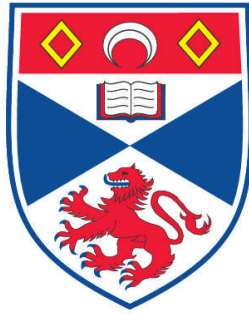# VIOLENCE, TERRORISM AND THE ROLE OF THEOLOGY : REPENTANT AND REBELLIOUS CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

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## A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
## at the
## University of St. Andrews

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VIOLENCE, TERRORISM AND THE ROLE OF THEOLOGY: REPENTANT AND

REBELLIOUS CHRISTIAN IDENTITY


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## Acknowledgements and Dedication

While I have done the work and accept the mistakes in this dissertation as purely my own—anything good that came from this has been because of many other people who have helped me along the way.

Bruce Hoffman is the greatest terrorism specialist in the world, but more than that he has been my friend and mentor along the way. I hope you will allow me to continue following along behind you learning and growing by watching and listening to you. Anders Strindberg is a hard headed Swede without whom I could not have had nearly as many fun arguments about my topic. I sure hope we have many more arguments in the future. Philip Esler guided me in this dissertation through the attacks of 9/11, me going to serve in Iraq and after I was wounded, he encouraged me to return to finish even though I didn't really want to. He is a brilliant academic and man of integrity. Mario Aguilar took over my supervision at the end of this project when he really had no time for yet another postgraduate student to lead through the difficult dissertation submission process. He did it anyway and he did it with style and grace—much needed grace I might add.

My Grandfather, USAF Chief Master Sergeant, Carl W. Schafer (ret.) never went to college. Despite that he realized it was important for me and he helped me get this done. I really appreciate it a lot.

Three beautiful and strong women went to unbelievable lengths to help me do this PhD. My daughters Adrian and Elizabeth had to put up with a lot of silly talk for years about Identity theology. They have always been interested in my theological as well as political discussions and I have appreciated their insight and love along the way.

My wife Alison is a star. As you can see, lots of people had to help me along in this process—but without Alison it would not have happened, period. Even though it made me mad when you noticed my typos and grammar issues, I appreciated you pointing them out. And when I wanted to, "just stop the madness" 10,000 different times—you had the guts, and coffee to keep me going till I got it done. I'm still not going to dedicate it to you though—because I want to dedicate a proper book to you not some dry dissertation. I love you, thanks, and we are sure glad that's over aren't we?

**ABSTRACT**

What has come to be known within the Academy as, *Identity* theology, is presented in the literature as a monolithic belief system which supports and encourages terrorism and other forms of political violence. This dissertation argues that inattention to theological and social issues within the many Identity theology based groups in the US has led to a deeply flawed understanding of the relation between Identity adherents, terrorism and other political violence. Discussions about these groups in the literature is flawed and there is an imprecise understanding which has led to an inaccurate alignment of widely varied social groups with a pejorative classification that is neither descriptive of the various theologies at work, nor the social manifestations observed in these groups. Fuirther, the research suggests that the academic community known as "Terrorism Studies" continues to contribute to the inaccurate understanding and that those inaccuracies are likely impediments to effective government policy in relation to the phenomenan known as Identity theology.

The research presented here suggests that there are both theological and social distinctions, which can and should be delineated and understood by all those researching *Identity* groups. The research highlights four significant types or differences within what is now known as *Identity* theology, by highlighting the nuance between social groups including the Church of Israel, Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord (CSA), Mission to Israel, KKK and Aryan Nations and suggests that a more precise understanding of the differences could lead to declining instances of violence and more openness to positive social change by those who currently follow these very different types of theological belief systems.

## DECLARATIONS

I, David W. Brannan, I hereby certify that this thesis, which his approximately 95,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.
October 26, 2006                              Signed; David W. Brannan

I was admitted as a research student January 2000 and as a candidate for the degree of PhD in January 2000; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St. Andrews between January 2000 and September 2006.
October 26, 2006                              Signed; David W. Brannan

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolutions and Regulations appropriate for the degree of PhD in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

*It is wrong when our laws point their fingers at groups rather than individuals." President, George W. Bush – February 2001*[1]

The February 26, 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City shook

the perception held by many Americans,[2] that of internal national security and the perception

of safety from the threat of political violence. Many felt that "terrorism" was a problem

encountered away from American shores. At home there was safety from the foreign dangers

that Americans watched on their televisions.[3] And yet, while this individual act did shake the

common psyche as to the perceived danger, the perpetrators were the type expected by US

citizens.[4] Radical Islam is the default setting for "terrorism" in the minds of most Americans.

Journalistic images of Islamic fundamentalists chanting anti-US and anti-Zionist slogans

easily leap to Americans' minds' when the word terrorist is used. For many, religious

terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism were interchangeable.

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[1] *CNN Headline News*, 2-27-01, President Bush's address to both houses of congress, speaking in reference to racial profiling by police officers.

[2] United States Department of State, *Significant Incidents of Political Violence Against Americans: 1993*, Bureau of Diplomatic Security. p.33. This attack killed six and injured approximately a thousand. The blind Egyptian cleric, Omar Abdel Rahmen, theologically sanctioned the attack. For example see, "Terror Hits Home" *Newsweek*, March 8, 1993 for the shock outlined by the media that terrorism had come to America's shores.

[3] While many did see this as 'bursting the bubble' of national safety from terrorism, it clearly should not have been something new in the eyes of Americans. Several, if not numerous, events involving violent sub-national activists had occurred and had been reported for two decades proceeding this event: for instance, the reign of terror carried out by the "Order", activities of the Covenant, Sword, Arm of the Lord or the only successful bio-terrorist attack on US soil, the Bagwanrosneshee's in Oregon, 1984.

[4] What became known as "the Iran hostage crisis" in 1979 and the US hostages taken in Beirut Lebanon during the early to mid 1980's fixed the view of terrorist's being Arab in the mind of many if not most Americans. Certainly the 9/11 attacks have added to this biased perception that terrorism is a problem that attacks the US from overseas.

The Oklahoma bombing changed everything. Just two years after the first World Trade Center bombing, Americans found that a very real threat came from within. At precisely 9:02 A.M. on April 19th, 1995 an explosion rocked the Alfred P. Murrah Building, forever changing America's perception of what a "terrorist" looks like.[5] Early reports from bystanders suggested that Arabs seen leaving the area were the likely suspects.[6] The investigation led to several Arab and Arab-American men being detained or arrested for questioning in the two days that followed the blast.[7] One Jordanian born man was returned from as far away as London[8] for questioning as Justice Department officials focused on, "Hamas, Hiz'ballah[9] and other fundamental Islamic organizations . . ."[10] As federal law enforcement investigators dug through the rubble and bodies of innocent victims looking for clues that would lead them to the "enemy," President Clinton promised swift retaliation against any foreign government found connected to the crime.[11]

It was beyond the average American's comprehension that the death of 168 innocent people, many of whom were children, could be caused by a terrorist act perpetrated by one of their own. Numerous traits and personality characteristics of Timothy McVeigh, the focus of the investigation, came to light in the weeks that followed the attack. How could this American veteran of the military now turn on his national allegiance? In addition, this man— suspected and charged with the most devastating single terrorist act perpetrated on US soil to

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[5] David Johnson, "Terror in Oklahoma City," *The New York Times*, April 20, 1995. The media continued to express their disbelief that terrorism had come to America, despite their own reporting of the actions from earlier events. See, Joe Clien, "The Nervous 90's"*Newsweek*, May 1, 1995. There has been very little historical anchor for the media in reporting on sub-national political violence. This fact has in part led to the problems of identification discussed in chapter five.

[6] David Johnson, Terror in Oklahoma City," *The New York Times*, April 20, 1995.

[7] *The Times*, "Oklahoma City Bombing" *The Times*, April 21, 1995.

[8] "Oklahoma Bomber" *The Financial Times*, April 21, 1995.

[9] Hamas Is translated "zeal" and Hiz'ballah means literally, "The Party of God."

[10] "More on the Blast" *The New York Times*, April 20, 1995.

[11] *Ibid.*

that time,[12]—claimed to be a "patriot" and a "Christian."[13] The terms used to describe

McVeigh were paradoxical in the minds of most Americans. Christian – Veteran – Patriot –

these were words used to describe everything that was good and wholesome in American

society. For many Americans "Christian" was a word aligned with morality. "Veterans" were

those who protected civilians and conjured images of safety. "Patriot" was synonymous with

the American idea of the rule of law. How was it now that these same words also meant

death, destruction and hatred aimed at innocent fellow citizens, as well as the federal

government? A little known theological position known as Christian *Identity* seemed to be

the key link.

**What is Christian *Identity*?**
While there are several relationships and ideologies at work in the Oklahoma

bombing case[14], Christian *Identity* theology has often been identified in the press and

academic writings as a major component driving the violent actions from the Right.[15]

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[12] Kerry Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate: Why they bombed Oklahoma City* (Louiseville, Quebec: Voyageur Publishing, 1998) pp. 206-207. The tragic events in New York and Washington D.C. on 9/11/01 have unfortunately eclipsed the carnage of the Oklahoma bombing.

[13] See, Martin Duham, "Preparing for Armageddon: Citizen Militias, the Patriot Movement and the Oklahoma City Bombing," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 8, #1 pp. 65-79, for a description of the myriad ideologies involved, also see, Michael Barkun, "Religion, Militias and Oklahoma City: The Mind of Conspiratorialists," *Terrorism and Political Violence,* Vol. 8, #1 pp. 50-64, for a description of the conspiratorial similarity between various secular and religious ideologies on the American Right.

[14] The Militia movement was cited early on in the investigation as an important pillar of McVeigh's violent ideology. This view was supported by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, (ADL) several months before the blast. See, ADL Fact Finding Report – *Armed and Dangerous: Militias Take Aim at the Federal Government.* (New York: ADL Publications, 1994). It is clear some years later that the link between the bombers and the Militia movement was tertiary. Another ideology involved likely played a more important role, *The Turner Diaries*, William Pierce's influential fringe novel, was a constant companion for McVeigh and played a significant role in the formation of his particular worldview. For a concise review of the various ideologies considered in the case see, Martin Duham, "Preparing for Armageddon: Citizen Militias, the Patriot Movement and the Oklahoma City Bombing,"*Terrorism and Political Violence*, pp. 65-79.

[15] Even the respected academic Michael Barkun, author of *Religion and the Racist Right,* felt it important to relate his views on *Identity* theology to the Oklahoma Bombing. See, Michael Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement.* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997) pp. 255-290.

When the Idaho based Aryan Nations members chased a female motorist and her son off the road near the group's compound in 1999, it was their theology, Christian *Identity*, which was identified by many commentators as the driving force behind the actions.[16] Similarly, the Christian *Identity* theology of the Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord (CSA) was, in the eyes of former second in command of the group, Kerry Nobel, instrumental in taking the group from a band of left over "hippie Jesus freaks"[17] in the 1970's to a dangerous para-military organization preparing for an imminent apocalyptic battle between the believers of *Identity* theology and the forces of evil led by a "Zionist Occupational Government (ZOG)." [18]

Christian *Identity* is an American theology. The name *Identity* was first used by adherents from within this internally differentiated belief system to describe themselves, but is now, almost exclusively used by outsiders as a pejorative description. The name has come to connote individuals and groups that the media, a variety of watchdog groups and some academics seek to label as "religious terrorists." Those from within the movement took *Identity* as a name for their belief system from the idea that they—the descendants of White Europeans—were the literal and true Israel of God. Jewish people were not seen as descendants of the Old Testament people of God. Rather, the true "identity" of Israel, was to be found in the British, other European and American Caucasian people. Clearly the claim was and is at odds with the dominant theological positions held by Christians in the US or other Christian communities.

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[16]"A neo-nazis last stand," *Time,* August 28, 2000, or, *Trial told of paranoia at Aryan camp*, Associated Press, September 1, 2000.

[17] Interview, Kerry Noble, February 14, 2001, Burleson, Texas.

[18] ZOG is a pejorative title given to the US government by some *Identity* and other writers on the extreme right in the US.

*Identity* theology was developed on the premise of British-Israelism's academically discounted belief system,[19] which asserted that the "lost" tribes of Israel were to be found in the people of Britain.[20] Various forms of *Identity* theology emerged in the United States between the 1940's and 1960's as British-Israel thought mixed with American racially biased groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, (KKK).[21]

For many commentators, both popular and academic, the belief system can be reduced to a caricature of pseudo theological white supremacy. For instance Harvey Kushner inaccurately links all Rightwing extremists together under the Christian Identity banner.[22] Others categorize all *Identity* adherents as white supremacists, which believe that Jewish people are the literal offspring of a sexual union between Eve and Satan, and that all non-whites are animals rather than humans. This perception is woefully incomplete. Subscribing to it leads to inaccurate labeling and potentially dangerous policy decisions.

This dissertation focuses on the various manifestations of *Identity* theology within a US context, seeking to delineate the origins, dynamics and significance of various theological and social types of *Identity* theology doctrines and groups. The author is aware that the movement also has a successful following in South Africa, Australia, Canada, and elsewhere, but the current study focuses on the United States; in part because it is the driving force behind the movement worldwide, and thus many comparisons are made with the general US

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[19] A more detailed discussion of British-Israelism is given in chapter four of this dissertation.

[20] This theological transformation is also discussed in more detail in chapter four.

[21] See, Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right* pp. 173-196 for an easily accessible recounting of the development, or see the following for some of the first publications listing what has become known as the "seed-line" *Identity* theory, Philip E. J. Monson, Satan's Seat: The Enemy of Our Race (Los Angles: Covenant Evangelistic Association Zion Press, undated) or, William P. Gale, "Racial and National Identity," *Identity* (undated) pp. 4-7.

[22] Harvey W. Kushner's *Terrorism in America*, (Springfield IL: Charles C Thomas LTD, 1998) pp. 56-85. Throughout this work Kushner unifies the various different ideologies on the extreme and radical US Right with *Identity* theology.

American population or "Christian" US American in mind.[23] Leaders such as, Gerald L. K. Smith and Wesley Swift made early American forms of *Identity* theology—from the late 1940's through mid-1970's—more accepted within the various extremist groups on the American Right.[24]

Recognizing that there have indeed been a number of violent incidents that have originated from *Identity* groups, it has been convenient for the media and other commentators speaking on the radical Right, to paint all violent action coming from this camp as being influenced by *Identity* theology.[25] The failure on the part of researchers to see the very real distinctions between ideological drives has led to an inconsistent and inaccurate labeling that is passed as a judgment over all groups so labeled with this negatively perceived term. *Identity* is commonly presented in the media and within many popular and academic books as a religion that is predicated on hate and hate alone.[26] Moreover, *Identity* theology supposedly represents a unified group of people ready to kill all Jewish, Black, Asian and mixed race people.[27]

Jeffery Kaplan, in his work, *Radical Religion in America*[28] outlines the emergence and nature of the divergent belief systems on the radical Right in this way:

> Adherents of these belief systems constitute a kind of pariah class in contemporary culture. As such, they have been banished to the farthest reaches of the cultural

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23 The use of the term "American" is not intended to slight other North, Central or South Americans by referring to US citizens generically as "American," but rather, recognizes the centrality of the efforts various leaders and groups from the US have played in building what is today known as *Identity* theology.

24 See, various issues of Gerald L. K. Smith's publications, *The Cross and the Flag* , which can be accessed through the Gerald L. K. Smith Collection, Michigan Historical Collection, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Especially, "Dr. Wesley Swift Passes*," The Cross and the Flag*, 29 March 1971, 14-26, or, Ralph Lord Roy, *Apostles of Discord: A Study of Organized Bigotry and Disruption on the Fringes of Protestantism* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1953) pp. 100-107.

25 This tactic is most commonly seen in the writings of the various watchdog groups. Specific analysis of this dangerous practice is returned to below.

26 See among many, Coates, 1998: 77-103 or Walters, 2001: 1-21.

27 See for instance, Coppola, 1996: 18.

28 Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America,* (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997).

cosmos. In this isolation, adherents have been left to interact primarily with each other, and as a result an ideological synthesis has taken place over the last half century, culminating in a kind of apocalyptic orthodoxy. Thus all of these groups share such primary characteristics as a Golden Age myth, the perception of a "theft of culture," scripturalism, a Manichean world view, a conspiratorial view of history, a vision of the group as a righteous remnant, an apocalyptic analysis of society, and a concomitant chiliastic dream.[29]

Kaplan, addressing the misperception that all radical right-wing groups are actually following the same ideology, is able to begin to make distinctions between divergent groups.[30] Kaplan recognizes that they pose similar characteristics, but recognizes also the tremendous differences that separate them. He insists that more detailed distinctions are needed, but acknowledges that the necessary research has not been completed to date.[31] Similarities are destined to impact perceptions of these groups, enforcing their pariah status as long as there are no efforts to show the very real distinctions between them.

For example, the now infamous criminal and terrorist group, The Order, which carried out multiple robberies, murder and ultimately a shootout with the FBI at Washington State's Whidbey Island in 1985, has often been identified as the quintessential *Identity* group.[32] But upon closer examination researchers have found that while some of the group's members had been influenced by *Identity* theology during the formation of the group, it was their specific disenchantment with and perception of the weakness of *Identity* theology that led these men

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[29] Ibid., p. xv.

[30] Making clear distinctions between *Identity* theology vs. Odinism vs. Nazi ideology, which is a significant improvement over the majority of the field, and yet, recognizing that there is a need for more research to more the distinctions beyond these very basic segments of what is seen as just "the right.".

[31] See, Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence,* Vol, 5, #1 (Spring 1993), pp.30-82 here Kaplan acknowledges the need for more detailed research into the theological aspects of the *Identity* movement.

[32] For the standard but journalistic recounting of the group, see, Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood* (New York, NY: Signet, 1989).

to co-opt additional and alternative ideologies. [33] In short, The Order's violent attacks against Jewish people and the US system at large were not fueled by *Identity* theology alone, but rather, by a unique mixture of a specific type of *Identity* theology, Odinism and the neo-Nazi rhetoric of William Pierce's National Alliance.[34] This impreciseness is even more problematic as we look at groups who have never been involved in, or linked to terrorism or any other type of violence, but who nevertheless are identified under the broad heading *Identity*.[35] This link—between theology, the various groups who make up the broadly defined *Identity* movement, and violence—is developed throughout the remainder of this thesis. Making accurate distinctions between the various theological and social types is a major aim of this dissertation.

The assumed association between *Identity* theology and political violence has become commonplace not only in the journalistic writing on the subject, but also in the academic literature.[36] For example, to date, the standard reference work on The Order remains *The Silent Brotherhood,* and yet, this book seeks to recreate an 'airport novel' kind of approach to the group's inner conversations and methods, never claiming to attain the rigorous methods expected in standard academic writing. The familiarity and similar presentation between what are generally seen as two very different types of writing novelistic and academic (both in

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[33] See, Robert S. Griffin, *The Fame of a Dead Man's Deeds* (United States: 1stBooks, 2001) pp. 209-224, also, from an interview with Rabbi Schiller, July 2001, Monsey, New York. During the interview the Rabbi showed me a correspondence between himself and an incarcerated member of "The Order" that further explained how the group's ideology which had once been related to *Identity* theology had been transformed by the more powerful ideology of Odinism.

[34] Griffin, *The Fame of a Dead Man's Deed, pp.* 209-224.

[35] For instance, followers of Ted Weiland's Mission to Israel in Scottsbluff, Nebraska.

[36] As evidenced in the literature portrayed in the two major academic journals on the subject, *Terrorism and Political Violence* and *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, as well as in the more popular journalistic titles on the subject such as; Kenneth S. Stern, *A Force Upon the Plain*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996) or, James Ridgeway, *Blood in the Face* (New York: Thunder Mouth Press, 1995).

content and style) gives cause to query the academic credentials of such research. [37] In this literature there is a presumption of a general correlation and correspondence between *Identity* adherents and 'terrorism'.[38] This belief of a unified Identity system, while convenient for affixing blame and creating a scapegoat for those looking for a unified ideology of American Right violence, leads to conclusions, which do not accurately represent this diverse and constantly evolving theological belief system.

McVeigh and the tragedy that resulted from the Oklahoma bombing highlight one option among the strange and ideologically confused composite relationships that develop among individuals from the radical fringe of the American Right, but do not therefore define the *Identity* genre. [39] A deeper inspection of McVeigh's ideological drives shows clearly that he was not an *Identity* adherent. He had come from a marginally Roman Catholic background and his religious beliefs had little or no impact on his actions. The ideology that drove McVeigh to bomb the Murrah building was completely unrelated to theology, specifically *Identity* theology. Rather, the primary ideologies that drove McVeigh to carry out his actions were based on his perception that the US Federal government was systematically reducing the freedoms of the citizenry, especially as they related to the Second Amendment, "the right to keep and bear arms." [40]

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[37] This is addressed more specifically chapter three, which focuses on the analytical framework used for this research and compares those frameworks used in the past.

[38] For instance, see Jerome Walters, *One Aryan Nation Under God: How Religious Extremists Use the Bible to Justify Their Actions.* (Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, INC, 2001), Kushner, *Terrorism in America*, 59-64, Kenneth S. Stern, *A Force Upon the Plain*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), or Vincent Coppola, *Dragons of God* (Atlanta, GA: Longstreet Press, 1996) p.18, as examples of the many contributions equating *Identity* theology with terrorism.

[39] Fredrick Schultz quoted the phrase, "composite terrorism" at the Terrorism conference in St Andrews, November 2000. The idea itself has been in use among academics within the terrorism studies community for many years.

[40] For an excellent look at the motivations behind McVeigh's actions, based on personal interviews just before his execution, see, Lou Michael and Dan Herbeck, *American Terrorist* (New York, NY: ReganBooks, 2001).

**Challenges to understanding**

Two very different but equally problematic perspectives emerge in looking at the role

of theology as it relates to sub-national political activism and violence in the United States.

First, there is a general apathy felt by today's post-modern individuals toward theology.[41]

While church attendance levels were up in the United States following the 9/11 attacks,[42]

Relativism[43] reigns supreme. Any belief system—especially one which is in part

theologically derived and which makes truth claims—is immediately suspect and

marginalized.[44] Some commentators fail to even make a distinction between *Identity* theology

and the rest of Christianity in aligning violence with Christian theology.[45] In these more

extreme writings the whole of Protestant Christianity is inaccurately aligned with extremism

and the support of groups, which advocate illegal or immoral sub-national political

violence.[46]

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[41] American Religious Identification Survey 2001, released by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), in, Chris Herlinger, "Number of Americans with No Formal Religion Increasing, Survey Finds" *Christianity Today,* January 7, 2002.

[42] For an outstanding review of the ongoing debate of the place of religion in the public life see, Stephen L. Carter, *God's Name in Vain* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2000), also see, Ted Olsen, "Think Jesus Is the Only Way to Heaven? You're a Terrorist Waiting to Happen" *Christianity Today* October 29, 2001.

[43] Used in this context to represent the pervasive post-Enlightenment belief that all views of truth are relative – "if you believe 'A' is truth for you, that's fine, but it does not mean that 'A' is truth for me." Thus, in this view there can be parallel "truths," which are at the same time counter to each other. For an interesting perspective on this issue see, R. C. Sproul, *Lifeviews*. (Old Tappan NJ: Power Books, 1986), or Francis A Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*. Wheaton IL: Crossway Books, 1981). For an accurate review of the historic protestant Reformed Christian argument for 'knowing truth', see, Ronald H. Nash, *The Word of God and the Mind of Man*. (Phillipsburg, NJ: R & R Publishing, 1982).

[44] One need look no further than the front page of the newspaper to see how Islamic Fundamentalists are portrayed to understand the marginal position in which theologically based belief systems are placed. For an interesting discussion on the role of theologically derived epistemological foundations and how theologians are seeking to change they way they are viewed within the Academy, see, the online journal Gregory E. Ganssle, "A Doxastic Community Approach to Christian Scholarship," *Leadership U*, accessed at http://leaderu.com/aip/docs/ganssle.html (cited May 24, 2005). Or, for views on fundamentalist Christians in the US, see Ted Olsen, "Think Jesus Is the Only Way to Heaven? You're a Terrorist Waiting to Happen" *Christianity Today* October 29, 2001.

[45] Some early academic research on the subject is even more general in its understanding of the role of theology as it relates to political violence or what has been termed "extremism". See, Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, *The Politics of Unreason*. (London: Heinemann, 1971) for a study of the Right in America, which makes a generalized alignment of Protestantism with extremism, anti-semitism and violence.

[46] *Ibid*.

Secondly, and concurrently, the Terrorism Studies community *does* recognize the

importance of religious underpinnings in supporting violent actions carried out by sub-

national actors.[47] Yet, while seeing the importance of this link, the literature on theologically

motivated violence generally betrays a belief that there is, essentially, a wholesale alignment

of illegitimate violence perpetrated domestically within the US with the radical Right in

general and *Identity* theology in particular. Most of the literature attempts to portray the

radical-Right as uniformly aligned behind a monolithic denominational arch type, *Identity*

theology.[48] But is this assumption correct? Consider for instance the Church of Israel's

explanation of their position on violence motivated from a particular theological position:

> Because of her belief in Biblical separation, the Church of Israel is sometimes falsely
> compared with identity hate groups. Identity, as redefined and used in the news media
> today, refers to white religious zealots who rob banks, kill Jews and Blacks and
> advocate violent overthrow of the government. Such crimes are committed by all
> racial groups, and more often by Islamics and other non-whites than by whites.
> However, the Church of Israel repudiates all such beliefs and practices by all racial
> groups. We hate no race, nor do we advocate violence to anyone. The Church of Israel
> is strongly and fundamentally Christian. It teaches the need to live at peace with all
> men, pray for our rulers, exercise our vote and wait on God to right the many wrongs
> which plague our society. No "firearms, drugs, alcohol or profanity" are allowed on
> Church of Israel grounds. The Church of Israel supports various agencies of law
> enforcement. Criminals, hate mongers, insurrectionists and peddlers of violence and
> rebellion are not welcome at the Church of Israel. Offenders are removed as soon as
> they are known. Our position is made clear in a booklet entitled, "The Duties of a
> Christian Citizen, A Handbook on Christian Citizenship," by Pastor Dan Gayman,
> free to all who request a copy. This booklet has been made available to members of
> law enforcement for their training seminars.[49]

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[47] The identification has been made by the 'terrorism studies' community in all the 'religions of the book', be they Jewish, Christian or Islamic. The association between terrorism and religion is generally made in conjunction with the term "Fundamentalist." Although this recognition is made in general, little or no delineation is made between comparative religious concerns and theology itself. A significant departure from the discipline's failure in this area has been found in the voluminous edited series by Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, *The Fundamentalism Project – Volumes 1 - 5*, (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[48] The non-academic writings making this alignment are legion and continually reemerging, for instance see, Stern, *A Force Upon the Plain* or Ridgeway, *Blood in the Face*, Richard Abanes, *American Militias*,, while much of the academic writing on the subject also presents *Identity* as a monolithic "type." See, Walter Laqueur's, *The New Terrorism.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) or Kushner, *Terrorism in America*. For a counterview from a powerful voice within the terrorism studies community, see, Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America,* (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997).

[49] Found at, www.churchofisrael.com/presskit (cited August 14, 2003). At this web site the Church of Israel provides the public and law enforcement in particular, a perspective of their group which is non-violent. Upon closer inspection and interaction, this author found their claims to be true.

This statement suggests that there is at least one *Identity* type church—and this work argues that there are more—which does *not* advocate, nor support in silence, violence and terrorism, as the literature suggests. Certainly this statement could be a smokescreen for illegal violent activity, but that assumption, which is regularly made in the literature, is generally unproven. Personal contact of the author with the groups in question provides an empirical basis for the fundamental thesis of this dissertation, that the many distinctions between *Identity* theologies and their representative groups are greater than their few similarities. The central argument of this dissertation is that there simply is no monolithic theologically motivated movement, let alone one which can be labeled as the "enemy."

Depending on the perspective of the listener or readers, many conventional religious speakers and writers might be viewed as radical or potentially violent and thus the enemy. Consider the rhetorical impact of the popular conservative television evangelist John Hagee;

> We are at war! We are at war with the world and our only goal is victory! Our only king is Jesus and he's not in Washington DC![50]

It takes little imagination on the part of the listener to perceive this statement as potentially violent, yet it is made on television and with no apology. Contrast the statement above with a radical *Identity* booklet by Kerry Noble of the now defunct group, The Covenant the Sword and the Arm of the Lord, (CSA). The CSA was a very active *Identity* theology based group during the 1980's:[51]

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[50] Quote taken from a sermon televised on the Trinity Broadcasting Service (TBS), delivered by Pastor John Hagee, April 29, 2001.

[51] It should be noted that CSA was not always an *Identity* based group, rather they came out of the evangelical fundamentalist movement of the 1970's sometimes called, The Jesus Movement. See, Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate*, 47-98.

Prepare War! Wake up the Mighty Men! Let all the Men of War come near. Let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears. Let the weak say I am strong![52]

While the first statement above by Pastor Hagee is deemed acceptable by many for public television, the second statement, which is nothing more than a quotation of a Biblical text, (Joel 3:9-10), is seen as terrorist literature. Which one is Christian? Is either, or both of these leaders excluded from the label Christian by their presentation of theological views with political impact? The logical conclusion for some considering a rhetorical phenomenon like this is to see all world-views, which are derived from a sacred text as potentially dangerous, marginal or otherwise illegitimate in today's post-Enlightenment, secular society.[53]

**The problem and a place to start**

Foundational to this thesis is the view that neither of the two extremes portrayed above is accurate. Theology is neither unimportant in modern life nor is it the foundation for all evil in the world today. It is a mistake for modern Western people to ethnocentrically apply their post-Enlightenment cultural distrust of religious thought and groups onto other cultures, regardless if the group makes truth claims. This is true even—or perhaps especially—if those cultures are contained within the same country.[54] Geographic proximity does not negate the reality of clear and significant cultural difference between people of the same nationality.

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[52] Reprinted in, *Ibid.,* 214-215.

[53] For a review of how this is done in the media, see, Bernard Goldberg, *Bias* (Washington, DC: Regency Publishing Inc., 2002) or, Stephen L. Carter, *God's Name in Vain* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2000), for a political perspective of the same issue.

[54] Many assume that to live in close geographic proximity is to be culturally similar or familiar. This fallacy is easily demonstrated as false in the US if we but look at any number of separatist communities which exist within the modern world but have little in common with it. For example, the Amish, American Indians, or extreme Orthodox Jewish communities all exist surrounded by the modern world but maintain particular cultural distinction, which is rarely understood by geographically near but culturally, untrained outsiders.

Clearly, sub-national, theologically motivated activists do participate in the social and political arena. Likewise, it is true that their activism is sometimes violent. But it does not logically follow that all groups whose worldviews are based on truth claims found in a particular believed revelation of God, are somehow united. To make this assumption is to commit a genetic logical fallacy, despite the fact that so doing may be handy for vilifying a particular segment of marginalized society.

Furthermore, the so-called "hate group watch-dogs,"[55] such as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) along with the terrorism studies community have inaccurately presented the radical-Right as being united behind a common theological perspective.[56] This is particularly true in relation to *Identity* theology. Much of the secular population is unable or unwilling to acknowledge the importance of theology in today's world. And yet, there is an important dimension of political violence, an issue that the public has repeatedly expressed an interest in, which in fact relies on—or is condoned by— theological precepts. The theology spoken of is not a singular belief system and the difference between the types of these theologies, and the social constructions to which they contribute, remain real and important once we seek to understand them.

On September 11, 2001, the western world became acutely aware of the power of theologically motivated sub-national political violence when 19 hijackers took control of four commercial airplanes in flight over the United States and simultaneously used them as guided

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[55] Such as the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), Anti-defamation League (ADL) or the American Jewish Committee. One of the single most influential pieces of recent written work aligning *Identity* theology with political violence has been, Stern, *A Force Upon the Plain*. In this work, every conceivable social, political & theological view on the radical American Right is woven into a single monolithic evil and presented as a united front waiting to take over America by violence.

[56] This work attempts to show a separation between 'watchdog' type group writings on the subject of terrorism and the Right and the 'terrorism studies' community's supposedly more academic approach to the subject. There are several problems in maintaining this separation, which are addressed in the following chapter on theory.

missiles, killing nearly 3000 people.[57] Osama bin-Laden, the Saudi millionaire and

charismatic leader of al-Qaeda had been telling the United States and Western Europe for

many years[58] that the combination of his theology and world view had led him to support

such violent attacks.[59] The West had paid little attention, believing that political activists

living out theological arguments were little more than a nuisance to the modern state

structure.[60] The changes to the US government and increased security throughout the world

are evidence that violent theological arguments are more than a nuisance.[61] Although a

particular Islamic theology motivated and sustained attacks, distinctions have been made to

show that not all Muslims are terrorists and not all Islamic theology supports terrorism.

Sweeping generalizations lead segments of society at large to dismiss the actions

perpetrated and all the individual members of the representative organizations and belief

systems, as "wacko".[62] This is a mistake, not least as it reduces the culpability of those

individuals that actually do engage in illegal violent acts. To the contrary, it has been the

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[57] Bruce Hoffman, *Lessons of 9/11*, Congressional Testimony, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2002).

[58] Among other statements, in 1998, bin Laden issued a Fatwa—religious decree—explaining his theological position. See, Magnus Ranstorp, "Interpreting the Broader Context and Meaning of Bin Laden/s Fatwa." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 21, no.4 (1998).

[59] See, Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside al-Qaeda,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002) for a description of the al-Qaeda network and see, Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes* (Washington DC: Brassey's Inc, 2002) for an analysis of bin-Laden's various warnings and pronouncements. (The author of this book, Anonymous, was later identified as the long time head of the bin-Laden working group within the CIA, Michal Scheuer).

[60] Anonymous, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes*, p. 3-11, 45-67 & 195-224 for an explanation of bin Laden's theological basis for targeting the West. See, Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, (London, Victor Gollancz, 1998) pp. 67-86 for an excellent explanation of how terrorism has been effective in changing the state system since the post-colonial period.

[61] The September 11th, attacks have led to the creation of a new Cabinet level Department of Homeland Security in addition to many other security policy changes. See, Advisory Panel to Assess Domestic Response Capabilities for Terrorism Involving Weapons of Mass Destruction [Gilmore Commission], *Third Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, vol. 3, (Washington, DC: RAND, 15 December 2001), Advisory Panel to Assess Domestic Response Capabilities for Terrorism Involving Weapons of Mass Destruction [Gilmore Commission], *Forth Annual Report to the President and the Congress*, vol. IV, (Washington, DC: RAND, 17 December 2002) or Gary Hart, Warren B. Rudman and Stephen E. Flynn, *America Unprepared— America Still in Danger,* Council on Foreign Relations (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2002) for a view of some of the policy implications the attacks have had on the US.

[62] This derogatory term is common among academics talking between themselves. For instance conferences such as, *Terrorism and Beyond: The 21st Century*, April 17-19, 2000, Oklahoma City.

experience of the present writer that most individuals, who are involved in these movements—be they Islamic, Jewish or Christian based—think and behave very much like the rational, intellectually coherent individuals with whom one comes in contact each day.[63] Applying the terms "crazy" or "wacko" appears to be an attempt by those so doing to insulate themselves, in their own minds at least, from the possibility that rational thinking people could carry out acts of violence in the name of God. The epithet becomes more a disclosure of the person's fear of "the other" than a description of those who carry out or support these types of acts.

This presentation of individuals involved in the *Identity* movement as intellectually coherent may also apply to those that take the rhetoric to its ultimate conclusion and actually carry out acts of violence. Far from being a "wacko," Timothy McVeigh was described by one military intelligence officer familiar with McVeigh's records in this way, "He was anything but crazy, his records show he was an outstanding soldier."[64] Clearly, *Identity* theology has developed into much more than the "wacko" ranting of madmen. Some areas of *Identity* theology can be virulent and provide a variety of dangerous belief systems—some of which may be similar to the many beliefs that motivated Timothy McVeigh—but the distinctions among them are real and important.[65] As will be seen as this work outlines *Identity* theology and the social manifestations of that theology, there is little correspondence

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[63] This assertion is based on the author's many contacts with religious activists from the Christian faith, and interviews with researchers looking at Islamic and Jewish groups. While the case of McVeigh and others have shown many activists not to be insane, some work has been devoted to the attempt to identifying a 'terrorist type' of personality. In particular see, Walter Reich (Ed) *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) p.25 See also Jerold Post, "Notes on a Psychodynamic of Terrorist Behavior," *Terrorism*, vol. 7, no.3 (1984), pp. 241-256.

[64] Personal interview by author with US Navy CMDR. J. K. Campbell, April 11, 1997, St. Andrews Scotland.

[65] While the example of McVeigh is the most popular villain in the literature to associate with *Identity* theology, there is scant evidence of McVeigh's own theological beliefs. Indeed, his only attachment to *Identity* theology seems to be attributed to the contact by phone he had with someone in Elohiem City, Oklahoma, a known *Identity* congregation, prior to the bombing. For a first source presentation that asserts McVeigh was *not* an *Identity* adherent, see, Michael and Herbeck, *American Terrorist.*

between the "Turner Diaries"[66] (a racist novel written by National Alliance leader, William Pierce) which influenced the actions of Timothy McVeigh and actual *Identity* groups.

Another common misconception evidenced in both the popular and academic literature, that the extreme fringe of the radical Right presents a theologically monolithic threat,[67] will also be dispelled in this work. These misconceptions will be replaced with both theological and social distinctions, which are substantiated clearly, distinguishing between the various milieus represented by these groups. These distinctions are clearly evidenced by the literature, social actions and through conversations with *Identity* leaders, theologians and lay believers.

The importance of personal contact with the laity as opposed to speaking only with the various groups' leaders' cannot be over emphasized. While the people who gather under the teaching of the better-known leaders are the actual *Identity* movement, their views and everyday actions are rarely considered. Former CSA leader, Kerry Nobel, suggested that the focus on the leadership by writers on the subject, rather than on actually talking with common *Identity* followers was in part a function of the intricate system of the theology involved.[68] In short, much of the laity—and he suggested a lot of the leadership—are confused by some of the essential doctrines of the theological system of Christian *Identity*. Nobel suggested that the constantly evolving and fundamentally difficult theological doctrines at issue were beyond the ability of untrained individuals to articulate effectively.[69] While Nobel may be accurate in his assessment of the convoluted nature of the theology, without observing,

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[66] Andrew MacDonald, *The Turner Diaries* (Hillsborough: National Vanguard Press, 1978) Andrew MacDonald was actually a pseudonym for National Alliance leader, William Pierce.

[67] "Watchdog" type groups seeking to emphasize the danger and threat upon which they specifically focus often perceive and/or portray the extreme-right as a monolithic movement. Overstatement and generalization become the methods by which a very real yet extremely diverse threat can be developed into a comfortable and easy way to explain what may be in some cases merely the bias of the watchdog group.

[68] Author's interview with Kerry Nobel, February 14, 2001, Burleson, Texas.

[69] *Ibid.*

speaking and interacting with the followers of *Identity* we are destined to make poorly

informed analysis of its social outcomes, and how these outcomes feedback on the

development of *Identity* doctrine.

Each of these separate groups, formed under the umbrella of various leaders'

teaching, feeds back into that teaching. Thus, each group is influenced by its leader and his

teaching, but is also affected by the way that their understanding of that teaching impacts

their actions. First hand observation of these groups often reveals rather quickly how,

although they may be based on some common basic tenets, they nevertheless generate very

different social methods and theological beliefs.

The white hoods of the Klan, Aryan Nation's Nazi symbols of hate, the militia

movement rhetoric and the groups within the radical Right influenced by *Identity* theology

should not be seen as a single ideological or theological phenomenon. Like the erroneous

Western perception of Islam as a monolith,[70] the actual forces at work within *Identity*

theology are far more divided, and contain more theological and sociological nuance, than a

simplistic and blanket categorization will allow.

Clearly similarities between the various ideologies do exist. This is seen both in the

rhetoric presented by the movement's leaders and, more commonly, in the blending of

ideologies by individuals along the movement's periphery. That is to say, an adherent of

certain strains of *Identity* theology may also support the Nazi beliefs of William Pierce and

the National Alliance. While the theology and belief system standing behind these two

movements are incompatible theologically, ideologically and at almost every other

conceivable point, individuals transcend the divisions based on hate, misinformation, or

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[70] For an excellent discussion on the difference between types of Islam, see John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat Myth or Reality?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). p.188-253, and see, Amir Taheri, *Holy Terror*. (Bethesda MD: Adler & Adler Publishers, 1987) p. 4, Here Taheri says, "What is at issue is not a duel between Islam and the West, but a war waged by a party of dedicated and ruthless fanatics against the rest of humanity, including the majority of Muslims."

ignorance of the differences. The National Alliance based theology of 'Cosmotheism' and

their national socialist beliefs are based on foundations of modern science and the theory of

the evolution of man in particular. All *Identity* theology types—without fail—are unified

behind the belief that the theory of evolution is, at the very least, incorrect; some *Identity*

groups believe it is part of a broader conspiracy designed by satanic forces, intended to

undermine American Christian values.[71]


**The thesis of this dissertation and the questions it seeks to answer**
    This dissertation seeks to understand, delineate and explain far more than the two

broad misconceptions outlined above; namely the ideas that theology is unimportant in

political activism, and that all US theologically motivated terrorism is unified behind *Identity*

theology. These inaccuracies, however, do serve as a starting point for exploration. For

instance, in 1995, Bruce Hoffman suggested that *Identity* theology served as, " . . . a

theological veneer that condones and justifies violence."[72] This statement is true only of

specific strains of Christian *Identity* theology, but not to all groups who fall under that

pejorative label. [73] *Identity* theology has continued to evolve and mutate in new and different

directions creating heretofore-unrecognized theologies.[74]

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[71] Author's interview with Dan Gayman, Schell City, MO. September, 1998. For an excellent review of the pre-suppositional differences between *Identity* theology and 'Cosmothiesm,' see Brad Whitsel, "Aryan Visions for the Future in the West Virginia Mountains," Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 7, No.4, (Winter, 1995), pp. 117-139.

[72] Bruce Hoffman, "American Right-Wing Extremism, The Ideological Thread" *Janes Intelligence Review.* 1995,Vol. 7., No. 7, p.329-330. Also see, Bruce Hoffman*, Holy Terror: The Implications of Terrorism Motivated By A Religious Imperative*. RAND: Santa Monica, 1993). This work was an extremely influential "wake-up call" to academics and various practitioners as to the importance of theological motivations for political activism within the Christian tradition, in addition to the constantly covered aspects of activism within the Islamic tradition.

[73] One principal example used by Hoffman, *Aryan Nations,* remains essentially unchanged ideologically or theologically from the time of Hoffman's evaluation.

[74] For instance, see David W. Brannan, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations*," Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol.11, Autumn 1999, 3, pp-106-118.

However, Hoffman has accurately noted that terrorism is an amorphous, constantly changing and adapting form of political violence.[75] Similarly, *Identity* theology and its many group manifestations, evolve, mutate and change. What may have appeared as a unified "theological veneer" at the time of Hoffman's article deserves more attention to discern the very real distinctions that exist between *Identity* types. This thesis carefully delineates between four variant theological types which have emerged during this theological and social transformation; Rebellious, Repentant, Seed-line and Non-seed *Identity* theologies.

Repentant, Rebellious, Seed-line and Non-seed *Identity* theologies each represent a unique and specific worldview. The various groups espousing the particular beliefs, derive their positions from both textual exegesis coupled with an internally developed socially constructed views of reality and truth. Specifically, the thesis postulates a multi-phased hypothesis that *Identity* theology has evolved into several major 'types' or denominations, which are distinct and counter to each other at several important social, rhetorical and theological junctures. Furthermore, it argues that these four theological types are real examples of what Christian theology has classified as 'heresies,' defined as a doctrine at variance with established religious beliefs.[76] These broad types are then constantly evolving and changing at both the micro (specific group) level as well as macro (broader alignment) level, making it difficult for researchers to generalize as to the nature of "*Identity*" theology.

Furthermore this thesis seeks to develop a typology of *Identity* theology, based on the various group's internal social development in conjunction with their particular scriptural hermeneutic and corresponding exegesis of key scriptures.[77] These important developmental

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[75] Taken from numerous discussions with Dr. Hoffman between 1996 and 2001. This theme has been an important and constant aspect of his teaching on terrorism throughout his prolific contributions to the field of sub-national political violence. For a fairly comprehensive presentation of this view see, Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism.*

[76] William Morris (Ed), *New College Edition, The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (New York, NY: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc., 1975) p. 617.

[77] Such as Romans 13:1-7, Genesis 3: 15, 4:1&2, Isaiah 56, Matthew 13: 24-43 and John 3:8-15.

particulars are impossible to separate from each other in looking at the theological,
anthropological or sociological developments of the individual groups. The thesis argued
here, that there is actually more than one type of *Identity* theology and that the differences
lead the people who participate within the separate groups to uniquely different theological
and social positions, is potentially a very unpopular argument among academics and
government agencies alike. It is unpopular among academics because it challenges the
received view of *Identity*,[78] which is effectively championed by the various watchdog groups.
To challenge this view entails the risk of being identified as a sympathizer with theologically
based racial separation, a label few academics can long sustain professionally. The
hypotheses advanced in this dissertation are equally unpopular among government agencies
and for similar reasons. Government agencies are not given to delicate theological
discernment, using instead the various watchdog groups as "experts" in government reports
and studies on the subject. This leaves little room for dissension.[79]

In addition to undertaking a proper categorization of the *Identity* theology types—and
based on the realization that these categories exist within the presumed monolith of *Identity*
theology—this thesis addresses four specific questions that have not been previously
considered in the relevant literature. They are:

- How do dissimilarities in scriptural interpretation affect the political behavior of
  groups adhering to *Identity* theology?

- What accounts for the existence of violent and non-violent strands within *Identity*
  theology?

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[78] An issue returned to in depth in chapter three.

[79] For example, the FBI project *Megiddo* repeatedly cites the Anti-defamation League (ADL) and
Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) as authorities on the subject while not taking into account the watchdog
group's bias in their reporting. This aspect is analyzed in more depth in chapter three—Analytical Framework
and Methodological Considerations. For example, the ADL has railed against Norman G. Finkelstein, a Jewish
intellectual, for believing that the ADL has used the Holocaust to inappropriately create an industry of perpetual
Jewish victimology. See, Norman G. Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry* (London: Verso, 2000).

- How have the *Identity* theology case study groups used violence, and what accounts for the differences?

- Is the use of violence or the use of the rhetoric of violence more useful in rallying support within the broader *Identity* movement?

Through an exploration of these four questions this dissertation seeks to contribute the following insights to the body of scholarly literature:

They include:

1.  Academic and popular commentators have inaccurately identified *Identity* theology as a monolith; hate based, pseudo-Christian, terrorism-supporting theology.

2.  Terrorism Studies, the academic discipline most often concerned with *Identity* theology has inappropriately relegated groups and individuals to the pejorative anti-social group known as "*Identity* theology adherents" on the basis of agenda driven discourse posing as academic scholarship.

3.  Academic inquiry into the theological and social issues commonly associated with what is called *Identity* theology, has not generally considered primary source interaction beyond the use of limited printed materials or input from various *Identity* theology leaders.

4.  While British-Israelism was the base from which the current broad and nuanced *Identity* theology types have come, a concurrent pseudo-scientific theory of racial biology influenced its development.

5.  British-Israelism mutated into *Identity* in the United States but both remain Christian theologies.

6.     Seed and non-seed *Identity* theology is based on exegesis and leads to

significantly different theological doctrine, social actions and political

manifestations between *Identity* theology groups.

7.     Repentant and Rebellious *Identity* doctrines are exegetically derived and have

significant social impact.

8.     The relationship between social factors, theology and political activism in the

behavior of Christian *Identity* groups and individuals is a function of the groups

internally constructed worldview and is not generalizable to describe an *Identity*

theology monolith.

## Understanding theologically motivated political activism

RAND, a California based "think tank" which has been researching political violence

since the early 1970s has developed a database known as the RAND chronology.[80] This

chronology noted no religious groups in 1968 when it began recording terrorist incidents, and

only two of the sixty-four groups that it tracked in 1980, were religiously motivated. By

1995, this had changed radically with twenty-six of the fifty-six groups tracked being linked

in some significant manner to religious thought or theology.[81] Surprisingly, this trend of

increasing religious motivations for terrorist actions corresponds with a decreasing overall

number of terror events being carried out worldwide offset by an increasing lethality. In

short, though the number of terror attacks has decreased, the number killed per incident has

soared.[82]

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[80] For a short time during the 1990's this chronology was maintained at the University of St, Andrews but remained under the close supervision of Dr. Bruce Hoffman. The data presented here was taken while the chronology was housed in St. Andrews. Today, the RAND Chronology is co-maintained by RAND and the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) and can be accessed at www.MIPT.com.

[81] For an excellent analysis of the change in trends in political violence; see, Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, pp. 87-129.

[82] Information taken from the RAND terrorism chronology in Washington, DC, June, 2002.

This trend in violent activism should be disturbing to all those who hold an important

place for theological issues, be they within the Christian Church, the theological centers of

the worlds other religions or the representatives of the Academy who are concerned with

theology. The events of 9/11 in New York and Washington DC, which killed thousands of

innocent civilians in the name of "God," remind us of the danger observed in the trend of

greater religious motivations for terror attacks. And while the 9/11 attacks were clearly

motivated by a particular Islamic theology, *Identity* adherents see themselves as holding keys

to understanding the attacks of 9/11.  Influential *Identity* theologian, Ted Weiland wrote the

following and posted it on his website shortly after the attacks:

> The United States supports the spurious State of Israel in Palestine to the tune of
> about $4 billion dollars per year. It has not been lost on the Arab nations that the State
> of Israel could not exist and could not be stealing their land if it were not for the
> United States' assistance. Therefore, the September 11 attack upon America is
> connected to the Zionist conquest of Arab lands and the murder of Arab lives, which
> are unfortunately financed by American tax dollars under the guise that today's Jews
> are Israelites. In other words, this terrorist incident is, at its core, unequivocally linked
> with the question: "Who are today's true Israelites?" It also reveals just how
> important the answer to this question should be to our families, our friends and to
> each of us individually. I forewarned of the potential possibility of such a conflict or
> war with Arab nations in the booklet Israel's Identity: It Matters! Published in
> December 2000.[83]

Clearly, there is good reason for the Church, society at large and the Academy in

particular to discern between theological types that may or may not lead to violent social

actions on the part of its believers.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's refusal to accept the Nazi transformation of the Church within

his own contemporary setting was as much a protest against heresy in general as it was the

protection of the contemporary church of the times.[84]  Likewise, an understanding of the

relationship between the theology and socially constructed worldviews of the groups

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[83] Mission to Israel, www.missiontoisrael.com, (cited December 29, 2001).

[84]  Alister McGrath, *A Passion for Truth*. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996) pp. 60-61.

discussed here distinguishes between potentially dangerous *Identity* belief systems, *Identity*

beliefs which are not violent and historic Reformed Christian theology at large. Without this

discernment—together with a resolute stand and a willingness to know what the difference

between these belief systems are—the Christian Church today is in danger of allowing the

gradual authentication of a heresy much like that which the Barmen[85] signatories sought to

resist to be recognized as 'authentic' rather than identifying it as the variant it is. The tragic

pain, injury and loss of life caused by some specific organizations in question are due in no

small part to the willingness of Christian people to abdicate historical Christian orthodoxy for

the variant strains espoused by what has come to be called *Identity* theology. Greater

understanding of the theology and social manifestations stand as a marker similar to the

Barmen Declaration in that is will distinguish between dangerous variations and orthodoxy.

As Alister McGrath has suggested,

Nazi Germany and Stalinist Soviet Union are clear instances of an academy which lent support, both passive and active, to oppression.[86]

By removing the myth of a monolithic *Identity* movement, the academy serves to lead

the broader population to greater understanding through clear distinction. Legitimate belief

systems, which may currently be under the de-legitimizing veil of a terrorist ideology, can be

allowed to grow, flourish and continue mutating and evolving, (hopefully toward a more

orthodox position). Other positions, illegitimate due to their illegal targeting of certain people

for violent attack, can be identified and more accurately understood by the law enforcement

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[85] The Barman Declaration was signed in May of 1934, by several German leaders of the Church and those concerned with theology within the Academy. Specifically it denied that God was speaking to humanity through German history or Hitler. The declaration was rebuffed in writing by the "German Christians," a mainline Protestant group representing those from within the Church who supported Germanys direction in the mid-1930s. The opposite view was declared in the June 1934, Ansbacher Consultation. See, McGrath, *A Passion for Truth* pp. 59-63.

[86] McGrath, *A Passion for Truth,* p. 63.

community, thus making enforcement more successful and specific in its targeting while

allowing legitimate non-violent religious expression to flourish.

Some of the *Identity* types researched within this dissertation appear to have either

arrived at or are moving toward a historically orthodox Protestant position in relation the

essential doctrines of Christianity.[87] To continue to align these evolving *Identity* theologies

and their representative movements with the current literature's imprecise stereotyping is

convenient, but inaccurate. In addition, to hold views, which are unpopular or just plain

difficult to sustain intellectually is not illegal and should not therefore be subject to general

prosecution. Substantive engagement with those currently viewed as the enemy has the

potential for re-categorizing, de-categorizing or cross categorizing the suspect groups with

those they oppose and can lead to a position of less rather than more hatred.[88] For instance,

through conversations with the leadership and members of the Mission to Israel, have stated

they would be comfortable meeting to discuss similarities and differences between their own

beliefs and the beliefs of a mainline Presbyterian church in Moscow, Idaho.[89] These types of

meetings would allow members of the various *Identity* churches to come into intimate contact

with other people of faith who represent a different viewpoint, and are not viewed by the

public as potential terrorists.

The proposed allowance for growth within *Identity* theology is not a popular position

to hold. The received view within the 'terrorism studies' discipline dictates that *Identity* and

any body of believers externally labeled as *Identity* should in its entirety be labeled a

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[87] These essentials are taken in combination for use within this thesis, from a review of the historic ecumenical creeds, the *Solas* of the Reformation and the fundamentals outlined in Torrey's fundamentals of the Christian faith. See, R. A. Torrey and Alan Dixon (ed's) *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*. (Los Angeles: The Bible Institute of Los Angeles, 1917).

[88] De, re and cross-categorization are terms, which describe how various groups might change the way they perceive other groups they currently see as the enemy. This conflict resolution technique is discussed in more detail in Chapter three of this thesis. Also see, Brannan, et al., "Talking to Terrorists," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 24:3-24, 2001, for an earlier discussion.

[89] Interview with Ted Weiland and other members of the church based in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, February 2001.

dangerous ideology of hate with no regard for the nuances in theology or social processes

which this broad category encompasses. This is a failure not only within the study of *Identity*

theology, but a wider failure within the 'terrorism studies' discipline at large.[90] This

convenient position does not, nor is it apparently intended to, move groups categorized by

particular beliefs toward a peaceful understanding of each position. This is a shortfall, which

is unfortunate and unnecessary in many cases. This dissertation is in part an attempt to

provide those who would move beyond demonization and out-group villainization—a trait

found among both *Identity* and non-*Identity* believers—to a foundation upon which to build

for future peaceful relations. Furthermore, the dissertation seeks to make accurate first

source information available to those charged with the difficult task of law enforcement and

protection of innocent civilians from groups involved in illegal violence. Currently this type

of information is not available. This does not mean that the research presented has been

approached from a crisis management perspective. Rather, that where legitimate enforcement

issues are at stake, legitimate scholarly information should be made available, rather than the

widespread agenda driven or severely biased presentations.[91]

**Outline**

Following this introduction and outline, the work turns to a critical analysis of the

relevant literature. This analysis questions the lack of depth in the extant research related to

this topic. Several academic works which have either served the discipline as foundational to

its understanding of *Identity* theology, or have made or attempted to make a significant

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[90] For an in depth analysis of this failure see, Brannan et. al., *Studies in Conflict and Terrorisms*, pp. 10-14.

[91] The danger of approaching research from a "crisis management" position is discussed in detail in chapter three, which explains the analytical framework.

contribution to understanding the diversity within *Identity* theology are critically reviewed in detail and highlighting where additional research is needed.

The analysis of the literature is followed by an explanation of the analytical framework used in addressing the issues raised in the review of the literature, to incorporate information and perspectives gained from the conversations with those involved in the *Identity* groups contacted, as well as situating the personal observations of the various groups. The framework highlights several deficiencies in the existing research and then makes suggestions—embedded in Social Identity Theory—on how to overcome these challenges. The theory is used to access, analyze and set the relevant information within a legitimate context. The theory, framework and methodology presented are in and of themselves a unique contribution to the study of *Identity* theology and the attendant social groups involved because no adequate framework has been used in the past. Each of the four primary questions that this thesis seeks to answer can be initially elucidated by the structure of the analytical framework itself, particularly in its use of primary and secondary material. A substantial portion of the case study information has been gathered from first hand interviews, discussions with those involved in "the *Identity* movement," both leaders and followers, as well as from time spent immersed in the social sphere of the groups discussed. A lack of primary source interaction is a major deficiency of the other analytical frameworks, which has been employed.

In chapter four, the dissertation outlines a historic baseline for the reader as it sets the context in which *Identity* theology emerged. Recognizing the era, theological background and developmental order from which *Identity* theology emerged is helpful for understanding how various segments of the system subsequently divided. Importantly, it shows that each of the sub-categories of *Identity* theology derive from a central belief known as British-Israelism in conjunction with a secular scientific racial theory which was being asserted simultaneously.

The various groups, all identified as simply *Identity* groups in the popular and academic literature are unique and different from each other both as they exegete the text and develop different socially constructed perceptions of reality based in part on that exegesis. While the individual groups develop differently along social lines, they also develop differently along exegetical lines. The views uncovered are helpful in aligning a given group with regard to the type of social action they are likely to take based on their particular exegesis coupled with the group's social development.[92]

Chapter five makes a major distinction between the very different theological types of *Identity* doctrine, based on the various groups' exegesis of the relevant Genesis passages as they relate to the different 'seed' and 'non-seed-line' theories which have developed. The general perception in the literature of *Identity* theology is that all groups accept as dogma that Jewish people are the offspring of Eve and Satan and that non-white people were created before Adam and are spiritually the same as "the beasts of the field," which is a result of inappropriate exegesis of Genesis 3:15. This view is called seed-line *Identity*.

An opposing *Identity* view holds that while true Israel is to found in the white races, Jews are simply deniers of Christ's Messiah-ship and that non-white people, while not Israel, are fully capable of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. The work of the two principal theological writers within the broad *Identity* movement, Pastor Dan Gayman from Missouri's Church of Israel and Pastor Ted Weiland of Nebraska's Mission to Israel, is reviewed in detail, demonstrating these two unique theological lines within *Identity* theology.

Chapter six articulates further distinctions arising from the groups particular socially and theologically derived views on specific texts, such as Romans 13:1-7. These categories are known among *Identity* adherents at large as Repentant—those who believe Christians must endure perceived injustice in the name of their religious beliefs—and, Rebellious—

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[92] For instance, whether or not a given group type is more likely to use violence or rhetoric in their social actions.

those who believe that when the government acts outside of God's law, they have an

obligation to make governmental changes, by force if necessary.[93] The product of this

exercise is the elucidation of existing divisions between the groups themselves, broadly

Repentant and Rebellious, with subcategories related to rhetoric and physical action.

Chapter seven asks the question, "Is *Identity* theology Christian or not?" Using the

classic Christian creeds, statements of faith and fundamental doctrines of Protestant

Christianity, an exploration of the debate over whether or not *Identity* theology, which is

typically portrayed as abhorrent to the modern churchman, is in fact Christian. One

potentially difficult conclusion of the chapter is that while some do not, there are indeed

social groups, commonly identified as *Identity* adherents, who are in fact operating within

Christian theological structures.

The final chapter draws together the major findings of the thesis, discussing the

seed/non-seed relationships with Repentant/Rebellious and rhetorically Rebellious *Identity*

theology. In addition, it suggests a method for re-categorizing some of the *Identity* groups

discussed. Far from an historical review of the various groups' actions—a task that has been

repeatedly undertaken in the extant literature—each theological and social division is treated

independently, as a chapter, to answer the four primary conceptual questions as discussed

above. Finally, the findings, as related to the five groups primarily discussed,[94] are brought

together systematically through the lens of the analytical framework of social identity theory

and conclusions are presented.

The thesis argued in this dissertation is the result of analysis based on a detailed

review of the relevant academic and popular literature, the written work of *Identity* writers,

interviews with the leaders and common individuals claiming the authority of *Identity*

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[93] See, Brannan, *Terrorism and Political Violence,* pp. 106-118, for my introductory explanation of this theological distinctive.

[94] A description of the five *Identity* group case studies is found in chapter three.

theology, all considered within the context of the analytical framework outlined above. The method of abduction, moving between the data and specific categories for analysis, is designed specifically to answer the four thesis questions. Additional information, though peripherally related to the subject's thesis is considered-much of it for the first time in academia-yet without becoming the focus of the thesis. This fact is directly related to the methodological strategy employed. To consider each new area of insight related to the primary issues is well beyond the scope of the work now at hand, which is necessarily and administratively limited.

# CHAPTER 2

## CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SECONDAY LITERAURE

**Introduction**

  While a significant body of literature has developed which alludes and reviles *Identity*

theology, very few of these works attempt to deal with the sociological questions involved.[95]

Additionally and perhaps even more disturbing is the fact that no work to date has attempted to

deal with the several developing systematic theologies within the *Identity* milieu. In fact, beyond

a brief caricature of the theological position most commonly asserted to be *Identity*,[96] the

theology of the groups covered by this now perceived derogatory term, is *a priori* considered

illegitimate. This absence of in-depth theological research is particularly puzzling given the

realization of the 'terrorism studies' community of the importance of theology to many groups

carrying out terrorist attacks today.[97]

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[95] In fact two of the books discussed in this chapter are the only significant works looking at *Identity* theology from any type of sociological perspective and these books are not exclusively about *Identity* theology. Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), and James A. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism* (Seattle WA: University of Washington Press, 1990).

[96] See for instance, Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God,* pp. 33-34; Walter Laqueur, *The New Terrorism,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,1999) p.107-108; Jerome Walters, *One Aryan Nation Under God: How Religious Extremists Use the Bible to Justify Their Actions* (Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, INC, 2001); Kenneth S. Stern, *A Force Upon the Plain* (New York, NY: Simon &Schuster, 1996) pp.46-47 or Richard Abanes, *American Militias* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1996) p.154.

[97] One need only look to the sudden rush by academics following the 9/11 attacks against the US to see how theology is believed to motivate "terrorism."

In the 1997 book, *Being There: Culture and Formation in Two Theological Schools*,[98] a work whose subject is the relationship between theology and culture within theological institutions, the authors make several observations, which are directly applicable to the work at hand. First, the authors observe that there is more to the culture of each of the case study institutions than the theology itself. They recognize that the theology does play an important role in forming the internal social group at each school, but that the theology alone is not the determining factor. Rather, that the theology acts in concert with the individuals who make up the student bodies being taught the theology and each builds on the other. At one point the theology affecting the social groups' structure and outcomes while in the next instance the social manifestations are impacting the theology.[99] A second point is that "being there" is the key to understanding any of these relationships, which develop between theology and social group.[100] Observation from a distance makes these connections impossible to observe or understand; two points which are directly applicable to the study at hand and will be returned to in some depth in Chapter Three, *Analytical Frameworks*.

This observation of an obvious deficiency in the literature is not to suggest that there has been no significant work upon which this thesis builds, since clearly it has benefited from the plethora of writings on rightwing 'terrorism' in general and the broad religious movement, which is identified in general as "the *Identity* movement." Yet the current literature has largely failed to approach the various *Identity* groups from a theological or social perspective in part because of

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[98] Jackson W. Carroll, Barbara G. Wheeler, Daniel O. Aleshire and Penny Long Marler, *Being There: Culture and Formation in Two Theological Schools* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[99] *Ibid*, pp. 31-60.

[100] *Ibid*, pp. 203-221.

the Academy's predisposition toward crisis management[101] research as explained in chapter three, *Analytical Frameworks*, as well as the failure to understand that the broad movement is actually quite divided along both theological and social lines.

While this thesis is cognizant of the obvious deficiency in the literature as it relates to the understanding of the theological and social aspects of *Identity* theology, there are several works—primarily along the periphery of the present study—which are relevant and analyzed below.

**An historical review of British-Israelism**

It is commonly accepted that British-Israelism is the foundation upon which the different modern *Identity* theologies and groups have built. The proponents of British-Israelism assert that the British monarchy is in direct lineage from the Davidic line found in the Old Testament of the Christian Bible, and that, the British people are the true "children of Israel" made up of the "lost tribes of Israel."[102] Through questionable theological, historic and linguistic scholarship, early British-Israelites attempted to present themselves as the direct offspring of Abraham and the rightful heirs to Israel's prophetic destiny.[103] This theme continues to run—with some alterations—through every type and distinction of *Identity* theology today.

Addressing this important aspect of the early foundations of *Identity* theology is the work of Michael Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity*

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[101] As used within this context, a 'crisis management' posture toward researching political activists implies that researchers see the activists negatively and something or someone who must be stopped or eradicated. This crisis management posture is opposition to the argued for research position in this dissertation which is one of conversation and communication between the researcher and the research subjects.

[102] These issues are dealt with in much more detail in the chapters following.

[103] For an overview of this development and how it has helped to form a modern *Identity* church, see, David W. Brannan, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations," *Terrorism and Political Violence,* Vol.11, #3, Autumn 1999, pp. 106-118.

*Movement.*[104] As the subtitle indicates, Barkun's work on *Identity* theology sets out to deal

primarily with the origins of Christian *Identity* rather than either of the two primary topics of

discussion in the work at hand, the distinctive features of *Identity* theology and its developing

social embodiments.

*Religion and the Racist Right,* has become *a*, if not *the*, standard reference for those

involved in research related to the radical fringe of the American right utilizing a religious

motivation.[105] As such, it has been widely influential. The work itself outlines the "origins" of

the *Identity* movement within British-Israelism. Particularly helpful is the way in which Barkun

demonstrates the historical heritage of specific modern *Identity* adherents as coming from a

particular belief system.

For instance, Barkun shows that *Aryan Nations* leader, Richard Butler, is indebted to and

claims linage from Wesley Swift[106] (1913-1970) for his understanding of *Identity* theology.[107]

Swift and his later-day followers espouse a unique presentation of the "Seed-line" hypothesis—

the idea that true Israel can be biologically traced from the sexual union between Adam and Eve

while modern day Jewish people can be traced from a sexual union between Eve and the Devil—

while earlier proponents of the British-Israel message were not tied to this doctrinal position.[108]

Swift's Seed-line hypothesis asserted that there is a direct line from Adam to the modern British,

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[104] Michael Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

[105] For instance it is cited in works as broad as, Jonathan B. Tucker (ed) *Toxic Terror: Assessing Terrorist Use of Chemical and Biological Weapon* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2000); Richard Abanes *American Militias: Rebellion, Racism & Religion* (Downers Grove IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1996); or, Jerome Walters, *One Aryan Nation Under God* (Naperville IL: 2001). In each of these very different works Barkun's book is cited with *the* authority of first source information, the last word on the subject for many academics.

[106] , "Dr. Wesley Swift Passes*," The Cross and the Flag*, 29 (March 1971), pp. 14-26.

[107] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement,* pp. 60-61.

[108] *Ibid*, pp. 47-64. Also see, pp.122-123 for the way in which Edward Hine (1825-1891) proposed that Jews were a part of, and necessary to, the greater Israel *Identity* message.

white people. Similar polygenetic[109] theories had been asserted by both Isaac de LaPeyrere (1596-1676), from a religious perspective and by Scottish Enlightenment philosopher, Henry Homes, Lord Kames (1696-1782) from a secular scientific position.[110] LaPeyrere argued that there had been humans created before Adam and that Cain took his wife from these pre-Adamic humans, while Kames believed that the human race was the product of multiple creation efforts but did not find the biblical story convincing and made that point known in his work to the irritation of many in his day.[111]

Swift proposed that just as he could identify the British and their Seed-line, he could also identify non-whites, and particularly Jews, through their different Seed-line. Swift and his followers said that just as they could follow the white ancestry back to Adam, so they could follow the Jewish lineage back to the Devil. This task of identifying the various Seed-lines is completed differently—in some cases very differently—by the various theologies and groups, which have developed from the foundation of British-Israelism.

Swift's followers asserted that they were the literal Israel of God who had found their "lost" identity. Those who believed Swift's assertions were able to claim his or her "true" identity as a member of one of the lost tribes of Israel. This claim to the tribal "identity" of Israel is the source of the name, *Christian Identity* theology in those modern churches that hold similar beliefs. The importance of finding one's true "identity" is important throughout the various groups and movement at large.

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[109] Polygenitic—is the idea that the human races were created in separate actions by God. Each creation effort forming a different race of people, with the race of Adam being created last and chronicled in the Bible.

[110] See, Henry Homes, Lord Kames, "Preliminary Discourse, Concerning the Origin of Men and of Languages, in Sketches of the History of Man," 2nd ed. (1778) pp.3-26 and 72-79, reprinted in H. F. Augstein (ed.) *Race: The Origins of an Idea,* 1760-1850 (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1996) pp. 10-23.

[111] *Ibid*, p. xiv.

Barkun, and consequently many other researchers, make only marginal acknowledgement of difference between several *theological* positions.[112] Rather, distinctions are attributed more too political views of the various emerging groups. Although one can observe in Barkun's book, the importance of a particular group identification with being uniquely Israel this factor is never explored, a task the work at hand seeks to further illuminate.

While Barkun's book is useful in demonstrating the theological and historical heritage of some *Identity* leaders, problems begin when he makes generalizations about *Identity* theology and its specific social manifestations. His view of the doctrines of *Identity* theology as a unified monolith constitutes a shaky foundation for his subsequent assumptions about *Identity* doctrine and politics. Furthermore, the view of *Identity* he puts forward has become dated even in the short time since it was published. *Identity* theology is a doctrinal formulation in constant flux and development precisely because it consists of several interacting groups of doctrines that Barkun fails to see. What may have been dogma within the broader movement yesterday may be deemed unnecessary or incorrect today, socially, politically or theologically, depending upon the way the various groups perceive their situation.

Barkun outlines and reduces *Identity* doctrine to three key beliefs:[113]

1. That white "Aryans" are descendants of the biblical tribes of Israel and thus are on earth to do God's work.

2. That Jews are not Israelites but rather the literal offspring of a sexual union between Satan and Eve.

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[112] Augstein, *Race: The Origins of an Idea,* p. 47.

[113] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement*, pp. 75-196.

3. That the world is on the verge of a final apocalyptic struggle between good and evil in which Aryans will fight on the side of good against the evil Jews.

The monolithic manner in which *Identity* is portrayed in *Religion and the Racist Right* is extended throughout the literature as others use Barkun's research as authoritative in all things related to *Identity* in general rather than its British-Israel roots alone.[114] These generalizations are made without adequate consideration of the scriptural exegesis and theological ideas or social development of the various groups involved. What develops from this incomplete handling of the constantly evolving theology is a caricature of *Identity* groups. This caricature is then repeated by others who are dependent on Barkun's work to provide their foundational or pre-suppositional understanding of *Identity* theology as some type of unified movement.  For instance, Richard Abane's book, *American Militias*[115] addresses the role of *Identity* theology within the militia movement. Abanes predicates his views of all of *Identity* theology on the Swift Seed-line theory as it is detailed in Barkun's book.[116] And yet, as I will argue in this study, there is certainly more than one theological and social *Identity* theology construction. Thus, one might ask if arguments based solely on this monolithic perception of *Identity* are helpful or valid?

Barkun's first key distinctive—that Aryans are the true Israel of God—is a claim made by many disparate groups outside of *Identity* theology. For instance, the Boers in South Africa have seen themselves as the true Israel of God, standing firm against all odds in a new promised

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[114] As in Tucker, *Toxic Terror: Assessing Terrorist Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons* (2000); Abanes, *American Militias: Rebellion, Racism & Religion* (1996); or, Walters, *One Aryan Nation Under God* (2001) among others.

[115] Abanes, *American Militias: Rebellion, Racism & Religion* (1996).

[116] For instance see the detailed citation of *Religion and the Racist Right* in, Abanes, *American Militias: Rebellion, Racism & Religion* pp. 154-168, 259-262.

land.[117] The Lembas of East and South Africa, a black African people, also claim to be the true

Israel of God.[118] Half a world away, Orthodox Jews of the Naturi Karta sect headquartered in

New York, assert that they are the true chosen of God while claiming at the same time that

Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza should give up their claim to be God's people because

of their secular Zionist focus.[119] Similarly, the Black Israelites of New York City, a group of US

born black citizens who claim they are the true Israel of God, make the same claims and

assertions.[120] Clearly the claim to 'being Israel' is central to many more groups than the *Identity*

adherents Barkun discusses in his book and cannot be considered unique to them.

    The second contention—that Jews are not the true people of God—is generally seen by

Barkun and those relying on his work as a particular turning point of British-Israel thought

toward the more virulent American manifestation *Identity* theology. This presumption can

likewise be seen in other belief systems. For instance, the Apostle Paul suggests frequently in his

letter to the Galatians that God's followers will not be found among those who keep specific

religious laws, but rather, the justification of God's people is through faith in Jesus Christ.[121] By

this token, all of mainstream Christianity might be painted with the stroke of the brush used by

Barkun to paint *Identity* theology.

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[117] W.A. De Klerk, *The Puritans in Africa: A Story of Afrikanerdo* (London: Penguin Books, 1975) pp. 117-119.

[118] Tudor Parfitt, *Journey to the Vanished City* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1999).

[119] Author's interview with Naturi Karta representatives, July 2001, Monsey New York.

[120] From conversations with members of the Black Israelites of New York City, July 2000.

[121] See in particular the entire book of Galatians. However, he pulls back from this extreme in Romans, as seen unequivocally in Romans 11:26.

Barkun's third key *Identity* belief also applies to much of the mainstream Christian faith as apocalyptic scenarios serve as the starting point for much of the Dispensational theology.[122] It is particularly evident in the theologically influential, but fictional, *Left Behind* series.[123] This series, which has enjoyed exceptional popularity from Christian readership in the US, is founded on apocalyptic beliefs in which the righteous face off against the evil. Those 'left behind' are people not carried into heaven at the return of Jesus. While Barkun does not address the point directly, it must be assumed that belief in apocalyptic end-times attended by conflict between good and evil is not a distinctive feature of *Identity* theology, but rather a widespread belief among religious people. In fact, all three of Barkun's key *Identity* beliefs are important to many groups in different ways and at various points in time and thus are not distinctive of *Identity* theology.

This thesis will show—through analysis of the various group's literature as well as personal interviews and contacts with believers from these groups, leadership and adherents—that some of what has come to be identified as pseudo-Christian *Identity* in no way accepts or relies on Barkuns' 'essentials.' A point of retreat when faced with this difference might be to align those groups, which do not assert all of the doctrinal distinctives, as something other than *Identity*, for instance British-Israelism. While this retreat might be convenient for maintaining Barkun's framework, it does not relate in any legitimate sense to the bulk of the literature, which always seeks to include all such groups under the pejorative label of *Identity* theology.

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[122]Dispensational theology is the belief that God acts differently toward His people during different ages. There are seven ages or dispensations within the dispensational framework Pre-millennial dispensational theology is a view initiated by a one-time priest of the Irish church, John Nelson Darby (1800-1882). The dispensational project continued and was influenced by the work of C.I. Schofield (1843-1921), and most recently by Charles C. Ryrie. A very influential pre-millennial dispensational theological work is Hal Lindsey's, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (Grand Rapids MI: Zondervon Publishing House, 1970). This work sold more than 1.2 million copies in 20 printings during 1970-1972 alone.

[123] Published in the US by Tyndale House Publishing.

For instance, academic, journalistic and watch-dog literature, routinely label movements such as *Mission to Israel* or *Scriptures for America* as *Identity* groups. Indeed, Pastor Pete Peters, the leader of the Colorado based *Scriptures for America*, is identified in *Religion and the Racist Right* as an *Identity* leader,[124] yet, a closer look at the genre from which Peters' theology emerges shows that it denies at least one of Barkun's essential *Identity* distinctives, namely, that Jews are the literal physical offspring of Satan.[125] Peters' denial of this "essential tenet" is far from singular. What then is distinctively *Identity* in nature about these groups? Other than them having a racial component to their theology, this thesis argues that there is very little similarity beyond the politically motivated necessity for creating a large and easily identifiable 'enemy' upon which to focus the public's fears.

The *Church of Israel*, which does believe that the Jewish people are the literal offspring of the Devil, does not adhere to Barkun's doctrinal distinctive of impending apocalypse.[126] The common millenarian perception within some *Identity* groups is of impending breakdown in society, destined to result in violent confrontation, but yet within the *Church of Israel* for instance, it is a doctrine in transition.[127] This church has relied ever more on the work of Reconstructionist[128] theologians such as Roosas John Rushdoony (1917-2001) for their view of

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[124] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement,* p. 203.

[125] From an interview with Pastor Ted Weiland, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, February 2001. Weiland is a long time friend and confidant of Peters and their theological views in relation to who the Jews are was formed at the same time and from the same perspective.

[126] From an interview with Pastor Dan Gayman, Schell City, MO, September, 1998. While this group did adhere to the views Barkun suggests at one time, the group and their theology are constantly in flux and they now hold a different view.

[127] From an interview with Pastor Dan Gayman, Schell City, MO, September 1998.

[128] Reconstructionists such as the late Rousas John Rushdoony (1917-2001) are post-millennial in their eschatology. They claim a theological linage from Cornelias Van Til (though Van Til himself denied he was a Reconstructionist), he has been called the father of pre-suppositional apologetics (which is the belief that apologetics begin with the action of the Holy Spirit rather than through the presentation of evidence). Reconstructionists believe that slowly, the world will be transformed to adopt a theocratic status ruled by the bible and Christ. In contrast to the

the Law as well as the Millennium. This shifting focus replaces the thought of impending

confrontation with a more standardized view of Post-Millennialism.

A representative of a splinter-church, formed from the past leadership of the Church of Israel,

has gone so far as to say that the millennial debate is the most over-stated and unimportant of the

doctrines discussed by the church today.[129] Change and doctrinal clarification—sometimes made

to increase support or reduce outside pressures—have been made but pass unmentioned within

the literature. Thus, here again is an example of a group, which Barkun would identify as

specifically *Identity*, which does not exhibit the key beliefs he uses to delineate *Identity* doctrine.

Clearly, the movement is evolving as it develops a theology that is more theologically mature

and intellectually coherent (or in some cases more incoherent), and thus more difficult to force

into existing ill-fitting frameworks.

The criticism above does not reduce the importance of Barkun's work in outlining the

foundations of many *Identity* groups. Where the work remains within its stated area of concern—

looking at where *Identity* theology flows from British-Israelism—the argument is extremely

helpful and seminal to the academic study of modern *Identity* theology. Difficulty comes where

the work steps out of this area and presumes to delineate and analyze contemporary *Identity*

groups based on a flawed definition.

*Identity* theology as a system of belief is under extreme social and political pressures and,

consequently, its development in response to that is simply extreme. This may explain some of

the differences between what Barkun found in his research and the very different picture

advanced in this thesis. Another explanation possible for this difference may relate more to the

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perception of most *Identity* leaders and adherents, many Reconstructionist leaders have impressive academic
credentials and are accepted to a great extent within the various reformed denominations.

[129] From an interview with Pastor Scott Stinson, Schell City, MO, April, 2001.

divergent frameworks within which the groups are studied.[130] In short, research involving direct

contact with Barkun's actual research subjects would be extremely difficult if not impossible:

when asked about Barkun, without fail the *Identity* believers I spoke with said that the name

sounded Jewish and any negative writing about them by Barkun was then attributed to their

perception of conflict between *Identity* adherents and Jews. *Identity* adherents in general see the

Jewish people as a group that denies that Jesus was the Messiah; a belief which *Identity*

adherents see as central to their theology.[131] Thus, the necessary preliminary contact was not

possible to make detailed distinctions between *Identity* types; they are not found in Barkun's

work, nor are they found elsewhere in the relevant literature.

A secondary drawback of Barkun's book is the lack of cultural or social legitimacy afforded

*Identity* adherents. There is an assumption that every precept or action that is accompanied by a

belief in *Identity* theology is illegitimate. While issues such as pastoral legitimacy or theological

depth within the various movements may be rightly questioned, Barkun, among others, gives

little credence to any real spirituality involved. Again, this is difficult to accept once you have

come into personal contact with the people who make up some of these groups. For instance, the

letter below is one of many emailed prayer chain letters I received from the pastor of the Mission

to Israel church, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, on September 6, 2001.

> Dear Brethren,
> About an hour ago, I received an emergency phone call from Pastor Ken Kemble. His
> eight-year-old daughter, Sarah, had a brain tumor removed a few months ago, and this
> last week she grew much worse again. I am saddened to tell you that as he was about to
> request for prayer, Sarah, died. It was very heart-wrenching to hear Sarah's mother,
> brother and sisters in the background wailing for their sister. Please pray for this family.
> Ask that God would minister to them at this time of loss in their family.

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[130] Refer to chapter three "Analytical frameworks," for a detailed description of the myriad problems with the current analytical frameworks being employed.

[131] Indeed, the Christian belief that Jesus was the Messiah is central to the Christian religion.

If you would like to send a sympathy card, send it to Ken & Donita Kemble, [*Address and telephone number were included in original*] If you are able to include some money to help with their hospital bills, I know it would be very
much appreciated.

God's blessings - Ted[132]

This prayer request is not unlike any other you might find in a US, evangelical, Protestant congregation. The senders' obvious intention is of a spiritual nature, not one of hate or terrorist design. Yet because they fall under the label Identity, all aspects—including *bona fide* spiritual and pastoral ones—are presumed illegitimate.

This is, however, a very 'safe' position for a researcher to adopt. To approach the research subjects as a legitimate social movement or to contend that their theological perspectives are anything other than 'pseudo-Christian,' is to put one's own research under suspicion of being a 'platform for the despised.' And yet, would the work of a researcher looking at the Amish movement be seen as equally legitimate if he or she considered their withdrawal from society and desire for a theocratic existence as *a priori* illegitimate? Clearly the Academy would not allow such a position to remain unchallenged.

**Toward a sociological explanation**

As acknowledged above, the role of theology in political violence has been realized in the 'terrorism studies' community. While one might have suspected that this realization would open virtual floodgates for sociological analysis, to date, the numbers of such contributions have been

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[132] Taken from an email sent from Pastor Ted Weiland to his congregation and supporters of the Mission to Israel, 09/06/2001 4:19:10 PM Eastern Daylight Time.

extremely limited. One contribution, which does attempt an analysis of 'terrorism' through sociological methods, is Mark Juergensmeyer's, *Terror in the Mind of God.* [133]

This book analyses some of the major similarities between social movements that employ violence or the threat of violence as a tactic in bringing about their ultimate strategic goal of a Theocratic society. The focus is much wider than Christian *Identity* theology, and seeks to uncover social similarities between groups of varied faiths; Christian, Islamic, Jewish and Sikh, in order to establish broader frameworks within which to consider past and future violence by these groups, in relation to the rest of society.

Juergensmeyer selects five categories in which to make the comparison and explanation; "Theater of Terror," "Cosmic War," "Martyrs and Demons," "Warriors' Power" and "The Mind of God." Each of these chapters focuses on the groups' or individuals' commitment to God or religious belief as the essential motivating factor in their actions. At some points in Juergensmeyer's analysis, this focus on God being the ultimate audience for his research subjects is made at the exclusion of the recognition that other audiences may be simultaneously intended to recognize and be affected by the group's actions. Thus those actions, which may be motivated by theological belief but are aimed at making temporal changes, may miss a portion of its intended political impact—that of changing temporal conditions here on earth. Juergensmeyer asserts in these thematic chapters that God is the audience of those carrying out religious violence that he calls "cosmic" because it is "larger than life."[134] While it is clear that God is one audience of *Identity* believers, He is but one of several audiences that those who are motivated to violence from a religious imperative want to impact.

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[133] Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, 2000.

[134] See, *Ibid*, pp. 146, 207, 235.

Juergensmeyer's categories of inquiry might be helpful and illuminating in relation to the established violent actors reviewed, but only to a point. As it applies to *Identity* theology groups his analysis is extremely useful in arranging the groups and individuals involved within the broader spectrum of violent activists. What is not discussed is the overlap between those identified with the blanket categorization of *Identity* adherent, and those similarly categorized but who are theologically, and socially counter to the positions covered. For instance this is compounded by the repeated reference to Timothy McVeigh as an *Identity* believer even though it has been shown from primary source interviews that his motivations were constitutional rather than theological.[135]

The reader of *Terror in the Mind of God* must either know prior to reading Juergensmeyer's book that the categorization of *Identity* adherent is too broad and generalized within the broader social groupings included in the book, or else he or she is likely to transfer the violent manifestations of specific individuals to the entire *Identity* theological system. Thus, reading Juergensmeyer it is easy to conclude that there is a distinct similarity between the theology of Timothy McVeigh and *Identity* believers in general; a difficult view to sustain in light of the information on the subject of McVeigh's religious beliefs in the recent work, *American Terrorist*.[136] This criticism is less related to the work of Juergensmeyer as it is to the lack of relevant research within the primary discipline now engaged in the study of *Identity* theology, e.g. Terrorism Studies.[137]

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[135] See, Lou Michael and Dan Herbeck, *American Terrorist* (New York: Regan Books, 2001) p. xviii.

[136] *Ibid*, Interestingly, this book, which demolishes the commonly held belief that McVeigh was primarily motivated by a religious imperative, was written following detailed and repeated interviews with Timothy McVeigh. Again the importance of first source contacts cannot be overstated.

[137] This deficiency is returned to below in more detail as it relates to the analytical framework employed within this thesis. See, chapter three, "Analytical framework."

Two particularly helpful insights of *Terror in the Mind of God* are the need to view

violent manifestations of social groups within their broader social context, and the need to move

beyond pejorative labels such as 'terrorism.' This may appear self-evident or obvious to

academic researchers in other disciplines, but, as is further explained in chapter three, 'Analytical

frameworks,' terrorism studies and the sub-category of religious sub-state activism have suffered

from labeling research subjects with pejorative names. Juergensmeyer establishes the need for

researchers working in the area of religious 'terrorism' to go beyond labeling those we fear with

out-group categorizations such as "terrorist". He argues that "terrorism" is exactly this type of

pejorative label intended to so define the group. He states:

> Because I want to understand the cultural contexts that produce these acts of violence, my
> focus is on the ideas and the communities of support that lie behind the acts rather than
> on the "terrorist" who commit them. In fact, for the purpose of this study, the word
> "terrorist" is problematic. For one thing, the term makes no clear distinction between the
> organizers of an attack, those who carry it out, and the many who support it both directly
> and indirectly. Are they all terrorists, or just some of them – and if the latter, which ones?
> Another problem with the word is that it can be taken to single out a certain limited
> species of people called "terrorists" who are committed to violent acts. The implication is
> that such terrorists are hell-bent to commit terrorism for whatever reason – sometimes
> choosing religion, sometimes another ideology, to justify their mischief. The logic
> concludes that terrorism exists because terrorists exist, and if we just got rid of them, the
> world would be a more pleasant place.[138]

This dissertation supports Juergensmeyer's assertion and then goes beyond his

identification of the use of the term 'terrorist' as "problematic." While it is submitted that the

term 'terrorism' is indeed over used, pejorative and intended to paint the accused as something

appropriate to hate and demonize, it has also been a key pillar in past writings on the subject. As

such it is more than "problematic:" It is a central tenet of the habitual association of all *Identity*

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[138] Jurgensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God,* pp. 7-8.

theology with political violence. The term is in fact a dam to the flow of knowledge and understanding in the area.

While Juergensmeyer does make significant advances toward a more powerful study of religious sub-state activism, it has limited utility for those seeking to understand the nuances and distinctions found within the broad *Identity* theology movement. Juergensmeyer's attempt to compare social movements does not allow a view into the idiosyncratic sub-divisions of belief of those he studies. *Identity* theology adherents are identified too broadly for this to be feasible.

In the case studies section related to Christianity, Juergensmeyer chooses four primary groups:[139] Michael Bray, author of the pro-life activist book, *A Time to Kill,* representing the violent side of the pro-life movement; Eric Robert Rudolph, who at the time the book was published was accused but now is the convicted bomber of the 1996 Atlanta Olympic games; Timothy McVeigh, the convicted and executed killer of the Oklahoma bombing; and, the Catholic-Protestant conflict in Northern Ireland.[140] Of these four distinctly "Christian" cases, two are alleged to be motivated to some significant degree by *Identity* theology, Rudolph and McVeigh.

In Juergensmeyer's explanation of what *Identity* theology is and how it has affected violent sub-state activism in general[141], several conflicting ideologies are presented together. For instance, in reference to *The Turner Diaries*, the influential book written by then National Alliance leader William Pierce (July 2002), he suggests that there is little difference between *Identity* theology and Pierce's National Socialist (NAZI) beliefs, stating in reference to Pierce:

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[139] Jurgensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God,* pp. 19-43.

[140] *Ibid,* pp. 19-43.

[141] *Ibid,* pp. 30-36.

Although he has denied affiliation with the Christian Identity movement—and in fact attacked the clubbishness [sic] of most Identity groups—Pierce's ideas are virtually indistinguishable from Identity thinking.[142]

Juergensmeyer goes on to identify Pierce's ideas as "Identity/Cosmotheist ideas."[143] This leaves the reader with little chance to see any distinction between the two very different belief systems. While Juergensmeyer is not alone in his assertion that the two ideologies are actually one,[144] research into each individual group's publications and public rhetoric, and private conversations with each group's leadership and supporters, show that they are based on and assert very different points of view. Some of these differences are outlined briefly below.

National Alliance Ideology

The National Alliance's published ideology is based on belief in a natural order that developed as a result of evolutionary processes. This ideology asserts that these processes have left the world with a basic inequality favoring the white European race.[145] The superiority of the Aryan or European white race is thus allegedly based on 'hard' science. It therefore becomes an obligation for members of that race to remain separate and pure, always striving for the advancement of the race.[146]

The National Alliance makes a succinct presentation of its ideology as follows:

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[142] *Ibid,* pp. 31.

[143] *Ibid,* p. 32.

[144] See for instance, Kushner, *Terrorism in America,* pp. 68, or "Letter to the Editor from Harvey Kushner" and "Response to Harvey Kushner by David W. Brannan," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, vol. 24, #6, 499-501

[145] National Office of the National Alliance, *What is the National Alliance?* (Hillsborough, WV: National Vanguard Books, 1996) p. 2.

[146] *Ibid* p. 2.

*Summary Statement of Belief*
We may summarize in the following statement the ideology outlined above: We see ourselves as a part of Nature, subject to Nature's laws. We recognize the inequalities which arise as natural consequences of the evolutionary process and which are essential to progress in every sphere of life. We accept our responsibilities as Aryan men and women to strive for the advancement of our race in the service of Life, and to be the fittest instruments for that purpose that we can be.[147]

Pierce's views of racial superiority are not based on 'inaccurate historical information' and 'contrived readings' of Biblical texts as some have alleged *Identity* theology is.[148] Instead, Pierce and the National Alliance base their radical racially prejudiced views on a belief in the "science" of the Third Reich and Darwinian social development theories.[149]

The pre-suppositional base of the National Alliance is thus, in direct conflict with the theological base of most *Identity* groups, that of a literal or fundamentalist[150] understanding of the Bible. Pierce has been called the "Guru" of the Right by one scholarly commentator on terrorism in America.[151] This title is not completely inappropriate given his influence within the radical fringe, primarily achieved through his popular book *The Turner Diaries* and its sequel *Hunter*. Many 'armchair extremists' relish the heroic tales of daring found in these blueprints of destruction and both militia-movement followers and *Identity* theology adherents often fail to see the ideological conflict between their belief systems and that of the National Alliance.

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[147] *Ibid,* p. 2.

[148] As this thesis will argue, "some" *Identity* groups reject all NAZI foundations (such as Church of Israel and Mission to Israel) while others (such as Aryan Nations) are willing to accept contradictory ideologies. This topic is returned to with much detail in the following chapters.

[149] *What is the National Alliance?* p.2 and Brad Whitsel, "Aryan Visions for the Future in the West Virginia Mountains," *Terrorism and Political Violence,* Vol. 7, No.4, (Winter, 1995), pp. 119.

[150] The issues involved in fundamentalism as they relate to *Identity* theology are dealt with extensively in chapter four.

[151] Kushner, *Terrorism in America,* p. 68. While Kushner does accurately described Pierce as the 'guru', he then goes on to mistakenly designate him as an *Identity* adherent. This follows the erroneous common perception of a monolithic threat from the Right.

Pierce was thus able to champion the commonality between the advocacy of Second Amendment rights by the militias, and the fear of federal government intervention that is common among many groups on the Right.[152] But few within this pro-Constitution group would support his desire to overthrow that Government in order to replace it with National Socialism. Indeed the 'years of glory' that many of the militia adherents hearken back to are the patriotic days of World War Two, when Americans were the 'good guys' and the Nazis were the clearly-defined 'bad guys'. Thus, while some groups are able to temporarily overlook the obvious ideological difficulties that separate them in order to attain a specific goal, the differences remain real and a barrier beyond these individual issues.

But the militias are not the only groups that turn a blind eye to their own ideology, when the possibility of strong support is seen on an important shared issue. *Identity* theology relating to belief in a Jewish conspiracy, racial purity and white separation may appear a perfect match with the hatred of the Jews found in the ideology of the National Alliance. Yet, upon closer inspection the bases of these beliefs are diametrically opposed to one another. The various theologians within the broader *Identity* movement routinely deny the evolutionary system upon which Pierce bases his beliefs. In addition, Pierce and the National Alliance specifically deny Christianity and the authority of all other revealed religion.[153] The central theme of *Identity* theology, as previously noted, is that white Aryans are the literal descendants of the Biblical Israelites. Following a rare interview with Pierce, Brad Whitsel writes,

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[152] The Second Amendment to the US Constitution states in its entirety, "The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

[153] Whitsel, "Aryan Visions for the Future in the West Virginia Mountains," *Terrorism and Political Violence,* p. 122.

In particular, he [Pierce] rejects the Christian Identity movement's reading of history in which white 'Aryans' are said to have descended from the Biblical Israelites and, as a consequence, stand as the true inheritors of God's favor.[154]

While the compound of the West Virginia-based National Alliance is home to a "church", Cosmotheism, the belief system upon which it is based, rejects every structure that *Identity* builds on in its own belief system. Cosmotheism remains theologically undefined, but relies on evolution to explain how man progresses to become one with the Creator.[155]

As a major step forward in the general study of violent and potentially violent sub-state activist groups, Jeurgensmeyer's work is extremely important. Yet, as it applies directly to the task at hand, that of delineating between specific theological and social typologies within the broader *Identity* genre, the work persists in mistaken clichés and in the belief in a monolithic theological front on the American radical right led by *Identity* theology.

**The need for further data**

There is obviously a need to get beyond these generalities and deal with particular theological and social issues within the context of a specific group. Little of the literature attempts such penetration as it relates to *Identity* theology. Kaplan's article, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel,"[156] is a detailed study of a specific *Identity* group which includes specific and personal contact between the researcher and the research subject. Indeed, no other work to date has so

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[154] Whitsel, "Aryan Visions for the Future in the West Virginia Mountains," *Terrorism and Political Violence,* p. 24.

[155] *Ibid*, 29. Whitsel accurately points out that the system is similar to many New Age ideologies.

[156] Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel." *Terrorism and Political Violence,* Vol. 5, Spring 1993, #1.

intimately considered an *Identity* group's social and theological development.[157] This article by itself should have challenged the received view within the terrorism studies community as to the general alignment between *Identity* theology and violence, but its brevity and lack of comparative case studies may have allowed other researchers to treat it as an isolated instance rather than the seminal work it is.[158]

Kaplan makes a plea to academics working in the field to consider the lack of evidence for the generally accepted overstatement of the relationship between *Identity* theology and violence. He achieves his goal through a detailed and personal relationship, which he develops with his research subjects within the Church of Israel, Schell City, Missouri. Communication takes place between individuals, in addition to researching the literature of the group in question.[159] This treatment of the *Identity* research subject is close to unique in the field and its importance is discussed in more detail in the chapter related to the analytical framework used in this dissertation.[160]

Kaplan's article seeks to make distinctions between *Identity* theology and the broader radical right groups, which include neo-Nazi's and Ku Klux Klan groups together, with Odinists groups, which Kaplan calls "Reconstructed Traditions"[161] and "Idiosyncratic Sectarians."[162]

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[157] The present writer's own prior publication on the Church of Israel was motivated by a desire to extend the longevity of this article and its usefulness. See, David W. Brannan, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations." *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 11, Autumn 1999, #3, pp. 106-118.

[158] This excuse is not valid after 1997 though as Kaplan published a subsequent book, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah*, which further articulated the position in a very convincing argument (See a review of this work following).

[159] It is important to note that the article was based on conversations with the senior pastor of the Schell City congregation alone, and does not deal with other related Church of Israel congregations, such as those in Michigan or Wisconsin.

[160] See chapter 3, "Analytical Framwork."

[161] Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah*, p. 35.

These most closely approximate the traditional view of a cult with the focus on a single leader's ultimate authority.

The framework used by Kaplan is a reformulation of an earlier framework developed by Michael Barkun, in his work, *Millenarian Aspects of White Supremacist' Movements*.[163] These categories have not become commonplace within the literature of those researching *Identity* theology. This fact is unfortunate, though possibly understandable. The categories delineated by Barkun and then adapted by Kaplan, if used, might have been useful in helping readers to understand that the radical American Right is not a monolith. But even if these categories had been generally adopted, the step would only have been an initial one as they distinguish between comparable religions and ideologies, not theological or sociological sub-divisions which are presumed monoliths. Although Kaplan considers theological differences relevant in distinguishing between activist/quietist *Identity* groups his work does not attempt to articulate these distinctions.[164]

Kaplan describes the Church of Israel's origin, its development and then current practices in terms primarily related to the common feature deemed most relevant within the field, millennialism. Valuably and uniquely, the concept and importance of millennialism is used as a framework throughout the article.

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[162] *Ibid*, p. 37.

[163] Michael Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of White Supremacist' Movements," *Terrorism and Political Violence,* 1, #4 (October 1989).

[164] The preferred distinction delineated by Kaplan in describing *Identity* and other extreme Right groups are "quietist," which he sees as withdrawing from society and "activist," those who are politically engaged. I have made somewhat different distinctions based on theological and social development rather than political activism, the totality of which is the focus of this work.

Kaplan is careful (and right) to explain to the reader throughout the work that the

theology and practice of this group are in constant flux.  This fact has however made the

distinctions he had hoped to use and possibly make standard, of somewhat doubtful utility, as the

group itself has fractionalized into theologically and socially distinct units.[165]

Nevertheless, Kaplan's work is important to this dissertation in several respects. It

provides a base line for understanding one case study, the Church of Israel. It recognizes the

importance of theology and its continued development within the social life of the group. This

dissertation also acknowledges the need for interaction with the research subjects themselves,

rather than just offering an analysis of their published literature. The problematic areas of

Kaplan's article are in large part a result of the subsequent development of the group itself, and

the article's political rather than theological focus. Kaplan recognized both of these elements at

the time he wrote the work. Thus he states;

> Tracing the doctrinal elements of the Church of Israel would require a volume-length analysis in itself. Church of Israel theology is extraordinarily complex, involving both intrinsic and extrinsic meaning of biblical text, overlaid with such secondary source material as Author Koestler's The Thirteenth Tribe, The Talmud Unmasked, and more. A further complication arises from COI[166][Church of Israel] doctrine, as with Kingdom theology generally, being in a state of flux, subject to periodic reexamination.[167]

The argument in this dissertation will differ from Kaplan's position by emphasizing the

importance of the theologies of *Identity* groups. This theological rather than political focus is

considered in conjunction with the various groups' own evolutionary trajectories. In addition,

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[165] For instance the earlier almost denominational character of the Church of Israel, with satellite bodies in South Africa, Michigan and Wisconsin has broken down and further theologically motivated divisions have brought about a distinct body even within Schell City, Missouri, called The Church of Israel Redeemed.

[166] COI meaning, Church of Israel.

[167] Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel." *Terrorism and Political Violence* p. 56.

where Kaplan only sought to explain one group, the Schell City Missouri congregation of the

Church of Israel, this thesis uses the vantage point of several different types of *Identity* groups—

one of which is that of the Church of Israel—to show the *similarities and differences* between the

groups within the proposed typologies.

**Identity theology?**

Pastor Jerome Walters attempts to undertake a detailed study of *Identity* theology, in his

book, *One Aryan Nation Under God: How Religious Extremists Use the Bible to Justify Their

Actions*. [168] This book and its hypothesis are important to consider in this analysis, as they are

highly representative of the many pseudo-academic writings on the topic of *Identity* theology.[169]

One significant break with many of these is Walter's call for engagement between the traditional

church and those in *Identity*.

Pastor Walters served as a Lutheran cleric to a congregation in Roundup, Montana

shortly before, during and after the 1996 Freeman standoff near Jordan, Montana.[170] The

Freeman movement, on which the author relies entirely for his first hand account of *Identity*

theology, is not primarily a theological movement. As a former leader of the *Identity* based

group, Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord, *(CSA),* explained:

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[168] Walters, *One Aryan Nation Under God: How Religious Extremists Use the Bible to Justify Their Actions*
(2001).

[169] Others include, Joel Dyer, *Harvest of Rage* (Boulder CO: Wet View Press, 1997), Abanes, *American
Militias*, (1996), Coppola, *Dragons of God* (1996), Coates, *Armed and Dangerous,* (1995), David A. Neiwert, *In
God's Country: The Patriot Movement and the Pacific Northwest* (Pullman, Washington: WSU Press, 1999),
Ridgeway, *Blood in the Face* (1995) or Stern, *A Force Upon the Plain* (1996) among others.

[170]  The Freeman standoff in Jordan, Montana pitted a handful of secessionists against the US federal
government. The Freemen did not recognize the authority of the US federal government on their land, which they
declared an independent state, Justice Township.

The Freeman movement is not *Identity* based, it's Constitutionalists. They care about some of the same things as we [meaning CSA *Identity* members] did, but really they just wanted to stop paying taxes and have their own little country.[171]

Freeman followers use religious language, but not necessarily the language found in *Identity* theology, to support their quasi-Constitutionalist views. The Freeman followers are, as suggested by their name, a group, which aligns a particular idiosyncratic view of the US Constitution with the Golden Age myth[172] to which many Manichean[173] groups point.[174] One of their central concerns is that they not pay taxes to the US federal government or acquire licenses or permits for activities such as driving, hunting or registering a car.[175]

The fundamental scripture for Freeman adherents is not the Bible, but rather, a specific reading of the US Constitution with a unique overlay of general support for their views from the *Magna Carta,* and writings from the founding fathers. Christian scripture and theology are of secondary importance and the Founding Fathers are upheld as great "Christian" models despite

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[171] Author's interview with Kerry Nobel, Forth Worth, Texas, April, 2001.

[172] The Golden Age Myth is a often times fictional view of the past which groups use to explain their desires for the future to members and others. A fairly typical example used by US Constitutionalists as explained during a discussion at a gun show is, "I remember back forty years ago, we all carried guns and nobody gave a damn. Back then we never had to lock the God damn doors and people were just more moral than they are today." Taken from author's discussion with a Freeman adherent, Springfield, MO, December 9, 2001.

[173] The Manichean worldview is common among political activists, especially those coming from a religious background. Originating from the early days of Christianity, the Persian religious leader Mani founded a type of Gnosticism, which supported a perspective that is now known as a Manichean worldview. The term is commonly used today to explain any doctrine that presents itself as the only representative of good with all other doctrines or worldviews being bad.  It expresses a fundamental division between irreconcilable opposites. For a concise yet helpful explanation see, Roger Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996) p.330.

[174] For an outline of Freeman beliefs set within the context of the 1980's farm crisis in mid-America, see, Dyer, *Harvest of Rage* (1997).

[175] From an interview with Freeman follower, Ventura, California, December 1999.

evidence that many of the founders they usher as evidence of their "Christian" authority were

simply Deist or Theist, not necessarily Christian.[176]

The social actions taken by Freeman generally revolve around the issuance of bogus liens

or money orders with an aim to converting US Federal Reserve notes to gold. Additionally, they

typically refuse to adhere to many licensing laws, such as obtaining a drivers license or vehicle

registration, which they see as un-Constitutional.[177] None of these actions or the rhetoric they

espouse is particularly theological or religious in nature. Rather, it is quasi-Constitutionalist

through and through. In the broader spectrum of the American extreme right, it does garner some

support from *Identity* believers, while at the same time garnering support from other theological

positions including such that are specifically counter to *Identity* in nature.[178] Most importantly,

there are no specifically Freeman doctrines that cannot be supported by a general belief in God

as opposed to those supported by *Identity* theology alone.

While the stated aim of Walter's book is to present a comprehensive view of the

theological deviations that *Identity* makes from traditional protestant Christianity,[179] he generally

produces a rehash of well known comparisons between traditionally churched Christians and

those who condone the rebellious rhetoric and well publicized (but infrequent) actions of the

quasi-Constitutionalist portion of the radical right. From the book's pre-suppositional starting

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[176] For instance many of the founding fathers of the US, such as Washington, Jefferson and Franklin, who were so influential upon the direction and construction of the US Constitution and Bill of Rights and writing were Deists or Theist in their perspective rather than Christian. See for instance, John Ferling, *Setting the World Ablaze* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[177] Typical is the refusal to license vehicles, or to obtain driver's licenses, as they believe they are entitled to "free movement" within the country without government control.

[178] For instance those Freeman adherents, who are Roman Catholic in theological beliefs, yet hold to all the Freeman tenants without prejudice. Taken from an interview with Southern California law enforcement officials, Ventura CA, December 1999.

[179] The author never does make it clear if his perception of *Identity's* deviation from mainstream Protestant theology is relative to his Lutheran position or protestant theology in general.

point—that the violent fringe of the American right is united behind the theology of *Identity*—

the die is cast for where the author will go with his investigation. His experiences in Montana

clearly rocked Walters' perceptions of Christian theology, its role in the church universal, the

attendant sociological development of variant theologies, and the potential dangers presented by

those willing to act outside the boundaries normally adhered to within American society. This is

not a good foundation for unbiased and detached analysis, it seems.

The Constitutionalist desires of the Freemen do not need the caricature of *Identity*

theology that Walters applies to satisfy their religious aspirations. Fundamentalist Christianity at

any level provides all the discourse necessary to villainize the US federal government in the eyes

of Freeman adherents.

Groups such as the Freemen in question in Walter's book use the veneer of theology, as

they deem appropriate. When the theological veneer is removed, the group remains coherent in

their own eyes and aligned behind their fundamental belief system—Constitutionalism—without

need for significant change to their thinking or rhetoric. Specifically *Identity* groups cannot

survive this same reduction. Groups such as the Church of Israel, which Walters cites repeatedly

as his source for *Identity* doctrine, are completely dependent on theology, exegesis, hermeneutics

and scripture. Without theology they cease to exist. If all *Identity* theology is removed from

Freeman rhetoric and belief, the worldview and belief system of its adherents can, and does,

continue to function using the US Constitution and a general "American Christianity" to support

it.[180]

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[180] This was made very apparent to the author during an interview with senior domestic law enforcement officials and a Freeman adherent working as a police officer in Southern California. The adherent religious beliefs were Roman Catholic—which is seen as non-Christian within *Identity* theology—and he was fully accepted within the local Freeman group. His primary concerns related to his desire to drive his pickup truck without a driver's license or registration for the vehicle. Secondarily, the individual was committed to Second Amendment rights being

Walter's reliance on Dan Gayman's systematic theology of seed-line *Identity* theology[181] is an interesting insight into the lack of theological depth of the Freemen he was in contact with in Roundup, Montana. While Walters uses Gayman's elucidation of *Identity* theology as the virtual final word on its systematic presentation, he ignores the focus of Gayman's writings on the Christians' obligation to obey the federal government.[182] Being in disobedience to the US federal government on the issues described above is the sum total of the Freeman platform. To ignore these completely divergent views between Gayman and the Freeman, while simultaneously using the one to support the popular view of *Identity,* as a monolithic evil is not only poor scholarship but also extremely misleading. Although there are other *Identity* and British-Israel preachers cited to support the Missouri based Church of Israel view of *Identity*, Gayman is cited repeatedly as the mouthpiece of the broader movement. Ironically, the author cites Pastor Ted Weiland of Nebraska in conjunction with pastor Gayman.[183] This is particularly outrageous knowing that these two pastors have been involved in a 'war of words' in print for 15 years over their very different beliefs as it applies to the topic at hand, *Identity* theology. Gayman and Weiland hold completely opposite views of what *Identity* theology is and how it is to be manifested socially. Unfortunately, the author does not appear aware of the conflict between their belief systems and uses conflicting viewpoints without realizing the difference.

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preserved, the individuals right to keep and bear arms. (Taken from interviews and discussions between officials and an officer who requested to remain unnamed, California, December 1999).

[181] Dan Gayman's, *The Two Seeds of Genesis* 3:15, (Schell City, MO: Church of Israel, 1976).

[182] See for instance, the entire book, Dan Gayman, *The Duties of a Christian Citizen: A Handbook on Christian Citizenship* (Schell City MO: The Church of Israel, 1985).

[183] Walters, *One Aryan Nation Under God: How Religious Extremists Use the Bible to Justify Their Actions,* p. 124.

**Broad sociological statements about the American-Right**

   *The Politics of Righteousness*[184] by James A. Aho is a serious sociological work on

Christian Patriotism.[185] This work moves beyond the alignment of *Identity* adherents with the

pejorative term "terrorism" and focuses on the interaction of social movements and their

development in the social setting. Furthermore, this work, written fifteen years ago (1990), was

already cognizant of the need to pay attention to the role that theology, and religion in general,

was playing in militant political activism in the United States. Since that time the need has

increased, not decreased.[186]

   The work sets out to view a sampling of the American-Right, and then make sociological

insights and judgments based on that sampling to establish a general theory regarding Christian

Patriotism.[187] The book succeeds in its objective, as recognized within the terrorism studies

field.[188] This said, Aho never claims to delineate between *Identity* types and thus, it takes as

orthodoxy the seed-line view of *Identity* theology and then applies this model across the board as

a typology of *Identity* in general. Beyond a very basic distinction between groups, Aho does not

attempt delineation between the various types of right wing groups he investigates. He instead

opts for a general view of the right, lumping *Identity*, neo-nazis and constitutionalists and radical

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[184] Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism* (1990).

[185] As opposed to the plethora of literature, which deals only peripherally with the subject and then generally from a biased position.

[186] For instance, since the time the book was published, many major apocalyptic, millenarian and generally religious politically violent incidents have occurred. These include; the 1992, Ruby Ridge incident; the 1993 AUM Tokyo subway attack; the 1993 Waco incident; and the 1997 Embassy bombings in Africa.

[187] Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism* pp. 15-18.

[188] For instance, see the glowing review of the work by noted 'terrorism studies' researcher, Michael Barkun, Michael Barkun, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 11, #3, pp. 166-167.

Mormonism together under the heading of "Christian Patriots," for later sociological comparisons.

Similarities between the various groups' developments are recounted. In particular, the relationship between Christian Constitutionalism and Mormonism is explained and shown to be helpful in understanding how Mormonism has influenced and effected movements with very different theological bases, such as *Identity*. Interestingly, though the book purports to center on Idaho Patriotism, Aho—like Walter's Montana based study—deals with Missouri based Church of Israel doctrine throughout the book.[189] The fact that many commentators writing on the American Right and *Identity* related subjects specifically repeatedly utilize the writings of Dan Gayman as authoritative on all things *Identity*, betrays the influence which Gayman has had on the radical right as a whole, and on *Identity* theology in particular. Gayman and the Church of Israel's influence recommends itself to further study as one of the case studies of this dissertation. The church also serves an interesting microcosm in the *Identity*/Mormonism relationship, as Gayman's background is Mormon.

The greatest contribution Aho's work makes to the argument of this dissertation is his willingness to see these groups in a social rather than power-political light. By doing this, he risks actually seeking understanding between people—rather than continued social out-grouping, which has taken place on both sides of the religious /political fence. Furthermore, he thinks that it is possible that positive change might occur within the groups themselves and in the way they stereotype out-groups. Interestingly, Aho suggests that there is little difference between the people focused on in his study, Christian Patriots in Idaho, and others in the state.

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[189] Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism* pp. 58-59, 93-94 , 96.

**Different millenarian outlooks among far-right groups**

As noted above, although a millenarian perspective is not unique to the *Identity* faith, it does play a role in *Identity* theology and social life. Jeffery Kaplan's *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far right to the Children of Noah* (1997), deals specifically with the millenarian aspects of *Identity* and other American religious movements typically seen as being on the fringe. This work by Kaplan, is important for reasons similar to the earlier article, which dealt with the Church of Israel. It takes seriously the need for primary source research, individual distinctions between groups and the possibility that *Identity* theology may spawn more rhetoric than actual violence.[190] The book seeks to compare several millenarian religious movements in the US, including; *Identity*; Odinism and A'satru,' and B'nai' Noah. The work shows a similarity between the millenarian perspectives and doctrines involved in each belief system. In addition, the work takes the unique position of criticizing the anti-cult movements, which includes such organizations as the ADL.[191] This undertaking is unique in the field and the delicate manner in which he addresses the subject of the anti-cult movement highlights some of the inherent difficulties in engaging in legitimate objective research of belief systems, which powerful out-groups seek to paint as "terrorists."

While recognizing the value and contribution of the work, the book's general assessment of *Identity* relates to a particular view of seed-line *Identity* theology most generally accepted in the literature. This *Identity* style is commonly associated with Reverend Richard Butler of Aryan Nations and is most eloquently articulated by Dan Gayman of Missouri's Church of Israel. Kaplan completed a serious inquiry into the Church of Israel in the 1990's with a valuable

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[190] Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah*, pp. 55-57.

[191] *Ibid*, p. 56.

publication discussed above. It is therefore quite natural that his perspectives on the *Identity* movement are influenced by that personal experience. As I have argued in other publications on the subject,[192] the movement is amorphous and constantly mutating, and thus his presentation serves more as a snapshot of one kind of *Identity,* from the period of his original research in the early 1990s, than a final statement, which, the discipline will have great difficulty in formulating.[193]

Millenarianism is the central theme of the book and thus is highlighted as an important doctrine of *Identity* theology in general. While Kaplan is correct in pointing out the unique impact of millenarian thought on specific entities within the broader *Identity* family, the observation also highlights the diversity that is as yet apparently unrecognized by the literature. True preterist[194] followers, such as Ted Weiland's Mission to Israel, are no longer reliant on an apocalyptic or millenarian message for gathering or sustaining a following. Similarly, the position of supreme *Identity* theologian, attributed to Dan Gayman by Kaplan (and myself in an earlier publication) is now challenged by another. Pastor Weiland and his growing systematic presentation of an *Identity* theology stands in opposition to many of the assumed foundations attributed to *Identity* in general.

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[192] Brannan, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations," *Terrorism and Political Violence,* (1999) and Brannan, et al., " Talking to 'Terrorists,' " *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 24:3-24, 2001.

[193] See, Brannan, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations," *Terrorism and Political Violence,* pp. 106-118 for this earlier argument on mutations.

[194] Full preterists believe that prophecy in general has been fulfilled in past historical events, taking place under the several Empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Heathen Rome. For an explanation of the various types of preterism, see, http://www.preteristarchive.com/Preterism/index.html (cited August 21, 2006).

Kaplan is aware of the overstatements by watchdog groups about *Identity* theology, and attempts to separate the movement into quietist versus activist camps.[195] This distinction is what Kaplan sees as:

> [t]he deepest cleavage in the Identity community, and it is around this issue that the competition between Identity theorists for followers is most keenly felt. To examine this divisive internal debate, we must consider three forms of violence: rhetorical, defensive, and revolutionary millenarian.[196]

With these words Kaplan goes further than any other commentator on the subject toward making real and helpful divisions between *Identity* types. This statement legitimates the possibility that the movement can, and in fact is, evolving into various positions, which are not normally considered by researcher in the literature. Furthermore, it sets the stage for further research assessing the actual theological and social development of the broader movement. Kaplan makes no note of the seed versus non-seed division that is so important to the theological base upon which these groups are founded. As Kaplan's primary audience is found within the 'terrorism studies' community, his focus on violence rather than theological underpinnings is to be expected. This said, his theological distinctions, such as the different groups' exegesis of Romans 13:1-7 as it relates to the Repentant and Rebellious division or the seed-line doctrine, are significant, and help determine to a large extent what kind of violence the individual groups will support whether rhetorical, defensive or revolutionary millenarian types. This then is part of the purpose of the present dissertation.

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[195] Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah*, p. 55, also see, Kaplan, The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel, *Terrorism and Political Violence* (1993).

[196] Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah*, p. 55.

**Beginnings rather than conclusions**

The current literature related to the topic of this dissertation is severely limited in depth and breadth. The foundational work of Barkun, which looks at the history and development of British-Israelism provides an excellent base from which to begin the argument of this dissertation. Barkun utilizes a rich selection of original manuscripts to piece together the movement from its earliest beginnings in Scotland and England up to the infusion of British-Israel thought into existing American racial thought. The narrative is less convincing as he attempted to extend the conclusions beyond his primary focus—the foundations of *Identity*. Understandably, he never delineates between *Identity* types nor accounts for the continuing developments within the movement along social or theological lines. Though his book is not specifically focused on delineating between *Identity* types, it is used as a primary source for others writing on *Identity* theology and groups and his failure to account for the differences is thus perpetuated.

Juergensmeyer has moved the discussion some distance with his use of sociological methodologies applied to the broad types of groups, which are generally considered under the heading "religious terrorism." Few researchers on the subject have considered the groups commonly associated with intolerance or violence within the religious community from a position of sociological seriousness rather than caricature. Furthermore, he has noted the difficulty in considering these types of groups objectively when the term "terrorism" is applied prior to encountering the subject of the research. The work's primary contribution to the field as it applies to the study of *Identity* theology is its acknowledgement of the movement as a truly religious entity rather than just a pseudo-religious covering for a purely fascist project. The

distinctions he uses to describe the actions of the groups involved tend to lose the unique

character of their theology and social development and he never make distinctions between

sociological or theological types. The work is severely limited in its utility for those investigating

the subject of *Identity* specifically as it seeks to establish the broad spectrum of violent religious

types rather than making any individual distinctions. By failing to recognize the very real

distinctions between racially motivated groups in the US, Juergensmeyer further ingrains the

current flawed view of these potentially violent groups. The use of William Pierce's National

Alliance—a new-age national socialist project based on Hitler era eugenics—as the

representative *Identity* group underlines the need for a differentiated understanding of the

broader *Identity* movement, especially within the academic community.

Kaplan's foundational work on the Church of Israel has again highlighted the need for

actually interacting closely with the research subject. A snapshot of *Identity* theology and its

manifestation at the time of the research and within the particular group viewed is the result his

work. This research is helpful in arguing for the need for a more nuanced understanding of the

*Identity* types. He uses the activist/quietist distinction to delineate between those groups which

appear to retreat from society to carry out their religious beliefs and those whom he suggests may

be more likely to use violence. Another contribution of this work is the recognition by Kaplan of

Dan Gayman's influence within the *Identity* community at large. Gayman's theological writings

which include such works as, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15* and *The Duties of a Christian*

*Citizen*, are truly foundational for many *Identity* adherents understanding of the doctrines and

theology of the broad movement.

Later, in *Radical Religion in America* (1997), he expands his critique of the *Identity*

movement at large based primarily on his contacts with Gayman and his reading of Aryan

Nations. This work further develops his argument for the need of greater definition of religious types within the literature. It also argues that the *Identity* movement currently seen as a violent monolith is rarely violent and certainly not a monolithic belief system. One important contribution made here—and certainly rarely elsewhere in the literature—is his recognition of the danger of confusing secondary source material about the groups in question with actual research. This discipline wide trend is particularly dangerous when provided by 'watch-dog' groups such as the Anti-Defamation League or Southern Poverty Law Center, who have a specific agenda against groups such as Aryan Nations, The Church of Israel or Mission to Israel.

Aho's text, *The Politics of Righteousness*, the earliest truly sociological work on *Identity* theology groups, looks at the fringe right in Idaho. As the headquarters for several major *Identity* and neo-nazi groups, the focus on the Idaho manifestation is perhaps well deserved. Aho carefully crafts an argument that presents the broad similarities between the various groups and draws conclusions, which he feels, are applicable to similar groups throughout the country. Unique to the literature is Aho's attempt to gather and analyze survey information taken directly from known *Identity* adherents within the state. This information is then presented in a statistical form, which highlights the apparent normality or everyday character of the adherents questioned. Mormonism, which does have some relationship with the *Identity* movement, is squarely identified as having a profound influence in Idaho local groups. Yet again, Aho highlights the need for more research in differentiating between *Identity* typologies or styles. His argument that this called for delineation between *Identity* types and needs to consider both theological and sociological perspectives has been an influence in outlining the research at hand.

All of the works considered above either explicitly called for more research, which could provide greater delineation between different groups, or pointed to this need because of their

mistaken conclusions which are attributed to insufficient attention to their case studies. Walters'
*One Aryan Nation Under God: How Religious Extremists Use the Bible to Justify Their Actions,*
claims to attempt just this type of study. As the analysis revealed, the final outcome of the work
serves more as a personal catharsis for the author's fear than an objective or academic study of
*Identity* theology. Walters repeatedly confuses diverse core beliefs of the American radical-Right
with the specific theology of *Identity*. There is no presentation of the multi-faceted and ever-
changing nature of the theology, rather, a caricature of Dan Gayman's seed-line theology is
asserted without foundation as *Identity* theology in total. The work does, however, make one
contribution that few other authors achieve. While Walters' presentation of the "theological
problem" with *Identity* is uninformed and exaggerated, he does suggest a need for interaction of
some level between the broader Christian Church and *Identity*. The suggestions are primarily
related to the Church's need to recognize between authentic and artificial Christianity and prayer
for those involved in the movement, but even this is a step forward toward alleviating future
conflict. In this regard, Walters' book inaugurates a process that this dissertation extends; the use
of a greater understanding of the theology involved to create links between rival groups. The
links created are designed to make three types of conflict resolution possible, which we will
return to in Chapter three, and are referred to as cross-categorization, re-categorization or de-
categorization.[197]

    This work now turns to the theoretical and methodological basis for creating that future
understanding between groups in an articulation of *Social Identity Theory's* utility in the current
project.

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[197] See, Philip Esler, "Jesus and the Reduction of Intergroup Conflict: The Parable of the Good Samaritan in the Light of Social Identity Theory," *Biblical Interpretation*, vol. 8, no. 4 (2000) pp. 325-57. Also see, Rupert Brown, "Tajfel's Contribution to the Reduction of Intergroup Conflict" in Peter Robinson (ed.) *Social groups and Identities: Developing the Legacy of Henri Tajfel* (Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 1996), pp. 169-189.

# CHAPTER 3

## ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

> Conversation puts you face to face with individuals, and all their human complexity. Our education cannot be complete until we have had conversations with every continent, and every civilization. It is a humbling experience, which makes one conscious of the enormous difficulty of living in peace when there is so much injustice, but which also gives one great hopes, every time one succeeds in having a conversation which establishes a sense of common humanity, a mutual respect. After such conversation, one can never be the same person again.
> *Theodore Zeldin*[198]

**Into the abyss: The failure of the current analytical models**

Theology today is seen within the secular world and sometimes even within the Christian Church, as increasingly irrelevant to daily life. Theological concepts and doctrine have taken a back seat to "important" issues that more directly impact the lives of modern Christians or the world surrounding them—increasingly in the US that "important" issue is the threat of "terrorism." Understanding the subtle nuances of doctrinal differences is perceived as tedious and boring, a task divorced from reality, only to be endured by professionals trained in such trivialities.[199]

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[198] Theodore Zeldin, *Conversation: How Talk Can Change Your Life* (London: The Harvill Press, 1998).

[199] *Exploring Religious America*, Mitofsky International and Edison Media Research March 26 - April 4, 2002 http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week534/specialreport.html (cited 8-14-06). Also see, *Americans Struggle with Religion's Role at Home and Abroad,* Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=150. (cited 8-14-06). Both these surveys show that "Christians" as well as non-Christians in the US each see religion as important—but do not see the need for a personal understanding of theological doctrines.

And yet, violent sub-state activism or what is generally characterized as "terrorism" has become an important issue in the minds of modern society.[200] This socially unacceptable violence is believed in many instances to be motivated, licensed and blessed through theologies of different variations[201] Indeed the highly influential studies known as, The Fundamentalism Project,[202] is an attempt to show exactly how various Islamic, Judaic and Christian theologies relate to political violence. This association highlights the growing importance and need for academics, policy makers, believers in the Christian and other faiths and people in general to effectively differentiate between the various theological positions. Currently, discrimination between the various theologies by researchers within the Terrorism Studies community—which tends to link terrorism in a general way to large and varied communities—is almost non-existent.[203] This problem is particularly evident in the literature related to what has come to be called the Christian *Identity* movement.

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[200] This is evidenced in a number of ways, such as: the convening of two US government commissions—The Bremer Commission, June 2000 and the Gilmore Commission, 1999, 2000 and 2001—which directly addressed the public's concerns relating to terrorism. It is also evidenced by the preponderance of time and space spent by journalists, both print and media, on the issues surrounding terrorism and political violence. Travel security, is often another place the everyday person is personally confronted with the countermeasures being implemented to fight terrorism.

[201] This is true in relation to Islam as well as Christianity and other faiths. See, Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, (2000).

[202] Two the most significant works on the subject would include, *Fundamentalisms Observed* (ed) Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), *Fundamentalisms and the State* (ed) Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1993).

[203] The work by John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) is an attempt to make these necessary and clear distinctions within the Islamic faith. Particularly since 9/11, there has been more effort to delineate between Islamic structures by terrorism studies community, but these same efforts are still lacking in relation to Islam and even more so as they attempt to relate to Christianity and Judaism and sub-national violence. There are efforts, such as the Fundamentalism Project publications mentioned above that try to make distinctions in relation to political violence—but the terrorism studies community continues to "link" very different theological belief structures to violence, painting broad segments of believers that may or may not be theologically similar under headings that are then pejorative and negatively influence society toward the belief system.

In the United States of America, it is estimated that over five million[204] rightwing, White supremacist, neo-Nazi, "militia" members stand ready to act against a system in which they feel disenfranchised. Tax resisters, anti-federalists, bigots and racists are routinely grouped in a wholesale theological classification of *Identity* adherents.[205] This diverse association of special interest groups, brought together for a host of different reasons, is believed to find authority to act – at least in part – in these theological imperatives, which the general public, uninterested in the 'subtle doctrinal differences of theology,' may see either as a completely variant non-Christian cult or as a subset of 'orthodox Christianity'.  While the perception of *Identity* theology as unified or generally incompatible with traditional Protestant Christianity[206] may be convenient for some writing on the subject[207], it fails to take seriously the divisions and differences within *Identity* theology and the social movements it has spawned.[208]

The use of political violence in the name of God by groups and individuals claiming to be following a kind of Protestant Christian doctrine has prompted a significant literature.[209] While

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[204] Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, p. 107. Hoffman makes it clear that this is the estimate of the militia themselves, while he feels the number is probably closer to 50,000. These are militia-member estimates only, and do not include the groups which are not 'militia' in nature yet are still potentially violent due to a theological stance.

[205] See, Kushner, Terrorism in America, (1998) for a recent view of the radical right as monolithically united behind *Identity* theology.

[206] By traditional Protestant Christian theology I am referring to those theological schools of thought that spring from the Protestant Reformation and have given rise to Presbyterian, Lutheran, and similar Reformed protestant theologies today.

[207] Specifically I am referring to several watchdog groups which seek to create the largest 'foe' possible against which to fight-and thus maintain fundraising capabilities, but this same trait can be found within the Academy when the research hermeneutic becomes one of crisis management rather than objective analysis. This difference is explained in some detail below.

[208] See for instance, Jeffrey Kaplan, Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far Right to the Children of Noah (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), for a well-reasoned argument that Identity is not a violent monolith.

[209] Such as, Kenneth S. Stern, *A Force Upon the Plain* (New York, NY: Simon &Schuster, 1996); James Ridgeway, *Blood in the Face* (New York: Thunder Mouth Press, 1995); Richard Abanes, *American Militias* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1996); Joel Dyer, *Harvest of Rage* (Boulder CO: Wet View Press, 1997);

the majority of the work has been popular or journalistic, the relevant academic writing on the subject is addressed almost exclusively from within the Terrorism Studies discipline.[210] This fact is directly relevant to the analytical framework used in this dissertation, the research methodology employed and the extant relevant literature reviewed. Although the popular view has been to label all theologies associated with the radical-Right in America as *Identity*, there are real and relevant divisions and these division make the Terrorism Studies genre in particularly less capable—at least at this time—of serious analysis because of several pre-suppositional bias' within the discipline which are addressed in detail below.[211]

This dissertation argues that most of the previous research in the area is presented from a particular perspective, namely Terrorism Studies, which is predisposed to a specific conclusion, i.e. this perspective is partially constructed as a result of the unique, but intellectually dangerous relationship that aligns Terrorism Studies with special interest groups, especially law enforcement, rather than approaching research from the more traditional academic perspective. This chapter argues that the methodologies employed have been incapable of approaching the research subjects in question – *Identity* theology influenced groups – from any perspective other than an antagonistic one. Given the widespread belief that all *Identity* adherents have used or support illegal violent political action, this antagonistic view might be understood. This dissertation will show that the lack of direct communication between researchers and research

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David A. Neiwert, *In God's Country: The Patriot Movement and the Pacific Northwest* (Pullman, Washington: WSU Press, 1999); James Coates, *Armed and Dangerous* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1997).

[210] Many would mark the beginning of the academic discipline of 'terrorism studies' with the publication of the landmark work by Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State.* (London: MacMillan Press LTD., 1977). Two works stand in stark distinction to this almost wholesale alignment of *Identity* theology and the radical Right. They are, Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism* (1990), and Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (2000). These two works utilize a sociological methodology almost unique within the discipline.

[211] For example see, Brannan, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations," *Terrorism and Political Violence* pp. 106-118.

subjects has led, in part, to the current misconceptions concerning *Identity* theology and its adherents. To replace this flawed framework of aversion, this work proposes in its place, social identity theory.[212]

While Terrorism Studies is a relatively new discipline within the academy, substantial theoretical work has been undertaken to explain 'terrorism'.[213] Each attempt at constructing a model for analysis has focused on the principal manifestation in question – which is – the violence of the specific groups or individuals involved. The violence in question is categorized under the umbrella term, "terrorism". This over used term has lost significant descriptive ability today because of its popularity within popular literature, politicians and governments, which seek to 'cover' their perceived enemy with this pejorative label.

**Modeling "terrorism"**

Few researchers today have struggled with the term more than Bruce Hoffman. In his seminal work, *Inside Terrorism*, Hoffman devoted a chapter to the challenge of producing a precise definition for 'terrorism'.[214] Like many words used in the English language, the term has changed meaning considerably over time.[215] Originally a positive label during the French Revolution,[216] the term today presents a dual problem for those investigating political violence.

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[212] See, Brannan, Esler and Strindberg, "Talking to Terrorists," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* pp. 3-24, for a previous argument for the wholesale replacement of the current standards in 'terrorism studies' with social identity theory.

[213] For instance early work came from, T.R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel.* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970) or, Yonah Alexander, David Carlton & Paul Wilkinson (Ed.'s*) Terrorism: Theory and Practice*. (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1979). Martha Crenshaw's, *Terrorism, Legitimacy, and Power* (Middletown CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1982), "An Organizational Approach to the Analysis of Political Terrorism" *Orbis* 29(3) (1985), pp. 455-489 and others have had significant impact on the discipline.

[214] Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, pp. 13–44.

[215] *Ibid*, pp. 15-28.

[216] *Ibid*, p. 15.

On the one hand, the term can be found in almost any edition of the daily news. On the

other hand, the way in which the term 'terrorism' is used varies greatly. The term "terrorist" is

used to describe those attacking the USS Cole[217] as well as the nine-year old bully on the school

playground.[218] One US politician, Governor Grey Davis of California even saw "terrorism" at

the base of California's difficulty in acquiring adequate electricity through wholesale power

companies. In January of 2001, then Governor Davis explained in a radio interview with

National Public Radio that the power companies were actually "terrorists" because they would

not sell electricity to California on credit.[219] Can it be that the killing of service personnel on the

USS Cole, the frightened nine year old on the playground and the scenario asserted by Governor

Davis, all describe a similar phenomenon?

Clearly the same type of activity is not associated with each act. Rather, it is the singular

aspect of the term – the extreme fear caused – that each author is hoping to describe by using the

word. The precise understanding of what the word really means escapes most readers. Any act

which uses or threatens the use of violence, and thereby causes fear in our minds, may now be

portrayed as an act of "terrorism'.[220] The term has become so difficult and imprecise that in one

study, one hundred and nine different definitions were cited.[221] Furthermore, US government

agencies have sullied the waters with their own interpretations of the term's meaning by trying to

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[217] See, http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/cole20010109.html (cited August 21, 2006), for extensive information on the attack.

[218] BBC Radio One, August 7, 1998, News report on the "terrorist" activity of schoolchildren in bullying their fellow classmates.

[219] National Public Radio, January 14, 2001, News report on the problems with the California power grid shortfalls during the winter of 2001.

[220] Clearly, Governor Davis' use of the word in the context given above exceeds even the liberal definition utilized in media presentations.

[221] Schmid & Jongman, *Political Terrorism: A New Guide to Actors, Authors, Concepts, Data Bases, Theories, and Literature* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1988) pp. 5-6.

identify "terrorism" specifically – up to the point it positively interfaces with their agency's

stated mission – to include or exclude certain groups and actions from the given agency's

responsibility.[222] This is particularly relevant as the negative label of 'terrorism' is used against

the religious adherents of *Identity*. Are the actions of all those identified with the Christian

*Identity* movement appropriately identified with "terrorism?"

Because of the inexact nature of the word "terrorism" as currently used and the pejorative

way it represents those who are labeled with it, blanket references to "terrorism" will be avoided

in this dissertation. With this in mind, the author is not unaware of the difficulty of completely

removing the word from this dissertation. This unfortunate fact is especially true given the nature

of the previous academic work on theologically motivated political activism and its general

willingness to paint *Identity* theology at large as a "terrorist" ideology alone. In an effort to apply

precision when possible, the word "terrorism" as referred to in this work describes a particular

type of violence, which will now be defined.

The meaning to be used here is most closely represented in the work of Bruce Hoffman

and includes the following elements:

- A political/social aspect to the threat or act;[223]

- Which engenders fear in an audience beyond the specific target of the attack or threat;

- By threatening or using violence against non-combatants;[224]

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[222] Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, pp. 37-38. Also taken from discussions with Hoffman between September 1996 and September 2003. Thus the FBI, State Department and CIA all use different definitions, which reflect the given department's focus.

[223] Hoffman's work does not delineate a "social" element to the model of terrorism – and indeed it may not need to be included – as most important social issues that might drive an activist to violence or its threat, can also be seen as a political issue. For instance the issue of abortion is at once a social, religious and political issue, but the violence that results from an activist's actions is always considered "terrorism."

[224] The specific tenant of targeting "non-combatants" is not specified in Dr. Hoffman's definition, but it is implied, and is considered herein as the role of the non-combatant is vital in justifying violence within the Christian

- Which is carried out by a sub-national or non-state group;

- That has an identifiable command structure, conspiratorial cell structure and wears no uniform or identifying insignia.[225]

Immediately difficulties arise in using even this definition in determining whether a group is a "terrorist" group or whether an act constitutes "terrorism." The question of appropriate response feeds back onto how the action is described. Is "terrorism" as described above a criminal act? Or should it more appropriately be seen as an act of war? The answer has continued to elude politicians, law enforcement personnel, military leaders and the public in general.[226] Even Terrorism Studies researchers have been somewhat unhelpful in delineating clear categories as they describe the same types of acts as requiring both military and civilian responses.[227] The current debate involving the congressionally mandated commission on 'terrorism' and 'weapons of mass destruction', known as the Gilmore Commission, highlights the difficulty as federal, state and local agencies struggle over jurisdictional problems in formulating a response.[228]

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tradition. See, Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*. (New York: Basic Books, 1992) pp. 197-206.

[225] Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* p. 43.

[226] See for instance, Christopher Hewitt, *Understanding Terrorism in America: From the Klan to to Al Qaeda* (New York: Routledge, 2003) pp. 82-133; or, Paul Pillar, *Terrorism and US Foreign Policy* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institute, 2001) pp. 73-129.

[227] A doyen in the field of 'terrorism studies', Brian Michael Jenkins, addressed the crowd of "terrorism studies" researchers at the April 2000 conference, *Terrorism and Beyond, the 21st Century*, held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, calling for a close relationship between all those that would "fight in the war on terrorism", in an appeal to academic researcher, law enforcement officials and the military intelligence community. The view of 'terrorists' as a military enemy of the state is regularly asserted by the US Government. For instance, Defense Secretary Cohen labeled the 'terrorists,' who attacked the USS Cole – and all "terrorists" in general as "enemies of the United States and its people." As quoted on National Public Radio News Report, January 9, 2001.

[228] The Gilmore Commission Second Annual Report, *Toward a National Strategy for Combating Terrorism,* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2000).

"Terrorism" is clearly a problematic term, excessively used by the media, and under endowed with explanatory capacity. Nevertheless, suddenly to cease using the word while trying to interact with the extant literature is problematic if not counterproductive. When referring to "terrorism" or its derivatives this work utilizes quotation marks or inverted commas as an aid to the reader and has reference to Hoffman's definition. These marks are intended to remind the reader that the term "terrorism" is loaded with pejorative overlay and may not necessarily be completely descriptive of the social movement, its adherents, leadership theology or ideology described throughout this work.

While "terrorism" as defined by Hoffman exists, it is also true that some of the groups described throughout this dissertation have been painted with this derogatory term in order to create a larger foe against which the public might fight or at least contribute money toward fighting. When "terrorism" is applied across the board to those violent groups we fear–or just do not like–it presents something more tangible and large enough to warrant a center of defense and thus a center for budget control. Certainly if a group does kill and maim innocent 'noncombatants' or civilians, the group would warrant the label of "terrorist."  But do we really know that this indictment is applicable to *all* to whom we seek to apply it? Is there, behind the violent manifestations of some self proclaimed *Identity* adherents, a cohesive body of thought and practice by all who believe in this theological position? The research presented herein argues that there are very real divisions within the broad umbrella of what has come to be known as *Identity* theology. The definitional overlay of "terrorism" has in part caused, added to and maintained the inaccurate alignment between *Identity* and "terrorism".

To continue seeing all *Identity* theology's adherents as monolithically united behind illegal violence is tantamount to, for example, the wholesale alignment of all nationalist

adherents with the violence perpetrated in their name in Northern Ireland. Clearly this would be

an illegitimate attribution of violence to many who oppose it yet still call themselves nationalists.

An exploration of the theoretical difficulties past researchers have faced will assist in outlining

how we might move toward a more productive and accurate investigation of the matter at hand.

**Analytical frameworks or prejudicial mandates?**

Beyond the definitional difficulties –and yet closely related– are the more general

problems with existing analytical frameworks. As stated above, the current use of the term

'terrorism' as emanating from the Terrorism Studies community is at once recognized as a

negative label. Thus, when researchers attempt to study these 'terrorists' they are essentially

compelled to assume a negative posture toward them. To do otherwise makes the researcher

immediately suspect as a probable spokesman for the groups or ideologies in question or at least

dangerously, insouciant to the peril they pose. More specifically as it applies to this context, a

close association with *Identity* adherents is seen as a foolishly dangerous practice, which is

unnecessary because of the existing literature.[229]

Thus definitional problems already mentioned are not the only challenge for an accurate

understanding of *Identity* theology. Theoretical difficulties have also challenged this research.

Two of the most popular analytical frameworks currently used for explaining "terrorist"

behavior are critically discussed in some detail below. Such a discussion is necessary in this

dissertation since the frameworks in which *Identity* theology is generally viewed contribute

significantly to the current misinformation and lack understanding concerning it. These

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[229] This belief has been driven home to the author on numerous occasions by "terrorism studies" researchers who suggest that a researcher who talks to "terrorists" is likely to become a spokesman for the "terrorists."

frameworks consist of: a) the models relying on psychological explanations to elucidate the cause of 'terrorist' violence; and b) models which treat 'terrorism' as a rational choice on the part of a sub-state group seeking power. Each of these frameworks has contributed significantly to the ongoing theoretical debate but ultimately fail adequately to distinguish between the *Identity* theology strains and the resulting social movements. These analytical frameworks have failed to interpret the data adequately in part because the theories have been used in conjunction with the overarching hermeneutic framework characteristic of Terrorism Studies and "crisis management" (returned to below).[230]

As the late Cornelius Van Til (1895-1987) suggested, *"A man's theology is always the theology of his method, even as his method is always the method of his theology."*[231] Van Til's statement applies to the *Identity* theologies studied in this work, as well as the methods used by those researching this theology and the various groups which seek to live their lives influenced by *Identity*. In short, *Identity* adherents are to a significant degree able to come to the theological and social conclusions they reach because of the method with which they approach the biblical text. Likewise, researchers come to their conclusions about these same *Identity* adherents because of the method with which they approach their research subjects. I will now proceed to the first of the two analytical frameworks just mentioned.

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[230] For a detailed explanation of how this hermeneutic has adversely effected the discipline, see, Brannan, et. al., "Talking to Terrorists" *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, pp. 10-12.

[231] Cornelius Van Til, *The Case for Calvinism*. (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1963) p. 56; Van Til's position has more recently been expanded upon by theologians such as Greg Bahnsen and R.J. Rushdoony and others in the Reconstructionist movement.

## Psychological framework

Psychological considerations have been used throughout the Terrorism Studies debate as a type of explanatory theory or adjunct to other theories.[232] This view perceives 'terrorist' behavior as an end in itself, rather than an instrument being used to gain a particular goal, audience or political end. Its proponents have suggested that 'terrorists' act in a "terroristic" manner because the activists have self-destructive urges,[233] fantasies of cleanliness,[234] or perhaps have issues related to their childhood and the parenting styles they experienced with their mothers.[235]

Other explanations, which are supposedly more general and applicable throughout the Terrorism Studies discipline, have also been published. For instance, Jerrold M. Post has suggested, ". . . political terrorists are driven to commit acts of violence as a consequence of psychological forces, and . . . their special psycho-logic is constructed to rationalize acts they are psychologically compelled to commit."[236]

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[232] Interestingly, there is little explicit explanation of how the theory is to work in conjunction with these other theories.

[233] Wilhelm F. Kasch, "Terror: Bestanteileiner Gesell schaf ohne Goll?" in H Geissler, (ed)*., Der Weg in die Gewalt* (Munich: Oizog, (Munich: Oizog, 1978), pp. 52-68. Translated for this author by Anders Strindberg.

[234] R. S. Frank as quoted by Gerhard Schmidtehen, "Bewaffnete Heilelehren." in H. Geissler, ed*., Der Weg in die Gewalt* (Munich: Oizog, 1978), p. 49. Translated for this author by Anders Strindberg.

[235] Jonas as quoted in E.F. Mickolus, *The Literature of Terrorism* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), p.361.

[236] Jerrold M. Post, "Terrorist Psycho-Logic: Terrorist Behavior as a Product of Psychological Forces." In Walter Reich (Ed) *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990) 25; also see Jerrold M. Post, "Notes on a Psychodynamic of Terrorist Behavior," in *Terrorism*, vol. 7, no.3 (1984), pp-241-56 241-256.

**Political frameworks**

The second framework revolves around the model most closely aligned with Political-Realism. This school of thought, which has been powerfully influential in the field of international relations, asserts that States take action in order to maintain power and thus exert control over their given area or population. These nations are seen as 'rational actors' whose actions have strategic importance, and act with a specific end in mind.[237] Within the Terrorism Studies community, Political-Realism has been expanded to include "terrorists", and the organizations the community associates with them, as pursuing similar goals through similar means as nations do in this scenario. Thus, "terrorism", political violence or other forms of activism taken at the sub-national level, are viewed as a power-oriented political instrument. This instrumentalism or "strategic choice theory" has its preeminent proponent in the work of Martha Crenshaw.[238] Strategic choice sees the activist actions of the various groups and individuals in question as an attempt to pursue, ". . . extreme interests in the political arena."[239] Actions are thus calculated and strategically employed by the various "terrorist" groups as "rational actor" states employ the use of force within international relations at large.

These models of interpretations are readily employed within the discipline yet without complete success in explaining the social actions of those groups involved. Strategic choice theory, for instance, has been helpful in understanding specific aspects of the phenomenon while

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[237] See for instance, Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace,* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1993), for a presentation of Realism and strategic choice theory as it applies to International Relations.

[238] See for instance, Martha Crenshaw, *Terrorism, Legitimacy, and Power* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1982); "An Organizational Approach to the Analysis of Political Terrorism." *Orbis* 29(3) (1985), pp. 465-489; and, Reich, "The Logic of Terrorism: Terrorist Behavior as a Product of Strategic Choice," *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*, pp. 7-24.

[239] Reich, "The Logic of Terrorism: Terrorist Behavior as a Product of Strategic Choice," *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*, pp. 24.

the psycho-analytical model may gives insight into specific individuals involved. Yet neither

model on its own, nor employed in conjunction, give a complete picture of the religious positions

often employed by activists.

David C. Rapoport has outlined some of the distinctions seen within these religious

positions, which make the two analytical frameworks mentioned difficult, if not impossible, to

apply. In 1984 Rapoport reminded us that God or "deity" is an audience to the violence of the

groups in question.[240] Obviously if the actions taken by these groups are appealing to an

audience which includes God, the "end game" goals may differ substantially from those of

secular activists. In a much more recent contribution to the subject Rapoport has shown how this

same misunderstanding of the framework in which religious activists operate can lead to faulty

conclusions. In, *Terrorism and Weapons of the Apocalypse*, Rapoport shows how religiously

motivated groups have employed, or failed to employ, the use of weapons of mass destruction

despite the predictions by those from within the Terrorism Studies community.[241] Clearly his

understanding that religiously and theologically motivated activists are compelled by the

addition of radically unique motivations highlights one aspect of the shortfalls from which these

secularly focused analytical frameworks suffer.

This brief discussion shows how each of these frameworks fail to account for the unique

world-views from within which religious groups in general, and *Identity* theology adherents in

particular, operate.  By missing this key component, analysts fail to take into account the broad

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[240] See, David C Rapoport, "Fear and Trembling: Terrorism in Three Religious Traditions" *American Political Science Review* 78, 3 (September 1984) pp.658-677.

[241] David C. Rapoport, "Terrorism and Weapons of the Apocalypse", *National Security Studies Quarterly*, 5, 3 (Summer 1999) pp.49-67. Richard A. Falkenrath, et al., *America's Achilles' Heel* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998) for an example of the "terrorism studies" communities' predictive capability.

spectrum of theologies, beliefs and actions subscribed to by religiously motivated activists in general and *Identity* adherents in particular.

Identity adherents are not necessarily goal-oriented in the same sense as the Weberian rational actor model with which researchers are more familiar.[242] While some actions taken at the organizational level by *Identity* adherents may be explained by strategic choice theory – and at the personal level psycho-analysis might be employed to account for individual attitudes – there are generally a multiplicity of factors that are at work in a given situation. For instance, an *Identity* theological mandate must relate to the groups' internally developed world-view,[243] organizational-structure, particular charismatic leadership and pre-suppositional stance. One *Identity* group that interprets Romans 13: 1-7[244] in a specific cultural *milieu* may live out that theological mandate quite differently from another *Identity* group interpreting the same scripture from a different cultural perspective.[245]

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[242]Max Weber (trans. H. P. Secher), *Basic Concepts in Sociology* (London: Peter Owen, 1962) pp.59-62

[243] I will return to this particular aspect in some detail below as it relates to social identity theory.

[244] Romans 13: 1-7, is a portion of a letter likely written sometime between A.D. 55 and A.D.57 by the Apostle Paul to Roman Christians. In this 13th chapter of the letter, Paul explains how God's righteousness is to be worked out in relation to the realities of political and social life in the setting these Roman Christians found themselves. The language and format of the passage is straightforward and unambiguous. Paul states rather plainly that those hearing his letter are to be "subject to" the governing authorities, a perspective likely unpopular with both Jewish believers who saw the Roman government as immoral and antithetical to God or even to Roman believers who might be facing persecution from their government (v.1). Paul is careful to point out that the Christian God, had in some manner, ordained the government these people now found themselves under, and thus, the Christian was called to submit to that authority legitimated by their God. To do otherwise was to bring righteous judgment upon themselves (v.2). Particularly important to the  research in question is (v.3-5) Paul's explanation that Christians need not fear their government if they "do good." In these same verses Paul legitimizes the use of force by the government against those that are in opposition to its law. This point is an issue directly related to *Identity* theologies various forms herein discussed—some of which choose to ignore or invalidate this portion of the text, which I refer to in this dissertation as "Rebellious" *Identity* –and some groups and individuals which choose to subject themselves to the governments rule of law, which I refer to as "Repentant" *Identity* adherents.  The final two verses of the section deal with the financial responsibilities of living in a secular state—the government of which—is ordained by God. Regardless of motives, the Christians is called upon to simply, pay their taxes.

[245] For example, the exegesis of the passage as outlined by the Church of Israel in Schell City Missouri may be significantly different from the congregation of *Identity* believers associated with the Church of Israel but living in South Africa.

Psychological factors do provide strategic choice theory with some resources with which to approach the research subject, as in the cases of the Covenant Sword and the Arm of the Lord (CSA) where many of the leadership were incarcerated and significant time was available to develop psychological profiles, but it is unclear how these various factors relate. The "psychological factors" at work and as presented within Terrorism Studies remain extremely vague. If what is meant are the processes that cause an individual to act, the model becomes so broad that it loses its explanatory capacity. If, on the other hand, it attempts to explain the actions through a given set of psychologically 'abnormal' attributes, the model lacks empirical foundation. Certainly psychological factors in a given person are explanatory of that person, but they fail to provide a framework that is then capable of being generalized within strategic choice theory at large.

Terrorism Studies as a discipline has often failed to see the need for a particular analytical framework within which to operate. When it did see that need, it applied existing models such as the described psychological and power political examples just mentioned in a less than exact manner. This commingling of theory imprecisely applied to political violence in general and to the groups studied by the Terrorism Studies community has left the field with disparate and inconclusive analysis. Far from seeing social movements and their differences, the literature simply sees "terrorists", or as one researcher puts it, "They are truly the evil within."[246]

Social movements are not cohesive phenomena. Violent activists emerge from many different social settings and group backgrounds. At some points Terrorism Studies literature acknowledges this fact, while in the next breath and apparently not seeing the contradiction, it attempts to apply a general theory to very different types of groups. An essential pillar of the

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[246] Kushner, *Terrorism in America,* p. 83.

Terrorism Studies explanation for "terrorism" is that those who engage in this type of activity are uniquely different or abnormal. They may be insane, power hungry or any combination of the two – but "they" the "terrorists" are completely different from "us," the rest of the population. The exercise thus becomes a classic case of 'out-group stereotyping' and is in itself in need of social-scientific explanation rather than constituting a likely source of illumination.[247]

To escape the dilemma just outlined between theory and practice, this dissertation engages in conversation with its research subjects – actual *Identity* believers involved in an ongoing social movement – in distinction from a research style, which reads about 'them.' Counter to the accepted norm of talking with governments, law enforcement and special interest groups – while not talking to activists – this work has actively engaged itself with those seen as "extremists" or "terrorists."

**Secondary sources and the researcher's role**

The field of Terrorism Studies has become reliant on the authority of secondary sources in relation to many aspects of "terrorism"[248] but especially where it writes on the subject of *Identity* theology. For example, in April 2000, the Swiss academic Jean Francois Mayer made the generally well received presentation, Cults, Violence and Religious Terrorism at the Dawn of the 21st Century: An International Perspective[249] at the conference, "Terrorism and Beyond: The

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[247] For examples of this trait in 'terrorism studies' see, Walter Laqueur, *Terrorism* (London: Weidefeld and Nicolson, 1977) pp. 125,129, or Paul Wilkinson *Terrorism and the Liberal State* (London: The Macmillan Press LTD, 1977) p. 193.

[248] For instance, see the plethora of writing on the "terrorist" use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) for a literature, which is replete with interviews of everyone except those that are supposedly on the threshold of using these weapons.

[249] Dr. Jean Francois Mayer, "Cults, Violence and Religious Terrorism at the Dawn of th 21st Century: An International Perspective", paper given, April 17, 2000, Oklahoma City National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism – Terrorism and Beyond…the 21st Century, Oklahoma City, USA.

21st Century" in Oklahoma City.  The location held obvious significance as the site of the 1995

bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah building by Timothy McVeigh, Terry Nichols and Michael

Fortier. The presentation, which sought to outline why certain religious groups were violent,

commented repeatedly on the role of violence in *Identity* theology. To substantiate these claims,

Mayer relied on several sources including; the Anti-Defamation League of Bani Brith (ADL);

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC); and Project Megedio – the FBI report - on the

potential of violence being perpetrated by religious groups at the turn of the millennium.

Mayer was careful to explain that he felt it necessary to avoid the use of the term "cult"

in dealing with these groups, as the term was overlaid with negative meaning – much the way

'terrorism' is seen. Yet, later in the same paper, Mayer explains that his desire in doing this is to

develop better "intelligence".[250] Mayer's paper is representative of much of the research

currently being conducted in this field and as such highlights what this dissertation seeks to

correct, as well as the significant difference between the analytical framework employed here

contrasted with those currently employed in the literature.

Two separate yet related problems are at work in approaching research from this

perspective. The first challenge to accurate research relates to the reliance on secondary rather

than primary sources for the researcher's base of information. The second problem revolves

around the relationship between researcher, research subject and the enforcement—

intelligence—military communities. Both of these challenges to objective research become

intermingled and related as the two feed back onto one another in a circular relationship. This

relationship leaves the researcher unable to conduct research from any starting point other than

an aligned and biased position.

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[250] Mayer, *Terrorism and Beyond…the 21st Century,* p. 17.

It is common practice among researchers of the American-Right to rely on groups such as the Anti Defamation League (ADL), the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and law enforcement to provide information on the groups in question. They do, after all, give detailed information, appropriately cited, on nearly every aspect of 'extremism' in general and *Identity* theology in particular. Yet a central feature of the thesis in this dissertation is that it is exactly this reliance on secondary source information, specifically as it applies to *Identity* theology, which has contributed to the factual errors and inaccurate analysis found throughout the literature on the subject. Special interest groups, by their very nature and design, portray their adversaries in a specific light. To rely on them to give a balanced picture of the research subject is not reasonable nor should it be expected. For instance the SPLC regularly publishes under the heading "Intelligence Project," articles related to "terrorism" and "*Identity* theology" on their web site.[251] Similarly, the ADL provides "special reports," which often relate to "terrorism," "religious extremism" and *Identity* theology.[252] But these reports are not just raw data, but heavily interpreted material, and should be considered in the light in which they have been written.

The "intelligence" reports and "special reports" articles just mentioned often contain detailed information on leaders of churches, ideologies and activist actions. The articles are professional in appearance and accurately cited, thus making them an attractive tool to the researcher of the radical American-Right, or any other group or movement which the ADL or SPLC monitor. But it would be a mistake to assume that because the articles have these characteristics that they are also objective or unbiased. It would in fact be unlikely that these

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[251] See for instance the multitude of articles located at, http://www.splcenter.org/intelligenceproject (cited March 10, 2003).

[252] See, http://www.adl.org  (cited March 10, 2003) to locate numerous examples of these "Special Reports."

groups, who are representing a specific constituency, would present anything other than their own, very influential agenda.

Intelligence is by definition, information presented in a particular light with a specific end in mind. The *American Heritage Dictionary* describes intelligence as, (4a.)"Secret information; especially, such information about an enemy."[253] Accordingly, what is being presented by these various 'watchdog' groups is information about their "enemy" – in this case all those they seek to tar with the brush of "religious extremist", "*Identity* adherent" or "terrorist," terms that many of these groups use interchangeably.[254] An understanding of what is meant by "intelligence" again highlights the perspective or stance the reader is expected to assume when reading or using the material. The subject being discussed is the enemy and no legitimate discourse between the enemy and "us" should be expected.

Even further difficulties arise for the objectivity of research in relation to law enforcement intelligence reports, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) 1999 release, "*Project Megiddo*."[255] The Megiddo report is helpful to the researcher, but again; the material is presented from a perspective that is aimed at rooting out the research subject. Objectivity and accuracy are further impeded when, as with Project Megiddo, the report uses

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[253] William Morris (ed.). The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc, 1975).

[254] While many of these "watchdog" groups would align *all* of *Identity* with these labels, there is an equal willingness to label other religious groups with similar labels. For instance, the ADL has labeled Dr. James Dobson and his ministry, *Focus on the Family*, as an "extremist" on their web pages because of a perception that Christian missionary efforts directed toward those of the Jewish faith constitutes a dangerous or negative practice. It is not difficult then to see how this wholesale alignment behind pejorative labels tends to include within the same sphere, many very different types of groups be they *Identity* adherents or other group, which the ADL sees in opposition to their worldview. This is in short, classic out-group labeling defining who-*we*-are in opposition to an identified-*other*. The same out-group pejorative labeling occurs on these sites in relation to the Palestinian vs. Israeli conflict.

[255] This report can be found at, http://www.fbi.gov/library, (cited March 12 2003).

information supplied from these agenda-driven watchdog groups as authorities on the subject.[256]

When relying on this type of "intelligence" instead of accessing the information from the research subjects themselves, the researcher must fight through multiple layers of bias to find hard data. There is no doubt that the resulting ease of information acquisition does save time, but can the researcher really hope to present his or her own findings rather than conclusions colored by the agenda of the information providing agency? Even minimal reflection on the conflict of interest will drive most researchers to see the inherent dangers to truly independent academic research necessarily represented by these types of secondary sources.

This dissertation does not seek to identify the use of second source information as necessarily useless, but there has been confusion within the Terrorism Studies community between source information and second source information. Both are necessary, but second source information should be used to corroborate information accessed by the researcher from a primary source, be it written works by the research subject or personal contact with the subjects in question.[257]

Noted scholars of the field have also commented upon this challenge to accurate research. For instance, in a 1988 survey of the Terrorism Studies literature, Schmid and Jongman said:

> There are probably few areas in the social science literature in which so much is written on the basis of so little research. Perhaps as much as 80 percent of the literature is not research-based in any rigorous sense . . .
>
> Ideally, the scientific literature of terrorism should be apolitical and amoral. The researcher should not take a "top-down" perspective, looking at the phenomenon of

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[256] See, *Project Megiddo* (Washington DC: FBI, 1999): pp. 12, 18, 23. Accessed at, http://www.fbi.gov/library (cited March 12, 2003).

[257] When dealing with *Identity* writers, the author has found that clarification of written doctrines elucidates the material substantially. To rely solely on the written word without talking with the writer often leaves the reader with an incomplete or distorted impression of the groups the writing represents. Written literature within the broader *Identity* movement acts as a rhetorical pulpit, not necessarily a forum of personal belief.

terrorism through the eyes of the power holders; nor should the researcher look at terrorism from a "revolutionary" or "progressive" perspective, identifying with one just cause or another . . . he should not judge in-group and out-group by different standards. Moreover, the researcher should not confuse his roles. His is not to "fight" the terrorist fire; rather than a "firefighter," he should be a "student of combustion," to use a distinction introduced by T.R. Gurr . . . Terrorist organizations must be studied within their political context, and the study of the terrorists' opponents and his (re)actions are mandatory for a fuller understanding of the dynamics of terrorism. This may sound almost trivial, but the absence of such even-handedness is nevertheless the chief deficiency of the literature of terrorism.[258]

This same sentiment was brought to the community's attention again in 1992 when Bruce

Hoffman suggested that,

In terms of perspicacity, those researchers who have been able to bridge the chasm separating them from the actual subjects of their inquiries have been the most successful. This applies not only to the obviously problematic-and often dangerous –task of establishing contact with active, imprisoned, or retired terrorists, but equally with less-threatening above-ground support apparata and bona fide political parties . . . too often terrorism research is conducted in a vacuum, divorced from the reality of the subject we study. Those researchers who succeed in overcoming this inherent distance often have the most interesting things to say.[259]

As seen in Hoffman's statement above, there is a possibility of danger or other logistical

problems in actually meeting with some activists, yet the benefits to the research are apparently

great if this obstacle can be overcome. Indeed, Aho highlights this perception, which has been

fostered within the Terrorism Studies community about "doing research" directly with the

subjects involved, in the forward of, *The Politics of Righteousness, Idaho Christian

Patriotism*.[260] Aho comes to much the same conclusion as the present writer has used in

undertaking the field work for this dissertation, namely, that rather than it being a danger or

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[258] Schmid & Jongman et.al *Political Terrorism: A Research Guide to Concepts, Theories, Databases and Literature,* pp. 179-180.

[259] Bruce Hoffman, "Current Research on Terrorism and Low-Intensity Conflict," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 15 (1) (1992) p. 28.

[260] Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness, Idaho Christian Patriotism,* pp. 10-13.

impossible to meet with the research subjects, it is in fact relatively safe and fairly simple to arrange as it applies to the various *Identity* communities. As this dissertation will show, the perception of danger in speaking with *Identity* adherents is entertained mainly by those who write about the movement without actually accessing their research subjects and who approach the subject from a pre-suppositional stance, which is biased against the subject group, thus creating an environment of conflict rather than conversation.

**Crisis management**

As noted above, the Terrorism Studies field has tended to approach the subject from a research hermeneutic described in an earlier work on the subject as "crisis management."[261] This hermeneutic results from several of the research inhibitors described above. The lack of primary research and research subject interaction, a reliance on secondary sources and a confusing of the researcher's role between research and enforcement has left one looking to root out "the evil within,"[262] rather than describe or explain social situations.

To adopt this perspective is akin to an anthropologist attempting to "root out" an African animist religion because it engages in activities which are abhorrent to the researcher's own Western perspective. Clearly this type of agenda driven research would not be tolerated in most disciplines within the academy, yet as it relates to the research of *Identity* theology and its adherents, this hermeneutic is the norm rather than the exception.

By conducting research within this aligned framework and by utilizing the described hermeneutic of crisis management, it becomes difficult if not impossible for researchers to give a

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[261] Brannan, et. al., "Talking to Terrorists," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, pp. 10-14.

[262] Kushner, *Terrorism in America*, p. 83.

truly independent analysis. Rather than independence, researchers are forced into giving their personal articulation of the received view,[263] a view, which may or may not correspond with the actual state of the research subject involved.

In an effort to get past these difficulties and present a view uniquely descriptive of the very real differences between the various strains of *Identity* theology types and groups, this work utilizes social identity theory to facilitate intercultural dialogue between the researcher and his subject. Following is a description of this theory as it applies to the work now at hand.

## Culture, inter-group communication and Social Identity Theory

Philip Esler has described 'culture' in the following manner;

Every person carries within him or herself patterns of feeling, thinking, valuing and potential action, which are learned during one's lifetime. These patterns constitute 'culture'.[264]

The geographer, Peter Jackson finds that the various cultures possessed by groups around the world are overwhelmingly important in understanding and meaning in the world, stating;

Cultures are maps of meaning through which the world is made intelligible.[265]

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[263] Meaning, the dominant view, whatever it might be, which is in vogue with a majority of those recognized within the field, an intellectual position enjoyed and applauded, but perhaps not proven.

[264] Philip F. Esler, *Galatians* (London: Routledge, 1998) p. 10.

[265] See, Joel L. Swerdlow, "Global Culture," *National Geographic*, Vol. 196, No. 2, August 1999, pp.5-6, George P. Murdoch, Theories of Illness: A World Survey (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 1980) pp. 5-21 for a view of culture as it applies to conflict and attempts at resolution to those conflicts, or Ulin, 2001: 204-238 for an interesting argument for the influence culture has on the individual. Or see, Murdoch, 1980. These works show how each culture affects the different aspects of life in a given area, through set patterns of behavior, institutions and varied artifacts. For a counter view on culture, see; Mario I Aguilar, 2004. "Changing Models and the Death of Culture" Anthropology and Biblical Studies, M. I. Aguilar & L. J. Lawrence (ed.'s), (Leiderdorp, The Netherlands: Deo. 2004) pp. 299-313.

The Terrorism Studies community has to a large degree disregarded the presence of many very real cultural differences when considering sub-state activist groups. This failure has had a significant impact on how the public, academics and government policy makers consider the role of *Identity* theology in relationship to potentially violent sub-state activists.[266] The following section outlines how the role of culture and inter-group communication are considered within the analytical framework of social identity theory. Furthermore, the section looks at how this theory is then employed within this dissertation to give greater insight into and distinction between the various *Identity* theologies currently developing internationally.

**Cultural diversity and inter-group understanding**

As noted above, the role of culture is rarely considered in the current literature relating to *Identity* theology.[267] This flaw has left the field with a particular view of *Identity* theology adherents, which fails to detect and take seriously the cultural diversity between the various *Identity* groups. Likewise, the cultural differences between the researchers and their research subjects have meant that the perceptions of the various *Identity* types are lumped together in a general and therefore ineffective manner. This is due in part to some, if not many, researchers' inability to communicate effectively across real cultural divisions between them and their research subjects. A divide that, in many instances, those researching do not realize nor want to admit, actually does exist and affect, the outcome, of their investigations.

While many of those studying *Identity* theology come from the same country – namely the United States – they do not generally share a similar culture. This fact is true for a number of

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[266] Two notable exceptions to this mistake are the works previously cited above for their insight; Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism,* 1990, and Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God*, 2000.

[267] The work returns to the particularly relevant literature in detail in the section below entitled "Literature Review."

different reasons, but a particular difficulty for some of those involved in the current assault on

*Identity* theology lies in the fact that many of these researchers are either culturally or religiously

Jewish.[268] These researchers form a group themselves or at least a segment within a broader

group with a particular social identity directly in opposition to their research subjects, *Identity*

adherents. These researchers share a particular communal background of liberal academia. They

use a particular language pattern, which serves as a specific marker identifying them both to the

group and those outside the group. They share similar ethnic and/or religious understandings

and, importantly, they are forced to feel a personal sense of opposition to the subjects of their

research, *Identity* adherents.

Political sociologist Ted Gurr describes the formation of specific social groups in the

following manner:

> … in essence, communal groups are psychological communities: groups whose core
> members share a distinctive and enduring collective identity based on cultural traits and
> lifeways that matter to them and to others with whom they interact. People have many
> possible bases for communal identity: shared historical experiences or myths, religious
> beliefs, language, ethnicity, region of residence, and, in caste-like systems, customary
> occupations. Communal groups, which are also referred to as ethnic groups, minorities, and
> peoples, usually are distinguished by several re-enforcing traits. The key to identifying
> communal groups is not the presence of a particular trait or combination of traits, but rather
> the shared perception that the defining traits set the group apart.[269]

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[268] The list of academic researchers who have published on the *Identity* movement and are also Jewish in either an ethnic, religious or cultural sense is long and distinguished. It includes but is not limited to; Professor Bruce Hoffman, Professor David Rapoport, Professor Michael Barkun, Professor Leonard Weinburg; Professor Jeffrey Kaplan and Professor Harvey Kushner to name just a few of the most well known writers in the area.

[269] Ted R. Gurr, *Minorities At Risk.* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1993). This is based on, Fredrik Barth (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969).

The presuppositional starting point for *Identity* theology is the belief that both ancient Jewish people and modern Ashkenazi Jews[270] have stolen the birthright of the "true Israelites."[271] This enormous cultural separation leaves the researcher with a very difficult, if not impossible gap to overcome in real understanding or unbiased objectivity. The present writer is aware that this is not likely to be a popular observation. In addition it would be easy for critics to de-legitimize the entire findings of this dissertation by using the same associative tactics employed in Terrorism Studies generally, dismissing the framework difficulties as a cover for latent prejudice or insinuating an association with another culture commonly held as bad, criminal or just uninformed. A similar difficulty might be found if an ethnic Hutu researcher were to be responsible for the unbiased articulation of the Tutsi worldview.[272] No doubt the goal can, and in fact has been achieved,[273] but the researcher faced with this unique challenge must first recognize the potential dangers to objectivity.

There is significant and relevant research on intercultural communication, which carefully models the difficulties and the processes involved.[274] This literature shows that in a

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[270] For instance see, Arthur Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe*, (Palmdale CA: Omni Publications, 1976) for a similar argument.

[271] See for instance, Dan Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15.* (Schell City, MO: Church of Israel, 1977), for a seed-line view; or, Ted R. Weiland, *Gods Covenant People*. (Scottsbluff, NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 1995), for a non-seed view of the same thing.

[272] This challenge is similar to the case made above between the research findings presented by the ADL, FBI and SPLC. The perceived "enemy" is the one making the case, thus out-group perceptions are likely to find their way into the conclusions.

[273] For instance, Bruce Hoffman, who is a Jewish American, approached this subject by accessing first source information from the *Identity* adherents themselves instead of relying on information provided by secondary sources particularly sensitive to a specific cultural bias. See for instance, Hoffman, "American Right-wing Extremism, The Ideological Thread," *Janes Intelligence Review*, Vol. 7, #7, p.329 for an article on *Identity* using information gathered from being in contact with the movement directly.

[274] See for instance, William B. Gudykunst and Young Yun Kim, *Communicating with Strangers: An Approach to Intercultural Communication,* forth edition (New York et alibi: McGraw-Hill, 2002) For a discussion of culture and intercultural communication relevant to an ancient Mediterranean document but where many of the cultural dynamics are similar to the Middle East today, also see Esler, *Galatians,* pp. 10-21.

general sense, 'culture' refers to the essential impact which people make on their environment at

large but which also impacts back on them. As used in this framework though, the cultural

impact in question relates to the social and theological effect on the various groups discussed in

relation to the broader world. Esler describes culture in this way:,

> Every person carries within him or herself patterns of feeling, thinking, valuing and
> potential action which are learned during one's lifetime. These patterns constitute
> 'culture'.[275]

Thus, there is great potential for diversity between groups, which might at first glance be

thought of as quite similar if not absolutely the same. 'Ethnocentrism' is the term most

descriptive of this failure to recognize this diversity. Ethnocentrism is in fact the manifestation of

what has been called by many people from around the world as the 'ugly American syndrome'.

This is the belief that the rest of the world either is, or should be, operating from the same

cultural perspective that the offending American tourists are coming from.  Esler describes

ethnocentrism as;

> [t]he assumption that the rest of the world is really like us, or if it is not, it should be.[276]

While this observation may be graphically portrayed in the 'ugly American syndrome',

the charge of ethnocentrism might also be leveled against those researchers who fail to recognize

the cultural differences between their own background as in the case of most of the researchers

of *Identity* and that of their research subjects, *Identity* adherents.  It is fundamental to this

dissertation that the cultural divide between liberal academics and fundamentalist *Identity*

adherents is a wide one and that without the proper consideration of this chasm a researcher's

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[275] Esler, *Galatians,* p. 10.

[276] Brannan, et. al., "Talking to Terrorists," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, p. 15.

findings will be necessarily slanted to reflect his or her culturally contingent view of the topic, in distinction from understanding the phenomenon being examined from within its own culture.

Culture, regardless of its manifestations prompts predictable and regular behaviors that are seen as normal and acceptable. These manifestations are often highly developed to the point of being seen as typical despite the fact they may not attain the position of social law.[277] Those from the given culture conduct their lives in relation to these developed social settings and 'default positions'. These social settings and assumed responses in given social situations are helpful to people in determining what is allowed or expected within the given culture. Likewise, they show outsiders how they are to act or respond in situations of everyday life. Short of these cultural cues and settings, people within the given culture would find it difficult if not impossible to operate socially with others. For instance, when traveling in the rural areas of Japan, an American might recognize the social cues revolving around public bathing and how they differ from a group of naked adults in a communal hot tub in the United States. By utilizing these cultural guidelines, the western traveler could both save himself and his Japanese hosts embarrassment while gaining social acceptance.

This is not to suggest that life is somehow predetermined and robotic. Rather, we are influenced and conditioned from a cultural perspective in almost every aspect of our lives. It would be absurd then to think that academic researchers have not also undergone this type of conditioning – and probably from a different perspective from our own. While the possibility

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[277] See Philip F. Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 6, 226.

exists that we can actively remove ourselves from these ingrained cultural responses, the fact is that generally people do not act outside of these accepted patterns in most areas of life.[278]

The Dutch social scientist Geert Hofstede in his book *Culture's Consequences*[279] develops a helpful classification.[280] Hofstede's work, which started in 1980, has continued to effectively categorize various national cultures. The research utilized questionnaires designed to elucidate basic national-cultural distinctions within the same large multinational corporation operating in 50 different countries throughout the world. Based on his findings in this study, Hofstede isolated five variables, which characterized the various national cultures involved. They are:

 

(a) The respective significance of the individual and the group;

(b) The differences in social roles between men and women;

(c) The manner of dealing with inequality;

(d) The degree of tolerance for the unknown; and

(e) The trade-off between long and short-term gratification of needs.[281]

 

While Hofstede's observations were not specifically structured with the current study of *Identity* theology and its social differentiation in mind, they are extremely helpful in setting out

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[278] The foundation for this thought is found in the enduring contribution of, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (London: Allen Lane, 1966).

[279] Geert Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Value*s (Beverley Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1980); See also Geert Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind: Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival* (London: HarperCollins, 1994).

[280] One example is the collection of hundreds of world cultures included in the Cross-Cultural Coding Center at the University of Pittsburgh. For use made of this taxonomy, see Murdoch, *Theories of Illness: A World Survey,* 1980.

[281] Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values,* 1980.

some major distinctions that separate the various *Identity* types as well as showing the

effectiveness of the framework in general.[282] Subsequent work in the field, such as Peter Smith

and Michael Bond's, *Social Psychology Across Cultures*, found that Hofstede's various

distinctions showed how each culture developed and maintained an identity more or less

associated with either individualistic or group-orientations while at the same time not negating

the possibility of difference within a given culture.[283]

In this dissertation the term "individualistic" is used in a specific manner. In

individualistic cultures social ties between individuals are weak as opposed to those found in

group-oriented cultures, where members of the same group feel a strong cohesive bond. In

individualistic cultures personal achievement is more valued than collective loyalty and

individual gain, even at the expense of others from within the same society, it is accepted as a

normal trait.[284] These traits are especially helpful in distinguishing between *Identity* groups such

as Idaho's *Aryan Nations* and Nebraska's *Mission to Israel*. Both groups are from the United

States and are influenced by *Identity* theology. The relevant literature makes no distinction

between these *Identity* groups, happy with the blanket and pejorative classification of *Identity*.

By using this one aspect of the proposed analytical framework, determining between

individualistic and collective tendencies, we can see that these groups are separated by distinct

social developments which affect many areas of their lives.

For instance, at a mundane but illustrative level, the collective tendencies of the Aryan

Nations are manifest in their clothing styles which are often similar to WWII era German

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[282] See, Peter B. Smith and Michael H. Bond, *Social Psychology Across Cultures: Analysis and Perspectives* (New York et alibi: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993) pp. 38-46.

[283] Smith and Bond, *Social Psychology Across Cultures: Analysis and Perspectives*, 1993.

[284] See, Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights From Cultural Anthropology,* revised edition (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), pp. 12-14 and 63-89, for illustrations of these insights in the realm of Biblical Studies and Mediterranean Culture.

uniforms. This similarity between group members of the Aryan Nations depicts their relationship

with nazi ideology which is central to their particular brand of *Identity* theology. In contrast, this

writer met many church members from Mission to Israel and found their dress indistinguishable

from their non-group neighbors living in the same area.[285] These very different cultural

developments in turn affect the way in which the groups articulate their particular theology as

well as the way in which that theology manifests itself socially.

Stella Ting-Toomey developed further distinctions based on cultural proclivities toward

individualistic or group-orientations specifically in the area of conflict rhythms. [286] Ting-

Toomey's work showed that individualistic cultures tend to foster monochromic (M-time)

rhythms and group-oriented cultures tend to develop poly-chronic (P-time) rhythms.[287] The

particular peculiarity of how a group understands and operates within time dimensions is of keen

importance to this dissertation. This is especially true when dealing with *Identity* groups such as

some of those which can be described as millenarian in their worldviews.[288]

Hall and Hall give a helpful articulation of this important concept in their work, *Hidden

Differences*,[289] explaining,

> In monochromic cultures, time is experienced and used in a linear way-comparable to a
> road . . . . M-time is divided quite naturally into segments; it is scheduled and
> compartmentalized, making it possible for a person to concentrate on one thing at a
> time.[290]

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[285] Observations by the author, Mission to Israel, worship service, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, February 2000.

[286] Stella Ting-Toomey, *Communicating Across Cultures* (New York: The Gilford Press, 1999), pp. 212-216.

[287] *Ibid*, p.216.

[288] Returned to below in the particular case studies on *Identity* group types.

[289] E.T. Hall & M. Hall, *Hidden Differences: Doing Business with the Japanese* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1987).

[290] *Ibid*, p. 16.

Prime examples of the individualistic or monochrome (m-time) cultures are Germany,

Scandinavian countries, Switzerland and perhaps the prime example, the United States. In

contrast to these types of cultures are the group-oriented or poly-chronic cultures. Hall and Hall

continue,

> [P-time] systems are the antithesis of M-time systems. P-time is characterized by the
> simultaneous occurrence of many things and by a great involvement with people. There is
> more emphasis on completing human transactions than on holding schedules. . . . P-time
> is experienced as much less tangible than M-time, and can better be compared to single
> point than to a road[291]

Understanding the differences between M-time and P-time cultural differences as

explained above effect every aspect of life for those within the given culture.  For instance, a

recent travel and leisure magazine targeting western vacationers noted that those traveling

through Madrid, Barcelona or Milan's Malpensa airport should expect "delays" at least thirty

percent of the time. In contrast to these alleged delays, the western traveler would find the most

punctual airports in Helsinki, Copenhagen and Stockholm.[292] In this modern example of M-time

versus P-time, the Poly-chronic cultures of the Mediterranean are viewed by western travel

experts as delaying travelers while the Mono-chronic cultures of the Northern European

countries meet their scheduling expectations. The difference is not found in the one being bad

while the other is good, the difference comes in the cultural expectations of the traveler in

conjunction with the cultural realities of the region the traveler is in.

Examples of the group-oriented cultures are widespread including many Asian, African,

Latin American, and Eastern European and significantly for this work, the Mediterranean

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[291] Ibid, p. 16.

[292] *Travel and Leisure*, May 2000, p. 34.

cultures commonly thought to include the areas in and around Palestine, modern day Israel and indeed the entire Middle East region.[293]

Early anthropological research in this area showed that the region bounded by Spain in the northeast, Morocco in the southeast, Italy in the north and as far-east as Iraq and Iran, is culturally similar in their group-oriented nature. Likewise, this same region culturally rests on issues related to honor and shame, limited good, patron client relationships and purity codes.[294] More recently, anthropological research related to the area and its cultural uniqueness has presented more nuanced and therefore more helpful delineation in regards to these same subjects. [295] These recent works add to, without making void the earlier findings based on access to a broader segment of the relevant study area, particularly the inclusion of female anthropological insights previously not considered. [296] Further illustrating the breadth of the frameworks effectiveness, applications which are culturally sensitive in a similar way have been helpful in the fields of classical studies[297] and more importantly for this work, biblical studies research.[298]

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[293] This observation is especially important to the work at hand as the distinction between *Identity* groups who have abducted Mediterranean culture versus those who have not is discussed in detail during the case study and conclusions chapters of this work, see, Hofstede, *Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Value*s, 1980.

[294] For further articulation of these Mediterranean distinctive, see, Julian Pitt-Rivers, *The People of the Sierra* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); (ed.), *Mediterranean Countrymen: Essays in the Social Anthropology of the Mediterranean* (Paris and La Haye: Mouton & Co, 1963); J. G. Peristiany (ed.) *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1965), pp. 19-77 and 191-241; J. K. Campbell, *Honour, Family and Patronage: A Study of Institutions and Moral Values in a Greek Mountain Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

[295] M. Herzfeld,. 'Honour and Shame: Problems in the Comparative Analysis of Moral Systems', *Man*, vol. 15, pp. 339-51; M. Herzfeld, '"As in Your Own House": Hospitality, Ethnography, and the Stereotype of Mediterranean Society', in D. D. Gilmore (ed.), *Honor and Shame and the Unity of the Mediterranean* (Washington DC: American Anthropological Association, 1987), pp. 75-89.

[296] See, for instance, Lila Abu-Lughod, *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society* (Berkeley et alibi: University of California Press, 1986); Anne Meneley, *Tournaments of Value: Sociability and Hierarchy in a Yemeni Town* (Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press, 1996); J. G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers (eds.), *Honor and Grace in Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[297] See, for instance, Jon E. Lendon, The Empire of Honour: The Art of Government in the Roman World (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997).

To this point, we are talking about culture as a fairly general idea or concept and thus there are exceptions and local variations that emerge as we apply the principles found at a more precise or specific level. The basic assumption though remains constant from high level generalities through local expression and particular unique sub-group manifestations, that is, that when researching groups dependent upon a group-orientation, or, Mediterranean styled culture, the researcher or even those reading the corresponding findings who come from a distinctively individualistic background, need to be cognizant of the potential misunderstandings and cultural distinctions that may blur ones views. Furthermore, to move to a position of understanding rather than continued out-group stereotypification of *Identity* theology adherents, representatives of the academy must take seriously their role, particular research hermeneutic, and cultural biases before approaching the research subject. This, then, is the goal of the analytical framework used in this work, even though it is necessary at the same time to remain aware of the intellectual dangers of "agency capture."

All this has two consequences for this dissertation. First, it is necessary to situate the phenomenon in question firmly within its own particular socio-cultural context, for example, a social and religious movement versus potential "terrorists." Secondly, we must be extremely careful to ensure that our own and different socio-cultural understandings does not cause a misinterpretation of the persons and data under consideration. All this is a way of suggesting that it is necessary to avoid ethnocentrism, and to submit that attempts at analyzing sub-state activism

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[298] The biblical research in this area began with, Bruce J. Malina's *The New Testament World: Insights From Cultural Anthropology* in 1981; revised edition (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993); revised 1993; see also, Philip F. Esler*, Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), Philip P. Esler, *The First Christians in Their Social Worlds: Social-Scientific Approaches to New Testament Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 1994); Esler, Galatians, pp. 1-57.

without a reasonable familiarity with its culture as revealed in anthropological research over the

last few decades are likely to be downright dangerous.[299]

At the same time we should realize that, although we may start to understand and become

intellectually sensitive through reading the anthropological literature mentioned, there is simply

no substitute for firsthand experience with the society/group in question. Thus, the methodology

adopted in this dissertation includes communication with and understanding of the particular

worldviews of the *Identity* adherents. This has meant spending time with the leaders and

followers of the various movements and groups in question in addition to formal interviews. The

relationship between the research subjects and researcher makes close involvement necessary to

properly consider the role of social identity, particularly in light of the analytical framework

being used. It is to this subject that we now turn.

**Group membership and social identity**

As noted above, the discussion to this point has been concerned with the level of

socialization to be expected as typifying all or most individuals from the particular cultural

situation. *Identity* theology is found in many areas of the United States as well as in Britain,

South Africa and other countries. While the members of the various *Identity* group types are

culturally influenced by their country of origin, the particular culture of the individual groups are

at many points in contrast with each other rather than in harmony. To further understand the

variations, this dissertation uses specific theory to aid in the accurate investigation of the

particular socializations within the broader geographic settings as well as across different

cultures. Social identity theory allows us to consider the specific dynamics of the various *Identity*

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[299] Brannan, et. al., "Talking to Terrorists," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, pp. 3-24.

types and individual groups from a perspective embedded in the context of cultural difference as seen above.

The technical use of the term, "social identity" represents a specific body of work often associated with Henri Tajfel and Jonathon Turner at Bristol University in England, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s. Tajfel's research has been widely recognized and applied within the field of social psychology.[300] Social identity theory is particularly helpful to this work in analyzing the relationship between *Identity* adherent individuals and their respective groups. Social identity theory also plays an important role in situating a similar distinction between specific group manifestations of *Identity* theology and the broader international movement, as well as the heretofore largely inaccurate perceptions made from well outside the movement.

The impact of social identity theory is less individualistic in its approach than Floyd Allport's 1924 approach,[301] an approach still widely used, particularly within the United States. A virtual antithesis to social identity theory, Allport proposed that groups have no distinct conceptual status apart from the individuals which make up that group. Allport's view emphasized his belief that social psychology necessarily focused on the individual rather than the group. In sharp distinction to this, social identity theory has at its core the belief that being a member of a group or in other words, "belonging" to a group, is an important part of who the individual is and how he or she defines him or herself. Merely belonging to a group changes the way we behave toward in-group and out-group members. This view asserts that we learn and

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[300] For a basis of study on social identity theory see, Ting-Toomey, *Communicating Across Culture,* 1999. Also see, Michael A. Hogg and Dominic Abrams*, Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988). For coverage of more recent developments in the field, see, the essays and bibliographies in Peter Robinson (ed*.) Social Groups and Identities: Developing the Legacy of Henri Tajfel* (Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 1996); and Stephen Worchel, J. Francisco Morales, Darío Páez and Jean-Claude Deschamps (eds*.) Social Identity: International Perspectives* (London: Sage Publications, 1998, Also see Esler, *Galatians*, 1998, for an application of the theory to Paul's letter to the Galatians.

[301] Floyd Allport, *Social Psychology* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1924).

become who he or she is in part through the group experience and practice. If we want a person

to tell us about who he or she is, that person will in all likelihood to some degree answer the

question in terms of the groups to which the person belongs.

For instance, when speaking to Richard Butler, the ageing leader of Aryan Nations, about

himself, the details he chose to give about himself were always in relation to a larger group.

Pastor Butler says that he is,

> …just a white man who loves God and his race. We're just a group of white men and
> women that don't want to see our race that's the chosen race of God pushed out of
> existence. Aryan Nations is just a group of like-minded white people.[302]

In this brief statement we see, that to a large extent, Richard Butler defines himself

directly in relation to specific groups with which he feels a particular and direct membership. He

calls himself a "white man". In a general sense, Butler seeks to show that he is a part of a much

larger group, the Caucasian 'race'. Further, he sees that he is distinct from some within the

Caucasian race in that he "loves God." At a more particular level, he seeks to identify that he is

"a part of like-minded white people" and here we see the greatest alliance with a smaller and

particular group – Aryan Nations. For Pastor Butler, his prestige and value comes from his

association with these particular groups. His membership in the Caucasian 'race', those that he

sees as loving God and Aryan Nations, and his particular belief that those who belong to Aryan

Nations are the ultimate manifestation of his culture, were both internalized and necessary to

describe Pastor Butler's feelings of self-worth and his view of who he is. [303]

While the extent to which one identifies the contribution of group culture to the

identification of the "self" differs from person to person and group-to-group, the difference relies

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[302] From an interview by telephone with Richard Butler, April 4th, 2000.

[303] Rupert Brown, *Group Processes: Dynamics within and between Groups* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), pp. 20-22.

to a large extent on the ability of the ambient culture to influence the particular group or individual. [304] In the case of most groups operating within a world-view influenced by *Identity* theology, much of the surrounding culture is seen as illegitimate or counter to God's will. Thus, those individuals who might ordinarily be seen in a national, US sense as individualistic, may more appropriately be understood from within a group-culture perspective. This insight will become even more significant as we look more closely at those *Identity* groups later in the dissertation, which have not only adopted a group rather than individualistic orientation but have sought to transform their world-views with the first century Mediterranean culture played out in the pages of Scripture. To some great degree, these groups have abducted the essentials of 'Mediterranean culture', understanding outside stimulus and internal cohesion from this unique perspective. While this infusion of Mediterranean Culture onto the lives of people who would generally be seen as representing an individualistic national group is instructive, it does not comprise the totality of what makes up the various *Identity* groups discussed.

Tajfel's early empirical research was influenced by the "minimum group experiments", conducted by Sherif in American boy's summer camps, in the 1950's. [305] These experiments suggested that any categorization of people in a particularly distinctive group, regardless of the reality of the distinction, had the effect of causing the individuals within the given group to behave within patterns associated with group-oriented behavior. This behavior led to forms of discrimination between perceived in-groups against perceived out-groups. An understanding of this phenomenon makes it easier to understand how *Identity* groups labeled in the literature as unified, can come to see those from outside the artificial label as an out-group or enemy. This

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[304] Hogg and Abrams, *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes,* pp. 12-16.

[305] M. Sherif, *Group Conflict and Cooperation: Their Social Psychology* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964).

continuous feed-back loop then contributes to the escalation of the described discriminatory practices.

While those outside the *Identity* milieu have lumped several disparate groups together in an effort to portray a larger and more dangerous foe, this is not a true "group orientation" as viewed by those within the greater *Identity* constellation. As Esler has said, "the simplest, and perhaps even the ultimate, statement that can be made about a group is that it is a body of people who consider that they are a group."[306] Tajfel is particularly helpful in bringing some sense of order to what makes up a given group by delineating three important components:

> (1) The cognitive component (i.e. in the sense of the knowledge that one belongs to a group),
>
> (2) An evaluative component (in the sense that the notion of the group        and/or one's membership of it may have a positive or negative connotation), and
>
> (3) An emotional component (in the sense that the cognitive and evaluative aspects of the group and one's membership of it may be accompanied by emotions - such as love, hate etc. - directed towards one's own group and towards others which stand in certain relationships to it).[307]

Tajfel's definition of "social identity" suggests that part of an individual's concept of self is derived from their understanding of membership in a given group (or groups) combined with the value and emotional significance attached to the same group identity.[308]

**Stereotyping**

Stereotyping is a helpful reality to human existence. The existence of various stereotypes allows an individual to quickly process complex information about those around them and

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[306] See Brannan, et. al., "Talking to Terrorists," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism,* p. 17.

[307] Henri Tajfel, *Differentiation between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (London et alibi: Academic Press, 1979), p. 28.

[308] *Ibid,* p. 63.

appropriately categorize the given information effectively.  General mental images of certain

types of people are the essence of stereotyping and are an important aspect of our perception and

interpretation of reality. The phenomenon of stereotypes has been the subject of significant

research. This research has shown that people are likely to characterize large human groups on

the basis of a few basic attributes.  Furthermore, the research found that these attributes or

stereotypes about the given 'other' are learned, often from a person's youth and become more

pronounced during situations of conflict between the two groups. Conflict based on these types

of crass or base attributes may be particularly dangerous. [309] Hogg and Adams relate the use of

stereotyping to social identity theory as;

> generalizations about people based on category membership. They are beliefs that all
> members of a particular group have the same qualities, which circumscribe the group and
> differentiate it from other groups. A specific group member is assumed to be, or is treated
> as, essentially identical to other members of the group.[310]

Those then, which see *Identity* theology adherents as an enemy or out-group, are

compelled to view the entire social phenomena as a unified stereotypical and pejorative out-

group. Likewise, *Identity* adherents, based on their understanding of who they are in relation to

each other, their view of scripture and the perception of the portrayal of *Identity* theology within

the literature, leads to extreme distinctions between *Identity* adherents and those outside the

movement.[311] *Identity* adherents are constantly reminded through the press as well as

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[309] Hogg and Abrams, *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes,* p. 67.

[310] *Ibid*, p. 65.

[311] For instance Gayman, from the Church of Israel in Schell City, MO has read , Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel." *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 5, Spring 1993, #1. While not all of the *Identity* believers I spoke with are aware of all the literature on *Identity* theology, they are not completely unaware either. Pseudo-academic books are more likely to have been read than those items in academic journals—but as noted above—there is little difference between the two in this area.

confrontations with those who believe them to hold a stereotypically evil position within society.[312] Importantly for this work, the use of stereotypes is not limited to only those from outside the greater *Identity* family. Many of the groups affected by *Identity* theology view each other with similar stereotypical overlays and thereby draw distinctions between themselves.

Stereotypes in conflict can be seen throughout the world. Rwanda, Palestine, Bosnia and other places are grim reminders of the danger and effectiveness of hate based on stereotypes. The influence of these stereotypes is not limited to the use by the various sub-state activist and social movements toward those outside the groups. That stereotypical belief is often ingrained in a researcher's analytical and hermeneutic framework, especially when inaccurate, determines and maintains a false perception of the described phenomena or group. The dangers are immediately obvious. Simplified stereotypical understandings of the various *Identity* types may lead to an ineffective or lethal use of force that need not have occurred had the true nuance of diversity been understood.

Social identity theory has gone some distance toward alleviating these potential dangers. Not only providing a legitimate framework for analysis, social identity theory has provided several insights for potential understanding and conflict resolution. The three most important for this work are:

a. Crossed categorization – using one social category to cancel out another.

b. Re-categorization – bringing members of two categories together under an inclusive, superordinate one.

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[312] Interview with Ted Weiland, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, 2-5-01.

c.  De-categorization – dissolving the problematic categories altogether, especially by

facilitating contact between members of rival groups.[313]


Facilitating contact between members of rival groups has already proven itself extremely

helpful within the rightwing versus law enforcement context.[314] A similar process of de-

categorization can be seen within a scriptural setting as well,[315] and thus should have potential

legitimacy with *Identity* adherents. When de-categorization occurs, the participants in the

conflict are less influenced by group-based or stereotypical, views and potentially are more

interested in relationships between individuals. This view argues that pre-conflict person-to-

person contact may at times and under suitable conditions negate out-group stereotypes, thus

facilitating understanding and conflict resolution. By actually engaging in conversations with

those from outside are particular culture, we can sometimes (but certainly not always) bridge the

chasms between us.[316] One important goal of this work is to look at how these types of conflict

resolution practices might be employed, rather than continuing to heap more and more out-group

identifiers on those within the *Identity* movement at large. No progress of this type can be made

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[313] The importance of the social identity theory inaugurated by Henri Tajfel in the area of the resolution of intergroup conflict is illustrated by the fact that three social psychologists, Professors E. Cairns, S. Dunn and M. Hewstone have recently been awarded a major grant by the John Templeton Foundation to undertake - in Northern Ireland - the first extensive and empirical study of intergroup forgiveness and inter-faith reconciliation

[314] See, Danny O. Coulson and Elaine Shannon, *No Heroes.* (New York: Pocket Books, 1999), pp. 536-540, for an example of how the idea of decategorization was used by the FBI to avoid conflict and potential violence.

[315] See, Philip F. Esler, "Jesus and the Reduction of Inter-group Conflict: The Parable of the Good Samaritan in the Light of Social Identity Theory", *Biblical Interpretation*, 2000, for an argument that the strategy adopted by Jesus in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37) exemplifies the process of de-categorization in the context of the negative relations between Judeans and Samaritans in first century Palestine.

[316] B. A. Bettencourt, M. B. Brewer, M. R. Croak, and N. Miller, 'Cooperation and the Reduction of Intergroup Bias: The Role of Reward Structure and Social Orientation' in *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 28 (1992), pp. 301-309; M. B. Brewer and N. Miller, "Beyond the Contact Hypothesis: Theoretical Perspectives on Desegregation," in N. Miller, and M. B. Brewer (eds*.), Groups in Contact: The Psychology of Desegregation* (New York: Academic Press, 1984), and Miller, N., Brewer, M. B., and Edwards, K., 'Cooperative Interaction in Desegregated Settings: A Laboratory Analogue' in *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 41 (1985), pp. 63-79.

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in the absence of real communication between the parties in conflict. That communication, which in many cases only calls for conversations between the parties, is the essence of the analytical framework employed throughout this work.

**Methodology employed**

While the outline for the analytical framework employed here is a departure from others being used to describe theologically motivated political activism and thus requires the detailed explanation found above, the methodology involved in using this framework is rather simple. Abduction is a technical term referring to a process of moving between the research subject and the analysis of the same. The process of abduction forms the primary method with which this research has been conducted and presented.

**Abduction**

Abduction is the method of moving between the information acquired in secondary reading and primary resources, interviews, and the analytical analysis made by the researcher, an analysis, which ultimately provides the conclusions presented by the research. This method of utilizing the information gained requires the researcher to constantly evaluate and reevaluate the objectivity and potential prejudice that attacks research of this type. [317]

Constant reevaluation of the prism through which the researcher views the material studied, is essential. Ethnocentric handling and 'agency capture' are the two extremes, which this

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[317] As a methodology for research, the term "abduction" was first and most completely elucidated by Charler Peirce (1839-1914) in his publications, including: Charles S. Peirce, "Some consequences of four incapacities," *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, (1868), 2, 140-157; Charles Peirce, "Deduction, induction, and hypothesis," *Popular Science Monthly*, (1878),13, 470-482 and Charles Peirce, "The fixation of belief," *Popular Science Monthly*, (1877), 12, 1-15.

method and analytical framework must guard against. Self evaluation as well as external

evaluations made by pre-appointed referees and supervisors aid in the focus of cultural

awareness and objectivity.

## Case studies and their identification

An initial study of *Identity* theology through the available literature in association with

my own contacts with *Identity* adherents led me to think that the current typology being used to

represent "the *Identity* movement" was unsatisfactory at best and probably inaccurate at the other

extreme.[318] During this preliminary study, a clear difference based primarily on the social

development of the various groups and their particular scriptural exegesis emerged and two

categories of *Identity* theology were identified. These categories of Repentant and Rebellious

*Identity* theology served as a starting point for the development of the case studies used in the

work now at hand.

Each case study was chosen on the basis of several criteria including; theological

persuasion (seed-line vs. non-seed *Identity* theology), historical activist nature, prior recognition

of the leadership or group in the extant literature, group accessibility and distinctions within the

various groups social manifestations. Following is a brief synopsis of the groups used as case

studies within this research.

### *The Church of Israel*

The Church of Israel is located just outside Schell City, Missouri where pastor Dan

Gayman serves as the church's senior pastor. Gayman is a long time *Identity* advocate as well as

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[318] See, Brannan, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations." *Terrorism and Political Violence*, pp. 106-118.

one of the principal theological writers within the *Identity* theology genre. Gayman's book, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15,*[319] is foundational to many of the other *Identity* groups and leaders understanding of *Identity* theology both in the US and internationally. The church has been the subject of prior academic study,[320] but primarily from the group's millenarian perspective. Theological considerations are assumed to be essentially parallel to other *Identity* types. A detailed reading of the churches relevant literature in conjunction with detailed interviews with the church's leadership and members betrays a much more detailed and involved belief system.[321]

*Ku Klux Klan – Harrison Arkansas*

Pastor Thom Robb leads the White Patriots of the Ku Klux Klan, based in Harrison Arkansas. The group is a thoroughgoing Ku Klux Klan organization, yet has attempted to separate itself from most of the other Klan organizations in the United States. It follows the same ritual[322] and hierarchal structures[323] but the rhetoric and actions of the group have moderated compared to their own leadership's past actions as well as differing from many of the other Klan groups outside Harrison Arkansas. This difference between Klan group actions and rhetoric is based upon their particular interaction between doctrinal beliefs and social development.

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[319] Dan Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15*, (Schell City Missouri: Church of Israel, 1976).

[320] See, Michael Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement,* (Chapel Hill,NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997); as well as Kaplan, Jeffrey Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel." *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 5, Spring 1993, pp. 30-82.

[321] Kaplan recognized the nuance and intricacy of the theology involved in his research, see, Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel." *Terrorism and Political Violence*, pp. 30-82.

[322] With members still using the notorious white hoods and robes and carrying out traditional cross burnings.

[323] With Pastor Robb as the top leader – EG Grand Wizard.

The break up of the Klan into smaller groups led by charismatic leaders is not unusual within the greater Klan at this time in history. This particular group was chosen to represent the Klan style *Identity* theology primarily because of Pastor Robb's attempt to push the theological importance of *Identity* within his Klan's social group. Illustrative of Robb's dependence on theological authority is his use of the title 'Pastor.' The White Patriots of the Ku Klux Klan have also been previously cited in academic works,[324] yet with little consideration of the theological or social uniqueness of the group within the *Identity* genre.

*Aryan Nations*

Aryan Nations, was headquartered in Hyden Lake, Idaho until September 2000,[325] and has been at the center of controversy throughout its existence. The principal leader and founder, Pastor Richard Butler, has gained international notoriety through his granting of numerous interviews, which contain explicit and unabashed Nazi apologetics. With his decidedly 'Hitleresque' view of the Scripture, Butler has sought to attach a specific kind of *Identity* theology. Watchdog groups and academic writers alike have used this *Identity* typology to represent the greater *Identity* movement as a whole. The representation is highly inaccurate and fails to accommodate the idiosyncratic hermeneutic through which Butler derives Aryan Nations theology. The case was chosen in part, for its extremist and violent manifestations, which contrast with many of the other *Identity* groups.

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[324] See for instance, Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement,* pp. 110, 114, 210 and 218.

[325] Aryan Nations recently lost their 20-acre compound in Idaho due to a civil law suit judgment against the group in the amount of 6.3 million dollars. See, "A neo-nazis last stand," *Time,* August 26, 2000, or, "Trial told of paranoia at Aryan camp," *Associated Press*, September 1, 2000.

*Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord (CSA)*

The CSA represents the militia styled *Identity* group. Though the formal group is no longer together, former leaders and members are accessible, making this study particularly useful in contrast to the more religiously focused groups (such as Church of Israel or Mission to Israel) as well as the Nazi and Klan styled *Identity* influence. CSA was located in the Ozarks, on the Missouri/Arkansas border and was disbanded due to law enforcement arrest and seizure during the mid-1980's. The group initially based its formation and existence on a particular millenarian perspective which was not *Identity* related in any way. *Zaraphath-Horeb*, as the precursor organization to CSA was known, were not significantly unique in their millenarian beliefs from other fundamentalist Protestant churches in the Ozarks. The group makes an interesting addition to this dissertation because of the changes within the group's focus and actions based on observable theological and sociological diversions from their essentially unremarkable beginnings.


*Mission to Israel*

Mission to Israel consists of a small and ageing congregation led by Pastor Ted Weiland. The importance of this case is derived not from their humble church population, but rather, from the efforts of the pastor and The congregations in the area of *Identity* theology publishing. Weiland has produced an impressive array of works, which enjoy a wide readership and command considerable influence. The church has a past association with Pete Peters' *Scripture for America*, based in Colorado as well as a current association with the Idaho based *America's Promise Ministry*, led by Dave Barley. The church's publication of the book, *God's Covenant*

*People: Yesterday, Today and Forever*[326] has catapulted the group's importance within the

greater *Identity* genre – and yet – this important work, as well as others the group has published,

refute many of the assumed primary and essential doctrines of *Identity* theology. Journalists and

watchdog groups write about both the pastor and the group at large regularly,[327] yet neither has

been approached for an interview by academic researchers. This fact is particularly disturbing

given the intense theological influence the Mission to Israel has had throughout the various

*Identity* groups.

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[326] Ted Weiland, *God's Covenant People: Yesterday, Today and Forever*. (Scottsbluff, NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 1997).

[327] For instance see the ADL or SPLC websites for comment on the "evil ideology" of pastor Weiland.

# CHAPTER 4

## BRITISH ISRAELISM: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROOTS OF *IDENTITY* THEOLOGY

I have tried to show that the evidence from anthropology concurs with history in refuting the popular belief in a Jewish race descended from the biblical tribe.[328] *Arthur Koestler, The Thirteenth Tribe*

### Introduction

*Identity* theology did not emerge in the United States without a history. British-

Israelism—the belief that the true Biblical Israelites are to be found among the British and

related people—serves as an important foundation in the later construction of *Identity* theology.

This chapter briefly outlines some of the historic progression and development of the British-

Israel movement while observing the movement's dependence on personal revelation, its use of

scripture, linguistics and history in making a case for their central belief. This exploration is

made while asking the question, "Is British-Israelism Christian theology or something else?" The

question is answered in relation to the claim it makes to be Christian Fundamentalism.

Christian theology is not an abstract term to which a writer can ascribe his or her own

meaning without correlating that meaning to what has come before. An individual may describe

a given theology—any theology and then call it "Christian"—but unless that theology meets the

criteria of accepted norms and doctrine of the broader Christian community, it may be theology,

but it isn't necessarily "Christian" theology. What then is Christian theology? It is a system of

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[328] Arthur Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe* (Palmdale, CA: Omni Publications, 1976), p.199.

doctrines derived from a study of God as understood in the light of the Christ event (the

incarnation, life, teachings, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

The term "Christian" was first noted in Acts 11:26, when the Disciples of Christ are first

called Christians. The passage reads;

> And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year
> they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were
> first called Christians in Antioch.[329]

The term Christians is used twice more in the New Testament, once in Acts 28:26 and again in I

Peter 4:16. In each of these three New Testament uses, the term defines a relation between

disciples that believed Jesus was the Christ—the actual Son of God.  Biblically then, "Christian"

described a specific people with particular doctrines developed in relation to Christ the Son of

God as described in the Bible.[330]

Thus it would be appropriate for a true Christian theology to be Christ-centric in relation

to the Jesus of the New Testament. While this may appear obvious, it is possible to claim a

theology to be Christian—while not focusing the study on Jesus as the Son of God. For instance,

a Mormon theology may claim to be Christian, yet the theology is based on a Jesus who is

claimed to be the brother of the Devil.[331] Similarly, Jehovah's Witnesses followers claim to use a

Christian theology but their doctrine asserts that the New Testament Jesus was actually Michael

the Archangel.[332] While these sects claim to be discussing Christian theology, they fail to discuss

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[329] Acts 11:26 NKJV

[330] See John 1: 1 & 14, John 20: 28; Colossians 2: 9; Philippians 2: 5-8 or Hebrews 1: 8. In these passages Jesus Christ is described as God and man so that a theology relating to the God described in these passages might appropriately be considered Christian theology.

[331] John H. Gerstner *The Theology of the Major Sects* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1960), pp. 41-52.

[332] *Ibid*, pp. 29-40. For a more readily accessible note on how these sects differ from Christian theology, also see; http://www.carm.org/dictionary/dic_c-d.htm#Christian, (cited August 15, 2006).

Christ as Jesus the actual Son of God—an important distinction—but a Christian theology with Jesus Christ as the actual Son of God is exactly what is found in both British Israelism and *Identity* theology.

## Early influences

British-Israelism as a general idea pre-dates anything that might be construed as the *Identity* movement by several centuries.[333] Many within the greater Israel-Identity movement[334] point to the *Declaration of Arbroath* signed on April 6, 1320 by the ancient Scottish leaders as "conclusive evidence" of a historical assumption of the British people equating with 'the people of Israel.' Although the statement may appear 'thin gruel' as evidence of a connection between the British and the original Israelites to those outside the movement, this type of 'evidence' is very persuasive within the various movements and groups. In the second paragraph of this letter addressed to the Pope, it reads;[335]

> Most Holy Father and Lord, we know and from the chronicles and books of the ancients we find that among other famous nations our own, the Scots, has been graced with widespread renown. They journeyed from Greater Scythia by way of the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Pillars of Hercules, and dwelt for a long course of time in Spain among the most savage tribes, but nowhere could they be subdued by any race, however barbarous. Thence they came, twelve hundred years after the people of Israel crossed the Red Sea, to their home in the west where they still live today.[336]

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[333] See for instance, John Barbour *The Bruce* (A.A.M Duncan, ed.) (Edinburgh: Canongate Classics, 1997), pp. 111-112, or for the reference from which most modern British-Israel followers find the information, see, E. Raymond Capt, *The Scottish Declaration of Independence* (Muskogee, Oklahoma: Hoffman Printing CO, reprinted 1996).

[334] 'Israel-Identity' and 'the Israel message' are labels that many from within the movement itself use to describe their beliefs.

[335] Ironically, at this important point, both British-Israel and *Identity* theology adherents each use the document as authoritative evidence, but they fail to recognize that the letter is addressed to a Catholic Pope. Catholics in general and the Pope in particular are relegated to a negative religious position at best. At worst, both British-Israel believers and *Identity* adherents see Catholics as anti-Christian. Some within these groups see the Pope as the Anti-Christ himself!

[336] Barbour, *The Bruce,* 111-112 or, Capt, *The Scottish Declaration of Independence,* 1996.

Certainly as early as 1600s,[337] theories had emerged containing many of the same themes found in later British-Israel writings. These ideas led to or influenced today's theologically motivated political actors. To cast a large net, the idea can be identified by the belief that the British people are direct descendants of the "ten lost tribes" of Israel.[338] This very general view becomes more focused in the work of Richard Brothers (1757-1824) as early as 1793.[339]

A retired British naval officer, Brothers believed himself appointed by God, through the direction of divine visions, to lead the true Israelite people back to the Holy Land.[340] Brothers was so sure of his calling that he provided a new covenant between God and his "Israel" people in Britain, written by Brothers. This covenant was published after his death by John Finleyson in June of 1830, some six years after Brothers death.[341] Brothers was not satisfied with merely asserting that the British were actually hidden Israel, although that assertion did form the central theme of his message, he provided a step by step guide to the formation of the new British Israel country that he wanted to establish in Jerusalem. This task was completed through the

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[337] See for example, *Origins of the British Israelites* (London: Mellen, 1993), or, H.L. Goudge, *The British Israel Theory* (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co. Limited, 1943), pp. 4-7.

[338] L.V. Powles, *The Faith and Practice of Heretical Sects* (Westminster: The Mother's Union, 1952), p. 84-85.

[339] The assertions of British-Israelism at this point must be understood in context. The modern state of Great Britain is in no way representative of the period discussed by Richard Brothers or others of his time writing on British-Israelism. The history of Britain may be broken into several distinguishing periods or eras. What might be called Pre-historic Britain lasted from 5000 BC to 100 BC. From 55 BC to 410 AD, Britain was under a period of Roman influence. Early kingdoms and Anglo Saxon influence began in approximately 410 AD and continued until 1066 AD when Britain was consolidated under Kind Harold II. With the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215 and the crowning of Henry III in 1216, Britain could be readily recognized as a particular nation. See, Kenneth O. Morgan *The Oxford History of Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[340] Explained in great detail in, Richard Brothers, *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times* (West-Springfield: Edward Gray, 1797) pp. 5-47.

[341] Richard Brothers, *The New Covenant Between God and His People* (London: Findley Son, 1870), pp. 54-56 This work was first published posthumously in 1830. Brothers died in 1824.

publication of 93 specific articles directing "Israelites" to establish government, education

centers, commerce and every aspect of late 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century life.[342] Particularly

interesting if also self-serving in light of Brothers' incarceration for insanity is the specific article

issued in the covenant, which states:

> The disorder termed lunacy is erroneous in application. There is in reality, no such disorder, nor ever was. [343]

Brothers paid close attention to every detail in relation to the British-Israel Jerusalem he

envisioned.  Beautiful and expert drawings, paintings and etchings can be found representing his

particular view of what life would look like in this new country.[344] His confidant and housemate,

John Finleyson, provided these artistic renderings.  One of Finleyson's finest renderings is a

large etching of the university Brothers had planned for the new city. The representation is of an

imposing structure with the following description below it:

> The side view of a COLLEGE HALL, 300 feet long and 74 feet broad; twelve of which form a large square, three on each side of 1191 feet each, and constitutes a college. Five such colleges in each quarter constitute an university. They will be for the education of the Hebrew youth and those of all nations who choose it, in divinity, law, medicine, astronomy, and every other useful branch of learning for the benefit of mankind. Sixty such halls being in each quarter, and 240 in the four, the number will be sufficient to accommodate Professors and students. Their grandeur and the way disposed will greatly assist in adorning that Capitol which his recorded shall be the admiration of the world! Delineated under GOD"S direction from the last nine chapters of EZEKIEL for the future JERUSALEM, by Mr. Brothers[345]

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[342] *Ibid*, pp. 7-50

[343] *Ibid*, pp. 13

[344] See for instance the many color plates representing the prescribed "Hebrew" dress to be worn by those living in Brothers' new Jerusalem, found in Brothers, *The New Covenant Between God and His People,* 1870.

[345] This etching was acquired by the New York Public Library from a Hasidic book dealer in Jerusalem. It can be viewed by appointment at the New York Public Library, Dorot Jewish Division, New York, NY.

To the rather general idea that Christians are Israelites in a figurative sense, espoused years before by Puritans and others,[346] Brothers added many specifics including most importantly the idea that the true Israelites were found within the British population.[347] The latter proposition, known as "hidden Israel",[348] is central to both the British-Israel and *Identity* movements. It is from this point that the first leap to a position, unsubstantiated by Scripture is made. Brothers relied on special and personal revelations from God to establish much of his belief system,[349] something which others following him in the British-Israel movement continued.[350] He never provides evidence beyond his own assertions for the claims he makes. For instance Brothers speaks of his revelations from God in relation to the identification of other "Israelite" families in Britain, saying;

> There are many families of the same origin as those three I have named, made known to me by revelation, but I am forbid to mention any of them at present for public knowledge.[351]

The three main points, which Brothers articulates for followers to build upon, are found in three of his principal works, *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times,*[352] *Prince and*

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[346] William Cameron, *The Covenant People*. (Merrimac: Destiny Publishers, 1966), chapters 1 & 2

[347] Laid out in great detail in, Brothers, *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times,* pp. III- IV, also see, *The Dictionary of National Biography*, 1967-68: 1350-1353

[348] *The Dictionary of National Biography*, 22 Vols., (London: Oxford University Press, 1967-68), 2, pp. 1350-1353

[349] Richard Brothers, *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times* (West-Springfield: Edward Gray, 1797).

[350] See for instance the popular apology for British-Israelism by, John Wilson, *Our Israelitish Origins*, (Schell City, MO: The Church of Israel – reprinted 1996), first published in 1840.. This work has been reprinted and sold by the Church of Israel as it has become a standard text viewed as authoritative by *Identity* leaders and followers alike.

[351] Brothers, *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times,* p. 48

[352] *Ibid*, 1797.

*Prophet: Calculations on the Commencement of the Millennium*[353] and *The New Covenant Between God and His People*.[354] The main points, listed below are evidenced in Brothers own writings:

- **Brothers as Davidic prince and prophet** – a man chosen by God.

I am not in the least acquainted with the man I have mentioned, whom God was pleased to distinguish by so great a testimony of his regard, but although I am not, and our names are different, *he is, as well as myself, descended from David, king of Israel.* The Countess of Buckinghamshire, whom I am no more acquainted with than the strangers I mentioned before, is likewise descended from David, king of Israel; the family she is married into are also of the Hebrews, and are descended from Joseph the once president of Egypt.[355] (emphasis added)

In obedience to the sacred command of the Lord God, *whose servant and prophet I am,* I

publish this writing, that it may be translated into all languages, for the information and

benefit of all nations.[356] (emphasis added)

- **A hidden Israel** – within Europe and especially the British nation.

A man that had been an officer in the navy, whose immediate ancestors have been separated from the Jews such a considerable length of time as to make them forget they ever belonged to the name, such a man declaring himself openly to the world a Prophet of God, the revealed Prince allotted to order the sudden return of the Hebrews from all nations, and govern them in the land of Israel, will, with some reason, I allow, excite both astonishment and doubt; but from the multiplied recorded testimonies I produce, which no other on earth can, it ought not to prevail with any person as a just objection against believing what I write.[357]

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[353] Richard Brothers, *Prince and Prophet: Calculations on the Commencement of the Millennium*[353] (West-Springfield: Edward Gray, 1794) p.4.

[354] Brothers, *The New Covenant Between God and His People*, 1870.

[355] Brothers, *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times,* p. 47.

[356] Brothers, *Calculations on the Commencement of the Millennium,* p. 5

[357] Brothers, *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times,* p. 4; Also see all of, Brothers, *The New Covenant Between,* 1870.

- **Millenarian Visions** – 'special revelation' of a millenarian type becomes a hallmark

  within the movement.

*Therefore, having Authority, I proceed through the Scripture, regularly uncovering, by revealed knowledge as I go*, its sacred Records which have been preserved for me, holding each one up for public view, beautiful and clear to the open mind; that all men may behold and examine them, that all men may perceive their truth, and admire at this late hour of the world, not only what was wrote by Daniel at Babylon, explained in London, but likewise a similar communication of revealed knowledge.[358] (emphasis added)

A knowledge of the Scriptures, the prophecies I have mentioned, and all that I have wrote besides, *have been communicated to me through visions and revelations* from the Lord God: the Prophet Daniel, and St. John the Apostle, were instructed, in the same manner, to write what they have.[359] (emphasis added)

Although Brothers was institutionalized for 11 years as being insane, this did not prevent

some of his followers from continuing his work.[360] Nor did it stop the following generation of

British-Israelites, such as John Wilson (1800-1871) from building on his foundation.[361]

## Developing "evidence" for British-Israelism

Brothers' thrill at producing his-own "evidence" was continued by those that followed.

John Wilson championed the cause by seeking to give 'empirical' evidence for 'hidden Israel'

rather than relying on a particular interpretation or personal revelation.[362] The evidence given is

still used today as "proof" for *Identity* beliefs. Although not a linguist himself, Wilson felt

certain that many of the words we see in English were actually Israelite (rather than Hebrew) in

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[358] Brothers, *Calculations on the Commencement of the Millennium,* p. IV.

[359] Brothers, *Calculations on the Commencement of the Millenniu*, p. 58.

[360] See, L.V. Powles, *The Faith and Practice of Heretical Sects* (Westminster: The Mother's Union, 1952), p. 85.

[361] See, Wilson, *Our Israelitish Origins,* 1840.

[362] Wilson, *Our Israelitish Origins,* 1840.

origin.[363] An integral part of this "evidence" becomes another important idea for the

development of British-Israelism and its transformation into *Identity*. The Israelite tribes of

Ephraim and Judah were believed to be distinct races, with the white British-Israelites emerging

from the tribe of Ephraim in the north and the Jewish people coming from the tribe of Judah in

the south. Wilson asks the rhetorical question,

> Is not the house of Israel, and especially the tribe of Ephraim, clearly distinguished from
> that of Judah, in both the historical and prophetical parts of Scripture?[364]

Naturally, since the British Israelites came from the northern tribes, it followed that the

names of geographic locations across the north of Europe came from these people, e.g. Danube,

Denmark, Danzig, etc. was supposed to have originated from the Israelite tribe of Dan. David

Williams highlights an obvious problems with this system of identification and suggests that the

Northern lost tribes must also have then made a hike across Vietnam, naming Danang, Dien Bien

Phu etc.[365] Possibly they went to Southeast Asia to visit their lost brothers, the Samurai

(evidently trekking to that location from Samaria), in Japan as suggested a few years later by Lt.

Col. W.G. MacKendrick, the rationale being that 'Samurai' sounds like 'Samaria'.[366] Just twenty

years before the Japanese attacked the Americans at Pearl Harbor, MacKendrick uses his view of

'prophecy' to suggest,

> If Americans knew their future as laid down in the Bible they would fear Japan as little as
> they now do Canada, Australia, or New Zealand, because the Samurai and up, or the

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[363] Wilson, *Our Israelitish Origins,* pp. 190-196.

[364] Wilson, *Our Israelitish Origins,* p. 234.

[365] David M. Williams, *British Israelism: An Expose* (unpublished research paper, 1998).

[366] William Gordon Mackendrick, *The Destiny of the British Empire and the U.S.A.* (Toronto: Commonwealth Publishers, 1940), for a more complete picture of the search to find the various 'lost' tribes of Israel in other parts of the world, see, Rivka Gonen, *The Quest for the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel* (North Bergen, NJ: Book-Mart Press, 2002) pp. 103-124 especially for the review of the 'lost' tribes in Japan.

white Japanese, are apparently our own people of Joseph's seed who dwelt in Samaria, before the dispersal of the ten tribes, hence their name, Samurai.[367]

A much later work by William Cameron continues the pseudo-linguistic case with more "evidence." This time we find that Scots are called Gaels because they came from Galilee[368] and that Cornish miners prove their Eastern heritage through a song that they sing including a verse about Joseph of Arimathea being a tin merchant.[369] British-Israel assertions such as this are not substantiated by standard historical inquiry. Rather they are quietly forgotten when problematic situations which appear to call the assertions into conflict, such as war with the country in question (Japan) arises.

Etymological evidence is a common apologetic tool of those within the Israel *Identity* movement. For the 'true believer,' the correlation between the two languages, English and Hebrew (or 'Israelite' as some *Identity* believers prefer) is uncanny and 'proof positive of the Israel truth.' [370]

A particularly common assertion of adherents as well as their leaders is that, the very word "British" is a conformation of the truth of the Israel *Identity* message. The assertion is that 'British' is a conjunction of two Israelite root words, *b'rith*, corresponding with the idea of 'covenant,' and *ish*, corresponding with 'man.' Thus, the British and their kinsmen the

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[367] MacKendrick, *The Destiny of the British Empire and the U.S.A*, p. 205.

[368] William Cameron, *The Covenant People*. (Merrimac: Destiny Publishers, 1966), p. 46.

[369] William Cameron, *The Covenant People*. (Merrimac: Destiny Publishers, 1966), p. 49.

[370] For instance, pastors Daniel Gayman and Ted Weiland have both seemed to replace the word "Hebrew" with "Israelite" at several junctures in our various conversations. While they are willing to use the title "Hebrew," they seem to replace it at some points to reaffirm the fact that they do not mean 'Jewish' when referring to "Hebrew." Phone discussions between September 1998 and August 2002 in Missouri and Nebraska with both Gayman and Weiland.

Americans are honestly the "covenant people," the Chosen of God, irrefutable evidence for those who are already predisposed to the British-Israel worldview.[371]

Language experts today do not support the linguistic assertions of the British-Israel or *Identity* writers. Modern linguistic experts appear uniformly convinced that English as a language is a derivative of German while Hebrew finds its roots in the Afro-Asiatic Semitic languages.[372]

**Pyramidology**

A further "evidence" being developed alongside of but not necessarily as a specific part of British-Israelism was the belief that the great Pyramids of Egypt held some secret key to understanding all of history.[373] Pyramidology, as it was called, served the developers of British-Israel as both a novelty to attract the curious as well as giving potential adherents the belief that the system was developing in tandem with current scientific concerns.[374] For instance, the well-known British-Israelism commentator, Edward Hine (1825-1891), suggested:

> Whence it may come to be generally confessed before many more years pass away, that to no sources will Christians be more indebted for substantial proofs and additional and unexpected evidence to the truth of Christianity, than to the Great Pyramid, which stands in, but is not of, Egypt, as Egypt was in the days of her profanity.[375]

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[371] This "evidence" has been given to me by *Identity* believers of the, Aryan Nations, Church of Israel and Ku Klux Klan varieties. See also, Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*, p. 107.

[372] See, Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness,* pp. 106 –107. Also confirmed with Defense Intelligence Agency, linguistic expert, Joseph Dobbles, Washington DC, July, 2001.

[373] Edward Hine, *England's Coming Glories* (Glasgow: Hay Nisbet, 1880) Containing also, *The Glory of the Pyramids*, by Professor C. Piazzi Smyth, pp. 204-205.

[374] See Davidson, 1948.

[375] Hine, *England's Coming Glories,* pp. 204-205.

Measurement systems, mathematics, building materials and methods as well as a Gnostic understanding of engineering were all examined and proposed as a link to proving that the lost tribes of Israel—using their God given skill and intellect—had been at work during the dispersal of 'lost tribes.'[376] These pyramid specific writings were found in books as well as the British weekly journal, *The Banner of Israel*.[377] Useful as a recruiting tool and interesting to the broader public, Pyramidology never became a focus of the movement. Rather, while 'evidence' like this was developed as a support, the central tenet and hermeneutic remained the identification of Britain with the lost tribes of Israel.

**Expansionism and racism**

During the period of the movement's growth and expansion in 1870-1890, concurrent developments in the British political arena, and indeed the Western world in general, added fuel to the fire. Edward Hine, now building on the 'rock solid evidence,' which came before him, wove a theological web, which supported many of the existing British and American feelings seen in ideas of Manifest Destiny and Imperialism.[378] Successes in national expansion could now be justified theologically as a blessing from God to his true people, Israel.[379]

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[376] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right*, pp. 12-14.

[377] Charles Homer, "A Recension of the Great Pyramid Measures, *The Banner of Israel,* Volume VIII, January 9, 1884, p.53.

[378] For a view of Manifest Destiny and the relations between the US and Britain see, Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1986) or for a view of Manifest Destiny more generally, see, Anders Stephanson, *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right* (New York NY: Hill and Wang, 1995).

[379] Barkun *Religion and the Racist Right*, pp. 8-24, 80.

**The developing idea of "race"**

Race as an idea was developing at the same time as British-Israelism. Some of the earliest academic efforts related to racial development suggested that the different races were a product of multiple acts of creation.[380] Later work relied on evolutionary principles but suggested that the commingling of races produced inferior offspring and that certain races were superior to others intellectually and physically.[381] British-Israelism was clearly in step with other branches of academic endeavor of the time, but which may now appear absurd to some modern readers.

Until this stage of the development of British-Israelism and *Identity*, what was missing in any significant form was the now important racist element.[382] This aspect would develop a short time later in America, as specific groups added their social views to the theological framework of British Israelism.[383] While some later manifestations of the theology would replace any hope for a redeemed Jewish population, British-Israelism at this point saw the Southern tribe of Judah as Jewish and important. They saw themselves as true Israel and as a kind of big brother, necessary to the final eschatological victory to be realized. For most of British-Israel's history, it saw itself as true Israel, and the more important element of the End Times equation. And yet, the Southern tribe of Judah, the modern Jews, were still not only redeemable but necessary to the eschatological plan of redemption in the minds of British-Israelite thinkers, writers and adherents. [384]

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[380] See, H.F. Augstein (ed.) *Race: The Origins of an Idea, 1760-1850,* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1996), pp. 10-2310-23.

[381]. Augstein, *The Origins of an Idea,* pp. 240-260.

[382] This racist element is now important in some, but not all, of the *Identity* strains at which this work looks.

[383] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* p. 8. This is not to say that the racist element was non-existent, Thomas Carlyle did make an influence but it was not able to flourish as it would in some later groups.

[384] Hine, *England's Coming Glories,* 1880.

Hine moved away from the Wilson's earlier view of Judah, which focused on their intermarriage with non-Israelites and stressed the need for the remnant British Israelites to join with the remnant tribes of Judah in reestablishing the historic land of Israel.[385] Later British actions in Palestine were easily linked by followers to Hine's ideas,[386] for a time making the British mandate in Palestine a "proof" of their position and a hope that the later Zionist project was in actuality prophecy coming to fulfillment. Hine was also important to British-Israelism as he popularized the belief in America—where it would find fertile ground for development both in the British-Israel form and in its mutation, which would evolve into several schools of thought known in general as *Identity* theology.

## Fundamentalism

In, *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*,[387] published by the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, 1917, several essential Christian doctrines were outlined, which the various authors and their supporters believed formed the essential doctrines of the Christian faith. The term 'Fundamentalism" emerged from this work and was initially applied to those Christians that believed the doctrines outlined in the four volumes to be essential—or fundamental—to the Christian faith. Over time, and certainly today, the term has taken on other meanings and is often applied to religious zealots of all faiths, especially those labeled "terrorists."[388] While the term

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[385] See, Wilson, *Our Israelitish Origins,* 1850 and Hine, *England's Coming Glories* , 1880, and, Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* p. 11.

[386] This includes actions by the British in Palestine until WWII.

[387] See, R. A. Torrey, *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*. (Los Angeles: The Bible Institute of Los Angeles, 1917).

[388] For instance, following the 9/11 attacks, it has become commonplace to refer to religious Islamic people as Fundamentalists while nominal/secular Moslems are not referred to in this manner. See, among many others,

'Fundamentalism' has become pejorative in recent years, the essentials outlined in that early work are the same tenets, which historically have encapsulated the distinctive doctrines of the Christian faith. This is true for even the most conservative and strict commentators looking to outline what is "Christian" and what are not.

The beliefs these conservatives outlined as necessary to be distinctly Christian are;

1) A belief in the inspired and inerrant Bible;

2) A belief in the Virgin Birth.

3) A belief in the deity of Christ and his atoning death for sin on the cross;

4) The belief in the bodily resurrection and ascension;

5) The belief that all men are 'fallen' in sin. A condition which separates fallen man from God's salvation;

6) That God's salvation is by justification through faith;

This more strict and conservative position is used herein to analyze the theological positions now in question, for two reasons. First, the conservative nature of the Fundamentalist essentials is more restrictive than the typical theologies, which this work seeks to identify and delineate. Secondly, the theological positions represented in British-Israelism and *Identity* theology claim to be ultra-conservative and Fundamentalist in their approach to understanding scripture. It is to a Fundamentalist-Christian position, which the various group's claim to ascribe, and therefore a legitimate standard by which to judge their claim.[389] Fundamentalism is accepted

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Amy Waldman, "How in a Little British Town Jihad Found Young Converts," *New York Times,* April 24, 2002. The term is also used in relation to Jewish as well as Christian believers.

[389] For example, see *The Church of Israel* statement of faith at, www.churchofisrael.com, (cited March 17, 2001) or, www.aryannations.com (cited March 17, 2001) to see the claims of both the Church of Israel and the Aryan Nations, to fundamentalist orthodoxy.

as Christian—unpopular among academics and wider society—but Christian. If then British-

Israelism, or even *Identity* later on, remain theologically aligned along the essentials included in

the classic Ecumenical confessions, the Reformation Solas[390] and Fundamentalist essentials, it is

legitimate to regard the system as Christian.

For instance, Mowbray says on this subject;

> [h]e recognizes that the British Israel theory is in close connection with what is called
> Fundamentalism; and he would wish to argue with Fundamentalist, as far as possible, on
> their own principles, and to show them that even on these the British Israelite theory is
> untenable.[391]

British-Israelism as a theological system clearly falls within the above outlined Christian

fundamentalist belief system. It sees the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, as the inspired

and inerrant Word of God. British-Israel believers earnestly hold to the beliefs in the deity of

Christ and the view that it is His atoning death on the cross that makes it possible for the elect to

have salvation, that man is in a 'fallen' condition of sin and that salvation comes through

justification by faith. It seeks to understand the role of Israel as God's elect in Scripture in a

literal rather than spiritualized sense. Furthermore, British-Israel theology asserts that Christ was

resurrected and ascended into heaven. Finally, that Christ will return to judge the world, consign

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[390] The Solas of the Reformation were, *Sola Gratia* (grace alone), *Sola, Scriptura* (Scripture alone), *Sola Christo* (Christ alone) and *Sola Fida* (faith alone). These statements of the Reformers serve as a marker of the essential doctrines of the Protestant Church, which emerged from the Reformation period. They remain to this day the hallmarks of faith and the base of essential doctrines for modern Reformed believers. See, David G. Hagopian (ed.) *Back to Basics* (Phillipsburg NJ: PR Publishing, 1996), for an introduction into basic protestant reformed theology.

[391] Goudge, *The British Israel Theory,* p. v.

the Devil and unrepentant sinners to hell and resurrect those who belong to Him to live eternally

in heaven with God, all are affirmed as real and important within British-Israel theology.[392]

The central tenet of British-Israel theology—that of a hidden Israel found among the

British and their extension—does not deny any of these essential doctrines outlined above.

Furthermore, and perhaps surprisingly, the doctrine of election based on national origin found in

British-Israelism did not historically, nor in its more modern manifestations, deny that the

election of the British in some way excluded non-British people from salvation. This chief belief

only added to this "chosen peoples" responsibility to bring the gospel to other nations.[393]

**British-Israel's hermeneutic**

British-Israelism asserts that its theology is based on the rock solid ground of scripture.[394]

With this claim, British-Israel thought means something specific and particular. The movement

is explicit that the belief in scriptural authority is absolute. The Bible—particularly the King

James Version of the bible—is believed to be inerrant, and inspired by the Holy Spirit.[395] These

are important aspects for the later transformation into *Identity* theology. It is important primarily

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[392] See, Frank S. *Mead, Handbook of Denominations in the United States*. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1970) pp.76-77 for a view of the British-Israel based Worldwide Church of God positions explained and, *op.cit.*, http://www.british-israel.net/USA2.htm (cited April 13, 2002) for a presentation of the generally orthodox beliefs of the loose association of British-Israel believers represented there.

[393] This 'responsibility' to bring the message of Christ to other nations included then and in some cases now those 'nations,' which are comprised of predominately non-white and Jewish populations. See, Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right*, pp. 75-101, in addition, see, http://www.british-israel.net/USA2.htm (cited April 13, 2002). This distinction is important to those *Identity* theologies derived from the writings of Ted Weiland.

[394] See, Wilson, 1850/1993 for an historical example, or, http://www.british-israel.net/USA2.htm (cited April 13, 2002) for the continuing modern version. Also see, *Religion and the Racist Right*, pp. 30-45.

[395] Many of the *Identity* groups see the King James Version of the Bible as the only truly inspired word of God. The debate about acceptable translations of the Bible rages within Evangelical circles throughout the United States, not just within *Identity* circles. The question of inspiration and authority of the King James Version are returned to below.

because of the relation of *Identity* theology with the Fundamentalist movement in general within the United States and several other countries.[396]

British-Israelism starts in the book of Genesis, explaining that the British and their extended lineage's true identity as the 'house of Israel,' has been misinterpreted for most within the Christian church. To really understand the prophetic words that scripture gives, one must understand that the 'house of Israel' refers directly to the British people, with a clear distinction being made between the house of Judah and the house of Israel. British-Israel believers assert that there is evidence for this throughout the Bible. They cite, for example, Jeremiah 12:14-15, where the prophet says;

> Thus says the Lord: "Against all my evil neighbors who touch the inheritance which I have caused My people Israel to inherit – behold, I will pluck them out of their land and pluck out the house of Judah from among them. Then it shall be after I have plucked them out, that I will return and have compassion on them and bring them back, everyone to his heritage and everyone to his land.[397]

In this passage the prophet clearly distinguishes between the Israelites and the tribe of Judah. This becomes an essential and intricate theme – the separation of Judah and Israel.

The understanding or presupposition of Israel being hidden within the British and their extension elsewhere then serves as the predominant hermeneutic for their later exegesis of scripture. If one is willing to accept this all-important presupposition, then later assertions appear to follow a coherent system of thought. Without this acceptance of the pre-suppositional hermeneutic, the system will fail to convince. Yet even in this failure there is assurance for the British Israel believers, for they are convinced that only a remnant will believe and that the majority are destined not to see their true Israel identity until the second coming of Christ.

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[396] Essentially, Western Europe, Canada, Australia and South Africa.

[397] Jeremiah 12:14-15, NKJV.

Modern day British-Israel believers make their case like this:

> In many ways, the Bible could be called the story of "one man's family." . . . Turn to this
> vital twelfth chapter, and read it with your own eyes. "Now the Eternal had said unto
> Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house,
> unto a land that I will show thee: "And I will make of thee a *great nation*, and I will bless
> thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that
> bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be
> blessed" (Genesis 12:1-3). *What a promise!* [398] (Italics in original)

The fundamentalist reader, already predisposed to the ultimate authority of inerrant

scripture,[399] is called upon at this point to see the 'obvious' promise of God to the literal

offspring of Abraham to be "a great nation." Within Christian theology this promise of a great

nation has been handled in various ways including the extension of nation status to the current

nation state of Israel, or, counter to this idea has been a spiritualized association with all

redeemed believers in general. [400]

The central hermeneutic principle for all fundamentalist exegesis is that the Bible is

inerrant and they try to use the most literal understanding of scripture whenever possible.[401] Thus

for the fundamentalist looking at the promise, there can only be one meaning—that of an actual

nation of Israel. When the reader has taken this step, the next is presented as the logical follow-

on. The question the British-Israel believer then puts forward is if there is to be an actual Israel,

is it the same as the modern state? The question allows them to take another step in the

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[398] See, http://www.british-israel.net/USA2.htm , (cited April 13, 2002).

[399] James Barr, *Fundamentalism* (London: SCM Press, 1981), pp 379

[400] See, Galatians 3:16 for a New Testament Biblical view of who Israel is.

[401] As James Barr suggests in his work *Fundamentalism*, this view may only be the perception
Fundamentals have of themselves. Barr suggests that, "Inerrancy is maintained only by constantly altering the mode
of interpretation, and in particular by abandoning the literal sense as soon as it would be an embarrassment to the
view of inerrancy held." (p. 46) Thus, Fundamentals do not hold that everything in the Bible is literal, most would
allow that the Bible does contain some symbolic language.

progression suggesting that unlike many Fundamentalists, British-Israel believers do not see the modern state of Israel as fulfilling this role, rather, that the British people are actually the hidden Israel coming from the Biblical Israelites.

The "faithful" present their next scriptural "proof" and draw some "obvious" conclusions.

"And the Eternal said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look *from* the place where thou art, NORTHWARD, AND SOUTHWARD, AND EASTWARD, AND WESTWARD: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed *forever.* "And I will make thy seed [your children - your progeny to follow] *as the dust of the earth* [numbering hundreds of *millions*]: so that if a man can number the *dust of the earth,* then shall thy seed also be numbered" (Genesis 13:14-16).

God is not promising that Abram's children would become but a small, struggling nation in the Middle East! This is not a description of "Israel" of this modern time—a nation surrounded by hostile Arab nations, struggling for survival. The Jews in modern Israel hardly comprise a nation so large; a people occupying all points of the compass who number "as the dust of the earth."[402] (All bold and italics in original)

If the reader will only accept the "obvious" inference from ultimately authoritative scripture, it becomes clear that modern Israel is not the subject of the Old Testament's 'house of Israel.' The "proofs" show that there must be another, unknown and 'hidden Israel.' Those accepting the 'obvious promises of God' are then inundated with overwhelming assurance that there must be another answer to the prophetic puzzle.

The "logical" progression of biblical exegesis continues;

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[402] See, http://www.british-israel.net/USA2.htm, (cited April, 13,2002). Also see, http://www.britishisrael.co.uk/, (cited August 22, 2006).

Anyone who attempts to interpret these facts as applying only to "that one Seed," which was Christ, is wresting, violently, the sacred Word of God! Notice carefully; let this burn deeply into your mind, and never forget it!
(1) "Abraham," the new name for Abram, means "The father of MANY NATIONS."
(2) God promised: "...I will make NATIONS of thee..."
(3) God promised: "...KINGS [plural! More than one!] shall come out of thee."
(4) God promised: "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed [plural!] after thee in THEIR [plural!] generations!"
(5) God promised: "I will give unto thee and thy seed [plural!] the *land..."*
(6) God promised: "I will be THEIR [plural!] God!"
(7) God promised - over and over again, that Abraham was to become the progenitor of many nations; that whole dynasties of kings would come from him; that his progeny would eventually become "as the dust of the earth" and as "the stars of the heavens" in number.

Yet, as in many cases in the Bible, especially in prophecy, there is oftentimes DUALITY in God's Word. Later, as we shall see, the children of Jacob (whose name was changed to Israel) were given specific, prophetic declarations: Each one of Jacob's twelve sons (thirteen in all, for Ephraim and Manasseh were the two sons of Jacob's favorite son, Joseph) were given a specific national prophecy—an outline of the future; showing the national characteristics; the ultimate inheritance of each.

Think, for a moment of the dual meaning inherent in the expression, "In thee shall all nations be blessed." As you will come to understand as you read; as you will come to know, if you have studied recent world history, the entire world has been mightily blessed because of the two nations of Great Britain and the United States of America! The statement is so obvious that it needs no magnification.

But think of the global community of nations; of the colonizing British - of the development of underdeveloped, backward, impoverished nations through trade and commerce. Think of what the world might have been like if there had never been a Britain or a United States! Hundreds of nations have been blessed, materially, as well as spiritually, by those two great nations! [403]

The warning is clear; do not attempt to interpret the prophetic scripture without first

accepting the central argument of British-Israel theology – that of a 'hidden Israel.' The listed

seven promises of God are the 'knock out' punch for the fundamentalist who has taken each of

the believer's steps into understanding prophecy. The reader need only accept the inference that

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[403]See, http://www.british-israel.net/USA2.htm. (cited April, 13, 2002).

the promises made to Abraham could not possibly be related to the current state of Israel. Then, it will become "obvious," Britain and America are the clear extension of Abraham's covenant with God. They, not the modern state of Israel, are the true 'hidden Israel' and rightful heir to the prophetic promises made throughout the Bible. After accepting the basic and essential premise of British-Israel theology – that there is an actual 'hidden Israel' found in the British and American people – the student is then ready to accept the many additional evidences which corroborate and support the basic premise. The central hermeneutic must be accepted, but once that leap is made, everything apparently falls into place.

Some of these "evidences" and "proofs" can be found in Peter Saemi's, The USA & the British Commonwealth In Bible Prophecy.[404] Many, if not a majority of these proofs, rest on questionable scholarship if not sheer fantasy in the areas of linguistics, history and geography as shown above.[405] The central beliefs of British-Israel theology do not revolve around or even involve the doctrines of grace, scripture, Christ's position, the Godhead, the trinity or any other essential distinctive of the Christian faith. After the 'extras' are pulled away, British-Israelism is a belief system that says nothing more than the assertion that 'hidden Israel' can be found in the people of British origin. The presuppositional starting point, the central hermeneutic for understanding scripture and the essential message of British-Israel theology is the same – a literal Israel exists in the British people of today. This then is the hermeneutic for all British-Israel exegesis and assertion.

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[404] *See,* http://www.british-israel.net/USA2.htm. (cited April, 13, 2002).

[405] See for instance H.L. Goudge, *The British Israel Theory*, (London: R Mowbray & Co. Limited, 1933,43), for a step-by-step dismantling of the questionable scholarship of early British-Israelism.

**Dispensationalism and date setting**

British-Israelism, willing to accept the 'less important' tribe of Judah, did nonetheless

insist that a conversion to Christianity, the acceptance of Jesus as God and the Messiah, would

take place prior to the end times for all Israelites. The manner in which British-Israelism

developed and the form it took upon reaching the shores of the United States are significantly

different. The American following of British-Israelism, saw the hidden-Israel motif as fitting

easily into their socio/historic theological construction, but they were far less philo-Semitic.[406]

Pre-millennial Dispensationalism[407] —the belief that God deals with humanity in seven separate

dispensations and that Christ will return to earth prior to a Rapture which will remove Christians

from earth before the great tribulation—was developing rapidly during this period (1880-1930)

with an increased following in many American Protestant churches.[408] This view, while

regarding the Jews as a chosen people in God's eyes, is very willing to see most persecution of

the modern Jews as proper punishment from God for their waywardness and lack of acceptance

of Jesus as God. This propensity made a more overtly anti-Semitic position easier to construct

and sell in America. Pre-Holocaust British-Israelism in the USA was therefore more open to the

legitimacy of discriminating against the American, Ashkenazim Jews**.**

Throughout the life of British-Israelism this eschatological theme, the idea of a coming

end, has been a disturbing influence. There has been a decided propensity on the part of many of

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[406] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right*, pp. 75,78

[407] Alistair McGrath, (Ed.). *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), p.107 – 110. This view was initiated by the English preacher, John Nelson Darby, the work influenced British-Israelism during Mr. Darby's time, (1800-1882), and a continued influence was felt through the work of C.I. Schofield (1843-1921), and most recently by Charles C. Ryrie. For a detailed description of how Dispensational theology has influenced religion and politics in America outside of *Identity* theology groups, see, Michael Northcott, *An Angel Directs the Storm: Apocalyptic Religion & American Empire,* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), pp. 52-72.

[408] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right*, p. 79.

the movement's leaders and writers to predict when the end would arrive.[409] Many efforts were

made, but there was an obvious problem. Dates came and went without fulfillment and new dates

had to be set. Specific and sometimes intricate future occurrences were described but failed to

manifest themselves.[410] Supporters were willing to overlook many of the mistaken dates but

repeated disappointments eventually took their toll. Ingenious tools were employed, such as the

Great Pyramid,[411] to determine the precise dates for specific events. The Great Pyramid was

believed to hold a hidden mathematical code, which would allow the holder of this code to

accurately predict future events. Even these Herculean efforts proved insufficient. For instance,

Richard Brothers had devised an entirely new calendar, which he believed gave him the ability to

predict the promised return of the Jews to Jerusalem, Brothers authoritatively proclaims that they

would return:

> 5917, the year of the world when the Jews will be restored to Jerusalem, which answers
> to the year of Christ -- 1798.[412]

Throughout the development of British-Israelism the central theme and motif is that

God's truly chosen people are the British and, by extension, through the colonization of North

America and the subsequent formation of the USA, the American people. This allows the

exclusion of most Jews from God's promise by relegating them to an inferior and subordinate

position brought on themselves by their own sin. For some of the later groups the sin is the sin of

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[409] *Ibid*, pp. 72-79.

[410] See for instance, Brothers, *Prince and Prophet: Calculations on the Commencement of the Millennium* p. 5 for an early example.

[411] Hine, *England's Coming Glories,* pp. 204-205.

[412] Brothers, *Prince and Prophet: Calculations on the Commencement of the Millennium* pp. 5-7, 11, 44.

mixing races instead of remaining pure, as the ten 'lost' northern tribes had supposedly done.[413]

For others it is the "fact" that Jewish people are the literal offspring of the devil[414] while still

others merely align the Jews with anyone who is against Christ—and thus anti-Christ in

nature.[415] In this way, the promises of God are not transferred to all believers.[416] They are a

birthright, by direct physical lineage, of a specific race and nation.

Nationalism, a modern invention[417] is thus pressed upon a culture and time that neither

understood nor operated within this framework.[418] The nationalistic centrality of British-

Israelism is similarly shared with many segments of pre-millennial Dispensationalism. The work

of Hal Lindsey, as in *The Late Great Planet Earth*[419] and the more recent book, *The Final

Battle*,[420] are prime examples. These and many other dispensational works are preoccupied with

questions surrounding the return and conversion of a national Israel. In most cases dates are not

specifically set, yet readers are led to believe that the end can be calculated to within a few

years.[421] While it is not my intention to align the dispensationalist camp with 'terrorism' as a

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[413] For instance this is the position of Aryan Nations and the various KKK groups.

[414] CSA, Church of Israel and Church of Israel Redeemed fit into this category.

[415] Such as *Scriptures for America*, *America's Promise Ministry* and *Mission to Israel.*

[416] Which is the view of most Christian churches.

[417] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, (London: Verso, 1991) pp. 19-43.

[418] For an in-depth social-scientific analysis of anachronistic encroachment on early Jewish culture through modern readings, see Philip Esler, *The First Christians in Their Social Worlds*, (London: Williams & Norgate, 1994). Also see, Philip Esler, *Modeling Early Christianity*, (London: Routledge,1995). In addition, Bruce Malina, *Windows on the World of Jesus,* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993).

[419] Hal Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, (Palos Verdes: Western Front, 1970).

[420] Hal Lindsey, *The Final Battle*, (Palos Verdes: Western Front, 1995).

[421] See, Northcott, *An Angel Directs the Storm: Apocalyptic Religion & American Empire,* pp. 61-72, for a description of Dispensational Zionism and its interpretation of world events as well as the influence Dispensationalism has had on US politics in recent years. While this research points to the impact Dispensational theology has had on *Identity*, Northcott shows that Dispensational theology has had a much broader impact on U.S. actions and politics in general. Dispensational theology has shaped, to some degree, much of how the United States

movement, both British-Israelism and some pre-millennial dispensationalists appear to take their

eyes off the specific focus of Christ's work and become enchanted with setting eschatological

calendars, a common endeavor for British-Israel and later *Identity* theology adherents as well.[422]

The later movements generally identified as *Identity*, which come in great part from

British-Israelism, are specifically opposed to pre-millennial Dispensationalism.[423] British-

Israelism as a movement appears at some points to adopt structures of theology, which defy

logical progression and clear objective classification. Most theological belief systems can be

classified without too much difficulty. For instance, Reformed theology can be characterized as

emphasizing the sovereignty of God, reliance on the authority of biblical text and the necessity of

unmerited grace as a reflection of the Protestant Reformation. This type of straightforward

thought process is not apparent in British-Israelism. Rather, by borrowing theology from very

divergent theological systems and mixing it with pseudo-historic and pseudo-linguistic

'evidence,' British-Israel thought becomes a confusing patchwork of ideas often difficult to

justify in relation to the other. The inability of British-Israelism to link its belief system with a

particular school of thought is indicative of its reliance on personal revelation as authoritative.

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has acted and reacted to world events at least since the period of the Reagan administrations. Thus, it is only natural that Dispensational theology would have a similarly important impact on the development of *Identity* theology in the United States.

[422] *The Late Great Planet Earth,* first published in 1970 sold 15 million copies and was a New York Times best seller. It was reprinted in 1976, 1980, 1992 and 1994. Some of the nations identified in the first printing of 1970 as being key to the proposed end times scenario, were no longer in existence when the last two printings were made. This tendency of dispensational followers to ignore prior mistakes and miscalculations is a common trait of both the British-Israel movement and the *Identity* movement that would follow.

[423] This aversion to pre-millennial Dispensationalism stems in part from the post-millennial position (the idea that the millennium will begin after society basis its governmental system on God's law) held by many *Identity* leaders and adherents. Additionally, many *Identity* groups and individuals find the idea of a Rapture of believers away from the apocalyptic tribulation to be opposed to their survivalist mentality. Outside of this specific problem and the literal view of being the lost tribes of Israel, *Identity* and British-Israelism often fits very neatly with pre-millennial Dispensationalism. The view of an inerrant Scripture coupled with the propensity for date setting would lead some from outside the British-Israelism movement and later *Identity* movements to see them as the same thing.

While a basic understanding of the historical foundation of British-Israelism is necessary for understanding *Identity* theology and its many varied strains, the history of this movement is easily accessible in the literature and thus an exhaustive recounting need not be made here recounting each step of its development.[424] Suffice for this work that the base upon which British-Israel thought built its foundations is purely Christian—offensive to many—yet Christian theology.[425] Even the outspoken opponent of British-Israelism in the 1930's and 40's, H.L. Goudge, who wrote in an effort to combat what he saw as British-Israel's potential for national disaster among his own English countrymen did not assert that British-Israelism itself was "un-Christian." Rather, Goudge saw, as most theologians since, that the beliefs have the *potential* to lead to non-Christian positions.

Goudge writes;

Why then, it may be asked, write a book against the theory? Because, though it may be in itself harmless, it is not harmless in its consequences. It fosters a nationalism which is profoundly un-Christian, and a pride and self-complacency which come only too easily to us English people.[426]

Thus Goudge makes the distinction between the doctrine alone and the potential for un-Christian consequences, which the doctrine may lead people toward. Clearly Goudge, living in

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[424] The most important original British-Israel works that outline this belief system include; Brothers, *The New Covenant Between God and His People* 1870; Brothers, *A Revealed Knowledge of the Prophecies and Times,* 1797), Mackendrick, *The Destiny of the British Empire and the U.S.A,* 1940, John Wilson, *Our Israelitish Origins,* 1850, and, Hine, *England's Coming Glories,* 1880. Without a doubt the best recent work on the subject of the roots of *Identity* theology movements is Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* 1997. Other agenda driven critiques of the history and the belief system in general are available across the Internet on 'watchdog' related sites. An older yet helpful reference on the subject is, Goudge *The British Israel Theory,* 1933/43.

[425] Even the most ardent opponents of *Identity* theology concede that British-Israelism itself is Christian theology, bad theology, but still Christian. By Christian theology it is meant that British-Israelism asserts the same essential doctrines of the Christian faith normally associated with mainline denominations. These Christian doctrines include (but are not limited to), belief in the Virgin birth, belief in the life of Jesus Christ and the view that Jesus, as the second person of the Trinity is fully God, belief in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and the eventual resurrection of Christian believers, See for instance, Barkun*, Religion and the Racist Right,* pp. 1-47, for the admission that despite its outrageous assertions, British-Israelism remained Christian.

[426] Goudge, *The British Israel Theor,y* p. iii.

the tumultuous time before, during and after the Nazi invasion of Europe and all its attendant horrors, understood the dangers of ultra-nationalism mixed with religious fervor. Even so, he was careful to make clear that it is the possible extension from British-Israel or the actions people may take while under its influence, rather than British-Israelism itself, which is un-Christian.

The early British-Israel adherents were recruited from British Protestant churches—English, Scot and Irish—and were urged to maintain all their essential Christian doctrines while understanding additionally that they, as British believers, were the literal Israel of the bible.[427] The movement was not so much a replacement for Christianity, rather a further understanding of what that Christianity fully meant to northern Europeans from a particular hermeneutic position.

This is not to suggest that there are not problems with the theology of British –Israelism. The movement failed to base its claims on any substantial, historical, linguistic or biblical exegesis. And yet, allowing for these issues it has made a major contribution to the modern *Identity* theology, namely, the idea that '*true* Israel' is hidden within the British people and their ancestral extensions.[428]

Later, constructs commonly associated with *Identity* theology as opposed to strictly British-Israel thought, were expanded to allow for the inclusion of essentially all white Europeans. But the essential issue for British-Israel thought was then, and continues to be within *Identity* theology generally, the hidden Israel message. Other less important issues came to light

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[427] Wilson, *Our Israelitish Origins* 1850, maintained the British-Israel position as an addition to mainline denominations as did important British-Israel writers such as, Mackendrick, *The Destiny of the British Empire and the U.S.A,* 1940, and Hine, *England's Coming Glories,* 1880. The writings are still accessible today through the British Israel web sites on the Internet. See for instance, http://www.british-israel.net/USA2.htm (cited April, 13, 2002). Also see, Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* 1997.

[428] See, http://www.british-israel.net/USA2.htm (cited April, 13, 2002), also see Wilson, *Our Israelitish Origins* 1850.

and then faded in importance[429] for British-Israel adherents but the essential message of their 'true identity' being that of the chosen people of God has never wavered.[430] In this, 'true identity,' we can in fact find the basis for the name from which *Identity* theology has been derived. Although the idea of identity emerges during this British-Israelism period, it is not until after World War II that the name emerges within the movement as common to distinguish their particular beliefs.[431]

British-Israel theology remains essentially unchanged for several groups in the modern age.[432] The researcher looking for information on this subject does not need to rely on historical documents and books from the 18th and 19th century alone.[433] Modern explanations and developments can be learned on the Internet and in readily available print documents.[434] Modern and accepted non-violent sects, such as The Worldwide Church of God depend on the British-Israel background as an important part of their theology.

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[429] These issues would include ideas such as dates set for the return of Christ or the importance of Pyramidology to the belief system.

[430] For some, the inclusion of Pyramidology is tantamount to occultic involvement. For a critique of the occultic inclusions see, Victoria Larson, "Christian Identity", *Christian Research Journal*, Fall, pp. 20-24.

[431] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* p. xi.

[432] For example, The 75,000 member Worldwide Church of God, made famous by Herbert W. Armstrong. See, Mead, *Handbook of Denominations in the United States,* p. 76.

[433] Two excellent sources for these documents include the New York Public Library, Special Collections and the University of Santa Barbara, American Religions Collections.

[434] Accessible at, http://www.british-israel.net/USA2.htm, (cited March 12, 2002). British Israel print books can be obtained through sources such as, *Scriptures for America, Mission to Israel and Church of Israel*.

# CHAPTER 5

## *IDENTITY* THEOLOGY: WHAT TYPE OF THEOLOGY IS THIS

Am I a soldier of the cross, a follower of the Lamb, and shall I fear to own His cause or blush to speak His name? Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, while others fought to win the prize and sailed thro' bloody seas? Sure I must fight if I would reign; Increase my courage Lord; I'll bear the toil endure the pain, supported by Thy word. *Thomas A Arne, 1710 – 1778, The Baptist Hymnal*[435]

Following a lecture about 'Christian *Identity'* in Boise Idaho, a member of the audience, who later identified himself as an Idaho state senator, objected strongly to the identification of *Identity* theology with anything "Christian."[436] For the senator—and indeed many academic researchers[437]—*Identity* theology gives up any claim to being truly "Christian" because of its "obvious un-Christian nature and attitude."[438] Claims about the unchristian nature of *Identity* theology are centered on the general perception of its militant rhetoric, actions and racial bias.

How can a system of theology, which claims that only a specific race of people is the people of God, still be Christian? Why would true Christians talk about war and violence in the name of God? Is it not fundamentally wrong and non-Christian to exclude someone on the basis

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[435] *The Baptist Hymnal*, "Am I a Soldier of the Cross" (Nashville, TN: Convention Press, 1956).

[436] From a discussion between the author and the Senator; August, 2000 - Boise Idaho Disaster Management Training Seminar.

[437] For instance, see the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), literature as it applies to "Christian" *Identity,* accessed at, www.adl.org, Routinely the theological diversity is not only mistakenly inclusive of many different types of theological positions labeled as general *Identity*, but the theological movement as a whole is de-legitimized by suggesting that there is only "pseudo" Christian ideology represented rather than authentic Christianity.

[438] From a discussion between the author and the Senator; August, 2000 - Boise Idaho Disaster Management Training Seminar. This same attitude toward *Identity* theology adherents in general can be found through out most of the existing literature and certainly within the popular writing on the subject.

of race? And if not based on racial heritage alone, does not the fact that *Identity* theology

demands a strict adherence to some moral law based on the Bible make it un-Christian? Does not

the grace found in the New Testament nullify the legitimacy of Old Testament law?

To make the types of exclusions *Identity* theology insists on is certainly not tolerant. In

the modern Western world, tolerance is viewed almost universally as *the* watershed tenet, which

decides legitimacy of a system of thought.[439] What is it that determines the qualification for a

theology to be "Christian?" Is it the claims of being "Christian" by the groups involved, which is

in some way determinative? Or, as has been the practice of theologians for centuries, are certain

theologies and doctrines excluded from the realm of "Christian orthodoxy" on the basis of their

subscription to, or rejection of several basic tenets?

The question of whether or not *Identity* theology is "Christian" is extremely important to

the work at hand. Understanding whether or not *Identity* theology is Christian at its base, or if it

is just another cultic apparition serves as the starting point in beginning to understanding how to

categorize the phenomena studied in this research. In this regard it is not the effort of this

dissertation to associate *Identity* theology's legitimacy or illegitimacy by associating it with

Christianity. Rather, this point is important because it is a beginning point or helpful marker in

classifying the theology. If *Identity* theology is indeed a Christian variant rather than cultic

aberration, there is a long scholastic and theological history and sets of norms, which help

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[439] For an interesting discussion of the role and effect of tolerance in society and culture see, Robert Paul Wolff, et. al., *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970). See also Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer A Christian Worldview, Volume One: A Christian View of Philosophy and Culture*, (Carlisle UK: Paternoster Press, 1982), for a highly developed argument of how the virtue of tolerance became so important in Western Philosophy. Within this argument the importance of the virtue of tolerance is seen as a by-product of the continuing development of Western philosophy following particularly the line of development from philosophy to art to music, to general culture and finally impacting theology. This view of tolerance is a step away from philosophy based on God-centered thought and moving to what Schaeffer has called the "line of despair," or man centric worldviews. As seen later in this chapter, some *Identity* theologies are in part a reaction to man rather than God-centered worldviews.

determine further theological and social type. Furthermore, the issue suggests that if there is a Christian foundation rather than merely cultic personality then perhaps there is a basis for dialogue and future mediation between followers of different doctrines that are less hostile toward segments of the population and importantly, non-violent.

This chapter deals with the issue of the most basic categorization of *Identity* theology. Is it a Christian theology we seek to understand or is it religious, yet without a claim to Christian perspective? Or perhaps, is it entirely non-religious and simply using the cover of religion to organize hate and or political violence? The chapter looks briefly at *Identity's* roots in British-Israelism and how those roots took on a specifically American flavor when merged with existing political ideas within the United States. Further, the chapter outlines key theological doctrines of the specific case study groups in contrast to a short list of essential doctrines of the Christian faith accepted by Christian fundamentalists—the body to which Identity adherents claim 'membership.'

In particular the doctrine of election is used to show social distinctions placed on the doctrine by the various groups in contrast to those groups who seek to explain the doctrine based on biblical exegesis alone. Hermeneutical presuppositions among the various groups emerge as important and begin to differentiate them. The essential doctrines used in this chapter to distinguish between Christian and non-Christian theology are derived from several sources, these include the historic statements of Christianity known as the Ecumenical Creeds, outlining essential Christian doctrines, the Protestant Reformation *Solas*[440] as well as the fundamentalist perspective, to which *Identity* claims to adhere.

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[440] While much has been written on the *Solas* of the Reformation, a short but complete perspective of their historical and continuing importance to the protestant faith can be found in, , Michael Horton's, *Putting Amazing Back into Grace* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994), pp. 11-20.

These standards of the Protestant Christian faith are used in conjunction to assess the groups outlined, against what determines "Christianity." The findings suggest that despite being an 'unwanted and embarrassing relative,' some of *Identity* theology both finds its roots in, and maintains its adherent population by holding fast to, the essential Christian beliefs. These essentials, which have historically been viewed, as the doctrines that circumscribe a distinctly Christian position are central to some of the groups studied, while others find their base less in Christian theology than in a specific political ideology. Thus, this second group relies on a parasitic use of Christian theology without actually representing Christian theology. Clear distinctions between these groups are made in a first effort toward understanding the various ideological and theological drives behind this diverse movement.

**British-Israelism vs. Identity!**

What then of the claims of *Identity* theology to be Christian?[441] Just because the roots of *Identity* theology are based in a belief system that is fundamentally Christian does not then mean that the resultant *Identity* theology is itself Christian. Indeed, many non-Christian theologies such as Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses point to roots in Christianity as a basis for claiming to be Christian theology. While these sects do have ties to Christianity, they are denied recognition as Christian theology because of their doctrinal stances on major (fundamental) issues, such as those discussed above.[442] In this section a detailed exposition of the relevant literature and

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[441] As KKK leader Tom Robb said during one phone interview, "Christian *Identity* is just the good ole' time religion." Phone interview, with KKK leaders, Tom Robb, March 2000.

[442] For an excellent discussion of these and other major sects claiming to be Christian while holding antithetical doctrinal positions, see, John H. Gerstner, *The Theology of the Major Sects* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Book House, 1960).

careful consideration of individual interviews with leaders and adherents within the representative Israel-*Identity* movement groups is made to determine if they are indeed Christian or non-Christian in nature.

The same fundamentalist standard in conjunction with the Ecumenical confessions and Reformation Sola's are used in critiquing these *Identity* groups as was used above to review British-Israelism. Each of the specific groups studied in this thesis claims to adhere to the restrictive theological distinctive listed.[443] While the claims might be accepted or thrown out depending on the reader's political or social perspective, a closer inspection of one of the key doctrines for all *Identity* groups, the question of who is elect and how that election relates to salvation, is dealt with more closely. This is an appropriate doctrine with which to examine the movement more closely, as it is the one doctrine most closely aligned with the movement's central tenet—the belief that they have discovered their true identity—Biblical Israel. In doing this, the various groups and leaders show quickly some differences between the groups and their various theologies.

The following section looks at the essential doctrines of the Christian faith and contrasts them where there is difference with the doctrine asserted by the given case study group. Not

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[443] Confirmed through numerous interviews between 1998 and 2002, and literature including, Dan Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Gensis 3:15* (Schell City MO: Church of Israel, 1976), Dan Gayman, (ed) *Contending for the Faith,* (Schell City MO: Church of Israel, 1997), Dan Gayman, *To the Mormons: A Religious People Filled with Good Works but Lost and Unsaved*, (Schell City MO: Church of Israel, undated), Dan Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation?* (Schell City MO: Church of Israel, 1995), Dan Gayman, *Are You and Israelite?* (Schell City MO: Church of Israel, 1998), Dan Gayman*, No Second Chance,* (Schell City MO: Church of Israel, 1996), ; Ted R. Weiland, *God's Covenant People Yesterday, Today and Forever,* (Scottsbluff NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 1997), Ted R. Weiland, *Capital Punishment, Deterrent or Catalyst?* (Scottsbluff NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 2000), Ted R. Weiland, *Christian Duty Under Corrupt Government,* (Scottsbluff NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 1997), Ted R. Weiland, Israel's Identity: It Matters! (Scottsbluff NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 2000), and, Ted R. Weiland, *Eve: Did She or Didn't She?* (Scottsbluff NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 2000).

every case study group is discussed at this point as several groups are clearly in harmony with the essential doctrines of orthodox Christianity.

**Soteriology Identity style**

The first essential for determining if a believer is an *Identity*-theology-adherent as opposed to a traditional-Christian relates directly to the central claim of British-Israelism. The central tenet as we have seen above is that the British people and their extension are the true chosen people of God. In *Identity* theology the British-Israel theme is extended to a number of other countries of northern European extraction. No longer must Germans, French, Swedish, Norwegian or Slavs be excluded from the members of the elect, with the transformation from British-Israelism to *Identity* these diverse nations join as members of the elect. This assertion is maintained by all of the *Identity* groups interviewed for this research.

Some *Identity* theology apologists suggest that there is a direct correlation between modern States and the biblical tribes of Israel. For instance the tribe of Dan is believed to have settled in Denmark and thus those that come from Denmark are by extension from the lost tribe of Dan. Furthermore, the argument asserts that although the literal Israel may be found among people from many different nations, the common trait is that these people from the "lost tribes of Israel" are racially white. Nations such as America and South Africa are believed to be extensions of the nations or "tribes" from which they came. Thus, White South Africans would be seen as descendants of the tribe of Ephraim if they came from Britain or Judah if they were German descendants.

The Church of Israel in Schell City Missouri provides an excellent example of how important the "true Israel" *Identity* belief is, in relating the various Israelite tribes to existing modern states. The Schell City sanctuary is decorated with the stained-glass representations of each tribe of Israel with the corresponding modern state representation named within the glass. These same nations are also used to identify the elect of God in literature published by such diverse *Identity* groups as, the Mission to Israel, Aryan Nations, Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord, some groups within the KKK and Church of Israel Redeemed. The correspondence between state and tribe is represented below.

**Figure 1: The twelve modern tribes as identified by Identity theologians.**

| Britain | Ephraim |
|---|---|

| U.S.A. | Manasseh |
|---|---|

| Denmark | Dan |
|---|---|

| Norway | Napthali |
|---|---|

| Sweden | Asher |
|---|---|

| Finland | Issachar |
|---|---|

| Iceland | Benjamin |
|---------|----------|

| Germany | Judah |
|---------|-------|

| Holland | Reuben |
|---------|--------|

| Italy | Gad |
|-------|-----|

| Spain | Simeon |
|-------|--------|

| Slavs | Zebulum |
|-------|---------|

While each of the case-study groups examined uses the same twelve modern nation-states to represent a corresponding biblical tribe, the salvific nature of that election is not equally observed. Rather than being a unique *Identity* doctrinal identifier, the nature of the elect and their relation to salvation from sin is a point of contention between groups commonly aligned with *Identity* theology. This fact is either completely missed or misunderstood by commentators, both academic and popular, who write on the subject. The differences between the various groups doctrine are not easily seen in the literature they write, but through conversations with their leadership and followers distinctions are found.

For instance, the belief statement of Aryan Nations deals with the issue from a racially motivated starting point.[444] The first issue to be clarified by the group is the right to racial preservation. Scriptural distinctiveness is secondary to the racial priority of the White race.

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[444] Betty A. Dobratz and Stephanie L. Shanks-Meile, *The White Separatist Movement in the United States* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins Press: 1997), pp. 76-77. Also found at, http://www.araynnations.com (cited February 7, 2002).

**Figure 2: This is a portion of the Aryan Nations statement of faith.**[445]

> **WE BELIEVE** in the preservation of our Race, individually and collectively, as a people as demanded and directed by Yahweh. We believe our Racial Nation has a right and is under obligation to preserve itself and its members.
>
> **WE BELIEVE** that Adam, man of Genesis, is the placing of the White Race upon this earth. Not all races descend from Adam. Adam is the father of the White Race only. (Adam in the original Hebrew is translated: "to show blood in the face; turn rosy.") Genesis 5:1
>
> **WE BELIEVE** that the true, literal children of the Bible are the twelve tribes of Israel, now scattered throughout the world and now known as the Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, Teutonic, Scandinavian, Celtic peoples of the earth. We know that the Bible is written to the family of Abraham, descending from Shem back to Adam. Yahweh blessed Abraham and promised that he would be the "father of nations." This same promise continued through the seedline of Abraham's son Isaac, and again to Isaac's son Jacob, the patriarch of the twelve tribes, whose name Yahweh changed to Israel (Meaning: "he will rule as God"). Genesis 32:28; Exodus 12:31; 16:4; 19:20; Revelations 21:12

Further discussion with the leadership of the group quickly illuminates the primary focus and understanding of election for the Aryan Nations. When I asked their leader, pastor Richard Butler directly about the value of racial election, Butler stated,

> Well it's everything! You said you were white didn't you? Then you're one of God's chosen people as well. The mark of God is on your very skin, you are white therefore you are one of the elect.[446]

Because the view held by Butler and the Aryan Nations is so radically different from those commonly held in various strains of Christian thought I attempted to relate Butlers

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[445] Located at, http://www.araynnations.com , (cited February, 7, 2002).

[446] From a telephone interview with Aryan Nations leader, Richard Butler, April 4, 2000.

articulation of the Aryan Nations belief to a readily identifiable Christian doctrine of election found in Protestant Reformed thought.[447] This further highlighted the lack of theological basis for Butler's doctrine as well as marked his view is sharp contrast to some other *Identity* groups interviewed during the research, Attempts to further clarify the Aryan Nations view of election by contrasting it with the classic reformed and Calvinistic view of election and predestination fell on deaf ears. Butler was neither interested in the historically orthodox perception of this important doctrine, nor was he prepared to discuss the doctrine outside of his own limited understanding.

The obvious difficulty was in the pastor's lack of even basic theological knowledge. Pastor Butler was able to answer questions about orthodox Christian positions in relation to his own doctrinal articulation of *Identity* theology, but when pushed to explain, in theological rather than racial terms, how this doctrine aligned with the classic Reformed Christian view of election,[448] the thinness of the theological veneer used to cover his pre-suppositional base was easily exposed.

In an effort to help Butler more fully explain his position to me, I asked bluntly if there was a possibility of a white Israelite being unsaved. The pastor's reply further belied his lack of theological as opposed to racial concern in the matter;

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[447] Calvinism, in opposition to Arminianism, asserts that God only chooses certain people to election. In classic Calvinism, this election is not made on the basis of race. In Armenian doctrine, God chooses all of mankind by sending his Son Jesus to die for our sins but leaves salvation up to man to choose. For an explanation of Arminian belief see, David N. Steele and Curtis C. Thomas, *Romans: An Interpretative Outline* (Philadeplhia PA: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1963) pp.144-147. Arminianism stresses five points: 1) Man's freewill and ability, 2) Conditional election, 3) Universal redemption 4) The Holy Spirit can be effectually resisted, 5) Mans ability to fall from Grace. These five points led to the articulation of Calvin's famous five points intended to refute the Arminian position.

[448] The classic work is of course, John Calvin's, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, (trans. Henry Beveridge) (London: James Clarke & Co, 1957) Book II, Chapters IV-VI. Also see, Loraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* (Philadelphia PA: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co, 1974).

That's not the issue, I don't know. No, the white man is the true chosen people of God. How could we be God's people and not be God's people at the same time? You forget that until a few years ago everyone accepted this as fact and I can prove it to you beyond a shadow of a doubt. Whites are Israel. If you are white you are chosen. Maybe some of us more interested in the religion of Israel know how to say it better or something … but the White man is God's people. That's the plain truth of it.[449]

Butler's view of *Identity* theology is of the same basic type as pastor Dan Gayman, the

well known and respected (at least within *Identity* circles) theologian who has attempted to

systematize the loose threads of *Identity* theology. Both share the seed-line hypothesis as their

foundation upon which to separate themselves from other races and see Jewish people as the

anti-Christ. But Gayman's theological rather than Nazi understanding of this idea is that the elect

come out of the Caucasian race,[450] while Butler sees the race itself as the elect. Where Butler

cannot see how a white person can be elect and yet unregenerate, Gayman has created a system

which appears to bridge the Reformed versus Armenian perspectives on salvation. Thus Gayman

states;

> The heirs of salvation were to be marked in the flesh by outward circumcision, as part of Abraham's family. But this had no bearing on their salvation. The promised seed had to experience circumcision of the heart. A new spiritual heart transplant became a prerequisite for Christian baptism; hence, salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. The Circumcision of the heart, and not the outward circumcision of the flesh, marks the true heirs of salvation in the purpose and plan of God.[451]

Gayman clarifies the question several pages later,

> The elect of God the Father are called out of Adam kind. Every Israelite is an Adamite, but not every Adamite is an Israelite.[452]

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[449] From a telephone interview with pastor Aryan Nations leader, Richard Butler, April 4, 2000.

[450] Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation,* pp. 100-110.

[451] Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation,* pp. 109-110.

[452] Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation* p. 115.

The issue for Butler quickly turned from God's election of a specific people to his view

of the destruction of the White race's legitimate control of society. But for Gayman the question

is truly one of theology as opposed to ideology. Traditional Nazi thought pervaded Butler's

responses to theological questions and there were strong affirmations of Hitler's views.

> Hitler was nothing more than a tool of God acting to save his people from the anti-Christ Jews. The Jew controlled media wants you to believe he was something, well… Hitler was simply God's man for that time.[453]

In this view, theology and the understanding of the basic Christian doctrines are an

appendage to the central issue rather than the focus of the belief system. Just as British-Israelism

comes to its position based upon its commitment to a particular hermeneutic, so the

understanding of Aryan Nations theology is dependant upon their central hermeneutic of racial

superiority rather than God's election.

Historically, the Church has labeled as heretical all those who attach a Christian veneer to

counter-Christian belief systems.[454] In this case Christianity is supplanted by a continuation of

Nazi diatribe. The Christian element was lacking from both the attitude and content of the

conversations. What is easily seen beneath the quasi-religious language is a mixed up view of

1940's Nazi ideology. This focus does not escape other *Identity* pastors who approach their

belief system from a Christian rather than racist perspective.[455]

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[453] Richard Butler interview, April 4, 2000.

[454] For instance, the German state church under the control of Hitler was widely condemned by those churches outside of Hitler's control. See, Alister E. McGrath, *Modern Christian Thought*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993) p.58.

[455] See for instance, Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far right to the Children of Noah.* (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), p. 57. Additionally, several *Identity* pastors and adherents have conveyed to me their disgust with the use of their theology to cover the Nazi veneer at the base of Aryan Nations.

**Photo 1: Richard Butler gives a Nazi salute from the pulpit of the former Aryan Nations headquarters in Idaho.**

Prior to the court decision against Aryan Nations in 2000[456], the bust of Adolph Hitler could be found in the sanctuary at the headquarter compound in Idaho. Hitler's Nazi ideology was and is viewed as equally authoritative as scripture. The Bible is not the ultimate and authoritative word in determining the group's belief system. Hitler's words are equally important to those of the theology used to attract potential members. Uniforms worn by Aryan Nations members were designed to emulate and show respect for those of their Nazi heroes during WWII. It would seem that if the groups aligned with this Nazi (Aryan Nations) or racist (KKK) view are theologically motivated, it is a theology unable to withstand the criteria used above.

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[456] For a summary of the court events leading to the loss of the Aryan Nations compound, see, Bob Edwards, "Jury Finds Against Aryan Nations for $6.3, *CNN Online*, September 8, 2000, http://www.cnn.com/2000/LAW/09/07/aryan.verdict/, (cited August 23, 2006). Or see, John K. Wiley, "Aryan Suit Could Alter Idaho's Racist Image," *The Columbian,* 09-09-2000, http://www.highbeam.com/Doc.aspx?DocId=1P1:31651097&tab=LIB, (cited August 23, 2006).

A unique departure from the majority of the literature in this area is the 1996 book, *American Extremists* by John George and Laird Wilcox.[457] In this work the authors break out of the mould of describing the Aryan Nations and similar groups as theologically motivated activists, rather, they merely list them with "assorted neo-nazi's."[458] While trying to co-opt some Christian veneer for ease of recruitment and pragmatic social reasons, the groups and their theology represented in this category (such as Aryan Nations) are not truly Christian theologically or, socially in how they work out that faith. Rather, the distinctions they are concerned with are racial not spiritual.

The Aryan Nations view of the election of the white race differs significantly from other *Identity* positions even those within the distinctive *seed-line*[459] category. Consider Gayman's answer to a similar question on the election of the white race and the possibility of salvation for other races.

> There may be salvation for the other races, I don't know. One thing I do know is that I am called to preach salvation to the house of Israel.[460] God's elect are the true Israel. They are found in the race of Adam, the Nordic, Scandinavian, Germanic, Anglo-Saxon people of the earth. You can read it for yourself, it's all there and plain… if you want to know the truth, you are just going to have to search the Word deeper. Once you understand the Israel truth, everything will start to fall into place.[461]

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[457] John George and Laird Wilcox, *American Extremists,* (Amherst NY: Prometheus Books, 1996).

[458] *Ibid*, pp. 340-342.

[459] Those *Identity* believers who see the *seed* of Adam and the *seed* of Satan as originating the two forces at work in our world through the sexual union between Eve and these two progenitors. For a complete explanation of the seed-line theology from an Identity perspective see, Dan Gayman's, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15* (Schell City, MO: The Church of Israel, 1977) where a complete delineation of this important doctrine is undertaken from Gayman's Seed-line perspective.

[460] Interview with Church of Israel pastor, Dan Gayman in Schell City, Missouri, 1998.

[461] *Ibid*.

In contrast to Butler's understanding of God's election, Gayman seeks to make his

argument a theological rather than racial or political point. Like Butler he has an overarching

hermeneutic which dictates how his theological positions will flow from that base, but that

starting point is the result of exegesis rather than racism. For Gayman the pre-suppositional

starting point and indeed the lens through which all scripture must be filtered is a—or his—

particular understanding of Genesis 3:15.[462]

The central effort of Gayman is not an attempt to justify Nazi atrocities, further Nazi

beliefs or argue that the liberal media has torpedoed the White races legitimate mastery over

other races.[463] It is true though, that despite the difference from Aryan Nations, the argument

based here on scriptural exegesis remains reliant on a particular hermeneutic. The hermeneutic in

this case is more closely related, however, to that of the earlier British-Israel believers than Nazi

racial bias.[464] Both groups have particular views on who are the elect, but the real difference

between them is how they seek to justify their views, theologically or racially.

In the cases of Aryan Nations and the KKK, ultimate good is centered on the superiority

of the White race over other non-white races. Theology truly serves as a "veneer" for existing

hatred and racial superiority. All theological positions are attained through this most important

hermeneutic. The rhetoric that Dan Gayman and the Church of Israel espouse is a subtly different

position; if God's elect are truly found in the white races and are thus the true Israel, the Bible is

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[462] Interview, Gayman, Schell City, Mo, 1998 and Dan Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15.*
1977.

[463] These are the constant themes returned to and the apparent hermeneutic used by both Richard Butler of
Aryan Nations and Tom Robb of the KKK.

[464] A closer look at the all important hermeneutic of Gayman is covered in the following chapter on seed vs.
non-seed Identity types. Further investigation shows that Gayman couples the British-Israel invective with further
an additional reliance on seeing Genesis 3:15 in a particular light.

an elucidation of God's word to that people and that people alone. This position allows for the

salvation of other races but not as it is articulated in the Bible.[465] On the surface at least, the

position Gayman describes is a theological argument, which sees a specific group of people,

coming from racial Caucasians, as "true Israel." The secondary argument as to how the elect is

identified pushes all non-white persons into a position of 'beasts of the field,'[466] Thus they are

"non-persons." Similarly, the Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord (CSA) held the same

position as pastor Gayman. This is not surprising as this group, which moved from a Jesus

commune of the 1970's, transformed itself into a Christian survivalist group and finally became

an armed militant *Identity* group in the 1980's,[467] followed closely the exposition of Gayman's

*Identity* theology.[468]

The idea that non-whites could find salvation or election by God through Christ's work

on the cross becomes a non-question to those persuaded by Gayman, seed-line style of *Identity*

doctrine.[469] If they are mere animals, which equate with cattle and sheep, they do not possess a

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[465] Interview with Church of Israel pastor, Dan Gayman, September 1998, Schell City, MO., This doctrinal position first articulated by Gayman has led to a split within the church and the formation of a new church, Church of Israel Redeemed. While the topic is the same, the difference between the approach used by Butler and Robb and that of the Church of Israel to determine the groups position is significantly different. The Church of Israel position is exegetically driven while the Aryan Nations and KKK are ideologically driven.

[466] "Beasts of the field" is a term taken from the Genesis one account of the creation of the beasts of the field. Seed-line *Identity* adherents assert that all non-white humanoids were created at the same time and thus are the same as the 'beasts of the field.'

[467] See, Kerry Wayne Nobel, *Tabernacle of Hate* (Ontario Canada: Voyageur Publishing, 1998).

[468] Taken from an interview with Kerry Noble, May, 2001, Burrelson, Texas. Kerry Noble is the former second in command at the CSA compound on the Missouri/Arkansas border.

[469] The major division between *Identity* types, seed vs. non-seed *Identity*, is dealt with in detail in Chapter Six. Four of the case studies for this work are dependent on both the seed-line typology as well as the exposition of the relevant passages by Pastor Dan Gayman.

soul and are thus are not in need of salvation.[470] Neither of these two leaders were able to then

pursue the theological question to the next logical step as asserted by Barth, that of the election

and thus salvation, of all God's creation.[471] If God could elect some of creation to salvation, did

it logically follow that all creation was then elected? The idea of Universalism or universal

salvation commonly derived from Barth's work on election has never entered into their position,

nor were they prepared to debate that concept.

A third position from within the *Identity* belief system deals with election from yet

another unique but more traditionally Christian position. Pastor Ted Weiland of Scottsbluff,

Nebraska asserted what has traditionally been the view of election seen in British-Israel thought.

He believes and writes prolifically on the theme that true-Israel is hidden within the various

white races around the world and as such is elect by God.[472] But Weiland goes much further both

theologically and socially than his seed-line counterparts in his understanding of election.

Thus he states;

> Yea, true Israel can be found within various, Anglo, Celtic, Germanic races all over the
> world. But this fact doesn't equate to some type of racial superiority. What it means
> today is the same thing we see throughout the Bible, that Israel has been called to the task
> of bringing God's truth to the other nations. This is what so many Christians miss in the
> Old Testament. Israel is a nation called to service to the nations. Nations that include
> Mexicans, Blacks, Asians…What it amounts to is White servant-hood not superiority. I

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[470] Interview with Church of Israel pastor, Dan Gayman, September 1998, Schell City MO, also see, Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation?,* pp. 94-96.

[471] Karl Barth, *The Church Dogmatics,* (trans. G. Bromiley et al.) (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956-75) Vol. II/2.

[472] See, Ted Weiland, *God's Covenant People, Yesterday, Today and Forever.* (Scottsbluff, NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 1997). The entire 465 page book is a testimony to the proposition that Israel is hidden within the various white races and that ones identity is important to claiming promises made to Israel by God.

guess that I do believe in white-hoods, but it's white servant-hood not the hate of the Klan and Butler.[473]

Within Weiland's articulation of *the* doctrine of election in *Identity* theology, race matters only as a possible identifier of who hidden Israel is—not how salvation is mediated. God elected Israel as his own for all time and salvation comes through grace by faith in Jesus Christ. Weiland would not even go so far as to say that God had elected all Whites as a part of hidden-Israel. The nation of Israel from the covenant with Abraham to the modern identification of members of the various northern European races has been a continuous line. This type of election of a nation is not a one to one correspondence with justification to salvation; rather, it is an extra responsibility to be an example to other nations. The focus is always on being an example to the other nations who are dependent on Israel to bring the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.[474]

Weiland could not objectively describe how to tell the difference between white elect Israel and white non-elect persons other than saying, "you will know them by their fruit," but the absolute bond between racial Israel and election is not assumed in Weiland's theology.[475] Salvation through faith by grace in the atoning work of Christ on the cross is the determining factor for salvation of particular individuals according to Weiland.[476]

This perception of the relation between God's election and salvation is unique. It is both dependent on the Reformed view of predestination of the saints for identifying the true Israel

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[473] Taken from an interview with Mission to Israel pastor, Ted Weiland in Scottsbluff, NE, February, 2001.

[474] Ibid, February 2001.

[475] A statement alluding to the fruits of the spirit found in I Corinthians.

[476] Taken from an interview with Mission to Israel pastor, Ted Weiland in Scottsbluff, NE, February, 2001.

while not immediately aligning that election with the justification of individuals in particular.

The justification of those particular individuals was more closely connected with the Arminian

belief that the individual must necessarily make some overt decision for God. For Reformed

theologians, this position is merely a return to Pelagian thought demanding a sinful man to

somehow make a righteous decision without the ability to do so.

Weiland's theology gave him an opportunity to develop his ideas of how his 'in-group'

related to the 'other,' and whom that 'other' might include. In speaking with Weiland about other

types of *Identity* theology, Weiland brought up Richard Butler with his vocal brand of Nazi

*Identity* and Tom Robb and his KKK group as examples. Weiland made some interesting

insights, which begin to indicate further how the various *Identity* groups see themselves.

Weiland makes the qualified statement that both Butler and Robb are evidently "of Israel" but

that they are woefully misdirected. Weiland believes that these leaders have supplanted the real

message of the gospel, which is his belief that Israel is to bring the gospel to the other nations,

because of their bias of white supremacy. Nowhere does Weiland see room for supremacy,

rather, for him the difficult doctrine of Israel's election dictates that whites must be servant

leaders to bring other nations to Christ through their example of devotion to God.[477] He believes

this was in fact the example demanded of the biblical Israel—one of showing God's redemption

to the nations surrounding Israel. Interestingly Weiland has made similar comments to

undercover newspaper reporters who in turn discount the statements in print.[478]

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[477] Ibid, February 2001.

[478] Carolyn Tuft and Joe Holleman, "Inside the Christian Identity Movement,", *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 5, 2000. p. A8.

At first glance one might be willing to remove Weiland and his followers from the role of *Identity* believers and return them to the roles of British-Israel believers, which their theology seems more closely to mirror. While this might be a more appropriate classification theologically, it is sociologically artificial. The perceptions of the groups, which align themselves with Weiland's theology, such as pastor Pete Peter's, *Scriptures for America* or Idaho pastor Dave Barley's, *America's Promise Ministry*, are resolutely seen as *Identity* by academics, law enforcement and importantly the watch-dog groups alike.[479] Furthermore, unlike earlier versions of British-Israelism, these groups do not have the same role for Jews eschatologically. Where true British-Israelism believes that the modern Jews will finally recognize Christ as the Messiah in the last days, this brand of Identity theology sees no special role for the modern Jews. They do not believe that the modern Jew is the offspring of the sexual union between Eve and Satan as Gayman, Butler, Robb and CSA did, but they do believe that all who deny Christ to be the Messiah are 'anti-Christ.'[480] While similar words are being used, a very different meaning lies behind them.

It is evident that this perception of these various and very different groups is not based on their subscription to a particular *Identity* theological view; rather, groups which would join these British-Israel ideas with other group oriented views then lead the 'other' (in this case society at large) to see them as *Identity*. For instance, while Pete Peters', *Scripture for America* boldly

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[479] Seen easily in the academic literature and through interviews with various law enforcement agencies. See for instance, Kushner, Terrorism in America, pp. 56-83; Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*, 1990; Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* 1997; among others, and, interviews with local and federal law enforcement in California, Missouri, Idaho.

[480] Interview with Mission to Israel pastor, Ted Weiland in Scottsbluff, NE, February 2001.

proclaims on its web site that, "We Are Not Identity,"[481] it cannot shake its firm allocation to that

social position within the literature.

Similarly, no person associated with the particular group which Ted Weiland leads in

Nebraska has never been accused of a specific 'terrorist' act, political violence or overt action

based on racial hate.[482] This fact has not kept others, such as the *St Louis Post-Dispatch*

newspaper, from treating the group as if they were clearly criminal or at least worthy of social

contempt. In the March 5, 2000 issue, the St Louis newspaper ran a story listing the home of one

of the mission's supporters on a map in the paper and reported that the family members were,

"racist *Identity* members."[483] *Identity* theologies may differ widely but the social aspect of

*Identity*—which is most often a label imposed by those from outside of any group or individual's

associated with the British-Israel or *Identity* movement—is as important as any theological

mandates or foundations upon which a group may be founded or believe.

The social stigma, which attends upon being associated with the *Identity* movement led to

the family's business, gospel music singing, being destroyed as well as a lawsuit on the family's

behalf against the newspaper.[484] Central to the loss of the family's business and the ensuing

lawsuit was the accompanying article, "The Movement "IS NOT CHRISTIAN," Says Minister

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[481] Found at www.ScripturesforAmerica.com, (cited August 23, 2006).

[482] Indeed, the pastor described the group to me as octogenarian during one interview, alluding to the fact that much of his congregation is made up of older (65 +) retired members. During my own attendance of the groups Sabbath meetings I have been surprised to find a much older than usual congregation. Interviews, Mission to Israel, Scottsbluff NE, February, 2001.

[483] Tuft and Holleman, "Inside the Christian Identity Movement,"*, St Louis Post-Dispatch*, pp. A8.

[484] Telephone interview with, Robert C. Seitbel, attorney representing the Sigafus family in case #94.1350, Sigafus v. St. Louis Post-Dispatch, et.al., April 6, 2001. Also see, St Louis Post Dispatch, March 5, 2000, p. A1.

Who Heads Ecumenical Group in St. Louis."[485] This article explained through the words of an

ecumenical leader why the movement wasn't Christian, a fate, in the "Bible-belt"[486] that no self

professing Christian organization can long endure. One minister quoted in the article, Dr. Robert

W. Edger, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, made the following statement;

> Even though this cult group camouflages itself under the word Christian, its hate speech
> is not part of the Hebraic-Christian tradition. We opposed vehemently their hate speech
> directed against gays, lesbians, Jews, African-Americans, minorities and any others they
> may talk about. That talk can lead to violence and goes against the fundamental
> principles of our understanding of God and our understanding of Christian faith.[487]

Nowhere does Dr. Edger relate his unhappiness with the *Identity* movement to any

commonly accepted theological criteria for what is Christian. This theological omission and

absolute dependence upon social perceptions is the usual method today for out-group

categorization of the movement as a whole. While it might be expected that the caricature

explanation of *Identity* in this case list the most extreme views of one portion of *Identity*,[488] no

attempt is made, either in this series of articles or the wider literature to see any internal

divisions. Thus, all are equally out-grouped in opposition to the authoritative proclamations of

the 'other.' The basic principles, which have for many years dictated a particular group's

admission to Protestant Christianity, are ignored.  Certainly within the Protestant fundamentalist

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[485]Patricia Rice, "The Movement "IS NOT CHRISTIAN," Says Minister Who Heads Ecumenical Group in St. Louis *St Louis Post-Dispatch",* March 5, 2000, p. A8.

[486] A term commonly associated with the mid-western portion of the US alluding to the areas high concentration of Fundamentalist believers. South Missouri is sometimes called the "tongue on the buckle of the Bible belt because of its known devotion to the Fundamentalist perspective.

[487] Carolyn Tuft and Joe Holleman, "Inside the Christian Identity Movement," *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 5, 2000. p. A8.

[488] "The FBI Calls it the Nation's most Dangerous Hate Group: Christian Identity," *St Louis Post Dispatch*, March 5, 2000, p. A1.

movement the doctrines below are seen as the essentials for being fundamentalist Protestant Christian group.

1) A belief in the inspired and inerrant Bible;

2) A belief in the Virgin Birth.

3) Belief in the deity of Christ and his atoning death for sin on the cross;

4) The belief in the bodily resurrection and ascension;

5) The belief that all men are 'fallen' in sin. A condition which separates fallen man from God's salvation;

6) That God's salvation is by justification through faith;

**Group vs. individual orientation**

As discussed in chapter three, Geert Hofstede showed in his research that people from different areas of the world could be broadly categorized as having either a collectivist or individualistic worldview. Americans are typically considered to be highly individualistic while the culture described in the Bible is collectivist in nature and orientation.

Two of the leaders I met with during the field research portion of this dissertation, Dan Gayman and Ted Weiland have spent many hours reading, studying and pouring over the various passages of Biblical scripture.[489] The groups that are theologically rather than racially focused,

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[489] This assertion is based on several observations. First are the statements made by the leaders. Each claimed to have spent many hours over many years studying the Bible. Secondly, the Bibles carried by these men are well worn and noted. Thirdly, their command and understanding of biblical passages led me to believe they had each spent many years engrossed in the text.

such as Gayman's Church of Israel and Weiland's Mission to Israel, have each adopted some traits more commonly found in a Mediterranean group orientation.

A visible expression of this unexpected trait is the dietary regime adopted by these groups. For instance Gayman and his group follow a strict diet which they believe is commanded in Scripture as a result of their believed solidarity with Old Testament Israelites. The leaders describe this commitment to what has traditionally been seen as a Jewish practice, as a practice, which links them with their ancestral past. The practice of following these dietary laws is observed church wide. Similarly, these same groups celebrate feasts and religious holidays normally associate with the Jewish tradition. For instance, The Church of Israel celebrates the Feast of Tabernacles, which is normally associated with the Jewish tradition. The church sees the festival as a mandatory gathering for all "Israelite Christians."[490] The festival is celebrated over an eight-day period that changes dates each calendar year.[491]

These Mediterranean borne practices have become pervasive within the theologically focused groups such as the Church of Israel and the Church of Israel Redeemed. The practice is not taken lightly and is related to their covenantal beliefs and is an example of the group rather than individualistic focus. The same group orientation is not seen in the racially oriented groups such as the KKK.

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[490] A label often used by *Identity* believers to explain those who understand their "real identity as literal Israel."

[491] "National Feast of Tabernacles," *The Watchman*, Summer 1997, Volume 20, number 3, p. 42.

**Conclusions**

The very basic tenets listed above, which have been accepted in Protestant theology as authoritative and determinative, should be used as a standard against which British-Israelism and the *Identity* movement at large is measured. They are appropriate for the task since they require an adherence to the stricter, Fundamentalist perspective from which *Identity* in general emanates.[492] But when we compare *Identity* groups with these criteria, we see that there are very real differences between their theological structures. In addition, these described theological differences have an impact on the social and ideological makeup of the various groups. Not only do Butler's Aryan Nations and Weiland's groups disagree on doctrine, but the groups members and adherents express a different social make up with the neo-Nazi Aryan Nations portraying dress, attitude and actions similar to other Nazi groups while Weiland's group is indistinguishable from other mainstream Fundamentalist congregations. Despite these differences, it would appear that groups like Weiland's cannot now be pulled from that more general *Identity* association, as the popular literature and general perception refuses to allow for a return to distinct British-Israel vs. *Identity* norms.

It becomes apparent that while all of the groups claim that they believe the described essential doctrines of the Christian faith, but not all have abducted the meaning into the nexus between their theological belief-system and how that system is worked out in the group setting. Aryan Nations and the KKK groups appear to utilize the veneer of Christian orthodoxy for recruitment and social acceptance while supplanting the particular doctrines with racist ideology rather than Christian meaning. On the other hand, the Church of Israel and the Covenant, Sword

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[492] Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*, pp. 20-21, 166.

and the Arm of the Lord and churches appear to derive their social presuppositions from exegetical considerations rather than racist ideology.  In short, while each of these four groups claim to be Christian, only two, the Church of Israel and CSA, make that claim based on their actual religious belief in correspondence with their doctrinal exegesis. The KKK and Aryan Nations examples make those same claims, but from a position of racial superiority and Nazi inspiration respectively.

Also claiming to be Christian and doing so from a scriptural rather than ideological perspective are the similar theologies of Pete Peters', *Scriptures for America,* Dave Barley's, *America's Promise Mini*stries and Ted Weiland's, *Mission to Israel Ministries*. These three groups make their assertion based on their exegesis of the biblical texts involved. While closer, to traditional Reformed theology, the position still differs from it. The belief that Christians make up the 'Israel of God' within the Reformed tradition is not a claim to actual physical descent from the Old Testament Hebrews as it is in these cases. Rather, they make the claim on the basis of becoming spiritual descendants, chosen by God as expressed in Ephesians.

> Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men) remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.[493]

A physical rather than spiritual claim to being Israel then is a general distinction between those *Identity* groups, which claim a similar view of predestination and traditional Reformed belief on the doctrine of election. While the views are different, it does not then follow that to

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[493] Ephesians, 2:11-13.

believe you are the actual line of Israel rather than the spiritual Israel somehow transforms the belief from genuine and Christian to un-Christian.

Also central is a different cultural orientation between groups based on their relationship to the text. Aryan Nations and the KKK group, although willing to use a religious veneer for their purposes, are not tied in the same way to the text, which groups such as Church of Israel and Mission to Israel are.[494] The tremendous time spent working with the biblical text by the leadership and members of groups like Church of Israel and Mission to Israel and a desire to see a direct family link between them and the Israelites of old have stamped the groups with a Mediterranean group orientation vs. the expected US individualistic society.[495] They have co-opted diet and ritual aspects of the text, which the other groups have not. Those groups, which have adopted the Mediterranean perspective, such as Church of Israel, etc, have adopted a kosher diet and observe the feasts and religious holidays normally associated with the Jewish religion. Life outside the group is not regarded as genuine or authentic as the honor of the group replaces the individual perspective. The 'evil other' is opposed not just because they are evil, but also because of the group's perception of limited-good. For these groups, both the Jews and the *Identity* group can never be good at the same time as only one-group can posses a position of righteousness at a time.

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[494] This assertion was confirmed by time spent with the various groups as well as the product of the literature produced by the different groups involved. There is a near vacuum of true theology rather than racial treatise from the racial rather than theological groups.

[495] See, Malina, *The New Testament World,*1993 for the classic treatment on first century Mediterranean culture, also see, Esler, *Galatians* pp. 1-56, or, Esler, *The First Christians in Their Social Worlds: Social—Scientific Approaches to New Testament Interpretation,* pp. 1-36.

Having established that parts of *Identity* theology are Christian while others come from a non-Christian pre-supposition, this thesis now turns to the question of 'seed-line' theology types to further distinguish between groups.

# CHAPTER 6

## CHRISTIAN *IDENTITY*: WITH OR WITHOUT SEEDS?

Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow black and white they are precious in his sight. Jesus loves the little children of the world. **Popular Christian children's song.**

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. **Genesis 3:15**[496]

**Introduction**

One of the major lines of differentiation in *Identity* theological doctrines and groups consists of the question of seed-line. The seed-line by which a person is born is believed by some within the broad *Identity* movement to dictate whether or not he or she is a part of the Chosen people of God's Israel, while another segment of the movement uses the distinction to determine whether or not a person should be regarded as human.[497] For some within the *Identity* movement—namely the seed-line factions—the idea espoused in the children's song above, that Jesus loves all races the same is abhorrent to their belief system. Seed-line theology is closely related, by *Identity* theologians, to the Mediterranean cultural idea of kinship and the need for a

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[496] Genesis 3:15, KJV.

[497] Though not generally understood within the terrorism studies community, academic theological circles or within the media, there is a distinction between types of *Identity* theologies based on seed-line which affect every aspect and action of the various groups adhering to the theology.

kinsman redeemer.[498] In addition, the view is related to and based on racist ideas that developed

in the 19th century.  Seed-line *Identity* theology, distinct from non-seed *Identity,* sees no way for

Jesus to "love all the little children of the world." Rather, for seed-liners, Jesus loves only the

white children and makes no provision for the "red and yellow and black" children to which the

song refers.

By seed-line, a significant number of *Identity* leaders, followers and adherents understand

that the hidden Israel nation is the result of the sexual union between Adam and Eve, whereas a

sexual union between Eve and the Serpent resulted in an evil race of anti-Christ beings known

today as the Jews.[499] Many *Identity* adherents come to this conclusion through a particular

exegesis of Genesis 3:15.  The seed of the woman and the serpent are believed to be literal races

of people.

This passage is most often referred to by traditional Christian commentators as the

*protevangelion* or "first gospel." The verse is generally recognized as the story from which the

Christian doctrine of "original sin"[500] originates, and is believed to be an Old Testament

foreshadowing of the atonement of sin by Christ in the New Testament.[501] Furthermore,

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[498] See, Bruce Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights form Cultural Anthropology*, (Louisville, KT: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), pp. 82- 86 & 117-148, for insight on to what this cultural perspective has meant to biblical studies understanding of the texts.

[499] This is the two-seed theory normally associated with *Identity* theology in total. Its most articulate presentation has been made by Dan Gayman, in his extremely influential work, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15.* (Schell City, MO: Church of Israel, 1977).

[500] Original sin is the doctrine that suggests that all of humanity is guilty before God for their sin because the whole race of men were infected by Adam and Eve's sin in Genesis 3. See for instance, Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, (Grad Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939), pp. 219-261.

[501] See for instance, Jacques Dupree (ed) The Christian Faith (New York: Alba House, 2001), or; *The Catholic Encyclopedia On Line* at,  http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11312a.htm (cited August 15,2006) under the heading Original Sin. Accessed on 6-15-06. For a Reformation period Protestant view, see; John Calvin's, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis,* Vol. I, (John King trans.) (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1999), pp. 167-171.

traditional Christian theology looks at the "two seeds" mentioned in Genesis 3:15 as a

description of a spiritual state—either of the spiritual seed of the woman redeemed by God in the

atonement by Jesus—or of the spiritual seed of Satan, which is in rebellion to God.  Distinct

from these views are the *Identity* ideas that by understanding Genesis 3:15 to mean a literal

"seed" or offspring, original sin is Eve's sexual union with Satan which produces a race of anti-

Christ half angel beings.[502]

Seed-line *Identity* theology believers assert that all non-white people are not human in the

same sense as Caucasian people. Rather, non-whites are believed to be part of God's creation

prior to the creation of Adam and, as such, are not human beings at all.[503] Within this system of

thought, non-white people are regarded as other non-human animals or cattle. These theological

assertions are not made as a result of personal millenarian visions or other special revelation.[504]

Rather, these assertions are the result of biblical exegesis from within a particular social setting

using a particular hermeneutic. This 'two-seed' position is held by some of the most outspoken

*Identity* groups and individuals. These include, Richard Butler's Idaho based, Ar*yan Nations*;

Thom Robb's, Arkansas based *The White Patriots of the Ku Klux Klan, (KKK)*; Dan Gayman's

Missouri based, *Church of Israel*; and Scott Stinson's Missouri based, *Church of Israel*

*Redeemed*.

While this theological position is advocated among the high profile groups listed above,

the two-seed theory is by no means the only position taken, nor is it the historically predominant

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[502] A position explained by Gayman but used by many groups that assert the seed-line *Identity* theology position.

[503] For the most complete treatment of this subject from a seed-line *Identity* theology perspective, see, Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation?,* pp. 63-71.

[504] As was the case with Richard Brothers and his construction of British-Israelism through millenarian visions "from God" and his belief that he was royalty (see chapter four of this dissertation for details).

position within the pantheon of the greater Israel *Identity* belief systems.[505] For instance, widely

respected and followed within the greater movement is Pete Peters of the Colorado based,

*Scripture's for America*; Dave Barley's Idaho based, *Americas Promise Ministries*; and Ted

Weiland's Nebraska based, *Mission to Israel*. Each of these men and their resultant ministries

hold a theological position, which although probably repugnant to the broader religious as well

as secular communities, is not based on the fundamental assertions of seed-line *Identity*.

Importantly this difference in belief and focus impacts their particular group's worldviews and

social perceptions in ways radically different from the two-seed groups.

The present chapter deals with this major distinction of seed-line versus non-seed

theologies in detail not attempted in the literature prior to this research. It furthers my thesis for a

differentiated and precise view of the theologies and groups currently seen as a monolithic within

the literature. The exegetical differences serve as a starting point to show how a group develops

and utilizes its particular hermeneutic to come to conclusions, which then influence the group's

social development and worldview. The case study groups are then used as a comparison

between the social outworking represented by the two distinct types of theology.

Two leaders have emerged as the principal theological writers of modern *Identity*. Each

of these men presents a view of *Identity* theology based on his particular primary exegetical

hermeneutic and his particular context. The social background and personal experiences of these

individuals contribute to the ultimate hermeneutic used, and thus participate in a dialectic or

feedback loop of experience affecting hermeneutic and the hermeneutic affecting later

experience. Dan Gayman most succinctly represents the two-seed theory of *Identity* theology,

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[505] By sheer number of years, the two-seed theory is a comparative theological newcomer. The non-seed *Identity* theology is synonymous with British-Israelism and thus has been around in some form or another for several hundred years.

while Ted Weiland has written in depth on the counter view.[506] The two men, each seen as

leaders in the broader *Identity* community, hold diametrically opposite views on most of the

important issues generally attributed to *Identity* theology.

These two views, seed-line versus non-seed, will be examined primarily through their

writings and interviews conducted with these men. The implications of the rival theologies are

applied to the wider body of case studies, but these two men and their corresponding exegesis

have significantly influenced the movement as a whole.

**The Jews are the literal offspring of Satan**

Jeffrey Kaplan describes Pastor Dan Gayman as having been, " . . . at the center of the

evolving *Identity* movement for the past 15 years . . ." and as, " . . . arguably the premier

theologian in the *Identity* movement today."[507] This is accurate at least as it applies to the seed-

line side of *Identity* theologians. In a movement whose literature is fraught with a mixture of

Odinism,[508] Dualism, pseudo-Christianity and the occult, the writing of Dan Gayman has

constituted one of the very few attempts at even partial coherency.[509] His following in the

*Identity* vein of his mentors came to see all non-white people as pre-Adamic (created before

Adam and with the beasts of the field) and the Jewish people as the literal offspring of the Devil.

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[506] The two most important books on the question are, Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15,* 1977, and the non-seed response, Weiland, *Eve: Did She or Didn't She?,* 2000.

[507] Jeffery Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol.5, No.1 (Spring 1993), pp. 30 – 82.

[508] Odinism is an ancient religion based on the belief system followed by the early Norsemen and other northern people. In the modern age it has been adopted by some sections of the White Power, neo-Nazi and related groups. See, Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America,* (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), for a comparison between *Identity* and Odinism.

[509] For instance the beliefs of the violent group, The Order, which is commonly held as the premier *Identity* group by many popular and academic writers. This group held (and may still hold in seclusion as those members of the groups which are not dead are now in prison) a belief system that attempts to incorporate all of the various ideologies of the right. Particularly those such as Odinism, Dualism and Cosmotheism.

Gayman's primary function within the broader movement has been to develop a systematic theology of the seed-line position, which had not before been articulated in one volume or with nearly the coherency, which he has been able to achieve.[510]

## Dan Gayman's Identity heritage

Unlike many associated with the American Right, Dan Gayman is a well-educated man. He graduated as a History major from Southwest Missouri State University in 1964.[511] Eventually Gayman taught within the local public school district.[512] His early life was influenced by his family's association and involvement with a sect of the Mormon Church,[513] and in the 1950's by the teaching of Herbert W. Armstrong of World Wide Church of God fame.[514] Gayman's family moved from Colorado to their present location in Southwest Missouri in the early 1940's where a small church was established. The church was influenced and in part led by

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[510] While many have written on the theory, a true systematic or defense, as seen in other areas of theology has not been made. See, David W. Brannan, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 11, #3, Autumn 1999, pp. 106-118, for an earlier argument related to Gayman's theological importance in the field.

[511] Kaplan "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, p. 51.

[512] Interview with Dan Gayman, Schell City, MO, September, 1998.

[513] Interview with Dan Gayman, Schell City, MO, September, 1998, Gayman now says that he has respect for the Mormon religion but does not see it as truth. He has written a book, which explains in detail why the Mormon people are good but still "lost and going to hell." For an in-depth look at the Church of Israel's views on the Mormon Church, see, Dan Gayman, *To the Mormons, A Religious People Filled with Good Works But Lost and Unsaved*, (Schell City, Mo: Church of Israel, undated). Also see, Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, p. 77.

[514] Kaplan "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, p. 51.

Gayman's grandfather.[515] Indeed the church appears to have been quite a Gayman family affair

as a later dispute between church leaders pitted Dan Gayman against his brother Duane.[516]

Gayman's early *Identity* training came in large part from Kenneth Goff of Denver,

Colorado in 1964-65.[517] Goff was a seed-line believer, coming from the *Identity* lineage of

Gereld L. K. Smith (1898-1976), the influential *Identity* preacher and writer that helped shape

the ideology throughout the 1940 to 1970's period.[518] Gayman's own voracious Bible reading

and study of relevant books on the subject augmented these lessons.[519] By the early 1970's,

Gayman was a seasoned *Identity* preacher with a systematic theology that was developing along

with his own fervor. The scales were gradually being removed from his eyes allowing him to

'understand' how the Scripture fitted in with the current events unfolding around him.[520]

Understanding the relationship between scriptural exegesis and current events—a shared pastime

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[515] Interview with Dan Gayman, Schell City, MO, September, 1998. There is some confusion here as to which grandfather this is. At some points he calls him his father and at others his mother's father. According to Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 1993 Gayman's father died when he was very young. My tendency here is to believe that his maternal grandfather was the influence. Gayman said he uses the name 'J. Chesley', when writing on especially hot or controversial topics, he said that J. Chesley was also his grandfather. See, *The Racial Crisis in America*, as an example. Kaplan identifies Gayman's maternal grandfather as Jesse Cruz thus either Gayman gave the name Chesley as another name that he uses to publish under, or he may have even changed the last name, taking only the initials, J.C. for Cruz = Chesley.

[516] Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, p. 52.

[517] Jeffrey Kaplan, *Encyclopedia of White Power: A Sourcebook on the Radical Racist Right* (Lanham, Maryland: Altamira Press, 2000), p.117-118 & 120-122, also see, Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, p. 52.

[518] See, John George and Laird Wilcox, *American Extremists*, (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1996), pp. 275-282 for a thorough but succinct description of Smith's influence on *Identity*.

[519] During one visit with Gayman, I was shown a large stack of 'worn-out' Bibles. They were tattered and marked with the obvious strain of many hours of intense study and use. Gayman indicated this to me as the cost of seeking 'truth.' It implied that I too would need to make this commitment if I were to find this same 'truth'.

[520] Interview with Dan Gayman, Schell City, MO, September, 1998.

between seed-line *Identity* teachers and pre-millennial dispensationalists—was another

commonality between Gayman and his mentor Gereld Smith.[521]

## Exegetical foundations

As suggested above, the two positions are the result of scriptural exegesis rather than

extra-biblical revelations as was the case in the early British-Israelism of Richard Brothers. The

most important of the two-seed passages is Genesis 3:15, but this is not the only area used to

support their thesis. Matthew 3:7, 13:24-30, 36-43, 23:33, John 8:38-44, Acts 13:6-10, II

Corinthians 11:1-3, I John 3-12 and Genesis 3:1-21 are all used as supporting evidence for the

hypothesis.[522] These passages have been used for many years now to defend the given point of

view.[523] What then is the exegetical foundation for the seed-line hypothesis, and how does the

premier seed-line theologian, Dan Gayman, most succinctly articulate it?

## The preeminent hermeneutic – She did it!

Throughout this discussion it has been argued that a major thrust of British-Israel thought

as well as *Identity* it rests on the idea that the true people of God have been involved in a case of

mistaken identity. Rather than seeing the modern day Jews as the people spoken about in the

Bible, *Identity* asserts that the Northern European people and their extension are the 'lost tribes'

of Israel. As this work looks toward an exegetical understanding of the seed-line position, this

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[521] See, John George and Wilcox, *American Extremists*, p. 277.

[522] These passages are used from a point of view most extensively in, Gayman's, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15*; they are dealt with again in works from non-seed groups such as, Weiland's, *Gods Covenant People,* 1995, but with radically different conclusions. The vast majority of these versus only come into play in relation to theology after the reader has accepted the principle hermeneutic of the exegete.

[523] Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*, pp. 13-24.

issue of mistaken identity must be addressed. On the issue of mistaken identity, Gayman makes

this statement;

> Firstly, the reader is reminded of a basic pre-supposition which the Bible declares of itself in Genesis 5:1-3. **The Bible is the book of the generations of Adam**. It is not the record of other races.[524] (Emphasis in original)

The asserted belief of *Identity*, that the people known as the modern Jews have attempted

to replace 'true Israel' with a counterfeit, is found in Gayman's books,

> There were several groups in Judea at the time of Christ who had no genetic connection with the true people of Israel, yet called themselves Jews…Surely this must be those false Jews who are of the synagogue of Satan…According to the Scriptures, they are the very people of Satan, yet they present themselves as the people of God. Surely, this is the hoax of history![525]

Gayman further suggests that other races do not share in the same relationship to God as

the seed of Adam, or white race. Gayman states plainly,

> **Christianity is the religion of the caucasian race**.[526] (Emphasis in original)

If the Bible is directed only to the seed of Adam, does this then mean that there are other

men, which are not of the seed of Adam?  This distinction becomes one of the important

hermeneutic pre-suppositions for Gayman throughout his later exegesis. The assumption is that

the Bible is not intended to apply to anyone other than the progeny of Adam—the question then

is—who is the progeny of Adam and who is not?

The text should give us some clue if, as Gayman says, "Ultimately we must stand on the

solid ground of scripture…"[527] as to who we should look for as the progeny of Adam.

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[524] Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation?,* p. 114.

[525] Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15,* p. 406.

[526] Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation?,* p. 29.

This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female and blessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created. And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.[528]

Gayman explains that the first of this "seed" is Cain,

**Cain was the first manifested seed of the serpent.** Cain is missing from Adam's genealogy not because he sinned, but because he was not of Adam's seed. Cain was fathered by Satan.[529](Emphasis in original)

Gayman then says that Cain's seed is identified by Jesus in the New Testament

repeatedly and could be found among both the Pharisees and Sadducees,

The Serpent Seed dominated both the Pharisees and the Sadducees at this point in history. Indeed, plenty of Satan's offspring were around when Jesus Christ walked the roads leading to and from Jerusalem.[530]

Finally, Gayman explains that this "Serpent Seed" is with us today in the form of the

Jewish people. Gayman explains,

They operate a highly developed network of organizations through which they control their own people, such as B'nai' B'rith, the American Jewish Congress, the Anti-Defamation League, and other organizations…Most of the people belonging to these secret societies, including the Masons, do not know that they are mere pawns in the hands of Satan and his offspring.[531]

Gayman wants his readers to understand that he sees the Genesis author making it clear

that Genesis, and indeed the entire Protestant Bible, is intended only for the seed of Adam, or as

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[527] Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15,* p. 7.

[528] Genesis 5:1-3, NKJV.

[529] Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15,* p.207.

[530] *Ibid*, p. 253.

[531] *Ibid*, p. 280.

Gayman views it, the white races.[532] This view is a very real part of Gayman's hermeneutic and

colors how he reads the text and exegetes the remainder of scripture. A more traditional reading

of the text suggests that no claims are made to include some race's lineage and exclude others.

Rather, the author of Genesis is letting his audience know that the following portion of the

writing, which is genealogical in nature, has to do with the genealogy of Adam through the line

of Seth.[533] It is specifically through the line of Seth, as Gayman sees the line of Cain as that of

Satan's own seed. A point that Gayman suggests is further proved when Cain goes outside the

white races in the seed of Adam to find a wife from the land of Nod.[534] Gayman assumes this

wife from Nod is a non-human, non-Adamic and thus, non-white being from an earlier creation

story he believes took place in Genesis 1:31.[535]

Gayman's exegesis induces among those living under the weight of his findings not only

peculiar theological beliefs, (but for some groups using the two seed hypothesis), it also leads to

potentially violent and certainly unpopular political beliefs and positions. In the Introduction I

suggested this work would begin to unravel several questions about the theology of *Identity* and

the political ramifications that come from this belief system. Specifically it asked, "How do

dissimilarities in scriptural interpretation affect the political behavior of groups adhering to

*Identity* theology?" Gayman's idiosyncratic interpretation of the text with regards to cultural or

ethnocentric understanding, leads his followers to a particular theological position, which

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[532] *Ibid*, p. 7.

[533] See Genesis 5:4-32, also see, Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis,* pp.229-235, for the commentators specific admonition against drawing to much, "speculations, which every one frames for himself from light conjectures" from this specific passage. While Calvin was not addressing pastor Gayman's specific "speculation," the admonition certainly fits.

[534] See Genesis 4:17. Gayman assumes that Cain's bride must be a part of an earlier creation of the 'beasts of the field,' and that the union outside of Adam's white, human race, should be expected of Cain because he was of the seed of Satan.

[535] See Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation?,* p. 94.

informs and in fact demands a particular political view, which sees Caucasians as human, and all

non-white people as animals. Obviously this is a politically charged belief with potentially

destructive ramifications.

For Gayman and his followers, if "the book" alluded to in Genesis—and assumed to be

the Protestant bible by Gayman—was written for an actual people, who flow from the seed of

Adam, there must be another people to whom the book does not apply. More importantly, this

other race or kind of people will also be traceable through following the physical lineage of some

other "seed."[536] Fundamentalist interpretation becomes an important issue as Gayman contrasts

his view of "seed" with that of traditional Christianity. This fact should not come as a surprise—

as we have already seen in Chapter 4—*Identity* theology claims to be a Fundamentalist

movement and thus, to hold to the interpretation of scripture as inerrant.  Gayman states;

> In the consequence of **original sin**, Almighty God placed enmity (hatred, hostility, or
> tension) between **two, distinct seedlines** in the earth. The primary implication of the fall
> of Adam and Eve resulted in the birth and proliferation of two seedlines in direct conflict
> with each other on earth. Thus, the **Seed of the Serpent** and the **Seed of the Woman** are
> both literal aspects of sin's entry into the world. The seed of the serpent is physical,
> literal, and represents a people embodied with the personality of Satan. Satan does have
> offspring in the earth; they are descended from the left side of Genesis 3:15. The seed of
> the woman is that seedline of Abraham which Jesus Christ took on in the incarnation.
> **Both seeds of Genesis 3:15 are literal.**[537] (emphasis in original)

Gayman leaves no doubt that he believes there are physical offspring of the "Seed of the

Serpent" roaming the earth today who are in opposition to another physical line, which descends

from Adam and later included Jesus Christ. The identification the first group in opposition to

God's people then becomes the focus of Gayman's work, which is outlined in the remainder of

the book. As surprising as the claim may appear to the reader at first glance, is it really that

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[536] Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15,* p. 7.

[537] Gayman, *Ibid*, p. 8.

different than other mainline Protestant denominations? For instance, consider the words of

Pastor John Lindal, senior pastor of the 3000-member James River Assembly, Assembly of God

church in Springfield, MO.[538]

> We forget that demons are angels and they come to earth and interact with us. They are all around us and you don't even know it. What the Scripture is talking about here is the fact that demons had come to earth and were collecting harems of women.[539]

The Assembly of God denomination is a mainline—US, thirty eight million strong,

openly accepted, Christian denomination, which makes claims similar in type to those that

Gayman makes.[540] Both are simply suggesting that angels come to earth and have sex with

human women. Or are they?

For Gayman, the sexual union between Eve and Satan becomes the central focus of all

further interaction with the text. Thus he states,

> Genesis 3:15 is one of the most important verses in the entire Bible. The implications of this verse form a central theme in the plot of the bible. How you deal with Genesis 3:15 has a direct bearing on how you interpret the remainder of the Bible. How you define *seed* in this verse is extremely important. Failure to establish yourself upon the solid rock interpretation of this verse can only lead to spiritual blindness and confusion in much of what you will read in the total Word of god. It is imperative that you confront genesis 3:15.[541] (Emphasis in original)

Gayman asserts that without understanding this passage—from Gayman's perspective—

the reader will never understand the rest of the Bible. Unless the reader accepts Gayman's central

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[538] A "mainline" church, both in denomination and in the specific manifestation of this particular assembly, which also proudly claims to be "Fundamentalist."

[539] A public statement made by pastor John Lindal, during a service at the James River Assembly, April 29, 2001, Springfield, MO, while preaching on Numbers 13:32. For a similar argument from a dispensationalist-fundamentalist perspective, see, John Phillips, *Exploring the Scriptures* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001).

[540] See, http://www.ag.org/top/ (cited August 15, 2006), for information of the Assembly of God denomination as mainline Protestant.

[541] Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15,* p. 15.

hermeneutic of literal sexual union between Eve and Satan, the reader is doomed to misunderstanding for all time and possibly eternal damnation.[542]

### Seed-line adherents interaction with Jews

Gayman's hermeneutic and subsequent exegesis determines the light in which he and his followers will view Jewish people. The Jew is to be seen as a half devil/half man who intentionally seeks to subvert the work of Christ and Christians in general. Furthermore, those dealing with people known as "Jews" are not subject to the normal constraints attended by those interacting with other humans. These beings are, in the minds of seed-liners, the focus of Jesus' and the New Testament writers reproach and condemnation, for instance;

> {a}nd I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but rather are a synagogue of Satan.[543]

Or,

> Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet and to know that I have loved you.[544]

Or,

> Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.[545]

Or,

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[542] Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15,* p.16.

[543] Revelation 2:9.

[544] Revelation 3:9.

[545] Matthew 23:15.

Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. Serpents, brood of vipers![546]

Or,

You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speak a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.[547]

Thus, seed-liners assert that Jesus and the New Testament writers see Jewish people as being of the "synagogue of Satan," "twice as much a son of hell," "serpents," and the literal sons of the devil. There is, accordingly, no reason to treat these anti-Christ beings as humans.[548] Seed-line believers repeatedly identify the "seed" or lineage of those who are known today as "Jews," as the anti-Christ or the one against whom real Christians are to fight and struggle.[549] For instance Gayman says on this subject;

Satan's seedline consists of those people named in Revelation 2:9 and 3:9 who claim to be Jews (AKJV), but are of the synagogue of Satan. The Seed of the Serpent have claimed descent from Abraham through Isaac and the twelve tribes. Specifically, they claim ancestry to the tribe of Judah. In calling themselves the **chosen people of God,** they have sought to become a racial embodiment of the promised Messiah. They deny the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, and by that fact alone, they can be labeled anti-Christ. 1 John 2:22 says: ***"who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth, the Father and the Son."*** The offspring of Satan deny that Jesus Christ is the true, anointed one, i.e. the Messiah, who was to come to redeem Israel, the Seed of the Woman. This tension and the conflict between the Seed of the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman are that age old enmity prophesized in Genesis 3:15 This is a battle between God and Satan, between the offspring of Satan and the children of God. It is a struggle between light and darkness, good and evil. In short, it is a life and death

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[546] Matthew 23:31-33.

[547] John 8:44.

[548] Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15,* pp. 267-270.

[549] See for instance, Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15,* pp. 25-26, 45-50, and 205-300.

struggle between the Kingdom of Satan and the Kingdom of God.[550] (Emphasis in original)

The largest and most influential opponents of *Identity* in general and seed-line theology in particular are the Anti-Defamation League of Bani Brith (ADL) and the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). These two organizations do more than any others to "fight" against this "theology of hate and violence."[551] They have sought to raise the public awareness of the dangerous potential of the theology.[552] Beyond this educational role, these groups act in concerted effort to stop perceived attacks against their constituent group, the "Jewish people, " a people which seed-liners see as only half human and the legitimate target of their hatred.

The relationship between seed-line *Identity* groups and these Jewish watchdog groups is as adversarial as one might expect. This conflict has taken various forms, including both violent actions and rhetoric of varying degrees. On the part of the *Identity* groups, actions and rhetoric have relied primarily upon the given group's particular theological position as related to Romans 13:1-7. This text, which is reviewed in detail in the following chapter, *Repentant and Rebellious*, is a watershed passage for determining whether or not a group will become actively violent toward "the other," which in this case is the "Jewish people." Broadly, groups such as the Church of Israel and the Church of Israel Redeemed, make no effort to attack Jewish people. While they may not like, respect or believe them to be anything short of the anti-Christ—their

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[550] Gayman, *Ibid*, pp. 25-26.

[551] See, www.adl.org or www.splc.org for examples of these groups describing *Identity* theology as a theology of hate and violence. Also see professor Jeffrey Kaplan's destruction of this fallacy in, Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America*, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997) pp. 55-57.

[552] www.adl.org/identity.html, (cited August 13, 2003). The theology is represented as a monolith, which seeks to kill Jewish people in general.

exegesis of the Romans 13 passage does not allow them to take physical action against their enemy. Other seed-line groups such as the CSA and Aryan Nations do allow for, and in fact applaud, physical violence against their sworn enemies, the Jews.

**Dealing with "the other"**

According to *Identity* groups such as the Church of Israel, and the Church of Israel Redeemed, non-Jewish but non-white people,[553] as we have seen above, are regarded as a part of God's creation, which is to be respected and cared for, but as one would care for and keep animals.[554] In this view of creation it becomes clear how certain segments of the movement deem slavery as a righteous pursuit for the modern white man.[555] If modern white man can keep cattle in the field or horses for their pleasure or work, then to keep another "beast of the field"—non-white man—for similar reasons is a natural position for these seed-line *Identity* adherents to hold. Interestingly, this position, which would seem to be the natural end result of the theological conclusions, is rarely asserted in person.[556] Even when prompted to agree or disagree with the view that non-whites are merely cattle and thus slavery was historically and should now be a legitimate endeavor, no adherent or leader I spoke to was willing to make this leap.

This offensive doctrine is specific and particular to the seed-line view of *Identity,* although the attempt to cover all who believe in a hidden Israel, including those who regularly

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[553] Thus, all other races such as Oriental, Black, Mexican, Native American, etc.

[554] This view is asserted within the systematic presentation made by pastor Gayman. See, Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3: 15,* 1977, or Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation?,* 1995.

[555] Such as Aryan Nations in Idaho.

[556] In print the assertion has been made in the form of undated and unpublished handbills. Some of these can be seen at the University of Kansas library, located in the Wilcox collection.

publish against these doctrines[557] with this veil has been somewhat successful by watchdog

groups.[558] The relationship Gayman is trying to describe is not to be as much one of supremacy

as it is a call to be a caretaker of God's "good" creation and to keep order in the creation as

Gayman believes God made it.[559]

> Thus Gayman states:

> If a majority of the Caucasian race in America makes the unscriptural choice to mix, mate, amalgamate, and destroy the treasure and blood of their race in miscegenation, fine. They have to live with that decision. However, we at the church of Israel have chosen to remain faithful to the covenant Law of God and Scripture. We seek no tension and conflict with other races. We wish that every race would remain faithful to the standards of racial purity. What we seek for ourselves we also wish for all other races. Every race should seek to preserve the original design of the Creator. Race mixing will erase God's mark of ownership. When persons of any race engage in interracial dating and marriage, they have crossed one of the very most important lines drawn by God and Scripture. Those who do so have taken a step into the darkness of night. This tragic walk will harvest bitter fruit, sorrow, pain, and suffering in this world, and in the world to come, eternal damnation.[560]

In a practical sense this means little as many within the Church of Israel practise a self-

imposed segregation, often living in rural or secluded areas where minority populations are

essentially not present. This lifestyle choice by adherents is then incorporated into the greater

doctrinal schematic as the church's leadership sees God's direction and purpose in everything.[561]

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[557] Such as pastor Ted Weiland's Mission to Israel in Scottsbluff NE. See, Weiland *God's Covenant People: Yesterday, today and Forever*, Weiland, *Eve: Did She or Didn't She,* 2000; or Ted Weiland, *Israel's Identity: It Matters!* (Scottsbluff, NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 2000).

*[558] See, Jeffrey Kaplan,* Radical Religion in America: Millenarian Movements from the Far right to the Children of Noah*. (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), pp. 127-163 for a review of how these groups have colored the* Identity *movement.*

[559] Gayman recognizes that throughout the creation narrative in Genesis, God pronounces his creation "good." Thus, if God calls his created pre-Adamic men "good," Gayman is loath to challenge that position.

[560] Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation*?, p. 190.

[561] See, Profile of a Wilderness Family," *The Watchman*, Volume 21, #4, Fall, 1998, p. 33.

The Church of Israel, Church of Israel Redeemed, Aryan Nations, White Patriots of the KKK

and the CSA all practise this segregation to some extent.

In speaking with members of various congregations operating under the theological

direction of seed-line *Identity*, the role of social engagement in applying these theological

principles to the group become more apparent. While Gayman's Church of Israel lives virtually

without minority contact, other groups seem to go out of their way to be in contact with

minorities. The White Patriots of the Ku Klux Klan in Harrison, Arkansas have traveled around

the country extensively preaching their particular brand of *Identity* in open-air forums, often

coming into contact with minorities. Pastor Tom Robb, the group's leader, has been vocal in his

desire to change the KKK's national image by using the tactics of Dr. Martin Luther King rather

than the traditional pro-violence tactics.[562] While his message delivery style may have changed

somewhat over the years,[563] the opposition to his message has not. Whenever Robb and his

followers make an appearance they are sure to be opposed, vocally if not physically, with a

substantial number of that opposition being minorities.[564] In a documentary made by the BBC in

1998, Robb is seen delivering a speech to no one other than his own membership, news crews,

law enforcement officials and a counter-demonstrating minority crowd jeering and yelling.[565]

Robb became angry with the crowd telling them to be quiet and calling them "niggers." The next

sequence shows Robb bemoaning the fact that he had made a "mistake" and should have never

used the racial epithet.[566]

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[562] Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America,* p. 12.

[563] In his earlier days Tom Robb was at least rhetorically violent in articulating his message.

[564] Phone interview with KKK leader, Tom Robb, March 30, 2000.

[565] *Heart of Darkness*, BBC/The Discovery Channel production, 1998.

[566] *Ibid.*

The KKK in this instance lives out their understanding of the seed-line theology very differently from the faith-based Church's of Israel or the now defunct Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord, CSA. Where segregation is self-imposed by the faith-based groups above, the KKK, far from maintaining the "quietist" position as it is described by Kaplan, lash out at the object of their hate. Groups such as the Aryan Nations and KKK differ substantially in this regard from their doctrinal brothers in the listed faith-based churches. Again, as was seen in the discussion of whether or not *Identity* is actually Christian, the theology has been applied as a veneer to cover an existing hate or ideology other than Christianity, rather, than in the case with Gayman's group, they simply choose to separate themselves from a group they see as fundamentally "other" than themselves.

It has been well documented that the current "fifth era" embodiment of the Klan has been essentially muted in their ability to carry out pre-planned violent strikes against the other.[567] Well known KKK leader and Aryan Nations associate, Louis Beam went so far as to say the KKK was incapable of carrying out clandestine operations because federal agents have so thoroughly breached the organization's security.[568]

Furthermore the KKK group studied here, the White Patriots, are vocally non-violent and supposedly pro-white rather than anti-minority in their beliefs.[569] But where seed-line theology as espoused by Gayman calls for a humble retreat from conflict with other races, Robb's KKK cannot deny their underlying motivation of historical KKK beliefs, which are counter to the

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[567] See for instance, Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America,* pp. 12-13.

[568] Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America,* p. 12. He is not alone in his estimation of the Klan's inability to operate without federal agents being present, throughout the general population of the radical right the Klan is seen as bumbling and incompetent. One man at a gun show in Springfield, Missouri, July 2001, described the current state of the Klan as a bunch of federal agents dressed up to play in white robes.

[569] This differentiation is in the minds of KKK activists alone. Few others can see the difference when applied in real life terms.

faith-based motivations of Gayman. In this respect, the group is unable to adhere to the tenets the

theology demand, e.g. obedience to law and humble respect of others races, which God has

proclaimed, "good." Robb and members of his KKK group have been repeatedly documented

belittling non-whites, making threats and inciting violence toward Jews, Blacks and other non-

whites.[570] No respect of other races can be tolerated, even at this self-avowed non-violent end of

the Klan family. The underlying important foundation is racial rather than theological. The

theology is helpful in recruiting a different type of membership or for making claims following

acts of violence but the social outworking of their theological position is radically different from

those groups whose primary focus is on biblical or theological questions rather than ideological

justifications. Robb received a poignant reminder of the KKK's racial rather than theological

focus in 1995 when a significant portion of his membership left his leadership because it was not

sufficiently focused on historical KKK issues.[571]

Both seed-line and non-seed *Identity* theologies exhibit large amounts of local distinction

and unique types of growth and mutation. The lack of denominational control or a perceived

historic orthodoxy allows the individual group to change slightly (or in some cases radically) the

theology they are following. This practice is perhaps best seen in the development, mutation and

social outworking of the now defunct seed-line *Identity* group, Covenant, Sword and the Arm of

the Lord, CSA. The CSA, once based on several hundred acres on the Missouri/Arkansas border,

grew out of a unique fundamentalist, 1960's/70's Jesus movement and commune style

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[570] See for instance, "White Supremacy in the 1990's," *Center for Democratic Renewal*, found at, http://nwcitizen.com/publicgood/reports/whitesup.htm, (cited June 7, 2001) for a perspective on the KKK's view toward non-white people.

[571] See, "Paranoia as Patriotism: Far-Right Influences on the Militia Movement," *The Nizkor Project,* accessed at, http://www.nizkor.org/hweb/orgs/american/adl/paranoia-as-patriotism/thom-robb-kkk.html. (cited June 7, 2001).

encampment in the Ozark Mountains.[572] The group originally known as Zerephath-Horeb

Community Church,[573] was led by James Ellison and mutated over a 10 year stretch of time until

it finally became a militant *Identity* gathering. The group initially lived and worked in and

around their rural acreage following a Pentecostal manifestation of the Christian faith which

followed the same doctrines generally represented in Protestant, fundamentalist, dispensational,

Arminian, theology.[574] Early on the group was unique among the mainstream Churches primarily

in its physical separation from city and suburbia and its communal lifestyle. As the group met

with and adopted Dan Gayman's particular views of seed-line *Identity* theology, the social

outworking of that theology took on a distinctive shape, which was different both from the

spiritual based actions of the Church's of Israel or the racial actions and views of the KKK or

Aryan Nations, the other seed-line case studies used in this dissertation.

The CSA group had a history of a strong commitment to literal scripture interpretation,

direct personal revelation as well as a dependence on charismatic leadership.[575] These issues,

combined with the group's separation from the broader Church's mediating tendency, allowed

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[572] See, Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate*, pp. 9-31. Also, confirmed in author's interview with Kerry Noble, Burrelson, TX, May 2001.

[573] This name was given to the group by its leader Jim Ellison in the spring of 1978. The group at that time was Protestant Armenian dispensational fundamentalist in its theology but was moving toward a survivalist position, yet un-reliant on *Identity* theology. Zerephath-Horeb was taken from the Old Testament and its significance to the group is explained in Nobel's book *Tabernacle of Hate*. Early on the group had lived on a farm they named, "Cherith Brook" which in the Old Testament had been the brook by which Elijah had been fed by ravens. When the brook dried up, Elijah went to a place called Zarepath where he was fed by a widow. Finally, after challenging the prophets of Baal, Elijah went to "Horeb" also known as Mount Sinai. The group believed that Zarephath-Horeb was their own Mount Sinai—a refuge from God. See, Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate,* pp. 63-65.

[574] See, Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate,* pp. 9-31. Also, interview with Kerry Noble, Burrelson, TX, May 2001.

[575] Noble, 1998, inclusive. Also, interview with Kerry Noble, Burrelson, TX, May 2001 and phone interviews with Kerry Noble in April and July 2001. Leaders and even some members were encouraged to "share" personal revelations with the group. These revelations were often authoritative in the life of the group.

the group to quickly develop additional doctrines and imperatives.[576] For the CSA, the two-stage

creation story based on of Genesis 1:24 and the view of the Jewish population as the literal

offspring of Satan was a volatile addition to the pre-millennial dispensational view of an

imminent collapse of society coupled with their interest in and practice of survivalist training.[577]

For the CSA, the "beasts of the field" were not so much a "good" part of God's creation as they

were an out of control, less than human, group that needed to be put in its place.[578] The CSA—

through the self-appointed leadership of James Ellison and Kerry Noble—took on a desire to

force God into judging the other races through the use of the group's violent actions.[579]

While many actions were planned, discussed and even attempted, the group's violent

capabilities were less than impressive. Few if any real actions against other races were actually

carried out by the CSA *per se*.[580] CSA member Randal Radar, who later joined The Order and

helped them become a more "professional" ideologically driven criminal-group, outside of the

CSA leadership's control, did manage to attack and kill Jewish victims.[581] Radar left the CSA

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[576] Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate,* pp. 9-31. Also, interview with Kerry Noble, Burrelson, TX, May 2001, and phone interviews with Kerry Noble in April and July 2001. Mr. Nobel later published on his web site that some of his publishing on the various doctrines of their particular brand of *Identity* had no basis in exegesis or documentation. Essentially it came from his conspiratorial worldview mixed with the groups interaction and the leadership of Ellison. See, www.hopeful-sorjourner.com/Extremist_Mentality/Identity/identity.html (cited June 21, 2001).

[577] See, Kerry Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate,* pp. 47-97, see especially pages 71,72 and 74.

[578] *Ibid*, pp. 85-96.

[579]*Ibid*, pp. 70-74, also, , interview with Kerry Noble, Burrelson, TX, May 2001, and phone interviews with Kerry Noble in April and July 2001.

[580] The CSA was ineffective in actually carrying out attacks during their group's revolutionary period but they were effective in rallying others to action. In this regard they served as a springboard for violence.

[581] For an overview of The Order, see, Kevin Flynn and Gary Gerhardt, *The Silent Brotherhood*, (New York, NY: Signet Books, 1995). The Order became infamous for their killing of Jewish radio talk show host, Alan Berg and their daring armored car robberies. The leader, Robert Matthews was eventually killed in a fiery shoot out with the FBI on Washington state's Widbey Island and the rest of the group are currently serving prison terms for their crimes. Jeffrey Kaplan highlights The Order's reliance on Odinist ideology in, Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America*, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), pp. 47-99.

because he felt it was incapable of actually carrying out the violent actions he desired and

because he saw the *Identity* theology upon which the group was dependent as incapable of

supporting effective or protracted actions against other races.[582]

The social outworking of the CSA's theological understanding and mutation of seed-line

doctrines reflected the group's greater dependency on a particular charismatic leadership as

opposed to the quietist manifestation found in the Church of Israel. Again, this difference is

somewhat striking given the similarity of the groups involved. Both the Church of Israel in

Schell City, Missouri and the CSA based some 100 miles south of the Church of Israel were

separated from the broader society and dependent on literal—although personally verified—

interpretations of Scripture to determine the actions and doctrines of the group.[583]

**Seed-lines continuing impact**

What then, does the identification of Gayman's reliance on a particular hermeneutical

position mean for his theology, congregation and for others who rely on his exposition?[584] These

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[582] See, Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate*, pp.47-97; or, for an agenda driven perspective which has gained acceptance in the general media, see, James Coates, *Armed and Dangerous: The Rise of the Survivalist Right*, (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1995), pp.41-76. Also, interview with Kerry Noble, Burrelson, TX, May, 2001.

[583] A further distinction between activist or quietist groups is made in the following chapter. See, Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America*, pp. 54-56 for one model used in the terrorism studies field currently. Also see, Brannan, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, pp. 106-118 for an earlier argument for a more theological perspective to describe these differences.

[584] Those who rely on pastor Gayman's exposition are numerous both within the movement and without. For those who follow the hypothesis within the movement, the Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15, is seen as nearly infallible. There are no other purely theological works on the subject. Other pamphlets are a mixture of political rhetoric and theological extraction-generally taken from Gayman's writing on the subject, both with and without citation to that fact. Researchers as well use the text as "the last word" on what the theology of the movement is. See for instance, Jerome Walter, *One Aryan Nation Under God*, (Naperville IL: Sorcebooks, 2001), pp. 7-34, who uses pastor Gayman as the final word on what *Identity* adherents believe. Aho's research on Idaho Christian Patriotism, mentioned earlier in this dissertation is similarly dependant upon the Missouri based Gayman's understanding of what *Identity* theology is. See, James Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990), pp. 58-59, 96.

theological distinctives have broader social implications and point to how the various groups

using this theology may handle their relationship to out-groups and potential conflict situations.

The perspective of the Church of Israel and all those drawing from Gayman is that 'true

man' is only found in the white races.[585] Jews comprise the race which sprang out of the sexual

union between Eve and Satan and thus are the literal 'anti-Christ.'[586] All other races are

essentially the same as the beasts of the field and were created at a separate time.[587] Gayman

states;

> The non-white races were created before Adam, lived on the earth prior to the creation of
> Adam kind, and were created to live in a manner totally different from Adam.[588]

This does not then equate to a one to one correspondence between salvation and the white

race, rather, that the elect—the true Israel—are to come out of the white race.[589] It does however,

become the point at which some seed-line groups, such as the Aryan Nations and the KKK base

their feelings of racial superiority and general disdain for all non-whites. The theologically rather

than racially minded view of this issue is subtly different, although, in the current cultural

climate of absolute tolerance, difficult to see. Gayman's exposition does see the elect, which

come out of the Caucasian race as different and intended to be separated from other races, but he

believes this is to be done while not looking down on or belittling other races. Gayman answers

the obvious dilemma caused in this way:

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[585] Gayman, *The Duties of a Christian Citizen,* pp. 91-100.

[586] From an interview with Dan Gayman, Schell City, MO. September 1998. Also see, Gayman, *The Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15*, pp. 205-300.

[587] Genesis 1:24-26. See Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation?,* p. 94.

[588] *Ibid*, p. 94.

[589] *Ibid*, pp. 91-100. Also explained in chapter four of this dissertation.

The non-white races do not need salvation because they have nothing to be saved from. They are not under law and thereby are not under sin. All Christians must respect and honor the races that God created, however. There is no room for dishonoring them or showing contempt for that which God has created. As God's elect, we should remain humble and grateful. It is best for all races to pursue their own distinctive cultural patterns and God-given innate capacities. That every race would seek to live and dwell among their own kind is best for all concerned.[590]

Gayman is forced to walk a theological tightrope. On the one hand he believes that God created man like creatures (all men other than Caucasians, Caucasians are sometimes called "Adam-kind" rather than mankind, by Gayman) that are essentially equal with the beasts of the field and that God has called them good.

> We know that Yahweh is the creator of all things in heaven and earth; everything He created was pronounced good (Genesis 1:31). The *Chay Neffesh* creation, if it does include other races, means that they were created by Yahweh and found to be good, perfect, in His creative work.[591] (Emphasis in original)

While on the other hand, he believes the races must remain segregated similar to the Jewish Levitical laws calling for separations between species.[592] He cannot attack the other races as evil or bad in someway or he risks the wrath of God who has seen his creation and declared it good. Gayman's answer to this apparent conflict is rarely (outside of Jeffrey Kaplan) represented in the terrorism studies literature.[593]

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[590] Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation?,* pp. 95.

[591] *Ibid*, p. 150.

[592] See for instance, Leviticus, 19:19 for a prohibition against mixing livestock of different types.

[593] Outside of Kaplan who recognizes that the supposed "theology of violence" has produced remarkably few violent encounters, the field has chosen to avoid any statements, which might be misconstrued as positive by those who monitor the literature in the "watchdog" communities. For Kaplan's views see, Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America*, pp. 47-68 and Jeffery Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol.5, No.1 (Spring 1993), pp.30 – 82.

This position is very different from that which many other seed-liners have taken. For instance the Aryan Nations' theology is similar to Church of Israel in that they believe the race of Adam was created following the beasts of the field—which from this perspective includes all non-white people—and they believe that Jewish people are the literal offspring of a sexual union between Satan and Eve. Yet, though their theological imperatives are essentially similar at these important junctures, they are very different in how that theology is worked out in day-to-day life. Consider the flyer below for instance.

**Figure 3: A flyer passed out at an Aryan Nations meeting in the 1980's.**

**NIGGER TAG**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

circle date of kill

Name _____ 16

City _____ 17

State _____ 18

Signature _____ 19

20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

TAG GOOD FOR FOUR NIGGERS

**NIGGER TAG**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

Name _____ 16

City _____ 17

State _____ 18

Signature _____ 19

20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

TAG GOOD FOR FOUR NIGGERS

**NIGGER TAG**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

circle date of kill

Name _____

City _____

State _____ 18

Signature _____ 19

20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

TAG GOOD FOR FOUR NIGGERS

---

NIGGER HUNTING LICENSE

THIS CERTIFIES THAT

Address _____ Sex ___ Wt. ___

Age ___ Ht. ___

Eyes ___ Hair ___

City _____

Having paid the license fee is hereby licensed to hunt and kill NIGGERS during the open season herefor in Idaho. This license must be carried on person when hunting NIGGERS and give the holder permission to hunt day or fire hunt night, with or without dogs.

Issued at _____ Idaho, this

day of _____ 19 ___

Issued By _____ County Clerk or Warden

Season opens Jan. 1, closes Dec. 31

Signature of Licensee

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THE ARYAN NATION
DISTRICT OF IDAHO
NIGGER HUNTING LICENSE

THIS CERTIFIES THAT

Address _____ Sex ___ Wt. ___

Age ___ Ht. ___

Eyes ___ Hair ___

City _____

Having paid the license fee is hereby licensed to hunt and kill NIGGERS during the open season herefor in Idaho. This license must be carried on person when hunting NIGGERS and give the holder permission to hunt day or fire hunt night, with or without dogs.

Issued at _____ Idaho, this

day of _____ 19 ___

Issued By _____ County Clerk or Warden

Season opens Jan. 1, closes Dec. 31

Signature of Licensee

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THE ARYAN NATION
DISTRICT OF IDAHO
NIGGER HUNTING LICENSE

THIS CERTIFIES THAT

Address _____ Sex ___ Wt. ___

Age ___ Ht. ___

Eyes ___ Hair ___

City _____

Having paid the license fee is hereby licensed to hunt and kill NIGGERS during the open season herefor in Idaho. This license must be carried on person when hunting NIGGERS and give the holder permission to hunt day or fire hunt night, with or without dogs.

Issued at _____ Idaho, this

day of _____ 19 ___

Issued By _____ County Clerk or Warden

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Official RUNNIN' NIGGER Target



TARGET, BOX 1474, POST FALLS, IDAHO 83854, 25¢Ω

BODY SHOTS COUNT 5
HEAD SHOTS COUNT 0

Official RUNNIN' NIGGER Target



TARGET, BOX 1474, POST FALLS, IDAHO 83854, 25¢Ω

BODY SHOTS COUNT 5
HEAD SHOTS COUNT 0

Official RUNNIN' NIGGER Target



BODY SHOTS COUNT 5
HEAD SHOTS COUNT 0
RIFLE SHOTS COUNT 10

How can people claiming to view a part of God's creation, which he has pronounced as "good," at the same time view the creation as something to demean and humiliate? Neither Butler nor the Aryan Nations are able to incorporate assertions by Gayman on the subject of who non-whites and Jews into their groups' social reality. This offensive cartoon depiction of a black man as a running target makes no attempt at paying the respect due to a part of creation, which God has determined as 'good.'[594] Hate and derision are transferred to the other races on the basis that they have in some way done something wrong or sinned against God. This is not the perspective portrayed by the literature, private statements or social outworking of the group directly affected by Gayman, e.g. the Schell City, Missouri body of the Church of Israel. At this critical juncture, the primary hermeneutic used by the various seed-line *Identity* groups becomes more clear.

Racial superiority and the cultic worship of Hitler are the fundamental watershed issues upon which the Aryan Nations and its leaders focus. For the KKK and its leader Tom Robb, the racial separation of whites from non-whites takes that preeminent position. Neither of these two racialist groups is able to overcome their pre-suppositional stand on race, in order to see the theological distance their position places between them and the more spiritually focused followers of pastor Gayman.

The Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord, CSA, floated between these two positions in a way that would no longer be possible today. The evolving *Identity* movement had not yet firmly ensconced the *Repentant* and *Rebellious* division, which today plays a significant part in distinguishing between these groups, both internally and external to the *Identity* movement at

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[594] As in the case of Gayman's view.

large.[595] The CSA had avidly adopted the seed-line aspects of the theology of Dan Gayman, mixing their own virulent stance of millenarian apocalyptic theology based on a idiosyncratic understanding of prophecy being played out in the daily newspapers. For the CSA, actions against "the other" were focused against those perceived to be the anti-Christ, the Jews; and those people who were perceived to be in direct opposition to the law of God, homosexuals. Particularly disturbing to the CSA leadership was the acceptance of homosexuality within some Protestant churches, such as the *Metropolitan Community Church*, in Springfield Missouri.[596] Kerry Noble, former second in command at the CSA compound said:

> It used to be that Gayman was the man! No one came close for anyone that was really looking at Identity from a theological position. He had pulled together the lifestyle of fundamentalism and the radicalism of seed-line Identity. He didn't cuss and drink. His church was like a real church. He was a really good man. So many of the others were just redneck bubbas. Gayman still talked about the radical stuff at that point, but he wasn't really doing it himself. He was focused on the theology not the action. He was kind of the final word on the theology at that point.[597]

While this study makes no attempt to justify or agree with the views of Gayman that non-whites are sub-human and Jews are the literal offspring of the Devil, academic integrity and a even a basic commitment to knowledge demands that we attempt to understand that there is a real and discernable distinction between the two social out-workings of the similar theologies. The history of the discipline most often associated with these groups, terrorism studies, does not

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[595] This division is delineated more fully in the following chapter, *Rebellious and Repentant*. This division is particularly acute since the sedition trials, which involved many of the groups and leaders considered here. The trial was held in 1988, Ft. Smith, Arkansas. All of the defendants were acquitted.

[596] See, Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate,* p. 133.

[597] Interview with CSA leader, Kerry Noble, Burleson, Texas, April 2001. Noble was referring to the level of respect and honor pastor Gayman held within the *Identity* community while CSA was active, 1980-88.

make these needed distinctions[598] and thus fails to account for the actual nuances, which are present in the broad *Identity* movement. It is illegitimate to continue to lump together theological and social stances, which are clearly distinct.

While each of the positions, both seed and non-seed alike, may be seen as repugnant to modern liberal thought, to continue to de-legitimize the whole movement by marking all with the views of only one part is irresponsible. It is irresponsible not only because it falsely labels those who do not believe the seed-line doctrines, but also because of the danger it presents to those who have been charged with defending against possible violent actions carried out by those within the movement. This lack of clarity or distinction has led some to classify all individuals labeled as *Identity* adherents as "terrorists," or at the very least, hate-mongers.[599]

Law enforcement officials and others responsible for the legal protection of society have in the past been able to rely on dispassionate, accurate and insightful analysis of various social movements from academic sources to help them in their difficult task. By coloring all people within the *Identity* movement as violent or even as holding a monolithic belief related to the seed-line theology, those charged with the task of enforcement are unable to properly allocate resources, proactively engage potential offenders or negotiate with offenders once a crime has been committed. Clearly the greatest danger of continuing to align dissimilar groups under a

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[598] See for instance, James Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990); Jerome Walters, *One Aryan Nation Under God*, (Naperville, IL: SourceBooks, 2001); Harvey Kushner, *Terrorism in America*, (Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas, 1998); Walter Laqueur, *The New Terrorism,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Richard Abanes, *American Militias: Rebellion, Racism & Religion*, (Downers Grove IL: Intervarsity Press, 1996); or David A. Neiwert, *In God's Country*, (Pullman WA: Washington State University, 1999), for a variety of academic presentations which fail to make any real distinctions between seed and non-seed *Identity* theology. There are as well, myriad popular presentations and 'watchdog' type presentations, which also fail to make these needed distinctions.

[599] See Numerous ADL websites, www.adl.org, as well as several academic and popular writers, se for instance, Kushner, *Terrorism in America,* 1998 or Ridgeway, *Blood in the Face*, 1995.

single theological and sociological banner when there are clear and important divisions is the

danger it presents to the public at large and the freedoms they wish to continue to enjoy.

**The double edged sword of kinship in seed-line thought**

Kinship is an idea which plays an important role in understanding early Mediterranean

texts, especially within the blossoming biblical studies literature, which sees a need to account

for cultural difference.[600] As it relates to seed-line *Identity* theology, the role of the 'kinsman' or

'kinsman redeemer' is also important in understanding the seed-line *Identity* view of salvation.

In the book of Ruth, the picture of God's covenantal salvation is played out between

Ruth, her mother-in-law, Naomi and Boaz a distant relative of Naomi and Ruth. Here the reader

finds God using a "kinsman redeemer" to save the pair of women following the death of Ruth's

husband. The cultural mandates involved insisted that the husbandless woman must find her

redemption through the now-dead husband's family or return to her foreign land and gods.[601]

The Israelite belief was that the closest remaining male relative had the option of taking the

woman as his wife and thus, he "redeemed" her.

> Now it is true that I am a close relative: however, there is a relative closer than I. Stay
> this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative
> for you—good: let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I
> will perform the duty for you, as the Lord lives! Lie down until morning.[602]

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[600] See for instance, Bruce Malina, The New Testament World: Insights form Cultural Anthropology, (Louisville, KT: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993) or, Philip Esler, *The First Christians in Their Social Worlds*, (London: Williams & Norgate, 1994). Also see, Philip Esler, *Modeling Early Christianity*, (London: Routledge, 1995), for examples and explanation of how this and other social mores have been isolated as important in understanding early Mediterranean texts.

[601] See, Ruth 3:2.

[602] Ruth 3:12-13.

Some *Identity* theologians use this picture of redemption as an example of why Jesus is the redeemer of the white race alone.[603] For *Identity* adherents, the "evidence" is overwhelming that Jesus was not a Semitic Jew.[604] Rather, Jesus was the incarnation of the second Adam—thus the redeemer of Adam's race—which only includes the, "{A}nglo-Saxon-Germanic-Scandinavian-Slavic kindred people of the earth."[605] Jesus is the kinsman redeemer of the white Israelite alone because he is unrelated to the other races beyond being their creator. Those of another "seed-line" must, therefore, have a redeemer from their own seed.[606] Since the Bible is seen as a text written only to white-Israelites, no speculation about whom the other races redeemer might be is made.

While this appears to be a convenient argument for seed-line theology at first glance, closer inspection presents difficulties which confront it. It is true that in the story of Ruth and Boaz we can see God's provision for those who are without social anchor in the redemption through their close kin. But what the *Identity* theologians fail to account for is the original position of Ruth. Ruth, it is explained in chapter one, is a Moabite woman whom the Israelite man has taken as his wife.

> Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab for she had heard in the country of Moab that the Lord had visited His people by giving them bread. Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go return each to her mother's house. The Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grants that

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[603] Interview with, Church of Israel pastor, Dan Gayman, Schell City, MO, September, 1998.

[604] *Identity* adherents assert that Jesus was a Caucasian Israelite. They give no evidence for their assertion but have published books, which tell stories about Jesus being an auburn hair boy who accompanied his uncle to England between the ages of 12 and 30. See especially, E. Raymond Capt, *The Traditions of Glastonbury* (Muskogee, Oklahoma: Artisans Publishers, 1998). Also see, Dan Gayman, *Are You an Israelite?* (Schell City, MO: Church of Israel, 1998), pp. 12-33, for a concise *Identity* presentation of which race comprises "true Israel."

[605] Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation?*, p. 19.

[606] Interview with, Church of Israel pastor, Dan Gayman, Schell City, MO, September, 1998.

you may find rest, each in the house of her husband." So she kissed them and they lifted up their voices and wept. And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people." vs. 6-10

And she said, "Look your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law."[607] vs. 15

While the passage does speak of the redemption of the 'lost' through the covenantal work of Ruth's kinsmen, there is much more that should be observed. Which tribe of Israel is the Moabite woman from? If the correlation between the seed of the Israelite and the race of the Caucasian is a one to one relationship and Israel is only to marry within their own race,[608] then it must follow that the Moabite woman Ruth is an Israelite. This particular claim would be difficult to substantiate as the text delineates in vs. 15 that Naomi sees Ruth as coming from another people who serve other "gods." Additionally, Gayman identifies the Moabite people specifically as those that racial Israel must not intermarry with.[609] The claim by Naomi that Ruth comes from a people that served other "gods" makes it impossible to claim Ruth was merely from another Israelite tribe.[610]

Questions put to him about the seemingly impossible contradiction in an interview in September 1998 produced little elucidation. No coherent argument could be offered to justify on the one hand, the prohibition toward marrying outside the "Israel" tribes, while in the next instance the same scenario is used to explain how Christ serves as the redeemer of the white race

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[607] Ruth 1:6-10, 15.

[608] For pastor Gayman's assertion on this point see especially, Gayman, *Do All Races Share in Salvation?*, pp. 165-176.

[609] *Ibid*, pp. 87-88.

[610] A similar argument is used by Gayman to say that Paul did not bring the Israelite message to "gentiles" in the normally accepted view of what gentile means. Rather, Gayman claims "gentile" in this usage is referring to those tribes of Israel, which had moved north from Palestine.

alone.[611] Clearly, this is a point in the development of the systematic theology with which most

seed-line *Identity* pastors have failed to deal.

While Gayman has apparently seen the difficulty with the illustration in the passage and

thus does not publish the views based on this passage, less astute *Identity* authors, such as Idaho

seed-liner, Keith Gilbert ignores the theological incoherence and claims the passage as evidence

of his system's truth.[612] Again there is nuance in the seed-line positions which is lost to those

outside the movement who have been led to believe *Identity* is a monolith.

### Non-seed: But still "evil" Identity theology?

Understanding the basic assertions of the Gayman styled seed-line *Identity* theology,

Nebraska pastor, Ted Weiland goes immediately to the important question when it comes to the

debate between *Identity* adherents about the seed-line hypothesis. He says,

> By ignoring the rules of sound interpretation, the Bible can be made to say anything a
> person wants it to, and this is precisely how proponents of the seedline doctrine have
> arrived at their conclusions.[613]

All of Gayman's arguments about the identity of non-whites and Jews, come down to a

particular hermeneutic based on Genesis 3:15 (the basis for the two seeds doctrine) and Genesis

1:24-26 (two stage creation). This hermeneutic dictates that Eve had sex with both Satan and

Adam on the same day, producing the two seed-lines, one of Adam and one of the anti-Christ or,

Eve didn't have sex with Satan and there is another *Identity* explanation. Ted Weiland writes

extensively on this alternate *Identity* explanation and leaves no room for any of the universally

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[611] Interview with Church of Israel pastor, Dan Gayman, Schell City, MO, September, 1998.

[612] See Keith D. Gilbert, *Territorial Imperative*, Undated, self-published flyers. These are accessible through the Wilcox collection, University of Kansas library.

[613] Weiland, *Eve, Did She or Didn't She?,* p. 2.

applied seed-line views regarding the inhumanity of non-whites or a Satanic Jewish nature within the construction of that doctrine.

Despite Weiland's denial of the seed-line hypothesis, it is still possible to see a "hidden Israel" in the white races and to be viewed by modernity as essentially the same "beast" as seed-line *Identity*. Clearly, the objections to *Identity* theology in general make no distinction between the beliefs of seed-line and non-seed *Identity* theology.

Pastors Pete Peters, Dave Barley and Ted Weiland all line up theologically behind a non-seed *Identity* theology, which on its face, appears to be nothing more than the British-Israel thoughts of the past.[614] The distinction between seed-line and non-seed *Identity* theology is merely linguistic for most writers as the three pastors are identified throughout both the popular and academic literature as every bit as evil as any other *Identity* type.[615] The non-seed theology is far from singular in its social articulation, but theologically, non-seed *Identity* makes a claim to racial Israel being found within the British and other white races without the seed-line belief in two-stage creation, or a human/angelic sexual relationship which supposedly produced the race of anti-Christ Jews.

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[614] Indeed, even insiders such as Kerry Noble, former CSA #2 leader make a distinction between the two schools of thought. Noble has been out of the *Identity* movement at large, since Weiland, Peters and Barley have been involved and become prominent. Thus, Noble said he felt unable to give an assessment of their positions. Interview with Kerry Noble, Burrelson, TX, May 2001.

[615] No distinction between types is made anywhere in the relevant literature save, for an early publication of my own, Brannan, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, pp. 106-118.

**A non-seed Identity theologian**

Like Dan Gayman from the seed-line side of *Identity* theology, evangelist[616] Ted R. Weiland is an educated man. He is the principal theologian and writer for those non-seed adherents of *Identity*.[617] Not happy to rely on the existing articulations for non-seed *Identity* found in British-Israelism, Weiland has sought to create a virtual systematic of non-seed *Identity* theology through his most important volume, *God's Covenant People*,[618] as well as smaller works such as *Eve: Did She or Didn't She?*[619] or, *Israel's Identity: It Matters!*[620]

Pastor Weiland is in part the product of the Protestant fundamentalist movement of the 1970's and 80's and in relation to *Identity*, a result of his close relationship since 1974 with the better known and now infamous, pastor Pete Peters.[621] He came to his earliest theological understandings within the teachings of the Church of Christ, a small but vehemently fundamentalist evangelical denomination, which falls within the commonly held category of pre-millennial dispensational churches.[622] Following high school, pastor Weiland worked on various ranches in Colorado and rode rough stock events at numerous rodeos with his friend and now co-*Identity* preacher Pastor Peters.[623] Eventually both Peters and Weiland attended the Church of

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[616] "Evangelist" is the term Weiland applies to himself in his books and other writings.

[617] These include among many others, Dave Barley's Idaho based *America's Promise Ministries*, Pete Peter's Colorado based *Scriptures for America* and Ted Weiland's Nebraska based *Mission to Israel*.

[618] Ted Weiland, *God's Covenant People: Yesterday, today and Forever*, (Scottsbluff, NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 1997).

[619] Ted Weiland, *Eve: Did She or Didn't She,* (Scottsbluff, NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 2000).

[620] Ted Weiland, *Israel's Identity: It Matters!* (Scottsbluff, NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 2000).

[621] Interview with Ted Weiland, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, 2-6-01.

[622] *Ibid* .

[623] Peters is the founder and leader of *Scriptures for America*, based in La Porte, Colorado.

Christ Bible school, located in rural western Nebraska.[624] While attending the bible school,

Weiland became convinced—primarily through his friend Pete Peters' urgings—of the hidden

Israel message.[625]

Weiland is quick to point out that his understanding of the Israel *Identity* message is not

that which is presented in the media. He further explained that the ADL, print and electronic

media had portrayed Weiland and others within his theological camp as essentially the same as

those within the seed-line *Identity* movement. This is an alignment he does not relish. While

Weiland is careful to note that he does see "true Israel" within the white people around the globe,

he does not believe or teach the 'seed-line' aspects of other *Identity* teachers.[626] His actions and

beliefs are in fact the antithesis of much of what critics of *Identity* theology deride.

**Eve: Did she or didn't she?**

For pastor Weiland, the title of this section is fundamental to the legitimacy of *Identity*

theology. Did Eve have sex with Satan and thus give birth to a literal race of half human half

satanic beings? Pastor Weiland answers this question with a resounding, "No!" Weiland then

provides an articulated theology, which supports the idea of a racial Israel being found in the

white races while simultaneously expounding doctrines of salvation for non-white races and

never makes a case for half angelic evil beings (the Jews) as is common in seed-line *Identity*

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[624] Interview with Ted Weiland, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, 2-6-01.

[625] *Ibid.*

[626] *Ibid*, also see, Ted Weiland, *God's Covenant People: Yesterday, today and Forever*, (Scottsbluff, NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 1997); Ted Weiland, *Eve: Did She or Didn't She,* (Scottsbluff, NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 2000), and Ted Weiland, *Israel's Identity: It Matters!* (Scottsbluff, NE: Mission to Israel Ministries, 2000), all of which clearly delineate between the seed and non-seed positions within *Identity* theology.

theology.[627] Those both from within and without the greater *Identity* movement locate Weiland

and those who follow his exposition as *Identity* adherents. All the while, these *Identity* believers

deny the supposed preeminent doctrines of that belief system, that of a literal sexual union

between Eve and Satan. Important for this dissertation is Weiland's recognition of how others

within the *Identity* movement come to their belief in seed-line theology, that is, through the use

of questionable hermeneutics as explained above.[628]

For Weiland, the unavoidable conclusion of seed-line theology is completely unacceptable.

This is because of a desire to maintain the liberal tenets of Western culture, but because he

asserts that the belief in the seed-line doctrine forces those holding it to additional conclusions,

which they are hardly likely to enjoy. Pastor Weiland lists the following as some of the

inevitable conclusions of seed-line thought:[629]

- Yahweh, Himself, is a sexual deviant.
- Yahweh had sexual relations with women and fathered children.
- Yahweh is a liar.
- The Bible is untrustworthy.
- Satan can manifest himself both physically and spiritually.
- The knowledge of good and evil originates with Satan, not Yahweh.
- Adam was a sodomite and Eve was an Adulteress.
- Both Adam and Eve were abominations in the eyes of Yahweh. Adam and Eve were permitted by Yahweh to have sexual relations with several partners who were other Satans, demons or people of another race.
- Yahweh was the originator of and even promoted spouse swapping for both heterosexual and homosexual purposes.
- Eve committed adultery with Satan or someone of another race several times and mothered more than one Satanic seedline.
- All unnamed sons and daughters of Adam were the consequence of Satan's and Eve's multiple sexual rendezvous.

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[627] A thorough presentation of his theology is made in Ted R. Weiland, *God's Covenant People: Yesterday, Today and Forever,* (Scottsbluff, Nebraska: Mission to Israel Ministries, 1994).

[628] See, Weiland, Eve: *Did she or didn't she?* p. 2.

[629] "Yahweh" is the name used by Pastor Weiland and others from non-seed *Identity* for God. Jesus Christ is sometimes identified as "Yahshua." For an explanation of why he and other do this, see, Ted R. Weiland, *The Sacred Names of God,* (Scottsbluff, Nebraska: Mission to Israel, 1996).

- If Cain would have made the appropriate sacrifice, Yahweh was prepared to embrace a hybrid son of Satan.
- The curse upon Adam for his sin was that he would have sorrow instead of pleasure in sexual intercourse.
- Seth carried the genes of Satan or someone of another race.
- Yahshua carried the genes of Satan or someone of another race.
- All Caucasians, who do not follow Yahshua, are the seed of Satan.
- All Israelites are the seed of Satan.
- Today's Jews are actually Israelites.
- Only the seed of Satan sin, or all sinners are the seed of Satan.
- All converts to Judaism are twice the sons of hell than are Satan's "actual children."
- Satan could have and possibly did have sex with some of the Corinthian Christians, both men and women alike.
- Yashua the Christ had and has sexual relations with His followers.[630]

Weiland's analysis of seed-line theology above makes a claim against the honor of seed-line

believers. By making these claims, Weiland calls on seed-liners not only to defend their

position—which he asserts cannot be done without violating basic hermeneutic principles—but

suggests the fundamentalist seed-line believers bring derision onto the name of God—a position

few Protestant fundamentalists in general, and even fewer *Identity* adherents wish to hold.

Weiland is careful not to attack the believers in the seed-line theology specifically as they are

exactly the same group of people to which he must appeal for followers. Thus Weiland states,

> Nevertheless, it is understandable how sincere (and, in some cases, some not so sincere) people arrive at their conclusions…[631]

Rather, he makes a case against the seed-line theology itself through a thorough

exposition of the scriptures used by seed-liners to make their case. Weiland highlights the

contextual inconsistency of seed-line expositors such as Gayman and then suggests that seed-

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[630] Weiland, *Eve: Did she or didn't she?* pp. 4 & 5.

[631] *Ibid*, p. 2.

liners are integrating psychological and scriptural aspects against their people, rather than relying

on scripture alone. Weiland states;

> Not only do the seed-liners weave a pretty good story with these passages, but they are also quite skilled at putting the average person on a guilt trip if they do not accept how these scriptures are presented.[632]

Weiland is at his base a believer in the inerrant Word of God.[633] For Weiland—and

indeed for his audience of other *Identity* believers and potential believers—the dependence on

Scripture is paramount. It is through the exegesis of Scripture that theologically motivated

groups such as Church of Israel and Mission to Israel maintain their adherent following as well

as how they try to distinguish themselves from issue-oriented groups such as the KKK and

Aryan Nations.

Maintaining a reliance on scriptural exegesis for their group's authority is a mainstay of

the claim of theologically motivated *Identity* groups to religious versus racialist motivations. To

allow one's group to be seen as handling the scripture incorrectly is paramount to group suicide

within the following of Fundamentalists at large. This observation is important, as Weiland

claims Gayman and other seed-liners have committed a heinous act of subversion of truth

through improper handling of the text.[634]

Weiland is willing to allow that the followers of seed-line have made an understandable

mistake, but the expositors themselves are not given this quarter. This is not unlike the claims

against *Identity* at large by other religious commentators. For instance, the work of Jerome

Walters, *One Aryan Nation Under God*, attacks *Identity* on the grounds that the movement

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[632] *Ibid*, p. 6.

[633] This assertion is verified through both interviews and his own published writings, see for instance, Weiland, *God's Covenant People: Yesterday, Today and Forever*, pp. 15 and following.

[634] Asserted in both print and in interviews between the pastor and the author, see, Weiland, *Eve: Did she or didn't she?,* 2000, as well as from an interview with Ted Weiland, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, 2-6-01.

handles scripture incorrectly to cover their true beliefs, which are racialist in nature rather than theological.[635] Interestingly, Walters relies on Gayman's seed-line articulation to describe all of *Identity* theology but then puts non-seed *Identity* groups under the general *Identity* heading.[636] As we have seen, Walters is not alone in his improper classification of the various groups commonly identified as simply, *Identity*.

**Not seed-line, then why still Identity?**

While non-seed *Identity* leaders and adherents do not accept the seed-line assertion of a literal sexual union between Satan and Eve, a literal anti-Christ offspring or a two-stage creation that relegates non-whites to the status of pre-Adamic animal, they do remain firmly ensconced in the *Identity* camp. Generally only those outside of the broader *Identity* family, including academics and watchdog groups, see non-seed believers as truly *Identity*.[637] Many seed-line *Identity* adherents do not accept their non-seed brothers as "true believers." Indeed, one of the most popular "*Identity*" preachers, Pastor Pete Peters, does not believe the seed-line message and ardently asserts:

> *We are not Identity!*
> Who are the people who make up the house of Israel and the twelve tribes of Israel? Some say it is the church, which they believe to be "spiritual" Israel. Some say it is the Jews; these believe the Jews are "God's chosen people." But most of those who have rationally and seriously looked into the matter from an archaeological, historical, and Biblical viewpoint have identified the twelve tribes of Israel as the Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, Celtic, Scandinavian, and kindred peoples--the peoples who comprise the

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[635] See, Jerome *Walters, One Aryan Nation Under God* (Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, 2001) pp. 94-116.

[636] See, *Ibid,* pp. 94-116.

[637] Within the movement, non-seed believers are considered British-Israel adherents rather than true *Identity* believers. While this is true, it is not uncommon to see non-seed writing in publications such as Jubilee, an ultra-right periodical which is commonly associated with *Identity* theology, terrorism and radical racial politics.

white race which settled the North American continent, forming the bedrock population of the United States of America. [638]

Peters and other non-seed believers are aware of the negative press *Identity* theology has accumulated. While they are willing to accept the derision that is associated with claiming the Jewish people are not the true people of God and that a racial Israel is to be found in the Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, Celtic, Scandinavian and other white races, they do not want to be seen as the same kind of theology as seed-line *Identity*.

Non-seed believers wish to make a clear distinction between belief systems because they are aware that the fundamental pre-supposition of seed-line theology is counter to all they believe. Similarities between the two theologies are primarily limited to two main issues: the belief of a racial Israel rather than a spiritual Israel, and, the fact that those outside the movement regard both to be one in the same, an extremist monolith.

The foundational pillar upon which most anti-*Identity* commentators rest their perceptions of all *Identity*[639]—the literal seed of Satan—is not found in both seed and non-seed constructions. Yet this absence, which would normally lead one to believe that there has been a false or inaccurate theological identification, has not been challenged. There are several reasons for this, some of which have already been highlighted in this dissertation, such as:

1. The desire of the 'terrorism studies' community to respond to a caricature of *Identity* rather than take up its more difficult and politically dangerous nuances.

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[638] See, http://www.scripturesforamerica.com/html/the_label.html (cited August 15, 2006) for a full presentation by Peters that while they do hold a belief in a racial Israel, they are not to be confused with those who the press has labeled as "*Identity*."

[639] Such as the ADL, SPLC or many academic commentators. See, http://www.adl.org/hate_symbols/about.htm (cited October 9, 2002). For a similar view in an academic context see, Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* pp. x-xi.

2. The overwhelming influence that watchdog groups covering *Identity* theology have on the academic community within the field of 'terrorism studies.'[640]

3. The intellectually suspect link between the academic writers on the subject and law enforcement/military/intelligence communities leading academic commentators to approach the subject from a "crisis management" rather than academic perspective.

4. The failure of the academic theological community to delineate clearly for the record the theological legitimacy or illegitimacy of the worldview presented in *Identity* theology.

Several other reasons exist which have not been suggested prior in this or other works.

First, *Identity* theology is a constantly evolving and mutating theology. It is very new by theological standards,[641] and as such, essential doctrines are constantly being challenged in an effort to test the boundaries allowed from within the various groups utilizing the theology.

Secondly, as former CSA leader Kerry Noble pointed out,

> Part of the problem is that Identity is really complicated. It's very intricate. Not everyone that believes this stuff really understands how to explain it. Actually, very few can explain it accurately. I doubt that Jim[642] could explain it if he was pressed off the normal questions. And it's always changing. Sometimes it changes to explain some problem and sometimes just because of the people in the groups want to do or not do something special.[643]

Having failed to see the deep theological differences between the two types, or perhaps, just not wanting to arouse the ire of the powerful watchdog groups, the 'terrorism studies' community has seen fit to describe all extremist religion on the American Right as essentially the

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[640] For instance, the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma regularly consults both the ADL and the SPLC on issues related to *Identity* theology.

[641] For instance traditional Christianity has developed its dogmatic essentials over two millennia including the foundation of its doctrines found in Judaism. By contrast, *Identity* is essentially a half-century old in the US.

[642] Kerry Noble was referring to the former co-leader of CSA with him, "Jim" Ellison.

[643] Interview with Kerry Nobel, Burleson, TX, May 2001.

same.[644] These reasons highlight a failure on the part of the existing literature and the responsible communities to accurately categorize this new theology.

At this point, to try to deal with the two types of theology as if they are not both *Identity*, is unproductive. The die is cast and the relevant and respected commentators have determined to deal with all racially related theologies under the heading *Identity*. Both seed-line and non-seed theologies do share common ground on important issues such as the 'hidden Israel' motif, racial identification of the chosen and a commitment to racial separation in sexual unions; but these issues are as equally identifying of standard British-Israel thought as they are of *Identity* theology in particular. The current standard for classifying these groups and their theology is to accept as *Identity* anything those writing on the subject deem to be *Identity* theology. These include the academic, popular, watchdog and general public communities. *Ipso facto*, the non-seed groups are *Identity*, despite not adhering to the supposed essential doctrines outlined in many cases by these same groups.[645]

**Non-seed social out-workings**

Since we have shown that the theologies are divergent, and yet, the groups are still considered synonymous, a view of the non-seed social out-workings should be considered to further explain the dilemma of precise categorization.

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[644] In speaking with some other academics from within the terrorism studies community, the author has been advised not to "upset the ADL or the SPLC by making waves" about the two theological types, as anyone who did make the watchdog groups angry would probably "pay professionally." One exception to this has been Professor Jeffrey Kaplan's publications speaking of the danger in relying on watchdog groups, or what he calls the "anti-cult" movements, for unbiased information. See, Jeffrey Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America*, (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), pp.127-163.

[645] See for instance, http://www.adl.org/hate_symbols/about.htm. Or, for a similar view from an academic context see, Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* pp. x-xi. Or see, Chapter 4 of this work, "*Christian or not?*"

The primary charge against *Identity* theology is that it is racist and de-humanizing, and a review of the exegesis of relevant passages by seed-line commentators revealed this to be true. Non-whites are categorized with the beasts of the field and Jews are seen as the offspring of Satan by seed-liners and the obvious social out-come is a distinct physical separation between seed-line believers and the other races. This is not necessarily the case when discussing the social outworking of non-seed *Identity*.

While non-seed *Identity* leader Ted Weiland feels that an absolute distinction should remain between the various races, he does not see this as a prohibition for interactions between individuals of the various racial groups.[646] For instance, while interviewing Weiland over a two-week period in February of 2001, he asserted that he commonly had positive contacts with pastors and members of other congregations comprised of people from other races. Weiland insisted that he has, "led people of other races to the Lord"[647] (a fundamentalist statement equating "being led to the Lord" with salvation) and that he has personally baptized those from outside the Caucasian race.[648] These claims would be difficult to believe if one were to rely on the terrorism community's general perception of *Identity* adherents, EG that of a non-white hating pseudo-religion. These claims are less difficult to believe once the researcher engages with the research subjects personally.

The author of this dissertation, attended lunch with the pastor and his family following a church service with Weiland's local congregation in Scottsbluff Nebraska. It was somewhat surprising to find that the pastor wanted to eat at the local Mexican food restaurant. Mexicans are

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[646] Interview with Ted Weiland, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, 2-6-01.

[647] By this, Weiland is asserting that he has "witnessed" to other races (by "witnessed" Weiland is saying that he told them the Christian Gospel as he understands it) and led them in prayer, instructing them to ask God for their salvation. This is a common reference among US Christian Fundamentalists outside of *Identity* theology.

[648] Weiland asserts that these converts include Black, Mexican and American Indian races.

considered throughout the seed-line *Identity* community as a race of "mixed breeds", alluding to the mixing of Spanish and Indian blood found among the general Mexican population. Choosing to support a Mexican restaurant is tantamount to "race mixing" among some seed-line *Identity* groups, such as the Aryan Nations or Church of Israel. Further shock came at the ease and friendliness exhibited between the white *Identity* pastor Weiland and the various people of color, with which we came into contact during the outing.

There was an obvious air of ease and familiarity between the white *Identity* adherent and the supposed "enemy" with whom he now talked and laughed. An especially poignant illustration was made as a Mexican/American man with his wife came out of their way to approach pastor Weiland, grasped his shoulders to hug him, spoke to the pastor and his wife and then walked on. Pastor Weiland explained that the man was the pastor of a local church catering to the local Hispanic population and that he and the pastor regularly met to pray for each other and their congregations. There was no animosity between these men. In fact, they were obviously friends and acted at ease and comfort with each other.[649]

This scene illustrated a significant separation between the social outworking of seed and non-seed theology. For the non-seed pastor Ted Weiland, the basis of his social group allows— and in fact demands—the inclusion of all who fit within the more general class known as "Christians," by fundamentalist in general. Thus, where seed-line *Identity* adherents would abhor the association between Mexican and white 'Christians,' non-seed *Identity* adherents openly welcome them as "brothers in Christ" based on their exegetical perception of salvation by faith and the more orthodox understanding of the creation story.[650]

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[649] This scene was observed during a two-week interviewing session with Weiland, his family and congregation, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, February 2001.

[650] Interview with Ted Weiland, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, 2-6-01.

Weiland's social group would not admit homosexuals into this category, but neither would any fundamentalist believer allow that homosexuality and Christianity are compatible. The non-seed *Identity* social grouping demands tremendous openness to other races based on their specific exegesis of the Genesis and other relevant passages.[651] Without the biblical support that seed-liners use to put non-whites in the role of animals,[652] the social groups identifying itself as *Identity* adherents are open to common inter-racial communication and association.

**Non-seed interaction with Jews**

While non-seed adherents may be able to interact with non-whites, are they similarly open to interaction with Jews? As stated above, Weiland and the other non-seed leaders such as Peters and Barley are adamant that they do not believe in the literal sexual union between Eve and Satan upon which Gayman bases his theology. While they hold fast to the belief in a hidden Israel, they do not see the modern Jews as a literal embodiment of Satan. This fact does not necessarily mean that non-seed *Identity* adherents are open to association with Jewish people.

Just as the two-stage creation interpretation of the seed-liners is debunked in non-seed theology, so is the belief of a sexual union between Eve and Satan producing a literal anti-Christ known as Cain.[653] This does not mean that non-seed adherents openly accept religious Jews in the same manner they would non-*Identity* Christians. Two significant problems exist which

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[651] For a complete elucidation of the non-seed view with exegesis, see, Weiland, *Eve: Did She or Didn't She?,* 2000.

[652] As in Gayman's view of the Genesis passages discussed above.

[653] Weiland, *Eve: Did She or Didn't She?,* 2000, also from, Interviews with Ted Weiland, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, 2-6-01.

preclude the theologically motivated non-seed adherents from accepting modern Jewish people openly.

The first barrier is the relation of modern Jews to the claim by non-seed adherents of being the hidden Israel. Jews are seen as attempting to use the birthright of Caucasians—that of being the Israel of God—when it is not theirs to use. Naturally, if Israel is identified with the white race it cannot be associated with modern Jews at the same time. Thus, non-seed *Identity* adherents do not see Jews as their seed-line brothers but they do see them as imposters. Since being identified as Israel is of paramount importance to both Jews and *Identity* adherents, both groups are adversarial toward the other.

The second barrier toward acceptance of Jewish people by non-seed *Identity* adherents is based on the Jewish view of Jesus Christ. Judaism specifically denies the deity of Christ, the Christian assertion of Christ being the Messiah, the resurrection or any other Christian doctrines based on Christ. Non-seed *Identity* adherents hold, just as other fundamentalist Christians, that Christ is central to Christianity. By rejecting the central figure and issues of the Christian faith Jews are in opposition to any religious claims based on Christ as the Messiah. Thus, there is no way for non-seed *Identity* adherents such as Weiland or his congregation to accept Jewish people as believers without them first accepting the centrality and Lordship of Christ.

**A third way for Identity theology?**
The descriptions above elucidate the two polar ends of *Identity* theology as it relates to the important seed-line issue. The logical outcome of the two belief systems dictate that seed-line believers see non-white people as animals rather than men and that they view Jewish people as half-man/half-demon beings who are a result of a literal sexual union between Eve and Satan in the Garden of Eden. Conversely, non-seed believers take the opposite view of non-white people,

seeing them as fully human and able to be redeemed to salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. These non-seed believers further assert that while they see Jews as a religious enemy of Christianity based upon their rejection of Jesus as Messiah, they do not see them as human demons as portrayed by most seed-line *Identity* believers. But is there another end to these two very different theologies? Scott Stinson, formerly of the Church of Israel and now pastor of the Church of Israel Redeemed in Schell City, Missouri suggests there is.

Scott Stinson was for 20 years an active and avid leader in Gayman's Church of Israel in Schell City. He taught in the church, published in the church's two periodicals, *The Watchman* and *The Vision* as well as teaching in the Church's private school and leading the its Boy Scout troop.[654] In addition Stinson was the chairman of the board of trustees for the Church of Israel. By all accounts Stinson was at the center of Church of Israel life both physically and spiritually. Gayman wrote in the foreword of Stinson's book, *The Exodus to Come,* "With all praise to Jesus Christ and trusting this book will be a blessing to the covenant people throughout the Anglo-Saxon World, I rejoice to write this foreword for the work completed by my good friend and colleague, Scott Stinson. "[655] Clearly, Stinson was accepted by Gayman and considered a worthy theologian to represent the Church's views. This changed as Stinson developed his theology outside of Gayman's orthodoxy.

In early 2001 Stinson and his family became involved in a dispute with the rest of the leadership of the Church of Israel and eventually left the church to form his own congregation of likeminded believers.[656] This dispute revolved around several issues, some of which related to

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[654] Interview with Church of Israel breakaway pastor, Scott Stinson, April, 2001, Schell City, MO.

[655] Scott Stinson, *The Exodus to Come* (Schell City, MO: Church of Israel, 1998), p. 9.

[656] Interview with Church of Israel breakaway pastor, Scott Stinson, April, 2001, Schell City, MO. Also information taken from a website hosted by the Church of Israel Redeemed, accessed at, www.dangayman.com, (cited April 29, 2001).

the leadership practices within the church and some related to theology.[657] The leadership

practices involved accusations by Stinson of Gayman's mishandling of funds and attempting to

cover up the improper relationship between Gayman's brother Duane Gayman and several young

girls from the Church. While these issues of practice were important to Stinson in his decision to

leave the church, they were not the only reasons. Several theological concerns and divergences

from Gayman's thought also contributed to the separation. Importantly, one of the theological

reasons related directly to the seed-line hypothesis.

Stinson began to preach at the Church of Israel that black, Asian and other non-white

people were not sub-human animals as Gayman asserted, but rather, were people fully capable of

redemption of sin and salvation by faith. Furthermore, Stinson asserted that these same non-

white (and thus non-Israelite) people would enjoy their own nation in the future and coming

kingdom of God.[658] Stinson could not give a coherent argument for his position which attempts

to hold to Gayman's belief in literal sexual union between Eve and the devil producing the

Jewish race while on the other hand throwing out a significant portion of the same doctrine

which subjects all non-whites to a less than human position.

Stinson says that there is no reason to give a biblical justification for his difference with

Gayman as the Bible is a book written about the lineage of Adams race (which he equates with

the white race) and thus the other races are peripheral to the story. It is therefore logical to

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[657] For an easily accessible insight into the reasons put forward by Stinson and his supporters, see, www.dangayman.com, (cited April 29, 2001).

[658] Interview with Church of Israel breakaway pastor, Scott Stinson, April, 2001, Schell City, MO. Stinson holds some unique beliefs on the millennium most closely related to a Post-Millennial position but with his own caveats. In short, Stinson believes that the modern church has incorrectly used Revelation 20: 1-10 (the description of the thousand-year reign) as the starting point for modern eschatology. He believes that the Millennium generally talked about by theologians is literal but only for those martyred for the faith. See, Revelation 20:4.

Stinson that the Bible does not give specific outlines on the salvation of the other races.[659] I

suggested to Stinson that perhaps Karl Barth's theology of a universal election of all creation

might be of benefit in attempting to defend his new variation of Gayman's seed-line theology,

but Stinson was not aware of Barth, his theology or a need to make a defense of his position.[660]

**Concluding thoughts on the seed-line hypothesis**

For many the seed-line hypothesis is paramount to *Identity* theology at large.[661] This is

true for many of the commentators, academics and watchdog groups reviewed above as well, as

for the seed-line *Identity* adherents themselves. But this chapter has argued that the issue of

hidden Israel being located with the white races and general popular opinion are more

determinative of *Identity* authentication than this single doctrine alone. Non-seed *Identity*

theology as articulated by Ted Weiland and adopted by the groups led by Pete Peters and Dave

Barley deny the seed-line hypothesis yet are clearly seen as *Identity* theologians.

Furthermore, the recent split at the Church of Israel between Pastors Dan Gayman and

Scott Stinson attests to the malleable nature of *Identity* theology. Even the strict seed-line

presentation of Gayman is now being splintered in an effort to create yet another *Identity*

theology classification, one of a seed-line base, which still allows non-whites a place for

redemption. Clearly, *Identity* theology continues to evolve and mutate in reference to even its

most fundamental doctrines.[662] The discovery of a real distinction between theology types should

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[659] Interview with Church of Israel breakaway pastor, Scott Stinson, April, 2001, Schell City, MO.

[660] See, Karl Barth, *The Church Dogmatics,* (trans. G. Bromiley et al.) (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1956-75) Vol. II/2.

[661] As seen in the earlier review of the ADL and SPLC positions as well as within the academic and popular literature, See chapter two for a detailed description.

[662] See, Brannan "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, pp. 106-118, for an earlier argument in regard to the mutating nature of *Identity* theology.

provoke interest in what other areas *Identity* theology might differ from the caricature that has been used to describe it.  The following chapter explores another important difference within *Identity* theology types, the separation of Repentant versus Rebellious *Identity* theology.

# CHAPTER 7

## REPENTANT AND REBELLIOUS THEOLOGY: BELIEF IMPACTS ACTION

You cannot submit in passive, blind obedience to a law that will require you to break God's Law. If all appeals, all petitions, and all else fails, prepare to suffer for not doing wrong.[663] *Pastor Dan Gayman*

Therefore an unjust king, as unjust, is not the genuine ordinance of God…So we may resist the injustice of the king, and not resist the king.[664] *Samuel Rutherford*

…the State must be made to feel the presence of the Christian community.[665] *Francis A. Schaeffer*

**Distinctions**

To this point, the central arguments of this thesis have been that *Identity* theology is not monolithic and that the very real differences between these various belief systems are both theologically and socially based. While the seed-line hypothesis discussed in the last chapter serves to bring out the theological differences between various *Identity* groups, the role of a Repentant or Rebellious theological perspective, similarly, highlights the social dimensions to the various *Identity* manifestations. It is essential to this dissertation to argue that the differences found need to be identified and articulated in a systematic manner, which will allow researchers and others concerned with the theologies to make specific and meaningful, rather than general

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[663] Dan Gayman, *The Duties of a Christian Citizen* (Schell City, MO: Church of Israel, 1985), p. 63.

[664] Samuel Rutherford, *Lex Rex* (reprinted, Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1982), p.117.

[665] Francis A. Schaeffer, *Christian Manifesto* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1993), p. 120.

and inaccurate, insights into the phenomenon. The distinction between Repentant[666] and

Rebellious[667] *Identity* types contributes to this argument by marking important distinctions in the

social out workings of *Identity* theology.

This distinction should be important to the 'terrorism studies' and enforcement

communities as this is a point of departure for some groups moving from law abiding citizens to

revolutionary activists. The combination of the Rebellious theology, with the seed-line

hypothesis and a violent charismatic leader, has led to violent actions in the past. Prime examples

include the actions of Richard Butler's, Aryan Nations and the Covenant, Sword and the Arm of

the Lord, (CSA). In this chapter we will distinguish between the social impacts of the various

groups. These include the Repentant type (not seeking confrontation with the government), the

Rebellious type (rhetorically seeking confrontation and theologically matched to carry out

violence action) and a third way, which is rhetorically Rebellious but without the necessary

theological ingredients to transform the rhetoric into action.

## Repentant versus Rebellious Identity theology

Some have distinguished between these various *Identity* positions while others—in fact

most—make no distinction.[668] Jeffrey Kaplan, however, makes an effort to begin explaining the

differences in his article, 'The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The

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[666] This work uses the delineation that the believers themselves use. **Repentant** describes a position taken by *Identity* adherents, which do not support violent action on the part of the believer against the government—even a government is sees as immoral—in this case, the United States.

[667] **Rebellious** describes a position taken by *Identity* adherents, which does support the use of force on the part of believers against their government. These terms are described and illustrated in detail below.

[668] By far the best example is, Jeffrey Kaplan 'The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel,' *Terrorism and Political Violence*, volume 5, #1, Spring 1993, London: Frank Cass.

Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel.' In the ten years since his article was written

there has been evolution of the leaders, groups and movements. Despite Kaplan's attempt,

academic study to date has not dealt with the theological underpinnings of Repentant and

Rebellious positions. Such disregard may be due in part to the lack of respect accorded to the

theologians of *Identity* by those writing about the movement. It may also arise from a

misunderstanding of the respective positions, based on reading text alone, rather than textual

interpretation coupled with personal interaction. While some understanding of the

Repentant/Rebellious division can be seen from the literature of the various groups, personal

contact with the various "theologians" is needed to actually see how these ideas are worked out

in conjunction with the proposed theology. This type of interaction with the *Identity* theologians

is not always possible to the researcher but when it is, such contact contributes toward a more

balanced and completes presentation of the position being studied.[669]

The significant research by Michael Barkun which fed into his book, *Religion and the

Racist Right*, has been very influential in the understanding of both *Identity* theology and the

groups it spawns. Barkun makes a distinction several times between these two sides[670],

Repentant and Rebellious, but does not use this language, which is actually the theological

language of the groups themselves. Kaplan in fact chooses to separate the two distinct factions

into "militant activist and quietist camps, within the millenarian community."[671] At this point in

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[669] Personal interviews with *Identity* adherents and theologians are key to a more complete understanding of the positions described. The text provides a basis for discussion but is not always a full picture of the position being asserted.

[670] Barkun*, Religion and the Racist Right*, pp. 241-242, 214-215, 232

[671]Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, pp. 54. The 'militant activist' camp corresponding with *Rebellious Identity* and the 'quietist' camps corresponding with the *Repentant* form of *Identity*.

*Identity's* development, it will be useful to consider the theological language of the groups

themselves in explaining this very real separation.

## The genesis of a new theology

Until 1976, Gayman would have fit neatly into what many would consider a 'standard'

*Identity* profile.[672] Gayman believed in the two seed theory discussed in the previous chapter, a

supposed hallmark of *Identity* theology and he preached a potentially violent position that mixed

an apocalyptic vision of the future with the importance of a surviving remnant of believers,

*Identity* adherents.[673]  But Gayman's social outworking of his beliefs would begin to be

transformed on July 2nd, 1976 and come to a completely new position by 1985.[674] What had not

been a major thrust of his theology to this point now began to develop in response to the

incidents that transpired on that night in July in combination with the events which later came to

be known as the Fort Smith Sedition trial.[675] His theology was initially redirected at the butt of a

Missouri Highway Patrolman's shotgun and finally through the arrest and incarceration of

several *Identity* and racial leaders coupled with the fear he would be arrested next. [676]

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[672] Although as we have seen the idea of a "standard" *Identity* type is myth, common use dictates that the "standard" is that which is predominant in the media and literature.

[673] This was confirmed though discussions with other *Identity* figures such as Kerry Nobel, formerly of the CSA or Richard Butler from Aryan Nations. Both of these men have been closely acquainted with Gayman and his theology for many years.

[674] From an interview with a Church of Israel congregation member, September 1998.

[675]Fort Smith Arkansas was the site of the now famous, "Fort Smith sedition trial." 14 men and leaders representing several right-wing groups were put on trial for charges related to the seditious overthrow of the US Government. *Identity* notables, such as Richard Butler of the Aryan Nations, Robert Miles of the KKK influenced Mountain Church in Michigan and Louis Beam, former Grand Dragon of the KKK in Texas and "Ambassador at Large" for the Aryan Nations were among those prosecuted. All were eventually acquitted of the charges. For an insiders perspective on the Ft. Smith sedition trial, see, Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate*, pp. 195-200

[676] For an excellent overview of the trial that caused Gayman and other *Identity* leaders such fear, see, Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate*, pp. 195-200.

Looking for a similar way of avoiding ongoing and future trouble with the law, Thom Robb, Grand Wizard of the Harrison, Arkansas based Knights of the KKK, adjusted his group's social perception based on the changing theology he found in Dan Gayman.[677] Today, Robb's, Arkansas based KKK groups is regarded as significantly different from many other Klan groups around the country for their Repentant stance.[678]

In speaking with Dan Gayman or Thom Robb, or in reading the literature they now write, one is immediately struck with the lack of anti-government vitriol expressed.[679] Where other *Identity* groups such as Aryan Nations, Scriptures for America or the now defunct Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord (CSA) are often cited for making statements, which incite followers to violence[680]—these two men have led their respective groups in another direction— away from violence. Both of these groups have been transformed by the interaction of the theological position and internal social group dynamics.  Members from Gayman's Church of Israel or Robb's Knights of the KKK maintained an internal social system that allowed free movement between groups by individuals prior to appropriating the new Repentant stance. After adopting and internalizing the Repentant theology, members and followers of the various groups are no longer comfortable in this type of trans-group interchange. The Repentant position has led

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[677] Interview, with KKK leader, Thom Robb, March 30, 2000, by telephone. He was well acquainted with Dan Gayman, his ministry, theology and publishing. He listed Gayman's *Two Seeds of Genesis 3:15* and *The Duties of a Christian Citizen* as important works that had influenced his thinking. Readers can buy Gayman's books on Robb's websites or in his bookstore. See, www.Kingdomidentity.com (cited August 23, 2006) or *Kingdom Identity Ministries*, PO Box, 1021, Harrison, Arkansas, 72602.

[678] This point was made visually in the TV program, *Heart of Darkness*, BBC/The Discovery Channel production, 1998 or can be seen in, Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America,* p. 12. or, Michael Riley Janesville, White & Wrong New Klan, Old Hatred, *Time Magazine,* 7-6-92.

[679] See for instance, Gayman, *The Duties of Christian Citizen,* 1985, or more recent editions of *White Patriot*, *The Torch* or *Robb's Editorial Report* (the last three being periodicals published by Thom Robb). Robb is still strongly racialist in his printed views and reflect his primarily racial rather than spiritual focus.

[680] See, Coates, *Armed and Dangerous,* pp. 77-103, Walters, *One Aryan Nation Under God,* 2001, inclusive or any of the constantly changing opinions expressed by the ADL or SPLC on their respective websites, ADL.org and SPLC.org.

to Robb's group being described as, "…that kinder gentler Ku Klux Klan…" and as trying to "…borrow a page from Martin Luther King, Jr.'s book…"[681] Gayman's new position on the other hand is described by *Identity* leaders such as Aryan Nations leader Richard Butler as, "Sold out to the government."[682]

As Gayman's views and writing have led to this new Repentant theological position, it is interesting to note the social conditions that prompted the mutation. According to Missouri State Highway Patrol Captain Dale Penn, he responded on the night of July 2nd, 1976, to a call for assistance from local Sheriff's deputies dealing with a disturbance at the Church of Israel, Schell City, Missouri.[683] He arrived and found that a potentially violent disturbance had erupted among the congregation and pastors. It was believed that several people were armed at the church[684] and a fight had broken out between them.

During the law enforcement response, Gayman, who was one of the eleven pastors arrested, was hit in the face with the butt of an officer's shotgun. The scene was described as "very bloody" and made quite an impact on Captain Penn.[685] This incident was one of two important elements that led *Identity* theology on a new course, the course of Repentant *Identity*

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[681] See, Kaplan, *Encyclopedia of White Power: A Sourcebook on the Radical Racist Right*, p. 259.

[682] Interview with Aryan Nations leader, Richard Butler, September 2000, by telephone.

[683] There was infighting among the leadership related to the direction and tone the church was taking. Interview with church member, Bolivar, MO, September, 1998.

[684] Kaplan, "The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, p. 55. Kaplan potentially identifies two of these men as Gayman and Tucker (the visiting pastor from Knoxville, Tennessee) and describes their dress as, "a white uniform, with knee length storm trooper boots, and an empty pistol holder and belt slung over one shoulder." This description was taken from the July 6th 1976 edition of the Nevada Missouri paper, the *Nevada Herald*.

[685] Being a former law enforcement officer myself, I found it very interesting that Capt. Penn was able to recall the incident more than twenty-three years later with such detail. This despite not going to court himself on the matter, an event that helps to lock a particular incident in the minds of officers. I believe it highlights how traumatic the sight of disruption, blood and fighting can be within what appears to be a traditional church setting. I have no doubt it had a similar turning effect on Dan Gayman and his theological progression.

theology.  The second and more generally cited reason for Gayman's transformation came just prior to and during the Fort Smith Sedition Trial.[686] Gayman was subpoenaed to testify at the trial as a prosecution witness.[687]

These two events bracket the advent of Repentant *Identity*.  Gayman had already tasted, and did not enjoy, his brush with the law in 1976. The potential for more negative involvement with the law did not appeal to Gayman's more pragmatic view of the future for either the Church of Israel or himself. Gayman avoided further negative interaction with the government by changing the Church's position on the proper relationship between believers their government.[688] In doing so he avoided the immediate personal discomfort of potential criminal prosecution with the other defendants at Fort Smith,[689] and, he created a theological position that allowed him and those that would follow his lead, to maintain the core beliefs of seed-line *Identity* while avoiding the violent aspects of the belief system.

While many people find it is easy to talk about what they might or might not do from outside the arena of violent confrontation, actually having blood spilt and having law enforcement called in often changes a person's desire to confront danger.[690] Few, of the primary *Identity* figures writing today, have been personally involved in an actual violent confrontation

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[686] For an accessible review of the trial see, www.SPLCenter.org.

[687] See, Kaplan, *Encyclopedia of White Power: A Sourcebook on the Radical Racist Right*, pp. 118-119.

[688] See, Dan Gayman, *The Duties of a Christian Citizen* (Schell City, MO: Church of Israel, 1985) or , see, Benson, R., "The Militia Movement and the Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrate," (1997) *The Watchman*, Summer 1998, Vol. 21, #1, p.40-42.

[689] These included Richard Butler of Aryan Nations, Robert Miles of the Mountain Church of Michigan, Louis Beam of the KKK, and 7 other less known defendants. All the defendants were eventually cleared of the sedition and conspiracy charges in a trial by jury.

[690] I make this assertion based upon my 12 years of law enforcement experience. During that time I watched many 'big talkers' suddenly change their tune when blood was spilt.

with law enforcement.[691] The majorities of those that have are either incarcerated or have stopped being a personal force in the greater *Identity* movement. Individual involvement with violence takes it out of the fictional clean setting of the movie screen and forces a person to deal with the reality of pain and fear. Gayman's choice to create a new theology that simultaneously supports his seed-line views while maintaining a peaceful stance dealt with the reality of his changing personal and social position.

While no one other than Gayman can confirm his reasons, the evidence of his radical theological change at this intersection in his life leads one to believe that the July 2nd incident was the opening event and catalyst for a new direction in his articulation of *Identity* theology. History has shown repeatedly that *Identity* theology is not an orthodoxy that can limit the parameters of belief of its adherents or leadership.[692] This inability has led in recent years to a polar separation and mutation in the greater *Identity* family of thought and theology resulting in two distinct schools of thought, best represented as Repentant and Rebellious *Identity*.

**The theological basis for Repentant Identity theology**

Considering the possibility for a Repentant *Identity* theology—one that is not concerned with the violent overthrow of the U.S. government—has not been a popular view to hold or pursue among academics or the popular press.[693] In fact, the majority of writing on Gayman has missed the fact that he holds a repentant position. This is in part because little has been written

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[691] One exception to this is the now infamous Louis Beam. Beam was involved in a shoot out with Mexican police. See, Kaplan*, Encyclopedia of White Power: A Sourcebook on the Radical Racist Right*, pp. 17-23.

[692] This is seen through the observation of the ever changing and mutating factions that develop and evolve into different *Identity* type groups based on leadership personality, hermeneutic used and social development.

[693] In fact no other academic publications (outside of my own) mention the terms, Repentant and Rebellious to delineate between theological or social group types. This fact remains despite the common use of the terms among the adherents themselves. See, Brannan, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 1998 for the first publication of these terms within the academy.

about Gayman's theology. Instead, what is written is generally a caricature of the ideology and politics of the greater seed-line *Identity* movement,[694] overlaying the violence of other seed-line groups onto the Church of Israel. This has been the result of a significant portion of the writing on Gayman having been written by special interest groups.[695]

Gayman's seed-line theology is clearly outside of the Christian norm and relies on a flawed hermeneutic as it exegetes the passages related to his seed-line hypothesis, but as Gayman now articulates and lives out his position on violence and force, his views are clearly mainstream Protestant theology.[696] There are problems with Gayman's seed-line theology and the conclusions that it logically draws but to overstate the position or to lump all *Identity* theology together is itself dangerous. One can view Gayman's seed-line beliefs as offensive and not hold that every aspect of his theology is equally wrong or bad.

The most important passage in Gayman's presentation of the Repentant position is his interpretation of Romans 13: 1-7. This passage has not only been important in this regard to Gayman and various other *Identity* leaders, it has throughout Christian history been the scriptural foundation of a peaceful disposition of Christians toward state governments, even when those governments persecute them.[697] Gayman's interpretation of the passage is traditional, going even

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[694] See as an example, Walters, *One Aryan Nation Under God*, pp. 7,34, or, Coates, *Armed and Dangerous*, pp. 38, 98, 99, 144-145.

[695] I am primarily referring to watchdog groups, such as the ADL or the SPLC, which need for their own purposes to show the whole of *Identity* as a unified evil front. These polemic presentations are found on the various websites hosted by the watchdog groups.

[696] The most complete articulation of Gayman's position is found in, Gayman, *The Duties of a Christian Citizen,* 1995.

[697] For some early and not dissimilar Christian views on the subject see, Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary, Vol. VI—Acts to Revelation* (reprinted, McLean, Virginia: MacDonald Publishing , undated), pp.465-468, or John Calvin, *Commentary upon The Acts of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans* (Henry Bevridge, translator), (reprinted, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), pp. 477-483.

further than most in making clear the length with which Repentant *Identity* adherents must

endure perceived governmental oppression.[698]

Gayman suggests, "Wickedness must be opposed in the family, the church and civil

government"[699] but goes on to say a sentence later, "We can never become violent and take the

law into our own hands."[700] Gayman recognizes the prevalent hostility of many of those within

the various *Identity* groups around the country and outlines directly what they should do if they

believe their governments are unjust, immoral or persecuting fellow believers. He gives six

specific "Godly responses" when "Caesar offends God."[701] These responses include:

1) **Enter into a time of self-examination.** By this Gayman suggests that the believer refer to Psalms 51 and I John 1 as a basis for self, rather than governmental examination. The focus, Gayman asserts, should be on the believer's contrition rather than anything external.[702]

2) **Protest and Petition Authorities.** While Gayman suggest believers must oppose evil government at every level, he calls believers to do so non-violently. Gayman expertly uses the imagery of the American Revolution as an example of proper use of protest knowing that many *Identity* believers would use this as a rallying point for violent revolt. Gayman reminds readers that the American War for Independence was led by delegates from various Colonial legislatures—not by individuals acting on their own initiative.[703]

3) **Flee the Jurisdiction.** Here again Gayman calls on believers to rebuke violent responses and follow the example of the pilgrims who fled the jurisdiction of the King of England in 1620 for religious reasons. [704]

4) **Prepare for Tribulation.** In this Gayman appeals to his social groups predominant millenarian and apocalyptic beliefs. Most *Identity* adherents, especially in 1985 when the book was written, were anxiously awaiting an

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[698] Gayman, *The Duties of a Christian Citizen,* pp. 58-59.

[699] *Ibid*. p. 58.

[700] *Ibid*, pp. 58-59.

[701] *Ibid*. p. 56.

[702] *Ibid*. p. 58.

[703] *Ibid*, pp. 58-60.

[704] *Ibid*. p. 60.

imminent time of tribulation in relation to their belief in the second coming of Christ.[705]

5) **Separate and Covenant Together.** Using I Corinthians 6:14-18 and Revelation 18:4, Gayman calls for *Identity* believers to separate from "great sin and wickedness" by moving away from non-believers. This desire to separate initially from the world fits well with another belief he holds related to Dominion theology. In this, Gayman has suggested that believers need to initially separate from the evil world and then slowly retake dominion over their surrounding areas of influence. [706]

6) **Suffer for Not Doing Wrong.** Finally, Gayman calls for believers to suffer rather than use violence against the state.[707]

Gayman leaves room for the members of the Church of Israel to arm and protect themselves against personal criminal attack in a traditional sense but without de-legitimization of the federal government or allowing that followers can legitimately revolt against the State.[708] The sword is left for the State to wield, with church members actively pursuing God's will from within traditional spiritual avenues. This acceptance of the government as the current legitimate government does not exclude them from pursuing the change of that government in keeping with their Theonomist beliefs.[709] This they intend to do through Dominion theological means (discussed below) rather than physical force.

Complementing this, the Church takes a strong position on the Militia movement in America that is not found in any other major *Identity* group. A result of the Repentant position is

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[705] *Ibid*, pp. 60-61

[706] *Ibid*, pp. 62-63, also see Brannan,. "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 1998, in reference to Gayman's Dominion theology beliefs.

[707] Gayman, *The Duties of a Christian Citizen,* pp. 63-69.

[708] It is important to note here that Gayman makes allowance for the "individuals right to keep and bear arms" as provided for in the US Constitutions, 2nd amendment. This perception of an individuals right to poses personal firearms is very much in keeping with the broader communities ethos and does not reflect some variant, in this area, based upon his personal religious or political beliefs.

[709] Theonomist beliefs assert that the civil society and government should be ruled by God. Theonomists would replace civil laws with Biblical law. Ancient Israel is an example as was the Taliban government in Afghanistan and the government in Iran under Ayatollah Khomanei. *The Watchman*, Summer 1997, Vol. 20, #3, p.13.

that the Church specifically holds that the place of the existing militias in America is illegitimate and should be abandoned due to the doctrine of, "The Lesser Magistrate"[710] taken from the Roman's passage. Thus, the major commentators on the subject, such as James Coates, *Armed and Dangerous*, Jerome Walters, *One Aryan Nation under God,* Kenneth Stern, *A Force on the Plain*, James Ridgeway, *Blood in the Face* or Harvey Kushner, *Terrorism in America*, who seek to present the American Right as a monolith being theologically led by *Identity* in general have not considered these very real distinctions between types.[711] This is particularly poignant considering the break of Repentant *Identity* from the more publicized Rebellious forms.

**Rebellious social actions**

In stark contrast to the Repentant form of *Identity,* is the more well known views of the Rebellious groups. This social outworking of *Identity* theology has been reported widely in the press and focused upon by popular writers and academics alike. [712]

For instance, the Idaho based Aryan Nations has repeatedly been in the news for its actions against the government, Jews and people of color.[713] In August 2000, the Aryan Nations leader, Richard Butler and several of the members of the Aryan Nations security team went to civil court in a case brought by the Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) Morris Dees on the

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[710] For a complete view of the Church's position on this important area, see, Reed Benson, "The Militia Movement and the Doctrine of the Lesser Magistrate," *The Watchman*, Summer 1998, Vol. 21, #1, pp.40-42. What is presented is compatible with most mainline Protestant theological interpretations of the passage today. It is directly opposed to the Rebellious *Identity* views put forward by leaders such as Aryan Nations leader, Richard Butler or the CSA.

[711] Of the major commentators on the subject, few are actually academics.

[712] See for example, Walters, *One Aryan Nation Under God*, 2001 or, Coates, *Armed and Dangerous,* 1995.

[713] For a good review of Aryan Nations see, Jeffrey Kaplan (ed.), *Encyclopedia of White Power* (New York, NY: AltaMira Press, 2000) pp.6-11; or news reports which are typical, "Aryan Nations: Hitler's ideology lives on in Idaho," *The Gonzaga Bulletin*, September 23, 1983, pp. 2-3.

part of Victoria Keenan, 44, and her son Jason, 21.[714] The Aryan Nations eventually lost the

case, losing their compound outside of Cour d'Alene, Idaho and a $6.3 million dollar

judgment.[715] The case was a result of an altercation, which involved the security guards from

Aryan Nations shooting at the Keenans on July 1, 1998. Other incidents have included the

actions of the Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord's (CSA) throughout their revolutionary

period (1979-1985). Their final violent action was to engage in an armed standoff with the

FBI.[716]

**Rebellious theology**

Kerry Nobel's involvement at the CSA was as the second in command, principal

theologian and spiritual leader.[717] Unlike Gayman who gives an articulated presentation of the

Repentant beliefs, Nobel, and various other writers, have merely made assertions, condemnations

and accusations in support of their Rebellious type of theology. For Rebellious adherents, the

pre-supposition is toward the use of force in "protecting" their way of life and beliefs against

other worldviews. The government is a principal, but not exclusive, target of their fear. An

example of the Rebellious justification can be found in CSA writings. As in the 1984 newspaper

article written by Nobel, a Rebellious adherent, *Christians must make commitment,* which said:

> Christians are taught an unscriptural doctrine that we are "to obey those who have rule
> over you" in all matters whatsoever the government says and does. It matters not that our
> Men-of-Faith examples obeyed the law only while the law obeyed God!…Today, I am

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[714] "A neo-nazis last stand," *Time,* August 28, 2000, or, "Trial told of paranoia at Aryan camp," *Associated Press*, September 1, 2000.

[715] Don Lawrence, "Supporters plan to move Aryan Nations out of Idaho," *Associated Press,* October 7, 2001.

[716] Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate*, pp. 129-182. Also see, Danny O. Coulson & Elaine Shannon's, *No Heroes* (New York, NY: Pocket Books, 1999), pp. 209-314, for a description of the events from the FBI perspective.

[717] Nobel, *Tabernacle of Hate*, 1998.

afraid that the government has become our God, telling us what is right or wrong, what we are to do, giving out penalties not allowed by law, making good to be evil and evil to be good. . . Christian—do you now know that to whom much is given, much more is required? Do you not know that God will hold you accountable for the sins of America if you do nothing?…What, though can be done? Many people no longer have faith in our governmental  "leaders" or in the established "churchianity (sp)." Many see no hope at the voting booth or behind the pulpit. Our only hope is found in Luke 1: 65-71, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel: for he hath visited and redeemed His people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have since the world began; THAT WE SHOULD BE SAVED FROM OUR ENEMIES, AND FROM THE HAND OF ALL THAT HATE US…" If you dare to stand up for Christ in ALL areas of your life—individual, family, local, state, national and world—with actions based upon the examples and commandments of the Holy Scriptures, then, and only then, can change come to America and the World! But change, though it must, is not easy. The choice is yours.[718] (Bold in original)

This example of CSA's justification for its outwardly violent social actions is very different from the more biblically based justifications and reasoning given by the Repentant Gayman. One might expect the two groups to hold very similar positions, as Dan Gayman had been the one to teach the CSA about *Identity* theology from the beginning.[719] But here again, the internal social development of the group is paramount in determining the social actions based on a given theology. The CSA , though located only three hours drive south of Gayman's Church of Israel, was being influenced by significantly different social pressures.[720] The membership and leadership of the CSA were new to the American radical Right.[721] Their background was essentially that of the 1960's and 70's *Jesus* movement and many of the members were down-

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[718] Kerry Nobel, "CSA leader: Christians must make commitment," *The Baxter Bulletin*, December 31, 1984, p.4.

[719] Nobel, *Tabernacle of Hate*, pp. 79-97.

[720] Interview, Kerry Noble, February 14, 2001, Burleson, Texas.

[721] Nobel, *Tabernacle of Hate*, pp. 47-66.

and-outers, former hippies, and Charismatic[722] church followers.[723] These are not the typical backgrounds found in the staunchly conservative American Right.[724]

As straightforwardly and precise as Gayman articulates his clearly non-violent position of Repentant *Identity*, so the CSA makes equally clear what the appropriate social action for Rebellious *Identity* believers should be. Thus, Jim Ellison, leader of the CSA stated:

> This government—not my government, not your government—this Jewish-controlled government, is transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny. It has excited (sic) domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of a white America, the merciless nigger savages, trained to kill in the government-created ghettos and in prison! The Jews have declared war on our race, promoting race-mixing and thereby polluting the pure seed of God. This ZOG, this Zionist Occupied Government, is killing our white babies through abortion! It is destroying white minds with its humanistic teaching of evolution! I tell you this—niggers may be descended from apes, but my ancestors never swung on trees by their tails! In order to preserve our Christian heritage and race, it is our patriotic duty, to overthrow this Antichrist government. Standing by and doing nothing against the tyranny of this government is open rebellion to God! Prepare war, O Israel! Wake up the mighty men! Let all the men of war come near. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears. Let the weak say, 'I am strong!'[725]

What is immediately evident is the obvious propensity for, if not dedication of, the Rebellious follower using force against his perceived enemies. Violent social action is not only permitted in the Rebellious declaration, it becomes a duty, "…it is our patriotic duty, to overthrow this Antichrist government."[726] Additionally, the role of the CSA's seed-line influence

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[722] In the United States, the Charismatic Church is distinguished by its focus on the gifts of the Spirit, speaking in tongues, continuing Revelation through the spoken word of believers and miraculous healing. There are several denominations that support the belief system including, The Assemblies of God and various Pentecostal movements.

[723] Nobel, 1998: 11-46, and Interview, Kerry Noble, February 14, 2001, Burleson, Texas.

[724] For insight into right-wing backgrounds, see, Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness,* 139-140, 143-144, 197-200.

[725] Nobel, *Tabernacle of Hate,* pp. 87-88.

[726] *Ibid*, pp. 87-88, Further confirmed in an interview with Kerry Noble, February 14, 2001, Burleson, Texas.

is evidenced in who is perceived as the group's enemy. It is not only, "this government,"[727] but it

is the, "Jew controlled government"[728] and "Zionist Occupied Government."[729] The claim of a

"Jew controlled government" is a claim that the remnant of 'true' Christians—identified as

*Identity* believers—are involved in a cosmic struggle of good versus evil. Further related to the

seed-line perspective is the identification of Black people with animals, as in the statement, "

…niggers may descend from apes..."[730]

Using a combination of the seed-line hypothesis in conjunction with the rebellious form

of *Identity* theology, a group is poised to carry out violent actions against its perceived enemies.

This is readily observable in the history of groups such as Aryan Nations or the CSA as

explained above.[731] Repentant and Rebellious would then appear to describe the possible

positions taken in regard to violence and the use of force within the pantheon of *Identity* groups.

As we have seen over and over again, *Identity* theology is constantly mutating and evolving.

**Weiland's third way: Rhetorically Rebellious—Physically Repentant**
        A third social position has been asserted by Ted Weiland and his Mission to Israel and

has been used by other *Identity* groups who follow the non-seed theology he articulates. In

addition, two other influential *Identity* groups adhere to this "third way." These include, Pete

Peter's Colorado based *Scriptures for America* and Dave Barley's Idaho based, *America's*

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[727] *Ibid*, p. 87.

[728] *Ibid*, p. 87.

[729] *Ibid*, p. 87.

[730] *Ibid*, p. 88.

[731] Also see, Kaplan, *Encyclopedia of White Power* pp. 6-11, 71-76 and 107-108.

*Promise Ministry*.[732] Just as there are three understandings of the seed versus non-seed

hypothesis among *Identity* believers, there are three social positions taken by *Identity* writers and

believers with regard to the use of force. As we have seen above, Ted Weiland has been a

prodigious writer within the non-seed camp of *Identity* theology,[733] and just as the issue of the

use of force is paramount within the minds of academics and law enforcement, so too does the

issue elicit significant debate between the various *Identity* factions.[734]

The principal written work explaining this third way is found in Weiland's, *Christian*

*Duty Under Corrupt Government: A Revolutionary Commentary On Romans 13: 1-7*. In this

work, Weiland lays out what amounts to a response to Repentant Theology as articulated by

Gayman. The primary thesis set out in the work is found on page three, "In fact, the Bible does

teach submission to government. However, it teaches a limited submission which is not rendered

indiscriminately to any and all who rule."[735]The response is presented, primarily through the use

of statements from the Reformers of the 16th and 17th centuries as well as the American

Revolutionary War era figures, set against various parts of the Romans passage.

For instance, in response to Romans 13:1 edict to, "Let every soul be subject unto the

higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the Powers that be are ordained of God,"[736]

Weiland responds, "Every Authority?" and then proceeds to cite English King James I, John

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[732] These groups position on the subject was derived from interviews with Ted Weiland and Dave Barley. Pastor Pete Peters refused to be interviewed.

[733] With seminal contributions such as, Weiland, *Christian Duty Under Corrupt Government,* 1997; *God Covenant People,* 1997; *and, Eve: Did she or didn't she?,* 2000.

[734] Some of this debate is carried out in the *Identity* based periodical, *The Jubilee Newspaper.* In addition to the publications print media, the current articles can be accessed at, http://www.jubilee-newspaper.com, (cited March 7, 2002).

[735] Ted E. Weiland, , *Christian Duty Under Corrupt Government* (Scottsbluff, NE: Mission to Israel, 1997), p. 3.

[736] Romans 13:1.

Locke, Samuel Rutherford, Samuel West, Samuel Cook, John Wingate Thornton, John Milton, Jonathan Mayhew and others. The collective response is that Christians need only submit to the authority of the government when the government is in submission to God's law. Weiland spends little time interpreting the Romans 13 passage.[737] Instead, Weiland uses carefully chosen quotes from the historic figures listed above to make his point and support his theocratic view of law. For instance Weiland cites the following:

> Whatsoever the authority ceases, the king ceases too, and becomes like other men who have no authority.[738] (John Locke)

And,

> Therefore an unjust king, as unjust, is not that genuine ordinance of God….So we may resist the injustice of the king and not resist the king.
>
> …but they that resist, that is, refuse, for conscience, to obey the man who is the king , and choose to obey God rather than man, as all martyrs did, shall receive to themselves salvation[739] (Samuel Rutherford)

While Weiland never calls for the CSA styled violent revolution seen in the Rebellious outline, he does make it clear that Christian Israel followers are not to blindly obey the government in violation of God's law.[740] Weiland's articulation of the social norms for his followers is much more nuanced than that found in the Rebellious camp and is not wholly dissimilar to that found within the work of Francis Schaeffer, a respected Reformed evangelical thinker.

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[737] Weiland, *Christian Duty Under Corrupt Government,* p. 5.

[738] *Ibid*, p. 5.

[739] *Ibid*, p. 5.

[740] This is found not only throughout, Weiland, *Christian Duty Under Corrupt Government* 1997, but was confirmed through several interviews with Weiland, in Scottsbluff, NE. February, 2001.

In two books primarily, *A Christian Manifesto*[741] and *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?,*[742] Schaeffer and former U.S. Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop argue that when man's government steps outside of God's law, the law is no longer binding on Christians.[743] This view fits neatly with the central thesis as outlined by Weiland that of a limited submission to government as long as the government follows God's law.[744]

Both Schaeffer and Weiland liberally use the same quotes and ideas from various historic figures like Locke and Rutherford. Both Schaeffer and Weiland are particularly reliant upon Rutherford for their thesis. Schaeffer appears to display an almost supernatural dependence on Rutherford, he goes so far as to dedicate the book to Rutherford:

> And most of all, to Samuel Rutherford. He has meant much to me for many years, …I understood increasingly that Samuel Rutherford's *Lex Rex* was an important trail marker for our day. In the times I have spoken at St. Andrews University, the most outstanding thing for me was feeling that Samuel Rutherford was not far away, that the old Rector was close by, and very contemporary![745]

Weiland is also heavily indebted to Rutherford, using nine full pages of Rutherford's quotes in a 78-page book.[746] Both of these men rely on many similar sources to outline their beliefs on social action by Christians under corrupt government and each comes up with essentially the same thesis. But while Francis Schaeffer is highly respected among evangelicals for his thinking on the subject, Weiland is dismissed because of the pejorative "*Identity*" label,

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[741] Francis A. Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1981) pp. 89-130.

[742] Francis A. Schaeffer & C. Everett Koop, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (London: Marshall Morgan and Scott, 1979).

[743] Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto,* 1981.

[744] Weiland, *Christian Duty Under Corrupt Government,* p. 3.

[745] Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto,* pp. 5-6.

[746] See, *Christian Duty Under Corrupt Government,* pp. 4-5, 13, 35, 43-45, 58-60.

which has been affixed by the media and scholars who refuse to separate and distinguish between the different theologies.

Weiland's social perspective is different from both the Repentant and Rebellious arguments given above. Unwilling to allow that all law must be followed even when it is counter to God's law, he is not willing to then suggest that all the laws enacted by an immoral government can be disregarded with impunity as in the Rebellious *Identity* groups. Again, the group's internal construction and development contributes to the third way, which Weiland, Peters[747] and Barley maintain within their various groups.

Each of these three groups adheres to the non-seed view explained in Chapter six. They do not view the Jewish people as half man, half demon but rather as people who refuse to accept the Christian view of Christ as Messiah.[748] Neither do they relegate people of color to a position of animal—but rather they embrace them as fellow Christian believers if they confess the historic Christian creeds and beliefs.[749] Without the seed-line demonization of others the rebellious stance will not fit with the group's world view.

Weiland's view of the Romans 13 and other related passages are interesting given his perspective on the other races. Not needing to justify a violent stance toward others, his theology provides a strong incentive for those that follow his perspective. By teaching a limited submission to government Weiland keeps open an important line of communication that appeals

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[747] Peters is routinely listed with seed-line *Identity* leaders. Although I was not able to secure an interview with him, both Barley and Weiland—who has worked, traveled and studied with Peters confirm that his theology is strictly of what is delineated in this dissertation as the non-seed *Identity* type.

[748] This acceptance of other races as people—counter to the seed-line hypothesis—does not mean that the non-seed groups favor a mixing of the races in marriage.

[749] Interviews with Mission to Israel pastor, Ted E. Weiland, in Scottsbluff, NE. February, 2001, and telephone interview with Americas Promise Ministry pastor, David Barley, January, 2001.

to a broad cross section of the American Right, a cross section that has become increasingly

disenchanted with their government.[750]

Weiland's rhetoric suggests that the use of force is always an option open to followers as

long as the government is failing to follow God's law. And yet, without the dehumanizing seed-

line theology to support a demonization of 'the other,' there is no physical rebellion. Non-seed

theology does not support the hate so often described in the literature and is helpful to groups

that support violence. This discovery should be of interest to law enforcement as it reduces the

likelihood of groups in this category—the non-seed and non-Rebellious—of being involved in

offensive violence directed toward the state or others.

**A Reconstruction Theology connection?**

As suggested above, Francis Schaeffer[751] was a highly respected thinker within the

broader Christian community while *Identity* theologians are immediately dismissed in the

mainstream as dangerous or crazy. Some have worried that a link between some respected group

and *Identity* might be discovered and thereby lend respectability to the *Identity* beliefs currently

dismissed by most. It has been suggested that this link might most likely come between the

Reconstruction theologies of the Reformed movement because they share similar views on a

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[750] See, Weiland, *Christian Duty Under Corrupt Government,* p. 3. This includes *Identity* believers from the seed-line side of the belief system who may be more comfortable with hearing a similar rhetoric.

[751] It is very important to note that Schaeffer was not a reconstruction theologian. Schaeffer writes strongly against any eventual Theocratic state being put in the place of civil government as Reconstructionists do and was an outspoken historic (rather than Dispensational) pre-millennialist. Reconstructionists are committed to post-millennial beliefs in their eschatology. Finally, Cornelius Van Til is the father of the presupposition school of apologetics, which is an integral part of Reconstruction theology. Schaeffer and Van Til argued back and forth by letters to each other over several years about their differences in relation to apologetic systems. Letters accessed at L'Abri Library, Huemous, Switzerland, June-August, 1999. Schaeffer's beliefs on this subject were further corroborated through interviews with Schaeffer's son-in-law, co-author and long time confidant, Udo Middleman, Gryon, Switzerland, June-August, 1999.

future theocratic state. When Professor Barkun wrote *Religion and the Racist Right* in 1997, he

said that,

> The Reconstructionists, including such figures as Rousas John Rushdoony, David Chilton, and Gary DeMar, consider biblical law binding and wish to see American law recast in biblical terms. **There is, however, no evidence of any connection between the small but influential Reconstructionist movement and the British-Israel or Identity groups considered here.** Indeed, there is no evidence that either is even aware of the other. . . . Nonetheless, should Reconstructionism expand beyond its currently small coterie, it may create a climate of opinion from which similar Christian Identity doctrines will inadvertently benefit. Since Reconstructionist leaders are trained intellectuals (something Identity figures are certainly not), the rigor of their approach may confer a halo of respectability on all ideas of Bible-centered law, including Identity's, despite the latter's completely separate origins.[752] (Bold added)

What Barkun had feared is now the case. During my time with Gayman he talked of his

personal contact with Rousas John Rushdoony[753] and the Reconstructionist movement. As

Barkun had suggested, Gayman presented this in such a way as to legitimise or strengthen his

own case for *Identity*. Reconstruction theology books are standard fare in the Church of Israel

book catalogue. While Gayman would not say exactly how long this association had been in

effect, he led me to believe that it was now well established and that it would certainly continue.

With the transitory nature of the Church of Israel's theology and the past and current movement

away from the *Rebellious* form of *Identity*, Reconstruction theology is an attractive direction for

the Church to move. Many of the theological doctrines are already shared and deeply ingrained

in the Church's practice.[754]

These Reconstructionist associations are important beyond the legitimisation predicted by

Barkun. Kaplan goes some distance towards showing that the Church of Israel is what he calls a

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[752] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* pp. 208-209.

[753] Rushdoony had been a leading theologian, writer and speaker in the Reconstruction theology movement for many years. Rushdoony died in 2001.

[754] These include but are not limited to the deep concern with Old Testament law, diet, Sabbath observance and beliefs in a future theocratic state.

"quietist camp"[755] within the *Identity* family. This description speaks of their pulling away from society, hiding from the evil and praying for the end that will bring salvation to the individual and the movement.[756] While this is a possible interpretation of Gayman's Church at the time of its writing (1993), it does not now give proper weight to the influence of the Reconstructionist movement or their theology as it influences Repentant *Identity* theology.

Current Church of Israel publications are full of ideas and doctrines drawn from Dominion and Reconstruction theology.[757] During a Sabbath service I attended in September, 1998, the 'Godly dominion' seen by one of the members in her election to a local Council seat was lauded and formed the focal point for a good portion of the service. Rather than a quiet retreat from society, to remain cloistered till Christ's return, as would be the logical conclusion of academics viewing the March 5th, 1972 resolution,[758] what is actually seen is an initial consolidation and return to the land, followed by 'dominion' through legitimate channels. Dominion is an attempt to take over the surrounding area, not a retreat in hiding.

The retreat of earlier times may now be seen as an initial strategic move, allowing for an unhindered period of foundation. This foundation – now established – is ready to move out from the foundational core area controlled by the Church and seeks to influence surrounding areas in "Godly dominion." The spread is intended to be a slow but deliberate conversion of the

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[755] Kaplan, 'The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel,' *Terrorism and Political Violence*, pp. 30-82.

[756] *Ibid*, pp. 58-62.

[757] Dominion theology, as it relates to Reconstructionism, asserts that because God's law is applicable to the community at large our effort to take dominion over what God has given us, namely the earth, is our spiritual duty. Most current copies of *The Watchman*, and *The Vision* give examples of how the members of the body are or should be taking dominion over their surroundings.

[758] Kaplan, 'The Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel,' *Terrorism and Political Violence*, p. 52

surrounding areas from their current position to the enlightened and eschatologically emergent

reality of a 'reconstructed' and theocratic world.

The congregation that Kaplan described in 1993 as, " . . . about 100 individuals residing

in the vicinity of Schell City . . ."[759] exceeded 200 members in 1998, with nearly half of those

coming from outside the local area to attend each service. One member I spoke with, a

communication's executive in Kansas City drove two-hours twice a week with his entire family

to worship with the Church of Israel. This type of dedication is not uncommon. Kaplan saw a

move away from legitimate institutional involvement, such as moving from private schools to

home schooling. This has not been the case. The Church of Israel currently operates a private

school with 89 children enrolled. While a percentage of the adherents continue to home school,

general public perceptions of home schooling have changed.  Where Kaplan saw home

schooling, as an example of retreat from society, there is a growing acceptance throughout

American society of home schooling as a legitimate response to problems in public sector

schools.[760] This has been especially highlighted since Harvard University began accepting

students educated at home in addition to those from traditional schools.

In short, the view that the Church of Israel is in some way pulling back from interaction

with the greater society because of their realisation of being outside society's norms is inaccurate

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[759] *Ibid*, p. 53.

[760] See John Holt, *How Children Learn*, (London: Penguin Books, 1983), for an academic argument suggesting public school drawbacks. In addition, see David Colfax, & Micki Colfax, (1987) *Homeschooling for Excellence*, (New York: Warner Books, 1987) for a defence of non-religious home schooling. In 1995 the Disneyland Hotel Convention Center in Anaheim California reported that 50,000 people attended the annual home-education curriculum trade show held there and that it was the largest convention that the Center hosted annually. In 2001 the US Census Bureau said, "…the data examined in this paper show that it [homeschooling] has established itself as an alternative to regular school for a small set of families, and is poised to continue its growth. In 1999 around 790,000 children between the ages of 6 and 17 were being schooled at home, and in the late 1990s the number was apparently growing." Curt Bauman, *Homeschooling in the United States: Trends and Characteristics, Working Paper Series No. 53* (Washington, DC: US Census Bureau, 2001), p. 9. The report can also be found online at, http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0053.html, (cited August 24, 2006).

at this stage of development. Unlike the Rebellious form of *Identity* theology, Repentant Theology is moving away from its anti-social roots towards a larger base of acceptance.[761]

Weiland expresses similar respect for the Reconstruction theology of Rushdoony, Demar and Chilton. Furthermore, Weiland describes his apologetic as "distinctly Van Tillian."[762] He believes that he has adopted the essential doctrines of the Reconstructionst thinkers and that the only difference he sees is his belief in a hidden Israel being found among the Angle-Saxon, Nordic and Germanic races.[763] Weiland expressed frustration repeatedly over being discounted because of the *Identity* label, which has been applied to him and his fellow Church members. He believes if he could enter into an ongoing dialogue with some of the recognized names in the Reconstruction movement he would be able to show that his theology is not substantively different than their own.[764]

Weiland would like to come out from under the label his groups and other like-minded believers have been saddled with.[765] He does not see himself or the group he leads as being represented in what most of the literature represents as *Identity* theology. Rather, he sees his theology as simply Covenantal, post-millennial, theology, which identifies Biblical Israel as being found in the Anglo-Saxon, Nordic and Germanic races rather than as many mainstream Christians do—associated with the modern State of Israel.

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[761] Particularly in view of Barkun's fears of legitimisation through association with Reconstruction theology, which has been realised.

[762] Interview, Mission to Israel pastor, Ted E. Weiland, in Scottsbluff, NE. February, 2001.

[763] *Ibid*.

[764] *Ibid*, and ongoing telephone and email communications.

[765] *Ibid*. Van Til is considered the father of presuppositional theology which serves as the basis of Reconstruction and Dominion theology.

This leaves Weiland and perhaps many from within his particular belief system ready to engage in meaningful discussion with those outside of his particular groups and perhaps, even open to a significant re-categorization as described in Chapter 3. What Weiland is describing is his desire to re-categorize their group from *Identity* to a point perceived to be more main stream. This action would allow the group to further migrate away from the more dangerous elements associated with that part of *Identity* theology which *are* potentially violent—the seed-line and Rebellious groups such as CSA and Aryan Nations. It remains to be seen what steps would be required by those within the Reconstruction theology groups before the transformation could take place. But to hinder this possibility seems unjustified on the basis of the group's non-violent and legitimate social actions.

Similarly other *Identity* groups might find that as their theology mutates and their social actions change with new influences, other types of de, re, or cross-categorizations might be possible. This type of suggested change does not serve the aim of creating a huge monolithic "enemy" upon which people can focus their fears, but it may go some distance toward creating a space for greater understanding and acceptance.

# CHAPTER 8

## DISTINCTIONS: TOWARD A DIFFERENTIAED VIEW OF *IDENTITY* THEOLOGY

*The difference between the almost-right word and the right word is really a large matter—it's the difference between the lightning bug and the lighting.* Mark Twain

In the five years since the 9/11 attacks, both the public and the academic communities have struggled to deal with the realization that theology has been a powerful motivation for violent attacks against non-combatants.[766] Since those attacks, significant work has gone into differentiating between violent and non-violent types of Islam.[767] But this has not been the case for *Identity* theology. Little or no attempt has been made to differentiate between domestic groups within the United States that base their worldview and actions on *Identity* theology. Wholesale and inaccurate categorization of believers that hold widely different doctrinal and social views are thrown together for ease in identifying the "enemy," raising money or just for laziness sake.

Many, if not most, Americans are offended by a theology based on the Christian Bible that claims to save some people and exclude others based on race in the way *Identity* theology does. It does not fit with the modern liberal and enlightened mindset nor does it seem "fair" in a

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[766] See for instance the results of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, The American Religious Landscape and Politics, 2004; found online at, http://pewforum.org/publications/surveys/green.pdf, (cited on August 14, 2006).

[767] See for instance, Andrew TH Tan (ed.) The Politics of terrorism: A Survey (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 73-88; Mark A. Gabriel Islam and Terrorism (Florida: Charism House, 2002), or john L. Esposito the Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality? (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

society whose very founding documents say that all are created equal.[768]   Despite this, belief in

and adherence to the various types of *Identity* theology continues to prosper in the United States,

Canada and other places around the world.[769]

The fear of a race-based theology has led to inaccurate classification of the various

*Identity* groups in many cases. This dissertation has initiated the process of untangling and

clarifying between the very different types of theology and social practice engaged in by *Identity*

theology groups. It begins to make classifications between the groups based on both their

theological perspectives in combination with their social actions.

In this concluding chapter, I reemphasize the primary contributions made in this

dissertation, which argue for a more complete and nuanced understanding of *Identity* theology

and the groups and individuals that follow it. A final and important contribution of this research

is proposed in a manner as to categorize the emerging denominational-type breakdowns between

various *Identity* theology systems.

**Answering the questions**

This research considered four broad questions about *Identity* theology, the answers to

which had been absent or ill informed in the previous literature on the subject. These questions

included;

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[768] This should seem somewhat strange to those acquainted with American Christian doctrine and theology as exclusiveness is part and parcel of modern Evangelical doctrine. A special relationship is allowed on the part of Evangelicals for the Jewish race—even those simply of the modern State of Israel and not religious or literal descendants of Abraham—because that race of people is identified with the "children of God." This has led to significant political support for the State of Israel by American Evangelical Christians. For a thorough discussion on this exception by US Evangelicals and the relationship to US foreign policy, see, Northcott, *An Angel Directs the Storm: Apocalyptic Religion & American Empire*, 2004, in particular pp. 44-72.

[769] For instance I met a South African *Identity* Pastor while at Dan Gayman's church who said the church was growing and accepted among whites in his area. Interview with Dan Gayman and other church members, Schell City, MO, September, 1998.

- How dissimilarities in scriptural interpretation affect the political behavior of groups adhering to *Identity* theology?

- What accounts for the existence of violent and non-violent strands within *Identity* theology?

- How *Identity* case study groups have used violence, and what accounts for the differences between these groups?

- And, whether actual violence or the use of the rhetoric of violence is more useful in rallying support within the broader *Identity* movement?

## The importance of hermeneutics

Clearly, the scriptural interpretation of sacred text is extremely important and impacts the way various *Identity* groups behave. Where both the Aryan Nations and the Church of Israel hold the same seed-line theology, the Aryan Nations are decidedly more violent and apparently hate-filled toward those around them. Similarly, while the CSA initially followed the teaching of Dan Gayman, charismatic leadership, internal stress and strains coupled with unique pressures that led the CSA toward violence rather than the Repentant position of the Church of Israel.

These differences in behavior are, in some significant part, the outworking of how the various groups differ in their interpretation of Romans 13: 1-8.

> Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting

themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.[770]

Aryan Nations believes that the passage, which on face value appears to call for Christians to obey the government, is null and void because the government has been overtaken by evil influences. This perspective was found not only in their rhetoric and discussion through interviews but in the social actions the group took. The CSA followed Butler rather than Gayman's interpretation at this critically important theological divide allowing that the plain meaning of the text—that Christians must obey their government was superseded by the groups belief that the government had been over taken by Satan and his forces.

The "rebellious" interpretation of the Romans 13 passage put Aryan Nations and the CSA in opposition—or "rebellion"—toward the US Government. The social outworking of that theologically derived position eventually led, in the case of CSA, to an armed stand off with the FBI and several individual members were arrested and convicted of violent crimes.[771] For Aryan Nations, the rebellious and potentially violent position eventually led to the group and their leader, Richard Butler, losing their land and buildings in Idaho. The victims of the Aryan Nations attack were awarded $6.3 million dollars in a civil suit brought against the group for their violent attack against the mother and her son in 1998. The victims eventually bought the Aryan Nations Northern Idaho property in a government foreclosure sale. Pastor Butler saw the events as part of a Jewish conspiracy against his small band of "true believers."[772]

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[770] Romans 13: 1-8, New American Standard Version.

[771] See, Noble, *Tabernacle of Hate,* pp. 129-166.

[772] "Attack Victims Buy Aryan Nation Compound," *The New York Times*, February 14, 2001, online at, http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B05E5D71630F937A25751C0A9679C8B63 (cited June 29, 2006).

Conversely, Pastor Dan Gayman's apparent epiphany, in part brought on by the butt of a Missouri law enforcement officer's shotgun being applied against his head, led the Repentant *Identity*, Church of Israel to interpret the Romans passage quite differently. Rather than believing they should be in rebellion to the US Government because it had been overtaken by evil influences Gayman and the Church of Israel followers say they must wait on God to change the government rather than taking actions into their own hands. They too believe the government is bad and overtaken by evil forces, similar to the Aryan Nations or CSA, but they do not feel at liberty to respond with force because of their interpretation of Scripture and the impact it has on daily life.[773]

## Dominion not terror

Gayman doesn't simply suggest they wait on God without taking action—rather—that the action they take should be ordained by God and within the legal construction set up by the government they believe God is allowing to rule. The Church of Israel—and the broader group of Repentant Seed-line *Identity* believers—fit their understanding of the Romans passage neatly with their modified Dominion and/or Reconstructionist belief system.[774]

While Butler and his Aryan Nations followers would have liked to usher in an apocalyptic period by starting a race war, Gayman's church believes they are called to wait and pray believing that only God has the ability to change the government and social situation. Where James Ellison and the CSA believed they were in the violent last days protecting themselves by arms against a Zionist Occupational Government that wanted them dead, the

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[773] In general Gayman lays out how Repentant believers should act in his book, Gayman, *The Duties of a Christian Citizen*, 1995.

[774] Gayman, *The Duties of a Christian Citizen*, pp. 125-172

Church of Israel follows the practice of Dominion adherents seeking to change society through legal and accepted methods. The only actions they see necessary are internal regulation and work coupled with the attempt to take back dominion over creation by involvement with the community and local government in legally legitimate ways, EG running for local office and voting for "Christian" leadership. Gayman lays out the plan of non-violent and legal "attack" very succinctly and, he believes, from a position of scriptural authority. Gayman says in his book, *The Duties of a Christian Citizen*[775];

1) **We are to build houses.** Jeremiah did not tell us to buy houses. We are to build houses debt free because Scripture does not sanction debt. We must bring together all the necessary spiritual and material resources to build debt free houses among remnant Christians.

2) **We must acquire land.** You cannot build houses on property that is not free and clear of debt. Remnant Christians must move forth and buy land. Wealth measured in land, livestock, silver, and gold was the means by which men held investments in the day of Abraham (Genesis 13:2), and it remains the best way to invest in our generation.

3) **We are to plant gardens.** Here is the call to cultivate, manage and take care of the soil. We are to grow our own food. Remnant Christians must prepare to produce their own food. We cannot continue to remain dependent upon food that is grown and processed in heathen lands (Mexico, etc.).Gardening involves mor than a postage stamp size plot at th rear of the house. We are talking about cultivating and growing food necessary to sustain families, which includes grains, nuts, vegetables, and fruits.

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[775] *Ibid.*

4) **Take ye wives.** This is a call to exercise the estate of Holy Matrimony, a sacrament central to Christian dominion. One who takes a wife is entering a covenant of marriage. God's original design for marriage is one man and one woman of the same race and faith (Gen. 2:24, I Cor. 7:2, & I Tim. 3:2). Monogamy in marriage remains God's plan for His people. The Christian marriage is central to Christian dominion, and to insure them, we must demand moral purity of the man and the woman before marriage and in the state of marriage. There must be absolute abstinence before marriage and unbreakable fidelity to the covenant to the state of marriage.

5) **Bear sons and daughter that ye may be increased and not diminished.** Multiplying children is central to Christian dominion. Remnant Christians cannot exercise dominion of the earth by taking up the standard of the world. Caucasian people living by the lies of Satan nearly have ceased bearing children. They have reached zero population growth with an average of 1.8 children per family unit. Scripture calls for the quiver to be full. If we want to be blessed of God and meet the enemy at the gate, we had better multiply children. How many children? We don not add one, two or three; rather, we multiply: two, four, six, and eight! Let us remember that children who are home birthed, home schooled, and churched in a strong local Church are key to the survival of the remnant in this generation.

6) **Seek the peace of the city where you live.** This is a call to exercise Christian citizenship and let your light shine in the community in which you live. As Christians we are to be a light in a world of darkness. We must learn to live under authority and be honest, hard working citizens exercising good self-government in our personal, family, and church lives. If captives in ancient Babylon were called to exercise good

citizenship, is it asking too much for remnant Christians living in modern Babylon to exercise good Christian citizenship?

7) **Pray unto Yahweh for the peace of the community where you live.** Here is a final call to Christian dominion of the earth. We are to have intercessory prayer for the country, state, county, and community where we live. We are to bind the powers of darkness, including the legions of demons, powers, principalities, rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places making prayer targets of special people in our community is an important step in Christian dominion.[776] (emphasis in original)

While the three references to race in this passage would make most modern groups cringe—many of the ideas put forward by Gayman here are revolutionary only because they are so thoroughly counter to the modern American mindset, not because they propose some violent or revolutionary idea or dogma. The idea that one might not go in debt to build their home, that large families are a good thing rather than a drain on potential resources for additional leisure activities, to be good husbands of our earthly temporal resources—the garden—as well as committed to a single partner in marriage is almost unheard of—even in Christian circles. If one leaves out the calls to racial purity in marriage—a perspective also held openly in the state of Israel and endorsed by the Israeli courts—then the there is little more revolutionary about the call by Gayman than the local Amish order might instill.[777]

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[776] Gayman, *The Duties of a Christian Citizen,* pp. 185-187.

[777] Donald Macintyre, " 'Racist' Marriage Law Upheld by Israel," *The Independent*, online at; http://news.independent.co.uk/ world/middle_east/article484122.ece (cited June 29, 2006).

There is no call to terrorism. No call to arms or even civil protest. Repentant *Identity* believers hold beliefs well outside of the accepted norm or "received view," about *Identity* theology but they are not the terrorist danger they have been portrayed as by watchdog groups and academics alike. In short, the scriptural interpretations of the Romans 13 passage by these very different groups lead to divergent theological positions that have real impact on their group's social activities. The failure to understand this—or perhaps to ignore the difference—leaves a segment of American society unprotected and vulnerable to unnecessary discrimination. There are clear theological divisions between the various kinds of *Identity* theology based groups that lead to varied social action.

**Exegesis leading to violence**

On the other hand rebellious seed-line *Identity* individual believers, like Richard Wayne Snell, executed April 19, 1995—the same day as the Oklahoma bombing—have used their understanding of the seed-line doctrine to dehumanize whole races of people. Snell's apparent understanding of the seed-line doctrine—a doctrine accepted by portions of both Repentant and Rebellious forms of *Identity*—was enough to validate, in his mind, the taking of a life. Again, it is the interpretation of the critical Romans 13 passage that either theologically allows the group or individual to take the illegal action, or, serves, as in the case of Repentant believers, to prohibit them from violence.

While it is the seed line doctrine taken from Genesis 3:15, coupled with the belief in a two-stage creation that dehumanizes non-whites and casts Jewish people as half-human half demons—it is the interpretation of the Romans 13 passage that forbids or allows the *Identity* adherent to take social action. The Genesis exegesis is commonly explored and objected to by those in the terrorism studies and watch dog communities because it is so offensive—but the

Genesis exegesis is potentially most dangerous when combined with a Rebellious interpretation

of the Romans 13 passage. Although less outlandish—the interpretation of the Romans passage

should probably be more concerning to these groups.

**Violence or rhetoric?**

      The use of violence by *Identity* groups has been isolated to events such as the Aryan

Nations guards attack against Victoria Keenan and her son and the CSA's stand off with the FBI.

More frequently, violence has occurred when individuals who believe the various doctrines act

spontaneously.

      The use of rhetoric that extols violence in the future has been very effective at garnering

funds and recruits for many of the *Identity* groups. For instance the brash and outrageous rhetoric

of Pete Peters has suggested the world is headed toward widespread violence and that the

believer—in Peters' case a non-seed *Identity* belief system—should be prepared to defend him or

herself.

      Peters' rhetoric, for instance in his pamphlet, *Death Penalty for Homosexuals*[778] is not a

call to violence or terrorist action by his followers, rather, it suggests that the liberal mindset of

modern man is counter to his literalist understanding of scripture. The pamphlet never calls for

violence nor any type of action against homosexuals in particular. Instead, the pamphlet uses the

rhetoric and shock value when seen by modern enlightenment influenced people from outside to

Identity theology to make his point. The text of the pamphlet is a discussion of modern mans

relationship to Old Testament Scripture from a non-seed *Identity* perspective—but it is the

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[778] Pete Peters, *Death Penalty for Homosexuals is Prescribed in the Bibl*e (LaPorte, Colorado: Scriptures for America, 1994).

rhetoric that is effective in transferring the message—no violence is called for or assumed on the part of his *Identity* beliefs espoused in the work.

In the first chapter of this dissertation this work suggested that it would attempt to answer seven important questions about *Identity* theology, and thus, make seven substantial contributions to the field of study most concerned with *Identity*. Following is the summary of these major contributions to further understanding *Identity* theology.

9.    *Academic and popular commentators have inaccurately identified Identity theology as a monolith; hate based, pseudo-Christian, terrorism-supporting theology.*

In each chapter of this dissertation there have been examples of both academic and popular commentators inaccurately describing *Identity* theology as a monolithic movement which is all hate-based, pseudo-Christian and terrorism supporting. While it is true that this research has shown that some of the groups and their theologies are hate based or terrorism supporting, it is also true that the research shows conclusively that the movement is not a monolith. This is a fact that seems conveniently overlooked or ignored in much of the influential literature on the subject.

In reality, violence is quite the exception. Some groups, for instance the Church of Israel in Schell City, Missouri, specifically forbid any association of their membership with violent practices. Others, such as Ted Weiland's Nebraska based Mission to Israel, see themselves as the literal Israel of God without seeing non-whites as anything to be hated. Rather, they openly associate with believers of other races, baptizing them as fellow Christians. The very real separations between the various kinds of *Identity* groups are both theological and social.

The distinctions between groups made from this research are in some ways a snapshot in time. More time, events and charismatic leadership will likely lead to further changes in theological position and social outworking of any given group discussed in this work. The Church of Israel would likely have supported violence—at least rhetorically if not actually—in the early 1970's, but internal theological understanding based upon the leaders interaction with law enforcement, led the group away from the standard rebellious seed-line belief structure to the current repentant seed-line position. The group's spiritual evolution now strictly forbids terrorist support based on their exegesis of Romans 13 as discussed in detail in chapter seven of this dissertation.

Unlike the Church of Israel, groups like Mission to Israel have *never* supported, either theologically or socially, the kinds of violence generally associated with the US radical Right. Their theological position precludes that support and their social outworking is typical of mainline Midwestern churches. The racial component of their theology is not unlike Jewish claims to a special covenantal relationship with God. They believe the true Israel of God is found in the white races—but do not suggest other races are excluded from salvation, justification or sanctification within Christianity.

While the introduction of this dissertation shows clearly that McVeigh and his accomplices were not driven by *Identity* theology as often assumed, the vision of *Identity* adherents as a "…hate based, pseudo-Christian, terrorism-supporting theology" is accurately represented in groups such as Aryan Nations. This is particularly true in Aryan Nations prior to the loss of their land in 2000 or the death of their long time iconoclastic leader, Richard Butler in 2004.

Aryan Nations theology is indeed, a thin theological covering at best. This type of *Identity* theology routinely comes back to an essentially hate based mantra, with, as Bruce Hoffman has

described, a "thin veneer" of religious language rather than theological depth. Similarly, Tom Robb's attempt to cover the traditional hate of the KKK with theological garments has been mostly unsuccessful. It would seem that KKK members want to use language, rhetoric and actions that are generally more easily sustained through traditional hate driven methods rather than trying to make it a Christian effort. The neo-Nazi ideology of Aryan Nations and the traditional hate of the Klan are ultimately difficult to maintain with *Identity*. The focus of these groups remains primarily neo-Nazi or Klan rather than moving toward the religious growth found in some other primarily faith based *Identity* groups.

The Covenant Sword and the Arm of the Lord (CSA) maintained a theological doctrine and social understanding that allowed and even promoted violence toward the end of their existence. But the group was ill suited to maintaining that violent perspective and failed in carrying out many attacks they planned. In the end, former members of the groups suggested the seed-line *Identity* theology was less capable of sustaining a violent spin-off group such as The Order than traditional white supremacist ideologies. Even the final eschatological confrontation between the CSA leadership and the FBI was ultimately anti-climatic and ended without bloodshed, with the membership serving long prison sentences for their resistance. Significantly, the major theological leader for CSA, Kerry Noble, has re-categorized himself as simply "Christian," now giving up his former *Identity* beliefs and holding on to a more traditional—even ecumenical— Protestant Christianity.

2.	*Terrorism Studies, the academic discipline most often concerned with Identity theology, has inappropriately relegated groups and individuals to the pejorative anti-social group known as "Identity theology adherents" on the basis of agenda driven discourse posing as academic scholarship.*

This research has shown that groups such as Ted Weiland's *Mission to Israel* or even the rhetorically virulent ministry of Pete Peters, *Scriptures for America* group, are theologically Anglo-Israel groups. They do not adhere to the essentials claimed by watchdog groups to identify *Identity* groups. The three beliefs most often associated with *Identity* theology are;

1. The seed-line perspective of Genesis 3:15 that suggests that Eve had sex with the Devil

2. The belief that Eve's offspring from that relationship are non-human, half satanic beings which some groups identify as the Jews, and;

3. The belief that non-whites are less than human and were created by God as part of the "beasts of the field."

Neither Weiland nor Peters' groups hold any of these "essentials" of the *Identity* faith—and yet—they remain consistently identified by this pejorative label.[779]

The theological claims made by these Anglo-Israel groups are offensive to many—particularly Jewish people and watchdog groups—because they claim to be a special chosen people of God. They make this claim and suggest that their Caucasian race is evidence of that relationship. They do not suggest, however, that other races cannot share in God's salvation for man—just that they are the "true Israel" of God. They do not claim that modern Jews are literal devils as seed-line *Identity* adherents do—just that Jewish religious beliefs deny the deity or messiah-ship of Jesus and are thereby "anti-Christian." The claim of these Anglo-Israelite groups is not unlike the claim by modern Jewish believers that they have a special relationship with God based on being racially Jewish.[780] And yet, while the claims of these groups may be offensive to

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[779] See for example the ADL website, http://www.adl.org/learn/ext_us/Peters.asp?LEARN_Cat=Extremism&LEARN_SubCat=Extremism_in_America&xpicked=2&item=8 (cited June 2, 2006).

[780] See for instance the discussion in, Waldo Frank, *The Jew in Our Day* (New York, NY: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1944), especially pp. 44-58, or, Meryl Hyman, *"Who is a Jew?"* (Woodstock Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1998).

some, they are not theologically similar with what as been defined as essential to *Identity*

theology. Thus to align them with these vilified *Identity* groups is more out group classification

than theological or social identification.

The excerpt below was taken from the ADL website. It is a description of what *Identity*

is, and even names some people, which they say, are adherents of this theology. But at least two

of the men listed as believers of this doctrine, Dave Barley and Pete Peters, have consistently

denied that belief, both in person and in writing. Rather, these men hold an Anglo-Israel belief

that is counter to the "essentials" the site suggest are *Identity* doctrine.

**Figure 4: From the ADL website on Christian Identity**
**Christian Identity**

**Origins:** Mid-20th Century (origins date to mid-19th Century)
**Background:** A racist and anti-Semitic religious sect whose adherents believe that white people of European descent are the descendants of the "Lost Tribes" of ancient Israel.
**Influential Personalities:** Howard Rand, William Cameron, Wesley Swift, Bertrand Comparet, Richard Butler, William Potter Gale, James K. Warner, Sheldon Emry, **Dave Barley**, **Pete Peters** (emphasis added)
**Ideology:** Anti-Semitic, racist, anti-government, conspiratorial
**Outreach:** Churches, pamphlets, tracts, books, shortwave radio, Web sites **Estimated Size:** 25,000 to 50,000
**Criminal activity:** Overall level of criminal activity is high, ranging from hate crimes to acts of terrorism

Christian Identity is a religious ideology popular in extreme right-wing circles. Adherents believe that whites of European descent can be traced back to the "Lost Tribes of Israel." Many consider Jews to be the Satanic offspring of Eve and the Serpent, while non-whites are "mud peoples" created before Adam and Eve. Its virulent racist and anti-Semitic beliefs are usually accompanied by extreme anti-government sentiments. Despite its small size, Christian Identity influences virtually all white supremacist and extreme anti-government movements. It has also informed criminal behavior ranging from hate crimes to acts of terrorism.

*3. Academic inquiry into the theological and social issues commonly associated with what is called Identity theology, has not generally considered primary source interaction beyond the use of limited printed materials or input from various Identity theology leaders.*

The analysis of secondary literature in chapter two of this dissertation highlighted the fact that many commentators continue to rely on secondary sources for their information. Rather than speaking with *Identity* theology adherents about what it is they actually believe and act upon socially, some commentators perpetuate existing myths. It would be easy to suggest this may be happening because it is easier to raise money when one's enemy appears large and growing, but it might also simply be a matter of those making the identification, researchers, watchdog groups and enforcement entities, being afraid to interact with the "other."

The vast majority of research on *Identity* groups has been completed within the academic community known as terrorism studies. This community has, for a number of reasons elucidated in chapter three of this dissertation, entered into a research hermeneutic described in an earlier publication as crisis management.[781] By allowing secondary sources to predominate research efforts on the subject, coupled with the impact the crisis management hermeneutic has in creating a presupposition toward viewing the "other" as evil, many stereotypes are continually extended, rather than destroyed by new research.

Efforts to meet with *Identity* adherents to discuss their theological perspectives have generally produced an open and almost eager attitude on the group member's part to discuss the issues. Often it would seem that *Identity* adherents are looking for a way to have someone— sometimes anyone—who cares, listen to their views on theology. The problems associated with first source research with these groups is generally on the part of the researcher—not the *Identity* believers.  Many researchers believe their own press and think their lives may be in danger if they meet with these groups.[782] The idea that because one is an *Identity* believer, they are also a

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[781] Brannan, et al., "Talking to Terrorists," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, pp. 10-14.

[782] This has been the perspective outlined to me most often by other researchers in the terrorism studies field throughout this research.

terrorist or at least criminally aggressive and generally violent has not been my experience.

Rather, what I have found are groups of people who are committed to a belief system that has

many facets and manifestations—and often strange by modern liberal democratic standards—but

which are rarely actually violent. This is not to suggest that some of the rhetoric and language of

the groups is not war like, nor that some violent acts have come from these groups clearly it is

and they have. But then the language of the bible and in fact many  historic Protestant or current

American mainstream Christian churches use similar language to convey their opposition to a

world they believe is outside of God's mandate for creation. [783]

Absent ongoing interaction with the subject of our theological inquiry much is likely going to

be either missed or misunderstood by the researcher. This distance from the source of

information has led many who have commented on *Identity* theology to pass on erroneous ideas

based on assumptions or other second hand information rather than primary sources.

Furthermore, the adversarial posture assumed by some researchers has predetermined or at least

biased the perceptions of *Identity* theology and its adherents.


3. *British-Israelism mutated into Identity in the United States but both remain Christian*
   *theologies.*

British-Israelism comes from a foundation of Christian theology. British Israel adherents from

the early days of Richard Brothers straight through to today, hold all held the essential,

foundational or fundamental Christian doctrines to be true.  Even if the stringent doctrines of

Protestant fundamentalism is applied as a guide for determining whether or not British-Israelism

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[783] See for instance Calvin's Commentaries where he suggests Christians are at war, "…but when he bids us to arm with a breastplate and a helmet, he is in fact calling us to warfare." John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries Volume XXI,* William Pringle (trans.) (Baker Books: Grand Rapids Michigan, 1999), p. 288.

is truly Christian—the movement is clearly Christian in that it holds to the essential Christian doctrines as it's fundamental base.

The transformation of British-Israelism into *Identity* theology was essentially an American phenomenon. Christian believers who also held British-Israel doctrines concurrently allowed the extant racism in some segments of American society to mutate the British-Israel beliefs into what we now know as *Identity* theology. Again though, the exegetically derived apologetic for *Identity* theology is decidedly Protestant Christian in its doctrine. *Identity* theology argues that the Bible is the inspired word of God, which they believe should, as God's word, have impact on the Christian's daily life. It upholds the doctrine the virgin birth. *Identity* theology asserts that human justification is by faith in the work of Jesus on the cross and that salvation is by grace mediated through Christ. It acknowledges the Christian doctrines of the deity, sinless life crucifixion and bodily resurrection of Jesus as the Son of God. At no point does British-Israelism or *Identity* theology deny any essential doctrine of Protestant Christianity.

Clearly some forms of *Identity*, such as the seed-line theology of Dan Gayman used by the Church of Israel add doctrines that are offensive and hurtful in some cases, but their core beliefs remain traditionally Christian. Even in the case of Tom Robb's KKK group in Harrison Arkansas, the addition of racist hate language and ideology to the broader group does not nullify the fact that their theological base remains Protestant Christianity—if only recognized in some superficial way by the membership.

Some of the most outrageous or racist beliefs of *Identity* can be found in other earlier Christian theologians, such as Martin Luther's much publicized *The Jews and Their Lies*.[784] Few Protestant Christians would suggest that Luther's doctrine is not Christian despite the unsavory

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[784] Martin Luther, *The Jews and Their Lies* (1543) reprinted in, Martin H. Bertram (trans.), *Luther's Works*, Volume 47, (Fortress Press/Philadelphia (1955), pp. 137-306.

language he uses against Jewish believers. Yet, it has become commonplace with both Christian

commentators and academics alike to suggest or assume that because *Identity* theology is racist,

biased and certainly not "politically correct," it is also not a "real" Christian belief. If rigorous

alignment with core Christian doctrines is a test of whether or not something is Christian—and it

commonly is—then both British-Israelism and *Identity* theology are clearly Protestant Christian

theologies, no matter how strange or bizarre they may appear. Rather than denying the obvious

link between Christianity and *Identity* theology, the efforts would be better spent at engaging

with *Identity* adherents and presenting them with alternative perspectives of Christian theology.

4. *Seed and non-seed Identity theology is based on exegesis and leads to significantly different theological doctrine, social actions and political manifestations between Identity theology groups.*

Each of the case study groups is routinely described in the literature as *Identity* adherents.

Each is routinely painted with the brush of extremism and even as terrorist supporting in some

cases.[785] But as we have seen, *Identity* theology is not a monolithic movement. There are

important distinctions in theology and social conduct. Four broad types emerge as we look at the

theology and social practice of the groups observed in this research. Seed-line vs non-seed

*Identity* and Repentant vs. Rebellious *Identity* adherents. Within these four broad groups are

constantly evolving sub-groups that will likely need further identification to maintain an accurate

classification or both theological and social perspectives. Clearly two types that begin to emerge

but will require additional research are the possibly rhetorically rebellious (but which are

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[785] Most commonly on Internet sites of hate group watch-dog efforts, See for instance many pages on; www.adl.org or www.splcenter.com. (cited August 24, 2006).

actually repentant in their social action) or conversely, the rhetorically repentant groups that are actually supporting violence behind the scenes.

First, and perhaps most obvious is the distinction between seed-line and non-seed types of *Identity* theology. The transformation of non-seed into seed-line theology was in part what made a distinction between British-Israel beliefs and *Identity* in the mid 1900's—but which now appears lost. And while that distinction was important, modern out-group identification efforts on the part of watchdog activists and academics alike have left each of these very different belief systems under a single demonizing label of "*Identity*."

Non-seed adherents do not believe in a literal sexual union between Eve and the Devil. They do not believe that the offspring of that supposed union are the people known today as the Jews. They do not believe that Jewish people are half demonic—half-human beings. They do not believe in a two-stage creation story supporting the notion that only white people are actually human while all other races are as "beasts of the field." Non-seed *Identity* believers do not believe in any of the distinguishing doctrines commonly associated with *Identity* theology except that of a hidden Israel in the people of the white races.

While non-seed adherents see themselves as being engaged in a special covenantal relationship with God, with their race as the identifying mark of that relationship—similar to the Jewish believe of a special covenantal relationship—they do not believe any of the seed-line doctrines listed above, and generally used to villanize *Identity* believers in general. Thus, the research delineates the two very real types based on their theological belief system: a denomination of seed-line believers and a denomination of non-seed or Anglo Israel believers. Groups such as the Church of Israel, Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord, Tom Robb's KKK and the Aryan Nations are appropriately classed under the general heading of seed-line

*Identity* adherents. These seed-line groups are distinct from the non-seed *Identity* groups such as Pete Peters Scriptures for America, Dave Barely's, America's Promise Ministry or Ted Weiland's, Mission to Israel.

**Table 1: Delineates various seed and non-seed Identity groups**.

| Denominational types | Seed-line Identity | Non-seed Identity |
|---|---|---|
| Church of Israel | x | |
| KKK of Harrison Arkansas | x | |
| CSA | x | |
| Aryan Nations | x | |
| Scriptures for America | | x |
| Mission to Israel | | x |
| America's Promise Ministry | | x |

Partly in an effort to avoid the pejorative label, *Identity*, Peters and other non-seed believers have tried to appropriate the name "Anglo-Israelites" as a more appropriate description of their belief that the 10 lost tribes of Israel found today in the British, Scandinavian, Germanic and other Anglo races.[786] Allowing non-seed believers to move out from under the restrictive and hate associated label of *Identity* would be a first but important step in social identity theory's attempt to resolve conflict through de-categorization addressed in Chapter three of this dissertation. If researchers remain distant from the actual focus of their research, refusing to speak or interact with the subjects, this appropriate de-categorization is not likely to take place. Rather, what will remain is an artificially maintained "other" against which people may focus

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[786] See, http://www.scripturesforamerica.org/html/bible_story.html, (cited August 12, 2006).

their fear, hatred as well as serving as an enemy to point to for raising money with which to continue the fight.

These two very different types of *Identity* are actually as different in religious categorizations as Catholics and Protestants. The fundamental belief structure is quite different for the two classes of *Identity*. These real theological differences have social impact. These social distinctions further defined another exegetically derived difference coming for the groups' reading of Romans 13.

5. *Repentant and Rebellious Identity doctrines are another major classification of Identity types and are exegetically derived and or maintained and have significant social impact on followers.*

While watchdog and academic literature discussed above presents all *Identity* theology adherents as a movement ready to act out violence on a large scale—there is little actual evidence for these assertions.  This fact is due in part to the distinction between what I have termed in this dissertation as the Repentant and

Rebellious divide between *Identity* believers.

The distinction between groups is a doctrinal difference as much as it is a political position. The CSA made a rational choice to assume a rebellious posture toward the US Government at the local, state and federal levels. Prior to their revolutionary period in the early to mid 1980's, the CSA had not been in conflict with the government. That posture was based on the group's understanding of the Romans 13 passage discussed above but worked its way out in the social actions of the group.

**Table 2: Expands on table 1 above showing how various Identity groups discussed throughout this dissertation align themselves on the Repentant and Rebellious distinction**

| Denominational types | Seed-line Identity | Non-seed Identity | Repentant Identity | Rebellious Identity |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Church of Israel | x | | x | |
| KKK of Harrison Arkansas | x | | x | |
| CSA | x | | | x |
| Aryan Nations | | | | x |
| Scriptures for America | | x | | X (only rhetorically rebellious—no social action or violence to support rebellious view) |
| Mission to Israel | | x | X (maintains defensive rebellious position is legitimate as well) | |

Aryan Nation social history has been one of both rhetorical and open physical defiance of government. The issue of rhetorical versus actual rebellion toward the US government at its many levels is a question that still needs further research and examination. For instance the language and writings used by Pete Peter's group, Scriptures for America, are commonly read as rebellious in nature. But the outlandish headlines in their writing, such as, *Death Penalty for Homosexuals,* is not a call to arms. Rather, its acts as a plea to return to Old Testament law as the standard for Christian living.

6. *The relationship between social factors, theology and political activism in the behavior of Christian Identity groups and individuals is a function of the groups internally constructed worldview and is not generalizable to describe an Identity theology monolith.*

By using Social Identity Theory as a framework for understanding the various Identity groups in this dissertation, it has become evident that each group develops and operates from a distinct internally constructed worldview. These worldviews are based on theological, political and social factors—but each is different for the various groups being led by individuals of differing capabilities and qualities. The experience of the particular group and its leadership contribute a significant way to the group's development and its likely social interface with society.

**The influence of group vs. individual culture**

A significant identifiable characteristic of the groups discussed herein is their relationship to those outside the group. As discussed in chapter three of this dissertation, the Mediterranean or Group vs. Individualist perspective helps shape the character and actions of groups. The *Identity* groups are often closer to their Mediterranean counterparts than they are their US and Western European counterparts. There is evidence of "groupthink" or collectivist attitude that is demanded in *Identity* thought.

All those outside of the *Identity* assembly are thus lost and/or apostate. The group is that which gives the individual significance and meaning. For the Seed-line *Identity* believer it is his belief that he is the very physical offspring of a blessed union between Adam and Eve that is identified by the mark of Caucasian ethnicity. At the same time these Seed-line adherents are in opposition to the otherworldly group or half-Satanic/half-human being they call Jews or non-whites they believe to be sub-human.

For the non-seed adherent it is much less diabolical but just as separating to see themselves a unique and set apart group—the "Israel of God." Again the racial identification of their unique position is noted by their race, but in their understanding they do not see other races as anything other than human—and certainly these non-seed groups believe that the non-white races of people are both real people and can be "saved" by God in a traditionally Protestant understanding of salvation or justification.

As these groups are genuinely focused on the exegesis of the biblical text for governance of their beliefs, it is not surprising to find that they then adopt—in varying degrees—some of the Mediterranean cultures focus on group rather than individual importance.

## What then should Christian theology do?
*Identity* theology adherents are continually redefining their evolving belief system. Seeking to force all these people into a pejorative classification linked to terrorism is unfair, inaccurate and unhelpful. Social Identity Theory suggests three possible conflict resolution alternatives, which could be used with the information this dissertation supplies, and as discussed above in chapter three, to move these groups further way from violence. These include changing the label or category from which researchers, law enforcement and the public generally deal with these groups. For instance;

d. Crossed categorization – using one social category to cancel out another.

e. Re-categorization – bringing members of two categories together under an inclusive, superordinate one.

f. De-categorization – dissolving the problematic categories altogether, especially by facilitating contact between members of rival groups.

By utilizing one or more of the three conflict resolution methods listed above and explained in chapter three, adherents of the various emerging denominational types of *Identity* theology may be able to move away from violence—either real or perceived—and closer to a socially acceptable and sustainable form of theology.  In particular the non-seed *Identity* theology of the groups, Mission to Israel, Scriptures for America and America's Promise Ministries are potentially compatible for re-categorization in one or more ways.

These non-seed groups already view themselves as 'other' than *Identity* adherents, which is, I believe, an important and essential first step toward re-categorization.[787]  If non-seed *Identity* adherents were re-categorized as pseudo-Reconstructionist theologians—the non-seed leadership already see themselves in this light and the effort might lead non-seed adherents into more meaningful discussions with more mainstream and non-violent believers.   Some might view this re-categorization as too far a leap initially. In this case an initial effort at cross-categorizing the non-seed groups with Post-millennial Reconstructionist could be a first step toward the eventual re-categorization.

Similar efforts might be helpful in regards to repentant seed-line adherents such as the Missouri based Church of Israel. Their repentant beliefs and social actions move them away from the violence that is the primary issue of the terrorism studies community and law enforcement, the two communities primarily concerned with studying them. By recognizing this distinction from the more dangerous rebellious seed-line adherents such as Aryan Nations, the terrorism studies community would be essentially de-categorizing the group. This recognition of

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[787] I make this assertion based not only on the preponderance of their written and online explanations, but also upon my discussions with their leaders who articulate the groups various doctrines and beliefs. See for instance, Pete Peters defense of his groups beliefs entitled; *We Are Not Identity!* Online at, http://www.scripturesforamerica.org/ADL/notidentity.html (cited on August 14, 2006).

what is already a reality between the various *Identity* groups would give further incentive for continuing in a non-violent manner.

A likely roadblock to an attempt utilizing the described methods at reducing violence and distinguishing between types would likely come from the watch-dog groups. These groups stand to collect more money from supporters by presenting each of the four varied types of *Identity* as a monolithic movement, ready and likely to attack at any moment.

The distinctions between these varied groups are real. They are documented through their writings as well as interviews with both leaders and adherents with the various groups. The groups themselves would like to known for their particular understanding of the biblical text and how that impacts their social actions, rather than being lumped imprecisely under the pejorative "terrorist" or "extremist" labels.  Despite the fact that these groups do differ significantly and their actions vary widely—the received view and comfortable stereotype will likely make it very difficult to change the categories in which these groups currently find themselves.


**Beginnings rather than conclusions**

What then is to be made of this argument against imprecise labeling and pejorative stereotyping of *Identity* adherents? Several issues come immediately to the forefront. First, the 'terrorism studies' community—that community which has been primarily responsible for research on *Identity* theology has been inaccurate—likely in part because of the distance from which they view their research subjects. The failure of many previous researchers to interact with the actual subject of their research and primary sources, rather than secondary sources, which have often been based on particular biases, has contributed to the existing inaccuracies related to *Identity* theology.  Social Identity Theory as used in this dissertation is but one of potentially many frameworks that might be used to more accurately uncover truth as it relates to the people,

social action and theology concerned with *Identity*.  Secondly, the research presented herein
leaves the broader Academy with a much more nuanced understanding of the theologies and
resultant social actions of those who follow what is currently only perceived in general terms as
*Identity* theology. The described accurate understanding of this theology and these groups is an
important starting place for moving beyond stereotypes toward delineating between those
groups, which are truly aggressive and dangerous, and those groups, which would use force only
in a truly defensive manner.   Finally, this research argues both that it is inappropriate to
castigate any group of people negatively based merely upon comfortable stereotypes and that by
replacing inaccurate blanket categories with more precise distinctions,  policy makers and
enforcement personnel can more accurately respond to the times when violence is either used or
threatened.

Although the distinctions made in this research are real and important for greater
understanding, the efforts of this research should only be viewed as a starting point for further
discovery and exploration. As shown throughout this dissertation, much more research is needed
from the divinity and theology perspectives. The "terrorism studies" prism through which nearly
all-prior research on the subject has been completed is simply one voice among many that need
to be heard on the subject.  The tools available to theologians, biblical scholars, church historians
and students of divinity, are considerable and potentially important for more accurately
providing insight into this difficult and understudied area. Thus, rather than providing ultimate
conclusions, this research serves as a beginning to new fields of inquiry into the ever developing
theology and social actions that make up the *Identity* theology adherent communities.

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