension of their evangelistic efforts to the Jews, through the ministry among them of our missionary, Rev. Jacob Gartenhaus."[26] That year, the women elected to give $3000 of their "self-denial offering" towards Gartenhaus's work. Local WMUs were also crucial in supporting Gartenhaus's mission. They often sponsored his visits and helped fund and organize his city-wide meetings. Gartenhaus's reports note that local WMUs gathered the addresses of

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[24] Gartenhaus, *The Jew and Jesus* (Nashville, TN: Sunday School Board, 1934); *The Rebirth of a Nation* (Nashville, Broadman Press, 1936); *The Influence of the Jews Upon Civilization* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1943); *What of the Jews?* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, 1948).
[25] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual,* 1925, 106.
[26] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual,* 1926, 76.

their Jewish neighbors so the missionary could send them literature.[27] By the mid-1930s, he had begun actively cultivating "Friends of Israel" societies among local Unions. In 1937, the national WMU reported that 383 local societies were involved in some way with Jewish work.[28] It noted, too, in its reports that local chapters were circulating among themselves and their communities' Jews a Hebrew Christian periodical co-edited by Gartenhaus called *The Mediator*.[29] In 1939, the Illinois, Florida, and Texas WMUs each began sponsoring female Jewish workers in their territories.[30] Both the local and national WMUs would remain crucial to Gartenhaus's work for the remainder of his time with the Home Mission Board (his impact on the WMU's approach to the Palestine question is examined in the chapter, "Auxiliaries").

Gartenhaus on Jews and Judaism

Before exploring Gartenhaus's approach to Zionism, it is important to understand his broader approach to Jews and Judaism. He was not simply interested in preaching support for the Zionist movement, after all, but in conveying to his audiences specific ideas about Jewish identity and religion that merit examination on their own terms. This section examines three interrelated elements of Gartenhaus's message that would have a bearing on his approach to Zionism—his presentation of Jewishness, his presentation of Judaism, and his prophetic understanding of the Jews' role in history.

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[27] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual,* 1927, 294.
[28] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual,* 1937, 392.
[29] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual,* 1939, 414.
[30] *Ibid*., 414.

Gartenhaus presented Jews as a nation or race—not simply a religious community.[31] This view—which, thanks largely to Zionism, was increasingly common among Jews in the early twentieth century—evolved directly out of his Hebrew Christianity. Hebrew Christians, after all, did not see their conversion as immolating their Jewishness; the very term "Hebrew Christian" suggested as much. In the tract *Who is He?*, Gartenhaus noted, "To many a Jew it would seem that we call him to become a Gentile…We want nothing of the kind."[32] In another tract addressed to Jews, *An Open Letter to the Jews of the South*, Gartenhaus referred to himself as "a member of your race, flesh of your flesh, blood of your blood[.]"[33] Although such assertions served evangelistic ends, the Jewishness of Hebrew Christianity was not solely a missionary tactic, as some scholars have argued.[34] It was, rather, both an actual expression of converts' self-identity and a legitimate approach to the question of whether Jews comprised a religious community or a nation. This much can be seen in the varieties of Jewish identity Gartenhaus included in his 1936 tract *How to Win the Jews for Christ*, which included the religious categories of "Orthodox" and "Reformed" as well as the more secular categories of "Zionist" and "Socialistic."[35] That most Jews—secular *or* religious—rejected his own Jewishness greatly rankled Gartenhaus (and other Hebrew

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[31] Gartenhaus used "race" and "nation" interchangeably.
[32] Gartenhaus, *Who is He?*, 13, Box 1, Folder 14, Gartenhaus Collection.
[33] Gartenhaus, *An Open Letter to the Jewish People of the South* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, n.d.), 2, Box 1, Folder 14, Gartenhaus Collection.
[34] Eliza McGraw's "'How to Win the Jews for Christ: Jewishness and the Southern Baptist Convention," presents this as a rhetorical device; B.Z. Sobel presents the maintenance of Jewish identity as a missionary tactic in *Hebrew Christianity: The Thirteenth Tribe*, 127-224.
[35] Gartenhaus, *How to Win the Jews for Christ*, 2-4, Box 13, Folder 26, Lawrence Collection.

Christians), who in 1932 complained to the *American Israelite* that "a Jew may deny the God of Israel, disassociate himself entirely from his people, be an atheist, guilty of every imaginable crime and still be recognized among his people" while the convert to Christianity was considered "an enemy, a traitor, hated, shunned and abused."[36]

While Jews were unwilling to accept Gartenhaus's claims to Jewish nationality, Southern Baptists accepted them. Baptist periodicals variously referred to the missionary as a "Christian Jew," a "Christianized Austrian Jew," or a member of the "Chosen People" concerned with the salvation of his "brethren according to the flesh" or "racial kinsmen."[37] An unpublished article sent to Gartenhaus by Helen Parker of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, expressed Parker's joy that converts "can always remain Jewish with their wonderful heritage, even after they become Christian."[38] In a 1931 editorial prompted by a discussion with Gartenhaus, F.M. McConnell of the *Baptist Standard* argued,

> Every national tie should hold with Jews who accept Christ as their Messiah, just the same as with those who reject him and look for another, or reject the Messianic hope entirely. Gentiles should not expect the Christian Jews to be

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[36] Gartenhaus, quoted in Charles Joseph, "Random Thoughts," *The American Israelite* (May 12,1932), 1; the letter was also printed in Baptist periodicals: "Gartenhaus Replies to Hebrew Critic," *Baptist Messenger* (June 16, 1932), Box 13, Folder 22, Lawrence Collection.

[37] "Christian Jew": Gartenhaus, "New Opportunities for Winning the Jews for Christ," *The Monthly B.Y.P.U. Magazine* (June, 1934), 7; "Christianized Austrian Jew": "Christianized Austrian Jew Will Speak Sunday At The First Baptist Church," Box 1, Folder 20, Gartenhaus Collection; "chosen people": "The Chosen People," in *Baptist Home Missions*, Box 13, Folder 22, Lawrence Collection; "brethren": "Rev. Jacob Gartenhaus," Box 13, Folder 22, Lawrence Collection; "racial kinsmen": "Racial Faith Sticks: Victory for Jews Seen," (May 1939), clipping in Box 13, Folder 25, Lawrence Collection.

[38] Helen Parker, "Why I am Interested in Giving the Gospel to the Jewish People," Box 1, Folder 5, Gartenhaus Collection.

> any the less Jews as to their national ties and ideals. It is God's purpose to preserve them as a separate nation forever.[39]

Converts like Gartenhaus, in other words, remained Jews.

Besides arguing that Jews comprised a nation, Gartenhaus held that they possessed particular national characteristics. This is seen most clearly in his 1943 work *The Influence of the Jews Upon Civilization*, which sought to counter antisemitism by demonstrating the many contributions Jews and Hebrew Christians alike had made to Western Civilization. In the chapter "Jewish Character," Gartenhaus identified several Jewish virtues—a love of learning, an emphasis on cleanliness, a powerful impulse towards self-control, a particular regard for justice and the value of life—while countering common antisemitic charges that Jews were particularly materialistic or criminal.[40] Though Jews had faults, he acknowledged, they had no more than the gentiles around them. Likely because of his increasing concern over rising antisemitism, Gartenhaus's *Influence of the Jews* left out some negative national traits that he had identified in earlier works. It most notably omitted Gartenhaus's concern over "racial pride that has become a mania" he had identified in the 1936 *The Rebirth of a Nation*.[41] In explaining these national characteristics, Gartenhaus leaned on a mix of racial determinism and environmental adaptation. He could note that "God has blessed the Jewish people with certain qualities to be used for certain purposes" while arguing elsewhere that the religious laws of the Jews "become ingrained in their blood" and "developed in

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[39] F.M. McConnell, "The Conversion of Jews," *Baptist Standard* (January 29, 1931), 4.
[40] Gartenhaus, *The Influence of the Jews Upon Civilization*, 15-20.
[41] Gartenhaus, *The Rebirth of a Nation*, 19.

them a mastery of self and a reverence of temperance."[42] He never appeared concerned with reconciling the two views.

Though Gartenhaus had much positive to say about the Jews as a nation, he was quite critical of Judaism as a religion. Having himself grown up in a traditional Jewish home in Galicia, he was most aggressive in criticizing Orthodox Judaism and the Rabbinate in particular. His 1934 *The Jew and Jesus*, an overview of Jewish attitudes towards Jesus, presented the Rabbinate as analogous to the papacy in its unquestioned exercise of religious authority. Echoing centuries of anti-Jewish polemic, he claimed the rabbis had "succeeded in blinding the eyes of a whole people" to Christ's true identity as the messiah.[43] Particularly irksome to Gartenhaus was the rabbinic emphasis on the Talmud. He was fond of claiming, "The Bible is a sealed book to Israel."[44] In *An Urgent Call on Behalf of the Jews of the South*, he claimed that Orthodox Jews thought the Bible "too holy to be handled and read by common people" and that the rabbis rightfully worried that reading it without guidance might "Mislead [common people] to believe in Jesus."[45] The "unbelieving Jew," on the other hand, "thinks of this book less than he thinks of a cheap novel[.]"[46] Gartenhaus considered Reform Jews as close to unbelief, noting in *How to Win the Jews for Christ* they have "practically no religion at all" and were

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[42] First quote from *The Rebirth of a Nation*, 21; second from *The Influence of the Jews Upon Civilization*, 16.
[43] Gartenhaus, *The Jew and Jesus*, 12; the image of Jews as blind was common to both Christian literature and art from the medieval era onward: Helen Rosenau, "Ecclesia et Synagoga." *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 6, 2nd edition, eds. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), 88.
[44] Gartenhaus, *An Urgent Call on Behalf of the Jews of the South*, 3.
[45] *Ibid*., 4.
[46] *Ibid*., 4.

primarily concerned with trying to "imitate [their Gentile] neighbors in speech, habits, and also in religious conduct[.]"[47] Beyond its spiritual shortcomings, Gartenhaus argued that Reform Judaism's assimilationist tendencies had failed in preventing antisemitism: "To the anti-Semites they were still despised Jews and had to be dealt with accordingly."[48]

Framing Gartenhaus's presentation of Jewishness and Judaism was his prophetic understanding of the Jews' role in history. "The Jew is the central figure of prophecy," he once asserted, "Without him it would be meaningless."[49] While Gartenhaus understood Jewishness in a descriptive sense on national or racial terms, he nonetheless held that Jews had a particular religious destiny. God had chosen the Jews and preserved them as a nation "for one purpose only—to proclaim Christ's name to the world."[50] In service of this national mission, God had inaugurated a covenantal relationship with the ancient Israelites. Reflecting his dispensationalist interpretation of the Bible, Gartenhaus held that these ancient covenants still applied to contemporary Jews rather than the church. Jews remained God's chosen people. Their "promised land" remained promised to them. Their national mission—"to proclaim Christ's name to the world"—remained their mission, even if they had hitherto failed in it.[51]

Gartenhaus preached that God remained constantly involved in Jewish history. His interpretation of that involvement, though, could be ambiguous. On the

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[47] Gartenhaus, *How to Win the Jews for Christ*, 4.
[48] Gartenhaus, *What of the Jews?*, 31.
[49] "Eyes of World on Jew Today," *The Lexington Herald* (August 8, 1927), Box 1, Folder 19, Gartenhaus Collection.
[50] Gartenhaus, *The Rebirth of a Nation*, 22.
[51] *Ibid*., 22.

one hand, he frequently claimed that Jewish suffering was tragic ("As a people, they have worn the crown of thorns.") and that God actively punished those who persecuted Jews ("If the present-day anti-Semites love their native countries as they claim they do, they should learn the historic lesson to take their hands off the Jews[.]").[52] In the 1948 *What of the Jews?*, he suggested that Czarist Russia and Nazi Germany had brought on their own demise through their persecution of Jews.[53] On the other hand, Gartenhaus also often presented God as the author of Jewish suffering. Just following his explanation of the fall of the Czars and Nazis in *What of the Jews?*, Gartenhaus added, "Over and over again God has permitted Israel to suffer at the hands of her enemies, but His promise to Abraham remains intact."[54] At times, this slipped into a functional view of Jewish suffering. In the 1930s, for example, he asserted God was using Nazi Germany to weld the Jews into a nation.[55] Gartenhaus never attempted to reconcile these seemingly-contradictory views. If there is an explanation to be had, it likely lies in his dependence on the biblical model of national judgment and deliverance. Beyond that, depicting Jewish suffering as tragic and wrong allowed Gartenhaus to condemn persecution. Depicting Jewish suffering as necessary, on the other hand, allowed him to give meaning to that suffering.

Gartenhaus also urged that God was bringing history to its climax through the Jews. His dispensationalist reading of prophecy led him to anticipate a two-fold

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[52] First quote from Gartenhaus, *The Rebirth of a Nation*, 33; second from *What of the Jews?*, 14.
[53] Gartenhaus, *What of the Jews?*, 21-22.
[54] *Ibid*., 22.
[55] "Missionary Believes God Using Hitler As Tool to Weld New Jewish Nation," *The Daily Current-Argus*, Box 1, Folder 2, Gartenhaus Collection.

national and religious awakening. This, he believed and preached, was already happening in his day. "The eyes of the world today are focused upon the Jew," Gartenhaus claimed in an address he gave repeatedly across the South in the 1920s, "Never were days so fraught with historical significance."[56] The Zionist movement—"one of the most remarkable of all fulfilled prophecies"—represented the prophesied national awakening. The Hebrew Christian movement—characterized as an "unparalleled spiritual revival"—represented the spiritual. In an article reflecting on the inaugural conference of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance in 1925, Gartenhaus noted, "The student of Bible prophecies needs only to hear reports of the marvelous happenings in Palestine and of the inward awakening and acceptance of Christ in large numbers—then such prophecy at once becomes history[.]"[57] Gartenhaus's belief that God was guiding the Jews towards this two-fold climax would color his approach to the Zionist movement.

Gartenhaus on Zionism

A mix of advocacy and prophetic speculation characterized Gartenhaus's approach to the Zionist movement. His tenure with the SBC roughly coincided with the British Mandate in Palestine, beginning almost exactly one year after the establishment of civilian administration in Palestine and ending mere months after the armistice struck between Israel and the surrounding Arab states. As with the other Hebrew Christians with whom he frequently worked, a mixture of national

[56] "Eyes of World on Jew Today," *The Lexington Herald* (August 8, 1927), Box 1, Folder 19, Gartenhaus Collection.
[57] Gartenhaus, "Thy People Israel," Box 1, Folder 2, Gartenhaus Collection.

pride and prophetic interest led Gartenhaus to be an outspoken supporter of Zionism. He lectured and sermonized on the topic frequently, even making it the subject of his first full-length book with the Sunday School Board, *The Rebirth of a Nation: Zionism in History and Prophecy* (1936).

In *The Rebirth of a Nation*, Gartenhaus offered an interpretation of both the prophetic and practical implications of the Zionist movement. His second chapter, "God's Covenant with Israel," offered a dispensationalist reading of the Hebrew Bible, arguing that the biblical covenants between God and ancient Israel were still active, noting "God's ancient covenant still stands."[58] Borrowing from the wording of the Balfour Declaration, Gartenhaus declared that the "covenant which God made with Abraham, which was renewed to Isaac, and again to Jacob, states definitely the geographical boundaries of this national home[.]"[59] Gartenhaus also laid out his approach to prophecies concerning the restoration of the Jewish people to Palestine. He noted there were generally three schools of interpretation: those that held the restoration had occurred in the return from Babylon, those that spiritualized the promised restoration, and those who saw the restoration as an actual event to occur in the future.[60] In determining how best to interpret biblical prophecy, Gartenhaus urged, "The Scriptures are written in a plain and intelligible way and are to be applied to those to whom they were first addressed, where the obvious grammatical and literal meaning is capable of a plain and literal fulfillment and does not

[58] Gartenhaus, *The Rebirth of a Nation*, 39.
[59] *Ibid*., 31.
[60] *Ibid*., 39-40.

contradict other Scriptures."[61] He argued that reading the Bible in this way inevitably led to the belief that the restoration was yet to be fulfilled. Further, he claimed, "The prophecies concerning the return of Israel are being fulfilled before our very eyes."[62] The success of the Zionist movement was assured: "…Zionism is going to win whether anybody likes it or not[…] To oppose it is to oppose God's plan."[63]

Most scholars of Christian Zionism have focused on understanding such hermeneutical bases of Christian support for Zionism *as a movement*.[64] Others have emphasized the interactions between Christians and individual Zionists or Zionist institutions.[65] This, of course, is crucial to understanding Christian Zionism in general and in understanding Gartenhaus's own approach. Zionism itself, though, was more than a movement to build a Jewish state in Palestine. It also encompassed a variety of related but competing ideologies. There were many Zionisms, from Herzl's "political" to Ahad Ha'am's "spiritual" to Chaim Weizmann's "synthetic" and beyond.[66] Besides being a movement to create a Jewish homeland or state in Palestine, Zionism offered a reimagining of what it meant to be a Jew. Gartenhaus

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[61] *Ibid*., 51.
[62] *Ibid*., 39.
[63] *Ibid*., 128.
[64] See works of Malachy, Weber, Rausch, Ariel, Clark, and Smith cited above.
[65] Merkley, *The Politics of Christian Zionism;* Carenen, *The Fervent Embrace.*
[66] For introductions to the varieties of Zionist thought, see Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1997) and Shlomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (NY: Basic Books, 1981); on the different American Jewish approaches to Zionism, see Melvin Urofsky, *American Zionism from Herzl to the Holocaust* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1976) and Ben Halpern, *A Clash of Heroes: Brandeis, Weizmann, and American Zionism* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1987).

and many other Christians who engaged with Zionism were not walled off from these questions.[67] As noted in the previous section, Gartenhaus himself had very specific ideas about Jewish identity and history. Several of them—his emphasis on Jewish nationhood, his rejection of the Rabbinate, and his belief that assimilation could never solve antisemitism—had analogues in mainstream Zionist ideology. Besides understanding his general approach to Jewishness, it is important to recognize that Gartenhaus also had a very specific understanding of the Zionist movement that is worth examining on its own terms. If he told Baptists that Zionism was "going to win whether anybody likes it or not," in other words, what *was* this unbeatable movement?

Gartenhaus depicted the movement—accurately, it should be noted—as evolving out of two contexts. The first was the Jews' centuries-long messianic hope for national restoration to Palestine. Indeed, Gartenhaus argued that it was this hope that had bound and maintained the Jews as a nation throughout the centuries.[68] The second and more immediate was the failure of the Enlightenment and era of emancipation to solve the so-called "Jewish problem" (or problem of antisemitism). Within this latter context, European Jewish intellectuals like Herzl had come to understand that "the homelessness of the Jews was the cause for all their humiliation and suffering, and that only as they became politically a people with their own national home, would there be any home for them."[69] Gartenhaus noted, too, the

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[67] As mentioned in the introduction, perhaps the best work on Christian Zionism in terms of explaining Christian *engagement* with Zionism—rather than simple "support of" it—is Goldman's *Zeal for Zion*.
[68] Gartenhaus, *The Rebirth of a Nation*, 34.
[69] Gartenhaus, *What of the Jews?*, 36.

diversity of opinion among Jews and even among Zionists themselves. He was quite aware of American Jewry's divided attitude towards the movement and noted that many wealthy American Jews were willing to give practical aid to the Yishuv (the pre-state settlement in Palestine) while not supporting the creation of a Jewish state. He noted and explained the distinct objections of both Reform and Orthodox Jews towards the movement. He explained, too, the different approaches of spiritual Zionist Ahad Ha'am and binationalist Judah Magnes.[70] Gartenhaus himself seems to have favored mainstream, institutional political Zionism as embodied in the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency. The fourth chapter of *Rebirth*, "The Interpretation of Zionism," included extended quotations from Albert Einstein, Harry Sacher, and Chaim Weizmann explaining the roots and intentions of the movement. Included in Weizmann's quote—taken from his essay "Zionism and the Jewish problem"—was the assertion that "The task of Zionism[…] is to create a home for the Jewish people in Palestine, to make it possible for large numbers of Jews to settle there and live under conditions in which they can produce a type of life corresponding to the character and ideals of the Jewish people."[71] Though Gartenhaus was certain that Zionism was not *the* solution to the "Jewish problem"—Christ, of course, was his solution—he presented the movement as *an* attempt to solve it.

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[70] Ahad Ha'am sought the creation of a Jewish spiritual or cultural center in Palestine rather than the creation of a state. Judah Magnes, the president of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, advocated the creation of a federated state wherein the Arab and Jewish national groups would share governing authority and maintain a relative degree of national autonomy within the state. For more on binationalism, see Rachel Fish, "Bi-Nationalist Visions for the Construction and Dissolution of the State of Israel" *Israel Studies* 19, no. 2 (Summer 2014): 15-34.

[71] Chaim Weizmann, quoted in Gartenhaus, *The Rebirth of a Nation*, 86.

Like other Baptists, Gartenhaus praised Zionism for bringing modernity to a blighted region. He repeatedly contrasted the innovation of the Zionist settlers against the perceived backwardness of the former Ottoman government and the native Arabs, contrasts that were frequently drawn by western travelers to the region.[72] "It is difficult to believe that Palestine ever was a country 'flowing with milk and honey,'" he noted, "so disastrous to the fertility and welfare of the land has been the blighting hand of the Turk."[73] The Arab farmer "always took what he could from the soil, returning nothing to it[.]"[74] The Zionist settlers, on the other hand, were using modern agronomy to make "two blades of grass grow where only one grew before."[75] He noted, too, the disparity in health and sanitation works: "Arab villages know as little of sanitation, hygiene, or health as they knew before the World War. But the Jews have begun to care for their health, and already they have achieved wonders."[76]

Perhaps most interesting in *The Rebirth of a Nation* was Gartenhaus's elaboration of a Christianized "New Jew" concept. Every form of Zionist ideology

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[72] A quote from Southern Baptist Norfleet Gardner, who traveled to Palestine in the 1930s and was struck by the differences between the predominately Arab Jaffa and the Zionist Tel Aviv, typifies how many westerners contrasted Zionist progress with perceived Arab backwardness: "The old city [Jaffa] is marked by dirty, narrow streets of bad smells. It has a population of 60,000. Adjoining it, however, is Tel-Aviv, the Zionist city, with 72,000 inhabitants, built since the war. You may drive from one into the other, but are able to observe almost immediately the difference. Clean, paved streets, nice homes, good places of business, a long beach lined with bathers, whom we joined, and pleasant citizens made our brief visit here another happy step along the way." From "Joppa," *Biblical Recorder* (January 30, 1935), 13.
[73] Gartenhaus, *The Rebirth of a Nation*, 90.
[74] *Ibid*., 94.
[75] *Ibid*., 93.
[76] *Ibid*., 107.

in some way emphasized the "negation of the Diaspora"—the doffing of the mentalities and habits of life as a scattered minority—and the creation of a "New Jew" in Eretz Israel; thus, there were as many types of "New Jews" as there were types of Zionisms.[77] Gartenhaus's Christian approach to Zionism was no different. He noted that, while Jews were coming to Palestine from all over, "after a few years they all become types of the New Jew."[78] These Jews were "not the slaves to tradition that their fathers were," but "think freely in matters of religion and thank God for it."[79] They were captive neither to the rabbis "with their perplexing sophistry and maze of ridiculous and impossible law and rituals" nor to the "cruel and blood-thirsty world."[80] Gartenhaus saw this negation of the conditions of Diaspora, both internally and externally, as an opportunity for the Christian message: "They are being emptied of all mixed and man-made religions, in order to be more prepared to receive the full blessing of the faith in him, the Unchangeable."[81] After becoming New Jews, they would surely become Hebrew Christians.

Gartenhaus revisited the Zionist movement in detail in a chapter of his 1948 mission study manual, *What of the Jews?*. Looking back, he considered the movement a great success on Zionist terms, noting "More than a half million victims of prejudice and intolerance have been enabled, without infringing on the rights of any other people or religious group, to remake their lives in dignity and

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[77] Yitzhak Conforti, "'The New Jew' in the Zionist Movement: Ideology and Historiography," *Australian Journal for Jewish Studies* (2011): 87-118.
[78] Gartenhaus, *The Rebirth of a Nation*, 117.
[79] *Ibid*., 126.
[80] *Ibid*., 126.
[81] *Ibid*., 126.

self-reliance on their ancestral soil."[82] Not only had Zionism proven successful for Jews, but it had become "a boon to the Arabs[,]" who received "more employment, better sanitation and health, and more education, without which they would have remained in the uncivilized state in which they had lived for centuries."[83] Still, Gartenhaus recognized a growing crisis in the wake of the White Paper of 1939, which had abandoned Britain's plan of partition and enacted severe immigration restrictions on Jews (the manuscript for *What of the Jews?* must have been submitted in early 1947; it shows no knowledge of the U.N. Partition Plan or Great Britain's impending withdrawal). He criticized the White Paper on essentially Zionist terms, arguing that it meant "the complete reversal of British policy toward the Jew in Palestine."[84] Tying the issue of Jewish immigration to the Holocaust, Gartenhaus argued, "Unless THE WHITE PAPER is abolished, there is no hope left for the stricken and homeless Jews who may survive the greatest persecution in their history, and new rivers of Jewish blood may flow in Europe."[85] He added his hope that Jews and "their friends in the United States and in the rest of the world" would bring pressure "to keep the doors of Palestine open."[86] As might be expected, Gartenhaus paired this largely secular appraisal with a confirmation of the prophetic implications of the movement, concluding "The Jew will have Palestine with or without the help of Britain or any other nation on the earth!"[87] By the time *What of*

[82] Gartenhaus, *What of the Jews?*, 40.
[83] *Ibid*., 41.
[84] *Ibid*., 44.
[85] *Ibid*., 44.
[86] *Ibid*., 44.
[87] *Ibid*., 47.

the Jews? was published, his prophecy had been confirmed. The State of Israel already existed.

Conclusion

In Gartenhaus's autobiography, written decades after his tenure with the Home Mission Board, the missionary implied that his departure from denominational mission work in 1949 had been tied to his agitation over the lack of a strong Baptist stance on the Holocaust. He suggested, too, that his denominational superiors had long been antagonistic to his work and had "tried on several occasions to do away with the Department of Jewish Evangelism[.]"[88] In truth, the Home Mission Board had only increased its support of Gartenhaus's mission in the years leading up to his dismissal, attempting to enlarge the work through the hiring of a secretary and an additional field worker. Gartenhaus was actually fired in March 1949 over allegations of misconduct made by the newly-hired field worker, Lucille McKinney.[89] It was the second time he had faced such accusations.[90] Though McKinney would retract her allegations four years later, Gartenhaus was never brought back to the Home Mission Board.[91] He moved on quickly, serving as president of the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America until 1951 (he had begun in 1948) and founding the International Board of Jewish Missions (IBJM) in Atlanta in

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[88] *Traitor?*, 211.
[89] "Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Home Mission Board," (March 3, 1949), 182, Box 8, Item 3, Home Mission Board Minutes.
[90] Rogers to J.B. Lawrence, 26 May 1938, Box 3, Folder 8, Home Mission Board Executive Office Files, SBHLA.
[91] "Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Home Mission Board," (November 28, 1952), 121, Box 8, Item 9, Home Mission Board Minutes.

1949, which still operates to this day (its headquarters were moved to Chattanooga in 1971).

It is not possible to gauge with any sort of precision how much influence Gartenhaus had on Southern Baptists' approach to Zionism and the Palestine question.[92] It is, however, possible to say that no other single figure had more influence than Gartenhaus. Throughout the Mandate era, the missionary and convert was the dominant Southern Baptist voice on matters relating to Jews and Judaism, a voice that spoke with a Yiddish inflection to say, over and over again throughout the South, that Zionism was "God's plan."

[92] It is worth noting that Gartenhaus's pastor at Atlanta First Baptist Church, Ellis Fuller, joined the pro-Zionist American Palestine Committee in the early 1940s. File 359, Emanuel Neumann Papers (hereafter "Neumann Papers"), CZA.

Chapter Six

The Graded Mission Study Series

In 1936 and 1937 the Foreign Mission Board published a series of mission study books on Palestine. It was one among six such series published by the Board, which was seeking to educate the Baptist population on its various missions and mission fields. Each series focused on a particular field—Europe, China, Africa, South America, or Palestine—and was graded for different age groups—Sunbeams and Primaries, Juniors, Intermediates, Young People, and Adults.[1] The Foreign Mission Board published the series to be used in conjunction with mission study courses put on by Woman's Missionary Unions throughout the South (the following chapter will examine in more detail the role of the WMU in missionary education). Several contained built-in lesson plans. The series marked the Southern Baptist Convention's largest single effort to educate the Baptist public on Palestine during the Mandate era.

With one crucial exception, all of the Palestine works were written by current or former missionaries. While stationed at Haifa, Doreen Hosford Owens wrote two narrative works, *The Camel Bell* and *The Village Oven*, intended for Primaries and Juniors.[2] Both were short and filled with illustrations; *The Village Oven* included a lesson plan. Former missionary Mattie Watts collaborated with Velora Hanna (then at Nazareth) and Roswell Owens (Haifa) in producing *Questing*

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[1] Annabelle Coleman, the Foreign Mission Board's first Secretary of Publicity was tasked with preparing "a graded series and cycle of mission study literature for children and young people" in 1934. Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1934, 163.

[2] Doreen Hosford Owens, *The Camel Bell* (Richmond: Foreign Mission Board, 1937); Owens, *The Village Oven* (Richmond: Foreign Mission Board, 1937).

in Galilee, a series of brief instructional biographies aimed at Intermediates and Young People.[3] Watts also penned *Palestinian Tapestries* for Young People and Adults.[4] The lone non-missionary among the authors was J. McKee Adams, a Bible scholar and SBTS professor who had visited Palestine on several occasions and occasionally published articles on the topic.[5] His *The Heart of the Levant* was longest (a mere 163 pages) and most academic of the series, although it maintained the series' emphasis on readability and included a small number of photographs. These were not weighty reads, but primers.

These works not only offer a look into how several Southern Baptist missionaries understood the land, people, and politics of Palestine, but how their perspectives were deliberately presented to Baptists throughout the South. Doreen Hosford Owens's *The Village Oven*, which included a lesson plan for a Sunday school mission study course, is especially instructive in this regard. The stated purpose of the lesson plan was to "develop an abiding interest in and a friendly feeling toward the peoples who live today in 'the Land of Our Lord.'"[6] Further, the plan sought "to guide the Juniors through a comprehensive study of these countries, their peoples, their fine traits, their customs, and their needs.[…] It further aims to lead the Juniors to desire to respond to the needs and to have a part in making known to these peoples God's love for them."[7] Other goals were made clear through the instructions for individual lesson plans. Session 4 was partially devoted to

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[3] *Questing in Galilee* (Richmond: Foreign Mission Board, 1937)
[4] Mattie Watts, *Palestinian Tapestries* (Richmond: Foreign Mission Board, 1936)
[5] J. McKee Adams, *The Heart of the Levant* (Richmond: Foreign Mission Board, 1937).
[6] Doreen Hosford Owens, *The Village Oven*, 17.
[7] *Ibid*., 17.

helping students get "an unprejudiced idea of the friction between Mohammedans and Arabs, and Arabs and Jews in Palestine."[8] *Questing in Galilee*, which also included a lesson plan for Intermediates, laid out nearly identical goals, including "to comprehend the reasons for the prejudice and hatred existing between the Moslems, the Jews, and the nominal 'Christians' of the Catholic churches; to think about practical ways of responding to the needs of Palestine-Syria."[9] Despite having different authors, the books in the Palestine mission study series were conceived of as an integral whole designed around these goals. Many emphases and themes thus permeate each grade of book. As will be seen below, the authors tended to share similar views of the land and the people of Palestine. When it came to politics, however, there was far less agreement.

The Land

All of the authors emphasized Palestine's place as the Holy Land. The land was significant because of its biblical heritage. Adams, writing to adults, noted "the traveler can be fairly certain that he is following the roads hallowed by the steps of the Master and the prophets of ancient Israel."[10] Owens, writing in narrative form for children, had her husband say to a Nazarene Arab of Palestine, "It is a land precious to us because it is the land in which God's Son lived when he was on earth."[11] This holiness and heritage called for special missionary attention in the present. Adams and the missionaries alike repeatedly emphasized the debt that

[8] *Ibid*., 53.
[9] *Questing in Galilee*, 18.
[10] Adams, *The Heart of the Levant*, 30.
[11] D. Owens, *The Camel Bell*, 42.

Baptist Christians owed Palestine for the Gospel: "We owe it to Palestine to give back all that we have received and to give it with a sense of privilege."[12] Finally, the authors depicted Palestine (particularly Jerusalem) as remaining central to God's plan for history and as integral to the future of mankind. "In times past God has manifested himself in marvelous ways in Jerusalem," wrote Watts, "In times to come, according to His promises, He will do so again."[13]

Adams and Watts, writing for older readers, asserted that Jerusalem and Palestine were not only central to God's plans, but were strategically located at the crossroads of the modern world. "It will be readily seen that the territory of Palestine-Syria lies at the heart of the eastern Mediterranean world and that it is strategic and determinative in all Near East affairs," wrote Adams.[14] Tying the spiritual importance of the region to its more temporal importance, he added, "The historic function of this area in the redemptive program, when its conflicts and contacts definitely influenced the experiences of the Chosen People, is being repeated today, when its political, social, and economic struggles exert tremendous influence on all surrounding peoples."[15] "Palestine is still beside the cross roads of the commercial world," wrote Watts, "Palestine is again a nerve center of its sentiments."[16]

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[12] Adams, *Heart*, 143; from D. Owens, *The Camel Bell*, 42: "[The land] is precious to us because so many people live here who have never heard of God's love and of our Saviour."
[13] M. Watts, *Palestinian Tapestries*, 79.
[14] Adams, *Heart*, 31.
[15] *Ibid*., 31.
[16] M. Watts, *Palestinian Tapestries*, 81.

Also prominent in both Adams's and Watts's approaches was the state of the actual land itself. Both depicted a long-dormant and neglected land being revivified by the achievements of the Zionist movement. "An old, old land which has seen few changes in many centuries is suddenly awake," wrote Watts.[17] Elsewhere she alluded to Isaiah 35 in noting, "Space does not permit us to tell of the wonders that have been wrought in making this desolate land to 'blossom as the rose.'"[18] Even Adams, far from a Christian Zionist, found himself relying on the allusion in noting, "Neglected plains and valleys, abandoned areas by the seashore, have been reclaimed by irrigation and artesian water supply, and made to blossom like the rose."[19]

The People

A repeated goal of the authors of the series was to "develop an abiding interest in and a friendly feeling toward the peoples who live today in 'the Land of Our Lord.'"[20] This included both Jews and Arabs. However, it must be remembered that the overarching goal of the mission study manuals was to encourage support of missions. To that end, any portrait of foreign peoples was designed to highlight their potential as converts. This called for a mixture of identification—emphasizing commonalities between Arabs or Jews and Baptists—and differentiation—emphasizing the need for Arabs and Jews to turn to Christ.

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[17] *Ibid.*, 24.
[18] *Ibid*., 30.
[19] Adams, *Heart*, 124.
[20] D. Owens, *The Village Oven*, 17.

Arabs

Most of the texts attempted to draw a racially-inclusive portrait of Arabs as whites. "The Arab people are white people," asserted Doreen Owens in *The Camel Bell*, "When they are not sunburned, their skin is quite white."[21] Mattie Watts likewise urged, "All of these Palestinian Arabs are of the white race."[22] Only J. McKee Adams drew the distinction of Arabs being a Semitic people (and only then to assert that since Arabs and Jews "are of the same Semitic stock[,]" their conflict is not essentially racial).[23]

Doreen Owens, who had chiefly worked among Arabs in Nazareth and Haifa, was particularly interested in getting Baptist children to identify with their Arab counterparts. The lesson plans in *The Village Oven* included instructions for teachers to teach their students "that the boys and girls are warm-hearted, like to play and are eager for adventure just as the boys an girls of America are[,]" with the goal of leading the class "into a feeling of comradeship and friendly fellowship with the boys and girls of Nazareth."[24] Both of her books featured narratives told from the perspective of Arab children. Owens even drew parallels between her recurring character Assad (based on a real boy named Assad Shorrosh) and Jesus: "[…] even though Jesus was a Jew and [Assad] was an Arab, they both knew what it meant to be boys in Palestine."[25]

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[21] D. Owens, *The Camel Bell*, 14.
[22] M. Watts, *Tapestries*, 28.
[23] Adams, *Heart*, 91.
[24] D. Owens, *The Village Oven*, 44.
[25] D. Owens, *The Village Oven*, 62.

The extent of Baptist identification with Arabs was circumscribed by their potential as converts. Spiritual and cultural "deficiencies" were frequently intertwined. Arab Christians, for their part, were understood as Christian in name only—the modifier "nominal" was *de rigueur* in Baptist descriptions of Orthodox or Catholic Christians. The series' authors offered commonplace Protestant critiques of Orthodox and Catholic Christians, depicting them as overly ritualistic, superstitious, and idolatrous with regard to sacred places and relics.[26] Adams was clear on this: "…nominal Christian bodies have largely succeeded in obscuring the true nature of spiritual religion" through the "introduction of sacraments, hierarchy, mediators, indulgences, feasts, holy days and holy places."[27] The lesson guide accompanying *Questing in Galilee* called on teachers to help students "comprehend the reasons for the prejudice and hatred existing between the Moslems, the Jews, and the nominal 'Christians' of the Catholic churches[.]"[28] In *The Camel Bell*, Owens's protagonist Assad declares that "the people here in Nazareth surely forgot the things Jesus told them day by day in his carpenter's shop."[29]

Baptist authors likewise depicted Muslims as idolatrous and, often, fanatical. They depicted Islam as not just a different religion from Christianity, but an inimical one. The lone footnote in Owens's *The Camel Bell* was used to incorrectly define a "Mo-ham-me-dan" as "a person who, instead of believing in Jesus, prays to a man

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[26] The entire history of Protestantism is intertwined with criticism of Orthodoxy/Catholicism. The missionaries' critiques of Arab Christianity particularly echoed the observations of Protestant travelers to the region from the 19th century onward. Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land*, 117-140.
[27] Adams, *Levant*, 53.
[28] *Questing in Galilee*, 18.
[29] D. Owens, *The Camel Bell*, 22.

named Mo-ham-med who died hundreds of years ago."[30] In a discussion of demography in Palestine, Mattie Watts noted, "Two-thirds of her people today[…] are Mohammedans, defying the most sacred principles of Christ."[31] Although the authors depicted Muslims as specifically inimical to Christian truth, they sometimes betrayed an appreciation for Islamic piety. "They are fanatical," J. Wash Watts noted in *Palestinian Tapestries*, "Yet, many[…] are deeply religious. One cannot go into these mosques, note their beauty, their quiet, their meditative atmosphere, and not realize that there is in the hearts of this people something fine to which we may appeal."[32] Sympathy for Muslims, however, did not mean sympathy for Islam. In contrast to local Christians who "traffic in religious faith[,]" the "average Moslem seems to us more like the sympathetic one of the story; one who is duped, one who fanatically supports a travesty on truth because he still believes it is the truth."[33] J. McKee Adams demonstrated similar ambiguity while noting his respect for "our Mohammedan friends who, faithful in daily prayers and devotions, turn their faces toward Mecca, or Jerusalem, and witness to their conviction that 'there is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet,' but little know what that profession means either as to God or Mohammed."[34]

Of particular interest to Baptist authors was the "evil eye," which frequently served as a representative superstition. Belief that envious or hateful glances had actual destructive power does seem to have been relatively widespread among Arab

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[30] *Ibid*., 25. The belief that Muslims worship Muhammad was widespread among Southern Baptists.
[31] M. Watts, *Palestinian Tapestries*, 13.
[32] J. Wash Watts, quoted in *Palestinian Tapestries*, 39.
[33] *Ibid*., 39.
[34] Adams, *Levant*, 52.

Christians (as well as among Muslims and Middle Eastern Jews).[35] Baptist authors, particularly the missionaries, frequently positioned their evangelical Christianity against the ritualistic measures locals took against the eye. In *The Camel Bell*, the mother of a sick child believes the eye caused her son's illness. She refuses to take him to a missionary doctor, instead dangling blue beads on his forehead. The child's sister reports, "Our grandmother taught us that these evil-eye beads will keep away the evil spells of those evil, blue eyes of the foreigners."[36] Here Owens deliberately contrasted local ritual practice with evangelical Christianity, intertwined with modern medicine through the missionary doctor. Mattie Watts's descriptions of Arab culture in *Palestinian Tapestries* likewise emphasized the eye. "The new-born baby may wear clothes or none, according to the season of year, but certainly he will wear a number of charms and amulets. Almost all of the peoples of Palestine, whether Moslem, nominal Christian or Jew, believe in the power of the 'Evil Eye.'"[37] Tying superstition to the perceived "filth" of Arab children—and thus spiritual deficiency to a lack of modern hygiene—Watts added, "To look admiringly at a child is a form of the 'Evil Eye,' and to prevent this from happening many

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[35] For some ritualistic practices concerning the evil eye in Greater Syria at the turn of the 20th century, see Ghosn el-Howie, "The Evil Eye," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (April 1904): 148-150; on the evil eye in Islam, see Ph. Marçais, "ʿAyn," *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* 2nd edition, eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs (Brill Online, 2014) accessed December 10 2014, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-2/ayn-SIM_0908; in Judaism, Rivka Ulmer, "Evil Eye in Judaism." *Encyclopaedia of Judaism* (Brill Online, 2014) accessed December 10 2014, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-judaism/evil-eye-in-judaism-COM_0058

[36] D. Owens, *The Camel Bell*, 4.

[37] M. Watts, *Palestinian Tapestries*, 36.

lovely children are dressed in the oldest, the dirtiest, the most ragged clothes, and are allowed to run about filthy and unkempt."[38]

Baptists were also critical of Arab family life and gender roles. The overarching critique was that Arab men were excessively harsh to both women and children. In both of Doreen Owens's child novellas, a harsh "traditional" family is contrasted with a loving convert family. In *The Village Oven*, Owens remarks of her protagonist Assad, "Often he noticed that his own father was more thoughtful and kind than the father of his little playmates next door."[39] In *The Camel Bell*, a girl from an Arab Christian family longs for the love and kindness she sees in Assad's family life and begins to wonder if the missionaries have a role in it:

> As Ameeni stood watching her friends go down the trail, she wondered what made them so different from her family. A strange longing came into her heart. She wanted to learn the secret of their kind words and ways. They always seemed so happy together.[…] Ameeni wondered if their friendship with those blue-eyed foreigners, and their going down to the church had anything to do with that family's being so kind and different. She wished that her own family were like them.[40]

Jameeli, Ameeni's brother in the book, is also struck by the family's loving ways. He is puzzled when Assad's mother holds her son's hand and when she refers to her daughter as "dear." "That was something which Arabs never did," Owens notes through Jameeli. "A girl-child was called 'good-for-nothing,' or some other unkind name. And a boy always walked in front of a woman or girl, and never by her side."[41] Such sentiments were echoed in Mattie Watts's *Palestinian Tapestries*. When a girl is born to Arab parents, she noted, "she is received with dismal faces

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[38] *Ibid*., 36.
[39] D. Owens, *The Village Oven*, 63.
[40] D. Owens, *The Camel Bell*, 16.
[41] *Ibid*., 71.

and loud laments."[42] Velora Hanna's biography of Munira Mosa in *Questing in Galilee* likewise mentioned that Munira's Protestant parents celebrated her birth "contrary to the custom in the Holy Land, for people rejoice when sons are born, but rarely when a daughter is born."[43] The treatment of women in Palestinian Arab society was a special concern for the missionaries. Hanna's biography of Munira Mosa noted, "Her heart ached at the poverty, the ignorance, the neglected babyhood, and the abused womanhood surrounding her."[44] A major contributor to this "abused womanhood" was Palestinian marriage practice. In *Palestinian Tapestries*, Mattie Watts described Arab marriages as "business arrangements between parents or their representatives."[45] Women were essentially transacted property in these arrangements. The bridegroom "has bargained for his bride as he would for a sheep or a goat, has paid the price, and may take her or leave her as he chooses."[46] Most often such marriages "lead to much unhappiness and misery."[47] Of course, the cure for these entangled ills was conversion. Only Christ could make Arab men into loving husbands and Arab women into sturdy wives and daughters.

Zionist Jews

In terms of religion, Baptist authors described Jews as a wayward chosen people, defined by paths alternate to Christ. Though each author affirmed their chosenness, the significance of chosenness varied. Mattie Watts opened her section on Jews in

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[42] M. Watts, *Palestinian Tapestries*, 35.
[43] V. Hanna, "Questing in Galilee," *Questing in Galilee*, 26.
[44] *Ibid.*, 35.
[45] M. Watts, *Palestinian Tapestries*, 34.
[46] *Ibid*., 35.
[47] *Ibid*., 35.

Palestinian Tapestries by declaring, "A chosen people they have been, and so they remain."[48] One aspect of this chosenness (explored more thoroughly in the following section) was the providential return of Jews to Palestine—the "first aid promised" by God to the Jews.[49] This return, though, was only a prelude to God's true goal, "the spiritual restoration of Israel" in Christ.[50] J. McKee Adams, less convinced of God's providence in Zionism, nonetheless emphasized the Jews' status as a chosen people. Indeed, his chapter focusing on Jews in the ancient and modern eras was titled "The Chosen People in Relation to Palestine."

The authors tended to cast Jewish religious or political movements as either intentional deviations from Christian truth or vain distractions from it. Mattie Watts broke Jews down into the categories of "Orthodox," "liberal," and "socialistic." Her description of the Orthodox raised age-old Christian charges of Pharisaism—"These ritualistic Jews hold so strictly to the many, many laws laid down by their rabbis through the years that they are guilty of the very things that Jesus laid at the door of the Pharisees of his day."[51] Liberals, on the other hand, were filled with spiritual yearning and a desire to leave tradition behind. Unwittingly—as she saw it—they sought Christ. The "socialistic" group "has lost all belief in God, and has made socialism its religion."[52] Watts concluded her section on socialistic Jews by contrasting Christianity and Communism as two movements "launched by Jews[,]" noting that a Communist Jew may "retain his place in Jewish national life" while a

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[48] M. Watts, *Tapestries*, 28.
[49] *Ibid*., 83.
[50] *Ibid*., 83.
[51] *Ibid.*, 32.
[52] *Ibid*., 33.

Christian Jew "is immediately called a 'traitor' by his own people."[53] J. McKee Adams, a Bible scholar, drew on New Testament typology in categorizing modern Jews, noting:

> The modern Jew follows in general the line of demarcation existing in ancient Israel: the *Pharisee* whose perversion of the picture of the Messiah was accomplished by the introduction of a purely political significance, which still obtains and renders it so difficult for him to recognize the glory of Israel manifested; the modern *Sadducee*, a kind of extraverted Jew, has grasped at materiality so intently, and compromised his spirituality so easily, that he has practically lost both.[54]

In pursuing Pharisaic politics or Sadduceean materialism, the modern Jew had brought a "pitiable diminution in his fidelity to his spiritual heritage."[55] To have remained truly faithful to that heritage, in Adams's eyes, would have meant turning to Christ.

If Jews were religiously wayward, the Zionists nonetheless had many admirable qualities. Both Watts and Adams lauded their hard work and devotion in bringing modernity to Palestine. Watts noted that Jews had "poured millions of dollars and thousand of men and women into the re-building of Palestine."[56] "Space does not permit us," she added, "to tell of the wonders that have been wrought in making this desolate land to 'blossom as the rose.'"[57] Among the blossoms were "rapid colonization… agricultural developments… industrial projects… engineering fetes… sanitation… hospitals and clinics… fine schools and… the great Hebrew

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[53] *Ibid.*, 33.
[54] Adams, *Levant*, 153-54.
[55] *Ibid*., 153.
[56] M. Watts, *Tapestries*, 30.
[57] *Ibid*., 30.

University on Mt. Scopus."[58] The Zionists were "stalwart, educated young people" who were ready to work in fulfilling their dream—"to drain swamps, to break rocks, to build highways, to earn a livelihood from this land, so long neglected."[59] They were determined to claim their God-given inheritance: "No physical hardships, no governmental regulations concerning immigration or business, no massacres at the hands of the Arabs have been able to quench the enthusiasm and feverish activity of these who are working in the belief that this is their land and home, promised by God to their father, Abraham."[60] Though J. McKee Adams viewed the Zionist movement as politically problematic (something explored in more detail below), he praised it on terms similar to Watts. In addition to reviving the land and building up the country's industry, the Zionists had revived the Hebrew language and reawakened Jewish life and thought.[61] As did Watts, Adams praised the Hebrew University, describing it as "one of the finest products of Zionism, whose avowed function is to inspire and to influence the life and civilization of the Hebrew people."[62] Like Watts, too, Adams simply found admirably qualities in the Zionist settlers themselves—"…the spirit of sacrifice, the heroic devotion to a most difficult undertaking, and the unfailing consecration of young and old to the reclaimed homeland of a wandering and dispersed people."[63] While both praising the

[58] *Ibid*., 30-31.
[59] *Ibid*., 31.
[60] *Ibid*., 31.
[61] Adams, *Levant*, 124.
[62] *Ibid.*, 125.
[63] *Ibid*., 126.

movement, though, both Watts and Adams made it clear that Zionism was no substitute for what the Jews truly needed—Christ.[64]

Politics

The Foreign Mission Board published its graded mission series on Palestine just as revolt was breaking out among Palestinian Arabs against both Zionist settlement and British rule. The series also came as the British were releasing the report of the Peel Commission, which called for partition of the land into two states—one Arab and one Jewish.[65] While these developments did not make it into the series, the shape and stakes of the conflict were already clear. The authors did not avoid it. Even Doreen Owens, writing for children, wove the tensions between Arab and Jew into the plot of *The Village Oven*. The lesson plan included in the book called for teachers to impart "an unprejudiced idea of the friction between Mohammedans and Arabs, and Arabs and Jews in Palestine."[66] Mattie Watts opened *Palestinian Tapestries* by declaring, "A million children of Ishmael and of Esau are expressing in no uncertain terms their resentment at the presence of more than 400,000 sons of Jacob in Palestine."[67] *Questing in Galilee* declared comprehending "the reasons for the prejudice and hatred existing between the Moslems, the Jews, and the nominal

[64] *Ibid.*, 142: "Whether Zionism succeeds or fails is a secondary question: *the Jews* will never succeed until they receive their rejected Messiah!"; M. Watts, *Tapestries*, 83: "Restoration to the Promised Land may be a means to an end in God's providence, but never an end in itself."
[65] William Robert Wellesley Peel, *Palestine Royal Commission Report* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1937).
[66] D. Owens, *The Village Oven*, 53.
[67] M. Watts, *Tapestries*, 5.

'Christians' of the Catholic churches" as an educational goal.[68] J. McKee Adams devoted the entire second half of *The Heart of the Levant* to the conflict. On this topic, Baptist authors offered noticeably different takes.

There was, however, one common conclusion—that Christ somehow offered the only true way to settle the conflict. In Owens's *The Village Oven*, this was demonstrated through the relationship between Assad, a faithful Arab Baptist, and Jacob Levi, an as-yet unconverted Jew, in Haifa. The two meet when Assad finds Jacob injured in the street after being hit by a car. Assad takes Jacob to the hospital, repeatedly returning in the following days to check in on his health. At first, Jacob is skeptical of Assad's intentions: "He had never felt like saying 'thank you' to an Arab before, and that same ugly feeling made him keep silent now."[69] Jacob "had always hated the Arabs and had thought that all the Arabs hated him because he was a Jew."[70] However, Assad's gospel-inspired example wears him down—"But here was a little Arab boy who evidently loved him—how could that be?"[71] The novel ends with Jacob coming to attend the mission's Christmas service with Assad—the birth of Christ bringing Arab and Jew together. J. McKee Adams echoed this for adult audiences, urging, "It is our conviction that warring factions in Palestine and Syria will never cease from struggle until Christ is brought again into the midst of their relations."[72] Believing that evangelism was the only way to bring peace to the

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[68] *Questing in Galilee*, 18.
[69] D. Owens, *The Village Oven*, 125.
[70] *Ibid*., 125.
[71] *Ibid.,* 126.
[72] Adams, *Levant*, 142.

region, though, did not preclude Baptist authors from expressing sympathy for each side in the intensifying conflict.

Mattie Watts viewed the return of Jews to Palestine on prophetic terms. This did not necessarily mean, though, that she saw the Zionist movement itself as divinely-ordained: "Would that we might say of [the Zionists] that they are seeking God's will and reading His Book! But Zionism is a political, and not a religious movement. Nationalism, and not a spirit of consecration to a God-given task, leads them on."[73] Even so, the movement could serve God's purposes. Discussing the role of "Gentiles" (here meaning "missionaries"), Watts noted:

> God promises to use Gentiles to help accomplish the perfection of Israel and Jerusalem. The bringing of Israelites back to the Promised Land is the first aid promised (cf. Isaiah 66:20). An infinitely greater aid is also promised. God says he will use some of these Gentiles 'for priests and Levites' (cf. Isaiah 66:21)….The supreme concern of these spiritual leaders whom Jehovah brings to the aid of Israel must be the spiritual restoration of Israel.[74]

The return of Jews to Palestine would set the stage for an ultimate missionary effort to bring Jews to Christ. Consequently, "Restoration to the Promised Land may be a means to an end in God's providence, but never an end in itself."[75] Believing that God may be behind the return of Jews to Palestine did not necessarily spell support for the creation of a Jewish state—the ultimate political goal of the Zionist movement. An Arab state or British protectorate could theoretically allow restoration without sovereignty. Within the political context of the late 1930s, though, it would have meant support for the Zionists against the Arabs—who sought

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[73] M. Watts, *Palestinian Tapestries*, 31.
[74] *Ibid.*, 83.
[75] *Ibid*., 83.

to stop Jewish immigration—and the British, who as of 1939 sought to restrict it. Arabs, for their part, do not appear as political beings in Watts's *Palestinian Tapestries*. Though Watts devoted large sections to describing Arab life and culture, she made no mention of Palestinian or Arab nationalism and did not explore the logic of Arab resistance to Zionism. The closest she came was in the opening lines of the book, claiming, "Rumor says that Communists, Fascists, and the two hundred and fifty million people of the Moslem world are keeping the pot of friction boiling."[76] Citing such "rumor" was not meant to evoke sympathy for the Palestinian Arab cause.

J. McKee Adams, on the other hand, argued that in "any question regarding the future of Syria-Palestine, by every canon of justice and fair-play, the Arab is the man of first importance."[77] As mentioned above, there was much that Adams admired about the Zionists. However, he also viewed maximalist Zionist interpretations of the Balfour Declaration as the source of Arab-Jewish hostilities. "In all likelihood," he argued, "the omission of one word (national) from that pronouncement would have guaranteed at least order in the country, and would have assured a surface agreement between Jews and Arabs with regard to political questions."[78] The "aggressive wing of Zionism," though, had latched on to that offending word, insisting on "emphasizing the national aspect of the Jewish re-patriation in the Holy Land; the *nation* [i.e., "nation state"] of the Jews is the *one*

[76] *Ibid*., 5.
[77] Adams, *Levant*, 109.
[78] *Ibid*., 92.

condition of successful Zionism, the ultimate objective of all Zionistic effort and propaganda."[79]

Arabs were right to be troubled. They had been "in actual possession of the Syrian-Palestinian territory since the days of Mohammed[,]" something "not to be regarded lightly[.]"[80] Their cause, though, was not just a matter of avoiding dispossession, but of realizing a pan-Arab national dream. This dream had "always been at the base of all Arab aspirations[.]"[81] It was "the subject matter of old men's dreams and the visions of youth, the one aspect of Arab life and thought which claims support from all factions, sects and classes, and which transcends even religious differences between Moslem and Christian, uniting both in a powerful surge of nationalistic fervor—the rebirth of an Arab State!"[82] Arabs throughout the Levant were organizing around this dream, developing political societies and working through colleges and universities. They were crafting a "new nationalism which intends to achieve the full expression of Arab independence, namely, the creation of a national independent government within the framework of a recognized and respected constitution."[83]

The heart of the issue for Adams was that the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine would necessarily mean an unjust dispossession of the Arabs. "The spectre of dispossession hangs over the Arabs," he noted, "It is their fear that they are on the

[79] *Ibid*., 93.
[80] *Ibid*., 108-109.
[81] *Ibid*., 110.
[82] *Ibid*., 110-111.
[83] *Ibid*., 112.

verge of losing their homeland in favor of providing a homeland for the Jews."[84] This fear was justified, as was Arab opposition to Zionism. Any "unprejudiced observer" would agree, too, that the related issues of land sales and Jewish immigration likewise threatened displacement. Baptists "could hardly expect them to be willing to make that sacrifice…to get out and to leave the country for the Jews."[85] For Adams, the only solution that could bring "even a semblance of peace" would be the "explicit denial of and cessation from any political schemes of Zionism which seek ultimately a *Jewish state in Palestine* and the consequent *dispossession of the Arab*."[86] The easiest step in this direction would be the aforementioned removal of the word "national" from the Balfour Declaration. In calling for this, Adams placed himself close to the British policy adopted in the 1939 White Paper, which abandoned partition and, according to Zionists, abandoned the promises of the Balfour Declaration by limiting Jewish immigration and land purchases. To Adams, there should be no Jewish state.

Conclusion

With the publication of the graded mission study series in 1936 and 1937, Southern Baptists of all ages had several new resources with which to shape their understanding of Palestine. The series would prove most important, though, for the Woman's Missionary Union and its local associations, which were the foremost Southern Baptist institutions devoted to mission study. As will be seen in the

[84] *Ibid*., 116.
[85] *Ibid*., 116.
[86] *Ibid*., 95.

following chapter, the publication of the series did bring a shift in how the WMU taught its charges about Palestine and the Palestine question. Leading this shift was J. McKee Adams's *The Heart of the Levant*, which for the first time made Arab political concerns a topic of conversation.

Chapter Seven

Auxiliaries

If the SBC's missionaries provided crucial channels through which Southern Baptists encountered Palestine, it might be said that the Woman's Missionary Union were their corps of engineers. Founded as an auxiliary to the missionary efforts of the SBC in 1888, the national WMU and its thousands of affiliate Woman's Missionary Societies were built around two tasks—fundraising and missionary education. As has already been noted in the chapters "Missionaries" and "Jew," the national and local WMUs were crucial in supporting domestic and foreign missionary efforts. Perhaps more important than material support, however, was the Woman's Missionary Unions' role in missionary education. Building on efforts that had begun in local women's societies, in 1907 the Convention-wide WMU began vigorously promoting systematic mission study. By 1918, 2,900 societies in fifteen states were conducting mission study courses using materials provided by the Home Mission Board.[1] Soon thereafter, the WMU began organizing graded courses for Sunday school students of all ages. The national WMU set the curricula, offering plans of study, lessons, book suggestions, and book reviews in its official journal, *Royal Service*. Each month had a distinctive thematic focus. The Woman's Missionary Union thus came to be among the most important pedagogical institutions in the Southern Baptist Convention. If Southern Baptist Theological Seminary led in prestige, the W.M.U. led in reach. The lessons published in *Royal Service* were taught in thousands of affiliate societies across the South. Engagement

[1] *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman, 1958), s.v. "Woman's Missionary Union."

with SBC publications was even enforced. Among nine other criteria, the convention-wide WMU would withhold its "A-1" rating from local societies if they did not have "two denominational periodicals in at least one-half of the homes represented in the society."[2] In 1922, it reported 573 A-1 societies (6,902 met four of the ten criteria).[3] Because of this, the Woman's Missionary Union was likely *the* single most important institution in shaping Baptist perspectives on the Palestine question.

The structure of *Royal Service* reflected the WMU's pedagogical orientation. Each issue featured a "program material" section that provided the content for specific lessons. In issues that concerned specific mission fields, such as examined here, the program material typically gave background information on the field—its history, its geography, its people, and so on—and described Southern Baptist work in it. The accompanying "program plan" specifically described how local union leaders should teach the material, suggesting skits and posters that would reinforce the message. Each issue also contained sections on how to implement these materials in more specific group meetings like the Business Women's Circles, as well as relevant book reviews and Bible studies.

Fourteen issues of *Royal Service* featured material related to Palestine during the Mandate era. Only six of these, though, focused specifically on Palestine or the "Near East." The same number included Palestine in the context of discussing Jews. The remaining two concerned the broader Islamic world. From this simple survey, it is clear that the W.M.U. primarily related to Palestine through its relationship to the

[2] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1926, 76.
[3] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual,* 1922, 80.

Jews. Every issue concerning Palestine dealt extensively with the region's Jews. Every issue concerning Jews—even if the focus was on domestic mission efforts—dealt also with Palestine. Because of this, missionary and Hebrew Christian Jacob Gartenhaus occupied a prominent position among spokespeople for the region. Even when not directly cited in the program material, Gartenhaus's influence could be felt on any sections concerning Jews or Palestine. It was only after the publication of a graded mission study series on Palestine in 1936 and 1937 that the editors of *Royal Service* had a base of subject material with which they could construct programs that dealt more extensively with Palestine's non-Jewish populations.

Palestine in *Royal Service* Before the Graded Mission Study Series

Five *Royal Service* issues contained program material dealing specifically with Palestine as a mission field prior to the publication of the graded mission studies series in 1937. Two issues (November 1926 and August 1933) lumped the region in with the European mission field. Two more considered it within a Jewish context ("The Questioning Jew" in November 1927 and "Debtor to the Jew" in July 1932). Only one (January 1935) was wholly devoted to Palestine on its own. Two program editors were responsible for content during this time. Elizabeth Brower (Eliza, or Mrs. W.R.) Nimmo was program editor for the two issues published in the twenties. By then, Nimmo had spent decades working on mission study literature, having served as either chairman or secretary of the WMU's literature department from 1892-1921.[4] Myrtle Robinson (Mrs. C.D.) Creasman served as program editor from

[4] *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists,* s.v. "Woman's Missionary Union."

1931-1948. A Tennessean for most of her life, Creasman had graduated from Virginia Intermont College in 1907 and attended the Chicago Conservatory of Music in 1910. She had served as president of the Tennessee WMU in the 1920s and would go on to serve as vice-president of the convention-wide Union in the 1940s.[5]

Before exploring what Nimmo and Creasman wrote, it is important to remember that the *raison d'être* of the Woman's Mission Union was to promote and support the SBC's missions. Because of this, its program materials tended to be structured around a sort of missionary formula—demonstrate the need of the mission field, describe ongoing efforts to meet that need, and give reasons for hope for the future. It is perhaps obvious (and nonetheless crucial), but the concept of missionary need circumscribed every discussion of particular peoples or regions. Before the readers of *Royal Service* knew anything specific about Palestine, Jews, or Arabs, they understood that the region and the peoples therein were not whole without the gospel. They understood, too, that whatever problems the region and its peoples had could be solved by acceptance of that gospel—whether those problems were more explicitly "religious" in nature or not.

Nearly every discussion of Palestine began with an exaltation of its status as the Holy Land—a place of past and future glory. "Palestine!" exclaimed Creasman in 1935, "How thoughts of the land charm us!"[6] The land had given to the world "its greatest race, the Jews; its greatest book, the Bible; its greatest man, Christ; and its

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[5] *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, s.v. "Creasman, Myrtle Robinson."
[6] Myrtle (Mrs. C.D.) Creasman, "Program for January," *Royal Service* (January 1935), 23.

greatest religion, Christianity!"[7] It was the land "where earth's history centers and toward which prophecy points as the place of the fulfillment of God's plan for the world."[8] The fulfillment of that plan was growing nearer, evidenced by the revitalization of Palestine. It was, for the first time in centuries, in Christian hands. Jews were returning to the land in great numbers. The country was being developed. "Today the eyes of the world are on this land," Creasman wrote, "eagerly watching the events that are transpiring there, reading again the prophecies that must yet be fulfilled within her borders, wondering what new purpose God is working out on that favored spot of the globe."[9] If others wondered at God's purpose in Palestine, Creasman was certain that it involved the restoration of true biblical—or evangelical—Christianity to the land. "Palestine shall be redeemed[,]" she wrote, "The Banner of the Cross shall wave in triumph over the Land of the Lord."[10]

The people also required redemption. In 1927, program editor Eliza Nimmo highlighted the need of reaching Jewish and Muslim women—"the Sarahs [Jews] who are blind to the Messiah of Calvary and the Hagars [Arab Muslims] who have never been told of Him."[11] Brower seems to have made no distinction between Arabs and Muslims—she made no mention of native Christians in describing the Nazareth mission, despite the fact that Christians were the primary targets in Shukri Mosa's work. Even as the editors of *Royal Service* grew more attentive to the presence of Christian Arabs in Palestine, they tended to elide Eastern Christianity

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[7] *Ibid*., 23.
[8] *Ibid*., 23.
[9] *Ibid*., 23.
[10] *Ibid*., 29.
[11] Eliza (Mrs. W.R.) Nimmo, "Program for November," *Royal Service* (November 1926), 19; of course, Jesus is actually a prophet in Islam, well known to "Hagars."

with Islam. In 1933 Creasman quoted Doreen Owens, stationed at Haifa, on the religious deficiencies of the Palestinian peoples:

> "The Jew is just as fanatical and jealous for the religion of his fathers as he was in Paul's and Stephen's day. The Arab is ignorant and steeped in and wedded to traditions and customs that have their roots back in heathenism. The nominal Christians, mostly Roman Catholic and Greek orthodox, are far from the New Testament in their beliefs and practices, and many of their leaders are as fanatical as the Jew or Moslem and just about as ignorant as can be".[12]

"In Jerusalem, and in all Judea today," Creasman added, "Jews and Arabs are alike sinful and needy—without the Word—waiting!"[13] Two years later, Creasman argued that "Moslems, Jews, and nominal Christians are alike insufficient for the spiritual needs of the people and opposed to the advance of true Christianity."[14] The people of Palestine were "for the most part grossly ignorant, intolerant, superstitious, fanatical, poor, sinful and seemingly satisfied."[15]

The issues that focused primarily on Jews tended to emphasize "the Jewish question"—the question of how to integrate Jews into the broader society—and emphasize Christ as the solution to it. In this, the editors followed the lead of Warren Mosby Seay, who published the mission study manual *A Tale of Two Peoples* in 1927, and Jacob Gartenhaus, who by then had published a number of tracts on the topic.[16] Eliza Nimmo argued in 1927 that mutual prejudice had separated Jews and gentiles for 1800 years. While Jews had been somewhat

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[12] Doreen Owens, quoted in Creasman, "Program for August: Topic--The RETURN of the WORD to EUROPE and PALESTINE," *Royal Service* (August 1933), 24.
[13] *Ibid*., 24.
[14] Creasman, "Program for January," *Royal Service* (January 1935), 24.
[15] *Ibid*., 24.
[16] Warren Mosby Seay, *A Tale of Two Peoples: Gentiles and Jews* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, 1927).

responsible for their original alienation in the first Christian centuries, the long and sorrowful legacy of Christian persecution had perpetuated and intensified that alienation, symbolized by the ghettoization of the Jews. While since "1848 the Ghettos have disappeared and the Jews have had the liberty to choose their own dwelling places[,]" she wrote, "there still remains the spirit of the Ghetto."[17] In the United States, that spirit primarily manifested itself in casual prejudice—an "attitude of unwelcome". While Nimmo attributed the survival of the Jews to their "sturdy mind and body", Creasman argued in 1932 that God was behind their survival. Their dispersion had been "a judgment of God" and "their preservation[…]a part of His great purpose for them."[18] "The Jews cannot be assimilated because His hand prevents it[,]" she wrote, "They cannot be destroyed because He needs them. So they remain today as a fulfillment of His prophetic word and as a monument to His faithfulness and truth."[19]

Both editors believed the Jews remained God's chosen people and would attain some future national glory. Eliza Nimmo understood the Zionist movement as "a literal fulfillment of prophecy," even as she lamented "that but a small part of these Zionists" realized it.[20] "Even the most worldly wise of the Jews," she argued, "who are desiring a national home for their people and who are using their influence and wealth for the upbuilding of a national name, are unconscious that this inborn

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[17] Nimmo, "Program for November: The Questioning Jew," *Royal Service* (November 1927), 16-17.
[18] Creasman, "Program for July: Topic: DEBTOR to the JEW," *Royal Service* (July 1932), 18.
[19] *Ibid*., 18.
[20] Nimmo, "Program for November," *Royal Service* (November 1926), 21.

hope is of God and that He it is who hath stirred their spirits in this enterprise."[21] She urged her readers to remember that, "however worldly this movement may look to the unthinking observer, it is of the Lord."[22] The same issue featured a Bible study section by Mrs. James Pollard on the topic, "The Lord Will Have Mercy." Pollard argued that, though the "whole history of Israel bears witness that it was a stiff-necked nation, rejecting God and His Word[,]" God "will again have pity for His holy name's sake" on the Jews.[23] The proof lay in Ezekiel 36, which promised the restoration of Israel.

Myrtle Creasman viewed the Zionist movement as part of a threefold fulfillment of prophecy that included the restoration of the Jews, the revitalization of the land, and the spread of the gospel. Writing of passages from Ezekiel, Creasman argued, "In these and many other prophecies God promises to bring His people back to their native land and to establish there a Jewish national life far more glorious than anything known in their past history."[24] She was clear, though, that "this will not be the Jewish nation that the Zionists dream of, but it will be a Jewish Christian nation with Jesus Himself ruling on the throne of His father David."[25] Even if it was not the Zionist dream that would be fulfilled, Creasman questioned, "Who would say that the present Zionist movement is not in preparation for the glorious time

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[21] *Ibid*., 21.
[22] *Ibid*., 21.
[23] Mrs. James Pollard, "Bible Study: Topic--The Lord Will Have Mercy," *Royal Service* (November 1926), 9.
[24] Creasman, "Program for July: Topic: DEBTOR to the JEW," *Royal Service* (July 1932)., 25.
[25] *Ibid*., 25.

when Israel shall again possess the promised land?"[26] "Christians," she wrote, "who love the Jews and who realize the great debt which they owe to this unfortunate race, rejoice in this movement toward the re-establishment of Jewish national life in this land which rightfully belongs to the house of Israel."[27] The modernization of the region was likewise a fulfillment of prophecy. Especially crucial, due to the ease with which it could be described with biblical imagery and allusion, was the spread of modern agriculture. "This land, for long almost like a desert, is beginning to blossom like a rose[,]" she wrote, paraphrasing the familiar passage from Isaiah, "After centuries of barrenness it is again flowing with milk and honey."[28] "In the reclamation of the land[,]" she noted, "we see the fulfillment of other prophecies: 'They shall plant vineyards and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens and eat the fruit of them' (Amos 9:14). 'And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations' (Isa. 61:4)."[29] Most important to Creasman, though, was the restoration of true Christianity in Palestine. After describing Baptist mission efforts to Jews and Arabs alike, Creasman noted, "The work of the cross is small and difficult in Palestine, but the word of prophecy concerning the future glory of the land is sure. Palestine shall be redeemed. The Banner of the Cross shall wave in triumph over the Land of the Lord."[30] Baptists could "hasten" the "glorious consummation" of Palestine's redemption by supporting the Foreign Mission

[26] *Ibid*., 25.
[27] *Ibid*., 23.
[28] *Ibid*., 23.
[29] *Ibid*., 29.
[30] Creasman, "Program for January," *Royal Service* (January 1935), 29.

Board's work in the region. Whether or not Baptists met the call, true Christianity would eventually triumph in Palestine: "The Bible promises it: therefore, it will surely happen."[31]

Palestine in *Royal Service* After the Graded Mission Study Series

The publication of the Foreign Mission Board's graded mission study series on Palestine in 1936 and 1937 brought a number of new resources to the mission study wing of the WMU. The WMU published nine *Royal Service* issues relevant to Palestine between the publication of the graded mission study series in 1937 and 1949. Three of these dealt directly with Palestine. Four dealt with Jews. Two concerned the broader region. Three trends stand out in examining the program materials from this time. First, their interpretations of the Jews' place in the world and connection to Palestine largely remained consistent with earlier program materials. Second, the program editors devoted increasing attention to ongoing events and political concerns (specifically regarding the Nazi persecutions in Europe, the refugee crisis, and the "Palestine question"). Third, having clearly imbibed the new mission study materials on Arabs, they were increasingly sensitive to the Arab perspective in the intensifying Arab-Zionist conflict.

Likely because Myrtle Creasman remained the program editor through 1948, *Royal Service* maintained its prophetic understanding of the Jews' place in the world and connection to Palestine. Every issue dealing with either the Jews or Palestine reiterated her claims that the return of the Jews and the revitalization of the land

[31] *Ibid*., 29.

were the fulfillment of prophecy. More and more, though, she drew connections between the return of Jews to Palestine and the increasing persecutions in Europe. In February of 1937, Creasman surveyed the tragic history of the Jews, adding, "As we shudder at the thought of these merciless persecutions of the dark ages we need to realize that there is, in our own enlightened day, Jewish persecution almost as bad as that of any age. The most outstanding instance of present day persecution is that in Germany, instigated by Hitler."[32] "How terrible are these Jewish persecutions of centuries' duration!" she exclaimed, "How wonderfully do they fulfill the prophecy of the Jews' own Sacred Book!"[33] The following year she noted that the Jewish population in Palestine had surged because of refugees fleeing persecution in Europe.[34] In 1943, she quoted Jacob Gartenhaus in describing the tragedy of the Struma, a ship laden with refugees from Eastern Europe that was sunk en route to Palestine.[35] After the war, Creasman described how Palestine had become the goal for most Jewish refugees: "Millions of Jews, suffering beyond human endurance, turn with longing hearts toward Palestine as a hoped-for refuge. Thousands expelled from other lands have returned to the land of their fathers. Thousands of others are trying to get into Palestine."[36] Always accompanying humanitarian and prophetic interest, though, was the missionary mindset that defined the WMU. Amidst the war, for example, Creasman remarked that the Jews' sufferings "are making them realize that there is something wrong with their race and, seeking a solution to the

[32] Creasman, "Program for February," *Royal Service* (February 1937), 26.
[33] *Ibid*., 27.
[34] Creasman, "Program for October," *Royal Service* (October 1938), 23.
[35] Creasman, "Program Material," *Royal Service* (August 1943), 24.
[36] Creasman, "Program Material," *Royal Service* (February 1947), 20.

problem, they are more willing to study the claims of Christianity than they have been in the past."[37]

At the same time that Creasman more overtly connected the situation in Europe to Palestine, she increasingly focused on the conflict that was wracking the latter. She organized her October 1938 program material on "The Near East" around the subjects of "Progress" and "Problems." These twin themes would permeate her writings on the region for the next decade. Throughout that time, she continued to associate the progress of the region with Zionism. In 1940 she noted that, "in spite of their constant conflict with the Arabs, the Jewish colonists are redeeming the land, long considered barren and unproductive, and are making it to flow once more with 'milk and honey'."[38] She continued:

> They are enriching and irrigating the land and are making it to produce in great abundance clover, alfalfa, cauliflower, tomatoes, carrots, strawberries, bananas, grapes, oranges and many other fruits, vegetables and grains. Jewish dairy and poultry raising is becoming famed throughout the near East. In the cities, too, Jewish industries are giving employment to thousands of colonists. Jewish hospitals and schools are springing up and health conditions are being greatly improved.[39]

Though this echoed her earlier writings on the subject, it is worthy to note that Creasman tempered her association of such material successes with biblical prophecies. Her 1938 program material, for example, included the familiar allusions to the blossoming desert and the building of the waste places, however in this context she used them as metaphors for the spread of the gospel.

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[37] Creasman, "Program Material," (August 1943), 26.
[38] Creasman, "Program Material," *Royal Service* (September 1940), 24.
[39] *Ibid*., 24.

It was not until her 1947 program material for "Jews and Arabians" that she explicitly compared Jews and Arabs in terms of material progress. Creasman offered a decidedly mixed picture of Arabs. On the one hand, she described them as "naturally active, intelligent and courteous" and "noted for their hospitality."[40] On the other, she noted, "Practically all Arabs are Mohammedans and heirs to the evils which go along with that false religion."[41] "The women are degraded[,]" she added, "and the people for the most part are ignorant and poverty-stricken."[42] Creasman noted that part of the ongoing conflict was that "the Arabs, struggling hard by their own efforts to catch up with the western world, are envious of the Jewish communities."[43] She added:

> However, it must be noted that the Arabs have profited greatly by the development which Jewish immigration has produced. Until the Jews came their methods in agriculture had not advanced much beyond that of the patriarchs. But, spurred by the example and competition of Jewish colonies, they have adopted new farm methods and have greatly increased production.[44]

The Arabs were behind, but were indeed modernizing.

The "Problems" identified in Creasman's 1938 program material were the lack of evangelical Christianity and the increasingly violent conflict between Jews and Arabs. After rehearsing her material on Zionism, Creasman noted "there are other people who claim Palestine as their home. The Arabs have lived there for many centuries and resent the Jews coming in as if the land belonged too them."[45]

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[40] Creasman, "Program Material," (February 1947), 18.
[41] *Ibid*., 19.
[42] *Ibid*., 19.
[43] *Ibid*., 21.
[44] *Ibid*., 21.
[45] Creasman, "Program for October," (October 1938), 23.

They had sold their land to the Jews "before they realized what was happening" and now found themselves "in danger of being thrust out of what they consider their national home."[46] Following J. McKee Adams's emphasis on pan-Arabism from *The Heart of the Levant*, Creasman wrote, "The Arabs too have dreamed of the establishment of a great Arab state, bringing together all the Arabians of the Near East into an independent nation and are therefore rebellious against what they consider the intrusion of the Jews."[47] "So there they are[,]" she wrote, "Jew and Arab, each with claims to the land dating back for many centuries and each with a dream of a national home on this sacred territory."[48] This was the crux of the conflict, which Britain hoped to settle by dividing the land (the Peel Commission's 1937 partition plan). Creasman was not optimistic about partition. "Both groups want all the land," she wrote, "so a division is unsatisfactory to all concerned."[49]

After that 1938 issue, Creasman never again took on a specific political "solution" to the Palestine question, though she continued to foreground the conflict in her program materials. Even the programming for the 1940 issue "To the Jew First" included a description the Arab perspective in its section on Palestine—a sharp divergence from the pre-1937 issues. After noting the Zionist dream "seems very wonderful and we find ourselves wishing that Palestine could once more belong exclusively to the Jews[,]" she wrote, "we must remember that the Arabs have lived in the land for many centuries and consider it their national home."[50]

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[46] *Ibid*., 23.
[47] *Ibid*., 23.
[48] *Ibid*., 23.
[49] *Ibid*., 23.
[50] Creasman, "Program Material," (September 1940), 24.

"Moreover," she added, "during the World War[…]not only were the Jews promised Palestine, but the Arabs were also promised independence."[51] Beyond the promises made by the British, Creasman wrote in 1944 that World War I had unleashed a new "spirit of nationalism[,]" a "new enthusiasm for democracy[,]" and an "atmosphere of progress" in the region.[52] Through their unfulfilled promises, though, the Great Powers had failed to capitalize on these developments after the war. Creasman hoped "for the sake of the world that such mistakes shall not be repeated" after the Second World War.[53] The conflict, which Creasman described as a "crash between a rising spirit of nationalism in both groups of people", was "without question one of the problems to be faced by world diplomats at the end of the present war[.]"[54]

In the end, only Christ could redeem Palestine. In 1938, Creasman wrote, "When the Jews receive their rejected Messiah, when the Arabs realize that full salvation can be found in the cross of Christ, then will Jesus come again to Palestine bringing peace and good will to the peoples of this land."[55] Similar claims were repeated in every article or lesson dealing with the region. At times, *Royal Service* even suggested visualizations. In Mrs. Charles Mullins's 1944 instructions for the Business Women's Circles (BWC), she advised BWC leaders to make a display featuring a map of Palestine torn and stretched "as if it were being pulled apart."[56]

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[51] *Ibid*., 24.
[52] Creasman, "Program Material," *Royal Service* (April 1944), 14.
[53] *Ibid*., 14.
[54] *Ibid*., 14.
[55] Creasman, "Program for October," (October 1938), 26.
[56] Mrs. Charles Mullins, "Business Women's Circles," *Royal Service* (April 1944), 11.

"At the left of the map paste a picture of a Jewish scroll," she suggested, "at the right a Mohammedan mosque, beneath a swastika, above a cross."[57] The display was to read "Who will win Palestine?" The expectation and hope, clearly, was that the cross would triumph.

Conclusion

There are two ways of looking at the WMU's mission study materials on Palestine. On the one hand, the program materials contained in *Royal Service* demonstrate how the program editors Eliza Nimmo and Myrtle Creasman interpreted material produced by the likes of Jacob Gartenhaus, Warren Mosby Seay, Mattie Watts, Doreen Owens, and J. McKee Adams. In this sense, the above survey can be seen as a sort of reception history, a look at how two particular Baptists reconciled the diverse perspectives offered by Baptist missionaries and commentators on Palestine. Examined in this way, the *Royal Service* program materials suggest that the tendency among the Baptist laiety was to aggregate different perspectives on the region rather than weigh them against each other. This is most clear with reference to the political situation, where there was the most disagreement among Baptist writers. Rather than choose between the contradictory assessments of the Arab-Zionist conflict offered by Jacob Gartenhaus and J. McKee Adams, for instance, Creasman combined the two, interpreting Zionism as a likely fulfillment of prophecy and Arab nationalism as a worthy and just ideology.

[57] *Ibid*., 11.

On the other hand, the *Royal Service* program material can be examined in its own right as an effort to educate Southern Baptists—especially Southern Baptist women—on Palestine. Probably no single text or individual had a greater reach than Nimmo or Creasman in shaping Baptist attitudes on the region during the Mandate era. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, not only was *Royal Service* promulgated throughout the South, but its materials were taught in thousands of local WMU societies. Fourteen issues of *Royal Service* related to Palestine during the Mandate era. In A-1 WMU societies (and probably in hundreds that did not merit the highest ranking), this meant fourteen *months* of programming related to the region. What did these societies learn from *Royal Service*? That Palestine was a land undergoing restoration, that the Baptists were bringing the gospel back to its birthplace, that God was bringing the Jews back to their land, and that the Jews were once again making the desert "blossom as the rose." After 1937, readers of *Royal Service* also learned that the land was populated by Arabs who were justly resisting the arrival of the Zionist Jews, that it was was riven by conflict between these two peoples, and that it could only really be healed by Christ.

Chapter Eight

Premillennialists

It is well known today that the most fervent evangelical supporters of the State of Israel are often premillennialists.[1] While most Southern Baptists consider themselves premillennialists today, this was not always the case. Indeed, in the first decades of the twentieth century, premillennialism was a marginal and frequently controversial topic in the Baptist South. It was, however, spreading. As noted in Chapter One, small numbers of Southern Baptists had touted premillennial eschatology and biblical interpretation since the 19th century. With the early exception of J.R. Graves, promoters of premillennialism like Len Broughton and M.E. Dodd tended to have connections to the proto-fundamentalist movement that was coalescing in the urban north. It was not until the fundamentalist-modernist controversy began splitting the Northern Baptist Convention after World War I, however, that such hermeneutics and eschatology came to be mired in controversy.

Southern Baptists watched the northern split with interest—editorials on the controversy and its implications for the South proliferated in the denominational press. Largely united against religious modernism, Baptist editors were more ambivalent towards the fundamentalists. In response to the northern controversy and an upsurge in fundamentalist activity in Texas, L.R. Scarborough (President of SWBTS) penned a 1922 editorial in the *Baptist Standard* explaining his own mixed

[1] Two primary examples are the late Jerry Falwell and John Hagee, founder of Christians United for Israel.

feelings.[2] On the one hand, Baptists largely shared the moderate fundamentalists' emphasis on the supernatural and opposition to ecumenicism. "Southern Baptists in the main…have sympathized with the main motive of Northern fundamentalism," he noted, "Southern Baptists have no sympathy with the Modernists in their denial of the great fundamentals of our faith, nor in their alignment with the Inter-Church or Federal Council of Churches."[3] On the other hand, Scarborough decried both the interdenominationalism and antidenominationalism of the fundamentalists. "It is not likely that Southern Baptists will…join up in a movement," he asserted, "that has as one of its main purposes the teachings of orthodoxy and the fundamentals of the faith led and dominated by inter-denominational Baptists and pedo-baptists." Fundamentalists tended to be "squarely and with deep-seated purpose against all our denominational movements."[4] For Scarborough, the worst aspects of fundamentalism had a name—"Norrisism."

By the time Scarborough penned his editorial in 1922, J. Frank Norris was becoming the face of fundamentalism in the South.[5] He was also becoming an absolute menace to the likes of Scarborough and George Truett, two popular, influential, and conservative Texas Baptists who were devoted to the institutional life of the Southern Baptist Convention. Tied to the "radical" wing of northern fundamentalism (led by William Bell Riley) that tended to pair separatism with a

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[2] L.R. Scarborough, "Two Kinds of Fundamentalism," *Baptist Standard* (November 2, 1922), 13.
[3] *Ibid*., 13.
[4] *Ibid*., 13.
[5] Barry Hankins's *God's Rascal* offers a full-length study of Norris's career; see also James Thompson, *Tried as by Fire: Southern Baptists and the Religious Controversies of the 1920s* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1982).

dispensational hermeneutic, Norris believed Southern Baptist institutions were becoming infected with modernism and should be purged or abandoned. Scarborough's 1922 article had actually come in response to a Norris fusillade against Baylor University (Norris smelled Darwinism on the faculty). Southern Baptists, though, largely had faith in their expanding institutions. Many felt that modernist theology simply could not find purchase on Southern soil.[6] Indeed, in response to both Norris's local agitation and the fundamentalist-modernist rift in the Northern Baptist Convention, denominational leaders like Scarborough successfully promoted denominational involvement as its own Christian fundamental. Scarborough, as head of the SBC's "Seventy-Five Million" Campaign (a massive denominational fundraising effort), was especially active in touting the SBC and its institutions as bulwarks against modernism.

Wrapped up in this controversy was premillennialism. Though the moderate fundamentalists North and South had premillennialists in their ranks, the radicals were dominated by them. Indeed, one of the radical fundamentalist distinctives that developed in the early 1920s was an insistence that premillennialism was as fundamental and non-negotiable a Christian doctrine as the virgin birth or substitutionary atonement. Southern Baptist leaders pushed back against this by arguing that the question of millennialism was too disputable to be made a question of faith. The *Biblical Recorder* published a 1920 editorial from the *Journal and Messenger* affirming the doctrinal statement adopted by W.B. Riley's World Conference on Christian Fundamentals while also declaring the editors would strike

[6] Scarborough led the way in making this case. See Smith, "Flocking," 109-113.

the word "premillennial" from the platform's seventh plank, which addressed Christ's second coming. The editors assured their readers they would remove the word not because premillennialism was wrong, "but because it is by no means certain."[7] On matters so uncertain, it was best not to make definitive confessional claims. Eminent Southern Baptist theologian E.Y. Mullins, who had published a premillennialist tract early in his career, likewise urged restraint in weighing pre- versus postmillennialism: "Which view is right, according to the Scriptures? My answer is that we do not know."[8]

Southern Baptist leaders were particularly disturbed by the formation of the Baptist Bible Union in 1922, which was led by Riley and promoted by Norris in the South. The formation of the BBU appeared to confirm the suspicions of Baptists that the radical fundamentalists were out to peel Southern Baptist churches, congregants, and funds away in order to create a new denomination. An editorial in the Virginia *Religious Herald* (reprinted in the *Biblical Recorder*) asserted, "There can be no doubt as to 'The Baptist Bible Union' being a divisive movement[.]"[9] Of particular offense was that the BBU's leaders were cynically using premillennialism to drive a wedge between Baptists and their denomination:

> Now 'The Baptist Bible Union' knows well that at this point there have for ages existed differences among Baptists; and that heretofore it is one of the points on which we have 'agreed to disagree,' and yet remain loyal in one undisturbed fellowship. A good Baptist could either be a pre-millennialist or a post-millennialist or could accept the second coming of our Lord without having very definite convictions as to its relations to the millennium. The very things set down in this new creed about premillennialism many good

[7] "The Fundamentals," *Biblical Recorder* (January 21, 1920), 1.
[8] Mullins, "Christ's Coming and the Millennium," *Biblical Recorder* (February 16, 1921), 5.
[9] "A Divisive Movement," *Biblical Recorder* (April 18, 1923), 1.

> Baptists believe. But, it is also true that many good Baptists do not accept all these statements.[10]

Noting that "'the issue' which Dr. Norris says has been raised has never been considered essential to membership in a Baptist church in the South," Livingston Johnson asked his readers, "Are we now going to allow it to become a divisive question?"[11] Johnson and E.Y. Mullins alike expressed faith that Southern Baptists would not allow premillennialism to be made a test of faith. "Our work is too important, our unity is too pronounced, our vision is too clear," wrote Mullins, "for us to be swept away from our moorings by prophets of the unknown future on a matter which the Scriptures leave unrevealed."[12]

Norris's continued agitation against established Baptist institutions and promotion of the BBU quickly erupted into open conflict with the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT). In 1923, the Convention refused to seat delegates from his First Baptist Church of Forth Worth, effectively pushing Norris out of institutional Baptist life. He was not gone, though. Even as Norris increasingly aligned himself with organized fundamentalism (and began splitting time between Fort Worth and Detroit), his presence continued to be felt within the Southern Baptist Convention by supporters and detractors alike. In 1933 he again tried to draw Southern Baptist premillennialists into his orbit by forming the Premillennial Baptist Missionary Fellowship (later the World Baptist Missionary Fellowship). Despite his estrangement, Norris's periodicals and books continued to exert an influence on Southern Baptists, especially within Texas. He also showed up from

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[10] *Ibid*., 1.
[11] "A Prediction," *Biblical Recorder* (May 2, 1923), 6.
[12] Mullins, "Great Doctrines of the Bible." *Biblical Recorder* (May 2, 1923), 4.

time to time to agitate at conventions and organized sympathetic delegates to push his agenda. An anecdote from W.A. Criswell, George Truett's successor at First Baptist Church of Dallas and leader of the SBC's "conservative resurgence" in the 1970s, is quite revealing of Norris's continued impact among Southern Baptists. Having grown up in Oklahoma and Texas, Criswell recalled that his mother had been wholly devoted to the denomination and George Truett while his father had loved Norris.[13]

Alongside the Fort Worth pastor was a growing cohort of independent evangelists sympathetic to fundamentalism and partial to premillennial dispensationalism. Perhaps the most important of these was John R. Rice, an ally of Norris's who himself left the Southern Baptist Convention in 1927. Rice would carve out his own fundamentalist fiefdom organized around his publication, *The Sword of the Lord*, which he began publishing in 1934 (though he relocated to Wheaton, IL, in 1940, Rice remained influential in the South until his return in the 1960s).[14] Mordecai Ham was another independent premillennialist and fundamentalist evangelist with Southern Baptist ties (he would become most famous for leading Billy Graham to Christ at a 1934 revival).[15] Hyman Appelman, a Hebrew Christian and professional evangelist, drifted in and out of affiliation with the SBC while leading revivals across the country and touting premillennialism.[16]

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[13] Criswell, "In Memory of Mother."
[14] The memoir of Rice's grandson also includes large historical and biographical sections on the fundamentalist leader: Andrew Himes, *The Sword of the Lord: The Roots of Fundamentalism in an American Family* (Seattle: Chiara, 2011).
[15] Mordecai Ham, *The Second Coming of Christ* (Louisville: n.p., 1943).
[16] Hyman Appelman, *Appelman's Sermon Outlines and Illustrations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1944), 51; Appelman, *From Jewish lawyer to Baptist Preacher*

While Norris was successful in creating a fundamentalist fiefdom in Fort Worth, he and his radical Fundamentalist allies were never completely successful in using premillennialism as a dividing wedge against the SBC.[17] Indeed, a growing number of premillennialists came to be involved in SBC denominational life in the ensuing decades. Most were presumably happy to, in Mullins's words, "repudiate any effort to make this issue a divisive one."[18] Among the more prominent premillennialists was M.E. Dodd, who paired his premillennialism with a whole-hearted devotion to building up SBC institutions. He helped devise the Cooperative Program in 1925, which integrated the fundraising mechanisms of local churches, state conventions, and the SBC, and even served as SBC President from 1934-1935. W.A. Hamlett of Texas served as the Foreign Mission Board's first Superintendent of the Near East Mission (albeit for two months). Jacob Gartenhaus, the Jewish convert who had been educated in northern Fundamentalist institutions, served as the Home Mission Board's first and only missionary to the Jews from 1921-1949. In 1936, the Convention's Broadman Press published Gartenhau's *Rebirth of a Nation*, which offered an appraisal of the Zionist movement significantly colored by a dispensational hermeneutic. Though such direct support for premillennial views was rare, most Southern Baptist bookstores carried premillennial texts, which were

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(Fairfield: Faith of Our Fathers, 1944); Appelman, *The Battle of Armageddon* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1944).

[17] Some small splinter groups like the Orthodox Baptists of Oklahoma, led by W. Lee Rector, were premillennialist. However, premillennialism was not the determining factor in their 1931 split from the SBC. *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, s.v. "Oklahoma Fundamentalism," 516-517.

[18] Mullins, "Great Doctrines of the Bible," 4.

advertised and reviewed in denominational publications.[19] State editors, no matter their own stances on the millennium, were usually willing to give premillennialists space to defend their viewpoints.

Most critics were less concerned with the specifics of premillennialism itself than with making sure it was not made a test of faith. They simply argued that the question of the millennium was open.[20] As E.Y. Mullins put it, "If you empty a quart of beans on a table, you can so arrange them as to make them spell 'premillennialism,' or you can arrange them in another way so they will spell 'postmillennialism.'"[21] Beans aside, many Southern Baptist critics followed the arguments of Northern Baptist Augustus Hopkins Strong, who had argued in 1907 that premillennialists put too much weight on a literal interpretation of Revelations 20, "an obscure passage of one of the most figurative books of scripture."[22] Mullins, Livingston Johnson (editor of the *Biblical Recorder*), J.B. Tidwell, and W.T. Conner were among those that carried this line.[23] Others warned Baptists not to get caught up in prophetic speculation at the expense of other Christian duties. J.B. Cranfill recalled a friend who had "fed me on the big horn and the little horn in Daniel, together with the wonderful and bewildering prophecies of the Apocalypse,

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[19] "Book Reviews," *Baptist Standard* (September 11, 1929), 15.
[20] J.B. Tidwell, "Second Coming of Christ and the Millennium," *Baptist Standard* (January 18, 1923), 6.
[21] Mullins, "Great Doctrines of the Bible," 4.
[22] William Pitts, "Southern Baptists and Millennialism 1900-2000: Conceptual Patterns and Historical Expressions, " *Baptist History and Heritage* (Spring 1999), 13.
[23] *Ibid*., 13; Livingston Johnson, "Interesting Bible Conference," *Biblical Recorder* (January 26, 1921), 6; Tidwell, "Second Coming of Christ and the Millennium," 6.

until I almost forgot to go to church."[24] When premillennialists did write in Baptist periodicals, it was usually in response to such critiques.[25]

Because premillennialists made up a marginal portion of the Southern Baptist populace, it is hard to measure just how widespread the hermeneutic was. Baptist editors largely avoided publishing anything on premillennialism except in times of controversy (such as the early 1920s), so the presence or absence of premillennial materials in denominational periodicals is more indicative of levels of controversy than adherence. Whatever the actual number of premillennialists was, it is clear from anecdotal evidence that it was growing. The best source is perhaps the SBC's chief opponent of premillennialism in the 1930s and 1940s, longstanding SBTS Professor of Missions, W.O. Carver.[26] In 1940, he lamented to F.V. McFatridge "that the dispensational millennialism has gotten such an extensive hold on our Southern Baptist pastors[.]"[27] He was particularly irritated that the Sunday School Board was inadvertently encouraging its spread by offering the Scofield Reference Bible. That same year, he published articles in the *Review and Expositor* and *Western Recorder* attacking premillennialism (or Pentecostal millennialism, as he referred to it) as "one of the serious menaces to the progress of New Testament

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[24] J.B. Cranfill, "Concerning the Millennium," *Baptist Standard* (September 1, 1921), 7.
[25] Alfred Ham, "Premillennialists' 'Obscure' Passage," *Biblical Recorder* (February 16, 1921), 4.
[26] For a thorough look at Carver's disagreements with premillennialists, see Mark Wilson, *William Owen Carver's Controversies in the Baptist South* (Macon: Mercer, 2010), 108-118.
[27] W.O. Carver to F.V. McFatridge, 2 October 1940, box 9, folder 40, Carver Papers, quoted in Mark Wilson, *William Owen Carver's Controversies in the Baptist South*, 112.

Christianity just now."[28] Angry rejoinders poured in. A few months later Carver remarked, "nothing I have ever written has in so short a time brought expressions from so many of my brethren."[29] In 1946, Southern Baptist premillennialists who remained devoted to the denomination began organizing into premillennial fellowships. By 1953, most states in Southern Baptist territory had their own fellowship and membership in the convention-wide Southern Baptist Premillennial Fellowship had topped 10,000.[30]

Premillennialists and the Palestine Question

For the same reason it is difficult to gauge how widespread premillennialism was in the SBC, it is difficult to trace Baptist premillennialists' approaches to the Palestine question in the Mandate era. Though many Christian supporters of the Zionist movement have been and are inspired by premillennialist (especially dispensationalist) thought, such connections should not be assumed in the absence of positive evidence. W.A. Hamlett, the Foreign Mission Board's first superintendent of the Near East Mission, was a prominent premillennialist who did not see God's hand in Zionism (indeed he was quite sympathetic to the Arab cause in the early 1920s). "When [the Jews] turn to God and God's Christ," he wrote in a 1913 travelogue, "then God will turn to them and give them their land and their

[28] Carver (Managing Editor), "Life Factors and Tendencies: Millennial Pentecostalism," *Review and Expositor* (April 1940), 195.
[29] Carver, "Facts and Factors in History Making," *Pastor's Periscope* (August 1940), 6.
[30] *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, s.v. "Premillennial Baptist Groups."

Temple."[31] Demonstrative of the plasticity of premillennial geopolitics, Hamlett resurfaced in the late 1940s supporting the just-established Israel's biblical right to the land.[32] M.E. Dodd went in the opposite direction. In the 1917 *Jesus is Coming to Earth Again*, Dodd had described meeting a religious Zionist who expressed hope "that Jehovah will manifest Himself to us again as He did in the ancient times" should the movement succeed.[33] Writing in the midst of World War I, Dodd noted:

> It looks in these days as if this hope of Israel is to be speedily realized. While students of prophecy must not themselves attempt to turn prophets, yet it seems clear that of all the results which may be anticipated from the present war, the one most certain will be the extermination of the Turks from Europe and the freedom of Palestine from his terrible tyranny.[34]

However, the Louisiana pastor made no mention of prophecy in his 1935 travelogue, *Girdling the Globe for God*, which included a chapter on "Jerusalem, Jesus, and the Jews."[35] Dodd had not abandoned premillennialism—he would continue to interpret the Bible in a dispensationalist manner into the 1940s.[36] He had simply abandoned using it to explain events in Palestine.

Others within the SBC wondered with passive curiosity if the Zionist movement did represent the foretold ingathering of the exiles. Many in this camp maintained concerns about Zionist irreligion and antagonism to Christianity. Even among dispensationalists, who maintained the continued covenantal status of the Jewish people, it was not clear whether Jewish title to the Promised Land was

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[31] Hamlett, *Travels*, 263.
[32] Hamlett, "The Palestine Question," *Florida Baptist Witness* (May 27, 1948), 3.
[33] Dodd, *Jesus Is Coming to Earth Again,* 55.
[34] *Ibid*., 56.
[35] M.E. Dodd, *Girdling the Globe for God* (Shreveport, LA: John S. Ramond, 1935).
[36] Austin Tucker, "Monroe Elmon Dodd and His Preaching," (dissertation, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1971), 117-140; it is possible Dodd sought to downplay his premillennialism while sitting as SBC President.

contingent on conversion. Of course, there were those who did explicitly see God's designs in the Zionist movement. T.T. Martin wrote in *The Western Recorder* in 1917 that Luke 21:24 indicated that the British were certain to hand over Palestine to the Zionists, noting with pleasure, "[…]when the Zionist movement was started to raise money to buy Palestine for the Jews, the world laughed at it. They no longer laugh."[37] A few years later, he wrote:

> Remember that the Jews have over half the money of the world in their possession; that September, 1920, England signed the papers making Palestine a Jewish country, that they are going back there now, by the multiplied thousands; that they have money by the millions to back up their making Palestine the garden spot of the world; that they are working on vast irrigation and electrical projects.[38]

These happenings, Martin was certain, fulfilled the predictions of Ezekiel 38. Near the end of World War One, W.E. Tynes wrote in the *Baptist Courier*, "The Lord is Providentially stirring [the Jews] in preparation for a great world movement—their conversion and restoration. And that great event, it is probable, will come ultimately, if not immediately, after, and as a result of, the present great world war."[39] Jacob Gartenhaus went even further in the 1936 *Rebirth of a Nation*: "To oppose [Zionism] is to oppose God's plan."[40]

The independent Baptist pastors and evangelists associated with the fundamentalist movement were no more unified on the issue. Frank Norris—the most important of the southern Baptist fundamentalists—was exceptional in his

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[37] T.T. Martin, "The Second Coming of Christ," *The Western Recorder* (November 15, 1917), 3.
[38] Martin, *The Second Coming of Christ* (n.p., n.d.), 20.
[39] W.E. Tynes, "III. The Second Coming," *The Baptist Chronicle* (January 24, 1918), 4.
[40] Gartenhaus, *Rebirth*, 128.

clear, consistent, and outspoken support of Zionism throughout the Mandate era. While Norris came to his original interest in Zionism through his dispensationalist reading of the Bible, his decades-long engagement with the movement was shaped by a variety of factors—his connections to Jews, his understanding of international law, his concern for persecuted Jews, his immense personal vanity, and, most importantly, his several trips to the region. Exceptional both in the amount of writings he left on Zionism and his activist political support for the movement in the late 1940s, Norris will be examined in depth in the following chapter.

Though John R. Rice had been a follower of Norris (the two fell out in the late 1930s), he eventually came to dismiss the idea that Zionism was in any way a fulfillment of prophecy. In the 1940 *World-Wide War and the Bible*, which weighed current events against Rice's interpretation of prophecy, the evangelist did argue for God's hand in the movement, claiming, "The modern Zionist movement and the world persecution which has put hundreds of thousands of Jews back in Palestine has made it so we must expect Jesus to come soon."[41] Rice believed that the full ingathering of Jews to Palestine would occur after a treaty with the anti-Christ, whom he expected to emerge from Italy. Based on this interpretation, Rice anticipated Palestine would likely come under an Italian Mandate at some point, noting "we may certainly expect to see British influence in Palestine and Egypt to decrease and that of Italy to increase."[42] In the 1941 *Jewish Persecution and Bible Prophecies*, Rice argued that the prophecies of Jewish restoration did not refer to the

[41] John Rice, *World-Wide War and the Bible* (Wheaton: Sword of the Lord, 1940), 117.
[42] *Ibid*., 100.

Zionist movement, but that a small number of Jews needed to be in Palestine to make a prophesied treaty with the Anti-Christ.[43] Zionism, in other words, had only a bit part in the coming eschatological drama. By the 1945 *The Coming Kingdom of Christ*, which offered the evangelist's particular understanding of the dispensationalist eschatological timeline, Rice had come to completely dismiss the idea that Zionism was in any way a fulfillment of prophecy. Rice argued that the biblical land covenant between God and Abraham was both everlasting and as-yet unfulfilled, that Jews would someday come into eternal possession of the land. However, he was also clear that "unbelieving Jews" were "not really Abraham's seed."[44] "Romans 4:13 shows[,]" he argued, "that only converted Jews, those who like Abraham believed in God, shall inherit the Abrahamic promises."[45] As for Zionism, Rice argued that the movement had no connection whatsoever to the prophesied ingathering of the Jews:

> The Zionist movement is a movement sponsored by unconverted Jews with a laudable purpose of restoring some Jews to their own land, Palestine. Those who are successful, prosperous and happy in other nations around the world remain where they are. Those who are unhappy, and long to go back to Palestine are encouraged to go. The movement rests on the will of men, not the will of God. The Zionist movement is not a fulfillment of the prophecies about Israel being restored. Preachers who think so are mistaken.[46]

Rice believed that only God could gather the Jews back to Palestine. Citing Isaiah 11:10-12, he claimed that the ingathering of Israel would occur in a single day—the same day as Christ's return to earth at the end of the Great Tribulation—at which

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[43] Rice, *Jewish Persecution and Bible Prophecies* (Wheaton: Sword of the Lord, 1941), 33-34, 39.
[44] Rice, *The Coming Kingdom of Christ* (Wheaton: Sword of the Lord, 1945), 29.
[45] *Ibid*., 28.
[46] *Ibid*., 36.

point all of the surviving Jews would be saved and Christ would inaugurate his millennial kingdom.[47]

Countering Millenarian Christian Zionism

It should be clear that premillennialism and support for Zionism were not necessarily intertwined—even as they easily could be. A related question, though, is whether they were understood as intertwined by observers and opponents. As noted above, W.O. Carver, Professor of Missions at SBTS, was perhaps the leading opponent of premillennial dispensationalism within the Convention. He was also a strong opponent of Zionism. Though it is tempting to view Carver's opposition to both as connected (as does Mark Wilson in *William Owen Carver's Controversies in the Baptist South*), it is not clear that Carver himself connected the two. His two 1940 pieces attacking premillennialism—published in the *Review and Expositor* and *Pastor's Periscope*—argued that premillennial dispensationalists overemphasized eschatological doctrine at the expense of Christ's ethical teachings.[48] Carver also felt that premillennialists' belief that "prophecy is pre-written history" involved "a basally erroneous conception of prophecy" that contributed "directly to turning people away from the serious business of preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God in the living generation."[49] His critique neither took up the covenantal status of the Jews nor the significance of the Zionist movement. Neither did Carver's critiques of Zionism take up the question of Christian support for the movement.

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[47] *Ibid*., 37.
[48] Carver, "Life Factors and Tendencies," 193-195.
[49] Carver, "Facts and Factors in History Making." *Pastor's Periscope* (February 1940), 4.

However, Carver's colleague at SBTS, H. Cornell Goerner, did draw connections between premillennialism and what he called "Christian Zionists" in the *Review & Expositor*, the SBC's main theological journal (this, by the way, is the only time I came across this term in Mandate-era research). Goerner noted the changes wrought in Palestine by the Zionist movement had stirred "a strong recurrence of interest in biblical prophecy, especially as it lends itself to an explanation of the events transpiring in Palestine, an interpretation of those events, and a prediction of the future outcome."[50] Goerner described the situation:

> The untrained Bible student, his interest in the subject once aroused, stands well in the way of being swept off his feet by the flood of literature, nearly all along the same line, which offers to him a ready-made interpretation of the Scriptures. It is declared that the present return of the Jews to Palestine is a fulfillment of specific Biblical prophecies; that the Scriptures clearly foretell the complete re-establishment of the Jewish nation as a geographical, political, and cultural entity; and that certain other events, apocalyptic in nature and intimately related to the restoration of the Jewish nation, are definitely prefigured.[51]

Goerner posed two questions in challenging this method of biblical interpretation. First, "are those specific passages which seem capable of being interpreted as predictions of current events rightly regarded as such, or does the belief rest upon a misinterpretation?"[52] Second, "are there other scripture passages which contradict this idea and force us to place a different interpretation upon the passages in question?"[53] With these two questions, Goerner argued that prophetic passages in scripture should be interpreted according to their immediate context and according

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[50] Cornell Goerner, "Zionism and the Scriptures," *Review & Expositor* 34, no. 3 (July 1937), 302.
[51] *Ibid*., 303.
[52] *Ibid*., 304.
[53] *Ibid*., 304.

to the larger themes of the Bible as a whole. In his eyes, Christian Zionists failed on both counts. In terms of immediate contexts, Goerner argued that most of the prophetic passages referring to the restoration of the Jews to their land were fulfilled in the 6th-century return from the Babylonian captivity. In terms of larger biblical themes, Goerner offered the classic supercessionist argument that the Jews' covenantal relationship with God had been invalidated and transferred to the Church.

Though Goerner did assert "that the Bible does contain prophecies of the restoration of Israel[,]" he was clear this was a "spiritual restoration, namely, the salvation of the Jews through faith in the Messiah, Jesus Christ."[54] Acknowledging some of the "secular" reasons to support Zionism, Goerner asserted that pursuit of spiritual restoration should nonetheless define Christians' approach to the Jews and Zionism:

> Here then is the Zionistic hope that should stir the hearts of Christians! They may indeed be interested, for humanitarian reasons, in the establishment of a colony of refuge for Jews made homeless by persecution. They may even hope that the wandering Jew may find a permanent haven of rest in a national home. But, as Christians, their religious hope will be for the coming of the Jews personally to Christ! And rather than being thrilled over the colonization of some hundreds of thousands in ancient Palestine, they will be stirred and challenged by the realization that Jews by the million in nearly every land on earth are today approachable, interested, and unprejudiced in their attitude toward Jesus and Christianity to a degree never before known in history.[55]

Goerner felt that Christians—"as Christians"—should restrict their religious hopes to the conversion of Jews rather than their national restoration. However, Goerner himself was unable to bury his own religious perspective in forming his approach to

[54] *Ibid*., 313.
[55] *Ibid*., 313-314.

Zionism. "The Zionistic Jew of to-day[,]" he averred, "is making the same mistake that cursed his forefathers."[56] In other words, Zionism was not simply another nationalist movement, but a continuation of the Jewish repudiation of Christ.

Conclusion – The Premillennial Tangle

Though premillennialism was clearly spreading in and around the Southern Baptist Convention in the first half of the twentieth century, it is less clear what this meant for how Southern Baptists approached the Palestine question. Because so many prominent Christian supporters of Zionism and Israel have been premillennial dispensationalists, it can be tempting to assume a direct thread between premillennialism and support for Zionism—to assume that the spread of premillennialism meant the spread of support for the creation of a Jewish state. Examining the place of premillennialism in the SBC, however, reveals more tangles than direct threads. For some, premillennialism was inexorably intertwined with radical fundamentalism. For many others, it was not. For some—proponents and opponents alike—premillennialism meant support for Zionism. For others, it did not. While it might be impossible to unravel this tangle as a whole, it is possible to follow individual threads—to see where they are attached and where they are not. The following chapter does so, looking at the most prominent fundamentalist, premillennialist, and supporter of Zionism in the Baptist South—J. Frank Norris.

[56] *Ibid*., 313.

Chapter Nine

Fundamentalist

Among Baptists—even among fundamentalists—J. Frank Norris came to be distinguished by his firm support of Zionism. As Norris had grown closer to W.B. Riley and the northern fundamentalists during the 1910s, he had come to favor a dispensationalist interpretation of Scripture—indeed, dispensationalism would come to be a defining feature of his ministry.[1] Indicative of this was that the pastor chose to build the inaugural issue of his periodical, *The Searchlight* (later *The Fundamentalist*), around an article titled "Jesus is Coming." The article laid out the basic dispensationalist eschatological scheme, describing how the Rapture of the Church would precede the unfolding of a seven-year Great Tribulation on earth. While believing Christians would escape the Tribulation, Jews would bear the worst of it. The "elect," "a portion of Israel," would be "gathered back to Jerusalem" where they would "pass through the fire of a great trial."[2] Only at the Revelation—or ultimate return of Christ to earth—would the Jews find relief in recognizing Christ as their messiah. After Christ establishes his millennial kingdom, "restored Israel and Jerusalem are to be [its] very Central Glory[.]"[3] In this particular article, Norris kept his focus on the biblical text, building the dispensationalist narrative of future events by stitching together disparate prophetic passages from the Old and New Testaments. He did not—as he soon would—attempt to attach his interpretive

[1] Hankins, *God's Rascal*, 74-89.
[2] J. Frank Norris, "Jesus is Coming" *The Searchlight* (March 2, 1917), 1.
[3] *Ibid*., 1.

scheme to contemporary events. He did not—as he later would—tie these prophecies to the Zionist movement.

Like other premillennialists, Norris's prophetic imagination was fired by the British conquest of Jerusalem eight months later. So inspired was the pastor that he even renamed First Baptist's young men's Sunday school class "the Allenbys" in honor of victorious General Edmund Allenby.[4] Increasingly, Norris began to interweave his biblical exegesis with his understanding of contemporary events. One week after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, which among other things affirmed the British government's promise to facilitate the creation of a Jewish "national home" in Palestine, Norris took to the pulpit to give his analysis of the conflict:

> The fundamental cause of the war is not found in the ambition of the kaiser, wicked and wild as it was. It was not the commercial rivalry between Germany and England, though that was very keen. It was not the Alsace-Lorraine issue between France and Germany, though that was the cause of constant irritation. It was not the assassination of the archduke of Austria, though that was the occasion of Austria's ultimatum.[…] But the Jew, the strangest of all peoples, and the divinest. The war goes back of all present things. It was that Palestine should be restored to the Jew. He has a divine title to it. It was given direct from heaven to Abraham and reaffirmed to succeeding generations.[5]

God had brought about World War specifically to give Palestine back to the Jews. Norris explained this in terms of established divine right—God had promised the land to Abraham, thus it was "contrary to the divine purpose that any other nation

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[4] "The Allenbys," *The Searchlight* (March 13, 1919), 2; the teacher of the class, Mr. Collins, declared "that as General Allenby had rescued Jerusalem from the reign of the Turk it is the purpose of the Allenby Class to rescue young men from the reign and domination of Satan."

[5] Norris, "World War Needed to Fulfill Word of Bible, Says Norris," *The Searchlight* (July 3, 1919), 3-4.

should possess or rule Palestine"—and in terms of the fulfillment of prophecy—"The Zionistic movement is a fulfillment of prophecy and should be encouraged and supported by the whole Christian world."[6] The appearance of the movement meant "the dawn of a better day" and "the most stupendous event of this hour."[7]

Norris also argued that the survival of the Jews' as a distinct people was itself a miracle. "The present existence of the Jews, unchanged, unmixed," he wrote, "is the greatest concrete proof of the inspiration of the scriptures."[8] The Jews had "baffled the Laws of assimilation of the races" and proven "immune to climactic changes while other races have been destroyed, assimilated or changed[.]"[9] Even "if there were no Bible," these facts alone demonstrated "that a supernatural providence has guided the destiny of the Jew to this hour."[10] Norris compared the fate of the Jews over the centuries to that of the prophet Jonah. Like Jonah, the Jews had disobeyed God's instructions, disavowing their sacred calling in order to "[turn] merchant", and been punished temporarily for their disobedience.[11] Just as the prophet "was not digested by the whale," the Jews had remained "undigested and unmixed with the rest of mankind."[12] Just as God had "made the whale vomit [Jonah] out," so would "the nations on earth release the Jew and the powers of the earth, like Cyrus, help the Jew in his restoration."[13] As Jonah "was sent a second

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[6] *Ibid*., 3.
[7] *Ibid*., 3.
[8] *Ibid*., 4.
[9] *Ibid*., 4.
[10] *Ibid*., 4.
[11] *Ibid*., 4.
[12] *Ibid*., 4.
[13] *Ibid*., 4.

time to Ninevah, so the Jew converted, will become the world's greatest missionary."[14]

Norris's dispensationalist interpretation of the Bible would remain crucial in shaping the pastor's understanding of Jewish history and destiny over the next several decades. It would remain crucial, too, in shaping Norris's approach to both "the Jewish question" and "the Palestine question." As crucial as it was, though, Norris's fervent dispensationalism does not adequately explain the Texan's approach to these questions on its own. His mentor and fundamentalist ally, William Bell Riley, shared Norris's dispensationalist hermeneutic and eschatological scheme. Yet in the late 1930s the two found themselves arguing opposing positions on the "Jewish question," with Norris castigating Riley for his endorsement of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Norris's outspoken opposition to antisemitism and ardent support of Zionism thus cannot be explained by his interpretation of the Bible alone. Rather, it can only be explained by the inextricable tangle of Norris's experiences in Palestine, acquaintances with Jews, interpretations of contemporary events and politics, and his considerable vanity, all in addition to his interpretation of the Bible.

Most important in bringing Norris's image of Jews out from the pages of the Bible were his frequent trips to Palestine. He traveled to the region five times between 1920 and 1950. Examining *The Searchlight* and *The Fundamentalist* during these years reveals that Norris's writings on Jews and Palestine appeared according to the rhythms of these trips. Though the most obvious product of these travels were

[14] *Ibid*., 4.

his travelogues, it is important to keep in mind that articles appearing to be straightforward political commentary or biblical exegesis were most often occasioned and informed by Norris's travels. Though we have already looked at one 1919 article interpreting the British conquest of Palestine in 1917, for example, most of Norris's writings on the subject did not come until the fall of 1920, when he traveled to the region for the first time.

Norris's Travels to Palestine

Norris's 1920 trip was crucial in cementing the pastor's support for Zionism. Norris reported that his ship from Italy to Alexandria was filled with "over three hundred Jews on board bound for Palestine."[15] He was clearly moved by the scene:

> They are from every country in the world. Most of them are very poor, though some of them are men of plenty and highly educated. There is one old Jew from Oklahoma. He is seventy-nine and wants to be buried in the land of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. By far the greatest number are from Russia and Central Europe. They are so anxious to get back to Palestine that they crowded the ship without a place to sleep. They stay on the deck night and day and sleep on the bare floor. They are very poorly dressed. But they are all happy. They sing the songs of Zion. Every ship going in this direction is crowded with Jews.[16]

Norris would return to these images year after year in describing his impressions of Zionism. From that point forward, the prophecies of Ezekiel and Zechariah would conjure these particular memories. "What does it mean?" he asked, "The promises of God are being fulfilled right before our very eyes.[…]It stirs my soul to its

[15] Norris, "From the Pastor: Sunday Service on Ship in Mediterranean," *The Searchlight* (October 7, 1920), 2.
[16] *Ibid*., 2.

depths."[17] After visiting Egypt, Norris arrived in Palestine in time to witness the transition from military to civilian administration. He was delighted that the British had appointed Herbert Samuel, a Jew, as the first High Commissioner of Palestine. "For the first time in nearly three thousand years[,]" he exclaimed, "all Palestine has been under the dominion of one Jewish ruler!"[18] Wanting perhaps to emphasize Samuel's power, Norris held that Palestine was nominally "an English province" but actually "an independent state."[19] Whatever his interpretation of the legal status of Palestine at the time, Norris was certain that the "English deserve large credit for what they have done, and propose to do for the country."[20] They had the right to claim the promise of Genesis 12, that God would bless those that bless Abraham and curse those that curse him. "In light of prophecy, in meaning to the present world crisis, and above all, in its deep significance to the future of all the world," Norris wrote that the Balfour Declaration stood "alongside that of Cyrus of Babylon, if not above it."[21]

Besides confirming Norris's reading of prophecy and evoking the biblical past, his travels instilled in him a sense of civilizational clash between the Arab and Western worlds, between backwardness and progress. From Egypt, then a British protectorate, he denounced criticisms of British rule, asserting, "Instead of abusing or criticizing the English for their 'Colonial Policy' they should be applauded by the

[17] *Ibid*., 2.
[18] Norris, "Palestine Restored to the Jews," *The Searchlight* (October 21, 1920), 1.
[19] *Ibid*., 2.
[20] *Ibid*., 2.
[21] *Ibid*., 2.

whole world. This rule is just."[22] He was "certain" that "if the rule of the English should be taken away from the land, no man's life would be safe for one hour."[23] The "natives" were "incapable of self government[.]"[24] After viewing what was likely the Mosque of Muhammad Ali (he simply refers to it as the "main mosque"), he lamented that women were not allowed in and "rejoiced in the Christian faith that gives woman her rightful and exalted place in the church, in the home and in the nation."[25] "Civilization, order, education and Christianity[,]" he wrote, "owe the English no small debt."[26]

In Palestine, Norris likewise viewed the burgeoning conflict between the Zionists and Arabs in terms of civilizational clash. Acknowledging that both Arabs and Jews had claims on the land, Norris argued that the conflict would boil down to "survival of the fittest" on "perfectly legal grounds[.]"[27] The Jews, inevitably, would prove prevail. "It will be the story over again of the American Indian giving way to the white man[,]" he wrote. "The process has already set in."[28] For Norris, the Zionists embodied civilization and industry. The Arabs embodied backwardness and indolence:

> The Jew is industrious, the Arab lazy; the Jew is progressive, the Arab is only half civilized. I know there are those who undertake to prove that the 'Natives' have a high state of civilization, even if not after the western ideals. I crossed Palestine in a Ford car in four different directions, visiting all the places of interest and I found only ignorance, poverty, disease and superstition among the natives. They are clothed in rags, have very poor or

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[22] Norris, "From the Pastor: Sunday Service on Ship in Mediterranean," 3.
[23] *Ibid*., 3.
[24] *Ibid*., 3.
[25] *Ibid*., 3.
[26] *Ibid*., 3.
[27] Norris, "Palestine Restored to the Jews," 1.
[28] *Ibid*., 1.

> no houses at all, know nothing of sanitation, and soap would be as much out of place as the average theological seminary professor would be at a revival meeting.[29]

Like other Baptist travelers, Norris was struck by the agricultural implements of the fellahin, noting, "The Arab scratches the fertile fields with a wooden plow[.]"[30] In contrast, "only a casual glance at the new and modern Jewish village will convince any man what is going to happen[…]The irrigated land with acres of orange groves, olive trees, almonds, figs and mulberry for silk worms tell it all."[31] He described seeing two different work gangs during his trip—one Arab, one Jewish—and witnessing the Arab crew walk off the job at 10 a.m. and the Jewish crew working deep into the evening. "A man doesn't need divine inspiration to know what the main result will be in a few years."[32]

Norris coupled his impression of Arab indolence with a fear of Islamic fanaticism informed by hotel gossip. During his travels he "learned" that "Mohammedans have special revelations and visions in which they are told to kill the Christians and the white race."[33] "They are perfectly sincere in these revelations and it is the highest evidence of their affection and concern for the soul of a Christian[,]" he wrote, "They believe that if a Christian is killed by a Mohammedan it is his only way to go to Heaven."[34] Playing on the common Western Christian trope that Islam is a religion spread by the sword while Christianity is spread by

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[29] *Ibid., 1*; apparently, Norris was unaware that soap manufacture was one of the leading industries in Palestine at the time.
[30] *Ibid*., 1.
[31] *Ibid*., 1.
[32] *Ibid*., 2.
[33] Norris, "Jerusalem," *The Searchlight* (October 28, 1920), 2.
[34] *Ibid*., 2.

persuasion, Norris claimed, "They go about their bloody work killing the Christian with the same passion that we as Christians go about to win the souls of our lost friends."[35]

Norris's return from Palestine was a major occasion at First Baptist and in the pages of *The Searchlight*. The pastor invited members of the Orthodox Ahavath Sholom congregation to sing the Zionist anthem "Ha-Tikvah" at a presentation of his slides and films, an event advertised as "Unprecedented Since Abraham's Time!"[36] When the Jewish singers were unable to perform due to a scheduling conflict, Norris invited "noted tenor" A.W. McKee to sing "The Holy City."[37] Norris himself was invited to speak at a meeting of the Fort Worth Zionist District held at Ahavath Sholom's Hebrew Institute, an occasion likewise hyperbolized by *The Searchlight* as "the most unheard of thing of all time."[38] The topic of that talk was "Palestine Restored to the Jews."[39] *The Searchlight* continued to publish Norris's reflections on his trip into December, when he concluded his series of articles by laying out how Jerusalem "has a large place in the prophecy concerning the last days."[40]

Norris did not return to Palestine for 17 years. That 1937 trip came only months after the publication of the Peel Commission's report recommending the

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[35] *Ibid*., 2.
[36] "The Unprecedented Since Abraham's Time!" *The Searchlight* (November 11, 1920), 1; the event does seem to have been mired in scheduling conflicts—it is thus unclear whether singers were ever able to come.
[37] Advertisement: "The First Baptist Church" in *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* (November 28, 1920), 4.
[38] "The Pastor Speaks for the Jews," *The Searchlight* (November 25, 1920), 2.
[39] Advertisement: "The First Baptist Church," 4.
[40] Norris, "Jerusalem," *The Searchlight* (December 2, 1920), 1.

partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states with a corridor remaining under British Mandatory control. Perhaps surprisingly, given his sympathies for Zionism, Norris was frank in asserting that Arabs had legitimate political complaints over the partition plan, that they were caught in "the most pathetic as well as the most impossible situation."[41] In a September 3rd article Norris claimed to have had "an extended interview with the editor of the official organ of Arabs and the most powerful factor in the Arabic world"—he did not specify who—in which he was shown "how the whole Mohammedan world is becoming inflamed and we may soon witness another 'Holy War' that will make the Crusading period pale into insignificance."[42] Norris included in his write-up extended excerpts from the *Voice from India* and from Jamil Husseini, nephew of Grand Mufti Hajj Amin al-Husseini, laying out the Arab case against partition. Following Husseini's lead, Norris noted there was a meaningful difference between saying "Palestine shall be the national home for the Jews" and saying "the Jew shall have a national home in Palestine":

> There is a difference in the two statements just like if a man comes to my house and I will say to him, 'I am going to give you a home in my place,' and then later he understands that to mean that my home will be taken over by him.[43]

Besides this distinction, Norris noted, "The Partition scheme in brief means to give the heart and meat of the watermelon to the Jews and the rind to the Arabs."[44] In another article he asked his American readers to consider being asked to "slice off California for the Japanese" before noting, "That is exactly the proposition from the

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[41] "But For The British Soldiers We Would Both Have Been Cruelly Murdered," *The Fundamentalist* (September 3, 1937), 1.
[42] *Ibid*., 1, 6.
[43] *Ibid*., 7.
[44] *Ibid*., 7.

Arab point of view."[45] Despite his growing understanding of the Arab claims, however, Norris argued in a September 24 article "over against these and all other claims is the fact that God Almighty gave the title to Palestine to the Jews. Who then can contest it? It would be to fight against God."[46]

If Norris's 1937 trip brought him to see more clearly Arab political concerns, it did little to change his impressions of Arab society and culture. He restated repeatedly his 1920 assertion that the Jews would triumph in Palestine because they were the fitter people. This was despite Norris's favorable impressions of his Arab Christian guide, Tewbik Jallouk, and Southern Baptist missionary, Louis Hanna.[47] In a September 24th article, "Why the Jews and Not the Arabs Will Control Palestine," Norris drew clear racial—and racist—contrasts between the two peoples:

> The Arab is lazy and without ambition. The Jew is industrious and ambitious[…]The Arab still uses the wooden plow, but the Jew the steel beam[…] The Arab is filthy, but the Jew is sanitary. The Arab lies in the past, and the Jew is past, present, and future[…]The Arab is very poor, the Jew has the purse strings of the whole world in his hands.[48]

Such characterizations stemmed from a combination of Norris's own clear prejudices and the postcard impressions he had gained in his travels. The week before, Norris had highlighted the visual contrasts between the Jewish Tel Aviv and the largely Arab Joppa (Jaffa/Yafo): "What a contrast between old Joppa and the new Jewish city. In the one filth, ignorance, poverty, beggary, and disease; in the

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[45] Norris, "Will The Next And Final War Break Out In Palestine?," *The Fundamentalist* (September 17, 1937), 5.
[46] Norris, "Why the Jews and Not the Arabs Will Control Palestine," *The Fundamentalist* (September 24, 1937), 1.
[47] Norris, "Will the Next and Final War Break Out in Palestine?," 5; Norris, "An Intelligent Christian Arab Guide: Mr. Tewbik K. Jallouk," *The Fundamentalist* (September 24, 1937).
[48] Norris, "Why the Jews and Not the Arabs Will Control Palestine," 1.

other sanitation, new buildings, paved streets, beautiful homes—This is why the Jew and not the Arab will rule all Palestine."[49] Another article cast the Arabs as the eternal opponents of civilization and progress. "The Arab never builds," he asserted, probably writing not far from the Dome of the Rock, "he destroys."[50] Arabs had destroyed the Great Library of Alexandria, the Temple at Baalbek, and the land of Palestine. "They allowed the fertile soil to wash away[,]" he wrote, "They permit these fine lands to grow sterile."[51] Because of this, "They have forfeited all title to this fair land of promise. They killed the land and did not till it."[52] As he had in 1920, Norris tied his understanding of the conflict to American Manifest Destiny, "It is the story of the American Indian and the coming of the white man, plus the plan, purpose and predestination of God Almighty."[53]

Norris's 1937 trip, it should be noted, not only came during the Arab revolt, but in the midst of the intensifying persecution of European Jews. Norris had paid close attention to the plight of European Jewry since 1933, when he had delivered a sermon on the persecution of Jews in Germany and prophesied the destruction of any nation that mistreated God's chosen people.[54] Norris's trip, paired with his interpretation of the Bible, led him to understand the "Palestine question" as crucial to the settlement of the "Jewish question" in Europe. "The British government promised the Jew this land at the close of the world war," he wrote, "The Jew is

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[49] Norris, "He Sent Them To Joppa," *The Fundamentalist* (September 17, 1937), 7.
[50] Norris, "Will The Next And Final War Break Out In Palestine?," 5.
[51] *Ibid*., 5.
[52] *Ibid*., 5.
[53] *Ibid*., 5.
[54] Norris, "The Persecution of the Jews in Germany," *The Fundamentalist* (April 7, 1933), 3.

severely persecuted in most of the European countries[.]"[55] Besides being sensitive to the trials of the Jews, Norris was keen to identify fascist sympathies among the Arabs. "Mussolini is on the radio and his voice covers the whole of three continents," he wrote, "and he is inflaming the whole Arab world."[56] Citing his experiences on the ground, Norris claimed, "Without exception every Arab that I have talked to is for Mussolini and Hitler because of the Jewish question."[57] Norris warned that the Grand Mufti had acceded to the leadership of a federation of Islamic kingdoms that would surely align with the fascists.[58] The entire Arab world was boiling over with hatred of Jews. "Hitler is a Sunday School teacher compared to the Arab in hating the Jew[,]" he wrote.[59] "What does it all mean?" he asked, "It is the fulfillment of prophecy. The Jew is wanted in no land, and now the whole Arab world is trying to keep him from coming back to his native land."[60]

It seems to have been Norris's travels through Europe and Palestine that immediately inspired his spat with William Bell Riley over the authenticity of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Less than a month after his return to the states, Norris published an article on antisemitism and the *Protocols*. "After seventeen years thinking over the Jewish question," he wrote, indicating the year in which he

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[55] Norris, "Will The Next And Final War Break Out In Palestine?," 5.
[56] Norris, "The First Baptist Church, Jerusalem," *The Fundamentalist* (September 3, 1937), 8.
[57] *Ibid.,* 8.
[58] Norris, "Will The Next And Final War Break Out In Palestine?," 5.
[59] *Ibid*., 5; It should be noted that, despite his prophetic interpretation of the Mufti, Norris was correct in noting the relationship between Haj Amin al-Husseini and the Nazis. See Lukasz Hirszowicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1966); Norman Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands in Modern Times* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991), 105-112, 116-117.
[60] Norris, "The First Baptist Church, Jerusalem," 8.

had first traveled to Palestine, "I am stronger in my position than ever before, namely, it is wrong, even more, it is positively wicked to persecute the Jew, and particularly it is more wicked to persecute the Jew because it is dangerous."[61] The danger came from running afoul of God's promises in Genesis 12. Norris continued, "The wave of anti-Semitism, I am sad to say, is rising. I found this to be true all over Europe."[62] Jews were being blamed for Germany's defeat in World War I. The real blame, Norris asserted, could be found "in six thousand pieces of heavy artillery and two million fresh American soldiers[.]"[63] Jews were being blamed for the rise of Communism. Yet there were "communistic Jews" and "capitalist Jews"—the "Jewish question [had] nothing to do with Communism."[64] "The Jew should not be blamed[,]" Norris wrote, "for the world war, or present militarism and the present war [in Spain]."[65] That was simple scapegoating.

Norris was especially concerned "that certain intelligent outstanding Fundamentalist pastors have joined in this age-long and divinely cursed persecution."[66] He meant Riley, who viewed and promoted the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* as authentic. "Of all the peoples on earth that ought not to persecute the Jews or any other race," he wrote, "it is that people called Fundamentalist Baptists."[67] Norris noted that the Jews were destined to become "the world's greatest evangelists" in Christ's millennial kingdom before asking, "why kill them

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[61] Norris, "Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion," *The Fundamentalist* (October 22, 1937), 1.
[62] *Ibid*., 1.
[63] *Ibid*., 1.
[64] *Ibid*., 1.
[65] *Ibid*., 1.
[66] *Ibid*., 5.
[67] *Ibid*., 1.

off if they are to be the world's greatest evangelists?"[68] Beyond such coldly utilitarian reasoning (as Barry Hankins has put it[69]), Norris warned there could be no revival if Christian ministers were consumed with such hate. Of course, Norris's views of the persecution of Jews did not explain why he believed the *Protocols* were a slander—only why it was wrong to spread such a slander. On the question of the document's authenticity, Norris seems to have been influenced by the results of the "Berne Trial," a suit undertaken in Swiss courts that determined the *Protocols* were a forgery in 1935.[70] Though he never mentioned the trial by name, Norris would repeatedly note that the *Protocols* had been determined to be slanderous "in the fairest courts of this day, namely, the Swiss courts."[71] The pastor even reprinted large quotations from "a great jurist" laying out the fraudulence of the document.[72] The following year, Norris published a pamphlet making the same case.[73]

The "Jewish question" would dominate Norris's next trip to Palestine in 1939. In the months prior to his arrival, Great Britain had abandoned its partition policy and agreed to limit Jewish immigration to 75,000 people over the next five years, effectively reversing the promises of the Balfour Declaration. This, of course, came as the situation of Jews in Europe grew increasingly dire. Norris directly tied Britain's reversal to the situation in Europe, arguing it was the result of "threats

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[68] *Ibid*., 1.
[69] Hankins, *God's Rascal*, 81.
[70] Poliakov, "Elders of Zion, Protocols of the Learned,", 297.
[71] Norris, "Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion," 5.
[72] *Ibid*., 5.
[73] Norris, *Did the Jews Write the Protocols?* (Detroit: n.p., 1938).

from Hitler and Mussolini[.]"[74] "Hitler stirred up the Arabs," he wrote in a later article, "and that is why Britain, for the time, reversed the Balfour decree."[75] He even argued that the Nazis were directly engaging in terrorist bombings in Jerusalem.[76] Norris also highlighted the pitiful attempts of European Jewish refugees to reach Palestine, only to have their ships confiscated by the British. He described, too, witnessing the confiscated ships and their refugee passengers:

> There are two empty ships, small and antiquated, that are confiscated in the harbor at Haifa. I saw them. They have a normal capacity of fifty each. But they brought six hundred Jewish refugees. For many weeks they sailed from port to port. Another ship was not allowed to unload 300 Jewish refugees at Cuba. They finally crossed and unloaded at Jaffa. The ship is there. You can see the empty ship in the harbor. I saw it. I also saw six hundred half starved, half dead human beings in a stockade at Haifa, who had been taken from off the ships.[77]

"All continental Europe is aflame against the Jews[,]" he wrote, "AND NOW THEY ARE FORBIDDEN TO ENTER THEIR OWN LAND!"[78]

Though Norris had long held that the Jews were a nation and had right of title to Palestine, for the first time in 1939 he argued that Jewish nationhood *as a concept itself* was inexorably intertwined with Palestine. "The association of the Jewish people with the land of Palestine[,]" he wrote, "presents an historical phenomenon as singular as the survival of that people itself."[79] Norris believed that

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[74] Norris, "Is Jacob's Trouble' Near? 'O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem," (September 1, 1939), 7.
[75] Norris, "Great Britain and Palestine - Will There Be Another Munich?," *The Fundamentalist* (October 6, 1939), 4.
[76] Norris, "Nazis Carrying On Reign of Terror and Death in Palestine," (September 15, 1939).
[77] Norris, "Is Jacob's Trouble' Near? 'O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem," 7.
[78] *Ibid.,* 7.
[79] Norris, "The 'Swastika' An Ancient Jewish Emblem, and 'Nazi' a Jewish Title?," *The Fundamentalist* (September 1, 1939), 2.

"attachment to the ancient home" was "one of the principal factors in the maintenance of the Jewish nation."[80] Though Judaism as a religious system had helped preserve Jewish national identity, the attachment to the land "gave to the legacy of the spirit a basis of reality which effectively precluded its submergence in any of the numerous systems of thought and belief with which the Jews subsequently came into contact."[81] Without a real land to dream of returning to, the Jews would likely have disappeared as a distinct people. While Norris believed that God had specifically preserved the Jews as a nation, these particular arguments relied on secular reasoning that had parallels in Zionist ideology.

If the land had sustained the Jews, Norris also argued that it was the Jews who sustained the land. "Palestine remained an historical site and a passive object of history after the Jews had left it[,]" he argued, "It never again attained any indigenous statehood or played any active part in the affairs of mankind."[82] The promise of Jewish statehood in Palestine portended not only a "return to history" for the Jews, but for the land itself. Norris mobilized evidence from the expanding archaeological record to argue that Jewish stewardship was necessary for the land to flourish. The centuries after Joshua's conquest had been "a period of remarkable development."[83] During the united monarchy of David and Solomon, "the Jewish State attained a high level of political military and economic organization, as proved by the recent archaeological excavations."[84] Agriculture, architecture, and literature

[80] *Ibid*., 2.
[81] *Ibid*., 2.
[82] *Ibid*., 2.
[83] *Ibid*., 2.
[84] *Ibid*., 2.

had flourished. After the Babylonian Exile, when "visions of a divinely assured return to Zion[…]kept alive the sense of national cohesion among the Jewish exiles[,]" the reign of the Hasmoneans had yielded "a period of even greater prosperity than the preceding one."[85] "Agriculture, trade and commerce, both on land and on sea, flourished," he noted.[86] When Jews controlled the land, it thrived.

Norris also argued for the first time in 1939 that the Zionists had benefited the Arabs. While this fit with his argument that the presence of Jews in Palestine was necessary for the region's material progress, it contrasted with his earlier assertions that Jews and Arabs were engaged in a battle of survival. "I know from first-hand knowledge from my tour in Palestine the Jews have not persecuted the Arabs," he wrote, "and instead of the Arabs being driven out they have actually increased in numbers since the Balfour declaration[.]"[87] Jewish hospitals were open to Arabs. Jewish medicine was lengthening Arab life-spans. Jewish business was making Arabs wealthy. Jews were helping maintain Arab schools. Jews were raising the standard of living for both populations. "[If] these two peoples were left alone and if it were not for outside agitation[,]" he claimed, "they would get along together."[88]

As his fourth trip approached in 1947, Norris began contacting Jewish organizations asking to be introduced to Zionist leaders in Palestine. A reply from Ben Goldman of the Anti-Defamation League seems to have had an impact on

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[85] *Ibid*., 2.
[86] *Ibid*., 2.
[87] J. Frank Norris, "Great Britain and Palestine - Will There Be Another Munich?," 3.
[88] *Ibid*., 3.

Norris. Goldman noted the ADL did not have contact with the Yishuv's leadership, however Norris's associations with renowned antisemite Gerald Smith would have made the organization "most troubled about furnishing you with a letter of introduction" even if it did.[89] While Goldman's letter did not discourage Norris from further attempts to gain access to the Yishuv leadership, it did affect his strategy—from that point forward the pastor was keen to make American Jewish organizations like the ADL and the American Zionist Executive Council aware of his own anti-antisemitic activities and active support of Zionism.

Perhaps to demonstrate his pro-Zionist bona fides, Norris became more activist in his approach to the intensifying conflict in Palestine. In particular, he grew increasingly concerned over the United States' role. During his 1947 trip he mailed and published a letter to President Truman calling on the U.S. government to support the Jewish bid for statehood. "In that whole controversy the big issue is who owns the land, who has the title to the land?" he wrote, "If that question is settled there is no other question."[90] Norris argued that the land belonged to the Jews by right of title and international law. Their right of title derived from Genesis 17, which specifically stated "that the title to Palestine is given not to Ishmael, the ancestor of the Arabs, but to Isaac and his seed forever."[91] "Thirteen hundred years ago the Arabs were usurpers," he wrote in describing the Islamic conquest of Palestine, "and they are robbers of property that belongs to the Jews."[92] In terms of international law—a "second and very important authority in addition to Scriptural

[89] Ben Goldman to Norris, June 10, 1947, Box 22, Folder 1010, Norris Papers.
[90] Norris, *My Fifth Trip To Palestine* (Fort Worth: Fundamentalist Press, 1948), 9.
[91] *Ibid*., 9.
[92] *Ibid*., 10.

authority"—"Great Britain was given mandate over Palestine for the purpose of Jewish immigration into that land and for making it a national home[…]This mandate was confirmed by the United States Government and by the 57 Nations of the League of Nations."[93] British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's adoption of the 1939 White Paper, which had limited Jewish immigration, was therefore a violation of international law. "Illegal" Jewish immigration to Palestine, on the other hand, was perfectly legal under the terms of the Mandate. Further, Jews had "invested six hundred and fifty million dollars in Palestine, built cities, public works" on the basis of "the mandate given to Great Britain over Palestine, and confirmed by the United States Government and confirmed by the League of Nations[.]"[94] Norris declared "the curse of God Almighty" was "on every hand that violates this most solemn agreement—the mandate three times over confirmed."[95] International law, it seems, gave definition to the prophetic.

Besides making a positive case for the Zionists, Norris made a negative case against the Arabs. Norris reminded the president that Hajj Amin al-Husseini, the leader of the Palestinian national movement, had been an ally of Hitler's. "Now, Mr. President," he wrote, "it is certainly a matter that should cause us to stop and think that the Arab leaders from the Grand Mufti on down were allies of Hitler, and it ill becomes them to come now into court with their hands dripping with the blood of the Jews—six million of them murdered by Hitler."[96] Just as he had attributed the Arab revolt of the 1930s to fascist agitation, he blamed current Arab resistance to

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[93] *Ibid*., 11.
[94] *Ibid*, 11.
[95] *Ibid*, 11.
[96] *Ibid*., 12.

Zionism on the Soviet Union. "I interviewed many Arab leaders," he wrote, "and without question I found that the whole crowd are for Stalin, just like they formerly were for Hitler."[97] Russia was "doing everything at her command to foment the trouble."[98] As for the United States, its responsibility was to "keep its promise and take a firm stand for law and order in that land that has given the world its Bible and Saviour."[99] Upon Norris's return he argued to a crowd that included members of the Zionist District of Fort Worth that "Peace[…]will come to a troubled Palestine only after the United States warns the Arab leaders to cease their aggressions against the Jews."[100] Norris was delighted to receive a personal, if somewhat dismissive reply from the President thanking him for the "expression of [his] views[.]"[101]

Two months later, Norris exulted in the United Nations' vote in favor of partition. "Yesterday afternoon the most far-reaching action was taken in two thousand years, or since the birth of Christ," he wrote, "when the United Nations voted to give that land a home for the Jews, a national home."[102] The Jews were now "nationally and officially recognized."[103] Despite his joy, Norris nonetheless feared that the U.N. vote represented "the beginning of the final struggle, or final war among the nations."[104] Though the Soviet Union had voted with the United States in favor of partition, Norris held that they had acted "for a wholly different

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[97] *Ibid*., 12.
[98] *Ibid*., 12.
[99] *Ibid*., 12.
[100] Harry Hamilton, "Dr. Norris Greeted by Jews," *The Fundamentalist* (October 31, 1947), 3.
[101] Norris, *Fifth Trip*, 13.
[102] Norris, "And They Parted My Land," *The Fundamentalist* (December 26, 1947), 2.
[103] *Ibid*., 2.
[104] *Ibid*., 2.

purpose"—"Russia is out to stir up all the trouble they can, and bring about a wrecked and ruined world. And on the wreck and ruin of this world they hope to build their communistic or totalitarian state."[105] Despite having voting against the Arabs, who viewed partition as illegal and illegitimate, the Soviets remained their allies. "Now all the Arab leaders that have opposed and fought the Jews and fought this partition," Norris wrote, "they are all allies of Joe Stalin[.]"[106]

As war broke out in Palestine and the date of British withdrawal neared, Norris again called on the United States government to help enforce the partition plan. In February, he published a statement issued by the American Christian Palestine Committee (ACPC), a lobby established by the Zionist Executive to cultivate support for the movement among Christians, that called upon the United States and the United Nations to enforce the terms of partition and castigated the British government for failing to maintain law and order in the lead-up to their withdrawal.[107] Norris had been made aware of the statement through his correspondence with William Kaufman of the American Zionist Emergency Council (AZEC).[108] Pleased that Norris had printed the statement in *The Fundamentalist*, Kaufman invited him to visit the AZEC offices in New York prior to his next trip to Palestine and suggested he may be able to provide him with contacts in the

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[105] *Ibid*., 2.
[106] *Ibid*., 2.
[107] American Christian Palestine Committee, "To The United States and the United Nations...," *The Fundamentalist* (February 13, 1948), 7.
[108] "J. Frank Norris to William Kaufman," January 24, 1948, AR 124, Item 13575, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

Yishuv.[109] Norris followed up the ACPC statement with a telegram to Truman arguing that the "only safe course" for the United States to pursue in Palestine was to "back up partition plan which was fostered by this government and do so immediately" with the "necessary armed forces to put down disorder[.]"[110] The Haganah (the main Zionist militia) "should be furnished all necessary arms immediately[.]"[111] Otherwise, "we will be guilty of too little and too late."[112] In advocating for direct American military aid for the Zionists—in giving a very specific, direct, and practical way in which Christians and the United States could support the creation of the Jewish state—Norris went beyond what almost any Southern Baptist and even many dispensationalists could contemplate.

Conclusion – The 1948 Southern Baptist Convention

As noted in the introduction, in 1948 Norris brought his activist approach to the Southern Baptist Convention in Memphis, Tennessee. Boxed out of actual Convention proceedings, Norris set up a counter-convention at the Peabody Hotel that included a May 17 address in the Peabody's Continental Ballroom on the Palestine question—just days after the declaration of the State of Israel and President Truman's near-immediate recognition. When the day arrived, Norris called on President Truman to raise the arms embargo against the Zionists while calling on the SBC to send Truman a telegram of congratulations for recognizing

[109] "William Kaufman to J. Frank Norris," January 27, 1948, AR 124, Item 13576, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.
[110] Norris, *Fifth Trip*, 35.
[111] *Ibid*., 35.
[112] *Ibid*., 35.

Israel. One of Norris's allies, E.D. Solomon, proposed a motion to do the latter at the Convention, which was repeatedly and overwhelmingly voted down. Baptist critics of the motion presented their "no" votes as a rebuke against the President for "playing politics with the Jewish vote."[113] As Terry Lindley has argued, though, a major factor in the motion's overwhelming defeat was likely its association with Norris—a Convention that had voted against seating him was not likely to adopt a motion he had publicly called for.[114] For some Southern Baptists, it seems, support for Zionism had come to be synonymous with Norrisism—or at least inextricably tangled with it.

[113] John Popham, "Baptists Criticize Truman on Israel," *New York Times* (May 20, 1948), 4.
[114] Terry Lindley, "The 1948 SBC Opposition to Israel: The J. Frank Norris Factor." *Baptist History and Heritage* 22, no. 4 (October 1987): 23–33.

Chapter Ten

Interpreters of Events

As we have seen, though Frank Norris came to be quite political in his support for Zionism, most of the Baptists we have studied did not encounter the Palestine question on political terms—even though it was a fundamentally political question. This chapter, however, focuses precisely on politics, looking at how Baptist editorialists across the South approached the question. Every state Baptist periodical had an editorial section, though the extent to which Palestine appeared in Baptist editorials varied from editor to editor. Under J.S. Farmer, for example, North Carolina's *Biblical Recorder* featured several editorials on both the "Palestine question" and "Jewish question" during the years of the Arab revolt (1936-1939). However, L.L. Carpenter, who edited the *Recorder* during the decisive years of 1947-1949, published no editorials on Palestine or the newly-created Israel. Some Convention-wide periodicals also featured commentary. W.O. Carver, Professor of Missions at SBTS, published a news commentary column in both *Pastor's Periscope*, essentially a review journal for Southern Baptist pastors, and *The Commission*, the Home and Foreign Mission Boards' periodical. The latter, following its earlier incarnation as *Home and Foreign Fields*, also featured commentary from the secretaries of the mission boards. The *Review & Expositor*, the leading Southern Baptist theological journal (edited by Carver from 1919-1942), infrequently featured commentary essays on news items; its January 1930 issue contained two articles on the Palestine question. Unsurprisingly, the question tended to stir the Baptist commentariat when major events broke into the American news

cycle—editorials peaked during WWI and the establishment of the Mandate (1917-1923), the Wailing Wall riots (1928-1930), the Arab Revolt (1936-1939), and the events surrounding the creation of the State of Israel (1947-1949).

As will be seen below, there was no definitive Southern Baptist perspective on the Palestine question, though some patterns are apparent. If there existed anything that could be called an anti-Zionist bloc within the SBC, it resided at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.[1] W.O. Carver, longtime Professor of Missions, and J. McKee Adams, Professor of Biblical Introduction, were among the most outspoken opponents of Zionism within the Southern Baptist Convention. Their colleague, Professor of Comparative Religion, H.C. Goerner, was a critic of "Christian Zionism"—specifically, the belief that Zionism was somehow the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. As professors at the Southern Baptists' leading seminary and as active denominationalists, Carver, Adams, and Goerner had widespread influence in the SBC. Their opinions were valued by denominational peers and former students (which were many). *Every* male foreign missionary to Palestine during the Mandate era, for example, had a degree from SBTS. That the SBTS faculty's opinions mattered, though, is different from them changing minds. Two of those foreign missionaries who had studied at SBTS with Carver and Adams, Leo Eddleman and Robert Lindsey, believed the Zionist movement was

[1] I use the term "anti-Zionist" reluctantly here, as what could be construed as anti-Zionist changed frequently during the Mandate era.

somehow fulfilling biblical prophecy (Eddleman, possibly under the influence of the SBTS faculty, would later change his mind).[2]

Broadly, Southern Baptists who took a more "secular" approach to the Palestine question (this included the SBTS faculty) inclined towards the Arab perspective. This did not necessarily mean identifying with any particular Arab political movement—be it pan-Arabism or Palestinian nationalism—but rather a sense that Arab resistance to Zionism was reasonable. While most in this camp admired the Zionist movement, they nonetheless felt that the Zionists were too aggressive in pushing for statehood (until the 1942 Biltmore Conference, American Zionists largely agreed).[3] Many followed the lead of Northern Baptist Harry Emerson Fosdick, famous for his outspoken opposition to fundamentalism in the 1920s, who favored a "moderate" Zionism that stopped short of statehood.[4]

Balfour and the Mandate

As General Edmund Allenby's army neared Jerusalem in 1917, some Baptist commentators took note. The *Florida Baptist Witness* declared, "It will be a notable event when [Jerusalem] is taken possession of by the Gentiles. Then it is frequently predicted that as a result of the war, it will pass once again into the hands of the

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[2] As can be seen in the missionary chapter, Eddleman's stance changed over the course of the 1940s, possibly as a result of Carver, Adams, and Goerner's influence.
[3] Zionist leaders called the Biltmore Conference to address the intertwined crises in Europe and Palestine. The Conference adopted a program calling specifically for Jewish statehood in Palestine. It was the first time that American Zionist groups had gone that far. Moshe Zvi Frank, "Biltmore Program," *Encyclopedia Judaica* 3, 699-700.
[4] Harry Emerson Fosdick, *A Pilgrimage to Palestine* (New York: MacMillan, 1937), 271-294.

children of Jacob."[5] As to whether this prediction lay in the realm of prophecy, politics, both, or neither, editor A.J. Holt remained silent. After the city fell on December 11, Holt exclaimed that "English troops have at last captured the Holy City from the unspeakable Turk." "From the very first stroke of the war," he noted, "this was most devoutly hoped and expected to be one of the results."[6] For Holt, Allenby's victory represented a triumph of Christianity over Islam. "For thirteen hundred years[,]" he wrote, "the Crescent has seemingly triumphed over the Cross."[7] It represented, too, the fall of an Ottoman regime that had laid the land low. "Palestine under the Turks was a desolation[,]" he wrote, noting that he had visited the Holy Land 27 years prior and been "an eye witness to Turkish atrocities and cruelty."[8] Remarking on the difficulties under which Christians—especially Christian missionaries—lived within the Ottoman world, Holt exulted, "The shackles of religious despotism has thus been removed from the souls of millions of people."[9] The fall of Islamic rule in Palestine meant "a long stride toward the universal introduction of Christianity into all the world and every creature."[10] Looking towards the future, Holt declared, "It would be in our opinion a splendid thing for Palestine to be turned over to the Jews, with certain restrictions. Already Russian persecutions have driven countless thousands of Jews to Palestine."[11] The following week, Holt penned a brief editorial that dealt specifically with the

[5] A.J. Holt, "News and Views," *Florida Baptist Witness* (September 13, 1917), 8.
[6] Holt, "Jerusalem Captured," *Florida Baptist Witness* (December 13, 1917), 6.
[7] *Ibid*., 6.
[8] *Ibid*., 6.
[9] *Ibid*., 6.
[10] *Ibid*., 6.
[11] *Ibid*., 6.

relationship of Jews to Palestine. "Jerusalem was made for the Jews[,]" he stated. Noting he had read an article in the *Tampa Times* describing rumors "that the British would invited the return of the Jews to Palestine for the purpose of making for the Hebrew people a national home once more[,]" Holt wrote, "We think this eminently proper, and will rejoice in its accomplishment, always under proper restrictions and oversight."[12] Of particular concern to Holt was that "Jerusalem is not a manufacturing city. Neither is it a commercial city."[13] While he was certain that Palestine could be developed agriculturally, he questioned the ability of Jews to do it: "…the Hebrew people are not agriculturists. They are almost everywhere commercial people."[14] "In order for Jerusalem to become a great and prosperous city as it once was," he wrote, "something in the way of industries apart from commercial pursuits shall have to be resorted to."[15] Still, Holt remained hopeful Jerusalem would flourish under "a benevolent government, protected always by Christian nations].]"[16]

Though Holt was replaced as editor by J.W. Mitchell in 1918, the *Witness* continued to display a special concern for Jerusalem and a particular disdain for the Ottoman Empire. An article in July of 1918 asked, "Was Jerusalem captured through the power of prayer?" It recounted a story of how King George had instructed General Allenby to pray that the holy city be taken without a

[12] Holt, "Jerusalem and the Jews," *Florida Baptist Witness* (December 20, 1917), 6.
[13] *Ibid*., 6.
[14] *Ibid*., 6.
[15] *Ibid.,* 6.
[16] *Ibid*., 6.

bombardment.[17] Briefly after concluding a prayer with his men, an officer "sprang to his feet and espying a Turkish group advancing with a white flag, said the Lord had answered their prayers."[18] After the November 11 armistice, Mitchell exulted in the defeat of the Ottomans, proclaiming, "We are all glad that the 'Awful Turk is down and out.'"[19] "Their rule has been characterized by cruel atrosities which are a shame to civilization[,]" he wrote, "What the Jews, Armenians, Syrians and others have suffered at their hands the world will never know. We confidently believe that there is a better day ahead for these once noble races. In fact already the day dawns, and they rejoice and take courage."[20]

No other state Baptist periodical here studied was as engaged with the Ottoman theater of the Great War as the *Florida Baptist Witness*. For the most part, only brief, scattered references to Palestine made their way to other state papers. The week after Jerusalem fell to the British, Livingston Johnson of the *Biblical Recorder* published a brief note in its "Current Topics" column, celebrating "that the 'unspeakable Turk' has been driven out" of Jerusalem. The column noted, too, that a "very able Hebrew" had delivered a lecture in Raleigh on the subject of Jerusalem:

> This man greatly rejoiced to know that the ancient capital of the Jews was now in the hands of Christians and prophesied that in a short time there would be over a million Jews in Jerusalem; that the Hebrews would be

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[17] "Army Prayed, Holy City Fell," *Florida Baptist Witness* (July 3, 1918), 13; the article was also published in the *Biblical Recorder*, albeit over a year later, (September 3, 1919), 5.
[18] *Ibid*., 13; it was actually not the Ottomans who surrendered Jerusalem, but the Arab mayor of the city.
[19] J.W. Mitchell, "Editorial: Better Days for Which We Are All Grateful," *Florida Baptist Witness* (November 21, 1918), 2.
[20] *Ibid*., 2.

> established there as a nation; that the Hebrew nation would be a democracy; that they would erect monuments to great Britain and France; and would always hold in grateful memory the part that America had in the restoration of the Holy Land to God's own chosen people. Furthermore, he said, that this would be the hyphen nation between the East and the West, friendly to both and serving as a connecting link between the two.[21]

"Whether this prophecy will be fulfilled or not," the editor noted, "it is a matter for great rejoicing that the land in which our Lord spent His earthly life has been wrested from the hands of the most cruel and barbarous people on the face of the earth, and let us hope and pray that never again will it fall into their possession."[22] "Prophecy" here, of course, did not indicate the execution of God's plan for history, but the hopes of a Jewish advocate for Zionism. That same week, John William Porter of *The Western Recorder*, who *did* understand the war as having biblical prophetic significance, published an editorial celebrating the British victory while warning, "The Russian debacle, and the fall of Jerusalem, suggest that the battle of Armageddon is near at hand. Should Russia link her destiny with the Central Powers, which is entirely within the range of probabilities, Palestine would present the logical battlefield for the final conflict."[23] After the 1918 armistice, E.C. Routh of the *Baptist Standard* attempted to make broader sense of the conflict. He remarked that the conclusion of the war would mean "age-long wrongs will be corrected."[24] Among the possible corrections was that "Jews after two millenniums,

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[21] Livingston Johnson, "Current Topics," *Biblical Recorder* (December 17, 1917), 7.
[22] *Ibid*., 7.
[23] John William Porter, "Editorial: The Fall of Jerusalem," *The Western Recorder* (December 13, 1917), 8.
[24] E.C. Routh, "Understanding the Times and Acting Accordingly," *Baptist Standard* (November 21, 1918), 13.

may have a country of their own."[25] Routh made no mention of Arabs—or, explicitly, of the Middle East—though he did note that Turkey "will no longer be tolerated" in Europe.[26]

Several state papers reprinted articles from outside periodicals. In November of 1917, *The Baptist Messenger* of Oklahoma published a brief note by Charles Trumbull, editor of the *Sunday School Times*, that touted the successes of the Zionist movement with a series of "Did you know?" questions. "Did you know what startling success was attending the Zionist or Jewish colonies in Palestine up to the time of the War?' he asked.[27] He asked, too, whether readers knew that "the Jewish colonists increased the productivity of Palestine soil from the Arab's yield of $5 an acre to their own yield of from $20 to $25 an acre?"[28] Trumbull concluded by noting the purposes of the Palestine Land Development Company, the Jewish Colonial Trust, and the Anglo-Palestine Company, and celebrating the rebirth of Hebrew as a vernacular language. In November of 1918, both the *Baptist Chronicle* and *Alabama Baptist* published an article focusing on Christian relations in Jerusalem.[29] The occasion was the World Sunday-school Convention, which brought Protestants of varying stripes to the city. The article, circulated widely in Protestant periodicals, contrasted the peaceful assembly of Protestants against the notoriously fractious setting of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and suggested that

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[25] *Ibid*., 13.
[26] *Ibid*., 13.
[27] Charles Trumbull, "Concerning the Jews," *The Baptist Messenger* (November 21, 1917), 15.
[28] *Ibid*., 15.
[29] "A New Day at the Holy Sepulchre," *The Alabama Baptist* (November 29, 1918); "A New Day At The Holy Sepulcher," *The Baptist Chronicle* (November 14, 1918), 1.

the presence of the Protestants had made for an uncharacteristically peaceful Easter celebration at the site. The following month, *The Baptist Chronicle* of Louisiana published an article by John Finley, the American Red Cross Commissioner to Palestine, describing relief work among the region's refugees.[30]

The Wailing Wall Riots

The 1929 "Wailing Wall Riots" brought Baptists to focus once again on the situation in Palestine. On Yom Kippur of 1928, the erection of a gender barrier at the Western Wall had spurred protest from Jerusalem's Arabs and a harsh intervention from Mandate police, who destroyed the barrier. The episode had spurred months of protests and counter-protests from both Jews and Arabs. In August of 1929 tensions erupted into violence, with Arab mobs killing 133 Jews in Jerusalem, Safed, and Hebron.[31] After years of relative calm, the riots had made clear that the political status quo was unsustainable. Palestine, once again, was a topic of conversation.

The January issue of the *Review & Expositor*, Southern Baptists' leading theological journal, included two articles on the Palestine question. The first, titled "Palestine—A Problem," was penned by Dr. Ryland Knight of Delmar Baptist Church in St. Louis. Knight, a graduate of SBTS and Richmond College, had served

[30] John Finley, "John Huston Finley, American Red Cross Commissioner to Palestine," *The Baptist Chronicle* (December 5, 1918), 11.
[31] Hillel Cohen's recent work, *Year Zero*, identifies the events of 1929 as the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Cohen, *Shnat ha-Efes ba-Sikhsukh ha-Yehudi-'Aravi* (Jerusalem: Keter, 2013) [hebrew]; recently translated by Haim Watzman as *Year Zero of the Arab-Israeli Conflict 1929* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2015).

in Baptist pulpits in Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, and Missouri, as well as on a variety of denominational boards.[32] Knight's goal was to provide historical context for both the Zionist movement and Arab responses to it. He was careful not to take sides and shrugged at any discussion of a possible solution. His description of Zionism rightly positioned the movement within two historical contexts—the centuries-long context of Jewish attachment to the land and diasporic persecutions and the more recent context of 19th-century antisemitism (he emphasized, in particular, the role the Dreyfus Affair in Theodor Herzl's turn to Zionism). He noted correctly that the movement "has not met with the hearty endorsement of every group of Jews, and has in many instances met with their emphatic opposition[.]"[33] He noted, too, the lack of "uniformity among the Jews in their understanding of the purpose of the movement"—there were irreligious, "communistic" Zionists and others who found the movement "almost wholly religious[.]"[34] Despite this variety, Knight did feel there was a "cohesive force" uniting the disparate strands of Zionism:

> …the cohesive force in Zionism is the conviction that the Jew is in danger of being absorbed by the nations among whom he is scattered, and that the Jewish hope for the future lies in the establishment of at least a center of Jewish life and thought to which, as to a shrine, the affections and aspirations of Jews everywhere may turn.[35]

Knight's appraisal of the movement was clearly influenced by the father of "spiritual" or "cultural" Zionism, Ahad Ha'am, whom he actually quoted in the

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[32] "Ryland Knight," in *Veterans of the Cross*, edited by William Lunsford (Dallas: Baptist Standard Publishing Company, 1921), 62-63.
[33] Ryland Knight, "Palestine—A Problem," *Review & Expositor* 27, no. 1 (January 1930), 14.
[34] *Ibid*., 14.
[35] *Ibid*., 14-15.

piece (as Asher Ginzberg). It is clear that Ahad Ha'am's influence on Knight led the latter away from some of the crucial assumptions of the political Zionism espoused by Theodor Herzl and the World Zionist Organization—that, rather than being "in danger of being absorbed[,]" Jews were fundamentally unassimilable and so required a state of their own. Knight did not explicitly address the matter of Jewish statehood, but did lament that "the zeal which makes Zionism possible makes almost inevitable the outbursts of a few individual Jews who hope to find in Zionism not only a restoration of the Jews to Palestine, but an intolerant usurpation of all rights in Palestine to the displacement of all other people."[36] Knight cited the noted northern Baptist Harry Emerson Fosdick in condemning this aggressive form of Zionism. Though Knight did not specifically stump for the binational or federated approach to Palestine that Fosdick favored (or offer any political solution, for that matter), it is clear that whatever political sympathy he had for the movement stopped short of outright independent Jewish statehood.

Knight's treatment of the Arab cause was less detailed. He laid out the long history of Arab inhabitance of the land, starting with the Islamic conquest of the seventh century, and noted the sacrality of Jerusalem in Islam. He laid out, too, the contradictory promises made by the British during the war, describing the "present situation in Palestine" as "in part another miserable hang-over from the world war."[37] Like many other Baptist observers, Knight presented the Arab cause as a justifiable reaction to British policy and Zionist encroachment rather than a movement of its own:

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[36] *Ibid*., 18.
[37] *Ibid*., 22.

> …the Arab feels that possession is nine points of the law and for a thousand years Jerusalem and Palestine have been his. His religious interest in Jerusalem is as great as the Jews. He does not propose to be dispossessed. And he is suspicious of Christendom.[38]

Knight never articulated any specific Arab goal beyond avoiding dispossession. He made no mention of either pan-Arabism or Palestinian nationalism as ideologies. Nor did he mention any specific Arab institutions. Avoiding any offer of a possible solution to the Palestine question, Knight was only able to conclude that it was "an intricate problem" that would tax all the "tact and patience" of the British.[39] Later, it should be noted, Knight would join the American Palestine Committee, a pro-Zionist lobby affiliated with the Zionist Executive. At the time of his joining in 1941, however, the aims of the group were limited to calling on the British to implement the promises of the Balfour Declaration, again short of a call for statehood.[40]

The second *Review & Expositor* article was penned by Rabbi Joseph Rauch of Temple Adath Israel in Louisville. Rauch's educational path had been unique, but it had uniquely suited him to write in the journal; he had the rare distinction of having studied at both Hebrew Union College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.[41] Though Rauch would come to be considered an anti-Zionist (indeed, he was later involved in the creation of the anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism)

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[38] *Ibid*., 23.
[39] *Ibid*., 23.
[40] "American Palestine Committee: Statement of Aims and Principles," petition, File 359, Neumann Papers, CZA.
[41] Rauch briefly discussed his time at SBTS in an address given at a 75th anniversary celebration of the seminary in 1934, "Among My Alma Maters," Box 5, Ledger 7, Joseph Rauch Papers (hereafter Rauch Papers), American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA), Cincinnati, OH.

his article, "Contemporary Palestine," offered a basic American Zionist approach to the Palestine question—which in 1930 meant that it stopped short of calling for statehood.[42] Instead, it called on the British to continue to allow Jewish migration and purchase of land with an eye towards building a Jewish national home, as promised in the Balfour Declaration. The small number of Jews already in Palestine had worked wonders, doing "more in a generation agriculturally, economically and culturally than the Arabs had done in five centuries."[43] Rauch added:

> The Jewish pioneers were transforming neglected, barren, malaria-infested Palestine into 'a land flowing with milk and honey'. They were building their new home in their old consecrated country with all their hearts, all their souls and all their might. It never occurred to them that their right to do so would be questioned. The nations of the world granted this privilege to them.[44]

The Zionists did not seek to displace anyone. Nor had they met any authentic resistance on the part of the Arabs. "From all available reports," he claimed, "the Arab masses were perfectly satisfied with the Jewish efforts in Palestine. They benefited in every way from the improvements that were made by the Jewish settlers."[45] Quite to the contrary, "the Arab masses" had not been perfectly satisfied with Zionist encroachment. Organized resistance to Zionist land purchases and

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[42] Years before his publication in the *Review & Expositor*, Rauch expressed opposition to Jewish statehood. "Ancient Palestine and the Modern Jew," (January 17, 1915), Box 1, Folder 3, Rauch Papers; in 1943 he co-authored a minority report against a successful Central Conference of American Rabbis resolution urging the anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism to disband: Rauch and S.H. Goldenson, "Minority Report on Resolution II," *Yearbook of the Central Conference of American Rabbis* 53 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1943), 94-98. After the creation of the State, however, he would grow to become supportive.
[43] Joseph Rauch, "Contemporary Palestine," *Review & Expositor* 27, no. 1 (January 1930), 27.
[44] *Ibid*., 27.
[45] *Ibid*., 27.

immigration predated the Balfour Declaration. Rauch attributed what resistance there was—including the shocking violence of the Wailing Wall riots—to the incitement of the "Arab chieftains" and "the religious and secular aristocrats" who "looked with hostility on the Jewish arrivals, their programs and their success."[46] "These oriental overlords," he added, "feared the occidental enlightenment which Zionism was introducing in the land."[47]

Rauch believed there could be peace with the Arabs if the British committed themselves to enforcing the Mandate. In allowing "effendi bolshevism" to rile the masses, the Mandate government had "made itself culpable of the Jewish tragedy in Palestine."[48] As a first step towards authentic piece in the region, the British government had to "preserve law and order[.]"[49] It had to enforce the terms of the Mandate. "The League of Nations has granted permission to the Zionists to come and settle in Palestine and build there a national home for themselves where they can develop their own culture," he wrote, "This promise must be kept inviolate."[50] The Zionists "have confidence that they can transform the most barren and desolate Palestinian soil to fruitful field and garden" and a "historic and moral right to do this[.]"[51] That right "should not be denied them."[52] "The normal status between

[46] *Ibid*., 27.
[47] *Ibid*., 27.
[48] *Ibid*., 29.
[49] *Ibid*., 29.
[50] *Ibid*., 31.
[51] *Ibid*., 31.
[52] *Ibid*., 31.

Arabs and Jews is friendliness," Rauch concluded, "and this can be restored if England and the League of Nations will see fit to bring it about."[53]

One reader of the two articles, editor J.S. Farmer of the *Biblical Recorder*, found that they had much in common, noting, "It is interesting to see how nearly these two writers agree on many important points."[54] On the matter of Zionism itself, there indeed was some overlap between Knight and Rauch. Though Knight did not overtly endorse the spiritual Zionism he described, he did favorably contrast it with the positions of more aggressively political Zionists. Rauch, for his part, was explicit in his endorsement of specific Zionist goals—namely continued migration and land purchase—although he stopped short of calling for statehood. Both Knight and Rauch viewed the movement as a vehicle of modernity in the region. As the discussion shifted to the underlying causes of conflict, though, clear differences emerged. Knight blamed overreaching Zionists and Britain's contradictory wartime policies for spurring the conflict. He viewed general Arab resistance to Zionism as reasonable. Rauch, on the other hand, blamed the conflict on rabblerousing effendis cynically trying to preserve their own power. He viewed authentic Arab resistance to Zionism as non-existent.

The Arab Revolt and the Persecution of Jews in Europe

The Arab revolt, which began as a general strike in 1936 but ballooned into a full rebellion by the following year, and the increasing persecution of Jews in Europe

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[53] *Ibid*., 31.
[54] J.S. Farmer, "Current Topics: Jews and Arabs, by a Jew," *Biblical Recorder*, (January 22, 1930), 7.

would once again draw Baptist eyes to Palestine. The revolt led J.S. Farmer, editor of the *Biblical Recorder* of North Carolina, to take a stand against continuing Zionist immigration to Palestine. Though he blamed the conflict on the "two incompatible promises" made by the British during World War I, he was certain that the "promise to the Arabs was really the only one that the British had a right to make, since the Arabs were the inhabitants of the country and they had a right to stay there[.]"[55] Farmer was less inspired by Zionist achievement than many of his fellow Baptists. Though he blamed the British for the conflict, he attributed the modernization of the region to them—for Farmer, it was the British who were making the land blossom "like a rose."[56] He viewed the Zionists less as modernizers than well-funded land-grabbers, who had "known how to get much of the best land from the poor Arab farmers, and are in consequence hated by the Arabs worse than ever."[57]

Though Farmer voiced repeated concerns with the persecution of Jews in Europe and the developing refugee crisis, he did not view Jewish immigration to Palestine as a moral solution to the problem.[58] "[What] is it but hollow mockery one to be outraged at the driving of Jews from their homes in Germany and Italy and at

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[55] Farmer, "Current Topics: The Partition of Palestine," *Biblical Recorder* (July 28, 1937), 7.
[56] Farmer, "Palestine," *Biblical Recorder* (September 16, 1936), 6.
[57] Farmer, "Current Topics: The Partition of Palestine," 7.
[58] On persecution and the refugee crisis: Farmer, "Current Topics: A Place of Refuge," *Biblical Recorder* (April 6, 1938), 7; Farmer, "Religious Liberty in Austria," *Biblical Recorder* (May 11, 1938), 6; Farmer, "Current Topics: Germany Refuses to Pay," *Biblical Recorder* (June 29, 1938), 9; William Richardson, "The Race Over Whom Jesus Wept," *Biblical Recorder* (August 24, 1938), 3; Farmer, "The Persecuted Jews of Germany," *Biblical Recorder* (November 23, 1938), 6; Farmer, "Current Topics: Plain Words to Germany," *Biblical Recorder* (January 4, 1939), 10.

the same time to strive to find homes for them by taking their lands away from the Arabs of Palestine," he wrote in 1938.[59] Farmer reported with approval hearing rumors that the British government and wealthy American Jews were trying to secure "some African colony, perhaps one of the former German colonies" to "provide a refuge for the harassed Jews of Germany."[60] In 1939, he published part of a letter from the Foreign Mission Board's J.H. Rushbrooke calling on Americans to help secure exit permits for German Jews.[61] After hearing of the MS St. Louis, a boat filled with Jewish refugees that had been turned away from both Havana and American ports, Farmer wrote, "…as much as we dislike undesirable immigrants, we think it would be well for our Government to find some place for these refugees rather than let them despair and perish. That, it seems to us, would be the Christian thing to do."[62] Farmer was not clear whether that "some place" could be in the United States. He was clear, though, repeatedly throughout the era of the revolt, that it was not in Palestine. "Removing a people by colonization is a method which cannot be defended," he had written the previous year. "In all this our sympathies are with the Arabs, who have occupied the country for more than a thousand years and certainly have as much right to it as the Irish have to Ireland."[63]

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[59] Farmer, "Current Topics: Great Britain in Palestine," *Biblical Recorder* (October 26, 1938), 7.
[60] Farmer, "Current Topics: The Nazis and the Jews," *Biblical Recorder* (November 30, 1938), 10.
[61] Farmer, "The Plight of the Jewish People," *Biblical Recorder* (February 15, 1939), 10.
[62] Farmer, "Current Topics: The Refugee Jews," *Biblical Recorder* (June 14, 1939), 10.
[63] Farmer, "The Jews—Refugees—and Aggressors," *Biblical Recorder* (July 27, 1938), 7.

Such sentiments were echoed by W.O. Carver in the *Pastor's Periscope*. Carver was clear in claiming that continued Jewish immigration to Palestine was no solution to "the problem of the Jew." The "insoluble Palestine situation" was not even "a very large part of the Jewish problem."[64]

> It involves at present only a half million Jews. The problem has to do with at least ten million Jews. And the problem becomes increasingly acute and difficult in almost all countries.[65]

Carver called for an international conference to attempt to deal with the worldwide "Jewish problem." He insisted, too, that Jews recognize that they themselves were part of the problem (a point that raised the ire of the aforementioned Rabbi Joseph Rauch).[66] While admitting "that Christian nations have been guilty of gross and shameful injustices to the Jews through most of the centuries," Carver claimed "it still remains true that the Jews themselves must share largely in the responsibility for the unending Jewish problem."[67] He complained that Jewish leaders "do not admit that they rightly constitute a problem within any nation."[68] He did not take up the Zionist argument that Zionism *was* an attempt by Jews to solve "their own problem" themselves. Rather, he complained that the "chief spokesman of the organized Jewish movement for relief and easement is […] in Washington undertaking to press upon the Christian leadership and upon President Roosevelt the obligation of the people and government of the United States that our influence

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[64] Carver, "Facts and Factors in History Making," *Pastor's Periscope* (November 1938), 17-18.
[65] *Ibid*., 18.
[66] On Carver and Rauch's exchange, see Mark Wilson, *Controversies*, 111-112;
[67] Carver, "Facts and Factors in History Making," (November 1938), 18.
[68] *Ibid*., 18.

should be brought effectively to bear on Great Britain to compel adherence to the Balfour Declaration."[69]

As for his own thoughts on the Palestine question, Carver felt that the British should scrap their wartime promises to Jews and Arabs alike and "work out the nearest approximation to a just, rational program for Palestine and inaugurate it as a fixed policy[.]"[70] The following year, Carver noted his approval of Britain's 1939 White Paper, which limited Jewish migration and land purchases (and effectively walked back the Balfour Declaration):

> ...the decision reached does seem essentially to conserve basal ethical issues with reference to human rights. To demand on the grounds of sentiment and of Jewish need that the British shall pursue a course involving the removal from Palestine of three times as many Arabs and others as the present Jewish population, is to ignore reason and right in the interest of sentiment and an actual need.[71]

Carver went on to reiterate his call for the "enlightened governments of the world" to "unite in seeking a humane and righteous solution of the problem of the Jews."[72] Despite having been reproached by Joseph Rauch for the victim-blaming in his earlier article, Carver reiterated, too, his call for Jews themselves to "face frankly the question of their own position among the peoples of the world through the long centuries of their existence."[73] Standing in the way was that "too many Jews are apt to seek preferential consideration based on a more or less conscious and definite claim of superiority and of Divine purpose[.]"[74]

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[69] *Ibid*., 18.
[70] *Ibid*., 18.
[71] Carver, "Kingdom Facts and Factors," *The Commission* (July 1939), 221.
[72] *Ibid*., 221.
[73] *Ibid*., 221.
[74] *Ibid*., 221.

Charles Leek of *The Alabama Baptist*, who published a weekly news commentary column called "Watching the World," also tended to blame Europe's Jews for their persecution. "One feels sorry for the Jews," he wrote in 1938, "although one cannot [help but] feel that they are largely responsible for their plight."[75] That same year he criticized Jewish comedian and radio personality Eddie Cantor for criticizing Henry Ford's acceptance of a medal from the Nazi regime. "…Mr. Cantor, and other Jewish spokesmen, make a sad mistake when they caustically criticise every pro-Naziism. This column reiterates the position that instead of this the Jews the world around need to have as their single aim the winning of the friendship of the races. Until they do this they are to continue in a pathetic plight."[76] Writing of the MS St. Louis's failure to find a home for its Jewish refugee passengers, Leek claimed, "The sons of Abraham have lived too aloof to be loved."[77]

If Leek's appraisal of the "Jewish question" was similar to W.O. Carver's, his approach to the Palestine question lacked Carver's clear stance. Though Palestine appeared with relative frequency in his column, it primarily served to hold water for shallow witticisms. Writing of the Peel Commission's recommendation of partition, Leek quipped, "Assuming the role of a Solomon in trying to decide the question regarding the ownership of this Palestinian baby, John Bull lifted his political sword to divide this 'child,' which the League of Nations placed in his lap, only to learn that both 'parents' claim it with such fervor as to make Solomon's

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[75] Charles Leek, "Watching the World," *The Alabama Baptist* (September 8, 1938), 4.
[76] Leek, "Watching the World," *The Alabama Baptist* (August 11, 1938), 4.
[77] Leek, "Watching the World," *The Alabama Baptist* (June 22, 1939), 4.

situation appear as just mere baby play in comparison."[78] A 1938 column noted rare snowfall in Jerusalem, considering it "very suggestive of the everlasting fact that God would blanket the combatants of every battlefield with a flag of truce."[79] That same year Leek commented on a report that more American Jews had left Palestine in the previous year than had immigrated there. Contrasting the low number of American immigrants with the high amount of American investment in the Yishuv, Leek joked, "The American dollars are remaining in Palestine."[80] Behind such sneers, though, lay some admiration for the achievements of the Zionist movement. A 1937 article praised Hadassah for bringing "modern American medical science and sanitation to the superstitious and epidemic-ridden lands of the Near East."[81] "Gentiles as well as Jews[,]" he urged, "can join in celebrating the 25th anniversary of such an organization."[82] In 1938, Leek commented on a report published by the United Palestine Appeal that highlighted the increased Jewish population, agricultural output, factory construction, and investment in Palestine. He concluded the brief note, though, with a characteristic quip: "It's fine to think that 71 per cent of the persecuted Jewish emigrants from Europe since 1931 have found a new home in Palestine, but it is disappointing that Palestine, in view of these things, cannot be preserved in its original state as an International park."[83] In this column alone did Leek draw connections between the persecution of Jews in Europe and the development of the Yishuv.

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[78] Leek, "Watching the World," *The Alabama Baptist* (July 15, 1937), 4.
[79] Leek, "Watching the World," *The Alabama Baptist* (March 10, 1938), 4.
[80] Leek, "Watching the World," *The Alabama Baptist* (July 28, 1938), 4.
[81] Leek, "Watching the World," *The Alabama Baptist* (March 18, 1937), 4.
[82] *Ibid*., 4.
[83] Leek, "Watching the World," *The Alabama Baptist* (March 24, 1938), 4.

Though W.O. Carver had published several of his anti-Zionist commentaries in *The Commission*, the editor of that periodical at the time (and Executive Secretary of the FMB), Charles Maddry, and his wife, Emma, were avowedly favorable to the movement. Both had visited the Baptist missions in Palestine on a 1940 trip, where Emma was struck by the number of Jews "who have fled from the persecutions in Europe to build anew their homes in Zion."[84] Though Emma ascribed no prophetic significance to Jewish settlement in her brief travelogue, Charles later painted the movement with prophetic strokes in his recurring column, "World Trends." In April 1941, he drew connections between prophecy and the rehabilitation of the land.[85] The column was occasioned by a report that the Jewish Agency's plan to commercialize the minerals of the Dead Sea was ahead of schedule. "God has promised Canaan to His Chosen People," Maddry wrote, "and in the Dead Sea He has stored up chemical and mineral wealth sufficient for the re-habilitation of this marvelous land."[86] The Dead Sea was a "storehouse of Almighty God," built in anticipation of "the day when He would need it for the rebuilding of a home for His Chosen People."[87] In an entirely separate section of the column, Maddry also described the sufferings of the Jews in Europe, offering, essentially, a prayer, "How long, O God, must Thy Chosen People suffer at the hands of wicked and lawless men? Shorten the time of their agony, if it can come within the purpose of Thy holy

[84] Emma Parker Maddry, "Women and Their Work," *The Commission* (September 1940), 266.
[85] Charles Edward Maddry, "World Trends," *The Commission* (April 1941), 117.
[86] *Ibid*., 117.
[87] *Ibid*., 117.

will."[88] Maddry, though, made no explicit connections between the suffering of Jews and Europe and the rehabilitation of Palestine. Over one year later, after the U.S. had entered the war, Maddry did draw a connection between Palestine and the events in Europe, albeit in a different manner. He noted, "The number of Jews serving in [the Allies'] Palestinian units is three times larger than that of Arabs, although the Jews number only one-third of the population."[89] Despite his clear inclination towards the Jewish cause, Maddry nonetheless expressed hope "the problem" could be settled "to the mutual advantage of Arabs and Jews."[90]

Partition and Statehood

While the outbreak of World War II had halted most discussion of the Palestine question, the end of the fighting in Europe and the resumption of fighting in Palestine brought a renewed and invigorated interest in settling the vexing problem. In 1947, Britain referred the settlement of the Palestine question to the newly-formed United Nations. After an investigation, the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) recommended the partition of the land into a Jewish state and an Arab state, with an internationalized *corpus separatum* carved out around Jerusalem. In November of 1947, the UN's General Assembly voted in favor of the plan—a huge victory for Zionists and a devastating loss for Arabs.

L.L. Gwaltney, editor of *The Alabama Baptist*, kept a close eye on events. The Alabaman stood out among state Baptist editors in his persistent political

[88] *Ibid*., 117.
[89] C. Maddry, "World Trends," *The Commission* (October 1942), 337.
[90] *Ibid*., 337.

editorializing. He was never hesitant to comment on domestic or world affairs whether or not they related to matters of religion. On the matters of Jews and Zionism, Gwaltney was ambivalent. In his 1947 book *The World's Greatest Decade*, Gwaltney noted that his hopes had been raised "when Field Marshall Allenby, of the British army, defeated the Turks and took Palestine, and declared after its capture that it would become a home of the oppressed Jews."[91] Allenby's victory, the Balfour Declaration, and the growth of the Zionist movement had all increased Gwaltney's hope "that the Scripture was being fulfilled concerning the turn of the Jews to their fatherland."[92] The editor had become "terribly disillusioned", though, when he "saw that the rich American Jews had no notion of giving up their businesses, palatial homes, automobiles and servants to return to their native land and once again become shepherds of sheep and vine dressers."[93] American Jews, he wrote, "may desire their disinherited brothers in Europe to return to Zion but they are not going."[94] In his editorial column the following year, Gwaltney pondered—in specific light of the Holocaust—"if there is a connection between the persecution of the Jews and the responsibility for the 'blood' which the Jews wilfully invoked upon themselves."[95]

Gwaltney also took a prophetic view of Arabs. In December of 1947, just two weeks after the U.N. vote in favor of partition in Palestine, Gwaltney argued that the ongoing strife was a continuation of the strife in the biblical patriarch

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[91] L.L. Gwaltney, *The World's Greatest Decade* (Birmingham: Baptist Book Store, 1947), 16.
[92] *Ibid*., 16.
[93] *Ibid*., 16.
[94] *Ibid*., 16.
[95] Gwaltney, "The Editor's Page," *The Alabama Baptist* (April 1, 1948), 3.

Abraham's house between Sarah and Hagar. Hagar's son, Ishmael, had been "the father of the Arab people."[96] Gwaltney noted it had been prophesied of Ishmael that, "His hand would be turned against every man and every man's hand against him[.]"[97] This, Gwaltney urged, accounted for the current troubles in Palestine. "Since United Nations has voted for a partition of Palestine[,]" he wrote, "the row which began in Abraham's home has been greatly intensified. Soldiers of the Arab states are now enlisting in an army and are calling for a 'holy war'."[98] Two months later, Gwaltney reiterated his prophetic understanding of Arab behavior arguing, "if one will study that prophecy [concerning Ishmael] in regard to what is now going on in Palestine he will never again doubt the prophets were divinely inspired."[99]

Aside from these two columns, though, Gwaltney was primarily concerned with how the strife in Palestine fit into the development of the post-war order and the unfolding Cold War. A dedicated Democrat and internationalist, the editor was a supporter of Roosevelt and Truman's push for the creation of international institutions that could secure a liberal post-war order. Of particular concern to Gwaltney was the success of the United Nations. In *The World's Greatest Decade*, he declared, "It is my hope that United Nations will hold the world in peace until there evolves from it a world state under law."[100] It was this hope that would predominate in shaping Gwaltney's approach to the Arab-Zionist conflict. The

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[96] Gwaltney, "The Editor's Page," *The Alabama Baptist* (December 11, 1947), 3.
[97] *Ibid*., 3.
[98] *Ibid*., 3.
[99] Gwaltney, "The Editor's Page," *The Alabama Baptist* (February 12, 1948), 3.
[100] Gwaltney, *Greatest Decade*, 67-68.

editor simply wanted a result that would bolster the stature of the UN. In February of 1948 he wrote:

> The United Nations General Assembly voted 22 to 13 to partition the Holy Land between the Jews and Arabs. The commission appointed by United Nations to partition the country is now asking the Security Council to provide a military force sufficiently strong to back up the decision and this by reason of the fact that the Arabs in Palestine and in the adjoining countries issued an ultimatum stating that a partition of Palestine would mean war.[101]

At stake was the legitimacy of the newly-formed United Nations. Gwaltney warned that "unless force is used, if it is necessary, then the representatives of the peaceful nations at Lake Success had just as well fold up the organization and go home."[102] The following month he wrote that since the UN "has no military power to enforce its decision and the partition cannot be made and sustained without force,]" it "seems now that the United Nations must back track and, if so, it will further weaken the prestige of that organization."[103] As the end of the Mandate loomed, Gwaltney warned that civil war in Palestine could elevate tensions between East and West.[104] One month later he noted that, though the United States was the first government to recognize Israel, the USSR was the first to open diplomatic relations. "This means[,]" he wrote, "that both nations are courting the favor of Israel through clever political moves, thinking the Jews will win. But—will they?"[105] Gwaltney was heartened by the truce reached by UN negotiator Folke Bernadotte in June, less for the prospect of peace itself than that "the moral power of United Nations that

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[101] Gwaltney, "The Editor's Page," *The Alabama Baptist* (February 26, 1948), 3.
[102] *Ibid*., 3.
[103] Gwaltney, "The Editor's Page," *The Alabama Baptist* (March 18, 1948), 3.
[104] Gwaltney, "The Editor's Page," *The Alabama Baptist* (May 6, 1948), 3.
[105] Gwaltney, "The Editor's Page," *The Alabama Baptist* (June 3, 1948), 3.

brought the truce about and this means that the prestige of the world's peace organization has been greatly strengthened."[106] If the truce held and the war came to an end, Gwaltney anticipated the "United Nations will receive a still greater prestige."[107] When the truce shortly failed, Gwaltney declared the "United Nations simply must be superceded by a world state under law which will have an international court and a police power sufficiently strong to enforce the decisions of the court."[108] He would repeat his concerns over the war's impact on the prestige of the United Nations and the larger conflict with the Soviet Union throughout the rest of the fighting.

In July of 1948, though, Gwaltney republished a very different take on the conflict by J. Fins Barbour of the National Baptist Voice, the official organ of the African-American National Baptist Convention. Barbour was concerned over the apparent secularity of the new Jewish state. He made clear that the Jews' "only claim to Palestine as a Homeland is that which is based on the Biblical Record of the promise of Abraham and his posterity."[109] "If there be no God," Barbour asserted, "then the Jews are bandits and robbers and should be run out of Palestine."[110] The only reason for Christian nations to support Israel was belief in the biblical record. "Otherwise[,]" he noted, "America and Britain are fools to let the oil supplies be endangered for a few million atheists."[111] Barbour felt the

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[106] Gwaltney, "The Editor's Page," *The Alabama Baptist* (June 24, 1948), 3.
[107] *Ibid*., 3.
[108] Gwaltney, "The Editor's Page," *The Alabama Baptist* (July 15, 1948), 16.
[109] J. Fins Barbour, "Will the Jews Never Learn?," *The Alabama Baptist* (July 22, 1948), 16.
[110] *Ibid*., 16.
[111] *Ibid*., 16.

Zionists were akin to "smart aleck Negroes" in the United States who have abandoned religious claims to brotherhood with the "Dominant Majority of America" in favor of claiming rights "in the Name of Impersonal Justice[.]"[112] He concluded by arguing, "If history teaches anything it teaches that Caiaphas' words: 'His Blood be on us and our Children,' have come true. Now Shall the Jews defy again the Mysterious purposes of God?"[113] An editor's note attached to the article exclaimed of Barbour, "Southern Baptists have few if any editors or writers with the gifts and holy boldness of this great Negro editor."[114] Whether the editors of *The Alabama Baptist* were more appreciative of Barbour's approach to Zionism, "smart aleck Negroes", or both is unclear. However, Barbour's invocation of the blood curse did echo Gwaltney's aforementioned "ponderings" about the Holocaust made months earlier.

Outside of *The Alabama Baptist*, editorial references to partition and the war were scattered. Some were concerned with the potential need for outside military force in enforcing the partition plan. W.O. Carver, who had supported the 1939 White Paper, warned again in *The Commission* against supporting the Zionist cause. "Americans render no aid toward solution[,]" he wrote of the conflict, "by their offhand deliverances and by their sentimental espousal of the claims of the Jews."[115] Carver argued that "efforts to force Jews into the nineteen centuries' heritage of Arabs can succeed and continue only by physical force and military domination.

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[112] *Ibid*., 16.
[113] *Ibid*., 16.
[114] *Ibid*., 16.
[115] W.O. Carver, "Kingdom Facts and Factors," *The Commission* (May 1947), 30.

Why will men not learn that lesson?"[116] Finley Tinnin of the *Baptist Message* commented that the partition vote meant, "a long drawn-out battle of words, finally settled, only gave place to the prospect of a long drawn-out battle with bullets."[117] In February, as the end of the Mandate neared, Tinnin wrote, "One thing is quite certain, and that is if the British army leaves without an adequate armed force to take its place in policing the country it will mean war to the bitter end between the Jews and Arabs."[118] "Who," he asked, "will supply the necessary military force to police the country?" The UN did not have an army. The U.S. State Department, in the meantime, was backtracking on its support for partition. "If reports are true that the new plan calls for a three-power trusteeship held by Great Britain, France and the U.S.," Tinnin wrote, "American troops will have to be sent and our dollars will finance what must inevitable become a full-size military occupation."[119] In April he declared Palestine "the world's No. 1 problem" and again warned against the potential entanglements of an American trusteeship: "Prospects for full-fledged war in the Holy Land are increased rather than decreased by the U.S. Government action in scuttling the partition plan and shifting to the advocacy to trusteeship."[120] As the potential for direct American involvement faded, it seems, so too faded Tinnin's concern for the unfolding war.

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[116] *Ibid*., 30.
[117] Finley Tinnin, "Editorial: Dreaded War Clouds Are Gathering Again," *The Baptist Message* (December 11, 1947), 2.
[118] Tinnin, "Editorial: A Troubled Future for Palestine," *The Baptist Message* (February 26, 1948), 2.
[119] *Ibid*., 2.
[120] Tinnin, "Editorials: Palestine Is World's No. 1 Problem," *The Baptist Message*, (April 15, 1948), 2.

Charles Wells of the *Baptist Student* was likewise concerned for what the conflict would mean for the United States. However, his focus was on the place of political and economic interests in dictating American policy. In 1947, he declared in his recurring "Trends" column, "The question of Palestine is not about Jews getting in or out—the question is OIL."[121] "American politicians keep saying publicly (with an eye to Jewish votes) that Jews must be allowed to enter Palestine[,]" he wrote, "Then the oil companies protest and the word goes from the same politicians down the line 'Keep the Jews out.'"[122] Wells lamented that the oil companies were "so powerful they are able to swing the diplomatic influence and armed power of the American Government behind their foreign adventures without the permission or knowledge of the American people."[123] After the declaration of the State of Israel in May and Truman's subsequent recognition, Wells declared, "Military policy and politics have gotten criss-crossed."[124] "To hold the large Jewish vote Mr. Truman has plugged loud and hard for the Zionist aims of partition and the establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine[,]" he wrote, "In the meantime, the great American oil companies, who have become the bosom buddies, if not the dictators of our armed forces, have gotten the country deeply embedded in the Near East Arabian world where we have staged the biggest oil grab in history."[125] Without weighing in on the conflict itself, Wells anticipated trouble for the president.

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[121] Charles Wells, "Trends," *The Baptist Student* (February 1948), inside front cover.
[122] *Ibid*.
[123] *Ibid*.
[124] Wells, "Trends," *The Baptist Student* (June 1948), inside front cover.
[125] *Ibid*.

Conclusion

Examining how different Southern Baptist editorialists approached the Palestine question reveals few consistencies. That does not mean, though, that there are not lessons to be learned both for how Baptists approached the question and how the wider American public did. The primary lesson is that Southern Baptist commentators simply held diverse, sometimes divergent understandings of what exactly the Palestine question was and what complexities it entailed. For some, it was a question of how God would deal with the Jewish people. For others, it was a question of self-determination. For L.L. Gwaltney, it was a foundational test for a post-war liberal world order. For Finley Tinnin, it was a potential quagmire. For Charles Wells, it was just another question to be cynically exploited by special interests. If few found agreement on how the Palestine question should be settled or what the United States' position should be, it was because few agreed on the parameters of the question itself.

Chapter Eleven

'Cyrus'

In 1978 scholars and statesmen from the United States and Israel gathered for a symposium to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the founding of Israel at the Harry S. Truman Research Institute at the Hebrew University. Among the presenters was Moshe Davis, a founding scholar in the field of America-Holy Land Studies, who offered his reminiscences on a 1953 meeting with Truman at Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Truman had been escorted to the meeting by Eddie Jacobson, his longtime friend and onetime business partner, who introduced the former president as "the man who helped create the State of Israel." Davis recalled Truman turning to his friend and countering, "What do you mean 'helped create?' I am Cyrus. I am Cyrus."[1] Davis also related an earlier story from Eliahu Elath, who had served as Israel's first Ambassador to the US. About one year after the proclamation of statehood and Truman's subsequent recognition, the President had met with the ambassador and Rabbi Isaac Herzog, the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel. According to Elath, the Chief Rabbi had drawn the same parallel between Truman and Cyrus and claimed "that when the President was still in his mother's womb and before he had seen the light of the world, the Lord had bestowed upon him the mission of helping His Chosen People at a time of despair and aiding in the fulfillment of His promise of Return to the Holy Land."[2] The comment had clearly had an impact on Truman, who rose from his chair and, "with great emotion, tears

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[1] Davis, "Reflections on Harry S. Truman and the State of Israel," 83.
[2] Eliahu Elath, *Harry S. Truman – The Man and Statesman* (Jerusalem: Harry S. Truman Research Institute, 1977), 48.

glistening in his eyes," asked Herzog "if his actions for the sake of the Jewish people were indeed to be interpreted thus and the hand of the Almighty was in the matter."[3] After relaying these two anecdotes, Davis asked his audience, "Where did this stream of biblical—Israel consciousness start? With Rabbi Herzog? In the earliest days of character formation? In Truman's mature reading of the Bible?"[4] Davis then suggested that answering these questions might yield insight into Truman's decision to recognize the Jewish state—"Historians seek to know the 'whole man.' And it was the 'whole' Harry S. Truman who had to make his individual decision during those critical hours[.]"[5]

The story of Truman's recognition of Israel has been well studied. Especially lauded—or lamented—has been that in recognizing the newborn state the president defied the wishes of the State Department's professional diplomats as well as his own Secretary of State, the eminent General George C. Marshall. The question of what led Truman to make his historic decision has evolved its own historiography. There are those scholars who have followed Truman's counsel Clark Clifford in arguing that the president acted primarily out of humanitarian concern for Jewish refugees from Europe. There are those who have followed State Department officials in arguing that Truman acted out of concern for Jewish votes in the 1948 election. And, more recently, scholars like Michael Benson, Paul Merkley, and Gary Smith have taken Davis's above questions seriously in arguing that Truman's

[3] *Ibid*., 48.
[4] Davis, "Reflections," 84.
[5] *Ibid*., 84.

decision was at least partially shaped by his religious background as a Southern Baptist.[6]

As this study has shown, however, there was no inherent Baptist approach to the Palestine question. A deep Baptist faith called forth no particular response to Zionism or Palestinian nationalism. A conversance with the Bible summoned no particular geopolitical perspective. For most who seriously engaged the Palestine question, it summoned a whole web of inextricable and yet oft-shifting associations. Scholars like Benson, Merkley, and Smith, who have focused on the role of religion in Truman's decision, though, have tended to assume that religious beliefs were something that Truman brought to the Palestine question, that the President's religion was part of an immutable core silently guiding his conduct. This faith in the immutability of Truman's own beliefs has allowed them to stitch together isolated utterances and writings from across the span of Truman's life in depicting this "core" or "background." Thus, seemingly "religious" references that Truman made about Israel after his decision to recognize are taken as indications (or at least suggestions) of beliefs that he held before making that decision. Such analysis overlooks the possibility that Truman's experiences as president changed his religious beliefs, that the decision to recognize Israel itself caused Truman to increasingly reflect on the Palestine question on biblical terms. It overlooks, too, the specific contexts of these utterances.

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[6] Benson, *Harry S. Truman and the Founding of Israel*; Merkley, *American Presidents, Religion, and the State of Israel*; Merkley, *The Politics of Christian Zionism*.

Truman's Faith

Writing in the *Christian Century* shortly after the former president's death, political scientist Merlin Gustafson declared Truman "a sincerely religious man – in fact, one of our more 'religious' presidents."[7] For most of his life, Truman had associated himself with Baptist Christianity. His parents, John and Martha, had attended the Blue Ridge Baptist Church, located next to the Martha's family's farm in Grandview, Missouri. In 1890, however, the family relocated to Independence and began attending the First Presbyterian Church, where young Harry would regularly attend Sunday school. In 1903, when Harry was 18, the family moved again to Kansas City, where he was baptized into the Benton Boulevard Baptist Church. After moving to Grandview, Missouri, to work the family farm in 1906, he transferred his membership to Grandview Baptist Church, where it remained for the rest of his life.

Truman was an independent thinker when it came to religion. The first evidence we have of his personal views on the subject come from letters he wrote to his future wife, Bess Wallace, in the 1910s. These letters reveal three intertwined themes that would remain prominent in Truman's approach to religion into and out of his presidency—morality, democracy, and ecumenicism.[8] Truman believed that the primary function of religion was to create moral individuals and build a better world. In February of 1911, he wrote Bess, "I am by religion like everything else. I

[7] Merlin Gustafson, "Truman as a Man of Faith," *The Christian Century* (January 17, 1973), 75.
[8] These emphases fit with Andrew Preston's understanding of Truman's faith in *Sword of Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York: Anchor Books, 2012).

think there is more in acting than in talking."[9] He despised hypocrisy in the church, recalling an uncle "who said when one of his neighbors got religion strong on Sunday, he was going to lock his smokehouse on Monday. I think he was right from the little I observed."[10] Religion was "something one should have on Wednesday and Thursday as well as on Sunday."[11] This did not mean he favored nitpicking others' behavior—far from it. Truman was clear that he did things upstanding Baptists were not supposed to do: "I like to play cards and dance as far as I know how and go to shows and do all the things they said I shouldn't, but I don't feel badly about it. I go when I feel like it and the good church members are glad to hear what it's like."[12] One month later he reiterated the point, adding, "Anyhow I don't think any church on earth will take you to heaven if you're not real anyway. I believe in people living what they believe and talking afterwards, don't you?"[13] This emphasis on "acting" or "living" morally over "talking" can also be seen in the personal prayer he claimed to have recited from his high school days onward:

> Oh! Almighty and Everlasting God, Creator of Heaven, Earth and the Universe,
> Help me to be, to think, to act what is right, because it is right; make me truthful, honest and honorable in all things; make me intellectually honest for the sake of right and honor and without thought of reward to me. Give me the ability to be charitable, forgiving and patient with my fellowmen - help me to understand their motives and their shortcomings -- even as Thou understandest mine!

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[9] Harry S. Truman to Bess Wallace, 7 February 1911, Box 1, Harry S. Truman Papers, Family, Business, and Personal Affairs (hereafter Truman Family Papers), Harry S. Truman Library and Museum (hereafter Truman Library), Independence, MO.
[10] *Ibid*.
[11] *Ibid*.
[12] *Ibid*.
[13] *Ibid*.

Amen, Amen, Amen[14]

His daily petition was for God to make him a moral man.

Over time, as he entered into public service, Truman evolved a Jeffersonian belief that morality was the essence of religion. Indeed, according to Richard Lawrence Miller, Truman enjoyed Jefferson's *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth*, which famously excised supernatural passages from the gospels in order to emphasize Jesus's moral teachings.[15] In 1952, Truman declared Jefferson "the greatest ethical teacher of our time."[16] Truman's favorite passage from the Bible was the Sermon on the Mount, regarded as the cornerstone of Jesus's ethical teachings. He believed it offered a guide for private life and public policy. In a 1946 address to the Federal Council of Churches (written by a Jewish advisor, Samuel Rosenman, whom had been carried over from the Roosevelt administration), Truman urged, "If men and nations would but live by the precepts of the ancient prophets and the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, problems which now seem so difficult would soon disappear."[17] In a 1949 press conference, he likewise claimed his political philosophy was based on the Sermon.[18] He reiterated consistently in public statements that the purpose of religion was to build moral

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[14] Truman, longhand note, 15 August 1950, Box 283, Harry S. Truman Papers, President's Secretary's Files, Truman Library.
[15] Richard Lawrence Miller, *Truman: The Rise to Power* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1986), 73.
[16] Truman, quoted in William Hillman, *Mr. President: the First Publication from the Personal Diaries, Private Letters, Papers, and Revealing Interviews of Harry S. Truman, Thirty-second President of the United States of America* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Young, 1952), 106.
[17] Truman, "Address in Columbus at a Conference of the Federal Council of Churches," 6 March 1946, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=12599.
[18] Quoted in Merkley, *The Politics of Christian Zionism*, 161-162.

people and a moral world.[19] This was most clear in a 1951 speech delivered at the cornerstone laying of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in which Truman urged, "The essential mission of the church is to teach the moral law. We look to our churches, above all other agencies, to teach us the highest moral standards of right and wrong. We rely on the churches particularly to instill into our young people those moral ideals which are the basis of our free institutions."[20]

Intertwined with Truman's emphasis on morality was an emphasis on democracy in religion. In his March 1911 letter he noted to Bess, "You know I told you that I also had strayed from the Presbyterian fold; but I went in the other direction. In place of more form we haven't any."[21] In a handwritten autobiographical manuscript from 1945, Truman combined his emphasis on moral action and democracy, noting, "I've always believed that religion is something to live by and not to talk about. I'm a Baptist because I think that sect gives the common man the shortest and most direct approach to God."[22] Late in his presidency he penned another note on religion, writing, "Forms and ceremonies impress a lot of people, but I've never thought that The Almighty would be impressed by anything but the heart and soul of the individual. That's why I'm a

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[19] In 1950 remarks to a contingent of Baptist missionaries, Truman noted, "As I told you, the only way we will ever arrive at peace in the world is to settle it on a moral Christian basis. And that is what I have been working on for 5 years or more." Truman, "Remarks to a Group of Baptist Missionaries," 3 February 1950, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13690

[20] Truman, quoted in Gustafson, "Harry Truman as a Man of Faith," *Christian Century*, 78.

[21] Truman to Wallace, 7 February 1911, Truman Family Papers.

[22] Truman, handwritten autobiographical manuscript, 1945, President's Secretary's Files.

Baptist, whose church authority starts from the bottom—not the top."[23] In another handwritten note found in his desk after he died, Truman wrote, "I don't believe that an intermediary is necessary for me to approach God Almighty."[24]

Truman also frequently expressed a sort of Christian folk ecumenicism that developed into a positive program for religious unity during his presidency. In 1918 he wrote Bess from France, "I believe in all churches, even the Roman Catholic can do a man a lot of good. I had a Presbyterian bringing up, a Baptist education, and Episcopal leanings so I reckon I ought to get to heaven somehow, don't you think so?"[25] In this brief, jocular comment can be seen how Truman's ecumenicism was tied to his emphasis on action. What concerned him was not which churches were right, but which could "do a man a lot of good." This connection can also be seen in a 1936 letter to Bess noting his pleasure that their daughter Margaret has been attending Baptist Sunday school. "She ought to go to one every Sunday—I mean a Sunday school[,]" he wrote, "If a child is instilled with good morals and taught the value of the precepts laid down in Exodus 20 and Matthew 5, 6, and 7, there is not much to worry about in after years. It makes no difference what brand is on the Sunday school."[26] After assuming the Presidency, Truman grew more and more concerned with religious unity and began actively promoting religion—broadly construed—as a necessary moral force in meeting the challenges of the post-war

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[23] Truman, longhand note, 13 April 1952, Box 284, President's Secretary's Files.
[24] Truman, handwritten manuscript, Post-Presidential Papers, Truman Library, quoted in "Harry Truman Speaks," *Harry S. Truman Library and Museum*, compiled by Raymond Geselbracht, http://www.trumanlibrary.org/speaks.htm
[25] Truman to Wallace, 31 July 1918, Box 5, Truman Family Papers.
[26] Truman to Bess Truman, 22 June 1936, Box 9, Truman Family Papers.

world.[27] In his 1946 speech to the FCC, Truman called for a revival of religion to summon the spiritual and moral forces necessary for the survival of the "civilized world" in the atomic age: "The Protestant Church, the Catholic Church, and the Jewish Synagogue—bound together in the American unity of brotherhood—must provide the shock forces to accomplish this moral and spiritual awakening. No other agency can do it."[28] Increasingly throughout his administration, Truman's ecumenicism came to be tethered to his Cold War concerns. In 1947 he worked with Myron Taylor, his on-again-off-again representative to the Pope, in attempting to unify world religious leaders against Communism. Writing to Bess of Taylor's mission, he wrote:

> Looks as if he and I may get the morals of the world on our side. We are talking to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop at the head of the Lutheran Church, the Metropolitan of the Greek Church at Istanbul and the Pope. I may send him to see the top Budist [sic] and the Grand Llama of Thibet [sic]. If I can mobilize the people who believe in a moral world against the Bolshevic [sic] materialists who believe as Henry Wallace does--"that the end justifies the means," we can win this fight.
> Treaties, agreements, or a moral code mean nothing to Communists. So we've got to organize the people who do believe in honor and the Golden Rule to win the world back to peace and Christianity.[29]

Even as Truman failed to create an international, interfaith movement against Communism, his ecumenicism only grew. In the previously mentioned private note

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[27] Chapter 22 of Preston, *Sword of the Spirit*, focuses on this. See also chapter three of William Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy, 1945-1960: The Soul of Containment* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008) and chapter nine of Elizabeth Spaulding, *The First Cold Warrior* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2006).
[28] Truman, "Address in Columbus."
[29] Truman to B. Truman, 2 October 1947, Box 16, Truman Family Papers.

found posthumously, Truman declared, "Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists and Confucians worship the same God as the Christians say they do."[30]

Several historians have seized onto Merlin Gustafson's quip that Truman had "an almost fundamentalist reverence for the Bible" in describing the President's religious outlook.[31] Indeed, Truman loved the Bible and read and quoted it frequently. He claimed to have read the entire Bible through multiple times as a youth in Independence.[32] He also cited his involvement with freemasonry, which began in 1909, as crucial in deepening his familiarity with and love for the scriptures.[33] As President, Truman frequently peppered his speeches with biblical passages and, as noted, claimed he derived his political philosophy from the Sermon on the Mount. However, if Truman had a "fundamentalist reverence" for the Good Book, it does not mean that he had a fundamentalist interpretation of it. Available evidence suggests that Truman viewed the Bible as a source of moral and spiritual guidance, of wisdom, of great literature, and of history. In a 1952 interview with William Hillman, Truman described some of his favorite passages in the Bible:

> I think some of the passages in Jeremiah and Daniel are wonderful. I like the Proverbs and the Psalms—the 137th Psalm, 'By the rivers of Babylon,' of course, is the famous one, and the 96th, 'O, sing unto the Lord a new song.' They are wonderful, they are just like poetry. And read the passages in Deuteronomy that are seldom referred to. The Ten Commandments are repeated in Deuteronomy in sonorous language that really makes a tingle go down your spine to read them.

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[30] Truman, handwritten manuscript, Post-Presidential Papers, Truman Library, quoted in "Harry Truman Speaks," *Harry S. Truman Library and Museum*, compiled by Raymond Geselbracht, http://www.trumanlibrary.org/speaks.htm
[31] Gustafson, "Truman as a Man of Faith," 76.
[32] Truman, *Memoirs* 1, 116.
[33] Hillman, *Mr. President*, 169.

> Of course the Sermon on the Mount is the greatest of all things in the Bible, a way of life, and maybe some day men will get to understand it as the real way of life.[34]

It was in terms of artistry or moral weight that Truman described his favorite passages. As Gustafson himself noted, "there is little evidence that he had any academic interest in complex theological issues."[35] He remained unconcerned with doctrine—the "talking" he disparaged in his early letters to Bess—throughout his life.

Truman's Religion and the Palestine Question

Scholars who have examined the role of Truman's religion in his recognition of Israel generally agree that the President's faith predisposed him towards the Zionist cause. What should be clear from the above survey, though, is that there was no demonstrable aspect of Truman's faith that would have predisposed him towards a particular political perspective on Palestine. This is not to say that Truman's faith did not affect his decision—the matter of Jewish survival, for example, was a tremendous moral question for the President. Rather it is to say that historians who have attributed Truman's defiance of the State Department to "spongy" religious factors have overstated the case.

This is nowhere more clear than in how scholars have treated Truman's approach to the Bible. In his 1997 *Harry S. Truman and the Founding of Israel*, Michael Benson argued that one of Truman's five motivations for supporting

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[34] *Ibid*., 105.
[35] Gustafson, "The Religion of a President," *Church and State* 10, no. 3 (Autumn 1968): 380.

partition and the recognition of Israel was that Truman "was a student of and believer in the Bible and the Old Testament promises to the Jewish people."[36] In 2015, Gary Smith essentially repeated the same case. Both scholars' arguments depended heavily on the account of Clark Clifford. While Clifford was certainly privy to Truman's thoughts on Palestine in the late 1940s, his specific recollections that Truman cited biblical prophecy in support of the Zionist cause were not made until decades after the fact. Benson, for example, cited Clifford's comments at a 1984 Congressional celebration of Truman that the President believed that "the Old Testament had made a commitment to these people that some day they would come into their right and some day they would have a homeland of their own[,]" as well as passages from Clifford's 1991 memoir, *Counsel to the President*, in which Clifford noted Truman's fondness for quoting Deuteronomy 1:8 in support of the Zionist cause.[37] In a 1977 article, Clifford had made the more moderate claim that as "a student of the Bible," Truman "believed in the historic justification for a Jewish homeland[.]"[38] However, belief in "historic justification," which implies a recognition of the millennia-long Jewish connection to the land, is something quite different than belief in prophetic fulfillment. Gary Smith, who was clearly informed by Benson's work on Truman, made the same case based on Clifford's recollections as well as those of Alfred Lilienthal, who had served as a lawyer for the State

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[36] Benson, 7.
[37] Clifford, "Clark Clifford Addressing a Joint Meeting of the House and Senate Held Pursuant to the Provisions of House Concurrent Resolution 126 in Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Harry S. Truman," *Congressional Record*, 8 May 1984, vol. 130, pt. 8, 11330-11331; Clifford, *Counsel to the President*, 7-8.
[38] Clark Clifford, "Recognizing Israel."

Department and, later, the anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism.[39] Lilienthal's recollections of Truman quoting Deuteronomy 1:8 in support of Zionism, however, did not come until 1999.[40] In his earlier, more detailed works on the subject—the 1953 *At What Price Israel?*, the 1957 *There Goes the Middle East*, and the 1978 *The Zionist Connection*—Lilienthal made no claims that Truman's actions were influenced by a prophetic interpretation of the Bible—this despite extended explorations of Truman's motivations and, in *The Zionist Connection*, an entire chapter devoted to criticizing Christian support for Israel.[41] Lilienthal, it seems, was himself dependent on Clifford's memoir in augmenting his recollections.

Despite Truman's frequent quotations from the Bible during his presidency, there is no contemporary evidence suggesting that he understood the creation of Israel as prophetic fulfillment. Nor do such claims fit with what we do know about how Truman interpreted the Bible. The evidence we do have from the time period suggests Truman understood biblical prophecy not as something to be fulfilled, but a moral guide to a better world. The prophets, the President noted in 1952, "were the protagonists of the common man, and that is the reason they survived, and for *no other reason*."[42] The claim that Truman viewed the creation of Israel as somehow a fulfillment of biblical prophecy thus depends completely on the testimony of Clifford, who made no such claim in 1977, noted that Truman "would refer from

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[39] Smith, *Religion in the Oval Office*, 255.
[40] Alfred Lilienthal, "Remembering General George Marshall's Clash With Clark Clifford Over Premature Recognition of Israel," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (June 1999), 50.
[41] Alfred Lilienthal, *What Price Israel* (Chicago: Regnery, 1953); Lilienthal, *There Goes the Middle East* (New York: Devin-Adair, 1957); Lilienthal, *The Zionist Connection* (New York: Dodd, 1978).
[42] Hillman, *Mr. President*, 104. Emphasis mine.

time to time to Isaiah" and "to other prophets and their views and their commitments" in 1984, and claimed very specifically Truman's fondness for Deuteronomy 1:8 in 1991. Until corroborating evidence is found, Clifford's late recollections remain questionable at best—as do the arguments that have depended on them.

Smith's recent work relatedly contends that Truman took seriously the advice of Frank Norris in shaping his Palestine policy, claiming, "In October 1947, Truman asked Texas fundamentalist pastor J. Frank Norris for his advice about the situation in Palestine."[43] Smith's evidence of this is the October 2, 1947 letter from Norris to the President in which the Texas pastor claimed Truman had asked his advice through Matthew Connelly.[44] While Norris certainly was an influential pastor—and while he was persistent and successful in his efforts to correspond and rub elbows with powerful people—his own suggestions of having influence over the President should not be taken seriously in the absence of corroborating evidence. Neither is there any reason that Truman's politely dismissive reply, in which he acknowledged Norris as someone who had "given long and extensive study to the Jewish Palestinian question[,]" should be accepted as suggesting that Truman gave the pastor's letter serious consideration, as Smith suggests.[45] Indeed, quoting Truman's letter in full is probably enough to convince most readers that Truman was merely trying to placate the fundamentalist:

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[43] Smith, 254.
[44] Norris printed the letter, "Who Owns or Has the Title to Palestine?" in both *The Fundamentalist* (October 10, 1947), 1, and *My Fifth Trip to Palestine*, 9-12.
[45] The letter was printed in Norris, *Fifth Trip*, 13.

> I am most grateful for your thoughtful letter of October second. I deeply appreciate having the benefit of this expression of your views because I know that you have given long and extensive study to the Jewish Palestinian question.[46]

Thanking someone for having "the benefit" of their "expression" is a far cry from agreeing with them.

Scholars have also fixed much attention on Moshe Davis's aforementioned recollection of the 1953 meeting in which Truman declared, "I am Cyrus. I am Cyrus." Paul Merkley has been foremost in asserting the significance of Truman's quip, even going so far as to argue that Truman had consciously claimed the "mantle of Cyrus":

> Truman pondered resolutely on the extraordinary circumstances that had made him president. He studied soberly his own strengths and weakness. And he came to the perfectly calm conclusion that he was Cyrus. It was not a manner of speaking, but the largest possible sort of truth, that someone, someday, would be called upon to play the role of Cyrus on behalf of the whole generation of Jews in their time of greatest need.[47]

In an earlier work, Merkley had likewise advised, "These words of Truman's—'I am Cyrus'—were uttered neither casually nor ironically. We must take them with the fullest seriousness, and when we do, we will have the key to understanding Truman's constant pro-Zionism."[48] There is, however, neither any evidence that Truman underwent the process of prophetic self-reflection described in the first quote nor any evidence to suggest Truman's words "were uttered neither casually nor ironically." Merkley also suggests that Truman's Great Man understanding of history had inclined him towards the model of Cyrus. The Persian ruler, he notes,

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[46] Norris, 13.
[47] Merkley, *American Presidents, Religion, and the State of Israel*, viii.
[48] Merkley, *The Politics of Christian Zionism*, 191.

consistently appeared in a laundry list of great rulers that Truman enjoyed reciting. However, Truman's list of Great Men also included Darius I (who had abandoned Cyrus's promise to help rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem), Titus (who had destroyed the Temple and the Jewish commonwealth in 70 CE), and Hadrian (who had rebuilt Jerusalem as a pagan city and viciously put down the Bar Kochba rebellion). Truman had a number of heroes that offered differing lessons on the matter of Jewish sovereignty.

If Truman's reading of the Bible did shape his approach to Palestine, it is likely along the lines suggested by Clark Clifford in 1977—that the Bible led him to believe "in the historic justification for a Jewish homeland."[49] As mentioned above, this implies an historical reading of the Bible—not a prophetic one—that demonstrates the longstanding Jewish connection to the land. Truman did admit that he had a particular interest in Palestine because of his familiarity with the Bible. However, this interest was articulated in terms of history. In an interview with Merle Miller in the early 1960s, Truman recalled his first meeting with Zionist representative Stephen Wise, noting, "…I was looking forward to it because I knew he wanted to talk about Palestine, and that is one part of the world that has always interested me, partly because of its Biblical background, of course."[50] Truman went on to describe his love of the Bible without drawing any connection between Zionism and prophecy, adding, "it wasn't just the Biblical part about Palestine that interested me. The whole history of that area of the world is just about the most

[49] Clark Clifford, "Recognizing Israel."
[50] Truman, quoted in Merle Miller, *Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman* (New York: Berkley Publishing, 1973), 213-214.

complicated and most interesting of any area anywhere, and I have made a careful study of it."[51] Eliahu Elath, who served as the Jewish Agency's representative in Washington before becoming its first ambassador to the U.S., recalled in 1977 that the Bible was Truman's "main source of knowledge of the history of Palestine in ancient times[.]"[52] While these claims, like those of the previous paragraph, come from decades after the fact, they do agree with what we know about how Truman read the Bible. They also can be fit into Truman's earlier recollections of his engagement with the Palestine question in his memoirs. While he made no mention of the Bible in his three chapters on Palestine, he did claim, "For many years I have been interested in the history of that great region."[53] The Bible, undoubtedly, formed part of this historical interest.

However, it was probably Truman's sense of moral duty—to him the essence of religious faith—that had the greatest impact in shaping his approach to the Palestine question. In this I agree with the broader conclusions of Michael Benson's work. His first public comments on the matter came in 1939, when he had excoriated the British government's 1939 White Paper (which restricted Jewish immigration and land purchasing) as making "a scrap of paper out of Lord Balfour's promise to the Jews[.]"[54] In 1941 he had joined the American Palestine Committee, a "Christian" lobby affiliated with the Zionist Executive that called for the opening

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[51] *Ibid*., 215.
[52] Elath, *Truman*, 49.
[53] Truman, *Memoirs* 2, 156.
[54] Truman, quoted in Ken Hechler, "A Common Man's Perspective," *Immigration and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman*, ed. Roger Daniels (Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2010), 52.

of Palestine to Jewish refugees from Europe. Two years later, he gave a speech in Chicago calling for the creation of a safe haven for persecuted Jews:

> In conquered Europe we find a once free people enslaved, crushed and brutalized by the most depraved tyrants of all time[…]The people of an ancient race, the Jews, are being herded like animals into the ghettoes, the concentration camps, and the wastelands of Europe. The men, the women, and the children of this honored people are being starved, yes, actually murdered by the fiendish Huns and Fascists[…]Today—not tomorrow—we must do all that is humanly possible to provide a haven and place of safety for all of those who can be grasped from the hands of the Nazi butchers[…]This is not a Jewish problem. It is an American problem—and we must face it squarely and honorably.[55]

This concern for providing "a haven and place of safety" for Jewish refugees would continue to guide Truman's approach to the Palestine question into his presidency. This is clear both from the President's statements and his policies, which were open to a variety of political solutions to the Palestine question but were uncompromising on the matter of refugees. It is also how Truman introduced the issue in his memoirs:

> The fate of the Jewish victims of Hitlerism was a matter of deep personal concern to me. I have always been disturbed by the tragedy of people who have been made victims of intolerance and fanaticism because of their race, color, or religion. These things should not be possible in a civilized society.[…]the organized brutality of the Nazis against the Jews in Germany was one of the most shocking crimes of all times. The plight of the victims who had survived the made genocide of Hitler's Germany was a challenge to Western civilization, and as President I undertook to do something about it. One of the solutions being proposed was a national Jewish home.[56]

If biblical prophecy resonated in any way for Truman in shaping his policy, it was likely in such concern for the downtrodden and persecuted. As he noted when discussing the prophets in 1951, "Every one of these prophets were trying to help

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[55] *Ibid*., 52-53.
[56] Truman, *Memoirs* 2, 132.

the underdog[.]"[57] As he stated repeatedly in his presidency, the object of religion was to help create a moral world order. Perhaps most telling, though, is the appeal that Chaim Weizmann made to Truman in April of 1948 as the end of the Mandate loomed. Weizmann, as Merkley notes, knew well how to appeal to the religious sentiments of potential Christian supporters of Zionism and was quite cognizant of "the powerful and residual appeal of biblical language."[58] The great Zionist statesman, though, made no such appeal when writing to Truman. Instead, he spoke in moral terms that cut to the heart of Truman's own faith: "The choice for our people, Mr. President, is between statehood and extermination. History and providence have placed this issue in your hands, and I am confident that you will yet decide it in the spirit of the moral law."[59] A few weeks later, the State of Israel was proclaimed and, shortly thereafter, extended de facto recognition by Truman.

Conclusion – Becoming Cyrus

In concluding, it is worthwhile to revisit to the questions posed by Moshe Davis at the 1978 symposium on Truman and Israel—"Where did [Truman's] stream of biblical-Israel consciousness start? With Rabbi Herzog? In the earliest days of character formation? In Truman's mature reading of the Bible?"[60] While it is of course possible that Truman had privately weighed the prophetic significance of his decision or had privately viewed Cyrus as a model, he never expressed such thoughts prior to the meeting with Herzog. Even after the fact, Truman seems only

[57] Truman, quoted in Hillman, *Mr. President*, 104.
[58] Merkley, *Politics*, 177.
[59] Weizmann, quoted in Benson, *Truman*, 187.
[60] Davis, "Reflections," 84.

to have expressed them a handful of times to particular Jewish or Israeli audiences and was never clear on what exactly he meant by the parallel. In his interviews with William Hillman, in his memoirs, and in his interactions with Merle Miller—all of which at points touched on both the Bible and Israel—Truman never made the comparison and never cited Cyrus's example. Neither did he suggest a connection between the prophets and the establishment of the Jewish state. The question, perhaps, is less when Truman's biblical-Israel consciousness began, but what it consisted of. Two possibilities, it seems, can be argued from the evidence. The first is that Herzog's comments did inspire Truman to increasingly reflect on his decision in biblical terms and that the President only saw fit to reveal these reflections to Jewish audiences. The second is that the parallels Truman drew between himself and Cyrus were indeed, contra Merkley, uttered casually and ironically—that Harry Truman, when he declared he was Cyrus, had been joking.

Conclusion

Between Washington and Memphis and Tel Aviv

The delegates who gathered at the 1948 Southern Baptist Convention in Memphis had a much less consequential decision to make than President Truman had the week before. Their most pressing Palestine question, put before them by E.D. Solomon of Florida, was whether or not to send a congratulatory telegram to Truman on his decision. Repeatedly and overwhelmingly, the delegates voted down the proffered resolution. Why? Most, like the editors of the *Western Recorder*, hoped to avoid involving the Convention in political questions—"The convention displayed no anger over the Solomon motion, but just avoided getting itself into politics."[1] John Popham, reporting on the gathering for the *New York Times*, argued that the motion's defeat "stemmed entirely from a desire to rebuke President Truman for 'playing politics with the Jewish vote' during a national election year."[2] He quoted L.E. Barton of Montgomery, AL, who stated plainly, "I'm not very hot for sending anything to the President for recognizing Israel. The President was not doing anything for Palestine and then he saw he had lost the Jewish vote, so he recognized Israel twenty-one minutes after it had been declared a state by the Jews. It was strictly a political measure."[3] As W. Terry Lindley has argued, the fact that perennial Convention nuisance J. Frank Norris had called for such a motion during his theatrical address on Palestine also probably helped to rally his many enemies against it.

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[1] "Editorials," *The Western Recorder* (March 18, 1948), 3.
[2] Popham, "Baptists Criticize Truman on Israel," *New York Times*, 4.
[3] *Ibid*., 4.

There was no definitive Southern Baptist approach to the Palestine question because there was no definitive question. What Baptists thought about the land, the people, and the politics of Palestine was shaped by the context in which they encountered it. The delegates at the 1948 Convention were not asked to evaluate Truman's decision—though some did—but to congratulate him on it. Who could say what tangle of associations Solomon's resolution summoned? There was, of course, *the* Palestine question itself, but there was also the specter of indulging Frank Norris. There were questions over whether a Baptist gathering should engage clear political matters as well as delegates' personal political leanings—in 1948, after all, Truman was unpopular in Dixie for reasons far removed from Zion. He was also unpopular among Southern Baptists for his many overtures to the Vatican.[4] There was, too, the matter of consequence. Whether or not to send a telegram was a question of a different order than the one Truman had answered on May 14—do I recognize the Jewish state?

The Palestine question itself would soon be settled by war.[5] By mid-1949, Israel had militarily secured its existence within borders defined by armistice agreements. Transjordan had annexed the West Bank and East Jerusalem, becoming Jordan in the process. Egypt had annexed Gaza. The Palestinian Arabs who were able to remain found themselves divided among these governments. New questions, however, were raised by the war. Could Israel ever find peace with the surrounding Arab states? How could the young state accommodate the hundreds of thousands of

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[4] John Lee Eighmy, *Churches in Cultural Captivity* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1972), 159.
[5] For the definitive account of the war, see Benny Morris, *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

Jewish refugees pouring into the country from both Europe and the Islamic world? The fighting had also forced hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs to flee and displaced many more within Israel. What would become of them? To these questions would be added dozens more, particularly after the 1967 Six Day War, which brought East Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and the Sinai Peninsula under Israeli control.[6] Many still linger.

Even as the complications have multiplied, for more and more Southern Baptists—as for evangelical Christians and Americans more broadly—the ongoing conflict between the Israelis and Arabs has become a political issue wherein categories like "pro-Israel" or "pro-Arab" are relevant, if frustratingly vague. Most Southern Baptists today, like most Americans, would consider themselves "pro-Israel." In the most general sense, this has meant identifying first with Israeli concerns in the conflict. Many Southern Baptists, too, have come to self-identify as Christian Zionists, meaning they view support for the Jewish state as a specific Christian duty. E.D. Solomon's 1948 resolution would not fail in today's SBC. Indeed, in 2008 the Convention passed a resolution celebrating the 60th anniversary of Israel's birth.

While the story of how Southern Baptists came to be so broadly supportive of Israel since 1949 requires its own study, *Between Dixie and Zion* does have several lessons for the era of Israeli statehood. First and foremost, the significance of the reality of Israeli statehood itself cannot be overstated. Nothing had changed Baptist perceptions of both Jews and Palestine between the Ottoman and Mandate

[6] For a helpful primer on the Arab-Israeli conflict, see Alan Dowty, *Israel/Palestine*, 2nd edition (Malden: Polity, 2008).

era more than the actual accomplishments of the Zionist movement. Prejudices were reshaped and prophecies were recalibrated to fit the new reality. The birth and survival of Israel had a similar, albeit more lasting, effect. All of the tacit interest in the return of Jews to Palestine, all of the enthusiasm for the rehabilitation of the Holy Land, all of the passive prophetic hope, and all of the rigid dispensationalist certainty was given a definable shape by the armistices that fixed Israel's borders. The Jewish state was real.

Also significant was that, whatever their views had been on the specific politics of Palestine, Southern Baptists largely identified with the Zionists as modern, civilized, and even Western, over and against the Arabs, who were seen as a quaint or backwards portion of the benighted East. The Israelis' surprising military victory only confirmed this paradigm for Baptists. Even as the Cold War redrew the real and imaginary lines that divided the world, those lines again fell between the Israelis and the Arabs, particularly as the Egyptian ruler and pan-Arab leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, drew closer to the Soviet Union in the late 1950s. The terror tactics of the revived Palestinian national movement under Yassir Arafat and George Habash did nothing but confirm the idea of a civilizational clash. Even as the Palestine Liberation Organization publicly renounced terror and engaged Israel in the Oslo Process, the rise of a violent Islamist Palestinian nationalism led by Hamas seemed to confirm what most Baptists thought about Palestinian Arabs—that they were fundamentally, sometimes violently, opposed to the values of Western civilization.

These broader lessons should not overshadow the specific processes by which Baptists came to identify more thoroughly with Israel after statehood. Perhaps the most important of these was the transformation of the fundamentalist movement both within and without the SBC. The 1940s and 1950s saw the movement split between a radical wing led by the likes of Bob Jones, Jr., and Carl McIntire and a more moderate "New Evangelical" wing led by the likes of Harold Ockenga and, soon enough, the Southern Baptist Billy Graham. Though the New Evangelicals carried over their forebears' emphasis on the fundamentals of the faith, they distinguished themselves by an optimistic desire to spark revival throughout the United States that contrasted with the pessimism and separatism of the radicals. The New Evangelicals, in other words, wanted to engage the world and American culture—not retreat from them. As they grew in prominence and influence from the 1940s onward, their transdenominational efforts at sparking revival drew in many Southern Baptists. At the same time, separatist fundamentalists, including Independent Baptists like Bob Jones, Jr., and John Rice, continued to impact Southern Baptists through their periodicals and educational institutions, through their attacks on the denomination and, sometimes, through their alliances with fundamentalists within it.[7]

Within the SBC, a growing numbers of pastors were coming to pair involvement with the broader fundamentalist or evangelical movements with their denominational commitments. Exemplary of this approach was W.O. Criswell, who

[7] For a look at the varieties of Baptist fundamentalisms, see Nathan Finn, "The Development of Baptist Fundamentalism in the South, 1940-1980" (doctoral dissertation, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2007).

succeeded George Truett as the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas (which Billy Graham joined in 1953). Criswell had grown up Southern Baptist in Oklahoma and Texas and had experienced first-hand the battles between Frank Norris and committed denominationalists like Truett and L.R. Scarborough. Indeed, his own family had been split on the issue, with his father favoring Norris and his mother adoring Truett.[8] Criswell came to embody aspects of both pastors. He was closer to Norris theologically, particularly in his dispensationalism, and had an independent streak, founding his own Criswell College in 1970 (former FMB missionary Leo Eddleman served as its first president). Like Truett, though, Criswell remained devoted to denominational causes. Every year, First Baptist was a major contributor to the SBC's Cooperative Program. In 1968 and 1969, Criswell was even voted President of the Convention.[9] While Criswell was not the first SBC President with fundamentalist associations—M.E. Dodd and R.G. Lee had earlier held the post—his election came as denominational fundamentalists were growing more organized within the SBC.

At the same time that fundamentalism and the New Evangelicalism were more thoroughly permeating the SBC, its denominational institutions had grown more moderate. Between the 1950s and the 1970s, a string of controversies alerted Convention fundamentalists and conservatives to these trends, stirring them towards organization. Most prominent were the controversies over Professor Ralph Elliott's

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[8] W.A. Criswell, "In Memory of Mother," 8 May 1977, *W.A. Criswell Sermon Library*, http://www.wacriswell.com/sermons/1977/in-memory-of-mother1/

[9] For many of these biographical details, I have depended on C. Allyn Russell, "W.A. Criswell: A Case Study in Fundamentalism," *Review & Expositor* 44, no. 1 (February 1984): 107-131.

1961 *The Message of Genesis* and the 1969 *Broadman Bible Commentary* on Genesis. Both volumes incorporated the historical-critical method in analyzing the biblical account of creation. This was anathema to Convention fundamentalists, who were particularly troubled that the denomination's press, Broadman, was forwarding such views. In reaction to these and other similar issues, the fundamentalists would come together in the mid-1970s with a specific plan to secure control of the denominational machinery. The "fundamentalist takeover," as its opponents called it, or the "conservative resurgence," as its proponents called it, would take place in 1979 with the election of Adrian Rogers as President of the SBC.[10] While fundamentalists had served as President before, none had used the office's powers of appointment to remake the Convention's institutions. Over the next decade or so, though, the fundamentalists began purging perceived liberals and moderates from denominational boards and institutions. From the 1980s onward, the Southern Baptist Convention was effectively a fundamentalist denomination, closer to Frank Norris than George Truett.

Entwined in these developments was premillennialism. Though the New Evangelicals tended to be open on eschatology (in ways reminiscent of the 1920s SBC), many involved in the movement, including Billy Graham, were

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[10] Helen Lee Turner interpreted the "takeover"/"resurgence" as a millenarian movement: "Fundamentalism in the Southern Baptist Convention: The Crystallization of a Millennialist Vision," (doctoral dissertation, University of Virginia, 1990); two "moderate" approaches to the conflict have been Nancy Ammerman, *Baptist Battles: Social Change and Religious Conflict in the Southern Baptist Convention* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1990) and Bill Leonard, *God's Last and Only Hope: The Fragmentation of the Southern Baptist Convention* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990); for an insider's favorable account, see Jerry Sutton, *The Baptist Reformation* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2000).

premillennialists. The separatist fundamentalists and Independent Baptists, like their radical fundamentalist forebears, almost exclusively subscribed to premillennial dispensationalism. Within the SBC, denominational fundamentalists like W.A. Criswell helped to popularize the system, which came to be seen as intertwined with the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. By the late 1980s, surveys revealed that 59% of Southern Baptist pastors considered themselves premillennialists—the marginal had become the majority.[11] Though premillennialists had expressed a range of views regarding Zionism in the Mandate era, after the establishment of Israel (and especially after the Israeli conquest of East Jerusalem in 1967) they grew increasingly certain that the Jewish state did represent at least a partial fulfillment of the covenantal land promises of Genesis and a waypoint on the path to the Second Coming.[12] Increasing numbers, too, began to hold Frank Norris's line that it was their Christian—and more and more frequently, American—duty to support the Jewish state.

As premillennialism spread further throughout the SBC, several parallel developments brought Southern Baptists to more closely identify with the Jewish state. Among them was an increasing interaction with both Jewish organizations and with the State of Israel itself. Beginning in 1969, the Department of Interfaith

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[11] Helen Lee Turner, quoted in Pitts, "Southern Baptists and Millennialism," 22

[12] Richard Land, former head of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, noted in 2008, "For Southern Baptists, the return of the Jews to the land of promise in great numbers after World War II has helped promulgate premillennialism among Southern Baptists[…]But many people with whom I went to seminary in the late 1960s and early 1970s were amillennial in their eschatological outlook. The attack on Israel helped change that, and today the majority of Southern Baptists are premillennialists." Quoted in Greg Tomlin, "Israel Celebrates 60th Year," *Baptist Courier* (May 21, 2008), accessed September 1, 2015, http://baptistcourier.com/2008/05/israel-celebrates-60th-year/

Witness (part of the Home Mission Board) inaugurated a series of dialogues with Jewish representatives, led by Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee. Writing in 1980, Tanenbaum's colleague Rabbi James Rudin would note that these meetings had repeatedly turned up "five areas of mutual interest and agreement."[13] Among them was an "abiding commitment to the security and survival of both the people and the State of Israel."[14] These dialogues continued into the 1980s, even as fundamentalists worked to reshape the Home Mission Board in a more exclusively evangelistic direction.

The Israeli government itself also grew involved in cultivating Baptist support for the Jewish state. While American Zionist organizations had recruited Christians to their cause in the Mandate era, these efforts had focused on the mainline and liberal Protestants that were seen as more politically influential (as well as less focused on evangelism). Indicative of their priorities was that J. Frank Norris, who for all his controversy was a very influential figure, had to go searching for Jewish organizations to align himself with in the late 1940s. With support for Israel waning among mainline and liberal Protestants after the Six Day War, however, the Israeli government grew increasingly interested in building connections with conservative evangelicals. In the early 1970s, Israel's Ministry of Tourism twice invited the editors of several Baptist state papers to visit the country for ten-day tours. The editors only had to pay $200 apiece, with the Ministry covering the remainder of the costs. In the months following the trip, glowing

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[13] James Rudin, "A Jewish Perspective on Baptist Ecumenism," *Baptists and Ecumenism*, eds. William Jerry Boney and Glenn A. Igleheart (Valley Forge: Judson, 1980), 161.
[14] *Ibid*., 165-166.

accounts of travel in Israel filled the state Baptist periodicals. The headline for George Sheridan's travelogue in the *Christian Index* was particularly telling—"Tour Reveals Israel IS the Holy Land."[15]

Although the seeds of the relationship between the Israeli government and American evangelicals were sown under the Labor Party, which had dominated Israeli politics since 1948, it was not until the right-wing Likud's surprising 1977 electoral victory and the simultaneous rise of the American Religious Right that this relationship began to blossom. It is well known that Jerry Falwell, leader of the Religious Right and founder of the Moral Majority, developed a friendship with Likud Prime Minister Menachem Begin during several trips to Israel in the late 1970s and early 1980s.[16] Falwell had grown up a Southern Baptist and had come to interpret the Bible in a dispensationalist manner. Like Frank Norris before him, Falwell believed that Christians had a duty to stand by the Jewish state. His many trips to Israel—and his relationship with the Israeli government—only confirmed this belief. At the same time, Falwell's support for Israeli policies, including the construction of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, confirmed for Israelis that evangelicals were allies worth cultivating. In 1980, Begin acknowledged this worth by awarding Falwell the Jabotinsky Medal, named for the founder of Revisionist Zionism. Though Falwell was an Independent Baptist, his role in building a conservative religious political coalition insured his influence among Southern Baptists and evangelical Christians more broadly. Indeed, he worked to

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[15] Sheridan, "Tour Reveals Israel IS the Holy Land," *Christian Index*, Box 53, Folder 16, William Clemont Fields Papers, SBHLA.
[16] Weber, *Armageddon*, 218-220.

actively build connections between Southern Baptist leaders and the Israeli government. In 1980, Falwell introduced SBC President (and leader in the conservative resurgence) Adrian Rogers to Begin at a meeting in Washington. Commenting on the meeting, Rogers noted with a mix of geopolitical and prophetic concern, "Just from our personal interests as a nation, apart from biblical prophecy, we would want Israel there as a bulwark against Russian aggression. I still believe the Scripture where it says, 'those who bless Israel, God will bless, and those that curse Israel, God will curse.'"[17]

At the same time that Baptist leaders were growing closer to Israel, an unlikely Palestinian Arab voice was beginning to be heard in Southern Baptist circles. Evangelist Anis Shorrosh had been born in Nazareth during the British Mandate.[18] His father, Augustine, had been a Melkite convert of the Southern Baptists' Nazareth mission—he was one of the two promising "native workers" who moved to Haifa and trained under Roswell Owens in the 1930s. Indeed it was the Shorrosh family that had served as the model for the happy convert family of Doreen Owens's mission study novellas, with Anis's brother Assad serving as the protagonist in both *The Camel Bell* and *The Village Oven*. 1948, however, had brought tragedy to the Shorroshes. Augustine, separated from his wife and children because of an earlier traumatic brain injury, was killed trying to reach Nazareth. The rest of the family had fled Nazareth to Jordan. There, they reconnected with

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[17] Norman Jameson, "Rogers Meets Menachem Begin, Tells of Faith," *Baptist Press* (April 18, 1980), 30-31.

[18] For most of Shorrosh's biographical details, I have relied on James and Marti Hefley, *The Liberated Palestinian: the Anis Shorrosh Story* (Dallas: Acclaimed Books, n.d.).

Southern Baptist missionaries, who eventually helped Anis to attend college in Mississippi and then New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (where he attended classes with Adrian Rogers). In 1959, Anis was ordained at First Baptist Church of New Orleans and appointed by the FMB to serve in East Jerusalem. He resigned from the post in 1966, though, to begin an evangelistic ministry with Jan Willem van der Hoeven, a dispensationalist and Christian Zionist (van der Hoeven later founded the International Christian Embassy at Jerusalem). The following year, he returned to the United States, settling in Mobile, Alabama. He became a popular itinerant speaker in the South, especially among Baptists, and soon began leading tours of Israel twice each year. Shorrosh's primary message was that only Christ could bring lasting peace to Israelis and Arabs. It had been his own faith, after all, that had allowed him to forgive Israelis for all that had occurred to his family. Increasingly, though, Shorrosh grew more deeply enmeshed in dispensationalist thinking and came to understand the events that had torn his family apart as part of God's plan for history.[19] Thus developed the curious situation whereby the most well-known Palestinian Arab in the Southern Baptist Convention was himself something of a Christian Zionist.[20]

Even as all of these forces brought Southern Baptists to more closely identify with Israel, though, there remained concerns over the Jewish state's

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[19] From Anis Shorrosh, *Jesus, Prophecy, and the Middle East* (Daphne, AL: Shorrosh, 1979), 72: "The strangest thing in the world of today's politics is the fact that the Arab's control 3,000,000 square miles of territory, but cannot let Israel, their kinfolk, have 10,000 square miles. The hallowed parcel of land, called Palestine, has actually been in the hands of the Arabs longer than the descendants of Jacob. Yet God promised it to the Israelites."

[20] From the late 1980s onward, Shorrosh would also establish himself as an anti-Islamic activist.

treatment of missionaries and converts. From statehood onward, Baptist missionaries like Robert Lindsey and Dwight Baker had become leading advocates of an expansive approach to religious liberty in Israel, an approach informed both by practical missionary concerns and the historic Baptist commitment to the separation of church and state.[21] Particularly disturbing to the missionaries was a 1977 law banning the use of material inducement in encouraging people to convert. While the Baptists (along with other Christians missionaries) had repeatedly forsworn such practices, they worried that an expansive reading of the law could threaten basic missionary functions. Concern over the issue quickly spread to stateside Baptists, who at the 1978 Convention passed a resolution expressing concern that the law "may inhibit religious freedom[.]"[22] That same year, SBC President Jimmy Allen traveled to Israel to communicate his concerns to Israeli officials. In 1980, Knesset member David Glass invited Allen back to testify before the Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee on the subject of religious liberty during discussions over the adoption of a Basic (constitutional) Law concerning human rights.[23] If Baptists had concerns about religious liberty in Israel, MKs like Glass made sure that they felt their voices were heard at the highest levels. Indeed, the *Baptist News* report on the aforementioned 1980 meeting between Adrian Rogers and Menachem Begin noted that, though the assembled evangelicals "did not have a chance to address the

[21] Dwight Baker, "Israel and Religious Liberty," *Journal of Church and State* 7, no. 3 (Autumn 1965), 403-424.
[22] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1978, 67.
[23] Glass to Allen, 10 March 1980, Box 287, Folder 5, IMB Minutes and Reports.

question of religious freedom in Israel," Rogers did feel "that Begin had a better understanding of evangelical Christians after the meeting."[24]

The matter of Baptist, Jewish, and Israeli understanding would come to the fore later in 1980, when Rogers's successor as SBC President, H. Bailey Smith proclaimed at a Dallas prayer rally, "God Almighty does not hear the prayer of a Jew." After the comments were publicized in the *Dallas Morning News*, condemnation poured in on Smith and the SBC. In response to the outcry, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) extended an invitation to Smith and other Baptist leaders to tour Israel with ADL representatives. In November and December of 1981, the group of twenty (twelve from the SBC and eight from the ADL) visited the country, meeting with both Israeli representatives—who apparently suggested that Baptists build a study center in East Jerusalem—and Baptist missionaries—who expressed concern "that Southern Baptist leaders realize Baptists in Israel work with both Arabs and Jews and be cautious about siding with either group."[25] Navigating every interested party's concerns, Smith said of the trip, "Everywhere we went, people talked about the survival of the state of Israel[…]And when you talk about the state of Israel, you're talking about everyone in it, including the Arabs[…]We realize half the people of Israel are non-Jewish. I want to underscore our support for the people. While we were there, we discerned a warmth and respect for the rights of others to live and worship as they please."[26]

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[24] Norman Jameson, "Rogers Meets Menachem Begin," 30-31.
[25] "Israelis Ask Baptists to Build in Jerusalem," *Baptist Press* (December 11, 1981), 4-5.
[26] *Ibid*., 5. Actually, in 1981, non-Jews comprised only 16.5% of Israel's population: "Jewish and Non-Jewish Population of Palestine-Israel, 1517-2004," *Israel in the*

Israel remained on Southern Baptists' minds at the 1982 Convention (presided over by Smith), which featured another debate over a resolution expressing support for the Jewish state. James DeLoach of Houston, TX, was the author of the resolution, which asserted, "God's prophetic program as presented in the scriptures includes the present State of Israel as part of God's completion of all things."[27] Even among fundamentalist supporters of Israel, DeLoach was something of an extremist. He would come to be involved in the Jerusalem Temple Foundation, an organization that looked forward to the building of a third temple on the site of the Dome of the Rock and the reestablishment of the Temple cult.[28] After DeLoach's resolution came to the floor, Thomas Conley of Georgia proposed an amendment stating that the resolution "in no way condones Israel's recent invasion of Lebanon" and that Southern Baptists "support peaceful means to alleviate the problems between Israel and her neighbors."[29] The amendment passed, but the resolution itself was referred to the Committee on Resolutions. Keith Parks, President of the Foreign Mission Board and a non-fundamentalist, then took the lead in opposing the resolution. He offered three criticisms—that it expressed an eschatological viewpoint not shared by many Baptists, that it unnecessarily implicated Baptists in political questions, and that it could harm or even imperil Baptist mission workers in Israel and Arab lands. The motion was tabled. Missionary priorities had, for the moment, overcome fundamentalist politics.

Middle East, eds. Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2008), 571-572.

[27] "Parks Takes Strong Stand Against Israel Resolution," *Baptist Press* (February 9, 1983), 2.

[28] Grace Halsell, *Forcing God's Hand* (Washington: Crossroads, 1999), 69-70.

[29] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 1982, 55-56.

The failure of the resolution, to be sure, did not mean that Southern Baptists were not broadly supportive of Israel. It meant, rather, that there remained significant enough countervailing forces within the Convention—in this case, the concerns of the Foreign Mission Board—to prevent an official Convention statement on a political matter. The following decades, however, would see a winnowing of these forces. Only one example of this is that Keith Parks, who had led the opposition to the 1982 resolution, would be pushed from the Foreign Mission Board in the early 1990s as fundamentalists continued to secure control of denominational institutions.

In 2002, a resolution expressing support for the Jewish state finally passed the Convention. The timing of the resolution was no accident. The year before had witnessed the 9/11 attacks on the United States. At the same, a Palestinian uprising in the West Bank, the Second Intifada, had grown increasingly violent. Many Americans, Baptists included, came to see the U.S. and Israel as sharing a common enemy—Islamic terror. Then, as ever, the lines that divided the world seemed to put the United States and Israel—to put Southern Baptists and Israel—on the same side. The 2002 resolution expressed "abhorrence of all forms of terrorism as inexcusable, barbaric, and cowardly acts" and support for "the right of sovereign nations to use force to defend themselves against aggressors[.]"[30] The priority of the resolution, though, was to express support for "the right of Israel to exist as a sovereign state[.]" It laid out several reasons for this support—among them that the "Jewish people have an historic connection to the land of Israel, a connection that is rooted

[30] Southern Baptist Convention, *Annual*, 2002, 74-75.

in the promises of God" and that "the international community restored land to the Jewish people in 1947 to provide a homeland for them and re-establish the nation of Israel[.]" It also expressed love for both Israelis and Palestinians and called on both peoples "to pursue policies that promote genuine religious liberty and peace between themselves and their neighbors[.]" In conclusion, the resolution offered a prayer "that the true peace of our Lord will reign in the lives of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples and that this peace will bring blessing to this war-torn land." Though much had changed in the Southern Baptist Convention—though much had changed in Israel and Palestine—Christ, as ever, was Southern Baptists' ultimate answer to every question.

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The Baptist Standard (Dallas, TX)
The Baptist Student (Nashville, TN)
The Biblical Recorder (Raleigh, NC) (accessed through the website of the Z. Smith Reynolds Library at Wake Forest University – http://recorder.zsr.wfu.edu/Default/Skins/WakeforestA/Client.asp?skin=WakeforestA&AW=1448979833027&AppName=2)
The Christian Index (Atlanta, GA)
The Commission (Richmond, VA)
The Florida Baptist Witness (Jacksonville, FL)
Foreign Mission Journal (Richmond, VA) (accessed through the Solomon Databases of the International Mission Board Archives and Records Services – http://archives.imb.org/solomon.asp)
The Fundamentalist (Fort Worth, TX)
Home and Foreign Fields (Richmond, VA) (accessed through the Solomon Databases of the International Mission Board Archives and Records Services – http://archives.imb.org/solomon.asp)
Pastor's Periscope (Nashville, TN)
Review & Expositor (Louisville, KY)
Royal Service (Birmingham, AL)
The Quarterly Review (Nashville, TN)
The Tennessee Baptist (Nashville, TN) (accessed through the website of the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives – http://www.sbhla.org/sbc_annuals/index.asp)
The Western Recorder (Louisville, KY)

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