

January 06, 2006

An Open Letter to Evangelicals and Other Interested Parties: The People of God, the Land of Israel, and the Impartiality of the Gospel

A few years ago I came across a document on the [Knox Seminary website](#) called:

[An Open Letter to Evangelicals and Other Interested Parties: The People of God, the Land of Israel, and the Impartiality of the Gospel](#)

In it, a group of scholars sought to respond to the statements of certain popular Christian leaders who were claiming to speak for the body of Christ as a whole in urging certain political actions be taken on behalf of the modern nation of Israel. These popular leaders were urging such action on the basis of what the Knox Seminary group felt was a faulty theological premise.

So, the open letter was published as a statement to the church and the world at large that there are a significant number of Christians who do not hold to the eschatological views of the aforementioned popular leaders.

Here at Theologica we have received permission from Dr. R. Fowler White of Knox Seminary to publish this letter in its entirety and offer this for your consideration. And, if you find yourself in agreement with this document you may add your name as a signatory to it - instructions on how to do so are at the bottom of the post.

Of course the proper caveat is in order - while I am in 100% agreement with the following, this is not the official position of Theologica, as I am sure there are contributors who do not share these views. Further, this is not the position of [World Magazine](#), which hosts Theologica.

So, speaking only for myself I do believe this is an important document and offer it for your prayerful consideration.

An Open Letter to Evangelicals and Other Interested Parties: The People of God, the Land of Israel, and the Impartiality of the Gospel

Recently a number of leaders in the Protestant community of the United States have urged the endorsement of far-reaching and unilateral political commitments to the people and land of Israel in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, citing Holy Scripture as the basis for those commitments. To strengthen their endorsement, several of these leaders have also insisted that they speak on behalf of the seventy million people who constitute the American evangelical community.

It is good and necessary for evangelical leaders to speak out on the great moral issues of our day in obedience to Christ's call for his disciples to be salt and light in the world.¹ It is quite another thing, however, when leaders call for commitments that are based upon a serious misreading of Holy Scripture. In such instances, it is good and necessary for other evangelical leaders to speak out as well.

We do so here in the hope that we may contribute to the cause of the Lord Christ, apart from whom there can never be true and lasting peace in the world.²

At the heart of the political commitments in question are two fatally flawed propositions. First, some are teaching that God's alleged favor toward Israel today is based upon ethnic descent rather than upon the grace of Christ alone, as proclaimed in the Gospel. Second, others are teaching that the Bible's promises concerning the land are fulfilled in a special political region or "Holy Land," perpetually set apart by God for one ethnic group alone. As a result of these false claims, large segments of the evangelical community, our fellow citizens, and our government are being misled with regard to the Bible's teachings regarding the people of God, the land of Israel, and the impartiality of the Gospel.

In what follows, we make our convictions public. We do so acknowledging the genuine evangelical faith of many who will not agree with us. Knowing that we may incur their disfavor, we are nevertheless constrained by Scripture and by conscience to publish the following propositions for the cause of Christ and truth.

1. The Gospel offers eternal life in heaven to Jews and Gentiles alike as a free gift in Jesus Christ.³

Eternal life in heaven is not earned or deserved, nor is it based upon ethnic descent or natural birth.⁴

2. All human beings, Jews and Gentiles alike, are sinners,⁵ and, as such, they are under God's judgment of death.⁶ Because God's standard is perfect obedience and all are sinners, it is impossible for anyone to gain temporal peace or eternal life by his own efforts. Moreover, apart from Christ, there is no special divine favor upon any member of any ethnic group; nor, apart from Christ, is there any divine promise of an earthly land or a heavenly inheritance to anyone, whether Jew or Gentile.⁷ To teach or imply otherwise is nothing less than to compromise the Gospel itself.

3. God, the Creator of all mankind, is merciful and takes no pleasure in punishing sinners.⁸ Yet God is also holy and just and must punish sin.⁹ Therefore, to satisfy both his justice and his mercy, God has appointed one way of salvation for all, whether Jew or Gentile, in Jesus Christ alone.¹⁰

4. Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully man,¹¹ came into the world to save sinners.¹² In his death upon the cross, Jesus was the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world, of Jew and of Gentile alike. The death of Jesus forever fulfilled and eternally ended the sacrifices of the Jewish temple.¹³ All who would worship God, whether Jew or Gentile, must now come to him in spirit and truth through Jesus Christ alone. The worship of God is no longer identified with any specific earthly sanctuary. He receives worship only through Jesus Christ, the eternal and heavenly Temple.¹⁴

5. To as many as receive and rest upon Christ alone through faith alone, to Jews and Gentiles alike, God gives eternal life in his heavenly inheritance.¹⁵

6. The inheritance promises that God gave to Abraham were made effective through Christ, Abraham's True Seed.¹⁶ These promises were not and cannot be made effective through sinful man's keeping of God's law.¹⁷ Rather, the promise of an inheritance is made to those only who have faith in Jesus, the True Heir of Abraham. All spiritual benefits are derived from Jesus, and apart from him there is no participation in the promises.¹⁸ Since Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the Abrahamic Covenant, all who

bless him and his people will be blessed of God, and all who curse him and his people will be cursed of God.¹⁹ These promises do not apply to any particular ethnic group,²⁰ but to the church of Jesus Christ, the true Israel.²¹ The people of God, whether the church of Israel in the wilderness in the Old Testament²² or the Israel of God among the Gentile Galatians in the New Testament,²³ are one body who through Jesus will receive the promise of the heavenly city, the everlasting Zion.²⁴ This heavenly inheritance has been the expectation of the people of God in all ages.²⁵

7. Jesus taught that his resurrection was the raising of the True Temple of Israel.²⁶ He has replaced the priesthood, sacrifices, and sanctuary of Israel by fulfilling them in his own glorious priestly ministry and by offering, once and for all, his sacrifice for the world, that is, for both Jew and Gentile.²⁷ Believers from all nations are now being built up through him into this Third Temple,²⁸ the church that Jesus promised to build.²⁹

8. Simon Peter spoke of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus in conjunction with the final judgment and the punishment of sinners.³⁰ Instructively, this same Simon Peter, the Apostle to the Circumcision,³¹ says nothing about the restoration of the kingdom to Israel in the land of Palestine.³² Instead, as his readers contemplate the promise of Jesus' Second Coming, he fixes their hope upon the new heavens and the new earth, in which righteousness dwells.³³

9. The entitlement of any one ethnic or religious group to territory in the Middle East called the "Holy Land" cannot be supported by Scripture. In fact, the land promises specific to Israel in the Old Testament were fulfilled under Joshua.³⁴ The New Testament speaks clearly and prophetically about the destruction of the second temple in A.D. 70.³⁵ No New Testament writer foresees a regathering of ethnic Israel in the land, as did the prophets of the Old Testament after the destruction of the first temple in 586 B.C.³⁶ Moreover, the land promises of the Old Covenant are consistently and deliberately expanded in the New Testament to show the universal dominion of Jesus,³⁷ who reigns from heaven upon the throne of David, inviting all the nations through the Gospel of Grace to partake of his universal and everlasting dominion.³⁸

10. Bad Christian theology regarding the "Holy Land" contributed to the tragic cruelty of the Crusades in the Middle Ages. Lamentably, bad Christian theology is today attributing to secular Israel a divine mandate to conquer and hold Palestine, with the consequence that the Palestinian people are marginalized and regarded as virtual "Canaanites."³⁹ This doctrine is both contrary to the teaching of the New Testament and a violation of the Gospel mandate.⁴⁰ In addition, this theology puts those Christians who are urging the violent seizure and occupation of Palestinian land in moral jeopardy of their own bloodguiltiness. Are we as Christians not called to pray for and work for peace, warning both parties to this conflict that those who live by the sword will die by the sword?⁴¹ Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ can bring both temporal reconciliation and the hope of an eternal and heavenly inheritance to the Israeli and the Palestinian. Only through Jesus Christ can anyone know peace on earth.

The promised Messianic kingdom of Jesus Christ has been inaugurated. Its advent marks the focal point of human history. This kingdom of the Messiah is continuing to realize its fullness as believing Jews and Gentiles are added to the community of the redeemed in every generation. The same kingdom will be manifested in its final and eternal form with the return of Christ the King in all his glory.

Of all the nations, the Jewish people played the primary role in the coming of the Messianic kingdom. New Testament Scripture declares that to them were given the oracles of God,⁴² the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises.⁴³ Theirs are the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and from them, according to the flesh, came Christ.⁴⁴ Salvation is, indeed, of the Jews.⁴⁵ While affirming the Scriptural teaching that there is no salvation outside of Christ, Christians should acknowledge with heartfelt sorrow and grief the frequent oppression of the Jews in history, sometimes tragically done in the name of the cross.

But what are we to make of the unbelief of Israel? Has their unbelief made the faithfulness of God without effect for them?⁴⁶ No, God has not completely rejected the people of Israel,⁴⁷ and we join the apostle Paul in his earnest prayer for the salvation of his Jewish kinsmen according to the flesh.⁴⁸ There always has been and always will be a remnant that is saved.⁴⁹ While not all Israel will experience the blessing of participation in the Messianic kingdom,⁵⁰ yet Jews who do come to faith in Christ will share in his reign throughout the present age and into eternity. In addition, it is not as though the rejection of some in Israel for unbelief serves no purpose. On the contrary, because they were broken off in unbelief, the Gospel has gone to the Gentiles, who now, through faith, partake of the blessings to the fathers and join with believing Jews to constitute the true Israel of God, the church of Jesus Christ.⁵¹

The present secular state of Israel, however, is not an authentic or prophetic realization of the Messianic kingdom of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, a day should not be anticipated in which Christ's kingdom will manifest Jewish distinctives, whether by its location in "the land," by its constituency, or by its ceremonial institutions and practices. Instead, this present age will come to a climactic conclusion with the arrival of the final, eternal phase of the kingdom of the Messiah. At that time, all eyes, even of those who pierced him, will see the King in his glory.⁵² Every knee will bow, and every tongue will declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.⁵³ The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever.⁵⁴

In light of the grand prophetic expectation of the New Testament, we urge our evangelical brothers and sisters to return to the proclamation of the free offer of Christ's grace in the Gospel to all the children of Abraham, to pray for peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and to promise all humanitarian sympathy and practical support for those on both sides who are suffering in this current vicious cycle of atrocity and displacement. We also invite those Christian educators and pastors who share our convictions on the people of God, the land of Israel, and the impartiality of the Gospel to join their names with ours as signatories to this open letter.⁵⁵

Advent

In the Year of our Lord 2002

Soli Deo Gloria

1 Matthew 5:13-16, "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

2 John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

3 Romans 6:23, "The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

4 Luke 3:8, "And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham." Ephesians 2:8-9, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

5 Romans 3:22-23, "There is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

6 Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death."

7 Romans 3:9-10, "Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, 'There is none righteous, not even one.'"

8 Ezekiel 18:23, 32, "Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? ... I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord."

9 Exodus 34:7, "He does not leave the guilty unpunished."

10 Acts 4:12, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." John 14:6, "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

11 John 1:1, 14, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

12 1 Timothy 1:15, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

13 Hebrews 9:11-12, "But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood he entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption." Hebrews 10:11-12, "And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God."

14 John 4:21, 23, "Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ... But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.'" John 2:19-21, "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' Then the Jews said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the temple of his body."

15 Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek [Gentile]." John 1:12-13, "But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

16 Galatians 3:16, "Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ."

17 Romans 4:13, "The promise to Abraham that he would be the heir of the world was not to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."

18 Galatians 3:7, 26-29, "Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. ... For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise."

19 Genesis 12:3, "I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you." Galatians 3:7-8, "Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'All the nations will be blessed in you.'"

20 Galatians 3:22, "But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe." Matthew 21:43, "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing the fruit of it."

21 Romans 2:28-29, "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God." Philippians 3:3, "For we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh."

22 Acts 7:38, "This [Moses] is the one who was in the church in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai."

23 Galatians 6:16, "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, even upon the Israel of God."

24 Hebrews 13:14, "For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come." Philippians 3:20, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 3:13, "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells." Revelation 21:9-14, "Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, 'Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.' And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. ... Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names

written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Hebrews 11:39-40, " And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us."

25 Hebrews 11:13-16, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them." Hebrews 12:22-24, "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel."

26 John 2:19-21, "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' Then the Jews said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?'" But he was speaking of the temple of his body."

27 Hebrews 8:1-6, "Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. . . . For if he were on earth, he would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things But now he has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as he is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises." See further Hebrews 4:14-5:10; 6:13-10:18.

28 Ephesians 2:19-22, "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit." 1 Peter 2:4-6, "And coming to him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this is contained in Scripture: 'Behold I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone, and he who believes in him shall not be disappointed.'"

29 Matthew 16:18, "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." Hebrews 3:5-6, "For [Jesus] has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. Now Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later. But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house."

30 2 Peter 3:10-13, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

31 Galatians 2:7, "The gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to [Paul], as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for he who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in [Paul] toward the Gentiles)."

32 Cf. Acts 1:6-7, "Therefore, when they had come together, they asked [Jesus], saying, 'Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' And he said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in his own authority."

33 2 Peter 3:13, "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

34 Joshua 21:43-45, "So the Lord gave to Israel all the land of which he had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. The Lord gave them rest all around, according to all that he had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. Not a word failed of any good thing that the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass."

35 Matthew 24:1-2, "Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said to them, 'Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.'" See also Mark 13:1-2; Luke 21:20-24.

36 Luke 21:24, "Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

37 Exodus 20:12, "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you." // Ephesians 6:2-3, "'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with promise: 'that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.'" Genesis 12:1, "Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you"; cf. Romans 4:13, "The promise to Abraham that he would be the heir of the world was not to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Psalm 37:11, "But the meek shall inherit the land, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." // Matthew 5:5, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Psalm 2:7-8, "The Lord has said to me, 'You are my Son, Today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession.'"

38 Acts 2:29-32, "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God

had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, he would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that his soul was not left in Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses."

39 Deuteronomy 20:16-18, "Only in the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, you shall not leave alive anything that breathes. But you shall utterly destroy them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against the Lord your God." See also Leviticus 27:28-29.

40 Matthew 28:19, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations."

41 Matthew 26:52, "But Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.'"

42 Romans 3:2, "They [the Jews] were entrusted with the oracles of God."

43 Romans 9:3-4, "For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises."

44 Romans 9:5, "whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen."

45 John 4:22, "Salvation is of the Jews."

46 Romans 3:1-4, "What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not!"

47 Romans 11:1, "Has God cast away his people? Certainly not!" See further Romans 11:2-10.

48 Romans 9:1-3, "I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."

49 Romans 11:5, "Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace."

50 Romans 9:6, "They are not all Israel who are of Israel; nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants."

51 Romans 11:11-18, "I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. ... For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. ... And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you."

52 Revelation 1:7, "Behold, he is coming with clouds, and every eye will see him, even they who pierced him."

53 Philippians 2:9-11, "God highly exalted him, and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

54 Revelation 11:15, "Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever!'"

55 Those who wish to add their names as signatories to this Open Letter may do so by contacting us by letter at Knox Theological Seminary, 5554 N. Federal Hwy., Ft. Lauderdale, FL, or by e-mail at DeanofFaculty@knoxseminary.org. Due to the potential for various abuses, names will be added as signatories only after receipt of 1) correspondence (letter or e-mail) granting permission to attach said name and pertinent identification to the Open Letter; and 2) a phone number for verbal confirmation. For further study on the contribution of the Book of Revelation to biblical eschatology, see [The John-Revelation Project under the Faculty Forum on this web site.](#)