Chapter 6: Hal Lindsey (b. 1929)
The Father of Apocalyptic Christian Zionism

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1. The Significance of Hal Lindsey to Christian Zionism

Hal Lindsey is undoubtedly the most influential of all Christian Zionists of the 20th century. Although rarely quoted by others, he has nevertheless been described by *Time* as *'The Jeremiah for this Generation*', and by the *New York Times* as '*the best selling author of the decade.'*[1] His newest publisher describes him as *'The Father of the Modern-Day Bible Prophecy Movement*,'[2] and, '*the best known prophecy teacher in the world*.'[3] He is apparently one of very few authors to have had three books on the *New York Times* best seller list at the same time.[4]

This chapter will explore the significance of Hal Lindsey within Christian Zionism, his dispensational hermeneutic, unconventional view of prophecy and eschatology, his distinctive apocalyptic Zionism and political agenda for Israel.

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[1]Hal Lindsey*, The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* (New York, Bantam, 1981), p. 179.
[2]Hal Lindsey, *The Final Battle* (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995), back cover.
[3]Hal Lindsey, *The Apocalypse Code* (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1997), back cover.
[4]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 179

Lindsey acknowledges that '*The future is big business*,'[5] and has proved the axiom true. He is a prolific writer, the author of at least twenty books spanning 27 years, most of which deal explicitly or implicitly with a dispensational interpretation of the future, biblical prophecy and Christian Zionism.[6] He hosts his own radio[7] and television programmes, leads regular pro-Israeli Holy Land tours, and by subscription makes available a monthly *Christian Intelligence Journal* called *Countdown* as well as the *International Intelligence Briefing*[8]. Lindsey, along with fellow Zionist, Grant Jeffries, hosts a weekly news programme*, International Intelligence Briefing* on the fundamentalist *Trinity Broadcasting Network* television station.[9]

Lindsey's most famous book, *The Late Great Planet Earth* has been described by the *New York Times* as the '*#1 Non-fiction Bestseller of the Decade.*' It has gone through more than 108 printings with sales, by 1993, of more than 18 million copies in English, with estimates varying between 18-20 million further copies in 54 foreign languages.[10]

Despite dramatic changes in the world since its publication in 1970, Lindsey maintains that the prophetic and apocalyptic scenario depicted in the book is biblically accurate and therefore it remains in print in its original un-revised form. Sales increased 83% during August and September 1990 amidst fears in the United States

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[5]Hal Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (London, Lakeland, 1970), p. 16.
[6]Hal Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (London, Lakeland, 1970); *Satan is Alive and Well on Planet Earth* (London, Lakeland, 1973); *There's A New World Coming, A Prophetic Odyssey* (Santa Ana, California, Vision House, 1973); *The Liberation of Planet Earth* (London, Lakeland, 1974); *The World's Final Hour: Evacuation or Extinction?* (1976); *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* (New York, Bantam, 1981); *The Promise* (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1982)*; The Rapture: Truth or Consequences* (New York, Bantam, 1983); *The Terminal Generation* (New York, Bantam,1983); *A Prophetical Walk Through the Holy Land* (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1983); *Israel and the Last Days* (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1983); *Combat Faith* (1986); *The Road to Holocaust* (New York, Bantam, 1989); *Planet Earth-2000 A.D.* (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1994); *The Final Battle* (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995); *Planet Earth-2000 A.D.* Rev. Edn. (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1996); *Amazing Grace* (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1996); *Blood Moon* (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1996); *The Apocalypse Code* (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1997); *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter* (Beverley Hills, California, Western Front, 1998); *International Intelligence Briefing* (Palos Verdes, California, HLM), monthly journal.
[7]Lindsey's weekly radio programme is called '*Week in Review'* and is aired by several Christian radio stations. http://www.audiocentral.com/rshows/weekinview/default.html
[8]For more information see http://www.iib-report.com/
[9] http://www.iib-report.com/
[10]Lindsey, *Road*., p. 195. For other statistics see George Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1991) p. 77, and Michael Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, North Carolina Press, 1993), p. 311. See also Gary Friesen, 'A Return Visit,' *Moody Monthly* (May 1988), p. 30; Lindsey's latest publisher, Western Front, is more conservative referring to '*a dozen books with combined world sales of more than 35 million*.' Lindsey, *The Final Battle* (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995), p. xiii & back cover.

that Saddam Hussein would drag the world into total world war. Paul Van Duinen, an executive of Lindsey's publishers, commented, '*Often times we see during a crisis that people more actively turn toward God and things spiritual.*'[11]

Lindsey's popularity may be attributed to a combination of factors including his readable, journalistic style of writing, his imaginative, if dogmatic insistence that contemporary geo-political events are the fulfilment of biblical prophecy and, above all, his categorical repeated assertions that the end of the world is imminent.

What makes Lindsey's writings distinctive, however, is that like J. N. Darby[12] and C. I. Scofield[13], he confidently claims his interpretation of the Bible shows what will happen in the future.

> *Today, almost before I finish explaining a developing trend - it's already an accomplished fact.*[14]
>
> *This book describes in more detail and explicitness than any other just what will happen to humanity and to the Earth, not a thousand years from now, but in our lifetime-indeed in this very generation.*[15]
>
> *In this riveting non-fiction book, the father of modern-day Bible prophecy cracks the "Apocalypse Code" and deciphers long-hidden messages about man's future and the fate of the earth.*[16]
>
> *Hal will be your guide on a chilling tour of the world's future battlefields as the Great Tribulation, foretold more than two thousand years ago by Old and New Testament prophets, begins to unfold, You'll meet the world leaders who will bring man to the very edge of extinction and examine the causes of the current global situation - what it all means, what will shortly come to pass, and how it will all turn out.*[17]

Like Darby, Lindsey claims his novel interpretations to have been revealed directly and personally by God.

> *I believe that the Spirit of God gave me a special insight, not only into how John described what he actually experienced, but also into how this whole phenomenon encoded the prophecies so that they could be fully understood*

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[11]*National & International Religion Report* (22 October 1990), p. 1, cited in Gary Demar, *Last Days Madness*, *Obsession of the Modern Church* (Atlanta, Georgia, American Vision, 1997), p. 196.
[12]J. N. Darby, "Evidence from Scripture for the passing away of the present dispensations' *Collected Writings*., Prophetic I, Vol II. p. 108.
[13]C. I. Scofield, *What do the Prophets Say?* (Philadelphia, The Sunday School Times Co, 1918), pp. 18-19.
[14]Lindsey, *Planet*., Rev. Edn. p. 3
[15]Lindsey, *Final*., p. xiii
[16]Lindsey, *Apocalypse*., back cover.
[17]Lindsey, *Planet Earth The Final Chapter*, back cover.

only when their fulfillment drew near... I prayerfully sought for a confirmation for my apocalypse code theory...[18]

His popularity may also in part, however, have to do with his tendency to revise those predictions in the light of changing world events. So for example *The Final Battle* (1994) is essentially an unacknowledged revision of the '*Late Great Planet Earth'* (1970); *'Apocalypse Code'* (1997) is a revision of '*There's a New World Coming'* (1973); and *'Planet Earth 2000 A.D.'* (1994, & 1996) are both revisions of *'The 1980's Countdown to Armageddon'* (1980). *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter* (1998) is, the latest version in the '*Planet Earth'* series.

A good example of Lindsey's prophetic revisions concerns the future of the United States. In *Planet Earth 2000 A.D*. Lindsey specifically draws attention to a prophecy made in *The Late Great Planet Earth* as evidence of his prophetic accuracy. A comparison, however, shows that he has edited out the prediction of Communist subversion which did not occur.

The Late Great Planet Earth	Planet Earth 2000 A. D.
The United States will not hold its present position of leadership in the western world; financially, the future leader will be Western Europe. Internal political chaos caused by student rebellion and Communist subversion will begin to erode the economy of our nation. Lack of moral principle by citizens and leaders will so weaken law and order that a state of anarchy will finally result. The military capability of the United States, though it is at present the most powerful in the world, has already been neutralized because no one has the courage to use it decisively. When the economy collapses so will the military.[19]	*"The United States will not hold its present position of leadership in the western world," I wrote in The Late Great Planet Earth.* *"Lack of moral principle by citizens and leaders will so weaken law and order that a state of anarchy will finally result. The military capability of the United States, though it is at present the most powerful in the world, has already been neutralized because no one has the courage to use it decisively. When the economy collapses so will the military." Remember folks, these words were written in 1969, not the 1990's!*[20]

Without access to all Lindsey's books one would not necessarily be aware that he has adapted his material to fit the changing world since he rarely acknowledges his sources or uses footnotes. The Introduction to two of his books serves as a good example. Reading *Planet Earth 2000 A.D*. (1994), one is led to believe that this, and not *1980's Countdown to Armageddon* (1981), was the long awaited sequel to *The Late Great Planet Earth* (1970).

1980's Countdown to Armageddon	Planet Earth 2000 A. D.
Ever since The Late Great Planet Earth I have thought about writing another book on	*Meanwhile, for 25 years I resisted the mammoth undertaking of writing a book that*

[18]Lindsey, *Apocalypse.,* p. 37. Compare with Darby, *Collected Writings*., Prophetic I, Vol. II. pp. 6-7, 108.
[19]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 184.
[20]Lindsey, *Planet*., pp. 15-16.

how prophecy relates to current events.	*would go beyond where The Late Great Planet Earth left off, mostly because prophetically meaningful events were occurring so quickly, I wasn't sure how a book could do justice to the subject. Instead of focussing on writing prophecy books that might be out of date by the time they reached the stores, I devoted my attention to radio and television shows, video and audio tapes and a monthly news and prophecy journal.*
But only recently have I felt compelled to do so. So many of the things which have occurred during the past 10 years are so directly related to prophecy that I now sense an urgent, even desperate compulsion to bring readers up to date.	*Only now, as mankind approaches the third millennium, do I feel like the Holy Spirit has provided me with the proper perspective - the Big Picture, so to speak - on the mind blowing experiences of the modern world...*
The goal of this book is not merely to show which prophecies have been fulfilled since Late Great came out in 1970, however. Even more important, it is intended to analyze what will occur in the decade we have just entered...	*This book doesn't dwell on the past, it looks to the future. Because we are so close to the final, climactic stages of world history, it is considerably easier today for the student of Bible prophecy to see with some accuracy what's coming next...*
The decade of the 1980's could very well be the last decade of history as we know it.[21]	*I am certain... The Second Advent will occur in the next few years - probably in your lifetime.*[22]

With the decade of the 1980's coming to an end, and the Second Advent still some way off, Lindsey also needed to revise the title if it was to remain in print. Without acknowledging he had rewritten the book, Lindsey changed his publisher and implied that *Planet Earth 2000 A.D*. was actually the sequel to *The Late Great Planet Earth.* Ten years on, and with the new Millennium fast approaching, the date has been removed altogether from the title in the latest edition, *Planet Earth, the Final Chapter.*[23]

Lindsey also makes use of previously published material in his later books. Unattributed paragraphs and sentences from earlier works reappear with regularity. So for example, in two unrelated books, published just a year apart, the same sentences are repeated.

Planet Earth 2000 A.D. (1994)	**The Final Battle (1995)**
The greatest threat to freedom and world	*...the greatest threat to freedom and world*

[21]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 7.
[22]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 3.
[23]Hal Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (London, Lakeland, 1970); *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* (New York, Bantam, 1981); *Planet Earth-2000 A.D.* (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1994); *Earth-2000 A.D.* Rev. Edn. (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1996); *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter* (Beverley Hills, California, Western Front, 1998).

peace today - is Islamic fundamentalism... Tragically, the world's sole remaining superpower - the United States -has responded to this monumental threat by embarking on a suicidal, unilateral demilitarization process of unprecedented speed and recklessness. Like the Scriptures warn, the West is blithely saying 'Peace and safety'...[24]	*peace today - is Islamic fundamentalism... Tragically, the world's sole remaining superpower for the moment - the United States - has responded to this monumental threat by embarking on a suicidal demilitarization process of unprecedented proportions. Like the Scriptures warned, the West is blithely saying 'Peace and safety'...*[33]
As the Bible tells us, the dispute over Jerusalem and Israel's borders will never be settled by any peace agreements nor any whiz-bang diplomatic breakthrough.[25]	*As the Bible tells us, the dispute over Jerusalem and Israel's borders will never be settled by any peace agreements nor any whiz-bang diplomatic breakthrough.*[34]
Right now, as you read this, preparations are being made to rebuild the Third Temple.[26]	*Right now, as you read this, preparations are being made to rebuild the Third Temple...*[35]
Folks, the footsteps of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, can already be heard as He approaches the doors of heaven to return.[27]	*Truly, the footsteps of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, can already be heard as He approaches the doors of heaven to return.*[36]
'Land for Peace!' Is the cry heard 'round the world.[28]	*"Land for peace!" is the cry heard 'round the world.*[37]
...the Arab world has been successful at framing the debate over the Middle East as a struggle between downtrodden Palestinians and powerful, heavily armed Jews...[29]	*Because the Muslim nations have been successful at framing the debate over the Middle East as a struggle between downtrodden Palestinians and powerful, heavily armed Jews...*[38]
Heading up what will evolve into a 10-nation confederacy will be a man of such magnetism and power that he will become the greatest dictator the world has ever known...[30]	*And heading up this 10-nation confederacy will be a man of such magnetism and power that he will become the greatest dictator the world has ever known.*[39]
There is a potential dictator waiting in the wings somewhere in Europe who will make Adolf Hitler and Josef Stalin look like choir boys. Right now he is preparing to take his throne, inflaming his soul with visions of what he will be able to do for mankind with	*There is a potential dictator waiting in the wings somewhere in Europe who will make Adolf Hitler and Josef Stalin look like choir boys. Right now he is preparing to take his throne, inflaming his soul with visions of what he will be able to do for mankind with*

[24]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 171.
[25]Lindsey, *Planet.,* pp. 162, 164.
[26]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 156.
[27]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 160.
[28]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 149.
[29]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 310.
[30]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 232.

his grand schemes and revolutionary ideas.[31] *There will be no peace in the Middle East as long as the world entertains the Arab's fanciful visions of dividing and conquering Jerusalem.* *Peace would only be possible, if, by some miracle, the Arabs realized that their ambitions for military and economic hegemony over Israel were delusional. Don't hold your breath... the Arab world has been successful at framing the debate over the Middle East as a struggle between downtrodden Palestinians and powerful, heavily armed Jews...*[32]	*his grand schemes and revolutionary ideas.*[40] *There will be no peace in the Middle East as long as the world entertains the Arab's fanciful visions of dividing and conquering Jerusalem and driving all the Jews into the sea. Peace would only be possible, if, by some miracle, the Arabs realize that their ambitions for military and economic hegemony over Israel were delusional. But don't hold your breath... Because the Arab world has been successful at framing the debate over the Middle East as a struggle between downtrodden Palestinians and powerful, heavily armed Jews...*[41]

On one occasion in *The Final Battle* (1995), Lindsey even makes use of the same material in subsequent chapters.

Israel is facing world pressure like never before. Because the Muslim nations have been successful at framing the debate over the Middle East as a struggle between downtrodden Palestinians and powerful, heavily armed Jews. Israel is precipitously close to compromising its own security needs[42]	*Israel is facing* *cessful at fram* *Palestinians a* *ing its own se*

In criticising clergy for getting caught up in '*the save-the-earth gospel*,' Lindsey reveals something of his estimation of himself,

> *Don't get me wrong. No one can deny that the earth is facing grave ecological crises. There is probably no one in the church that has done more than me in calling this fact to the attention of millions.*[44]

There is no doubt that Lindsey has had a profound and lasting impact on the American as well as British Christian scene. Indeed, the popular influence Christian

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[33]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 5.
[34]Lindsey, *Final.,* p. 93.
[35]Lindsey, *Final.,* p. 103.
[36]Lindsey, *Final.,* p. 108.
[37]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 118.
[38]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 116.
[39]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 163.
[31]Lindsey, *Planet*., pp. 232, 235.
[32]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 310.
[40]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 165.
[41]Lindsey, *Final*., pp. 260-261.
[42]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 116.
[43]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 261. In his last book, *Planet Earth, The Final Chapter*, the page numbers in the index do not correspond to the chapters in the book.
[44]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 32.

Zionists such as Lindsey have had, even in American political circles, is highlighted by Don Wagner who claims that as long ago as 1980,

> *The election of Ronald Reagan ushered in not only the most pro-Israel administration in history but gave several Christian Zionists prominent political posts... Once the Reagan Administration opened the door, leading Evangelical Christian Zionist televangelists and writers were given direct access to the President and cabinet members. Rev. Jerry Falwell, Christian Zionist televangelist Mike Evans and author Hal Lindsey among them.*[45]

'*White House Seminars*' became a regular feature of Reagan's administration bringing Lindsey into direct personal contact with national and Congressional leaders. Lindsey subsequently became a consultant on Middle Eastern affairs not only to the Pentagon but also to the Israeli Government.[46]

2. Lindsey's Literalist Dispensational Hermeneutic

Like other dispensationalists, Lindsey holds dogmatically to a literalist approach to biblical hermeneutics. He attributes the development of erroneous views concerning Israel to an allegorical, non-literal hermeneutic which he alleges was popularised by Origen.

> *The man most responsible for changing the way the Church interpreted prophecy is Origen... [He] powerfully introduced, taught and spread the allegorical method of interpreting the Scriptures, particularly in the area of prophecy. From this seemingly harmless fact of Church history evolved a system of prophetic interpretation that created the atmosphere in which 'Christian' anti-Semitism took root and spread. Using this method of prophetic interpretation, Church theologians began to develop the idea that the Israelites had permanently forfeited all their covenants by rejecting Jesus as the Messiah.*[47]

As has been shown in an earlier chapter, it was the consistent approach of the Post-Apostolic Fathers to interpret the Hebrew Scriptures typologically as the Apostles had done before them.[48] In his commitment to literalism, Lindsey does not appear to distinguish between figurative or typological approaches acknowledged by covenantal theologians from the allegorical methods of interpretation seen typically in pre-Reformation Roman Catholicism.[49] The distinction between these two methods of interpretation are significant since the former places particular emphasis on the historical context of passages as well as the way scripture interprets scripture. An allegorical approach finds eternal truths in the Bible without reference to their historical setting. A typological approach highlights the way New Testament writers see

[45]Wagner, *Beyond*., p. 5.
[46]Wagner, *Beyond.*, p. 4.
[47]Hal Lindsey, *The Road to Holocaust* (New York, Bantam, 1989), pp. 7-8.
[48]Chapter 2. Early Christian Attitudes Towards the Jews.
[49]J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrine*, rev. ed. (San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1978), pp. 69-75.

Jesus Christ to be the fulfilment of many Old Testament images and types.[50] There is good evidence that a typological interpretation of the Old Testament was consistently followed by the Church from the 1st Century, and did not arise with Origen as Lindsey alleges.

> *Origen defended the historical sense of Scripture, tried to reconcile the historical and allegorical senses, attempted to interpret Scripture with Scripture, and was respectful of the church's tradition.*[51]

Ironically, Lindsey admits to interpreting passages symbolically rather than literally on occasions. In explaining his hermenutical approach to the Book of Revelation, Lindsey makes the following assumptions,

> *How could this first-century man describe the scientific wonders of the latter twentieth century? He had to illustrate them with phenomena of the first century; for instance, a thermonuclear war looked to him like a giant volcanic eruption spewing fire and brimstone... Much of the symbolism John used was the result of a first century man being catapulted in God's time machine up to the end of the twentieth century, then returned to his own time and commanded to write what he had seen and heard. The only way that John could obey that instruction was to use phenomena with which he was familiar to illustrate the scientific and technical marvels that he predicts.*[52]

> *Some writers have chosen to interpret each symbol quite literally. For example, a locust with the face of a man, the teeth of a lion, a breastplate of iron, a tail than can sting, and wings that make the sound of many chariots would have to be specially created by God to look just like that description. I personally tend to think that God might utilize in his judgments some modern devices of man which the Apostle John was at a loss for words to describe nineteen centuries ago! In the case just mentioned, the locusts might symbolize an advanced kind of helicopter. This is just one example of the fast-moving, contemporary, and often deductive manner in which I have chosen to approach the Book of Revelation. I realize I'll be accused by some of making wild speculations...*[53]

In *Apocalypse Code* (1997), essentially an unattributed revision of *There's a New World Coming* (1973), Lindsey's speculations become more dogmatic and categorical, and so phrases such as "might symbolize" become "actually saw."

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[50]Gary DeMar and Peter J. Leithart, *The Legacy of Hatred Continues: A response to Hal Lindsey's The Road to Holocaust* (Tyler, Texas, Institute for Christian Economics, 1989), p. 34. See also E. A. Martens, *Plot and Purpose in the Old Testament.* (Leicester, IVP, 1981); Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom, A Christian Interpretation of the Old Testament*, (Exeter, Paternoster, 1981); *According to Plan, The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible*, (Leicester, IVP, 1991).

[51]DeMar and Leithart, *Legacy.,* p. 37.

[52]Lindsey, *Israel*., pp. 32-33. This chapter is reused heavily in *Apocalypse Code*, pp. 30-44.

[53]Lindsey, *There's.,* p. 8. The idea that the locusts mentioned in Revelation 9 are Cobra helicopters is raised again on page 141.

Just exactly how could a first century prophet describe, much less understand, the incredible advances in science and technology that exist at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries? Yet he testified and God bore witness that he actually saw and heard things like:

•supersonic jet aircraft with missiles...
•advanced attack helicopters
•modern main battle tanks
•intercontinental ballistic missiles with Multiple Independently Targeted Reentry Vehicles tipped with thermonuclear warheads (ICBM's that are MIRVed).
•battlefield artillery and missiles with neutron-nuclear warheads
•biological and chemical weapons
•aircraft carriers, missile cruisers, nuclear submarines
•laser weapons
•space stations and satellites
•the new super secret HAARP weapon system (High-frequency Active Auroral Research Program)[54]

So, using Lindsey's 'Bible Code', John's '*locusts*' become helicopters, *'horses prepared for battle'* are heavily armed attack helicopters, *'crowns of gold'* are the helmets worn by pilots, and the *'sound of their wings'* are the *'thunderous sound of many attack helicopters flying overhead."*[55] Just as imaginatively, the '*bow'* wielded by the Antichrist in Revelation 6:1-2, is apparently, "*...a code for long range weapons like ICBM's*."[56] The reference to the "*colour of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone"* in Revelation 9:17 becomes the "*Chinese national flag", "emblazoned on the military vehicles*."[57] Lindsey applies the same hermeneutical technique to Zechariah 14:12.

This is exactly the way a neutron bomb works. A soldier is hit by a burst of radiation that leaves only a skeleton within a nanosecond. How could Zechariah have known such a thing 2500 years ago? Once again, the Apocalypse code unlocks the meaning of something not understood for centuries, because the technology for such things did not exist until now.[58]

Like Darby and Scofield before him, Lindsey also understands references to ancient tribes and nations mentioned in Old Testament prophecies as meaning contemporary peoples and countries in the Middle East.[59]

In Psalm 83, some 3,000 years ago, God gave a warning of what would happen in the last days... In these verses the Philistia or Philistines are the modern Palestinians. Tyre is modern Lebanon. Assyria is modern Syria.[60]

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[54]Lindsey, *Apocalypse*., p. 36.
[55]Lindsey, *Apocalypse*., p. 42.
[56]Lindsey, *Apocalypse*., p. 72.
[57]Lindsey, *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter*, p. 247.
[58]Lindsey, *Apocalypse*., pp. 110-111.
[59]J. N. Darby, 'The Hopes.,' *The Collected Writings*, Prophetic I, Vol. II, p. 380; C. I. Scofield, *Scofield Reference Bible*, fn. 1, p. 883.
[60]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 2.

Ezekiel 38 also talks about a confederacy of powers - including Russia and Germany - coming against Israel... Ezekiel Chapter 38, verse 8 describes modern-day Israel, after the Jews have returned from many nations and "are living securely."[61]

I know from my study of the Bible that the final great war includes Turkey as part of the Islamic grouping allied with Russia.[62]

The great nations that do get Biblical reference are the Kings of the East, (China, India, Pakistan - all openly nuclear), Russia (Gog and Magog), Libya, Egypt, Iran, Iraq and so on.[63]

In his prophecy of the Gog-Magog War, Ezekiel listed the major allies of Russia in its end-time invasion of Israel. First on the list is Persia, or modern Iran.[64]

On occasions, Lindsey is breathtakingly comprehensive in what he claims is foretold concerning this generation in the Bible,

The Bible predicted moral collapse in the last days. It predicted the rise of Muslim fundamentalism, the collapse of Russia... The Bible predicted the collapse of the Israeli peace process, the controversy over Jerusalem, and even the development of the European community. The Bible said all these things would begin at approximately the same point in history, and would develop along parallel lines.[65]

Referring to the decision of Yasser Arafat and the Palestine Authority to declare the State of Palestine on 4th May 1999, Lindsey even claims,

The Bible laid out the scenario we see unfolding twenty five hundred years ago... A Muslim-Russian alliance will continue to develop, ultimately forming an invasion force that will move against Israel... The Bible names the main players for the last days. Israel, Europe, Russia and the Arab nations form the core of the end times' scenario. The same scenario we see developing before our very eyes, in this, the last year of the sixth millennium of man.[66]

On other occasions, for example, with reference to Exodus 9:9, Lindsey is content to acknowledge, "*Egypt is often used as a metaphor in the Bible for the "world" as opposed to the Church*."[67] It is not clear, however, when the term should be taken literally or as a metaphor.

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[61]Lindsey, *Final*., pp. 140, 142.
[62]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 183.
[63]Lindsey, *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter*, p. 213.
[64]Lindsey, *International Intelligence Briefing*, 14th January 1999.
[65]Lindsey, *International Intelligence Briefing*, 7th January 1999.
[66]Lindsey, *International Intelligence Briefing*, 7th January 1999.
[67]Lindsey, *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter*, p. 255.

To assist his readers in their understanding of otherwise obscure passages of Scripture, Lindsey also has the tendency to add words to biblical texts which are not there in the original. So, in *The Road to Holocaust*, for example, where Lindsey is anxious to stress how the promises made in Romans 11 apply to the State of Israel and not merely to Jews generally, Lindsey 'interprets' this passage dispensationally adding the word '*national'* to the text.

> *The whole point of this passage revolves around Israel's being restored to a position of preeminence as a believing nation. This could not be true if those who are converted in the future are made part of the Church, since the national distinction would be lost... The exact meaning of the future 'riches of the world' and of the 'fullness for national Israel' is of utmost importance*.[68]

In a quotation of Matthew 24:15-18, Lindsey adds a reference to the rebuilding of the temple, necessary for this prophecy to refer to some future date,

> *Therefore when you see the Abomination which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place [of the rebuilt temple] (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains...*[69]

Lindsey's interpretation of Daniel 11:40-45 is similarly colourful,

> *This will be the sign that immediately precedes the Russian-led Islamic invasion of Israel... "At the time of the end the King of the South [the Muslim Confederacy] will engage him [the False Prophet of Israel] in battle, and the King of the North [Russia] will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He [the Russian Commander] will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. He will also invade the Beautiful Land [Israel]. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon [Jordan] will be delivered from his hand...*[70]

Likewise, in quoting Ezekiel 38:15-16, Lindsey adds the word '*Russia*' to reinforce his interpretation.

> *And you (Russia) will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you...*[71]

His preoccupation with reading the Soviet Union into Old Testament prophecies leads to some novel definitions of chronology and time. In commenting on Isaiah 10:25, for example, Lindsey insists,

> *Carefully note also that right after the LORD predicts the restoration of the remnant of Israel and the destruction of the Assyrian enemy (which must be applied to a yet future enemy), He says, 'VERY SOON my anger against you will end and my wrath will be directed to their [Israel's enemies] destruction'*

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[68]Lindsey, *Road*., p. 176.
[69]Lindsey, *Apocalypse*., p. 78.
[70]Lindsey, *Planet Earth, The Final Chapter*, pp. 182-183.
[71]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 65.

(Isaiah 10:25) What the LORD called 'Very soon' has already been some 2700 years.[72]

Lindsey's rather unusual understanding of time also extends to his view of prophecy.

3. Lindsey's Unconventional View of Prophecy

Integral to his literalist hermeneutic, Lindsey has largely been responsible for popularising a rather controversial approach to eschatology. In his first work, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, Lindsey surveys the apparent revival in interest in astrology, spiritualism and clairvoyancy. He then asserts,

> *However, compared to the speculation of most that is called prophetic today, the Bible contains clear and unmistakable prophetic signs. We are able to see right now in this Best Seller predictions made centuries ago being fulfilled before our eyes. The Bible makes fantastic claims; but these claims are no more startling that those of present day astrologers, prophets and seers. Furthermore, the claims of the Bible have a greater basis in historical evidence and fact.*[73]

In his third book, *There's A New World Coming: A Prophetic Odyssey*, published three years later in 1973, Lindsey continues to take a comparative approach to prophecy, likening the claims of the Old Testament prophets to those of the druids of Stonehenge.

> *Through these stones, 4000 years ago, priests could site the sun, moon and stars and predict with exact accuracy the seasons, sun risings and eclipses of the sun and moon... There have been many, throughout the centuries of man's long history, who have sought to predict the course of human events, but none have had the incredible accuracy of the ancient Hebrew prophets.*[74]

In 1994, looking back at the popularity of *The Late Great Planet Earth,* Lindsey challenged his critics,

> *Not surprisingly, then, I'll confidently hold up my track record against that of any modern-day astrological charlatan or New Age clairvoyant.*[75]

Lindsey appears therefore to believe that predictive accuracy is the hallmark of divinely inspired prophecy. In taking a comparative approach to prophecy he has been criticised for blurring the distinction between biblical and occult sources.[76] Ironically, the last chapter of *The Late Great Planet Earth* is entitled, '*Polishing the Crys-*

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[72]Lindsey, *Road.,* pp. 143-144.
[73]Lindsey, *Late.,* pp. 17-18.
[74]Lindsey, *There's.,* Back page.
[75]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 4.
[76]C. Van der Waal, *Hal Lindsey and Biblical Prophecy* (Neerlandia, Alberta, Canada, Inheritance Publications, 1991), p. 51.

tal Ball,'[77] while a paragraph heading in *There's a New World Coming*, describing the Book of Revelation, is entitled, '*John's Chain of ESP'*.[78]

Lindsey makes a second questionable assumption regarding prophecy. He assumes that biblical prophecy is essentially futuristic and predictive, that is, the foretelling of the future, and the future of the State of Israel, in particular.

> *The center of the entire prophetic forecast is the State of Israel. Certain events in that nation's recent history prove the accuracy of the prophets. They also force us to accept the fact that the 'countdown' has begun.*[79]

> *The information in the book you're about to read is more up-to-date than tomorrow's newspaper... I think you will be surprised to see what kind of predictions were made almost two thousand years ago!*[80]

> *...it is intended to analyze what will occur in the decade we have just entered.*[81]

> *The world is spinning out of control - or so it seems. But, as you will discover, everything is in order. God told us these things would happen - in advance...*[82]

> *These weapons are so new, so secret, and so deadly that few people outside of military circles even know such weapons exist. But God knew, and he told Zechariah all about them when he was given details of another, upcoming battle for Jerusalem.*[83]

> *We have the assurance of knowing the only way to predict an event is to be in control of it. Bible prophecy proves everything is under control, and on schedule.*[84]

Following Darby, Lindsey believes '*prophecy is prewritten history'*.[85] In so doing he detaches predictions concerning the future from the covenantal context within which the prophecies were given. Lindsey's view is at variance with the Hebrew prophets who consistently stress that their intention is to call God's people back to the terms of their covenant relationship. Their role was not primarily to reveal arbitrary and otherwise hidden facts about predestined future events.

> *The prophet speaks the Word of God. He appeals to his people to be true to Yahweh, the God of the covenant... He comes to his people with a threat or*

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[77]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 180. See also Demar, *Last.,* p. 197.
[78]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 12.
[79]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 11.
[80]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 7.
[81]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 7.
[82]Lindsey, Planet., Rev. Edn. p. 2.
[83]Lindsey, *Planet Earth, The Final Chapter*, p. 227.
[84]Lindsey, *Briefing.,* 7th January 1999.
[85]C. Van der Waal, *Hal Lindsey and Biblical Prophecy* (Neerlandia, Alberta, Canada, Inheritance Publications, 1991), p. 51.

with words of comfort. Insofar as his message touches on the future... His message is conditional; it is tied in with God's promises, on the one hand, and his threats, on the other.[86]

Authentic biblical prophecy was always conditional rather than fatalistic and given within the context of the covenant between God and his chosen people. It was the false prophets who flattered the people with promises of peace and prosperity without specifying the covenantal preconditions of repentance and faith.

The true prophets were not concerned with authenticating their prophecies by presenting predictions that came true. In fact, some of the predictions didn't come true at all. When Micah prophesied that Jerusalem would be plowed as a field and turn into a heap of ruins, his words led to repentance under King Hezekiah. As a result, the Lord held back his judgment He had in mind (Mic. 3:12; Jer. 26:17-19).[87]

Since Lindsey, like other Dispensationalists, believes God gave the Middle East to Abraham's Jewish descendants as an unconditional and everlasting possession, he ignores the conditional nature of the covenant relationship. Instead, he understands the prophets to be predicting predetermined events thousands of years later, giving an '*exciting view*'[88] of human destiny.

Three millenniums of history are strewn with evidence of their prophetic marksmanship and to ignore their incredible predictions of man's destiny and the events which are soon to affect this planet will be perhaps the greatest folly of this generation.[89]

Hal Lindsey claims to have uncovered prophetic puzzles throughout the Bible. Hidden away within these enigmas are specific predictions concerning the present and imminent future. In the wake of the '*Bible Code'* debate, Lindsey rewrote *There's a New World Coming*, renaming it *Apocalypse Code* claiming to have deciphered, '*long-hidden messages about man's future and the fate of the earth.*'[90]

To do so Lindsey performs '*acrobatic stunts'*,[91] twisting biblical texts to fit his future scenario, propounding what some critics regard as a '*new form of Christian Gnosticism,*'[92] since only those who read his books will be able to understand them.

Perhaps we could speak of a post-Rapture complex in Lindsey's hermeneutics. As a result of this complex, all sorts of ancient prophecies about nations that have disappeared must be modernized, right down to the weaponry used in warfare... In his books, Hal Lindsey uses Biblical prophecy to open a su-

[86]Van der Waal, *Hal.,* p. 51.
[87]Van der Waal, *Hal.,* p. 52, 53.
[88]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 18.
[89]Lindsey, *Late.,* back cover.
[90]Lindsey, *Apocalypse.,* back cover.
[91]Van der Waal, *Hal.,* p. 54.
[92]Van der Waal, *Hal.,* p. 55.

permarket in which he sells the curious inside information about the near future, especially World War III.[93]

Responding to criticism that he did not foresee the collapse of Soviet Communism, Lindsey carefully denies that he himself ever claimed to a prophet.[94] He does, however, confess to making '*a series of predictions*'[95] and is happy to quote others who believe he is a prophet. For example, Lindsey allows his publishers to use the accolade of *Time* magazine that he is "*The Jeremiah for this generation*."[96]

Reviewing the prophecies made in *The Late Great Planet Earth*, 25 years later, Lindsey lists 23 of these predictions and then asks the rhetorical question, '*Did I miss any?*'[97] These somewhat generalised predictions apparently included:

- Jerusalem would become the focal point of world concern as Muslims and Israelis would begin to fight in earnest over who owns it.
- We would see movement toward the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem in Jerusalem by the Jews.
- The Middle East would become a constant source of tension in the world.
- Israel would become more prosperous.
- The Muslim-Israeli conflict would become a constant world threatening crisis. The U.S. would begin to lose its pre-eminent leadership position in the world.
- Europe would begin emerging as the most powerful economiuc force in the world.
- We would see Europe move toward unification.
- The Communist takeover of the world would be stopped abruptly.
- The political power and influence of the pope would increase.
- People all over the world would be looking and yearning for a leader to bring them together.

Lindsey does not, however, footnote where these predictions were made in *The Late Great Planet Earth.* The back cover of *The Final Battle* (1995), which is an amplified and significantly more politicised revision of *The Late Great Planet Earth*, says,

You couldn't get a better picture of what World War III will be like without being bodily transported into the future. Hal Lindsey has done it again! [98]

4. The Distinctive Apocalyptic Zionism of Hal Lindsey

The titles of Lindsey's books show an increasingly exaggerated and almost pathological preoccupation with the apocalyptic.[99] His books are replete with dogmatic and categorical assertions of the imminent destruction of the world.

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[93]Van der Waal, *Hal.,* p. 53.
[94]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 191.
[95]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 4.
[96]Lindsey, *Planet*., back cover; *Final*., back cover;
[97]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 5.
[98]Lindsey, *Final*., back cover.

We are the generation the prophets were talking about. We have witnessed biblical prophecies come true. The birth of Israel. The decline in American power and morality. The rise of Russian and Chinese might. The threat of war in the Middle East. The increase of earthquakes, volcanoes, famine and drought. The Bible foretells the signs that precede Armageddon... We are the generation that will see the end times... and the return of Jesus.[100]

Lindsey has been described as, '*a long haired reincarnation of Scofield*.'[101] This may be because of the similarities between the pessimistic pronouncements of both authors.

Cyrus Scofield (1918)	Hal Lindsey (1970)
So far as the prophetic Word has spoken there is not the least warrant for the expectation that the nations engaged in the present gigantic struggle will or can make a permanent peace. *It is fondly dreamed that out of all the suffering and carnage and destruction of this war will be born such a hatred of war as will bring to pass a federation of the nations-The United States of the World-in which will exist but one army, and that an international peace, rather than an army... For that Word certainly points to a federated world-empire in the end-time of the age...* *It is, of course, possible, nay, probable that some temporary truce may end, or suspend for a time, the present world-war, for ten kingdoms will exist at the end-time in the territory once ruled over by Rome.*[102]	*In spite of the vain striving of man, of the bold and infamous conquerors throughout the ages who failed in their human attempts, we are beginning to see the Ancient Roman Empire draw together, just as predicted... We believe that the Common Market and the trend toward unification in Europe may well be the beginning of the ten-nation confederacy predicted by Daniel and the Book of Revelation... In spite of those who propose the alternatives to the United States of Europe, and the temporary setbacks it appears to have, it seems that the trend is ever onward... At about 1980 we may fully expect the great fusion of all economic, military, and political communities into the United States of Europe... Imagine that. A "ten-nation economic entity." Is it any wonder that men who have studied prophecy for many years believe that the basic beginning of the unification of Europe has begun?*[103]

[99]Hal Lindsey, *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* (New York, Bantam, 1981); *Israel and the Last Days* (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1983); *The Road to Holocaust* (New York, Bantam, 1989); *The Final Battle* (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995); *Planet Earth-2000, Will Man Survive?* Rev. Edn. (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1996); *The Apocalypse Code* (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1997).
[100]Lindsey, *1980's.,* back cover.
[101]Van der Waal, *Hal.,* p. 48.
[102]C. I. Scofield, *What Do The Prophets Say?* (Philadelphia, The Sunday School Times Co., 1918), pp. 18-19. Cited in Canfield, *Incredible*., pp. 274-275.
[103]Lindsey, *Late.,* pp. 96-97.

Lindsey's book, *The Final Battle*, is a good example of “Armageddon Theology”. It includes this statement on the cover,

> *Never before, in one book, has there been such a complete and detailed look at the events leading up to 'The Battle of Armageddon*.'"[104]

Lindsey asserts that the world is degenerating and that the forces of evil manifest in godless Communism and militant Islam are the real enemies of Israel. An apocalyptic scenario is predicted, centred upon a great battle at Megiddo between massive continental armies that will attempt but fail to destroy Israel.

Based on his interpretation of Ezekiel 38 & 39, and selective quotations from speculative 19th Century commentators, Lindsey insists the references to Gog, Rosh and Tubal reveal that the chief enemy of Israel in the final days will be Russia.

> *You need only to take a globe to verify this exact geographical fix. There is only one nation to the ‘uttermost north’ of Israel - the U.S.S.R... General Dyan’s statement that ‘The next war will not be with the Arabs but with the Russians’ has a considerably deeper significance, doesn’t it? Just think for a moment how incredible a thing we are considering here. How could Ezekiel 2600 years ago have forecast so accurately the rise of Russia to its current military might and its direct and obvious designs upon the Middle East, not to mention that fact that it is now an implacable enemy of the new state of Israel? How could men like Chamberlain and Cummings, for that matter, one hundred years ago have so clearly seen the rise of Russia to its present world-threatening position? The answer is again, it seems to this writer, obvious, Ezekiel once again passes ‘the test of a prophet’.*[105]

Lindsey offers detailed illustrated plans showing future military movements of armies and naval convoys, including the American 6th Fleet, leading up to the battle of Armageddon.[106] He claims these cataclysmic events indicate the imminent return of Jesus Christ as King of the Jews who will rule the world from the rebuilt Jewish temple on the site of the destroyed Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.[107]

Lindsey believes that the great battle of Armageddon is imminent and unavoidable. His motive for writing is to shock people into believing in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Only then can they be raptured to heaven and avoid suffering in the coming global holocaust. Like a sinking ship, Lindsey portrays a world in which there is no hope or purpose, other than trying to get off as quickly as possible. There is therefore no point in trying to care for the world or getting involved in charitable or humanitarian work. Every human tragedy, be it earthquake, hurricane or war merely adds to the mounting evidence and proves his contention that the end of the world is nigh.

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[104]Lindsey, *Final*., front cover.
[105]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 66.
[106]Lindsey, *Late.*, pp. 155, 159.
[107]Lindsey, *Israel.*, pp. 31-48.

You won't find another book quite like this one. We will examine why and how the world is hurtling toward disaster... My background as a student of prophecy allows me to place all this information in perspective in a way that is sure to lead many people to the ultimate truth about the coming global holocaust - and, if they are open, to a wonderful way of escaping it. Read this book. Learn from it. Pass it on to your friends. It may be the last chance some of them will ever have to avoid the horrible fate this book describes.[108]

According to Lindsey, the key to deliverance from Armageddon is bound up with God's purposes for, and our attitude toward, the Jews.

4.1 The Jews of the Bible and the Modern State of Israel

Lindsey's empathy for the Jews is highlighted in his emotive description of a visit he made to the Western Wall.

The wall is a symbol of the unity of the Jews as a race and of their ancient ties to God. Even battle-hardened soldiers wept when they first approached the wall. I stood by many a Jew when he first touched the wall, and all have felt that at last they had come home. So did I.[109]

He also claims to have been motivated by concern for the Jews in writing his first book,

In writing The Late Great Planet Earth, I had the Jews constantly in mind. I prayerfully and deliberately sought to present my prophetic case in such a way that it would especially appeal to them. It has been published in more than fifty foreign editions and has been instrumental all around the world in bringing tens of thousands of Jews to faith in Jesus as their Messiah. I run into them everywhere. They continue to write to me from virtually every part of the world. The first Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben Gurion, was reading it shortly before he died. Since everything in his room has been kept the way it was before he died, a copy of The Late Great Planet Earth remains on his desk. A friend of mine who is one of Israel's top military commanders passed out hundreds of copies of the Hebrew translation to the Israeli Defence forces, even though he personally hasn't as yet believed in Jesus as the Messiah.[110]

Lindsey's sympathies clearly lie with the State of Israel rather than with her Arab neighbours, the Palestinians, or even with the ancient indigenous Christian community of Israel and the Occupied Territories. Under a heading '*Why the Bias?'* Lindsey insists,

Because Israel is a pro-Western, democratic nation committed to the ideals of free speech and press, there is good access for journalists... And because Israel is a staunch U.S. Ally, it is always under the microscope... This kind of distortion and bias has placed Israel center stage in the court of world opinion

[108]Lindsey, *Final*., p. xxi.
[109]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 41.
[110]Lindsey, *Road*., p. 195.

and helped to make the Jewish state something of a pariah nation. Funny, how that's just what the Bible predicted for Israel in the last days.[111]

Lamenting the isolation the United States experiences in the United Nations when vetoing repeated censure motions against Israel, Lindsey points out,

Up to the time of the 1991 Madrid Conference, the Arabs were 'called upon' to 'comply,' 'desist,' 'refrain' etc. four times. Israel was 'demanded,' ordered,' etc. to do General Assembly bidding three hundred and five times. The UN voted six hundred and five resolutions between its inception and the Gulf War. Four hundred and twenty nine of those resolutions, or, sixty-two percent of the total of the UN's resolutions were against Israel or its interests.[112]

Israeli society is far from homogeneous politically. While the majority of secular Jews favour a negotiated settlement with the Palestinians, Lindsey identifies with the fundamentalist settlers and political far right.[113]

...it was a pity that Israel chose to recognize, negotiate and compromise with sworn enemy and terrorist Yasser Arafat... It was a risky tactic - one fraught with danger not only for the Jewish state but for the entire world. The stage is now set for the kind of explosive developments students of Bible prophecy have long anticipated. What the Israelis have actually done by establishing autonomous Arab states in Jericho and Gaza is to create the kind of bridgehead in Israel that Arafat has, until now, only dreamed about.[114]

Lindsey's preoccupation with Israel is largely due to his dispensational presuppositions which distinguish Israel from the Church in the present and future purposes of God, although the origins of this theological position are never discussed, nor attributed in any of his writings apart from three pages in his latest book.[115] Like other dispensationalists, Lindsey insists that the promises of blessing and protection made to Abraham are unconditional and eternal and that it is specifically the State of Israel rather than merely people of Jewish descent who are the beneficiaries today.

There has been much infidelity in Jewish history, and their present worldwide dispersion and persecution have been their divine discipline. However, God made unconditional promises of eternal blessings to the Jewish patriarchs and will someday restore the Jews to a position of special favour with Himself... God has promised never to abandon His chosen people, no matter how despicably they treat Him (Romans 11:1,2). The divine hand of protection of

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[111]Lindsey, *Planet.,* pp. 142-143.
[112]Hal Lindsey, *International Intelligence Briefing*, 29th October 1998. His underlining.http://www.iib-report.com/pages/transcripts/10.29.98/oct29.htm
[113]Lindsey, *Briefing*, 8th August 1998 & 7th January 1999. Lindsey favourably quotes from a statement by Arutz 7, a renegade Jewish settler radio station broadcasting off the Israeli coast and from the International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem, an extreme Christian Zionist organisation.
[114]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 182.
[115]Lindsey, Planet Earth, The Final Chapter. pp.32-34.

the Jews during their recent Six-Day War was just a token of that protective care.[116]

...God clearly reveals that the tree into which we Gentiles have been grafted contrary to nature is still the Jew's own olive tree. The simple meaning of this is that the covenants are still valid to the physical race of Israel. Their fulfilment only awaits that predicted time when God will bring them back to faith again.[117]

Rather than apply these ancient promises to the Jewish people generally, Lindsey quite specifically, and increasingly more explicitly, applies them to the State of Israel and Israeli citizens.

The God of Israel has sworn in the prophecies that He will not forsake the Israelis, nor let them be destroyed.[118]

To Israel as a nation were made unique promises... All other nations received blessings only through Israel. They were the only nation that was promised a specific plot of land, a city, and a kingdom on an earth from which the original curse would be removed.[119]

Unless one goes off into allegorical la-la land, these prophecies literally demand a National restoration of Israel as a distinct and unique believing Nation in the future kingdom.[120]

To reinforce the link with the Jews of the Old Testament, in his later books, Lindsey increasingly refers to Israeli citizens as '*Israelites*'[121] as well, the land as *'Judea and Samaria'*[122]

One of Lindsey's strongest critics is David Chilton. With regard to the promise in Romans 11 that many Jews would recognise Jesus as their Messiah, Chilton insists,

The Bible promises the restoration of Israel as a people, but not necessarily as a State; nothing requires that the two must go together. Even assuming, that there is still a State of Israel when the Jews are converted, Israel would simply be one Christian nation among many, with no special standing. The people of genetic Israel will be part of the covenantal tree of life, but there is no longer any religious significance belonging to Palestine.[123]

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[116]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 115
[117]Lindsey, *Road*., p. 197.
[118]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 45.
[119]Lindsey, *Road*., p. 127.
[120]Lindsey, *Road*., p. 208.
[121]Lindsey, *Road.,* pp. 7-8; *Final*., pp. 231, 255-7.
[122]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 122.
[123]Lindsey, *Road*., p. 208.

To even classical dispensationalists, such as Schuyler English, who revised the *Scofield Reference Bible* in 1967, Israel as a State has no prophetic significance during the 'church age' until after the so-called 'rapture'.

> *An intercalary period of history, after Christ's death and resurrection and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 has intervened. This is the present age. During this time God has not been dealing with Israel nationally, for they have been blinded concerning God's mercy in Christ... However, God will again deal with Israel as a nation. This will be in Daniel's seventieth week, a seven-year period yet to come.*[124]

Daniel 9:24-27 states,

> *"Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.*
> *25"Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.*
> *26After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.*
> *27He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."*

Lindsey believes,

> *...this amazing prediction of the future events of Israel's career sets forth a divinely ordained time period of 'seventy weeks' of years (490 years) in which God would, in specific ways, deal with the sin of the nation, bring in everlasting righteousness, and send the Messiah to the world. This allotted time period was like a great divine 'time-clock'... Countdown began clicking off April, 444 B.C.E... Then Daniel predicted a strange thing. He said that after sixty-nine weeks of years (483 years) had clicked off on this allotment of time, the Messiah of Israel would be revealed to the Jews and then killed, and the city of Jerusalem and their Temple would be destroyed and their 490 year special time allotment would be temporarily cut short by 7 years...*
> *Jesus himself had thoroughly studied this prophecy of Daniel and related its meaning to his disciples... Then he added something which Daniel hadn't predicted, but Moses had: '...Jerusalem would be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled' (Luke 21:23, 24)... For nearly two thousand years now, this prophecy has been a horrible reality in the life of God's chosen people... Even though Israel is now partially back in her ancient homeland, she isn't at peace with the world around her...*

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[124]E. Schuyler English, *A Companion to the New Scofield Reference Bible* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 135.

We have one thing to give substance to our hope for Israel. We know that God will never break a promise and He still owes Israel seven years of her allotted 490 years in which to bring about righteousness in her land and purge her people of sin. Then God's Messiah will come again to Israel and give to those of His chosen people and the world who receive Him, the Kingdom of God which He promised so long ago.[125]

Lindsey does not explain how he fits the nearly 1878 year gap between 70 A.D. and 1948 into Daniel 9:24-27. The seven years he claims is still 'allotted' to Israel during which they will be 'purged' is actually a euphemism for the 'tribulation' in which Lindsey believes many Israelis will suffer and die in the nuclear war of Armageddon. In order to strengthen his argument that the prophets predicted the restoration of Israel in 1948, Lindsey believes that Moses predicted two separate destructions of Israel in Deuteronomy 28:49-52 and 28:62-66. The passages actually state,

The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the ends of the earth, like an eagle swooping down, a nation whose language you will not understand, 50a fierce-looking nation without respect for the old or pity for the young. 51They will devour the young of your livestock and the crops of your land until you are destroyed. They will leave you no grain, new wine or oil, nor any calves of your herds or lambs of your flocks until you are ruined. 52They will lay siege to all the cities throughout your land until the high fortified walls in which you trust fall down. They will besiege all the cities throughout the land the LORD your God is giving you. (Deut. 28:49-52)

You who were as numerous as the stars in the sky will be left but few in number, because you did not obey the LORD your God. 63Just as it pleased the LORD to make you prosper and increase in number, so it will please him to ruin and destroy you. You will be uprooted from the land you are entering to possess.
64Then the LORD will scatter you among all nations, from one end of the earth to the other. There you will worship other gods--gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known. 65Among those nations you will find no repose, no resting place for the sole of your foot. There the LORD will give you an anxious mind, eyes weary with longing, and a despairing heart. 66You will live in constant suspense, filled with dread both night and day, never sure of your life. (Deut. 28:62-66)

Lindsey claims these verses teach that,

Just before the Hebrews conquered the Promised Land, Moses predicted that Israel would twice be destroyed as a nation and twice be driven out of the land because of persistent unbelief. He also predicted that the first destruction and dispersion would come by the hand of one mighty nation. He specifically predicted that in this dispersion the Israelites would be taken captive into this one invading nation (Deuteronomy 28:49-57). This prophecy was fulfilled when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C. And took the survivors back to Babylon as slaves (2 Chronicles 36:9-21)...

When Moses predicted the second destruction of the nation, he warned that the second dispersion would be much more extensive and severe than the

[125]Hal Lindsey, *The Promise* (Eastbourne, Kingsway, 1983), pp. 187-191.

first... This part of Moses' prophecy was fulfilled in A.D. 70 when Titus and the Roman Tenth Legion crushed Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple and scattered the surviving Jews throughout the known world... Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Zechariah and many other prophets predicted Israel's second restoration as a nation in the 'latter days'. They predicted that the Jews would return to their ancient homeland after a long and terrible dispersion among the nations, and that they would miraculously become a nation again (Ezekiel 36, 37). The most important factor in these prophecies is that God promises the Jews that once they have returned in the second restoration, their nation will never be destroyed again.[126]

Lindsey neglects to point out that the warnings uttered by Moses in Deuteronomy 28 were not predictions of future events but conditional warnings, dependent on whether the Israelites kept the covenant. In between the two selective passages which Lindsey highlights, Moses also warned that the Israelites would suffer all the plagues witnessed in Egypt if they were disobedient, something Lindsey conveniently ignores.

More significantly, the passages Lindsey quotes do not actually specify that the Israelites will be taken captive '*into this one invading nation',* nor that two distinct dispersions would occur. The reference in Deuteronomy 28:63-66 which Lindsey claims predicts a second universal exile actually goes on two verses later to indicate that Egypt, still a feared and great power in Moses day, would be their return destination. Lindsey's insistence on two dispersions is itself a very selective reading of Jewish history ignoring the earlier Assyrian conquest of Tiglath-Pileser in 721 B.C. when the ten tribes of the Northern kingdom were deported and absorbed into other parts of the Assyrian Empire.

Instead of following the position of Schuyler English and other traditional dispensationalists, Lindsey develops his own innovative scheme claiming that there is great significance in the events of 1948 and especially 1967. He insists, *'The center of the entire prophetic forecast is the State of Israel*,'[127] and Israel is the '*center of world destiny.'* [128] Lindsey's entire reading of the Bible and of contemporary events in the world are shaped by this conviction and perspective.

In 1970, in *The Late Great Planet Earth*, under the sub-title '*Keys to the Prophetic Puzzle'*, Lindsey explained why his interpretation of contemporary events concerning Israel is more reliable than previous attempts. Then in 1980 Lindsey reiterated this conviction more dogmatically, insisting the 'rebirth' of Israel to be the only 'sign' that the 'countdown' to Armageddon had begun.

Late Great Planet Earth	1980's Countdown to Armageddon
Many Bible students in recent years have tried to fit the events of World War I and II to the prophetic signs which would herald	*Many skeptics point out that during World War I and II, some well-meaning students of prophecy claimed that the end of history was*

[126]Lindsey, *Israel.,* pp. 18-19.
[127]Cited in 'The Church and Israel' by Michael Horton, *Modern Reformation* (May/June 1994), p. 1.
[128]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 133.

the imminent return of Christ. Their failure discredited prophecy... It is because of these unscriptural attempts at calculating days that some eyebrows rise when we speak of Bible prophecy today. *The one event which many Bible students in the past overlooked was this paramount prophetic sign: Israel had to be a nation again in the land of its forefathers.*[129]	*at hand and the Messiah would return soon... Naturally, when the world didn't end, all prophecy was discredited. These skeptics have asked me, 'Why do you think that all the various prophecies will come to pass during this generation? The answer is simple. The prophets told us that the rebirth of Israel-no other event-would be the sign that the countdown had begun. Since that rebirth, the rest of the prophecies have begun to be fulfilled quite rapidly. For this reason I am convinced that we are now in the unique time so clearly and precisely forecast by the Hebrew prophets.*[130]

Lindsey bases his interpretation of contemporary events largely on the prophecies of Ezekiel 37-39, and, in particular, the vision of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37. Most commentators see in these chapters the promise of the return of the remnant from Babylon under Ezra and Nehemiah, or as evidence of the bodily resurrection.[131] Lindsey, however, chooses instead to apply them to 1948 and 1967 when Israel occupied the West Bank and the Old City of Jerusalem.

> *Some 2600 years ago Ezekiel showed that the Jewish nation would be reborn after a long world-wide dispersion, but before the coming of the Messiah...*[132]
>
> *Ezekiel 37:7-8... Is phase one of the prophecy which predicts the PHYSICAL RESTORATION of the Nation without Spiritual life which began May 14, 1948... Ezekiel 37:9-10... Is phase two of the prophecy which predicts the SPIRITUAL REBIRTH of the nation AFTER they are physically restored to the land as a nation... The Lord identifies the bones in the allegory as representing 'the whole house of Israel.' It is crystal clear that this is literally predicting the restoration and rebirth of the whole nation at the time of Messiah's coming [Ezekiel 37:21-27].*[133]

In like manner, where first Century Christians understood Jesus to be warning them to flee Jerusalem because of its imminent destruction, Lindsey claims that Jesus was actually predicting the restoration of the Jews to Palestine in the 20th Century.

> *But the most important sign in Matthew has to be the restoration of the Jews to the land in the rebirth of Israel. Even the figure of speech 'fig tree' has been a historic symbol of national Israel. When the Jewish people, after nearly*

[129]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 43.
[130]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 12
[131]See Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37 Anchor Bible Commentary* (New York, Doubleday, 1997); Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 25-48, Hermeneia Series* (Philadelphia, Fortress, 1979); Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezekiel* (Louisville, John Knox, 1990); John B. Taylor, *Ezekiel* (Leicester, IVP, 1969), pp. 234-250.
[132]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 51.
[133]Lindsey, Road., p. 180.

2,000 years of exile, under relentless persecution, became a nation again on 14 May 1948 the 'fig tree' put forth its first leaves.[134]

Nothing, however, in Matthew 24:32 indicates that Jesus intended his hearers to understand that he was promising Israel would become a nation once more. The New Testament is silent on the question of whether the Jews would ever become a national state again. Nevertheless, Lindsey has popularised the notion that the return of Jewish people to Palestine since 1948 is the fulfilment of biblical prophecy. Lindsey speaks repeatedly of the '*rebirth*'[135] of Israel, insisting,

The nation of Israel cannot be ignored; we see the Jews as a miracle of history.'[136]

...all the unconditional covenants... Were made only with the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as a unique nation.[137]

This logic leads Lindsey to suggest that had the Jewish people accepted Jesus as their Messiah, the rest of the world would not have been offered the Gospel.

The Gospel and the age of grace would not have come to us Gentiles unless Israel had fallen into unbelief.[138]

Aware of criticism of attempts to apply biblical prophecy to contemporary events, Lindsey qualifies his own particular interpretation, but in so doing advocates both a massive secularisation of biblical prophecy as well as a questionable 'second chance' way of salvation for the Jews.

Right here a careful distinction must be made between 'the physical restoration' to the land of Palestine as a nation, which clearly occurs shortly before the Messiah's coming and the 'spiritual restoration' of all Jews who have believed in the Messiah just after His return to this earth. The 'physical restoration' is accomplished by unbelieving Jews through their human effort. As a matter of fact, the great catastrophic events which are to happen to this nation during 'the tribulation' are primarily designed to shock the people into believing in their true Messiah (Ezekiel 38; 39).[139]

In *The Road to Holocaust*, Lindsey draws a distinction between those who are Jews racially and religiously from those who are regenerate Jews, claiming only the latter are God's chosen people.

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[134]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 53.
[135]Lindsey, *Israel.,* p. 19; Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 11.
[136]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 45.
[137]Lindsey, *Road.,* p. 186.
[138]Lindsey, *Road.,* p. 208.
[139]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 48. The idea of Jewish evangelists replacing the Church during the Tribulation offering people a second opportunity to believe in Jesus is also taught in *There's a New World Coming*, pp. 121ff.

The Regenerate Israelite has always been the True Israelite. This group combines together both the racial and spiritual factors that the Bible describes as 'the remnant of Israel.'... The Bible reveals the insufficiency of being only a racial and religious Jew... The Bible has always taught that only the racial Jew who is born spiritually is a true Israelite and heir to the eternal promises... And that they continue to be God's special people.[140]

Lindsey does not accept the New Testament insistence that the once privileged status of covenant people was taken away from the Jews at some time between Pentecost and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D.[141] Based on his interpretation of Romans 11, Lindsey argues, in line with classical dispensationalism, that the Church will be replaced by Israel as the people of God on earth,

...at some point in history - very soon, I believe - God's special focus and blessing is going to shift back to the Jews. At that moment, the Jews will once again be responsible, as God's representatives, to take His message to the whole world. This mission - incomplete and seemingly impossible for the last 2,000 years - will be accomplished by the 144,000 Jewish Billy Graham's in seven years.[142]

In his latest work, Lindsey continues to insist on a radical distinction between the church and Israel.

He redeemed the Church (both Jew and Gentile who trusted in Him) at the Cross. That is an accomplished fact. Israel's national redemption in accordance with the Abrahamic covenant takes place at the Second Advent.[143]

An alternative reading of the New Testament would suggest that, while the apostles Peter and Paul could appeal to the historical link between the Jews and their privileges (Acts 3:25; Romans 9:4-5, 11:28), time was running out and that there was a limit to that appeal. In the plan of redemptive history, the rejection of the Messiah by the majority of Jewish people led to their rejection under the terms of the covenant. In Acts 3:22-23 Peter applies the Mosaic warning of Deuteronomy 18:15-19 and Leviticus 23:29 to his generation and makes their response to Jesus Christ the critical test.

For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.' (Acts 3:22-23)

Likewise, Paul explains how only those who believe in Jesus Christ, including both Jews and Gentiles, are now the true children of Abraham.

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[140]Lindsey, *Road*., pp. 134-135, 143.

[141]Compare Matthew 10:5 with Acts 18:6, '*But when the Jews opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the Gentiles*."'

[142]Lindsey, *Apocalypse*., p. 121.

[143]Lindsey, *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter*, p. 98.

It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression. Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring - not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." (Romans 4:13-17)

Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. (Galatians 3:6-9)

The New Testament therefore insists on a limited time when the initial offer of salvation would be made to the Jews as the chosen people of God. This was probably confined to the generation that witnessed the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Failure to respond to the claims of Christ led to the removal of the covenant status and privileges from the Jewish people and their application to the Church (1 Peter 2:9-10). Paul goes so far as to describe the consequences as a complete reversal of the status of Jews and Gentiles. 'Jerusalem' symbolic of the Jews who had rejected Jesus Christ were now regarded as the offspring of Hagar not Sarah.

[24]These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. [25]Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. [26]But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother... [28]Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise... [30]But what does the Scripture say? "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son." [31]Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman. (Galatians 4:24-31)

Ignoring the flow of redemptive history, the status of Israel under the terms of the Hebrew covenant, and ultimately the impact of their rejection of Jesus Christ, Lindsey applies conditional and superseded Old Testament promises made to Israel, at times to the contemporary State of Israel and on other occasions to Jews who believe in Jesus as their Messiah. This ambivalence is perpetuated in Lindsey's speculations concerning which, and how many, Israelis will survive the war of Armageddon, explored later.

4.2 The Territorial Extent of Eretz Israel

Christian Zionists clearly see the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 as highly significant, signalling the end of 2000 years of exile. They have therefore actively encouraged Jews in Russia and Eastern Europe to make Aliya, seeing this as

another '*Exodus.*'[144] The settlement and integration of the Occupied Territories within Eretz Israel, now imbued with the evocative biblical names of '*Judea and Samaria'*, is deemed essential to maintain Israeli security as well as to fulfil the land promise made to Abraham and his descendants. In this Lindsey was the first and probably most successful to popularise a Christian Zionist reading of Scripture and contemporary events since 1967.

> *What the average Israeli understands - in part because their sons and fathers and brothers fought to gallantly to gain this high ground - is this... Giving away the Golan Heights might be enough to cause a political uprising among the Israeli people. But if it isn't, surely concessions that involve Judea and Samaria would be. There are 100,000 Jewish settlers living in these lands now. They are biblically Jewish lands. To evacuate Jews from them would be an enormous psychological blow to the whole concept of Jewish nationhood. Frankly, such an attempt might be enough to trigger a civil war.*[145]

> *And God has promised the land of Israel to the Jews forever. Period.*[146]

Lindsey is at his most critical when contemplating the implications of a '*land for peace'* resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

> *If Israel would just give the Palestinians a homeland, the Arabs would be satisfied and peace would reign. If you believe that, I have some lakefront property in the Sahara Desert I'd like to sell you.*[147]

Having listed the various military threats Israel faces from Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Iran and other Arab nations, Lindsey finds negotiation incomprehensible.

> *...despite all of these facts, Israel has still agreed to give up more occupied land in the Gaza strip and Jericho and is discussing turning over more strategic territory in Judea, Samaria and the Golan Heights. This series of developments was enough to make the most confident warriors scared.*[148]

> *With its all-consuming desire for peace at any price, Israel has now placed itself in an indefensible position.*[149]

Speaking of the Wye, Oslo and Hebron Accords, Lindsey offers this pessimistic assessment.

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[144]Leon Uris, *Exodus* (New York, Bantam, 1958); Steve Lightle, *Exodus II* (Chepstow, Bridge, 1983); Tom Hess, *Let My People Go* (Charlotte, Morning Star, 1996); Gustav Scheller, *Operation Exodus*, *Prophecy Being Fulfilled* (London, Sovereign World, 1998).
[145]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 122.
[146]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 262.
[147]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 42.
[148]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 146. See also page 174.
[149]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 243.

Basically, the agreement calls for Israel to surrender more land in exchange for Arafat's promises to abide by the agreements he has already signed. Something for less than nothing is the best way to term it.[150]

'Land for Peace!' Is the cry heard 'round the world. In 1993 we saw Israel bullied and blackmailed into turning over more land to the Arabs - this time to its sworn enemy, the terrorist Yasser Arafat. Objective military and intelligence say any more land concessions would be strategically foolhardy... Further land concessions would leave Israel with indefensible borders and no effective conventional deterrent against attack. The world should take note that if it stands by and lets Israel be over run, the Samson Option is still very much in readiness... Does the world really want to force Israel to rely exclusively on nuclear weapons for its defence? [151]

Although the rhetorical answer is presumably '*no*,' Lindsey predicts, yet again, an apocalyptic scenario.

There is no question, in reviewing Bible prophecy, that a cataclysmic, apocalyptic war will engulf the Mideast prior to the return of Jesus Christ. In this nuclear age, it makes sense to us that the mass annihilation we read about might be the result of a nuclear exchange. Because the Bible talks about mass destruction by fire, this scenario seems to make sense. 'And I will send fire on Magog [Russia],' Ezekiel recorded. If faced with annihilation you can count on Israel to protect its civilian population by any means necessary... Its clear that the Bible can't be talking about any other time in history but today.[152]

Quoting a defence expert, Joseph De Courcy, Lindsey insists,

The absolute minimum territory Israel requires to deter war is the territory it is controlling today... If Israel gives back Judea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights, it will simply no longer be able to defend itself against the Muslim nations with conventional weapons.[153]

Lamenting the Oslo Peace Accord, "Land for Peace" deal, Lindsey insists**,**

Basically, the agreement calls for Israel to surrender more land in exchange for Arafat's promises to abide by the agreements he has already signed. something for less than nothing is the best way to term it.[154]

4.3 The Significance of Jerusalem

Lindsey insists that the occupation of the Old City of Jerusalem in 1967 by the Jews was another significant sign of the imminent return of the Messiah, since unfulfilled prophecies concerning the Jewish people must occur within the ancient city.

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[150]Hal Lindsey, *International Intelligence Briefing*, 29th October 1998.
[151]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 149.
[152]Lindsey, *Planet.,* pp. 150-151.
[153]Lindsey, *Final.,* pp. 117, 127-128.
[154]Lindsey, *International Intelligence Briefing*, 29th October 1998.

> *Jerusalem's importance in history is infinitely beyond its size and economic significance. From ages past, Jerusalem has been the most important city on this planet... More prophecies have been made concerning Jerusalem than any other place on earth.*[155]

He concedes that the status of Jerusalem is contested, claiming, in the context of the Oslo Peace Accord,

> *The Arabs still demand Jerusalem as the ransom price for any lasting peace. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu went on record in Washington repeating his promise that Jerusalem will never be divided.*[156]

Nevertheless, Lindsey insists, pessimistically, Arab aspirations are futile.

> *As the Bible tells us, the dispute over Jerusalem and Israel's borders will never be settled by any peace agreements nor any whiz-bang diplomatic breakthrough. Jerusalem, the Bible says, will be a stumbling block for the entire world... In Luke 21:24, the Bible tells us that 'Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.' We are literally witnessing the end of the times of the Gentiles.*[157]

A year later, Lindsey is more specific and emphatic in his dispensational timing,

> *We are literally witnessing the last hours of the times of the Gentiles. God's focus is shifting back to His people Israel.*[158]

Lindsey interprets the prophecies of Zechariah 12-14 as foretelling events that are about to happen including a fearful siege of Jerusalem by the Soviet army.[159]

> *It is clear from these chapters that the Jews would have to be dwelling in and have possession of the ancient city of Jerusalem at the time of the Messiah's triumphant advent.*[160]

> *There couldn't be a more perfect modern-day description of what was predicted hundreds of years ago in Zechariah 12-14. There it tells us that the last war of the world will be started by a dispute over Jerusalem. We've got that dispute right now. As a matter of fact, the West helped guaranty the world a dispute over Jerusalem by forcing the Israelis into a pact with the Palestinians*.[161]

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[155]Lindsey, *Israel*., p. 20.
[156]Hal Lindsey, *International Intelligence Briefing*, 29th October 1998.
[157]Lindsey, *Planet.,* pp. 162, 164.
[158]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 95.
[159]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 54.
[160]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 55.
[161]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 247.

How much of Jerusalem will be left standing when Jesus returns is a matter of speculation, given Lindsey's terrifying description of the war of Armageddon.

> *The Bible also makes clear that Jerusalem - the focal point of the endtimes fighting - will be vanquished by Israel's enemies in the hours just before the Lord comes. In fact, it seems that the destruction of the holy city is the final straw that angers God and provokes Jesus' return.*[162]

He nevertheless looks forward to a better day after Armageddon, when, during the Millennium,

> *Jerusalem will be the spiritual centre of the entire world... all people of the earth will come annually to worship Jesus who will rule there.*[163]

4.4 The Rebuilding of the Jewish Temple

> *Right now, as you read this, preparations are being made to rebuild the Third Temple.*[164]

Lindsey not only regards the founding of the State of Israel and capture of Jerusalem as the fulfilment of biblical prophecy but insists, controversially, that the Jewish Temple must also be rebuilt. Initially, in 1970, he insisted this would have to be in place of the Dome of the Rock.

> *There remains but one more event to completely set the stage for Israel's part in the last great act of her historical drama. This is to rebuild the ancient Temple of worship upon its old site... There is one major problem barring the construction of a third Temple. That obstacle is the second holiest place of the Moslem faith, the Dome of the Rock. This is believed to be built squarely in the middle of the old temple site. Obstacle or no obstacle, it is certain that the Temple will be rebuilt. Prophecy demands it.*[165]

This quote reveals Lindsey's basic ignorance of Islam. The Temple Mount on which the Dome of the Rock and Alaqsa Mosque are built constitutes the third most holy shrine to Moslems after Medina and Mecca.[166] Dispensationalists like Lindsey believe in the imminent rebuilding of the Temple based on the somewhat enigmatic passage of Daniel 9:24-27. The sanctuary already appears to have been destroyed in verse 26 yet sacrifices are brought to an end in verse 27 and then the '*abomination that causes desolation'* desecrates the Temple.

> *After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been de-*

[162]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 262.
[163]Lindsey, *Israel.*, p. 165.
[164]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 156, *Final*., p. 103.
[165]Lindsey, *Late.,* pp. 56-58.
[166]Lindsey repeats this erroneous assertion in *There's a New World Coming*, p. 160. '*This site is second only to Mecca in sacredness to the millions of Moslems in the world.'*

> *creed. 27He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."* (Daniel 9:26-27)

On the basis of a rather tenuous interpretation, Lindsey confidently argues,

> *This prophecy speaks of sacrifice and offerings which demand that the Jews rebuild the Temple for the third time upon its original site. At that point, Judaism and Islam will be placed on an inevitable course of war over the site, a war that will start Armageddon. Many prophecies demand rebuilding of the ancient Temple, indicating that the event is a significant prophetic sign (see Matthew 24:15 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4). Therefore any move toward that direction is a crucial clue to what hour it is on God's prophetic timetable.*[167]

Lindsey insists Jesus concurred with this interpretation.

> *Of course, for Temple rites to be stopped in the last days, we know they must be restarted. The words of Jesus Himself in Matthew 24:15 require that a new holy place be built and a complete sacrificial system re-instituted. And since only a consecrated temple can be defiled, this prophecy shows that the physical Temple must not only be rebuilt, but a functioning priesthood must begin practising once again.*[168]

He also sees evidence for the rebuilding of the Temple in the instructions given to the Apostle John to measure the Temple in Revelation 11:1-2.

> *The Apostle John wrote the Book of Revelation about the year A.D. 95. This means that the Temple... was non-existent for the twenty-five years preceding John's writing... What Temple, then, was John referring to? There can be only one answer - a yet-to-be-built structure!*[169]

Lindsey quotes Israel Eldad, an Israeli historian, who claims that devout Jews, '*some of whom are in powerful positions in the Israeli government'* expect the Dome of the Rock to be destroyed, whether by natural or supernatural intervention, and the Jewish Temple to be rebuilt very soon after.[170] Lindsey quotes Eldad again three years later,

> *"When the Jewish people took over Jerusalem the first time, under King David, only one generation passed before they built the Temple, and so it shall be with us." When asked about the problem of the Dome of the Rock being on the Jewish Temple site, he replied with a wink, "Who knows, perhaps there will be an earthquake!" What Eldad said in jest may be just the thing that will happen.*[171]

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[167]Lindsey, *Israel*., p. 23.
[168]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 158.
[169]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 160.
[170]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 57.
[171]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 164

Clearly, in 1970, Lindsey believed that the Dome of the Rock would need to be destroyed in order for the Jewish Temple to be rebuilt. He even appeared to know the exact location of the former structure.

> *Archaeologists have uncovered a pillar from Solomon's porch as the first major find from the Herodian Temple. From its location in relation to the Wailing Wall they have now ascertained where the ancient Holy of Holies in the Temple was located. Imagine my emotions as I stood under a sign at the Wall which read in Hebrew: 'Holy of Holies, 10 Metres,' with an arrow pointing towards a spot thirty feet behind the existing Wall in the direction of the Dome of the Rock!*[172]

By 1983 Lindsey had changed his mind about the location of the Herodian Temple. Based apparently on the findings of a 16 year investigation undertaken by Dr Kaufman of the Hebrew University and published in the *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Lindsey now claimed,

> *I also believe that this discovery has accelerated the countdown to the events that will bring the Messiah Jesus back to earth. The reason for this belief is that the predicted Third Temple can now be built without disturbing the Dome of the Rock. ...the Temple and its immediate guard wall could be rebuilt and still be twenty-six meters away from the Dome of the Rock.* [173]

Having discovered the true site of the Herodian Temple, in 1980 Lindsey proceeded to find scriptural verification for this new location.

> *Revelation chapter 11 indicates this very situation: 'I was given a reed like a measuring rod and told, 'Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the worshippers there. But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.'' (Revelation 11:1,2 NIV). The outer court, which includes the area where the Dome of the Rock is situated, was given to the Gentiles. So this prophecy accurately reflects the situation that is present today... All of these things are tremendously exciting to those who know Bible prophecy. We are literally in the very last days of the Church Age. The Temple will be rebuilt soon!*[174]

In 1994, Lindsey heightened speculation still further with the following assertion.

> *I remember my whole body tingling with excitement when I measured the distances on the Temple platform and realized that God had left out the outer court because it allowed for the Gentile temple to remain alongside the rebuilt Jewish Temple during the Tribulation. Folks, the footsteps of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, can already be heard as He approaches the doors of*

[172]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 163.
[173]Lindsey, *Israel*., p. 29.
[174]Lindsey, *Israel*., p. 30.

heaven to return. The Temple is the last sign that needs to fall into place before events irreversibly speed toward the return of Jesus.[175]

Despite being aware of the hypersensitivity felt by Moslems about the Temple Mount area and their justifiable fear that Jewish and Christian fundamentalists might try to destroy it again,[176] Lindsey assumes that, since a Jewish Temple could now be built alongside the Dome of the Rock, the Moslem authorities would tolerate this, so that the Jewish Temple could become '*the greatest tourist attraction in the world'*.[177]

But lets think even more practically. Not only would the Temple become a unifying force for Israel's diverse and pluralistic society, it would also, without doubt, become the greatest tourist attraction in the world. Its basic economics. Imagine what a new Temple would do for the Israeli economy, which relies so heavily on tourism. The Temple would also serve to attract more Jews from all over the world-and... The Bible tells us that eventually all of the dispersed will return to their homeland. The Temple would serve as a kind of spiritual magnet. This, too, would fit into the prophetic scenario, which indicates that Israel is destined to play a major role in the world and experience vast wealth, power and prestige in the last days. Why else would the Antichrist choose to set up his throne in Jerusalem unless Israel had moved center stage in the world's political and economic picture.[178]

Lindsey points to the existence of two talmudic schools training some 200 Levite priests and the accumulation of vessels and clothing necessary to perform sacrifices, as further proof of the imminent plans to rebuild the Temple.

Near the site of the Temple, the seminary of Aterat Kohanim (Glory of the Priests) is reviving an extinct class of Jewish priests and their servants known as Levites so they will be ready when the ancient prophecies are fulfilled and the Temple, twice destroyed, is rebuilt.[179]

Lindsey's belief in the imminent rebuilding of the Temple is reinforced by his understanding of Jesus' words in Matthew 24.

Jesus Christ predicted an event which would trigger a time of unparalleled catastrophe for the Jewish nation shortly before His second coming... With the Jewish nation reborn in the land of Palestine, ancient Jerusalem once again under total Jewish control for the first time in 2600 years, and talk of rebuilding the great Temple, the most important sign of Jesus Christ's soon coming is before us... It is like the key piece of a jigsaw puzzle being found... For all those who trust in Jesus Christ, it is a time of electrifying excitement.[180]

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[175]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 160.
[176]Ross Dunn, 'Israel holds disciples of 'Second Coming' cult' *Times*, 4 January 1999, p. 12.
[177]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 163.
[178]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 163.
[179]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 156.
[180]Lindsey, *Late.,* pp. 56-58.

Although Lindsey's speculations are popular and have an immediacy in terms of interpreting contemporary events, they bear little relation to the events described in Matthew 24. Many commentators note that the predictions of Jesus were fulfilled in the events leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. when Jewish Zealots desecrated the temple using it as a fortress against the Romans. Eusebius, for example, the 4th Century Bishop and historian refers to the eye witness accounts of Josephus, the Jewish historian of the 1st Century, to show how these predictions of Jesus had already been fulfilled.

> *It is fitting to add to these accounts the true prediction of our Saviour in which he foretold these very events.*[181]

Lindsey ignores this historical position preferring to interpret Matthew 24 as prophecy still awaiting fulfilment. So when Jesus promised these events would be witnessed by '*this generation*'[182], Lindsey understands 'this' to be his own generation.[183] There is no room for negotiation or debate on this issue, Lindsey is emphatic.

> *So the rebuilding of the Temple is significant not only because of the potential firestorm it will create between Jews and Muslims in the Middle East. It is also a critical development in the entire prophetic scenario. The Bible makes it clear that in the last days the Antichrist will establish his reign in the Temple of Jerusalem. Therefore, the Temple must and will be rebuilt.*[184]

4.5 The Implacable Enemies of Israel: Communists and Moslems

Lindsey claims biblical warrant for his hostility toward Communism and Islam.

> *Ezekiel, Daniel and Zechariah all said that a nation to the extreme north of Israel would achieve great influence and become a threat to the whole world. They said this power would be Israel's mortal enemy. The prophets predicted that this nation would launch an all-out land and sea attack on Israel, the Arab nations and the continent of Africa. This country, Bible scholars agree, is the Soviet Union. A line drawn due north of Israel crosses only one land mass - Russia. And the three tribes Ezekiel predicted would people the nation to the north are in fact the ancestors of today's Russians. Throughout its history, the single most consistent motive of the Soviet Union's military invasions has been the acquisition of warm water ports for its merchant and naval fleets.* [185]

> *As previously quoted the Russians will make both an amphibious and land invasion of Israel. The current build-up of Russian ships in the Mediterranean serves as another significant sign of the possible nearness of Armageddon.*[186]

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[181]Eusebius Pamphilus, 'Predictions of Christ' *The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus* (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1988), 3:7, 92-94.
[182]Matthew 24:34
[183]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 54.
[184]Lindsey, *Final*, p. 104.
[185]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 13.
[186]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 157.

Lindsey's speculations concerning Russia show remarkable similarity to those of earlier Dispensationalists such as Arno Gaebelein.

Arno Gaebelein (1916)	Hal Lindsey (1980)
The time cannot be far off when Russia's millions, augmented by the armies that she will gather from these and other nations, will be thrown by their rulers into Palestine in order to destroy the nation of the Jews.[187]	*...I predicted that the Soviets would begin their Middle East campaign with a sweep through the Persian Gulf area into Iran. The recent Russian invasion of Afghanistan was a first step in that direction.*[188]*...to utterly destroy the Jewish people.*[189]

Attempting to keep pace with the dramatic geo-political changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, Lindsey insisted in 1981 and 1994 that his shifting views of Russia, were nevertheless both predicted in the Bible.

1980's Countdown to Armageddon	Planet Earth 2000 A.D.
Today, the Soviets are without question the strongest power on the face of the earth. Lets look at recent history to see how the Russians rose to the might predicted for them thousands of years ago.[190]	*We see Russia as no longer a world threat, but a regional power with a world-class military - exactly what Ezekiel 38 and 39 predicted it would be.*[191]

While at the time believing Russia had a preordained destiny to dominate the world, attack Israel and precipitate a nuclear holocaust, in 1980 Lindsey nevertheless berated successive American governments for allowing the Russians to gain this military superiority. He does not explain how on the one hand he believed this to be the fulfilment of biblical prophecy yet '*incomprehensible'*.

> *The United States was far ahead in the nuclear arms race until the end of the 1960's. Then the situation began to change rapidly. The change occurred because of the U.S. leadership's almost unbelievable misreading of the Soviet goals and intentions. In light of the clearly-stated communist goal of world domination and their constant efforts to attain that status, it is incomprehensible to me that America allowed the Russians to take the lead in the arms race. To understand how the U.S. slipped into this perilous position we must review some recent history*.[192]

Lindsey provides five pages of graphs to show how Russia had by the 1980's gained military superiority over the United States in conventional forces, tactical air-

[187]Arno C. Gaebelein, *Our Hope* XXIII (August 1916), 110. Cited in Dwight Wilson, *Armageddon Now! The Premillennial Response to Russia and Israel Since 1917* (Tyler, Texas, Institute for Christian Economics, [1977], 1991), p. 36.
[188]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 13.
[189]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 160.
[190]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 68.
[191]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 216.
[192]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 69.

craft, military personnel, combat ships, tanks, artillery, anti-ballistic missiles, interceptor aircraft, strategic bombers and nuclear warheads.[193] Lindsey laments,

> *Beginning with President Kennedy, each U.S. Administration has grossly misjudged the goals of the Soviet Union and communism in general. Each successive administration has hoped that its own example of fairness and good will toward the world would somehow encourage the communists to abandon their drive toward world domination.*[194]

Lindsey repeats this inexplicable contradiction, one the one hand criticising the U.S. Government for allowing the Russians to gain superiority, while at the same time claiming this to be their divinely determined destiny.

> *In carefully researching this chapter, one thing came through with sickening clarity: The foreign policies of the western nations, especially the U.S., have done more to aid the tremendous buildup of Soviet power than has any other single factor... The Soviet Union and its satellites have now reached the position of military superiority and strategic world power to fulfill their predicted dreadful role in history. The pages of Ezekiel's and Daniel's prophecies are beginning to look like today's headlines.*[195]

With the demise of the Soviet empire, Lindsey's predictions appeared more like 'yesterdays' headlines. Nevertheless, in 1994, despite the fall of the Communist government, Lindsey continued to speculate a possible revival of the Russian threat.

> *In the 1980s and early 1990s, I criticized Ronald Reagan and George Bush for making foreign policy based on the life and health of one man - Mikhail Gorbachev. It is even more true today that the United States is taking a great gamble - because of its rapid savaging of our whole military-industrial complex - that Boris Yeltsin will prevail and turn Russia permanently away from its expansionist, imperialist dreams. That's a gamble, by the way, that the Bible prophecies hint may lead to our destruction*.[196]

By 1995, just a year later, Lindsey was now extolling Reagan's foreign policy and denying that it was ever predicted in Scripture that the Soviet Union would gain world domination.

> *In fact, the Soviet Union was on the verge of dominating the world militarily in the period leading up to 1985... Fortunately, a confident and bold leader, Ronald Reagan, was elected president of the United States and set in place policies which resulted in a series of reversals - militarily and economic - for the Soviet Union. I believe God's providential hand was working behind the scenes because it was never on the cards for the Kremlin to rule the world.*[197]

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[193]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 70-74.
[194]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 81.
[195]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 86.
[196]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 190.
[197]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 4.

With the gradual demise of Russia as a world power, and the disintegration of her communist empire, Lindsey began to switch his emphasis to Islam as the real threat to Israel and world peace.[198] It is interesting to observe this transition. In *The Late Great Planet Earth* (1970), the threat comes from "*The Russian force*." In 1997 this had become, "*The Russian-Muslim force*." By 1999 the power had shifted to "*A Muslim-Russian alliance"*[199]

Late Great Planet Earth (1970)	Apocalypse Code (1997)
The Russian force will establish command headquarters on Mount Moriah or the Temple area in Jerusalem. ...he seeks to utterly destroy the Jewish people.[200]	*In response to these two deadly threats, the Russian-Muslim force retreats back to Israel and sets up command HQs on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. These forces try to annihilate the Jews as they do this.*[201]

1980's Countdown to Armageddon	Planet Earth 2000 A.D. (1994)
Today, the Soviets are without a question the strongest power on the face of the earth... As the Biblical prophets predicted long ago, the Russians now possess a 'splendidly equipped' army. In fact, the Russian military is the most destructive war machine ever assembled... The Soviet Union and its satellites have now reached the position of military superiority and strategic world power to fulfill their predicted dreadful role in history... Today, we are in a life-or-death contest with the totalitarian system of communism. If we cannot build a credible deterrent to the growing Soviet military machine, then we will soon be taken over, and we will cease to exist as a free society...[202]	*The greatest threat to freedom and world peace today - is Islamic fundamentalism...* *Tragically, the world's sole remaining superpower - the United States -has responded to this monumental threat by embarking on a suicidal, unilateral demilitarization process of unprecedented speed and recklessness. Like the Scriptures warn, the West is blithely saying 'Peace and safety'... Yet the free world today is facing greater danger than anything since World War II.*[203]

Throughout his books, but increasingly in the latter editions, Lindsey denigrates Arabs generally and Palestinians, in particular. He appears to show little understanding or compassion for their plight. Instead he offers a novel reinterpretation of the events of 1948.

> *Although the new Israeli government pleaded with them to stay and fight together for a common homeland, all but a handful crossed over into Jordan to wait for total victory against the Jews.*[204]

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[198]Lindsey, Chapter 1 of *The Final Battle*, (Palos Verdes, California, Western Front, 1995), is entitled "The New Islamic Global Threat". p. 1.
[199]Lindsey, *Briefing*., 7th January 1999.
[200]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 160.
[201]Lindsey, *Apocalypse*., p. 153.
[202]Lindsey, *1980's*., pp. 68, 85-86, 144.
[203]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 171.
[204]Lindsey, *Planet Earth The Final Chapter*, p. 71.

The Palestinians are determined to trouble the world until they repossess what they feel is their land.[205]

While it is true that "the Palestinian issue" is a mere mirage, an excuse for hating Jews and Israel and turning the world against them, it is also true that the radical Islamic world will never accept the existence of the Jewish state no matter what concessions it makes toward peace.[206]

...there is no such thing as Palestine.[207]

...the Palestinians who have attempted to usurp control over a city that holds no genuine significance for them and a land they never particularly wanted until the Jews occupied it again.[208]

The declaration of a Palestinian state, without UN support, could well spark a new war of annihilation - especially over the issue of a divided Jerusalem.[209]

Lindsey's antipathy toward Islam, expressed in quite inflammatory remarks, is typical of Christian Zionism generally.

'All Moslems see Israel as their enemy'[210]

The Arab nations are united in their fanatical obsession to destroy Israel.[211]

The Arab nations consider it a matter of racial honour to destroy the State of Israel.[212]

The Middle East is a powder keg, all right. But it's not because of Israeli policies. Islam, with its grand and global ambitions - not Israel - is the culprit.[213]

There will be no peace in the Middle East as long as the world entertains the Arab's (sic) *fanciful visions of dividing and conquering Jerusalem. Peace would only be possible, if, by some miracle, the Arabs realized that their ambitions for military and economic hegemony over Israel were delusional. Don't hold your breath... the Arab world has been successful at framing the debate over the Middle East as a struggle between downtrodden Palestinians and powerful, heavily armed Jews...*[214]

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[205]Lindsey, *Israel*., pp. 38-39.
[206]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 52.
[207]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 260.
[208]Lindsey, *Planet Earth The Final Chapter*, p. 264.
[209]Lindsey, *Briefing*., 1st October 1998.
[210]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 45.
[211]Lindsey, *Israel*., p. 33.
[212]Lindsey, *Israel*., pp. 38.
[213]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 175.
[214]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 310.

Agreements in the Arab nations don't mean the same thing they mean in the Judeo-Christian world. Islam not only has a track record of re-interpreting, denouncing and reversing settlements, such actions are actually encouraged if they further the cause of Allah.[215]

Is there anyone who doubts that the Syrians are willing to push the button to launch surface-to-surface missiles carrying chemical warheads into Israeli population centers?... Given what you know about the long history of Islamic jealousy and hatred of the Jews, is it difficult to imagine a decision being made in Baghdad or Tehran to fire a nuclear warhead at Tel Aviv?[216]

The history of the Middle East and Islam is a landscape of tribal warfare, imperial ambitions and oppression for all non-believers.[217]

This movement seeks not only to destroy the state of Israel but also the overthrow of the Judeo-Christian culture-the very foundation of our western civilisation... They have, like the Communists, at their philosophic core the sworn duty to "bury us."[218]

Lindsey claims biblical warrant for the contemporary Arab-Israeli conflict. He believes the Psalmist, for example, predicted that the Palestinians along with the Lebanese and Syrians would attempt but fail to destroy Israel.

Long ago the psalmist predicted the final mad attempt by the confederated Arab armies to destroy the nation of Israel... (Psalm 83:1-8)[219]

In Psalm 83, some 3,000 years ago, God gave a warning of what would happen in the last days... In these verses the Philistia or Philistines are the modern Palestinians. Tyre is modern Lebanon. Assyria is modern Syria. I wanted you to read this passage for yourself because it speaks of a time in which there is a concerted effort to wipe out Israel as a nation... Even then, the Psalmist -under Divine Inspiration-looked to the last days before the Messiah would come to deliver Israel from the children of Ishmael. All the peoples named in those verses make up the various tribes that became known as the Arabs. When you read some of these verses it sounds like modern Radio Tehran, doesn't it? Why? Because this passage of scripture is predicting the modern-day Middle East situation.[220]

As the Bible tells us, the dispute over Jerusalem and Israel's borders will never be settled by any peace agreements nor any whiz-bang diplomatic breakthrough.[221]

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[215]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 256.
[216]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 151.
[217]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 42.
[218]Lindsey, *Final*., pp. 4-5.
[219]Lindsey, *Israel.,* p. 38.
[220]Lindsey, *Final*., pp. 2-3.
[221]Lindsey, *Final.,* p. 93.

Lindsey attributes Armageddon and the destruction of most of the world's population to the influence of Islam over the Arab-Israeli conflict.

> *All this destruction will be caused by the ancient hatred between Ishmael and Isaac - the smouldering flames of hatred that have existed for 4,000 years - the jealousy of Ishmael toward Isaac - the fact that Ishmael and his descendants have never been willing to accept the blessings that God gave them... they have never been satisfied. They wanted Isaac's blessing... it is what is going to touch off the war that will almost destroy the World.*[222]

> *Ezekiel's long-predicted invasion sweeps into Israel with the pent-up-fury of four thousand years of hatred that started with Ishmael and was later enshrined by his descendants in the Muslim religion.*[223]

> *This will be the sign that immediately precedes the Russian-led Islamic invasion of Israel.*[224]

Lindsey claims his assessment of Middle Eastern politics is not only based upon the Bible but also privileged access to '*primary intelligence sources'* within the Israeli military. In 1994 he quoted one such source as equating Islam with Nazism,

> *Stopping the Iranian-Syrian axis and their lead over the Islamic world is the most important issue of this decade. It is even more important than it was in 1939 to stop Adolf Hitler.*[225]

Lindsey's dogmatic and provocative views are representative of what Edward Said calls Western cultural imperialism or '*Orientalism*' typified by its "*crude stereotype imaging of the East*."[226]

4.6 The Fall and Rise of the United States

A popular view among Christian Zionists is the belief that God will continue to bless America only as long as she remains an ally of Israel. Lindsey is no exception.

> *Except for the U.S., Israel has no allies... We are still Israel's friend. But there are strong pressures from within to turn away from Israel. I pray that we do not, for our friendship with the Israelis is one of the reasons we've survived as a nation.*[227]

Lindsey finds mention of the United States in the Bible. In the reference to *'...the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly into the wilderness...'* in Revelation 12:13-17, Lindsey speculates that this describes '*some*

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[222]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 256.
[223]Lindsey, *Apocalypse*., p. 79.
[224]Lindsey, *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter*, p. 182.
[225]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 172.
[226]Edward Said, Orientalism. pp. 47-48.
[227]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 45.

massive airlift' that will transport escaping Jewish believers from the holocaust of Armageddon to the safety of places like Petra.

> *Since the eagle is the national symbol of the United States, its possible that the airlift will be made available by aircraft from the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean*.[228]

Lindsey does not explain why the symbolism of the eagle should be applied to the United States instead of to any one of a number of countries like Germany or the Czech Republic who also include an eagle as part of their national emblem. Nor does he explain why this particular reference to an eagle should be understood as describing modern aircraft and not other passages such as Exodus 19:4, Deuteronomy 32:11-12 or Isaiah 40:31 which also refer to eagles. Such speculative interpretations hardly corroborate Lindsey's claim to hold to a consistent literal hermeneutic.

Despite fulfilling this important biblical role of supporting Israel, Lindsey does not, however, see a hopeful future for the United States. In 1970 he predicted,

> *The United States will not hold its present position of leadership in the western world; financially, the future leader will be Western Europe. Internal political chaos caused by student rebellion and Communist subversion will begin to erode the economy of our nation. Lack of moral principle by citizens and leaders will so weaken law and order that a state of anarchy will finally result. The military capability of the United States, though it is at present the most powerful in the world, has already been neutralized because no one has the courage to use it decisively. When the economy collapses so will the military.*[229]

In 1994, Lindsey drew attention to the accuracy of his predictions, made some 24 years earlier, of a moral as well as military decline of the United States. "*And this is exactly what I have been expecting and predicting for this country since 1956*."[230]

In the 1980's Lindsey saw further evidence that his prediction had come true. He berated the U.S. Administration for allowing Russia to gain military superiority, describing America as '*a second-class military power*.'[231] Lindsey claimed God wanted the American government to win back the lead in the arms race.

> *...I believe that the Bible supports building a powerful military force. And the Bible is telling the U.S. To become strong again. A weak military will encourage the Soviet Union to start an all-out war... It is time to use our vast and superior technology to create the world's strongest military power. Only this will stop the Soviet's insane rush toward nuclear war.*[232]

Since Lindsey believes most of the world will be destroyed in a predestined nuclear holocaust anyway, he does not explain the point of building yet more weap-

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[228]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 185.
[229]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 184.
[230]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 15.
[231]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 107.
[232]Lindsey, *1980's.,* pp. 149, 154.

ons of mass destruction. Nevertheless, he claims that American people must face some stark choices.

> *So from the standpoint of Biblical prophecy, the U.S. must fade from its place of leadership for the West and its former supreme superpower status. There are several possible fates for the U.S. They include:*
> - *A takeover by the communists*
> - *Destruction by a surprise Soviet nuclear attack (I don't even like to think about this possibility)*
> - *Becoming a dependent of the 10-nation European confederacy*
> - *A far more hopeful fate than any of the above...*[233]

His fourth option is elaborated under the heading '*The More Important Duty*.' Lindsey claims that God has preserved the United States as a '*free country'* for four reasons. These include the presence of a large community of '*true believers'*; their support for missionaries around the world; their commitment to prayer; and,

> *The third reason is that the U.S. has stood behind the Jews and the nation of Israel in their times of need. Both here and in the Middle East, we have fought persecution of the Jewish people and their nation, many times when no one else would help. God said to Abraham, the father of all Jews: 'I'll bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you.' This promise was extended to protect all the descendants (sic) of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 12:3 and 27:29). I believe that if the U.S. ever turns its back on Israel, we will no longer exist as a nation. Don't take this lightly, for throughout history the rise and fall of empires can be directly related to how they treated the Jews.*[234]

By 1995 Lindsey was lamenting American ambivalence toward Israel.

> *I believe America's fate is tied directly to the way it relates to the nation of Israel. Think of the way America prospered from 1948 through 1967 when its support of the Jewish state was virtually unconditional. Today the United States has joined the worldwide chorus urging Israel to make concession after concession to the Arabs for nothing more than promises...*[235]

This he attributed to a failure on the part of the American establishment, and President, in particular, to maintain a foreign policy that was unequivocally pro-Israel based on a strategic military alliance against the Communists and Islam.

> *In these days of rogue Islamic nations acquiring nuclear missile capabilities, such short-sightedness is close to national suicide... We now have had a president of the United States who smoked marijuana but "didn't inhale." The American military is completely demoralized. Its mission has been radically altered from fighting force to "humanitarian" force. And as the defense budget is hacked away mercilessly, America's naive political leadership keeps finding*

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[233]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 132.
[234]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 158.
[235]Lindsey, *Final.,* p. 111.

more remote parts of the world in which to commit our confused young troops.[236]

After Jimmy Carter was elected president in 1976, America took a more strongly pro-Cairo line... Under President Bush, things deteriorated even further... George Bush's administration represented the most anti-Israel U.S. presidency ever. But that was then, and this is now. The current administration and, particularly, the new leadership emerging within the State Department, may make the Bush years look good by comparison.[237]

Lindsey has been particularly outspoken in criticising the United States decision to help monitor the Peace Accord by offering the services of the CIA both to the Palestine Authority as well as Israel.

Last week's Middle East peace deal puts the US smack in the middle of a war zone. President Clinton committed the Central Intelligence Agency to a role the CIA was not designed to do. The US promised to use the CIA to openly track Palestinian compliance with the Wye agreement... The use of the CIA in the Middle East is filled with dangerous possibilities for America... And it's the CIA's new role to play umpire. Anybody that's ever been to a baseball game knows what that means. The last thing the US needs is to hear the Arabs begin to chant 'kill the umpire.' Because they won't be throwing soda bottles.[238]

Appalled at the involvement of the United States in the peace agreement signed at the White House in 1993, Lindsey insisted,

Instead of peace, appeasement will lead to war in the Middle East. But not just war. This time it will lead to catastrophe, to nightmare, to unprecedented bloodshed and human suffering. In other words, it will lead to the Final Battle.[239]

The US is hopeful that at the "appropriate time" the negotiations on all aspects of the redeployment will resume. In other words, 'Gee, too bad. Now turn the rest of the land to your new Arab friends. They're trying not to kill you. Honest.' To the Arab world, America is the enemy to them and a friend to Israel. With enemies like us, why would Arafat need friends?[240]

The United States remains the most powerful country in the world. While Lindsey has been convinced for decades that the apocalypse is imminent, in 1995 he claimed,

But my gut reaction is that America will continue to decline in power and influence in the coming years. Clearly, America does not appear to play an ex-

[236]Lindsey, *Final.,* p. 225.
[237]Lindsey, *Final.,* p. 228.
[238]Lindsey, *International Intelligence Briefing*, 4th November 1998.
[239]Lindsey, *Final.,* p. 114.
[240]Lindsey, *International Intelligence Briefing*, 22nd October 1998.

traordinary role in the endtimes events. If she did, there would be more scriptural evidence for it.[241]

I have always believed and stated quite plainly that the fate of America is, to a great extent, determined by how it treats Israel. Why? Because God promised to bless those nations that were a blessing to Israel and curse those that were a curse upon the Jewish state. I won't go so far as to suggest that America has been a curse upon Israel of late, but it has been far from a blessing either... The U.S. has been protected by God because it has been a haven for Israelites and an ally for their survival... Now we are turning away, look for the "Late Great United States... Its understandable why America may be all but irrelevant by the time of the Final Battle."[242]

4.7 Europe and the Emergence of a Revived Roman Empire

Like many other dispensationalists before him, Lindsey claims the Bible predicts that the European nations are forming a revived Roman Empire which will eclipse the influence of the United States led by the Antichrist who is apparently alive today. Lindsey's writings on this subject show a rare ability to shape prophecy to fit the changing size of the European Community. In 1970, quoting Walter Hallstein, former president of the European Economic Community, Lindsey predicted,

We believe that the Common Market and the trend toward unification of Europe may well be the beginning of the ten-nation confederacy predicted by Daniel and the Book of Revelation... 'At about 1980 we may fully expect the great fusion of all economic, military, and political communities together into the United States of Europe.'[243]

In 1973, Lindsey returns to the same theme,

You'll notice that nine countries are already members of the Community... The European union has therefore been temporarily halted at nine members instead of ten. My personal belief is that God Himself stopped the rapid unification because the Revised (sic) *Roman Empire was coming together too fast. Once the confederacy includes the ten nations of God's choosing, the group will begin to look for a leader powerful enough to make this new nation the nucleus of a one-world government.*[244]

In 1980, Lindsey was more assured about his timetable.

When I wrote that in Late Great, the only possible successor to the Roman Empire (in my opinion) was the European Common Market. But a decade ago, that organization had just six member nations, not the 10 the Bible forecast. In 1979, Greece became the 10th member of the Common Market. Recently, the Common Market went beyond its original economic and trade func-

[241]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 215.
[242]Lindsey, *Final*., pp. 227, 231, 232.
[243]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 96.
[244]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 194.

tions and elected a parliament. This move will eventually fulfill the Common Market's long range goal - to unify its members into a single political body.[245]

Perhaps forseeing that more countries might conceivably wish to join the European Community, Lindsey wisely covers that eventuality also.

It is possible that more than 10 nations could at one point be admitted. But in the final stages, it will number 10.[246]

In 1994, Lindsey acknowledged that there were now 12 member nations and more likely to join, so, in order that Scripture be fulfilled, Lindsey predicted,

In phase 2 of the fourth kingdom, Rome will be in the form of a 10-nation confederacy. Therefore we can expect two nations to withdraw from the CE or we can expect to see mergers of nations.[247]

A year later, Lindsey was more specific about what would likely happen next.

I believe, for instance, that a split is very likely that will cause either Britain and/or Germany to leave the EC. Germany could forge a closer relationship with Russia, while Britain may turn toward the United States of America. The Bible is very clear, as we shall see, that this union will be a confederation of ten nations.[248]

In May 1998, with disagreement within the European Community over the use of the Euro currency, Lindsey came up with an alternative interpretation. Since the United Kingdom, Denmark and Sweden had decided to postpone a decision on using the common currency, and Greece had failed to comply with the monetary requirements for entry, Lindsey speculated,

When the prophet Daniel laid out the outline for the last days, he spoke of a revival of the Roman Empire. In it, he laid out the initial lineup of kingdoms that would form the basic system. He said there would be ten nations plus an eleventh 'little horn' as Daniel called it. Ultimately, Daniel said that three of the originating nations would be plucked up by their roots. What makes your story even more interesting is the fact that those who are part of the new system have their own name -- Euroland. At this point, its far too early to say that this is the configuration that the Bible predicted as the final form of what will be the nucleus of the Revived Roman Empire. But the numbers are exactly right. While it doesn't mean this is the exact time Daniel spoke of, it suggests it's close - very close.[249]

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[245]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 15.
[246]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 104.
[247]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 223.
[248]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 153.
[249]Lindsey, *Briefing*., 7th May 1998.

Lindsey consistently fails to acknowledge that pan-European military defence is provided not by the European Community but by NATO which is comprised of the armed forces of 17 nations**.**

4.8 The Coming Holocaust: Armageddon Theology in Practice

Most Christian Zionists are dispensationalists and all dispensationalists are premillennialists, holding to a pessimistic and deterministic view of the future. Lindsey is no exception. Without any hesitation or doubt he insists,

> '*And look what's happening in the Middle East - ground zero in the endtimes events.... This phoney peace deal in the Middle East thus only ensures that eventually there will be a thermonuclear holocaust in the Middle East... This seems to parallel predictions in Revelation and else where almost to a T. Mark my words. It will happen.'*[250]
>
> *Let's talk about World War III... We can almost see the handwriting on the wall... Does this sound like a scenario that could happen in the very near future? Perhaps at almost any minute? You bet it does.*[251]
>
> *Want to know what hell on earth will be like?. Hal Lindsey gives us the best glimpse to date... You couldn't get a better picture of what World War III will be like without being bodily transported into the future... This book focuses on a rapidly approaching climactic war - the most brutal, barbaric and destructive conflict ever waged on this planet.*[252]

At times Lindsey's description of the suffering inherent in this most terrible scenario of a nuclear holocaust is tasteless if not repulsive.

> *Man has pretty much exhausted his arsenal. There are few popguns left, but not very much left to pop them. At least four billion people have perished in the first 14 Judgments alone. Now its God's turn.*[253]
>
> *I always get a comical mental image when I read this next verse. In my mind's eye, I see this confused, cancer ridden, dull eyed, war-weary soldier. He smokes a giant joint and says, "Let the weak say, I am a mighty man"*[254]
>
> *If you liked the Cold War, stay tuned the sequel may be just around the corner.*[255]

In two of Lindsey's much early books he includes maps showing the various stages of this war of Armageddon. A comparison shows the evolution in Lindsey's thinking given a changing world.

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[250]Lindsey, *Planet*., pp. 243-244.
[251]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 255.
[252]Lindsey, *Final*., pp. back cover, xv.
[253]Lindsey, *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter*, p. 254.
[254]Lindsey, *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter*, p. 266.
[255]Lindsey, *Briefing*, 8th October 1998

The Late Great Planet Earth (1970)	Israel and the Last Days (1983)
Phase I: Pan Arabic assault & Russian amphibious assault.	*Map 1: King of the South. Pan-Arabic Armies Attack Israel (Daniel 11:40).* *Map 2: King of the North. The Soviet Union Launches an All-Out Invasion. (Daniel 11:40-45)*
Phase II: Russian Confederacy counterattack Middle East into Egypt (Daniel 11:40-42)	*Phases 1 & 2: Soviets and their allies launch massive invasion from land, sea and air.*
Phase III: Russian Confederacy initiates conquest of Africa, attacking to the West and South.	*Phase 3: Soviets launch lightning attack on Strait of Hormuz from Afghanistan to close off oil from Persian Gulf.*
Phase IV: Russian commander hears tidings out of the 'East' (Orient mobilizing) and out of the 'North' (Roman confederacy mobilizing) and regroups his troops. (Daniel 11:43-45)	*Phase 4. Soviet navy makes large amphibious invasion. Hits hard and lands at Haifa, gateway to the Valley of Armageddon. Also lands on shores of Egypt.* *Soviet commander moves rapidly through Israel on his way to Egypt and prepares to take Africa (See Daniel 11:42-44.)* *Map 3: Armies of the East and West. China and Ten Nations of Europe Counterattack (Revelation 16:12, Daniel 11:44)... The Soviets are totally destroyed.*
Phase V: Russian army returns to Israel from Egypt and is destroyed there.[256]	*Map 4: The Messiah Comes. Blood Shall Stand to the Horses Bridles (Revelation 14:19-20).*[257]

Despite the peace-process, in 1995, Lindsey maintained a predictably pessimistic stance regarding the future.

> *...the Middle East is more unstable and more prone to war than any time in modern history. Its literally on the brink of a catastrophic nuclear war. And the next time, its not going to be a regional, self-contained conflict. It will touch every part of the globe.*[258]

Four years later, his prognosis was just as bleak.

> *All the necessary elements are in place right now. And the clock keeps on ticking... Meanwhile both sides are making preparations for the possibility of a major conflict sometime around next May... arrangements must be made for the "right of return" of Palestinian refugees. Since meeting any or all of these*

[256]Lindsey, *Late*., pp. 155-159
[257]Lindsey, *Israel*., pp.37-44.
[258]Lindsey, *Final*., p. xix.

conditions would mean certain suicide for the Jewish State, it looks like war, sometime next spring.[259]

1999 has a weird, surrealistic feeling to it. Almost like a sense of impending doom... In Israel, it looks like the peace process is all but dead and war in the Middle East inevitable. It seems as if everything is spinning out of control... The feeling of impending doom is for everyone else... Bible prophecy proves everything is under control, and on schedule. We have nothing to fear.[260]

4.8.1 The Motivation for the War of Armageddon

At various times Lindsey has speculated as to the causes of the war of Armageddon. To justify the conviction that four great super-powers, a revived Roman Empire, a Russian, an African and the Chinese will all wish to occupy Palestine, Lindsey initially speculated that Israel would become the wealthiest and most desirable territory on earth.

The prophetic indication is that Israel will become one of the most prosperous nations on earth during the reign of the Antichrist... Israel will become a cultural, religious and economic world center, especially at Jerusalem. The value of the mineral deposits in the Dead Sea alone have been estimated at one trillion, two hundred and seventy billion dollars. This is more than the combined wealth of France, England, and the United States.[261]

Together with her strategic significance as a bridgehead between Africa, Asia and Europe, Lindsey argues, based on his interpretation of Ezekiel, that the Russians will invade Israel to gain control of this great material wealth.[262]

In 1983, Lindsey began to speculate about an alternative religious reason for the war of Armageddon.

The dispute to trigger the war of Armageddon will arise between the Arabs and Israelis over the Temple Mount and Old Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:2-3), the most contested and strategic piece of real estate in the world. Even now we are witnessing the escalation of that conflict.[263]

In 1994, Lindsey developed this religious theory further, describing the Temple Mount as '*The most disputed 35 acres on the planet*.'[264] He confidently predicted,

Two religions, Judaism and Islam, thus are on a collision course with global and heavenly repercussions... Islam will never accept Jerusalem as the undivided capital of the Jewish state, and Israel will never agree to give it up. This

[259]Lindsey, *Briefing*., 1st October 1998.
[260]Lindsey, *Briefing*., 7th January 1999.
[261]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 156.
[262]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 156.
[263]Lindsey, *Israel*., p. 19.
[264]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 156.

is the intractable, insoluble crisis that will soon result in the climax of world history.[265]

The whole prophetic scenario is in place. We see the Islamic nations united in mutual hatred of Israel. The dispute has nothing to do with borders or territory. It has to do with the existence of Israel and its claim on Jerusalem.[266]

In 1995, Lindsey lay the blame for the failure of the peace process and the coming holocaust squarely with the Moslems.

The peace process continues... But - and this is a big 'but' - any such settlement is doomed to ultimate failure for two basic reasons. First, because it doesn't deal with the principal causes of war between Arabs and Jews, which are rooted in the Muslim religion. Second, because it at the same time, increases the opportunities for war. The Muslim nations know that Israel must have the territory she has held since 1967 to successfully defend herself with conventional weapons. So when Israel is squeezed down to the presently agreed upon borders, the Muslims will once again figure that an all out attack on Israel would have a high probability of victory.[267]

4.8.2 The Strategy for the Soviet Occupation of Israel

In the *Late Great Planet Earth*, Lindsey claimed that Daniel 11 and Ezekiel 38 describe the way in which Russia will attack Israel.

When the Russians invade the Middle East with amphibious and mechanized land forces, they will make a 'blitzkrieg' type of offensive through the area... The current build-up of Russian ships in the Mediterranean serves as another significant sign of the possible nearness of Armageddon.[268]

Ten years after making his first predictions concerning the role of Russia in the war of Armageddon, Lindsey saw further corroboration.

In the Late Great Planet Earth I predicted that the Soviets would begin their Middle East campaign with a sweep through the Persian Gulf area into Iran. The recent Russian invasion of Afghanistan was a first step in that direction.[269]

Russia's attack on Afghanistan was its first step into the pages of Ezekiel, chapter 38. It's clear that the Russian strategy is to cut off the supply of Persian Gulf oil to the west and then close all sea lanes leading to that vital area.[270]

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[265]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 155.
[266]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 216.
[267]Lindsey, *Final*., p. xix.
[268]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 157.
[269]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 13.
[270]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 47.

The Russian invasion of Afghanistan has telegraphed the Soviet intention to take over the entire Middle East... This area has now fit precisely into the pattern predicted for it. All that remains is for the Russians to make their predicted move.[271]

When we apply this prophecy to modern times, it becomes obvious that the Soviets will use their recent conquest of Afghanistan as a springboard to overthrow Iran and gain control of the Persian Gulf area.[272]

Although apparently obvious to Lindsey, the Soviet military had another agenda and were forced ignominiously to pull out of Afghanistan. In 1990 when asked whether perhaps the Gulf War instead perhaps signalled the end of history, Lindsey claimed rather more evasively,

I've never named a day or time, but I can tell you this: Prophecy is on fast forward. I do believe we live in the generation that will see Armageddon.[273]

Then in early 1991 Lindsey again insisted the war against Iraq was '*setting the stage for the last, climactic war*.'[274] By 1995, however, the Islamic threat to destroy Israel would come, Lindsey now predicted, from Iran.

In Tehran, the new leader of the Islamic confederation is determined to do Allah's will and destroy Israel and thereby prove to the world that its creation was merely a historical anomaly. Here's the plan: Iran's Operation Grand Design includes a a (sic) *strategic amphibious invasion in a chemical weapons environment. The first step is clearly the overthrow of the house of Saud. By taking out Saudi Arabia, the Iran-Syria alliance would remove the vital Western military base, control the Islamic holy places and deprive the West of its supply of oil. According to intelligence sources, the plan then calls for an all-out airborne chemical and nuclear assault on the state of Israel. Such draconian plans become all the more achievable as Israel's borders shrink. That's the policy America is promoting today for Israel.*[275]

4.8.3 The Samson Option: Israel's Response to the Coming Holocaust

Following the war of 1973, Lindsey described a conversation with one of Israel's '*most brilliant and aggressive generals.*'[276] At Masada, all Israel's graduating military officers swear allegiance to the State, promising as part of a solemn oath that '*Masada shall never fall again*.' Lindsey claims this 'Masada Complex' has now been superseded by a more aggressive retaliatory stance known as the 'Samson Complex'.

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[271]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 63.
[272]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 68.
[273]*National Review* (19 November 1990) 49, cited in Demar, *Last.,* p. 200.
[274]'Artswatch,' World (2 March 1991), 15, quoted in Gary Demar, *Last Days Madness*, *Obsession of the Modern Church* (Atlanta, Georgia, American Vision, 1997), p. 107.
[275]Lindsey, *Final.,* p. 114.
[276]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 37.

A hint of Israel's new outlook was revealed just after the 1973 war. Time magazine quoted a conversation between General Moshe Dayan, then chief of Israel's defense, and the late Prime Minister Golda Meir. The conversation reportedly took place when Israel's defences were being overwhelmed both in the Sinai and in the Golan Heights. 'The Third Temple (a term for modern Israel) is falling,' Dayan reportedly told his prime minister. 'Arm the doomsday weapon.'... Anyone who understands the history of the Jewish people knows what the Israelis would do if they found themselves about to fall to their Arab enemies... I'm sure that if Israel saw its own destruction near it would use whatever was needed to bomb key Arab cities right off the map. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if Israel launched an attack on Russia as well, since the Soviets have armed and goaded Israel's Arab enemies. Remember, Israel has the capability of producing nuclear weapons, and its pilots are legends for their skill and daring. If the world were to stand by and allow another holocaust to occur, then, like Samson of old, Israel would surely take its enemies along to mutual destruction.[277]

In 1994, Lindsey was even more dogmatic. He anticipated that the consequence of the peace process would require Israel to relinquish more strategic territory in the Occupied Territories and the Golan. The consequences of this for Lindsey were dire.

Soon will come the time when Israel has no alternative but to use all or part of its nuclear arsenal - conservatively estimated at some 200 warheads. This doesn't even count its neutron bombs.[278]

A year later Lindsey claimed to have had access to Israeli military intelligence reports showing that the "Samson Option" was now operative.

Instead of just Jewish corpses, there would be millions of Arab corpses. The option is to launch an all-out nuclear attack on all the Arab capitals. I have seen and read the "Samson Option" a special paper that outlines a military doctrine now in force. If Israel is being overrun, they will use the nuclear option. Like Samson, they may go down, but so will all their enemies. And that's just a preview of how terrible things will be in the Final Battle.[279]

4.8.4 The Extent of the Final Holocaust

Lindsey describes in graphic detail what this war will be like. In his earliest writings, he predicted that there would be a Soviet invasion if Israel.

The Russian force will establish command headquarters on Mount Moriah or the Temple area in Jerusalem. Daniel pointed this out when he said: 'And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the seas [Dead Sea and Mediterranean

[277]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 39.
[278]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 247.
[279]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 128.

Sea] and the glorious holy mount Zion; yet he shall come to his end with none to help him' (Daniel 11:45 Amplified).[280]

However, Russia and her confederates will be destroyed completely by an act that Israel will acknowledge as being from their God. This act will bring many in Israel to believe in their true Messiah (Ezekiel 38:15ff.). The attack upon the Russian confederacy and the resulting conflict will escalate into the last war of the world, involving all nations.[281]

The armies of all nations will be gathered in the area of Israel, especially around Jerusalem. Think of it: at least 200 million soldiers from the Orient, with millions more from the forces of the West... Messiah Jesus will first strike those who have ravaged His city, Jerusalem. Then he will strike the armies amassed in the Valley of Meggido. No wonder blood will stand to the horses' bridles for a distance of two hundred miles from Jerusalem! (Revelation 14:20). Its grizzly to think about such carnage, but just to check all this out I measured from the point where the Valley of Armageddon sloped down to the Jordan Valley. From that point southward down the Valley through the Dead Sea to the port of Elath on the gulf of Aqabah measures approximately two hundred miles. Apparently this whole valley will be filled with war materials, animals, bodies of men, and blood![282]

I have traveled the entire length of this valley... It is almost impossible to imagine the valley covered with blood five feet high! Yet that is exactly what God predicts, and He always fulfills His Word. Some have asked, "Wouldn't the blood coagulate and not flow?" Blood exposed to intense radiation doesn't coagulate.[283]

Because of the intense radiation, blood will not coagulate. It will literally become a sea of blood five feet deep.[284]

The topography between Megiddo and Eilat would make such a vision difficult. Megiddo is approximately 50 metres above sea level while Jerusalem is over 800 metres above sea level. Most of the Jordan Valley, however, is 300 metres below sea level while the region around Eilat rises to around 70 metres above sea level. Without major geological changes, Lindsey's vision cannot be accomplished. However, based on Revelation 16, he believes, the impending *'...full-scale nuclear exchange'* will not only radically alter the climate causing a '*global heat wave'* but will also change the topography of the world.[285]

While this great battle is raging, every city in the world is going to be levelled. This will take place by what is called an 'earthquake' (Greek seismos), but that's not the only meaning. The word itself simply means 'a great shaking of

[280]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 160.
[281]Lindsey, *Late*., p. 71.
[282]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 215.
[283]Lindsey, *Final*, pp. 251-252.
[284]Lindsey, *Planet Earth: The Final Chapter*, p. 284.
[285]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 230.

the earth.' The earth could be shaken either by a literal earthquake or by a full-scale nuclear exchange of all remaining missiles. I lean towards the nuclear conflict; I believe that when these powers lock forces here, there will be a full-scale exchange of nuclear weapons, and its at this time that 'the cities of the nations fall.' Just think of the great cities of the world - London, Rome, Paris, Berlin, New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Mexico City, and Tokyo - all these great cities are going to be judged at that time![286]

Apparently the devastation will be so tremendous that not only will all the cities be destroyed, but the land itself will be ripped apart. The coastlines and continents will be changed and all the mountains will be shifted in elevation... This chapter closes with multiplied millions of soldiers slaughtering each other in and around Israel.[287]

That means half of the original population of the earth is wiped out within a space of no more than a few years. Perhaps in only a few months (Revelation 6:7, 8 and 9:15)... When all is said and done - after all the battles have been waged and Jesus has conquered Satan... Only a tiny fraction of the world's population will be left. Only a remnant will have survived... Hard to believe, isn't it? ... Think no such thing. This is reality.[288]

4.8.5 Supernatural Deliverance from the Holocaust

Most dispensationalists are not afraid of the imminent holocaust. Whereas Israel is the '*Fuse of Armageddon*'[289] Christians accepting a dispensational eschatology will, Lindsey insists, be safely raptured to heaven just before the tribulation of Armageddon begins. He depicts this event seen from the perspective of the non-Christian left behind,

There I was driving down the freeway and all of a sudden the place went crazy... cars going in all directions... and not one of them had a driver. I mean it was wild. I think we've got an invasion from outer space.[290]

While Lindsey is confident that Christians will escape the holocaust and witness the events from heaven he seems less certain concerning the fate of the Jews. His writings offer a variety of perspectives, some more hopeful than others. In *The Late Great Planet Earth* (1970), Lindsey taught,

...the great catastrophic events which are to happen to this nation during 'the tribulation' are primarily designed to shock the people into believing in their true Messiah (Ezekiel 38; 39)... According to Zechariah, terrible fighting will center around the city of Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:2,3; 14:1,2)... In a battle line which will extend throughout Israel with the vortex centred at the Valley of

[286]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 237.
[287]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 238.
[288]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 264.
[289]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 44.
[290]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 136.

Megiddo... Zechariah predicts that one-third of the Jews alive during this period will be converted to Christ and miraculously preserved.[291]

In *There's a New World Coming* (1973), Lindsey claimed God will supernaturally deliver Messianic Jews who come to believe in Jesus during the tribulation. The fate of those who do not believe is left unclear but presumably bleak given the carnage he envisages. Based on his reading of Revelation 7:4-8 Lindsey insists,

The fact that God redeems 144,000 literal Jews and ordains them His evangelists not only makes good sense but fits in with the counsel of God... So I say loud and clear: the 144,000 described here are not Jehovah Witnesses, or Mormon elders, or some symbol of the Church; they are Jews, Jews, Jews![292]

This chapter closes with multiplied millions of soldiers slaughtering each other in and around Israel.[293]

In *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* (1980), Lindsey is more hopeful for Israelis generally.

The God of Israel has sworn in the prophecies that He will not forsake the Israelis, nor let them be destroyed.[294]

By 1983, in *Israel and the Last Days*, Lindsey is able to reassure Jews that during the tribulation, despite being at the '*vortex'* of a world war involving hundreds of millions of soldiers and despite enduring nuclear as well as conventional attacks from Russia, Europe and China,

In one of the most incredible miracles of all time, Israel will be converted to faith in her true Messiah and then miraculously protected... (Zechariah 12:8,9). As promised, God will strengthen the Israelis to fight with a ferocity never seen before on this earth. He will also supernaturally protect them from being annihilated.[295]

In 1994, Lindsey had returned to a more pessimistic forecast.

...only a tiny fraction of the world's population will be left. Only a remnant will have survived. Many of the Jews would have been killed.[296]

In *The Final Battle* published in 1995, Lindsey seems to envisage contradictory scenarios for Israel. Under the heading "*It Will Take A Miracle To Save Israel - Intelligence Digest*", Lindsey was confident,

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[291]Lindsey, *Late*., pp. 48, 165, 167.
[292]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 121.
[293]Lindsey, *There's*., p. 238.
[294]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 45.
[295]Lindsey, *Israel.,* pp. 45-46.
[296]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 264.

A miracle is just what Zechariah Chapters 12 through 14 predict and promise will save Israel. God has promised in several passages that their nation will never, ever again be destroyed. All the weapons of the world won't overturn that promise. But Israel is in for a very rough time. The Jewish state will be brought to the brink of destruction.[297]

In a later chapter, however, he predicts in greater detail,

The land of Israel and the surrounding area will certainly be targeted for nuclear attack. Iran and all the Muslim nations around Israel have already been targeted with Israeli nukes. Russia clearly receives a knockout blow, probably in the form of a retaliatory strike. Russia's Eastern European allies would also likely suffer the same fate. All of Europe, the seat of power of the Antichrist, would surely be a nuclear battlefield, as would the United States... Zechariah gives an unusual, detailed account of how hundreds of thousands of soldiers in the Israel battle zone will die. Their flesh will be consumed from their bones, their eyes from their sockets, and their tongues from their mouths while they stand on their feet (Zechariah 14:12). This is exactly the sort of thing that happens from the intense radiation of a neutron type bomb... But God's power is certainly stronger than any nuclear bomb... We do know God will supernaturally strengthen and protect the believing Israelites so that they will survive the worst holocaust the world will ever see. Amen. But believe it or not, there's more to this story. The world is not over. Contrary to popular belief, the Final Battle is not the end of the world.[298]

Lindsey neglects to explain how this will be biologically or ecologically possible, nor how the 144,000 Jewish evangelists will have any ministry to perform in a post-nuclear holocaust world where the combined populations of America, Russia, China, Europe and the Middle East have been annihilated by destructive forces sufficient to modify the world's climate as well as topography. Since "*every city in the world will be leveled*"[299] it is difficult to imagine anyone alive, let alone anyone sane enough to want to listen to "*144,000 Hebrew Billy Grahams running round the world*"[300]

4.9 Dating the Second Coming of Christ

One reason other Dispensational writers have perhaps avoided quoting Lindsey or been reluctant to identify with his views, may be because of his tendency to set the date for Christ's return. Lindsey was not the first to do so. In 1828, one of the founders of what became dispensationalism, Edward Irving, set an example others have eagerly followed.

I conclude, therefore, that the last days... will begin to run from the time of God's appearing for his ancient people, and gathering them together to the work of destroying all Antichristian nations, of evangelising the world, and of

[297]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 184.
[298]Lindsey, Final., pp. 255-7.
[299]Lindsey, *Apocalypse*., p. 237.
[300]Lindsey, *Apocalypse*., p. 118.

governing it during the Millennium... The times and fulness of the times, so often mentioned in the New Testament, I consider as referring to the great period numbered by times... Now if this reasoning be correct, as there can be little doubt that the one thousand two hundred and sixty days concluded in the year 1792, and the thirty additional days in the year 1823, we are already entered upon the last days, and the ordinary life of a man will carry many of us to the end of them. If this be so, it gives to the subject with which we have introduced this year's ministry a very great importance indeed.[301]

Lindsey has exploited that same escapist fear throughout his writings. On the back cover of the American edition of *The 1980's Countdown to Armageddon*, for instance, is the assertion, '*We are the generation that will see the end times ...and the return of Jesus.*'[302] The British edition is more circumspect claiming enigmatically, '*We are the generation the prophets were talking about*...'[303] In 1994, Lindsey was still insisting,

It is clear that the Bible can't be talking about any other time in history but today. No man knows the day or hour this dramatic climax is going to occur. But there can be little doubt that this is the generation. It could start tomorrow.[304]

Lindsey's dogmatism concerning the imminent return of Christ is largely based on his interpretation of the 'signs' given in Matthew 24 and the meaning of the phrase 'this generation.'

4.9.1 This Generation

In his first book, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, Lindsey interprets Matthew 24 as referring to the events that have occurred since the State of Israel was founded in 1948. Lindsey calculates,

Jesus said that this would indicate that He was 'at the door,' ready to return. Then He said, 'Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place' (Matthew 24:34 NASB). What generation? Obviously, in context, the generation that would see the signs-chief among them the rebirth of Israel. A generation in the Bible is something like forty years. If this is a correct deduction, then within forty years or so of 1948, all these things could take place. Many scholars who have studied Bible prophecy all their lives believe that this is so.[305]

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[301]Edward Irving, *The Last Days A Discourse on the Evil Character of These Our Times, Proving Them to be The 'Perilous Times' and the 'Last Days'* (London, James Nisbit, 1850), pp. 10-22.
[302]Hal Lindsey, *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* (New York, Bantam, 1982), back cover.
[303]Hal Lindsey, *The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon* (Basingstoke, Lakeland, 1983), back cover.
[304]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 151.
[305]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 54.

Lindsey does not elaborate on who these scholars are but implicitly set 1988 as the date by which Jesus would return. In his later work, *'The 1980's Countdown to Armageddon'*, published in 1980, Lindsey continued to speculate that the tribulation would occur before 1990. '*The decade of the 1980's could very well be the last decade as we know It.'* [306] Many of his contemporary dispensationalists similarly placed great emphasis on 1988.[307]

By 1994, while persisting in his belief that Jesus meant this present generation, Lindsey had begun to prevaricate and lengthen a '*biblical generation'* since Jesus had not returned by 1988 as he had confidently predicted. Based on his revised calculations Lindsey claimed Jesus would return some time between now and 2067.

> *Jesus promised us that the generation that witnessed the restoration of the Jewish people to their homeland would not pass until 'all these things' - including his return to Earth - would be done. The Jewish people declared the rebirth of their nation in 1948. They recaptured Jerusalem in 1967. A biblical generation is somewhere between 40 to 100 years, depending on whether you take the example from Abraham's day or from the discipline of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. In either case, you do the arithmetic, folks. No matter how you cut it, there's not much time left.*[308]

> *I also said that 'if' a generation was 40 years and 'if' the generation of the 'fig tree' (Matthew 24:32-34) started with the foundation of the State of Israel, then Jesus 'might come back by 1988.' But I put a lot of ifs and maybes in because I knew that no one could be absolutely certain.*[309]

> *Many biblical scholars have pointed out the fact that a generation in the Bible is generally regarded as 40 years. Some people point out that 40 years has already passed since the rebirth of Israel and Jesus has not returned. Well folks, we simply don't know for certain how long a biblical generation is. In addition, we're not certain when that final countdown began. Did it begin in 1948 when Israel was reborn? Or could it have begun in 1967 when Jerusalem, the apple of God's eye, was recaptured and reunified under Jewish control? We simply don't know and that is the way God wants it.*[310]

The failure of Lindsey's published timetable led him to reappraise the critical 'sign' upon which his chronology was based.

> *My recent study of Daniel 9:24-27 has convinced me that the capture of Jerusalem in 1967 may be a more prophetically significant event than the rebirth*

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[306]Lindsey, *1980's.,* back page.

[307]A classic example was, Edgar Whisenant, who predicted the return of Christ some time between 11-13 September 1988 in his book, *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988* (Nashville, World Bible Society, 1988), pp. 3, 36, 56, which sold 2 million copies. See also Tom Sine, *Cease Fire* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1995), p. 57, and Richard Kyle, *The Last Days are Here Again* (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1998) p. 121.

[308]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 3.

[309]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 6.

[310]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 144.

of the nation. Think of it. In June of that year, the Jews recaptured Jerusalem and re-established a lasting sovereignty over it for the first time since the Babylonian destruction in the 6th Century B.C.[311]

In *The Final Battle,* Lindsey also implied a date before 2024 A.D was now feasible,

But note carefully, Jesus said the generation would not "pass away until all was fulfilled." In other words, many who saw the signs begin to come together would not die before their climactic fulfillment. Life expectancy today in the U.S. is about 76 years[312]

In Lindsey's latest work, *Planet Earth, The Final Chapter*, with the benefit of hindsight, he now claims, the period between 1948 and 1967 does not count in calculating the time of the Lord's return.

...the prophetic time-clock stalled in 1948, and did not resume again until the pivotal events on June 6, 1967, when for the first time in 2500 years, Jews once again had sovereign control of Jerusalem and have maintained it.[313]

While Lindsey places great emphasis on holding to a 'literal' hermeneutic, on passages such as this, he appears to accept an interpretation that is far from literal. When Jesus refers to '*this generation'* he uses the same language as in Matthew 16:28, where he predicts, *"I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."* In both cases most commentators believe Jesus is referring to those alive at that time, rather than a generation living 2000 years or more later.[314]

4.9.2 The Anti-Christ is Alive and Well

Integral with the '*end times'* scenario Lindsey envisages, is the conviction that the Antichrist is alive and about to be revealed. Beginning in 1970, Lindsey has repeatedly insisted that this individual is alive today.

We believe that the dramatic elements which are occurring in the world today are setting the stage for this magnetic, diabolical Future Fuehrer to make his entrance.[315]

As I wrote 10 years ago in The Late Great Planet Earth, I believe this man is alive today-alive and waiting to come forth... I believe this leader is alive

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[311]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 144.
[312]Lindsey, *Final*., p. 263.
[313]Lindsey, *Planet Earth, The Final Chapter* (Beverly Hills, Western Front, 1998), p. 76.
[314]David Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (London, Oliphants, 1972), pp. 323-324; David E. Garland, *Reading Matthew, a Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel* (London, SPCK, 1993), pp. 234-238; R.T. France, *Matthew, Evangelist & Teacher* (Exeter, Paternoster, 1989), 315.
[315]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 113.

somewhere in Europe; perhaps he is already a member of the EEC parliament.[316]

He will immediately rise to prominence in the EEC and from that post he will offer the world amazing solutions to all its complex and terrifying problems. Because of his superhuman powers and his solutions to the world's conflicts, the anti-Christ will be chosen to lead the EEC.[317]

Heading up what will evolve into a 10-nation confederacy will be a man of such magnetism and power that he will become the greatest dictator the world has ever known... And he is alive today. There is a potential dictator waiting in the wings somewhere in Europe who will make Adolf Hitler and Josef Stalin look like choir boys. Right now he is preparing to take his throne, inflaming his soul with visions of what he will be able to do for mankind with his grand schemes and revolutionary ideas... Is alive and well on planet Earth... Lets go meet him.[318]

Today, the man who will command this budding economic and military colossus - this phony savior of Jerusalem - is alive and well somewhere in Europe. The man who will make a pact with Satan for a few months of glory in this world is planning his ascendancy.

Despite promising in 1995, '*I will show you who will be the key players in this endtimes drama,*'[319] and for thirty years, making detailed predictions about this 'someone', supposedly alive today, Lindsey is still unable to identify the anti-Christ.

4.9.3 Signs of the Times

Consistently and repeatedly, Lindsey draws attention to 'signs' which he believes indicate that the return of Jesus is very near. In this respect, Lindsey is simply reiterating a conviction held by earlier dispensationalists. John Walvoord, a member of the faculty at Dallas Theological Seminary while Lindsey was a student, held very similar views to Lindsey some twenty years earlier.

John Walvoord (1962)	Hal Lindsey (1980 & 1994)
In the present world scene there are many indications pointing to the conclusion that the end of the age may soon be upon us... In this generation.	*We are the generation he was talking about. I say this because, unmistakably, for the first time in history, all the signs are coming together at an accelerating rate.*[321]
Never before in the history of the world has there been a confluence of major evidences of preparation for the end.[320]	*...never before in the history of the planet have events and conditions so coincided as to set the stage for this history-*

[316]Lindsey, *1980's.,* pp. 15, 106.
[317]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 109.
[318]Lindsey, *Planet*., pp. 232, 235.
[319]Lindsey, *Final*., p. xv.
[320]John Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1962), p. 129.
[321]Lindsey, *1980's.,* p. 162.

	stopping event.[322]

In 1983 Lindsey was even more emphatic.

> *All the predicted signs are before us. No other generation has ever witnessed the simultaneous coming together of these prophetic events. It is because of this that I believe we are the generation that will see the Lord Jesus' return. World events viewed through the grid of Bible prophecy indicate that we are rapidly moving toward the end of history as we know it.*[323]

Lindsey goes to great lengths to show that the 'signs' of his imminent return predicted by Jesus, such as wars, earthquakes, famines, etc. are increasing dramatically.

> *There have been many great earthquakes throughout history, but, according to surprisingly well-kept records, in the past they did not occur very frequently. The 20th Century, however, has experienced an unprecedented increase in the frequency of these calamities. In fact, the number of earthquakes per decade has roughly doubled in each of the ten year periods since 1950... The 1970's experienced the largest increase in the number of killer quakes known in history.*[324]

Whilst Lindsey lists the major earthquakes which occurred in the 1970's, he offers no evidence to substantiate his assertion that such disturbances are increasing exponentially. In 1994 he quoted from a U.S. Geological Survey, which allegedly shows the number of earthquakes increasing.[325] Others remain unconvinced and quote seismologists to that effect.[326] Lindsey's apocalyptic claim that in 1982, the so-called '*Jupiter Effect*' would cause '*history's greatest outbreak of earthquakes*' did not materialise.[327] While other contemporary dispensationalists like Thomas Ice could insist,

> '*...there are no signs relating to the rapture. The fruit of date setting... has not been gathered from the root called dispensationalism,*'[328]

Lindsey and others have proved that date-setting sells books.[329] So in a foreword to *The Coming Russian Invasion of Israel*, by Thomas McCall and Zola Levitt, Lindsey claims, '*I feel this book is a must for everyone who wants to know where we are on*

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[322]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 306.
[323]Lindsey, *Israel*., p. 47.
[324]Lindsey, *1980's*., pp. 29-30.
[325]Lindsey, *Planet.,* pp. 83-84.
[326]Demar, *Last*., p. 331. See also http://www.Bible.ca/pre-earthquakes-history-data.htm
[327]Lindsey, *1980's*., p. 29.
[328]Thomas D. Ice, 'Dispensationalism, Date-Setting and Distortion,' *Biblical Perspectives* (September/October, 1988), p. 1.
[329]Gary DeMar & Peter J. Leithart, *The Legacy of Hatred Continues, A Response to Hal Lindsey's The Road to Holocaust,* (Tyler, Texas, Institute for Christian Economics, 1989), p. 31.

God's time-table.'[330] In 1994, with an eye on the Middle East, Lindsey was still insisting,

> *It is clear that the Bible can't be talking about any other time in history but today. No man knows the day or hour this dramatic climax is going to occur. But there can be little doubt that this is the generation. It could start tomorrow. We are on the brink of some startling prophetic development. Never before has the world stage been set for the climax of history as it is today. Pray for God's intervention. The 'times of the Gentiles' are rapidly drawing to a close.*[331]

In describing the Apostle John's description of Armageddon, Lindsey reminds his readers in 1994, '*...of this endtimes battle, which I believe is coming in this decade or the next.'*[332]

Lindsey appears able to hold in tension his declared agnosticism over the precise timing of the Lord's return with the ability to predict the decade, always just a few years hence. Since 1970, as each decade has passed, Lindsey has offered with each new book another 'imminent' prediction when the old one has been superceded. For example, he reflects,

> *I remember saying to myself a little over 13 years ago while writing the book, The 1980s: Countdown to Armageddon, that if the Lord doesn't come by the mid 1990s, we'll be able to see the end more clearly from there. And now that we're here, wow, can we see it.*[333]

In an 'Afterword' Lindsey looked on toward the celebrations being planned for the 31st December 1999.

> *Just for the record: I'm not planning to attend. In fact looking at the state of the world today, I wouldn't make any long-term earthly plans. We may be caught up to meet Christ in the clouds, between now and then - just as I described in an earlier chapter. Could I be wrong? Of course. The rapture may not occur between now and the year 2000. But never before in the history of the planet have events and conditions so coincided as to set the stage for this history-stopping event... I want to spend the final pages of this book discussing what I expect to see happen in the hours and minutes we have left.*[334]

In the same work, Lindsey made his most provocative claim, repeated word for word a year later in 1995, concerning the imminent return of Christ.

> *Folks, the footsteps of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, can already be heard as He approaches the doors of heaven to return.*[335]

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[330]Cited in C. Van der Waal, *Hal Lindsey and Biblical Prophecy* (Neerlandia, Alberta, Canada, Inheritance Publications, 1991), p. 14.
[331]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 151.
[332]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 213.
[333]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 164.
[334]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 306.
[335]Lindsey, *Planet*., p. 160, *Final*., p. 108.

5. Lindseyism and Charges of Anti-Semitism

Assured of the veracity of his own interpretation of Biblical prophecy and contemporary events, like Darby, Lindsey has sought to inoculate his followers from the criticisms levelled against him.[336]

> *Peter... even warned that in 'the latter times' men posing as religious leaders would rise from within the Church and deny, even ridicule, the prophetic word (II Peter 2:1-3; 3:1-18). If you pass this book around to many ministers you'll find how true this prediction has become.*[337]

> *No self-respecting scholar who looks at the world conditions and the accelerating decline in Christian influence today is a 'postmillennialist.'*[338]

> *I've said it before and I will no doubt say it again: When the Rapture occurs, many churches will not have to find a new pastor. That's how badly infected the modern church is with deceiving spirits.*[339]

Given his controversial reading of Scripture, Lindsey has attracted criticism particularly from postmillennialists[340] as well as from fellow dispensationalists who distance themselves from what they term the popular 'apocalyptism' of 'Lindseyism'.[341]

> *It's obvious that Lindsey does nor represent 'orthodox' dispensationalism. But Lindsey's brand of date-setting dispensationalism is the prevailing system. If*

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[336]Roy Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement* (Exeter, Paternoster, 1968), p. 135.
[337]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 67.
[338]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 176.
[339]Lindsey, *Planet.,* p. 29.
[340]Samuele Bacciochi, *Hal Lindsey's Prophetic Jigsaw Puzzle, Five Predictions That Failed* (Berrien Springs, Biblical Perspectives); Gary DeMar & Peter J. Leithart, *The Legacy of Hatred Continues, A Response to Hal Lindsey's The Road to Holocaust,* (Tyler, Texas, Institute for Christian Economics, 1989); Kenneth Gentry, 'Dispensationalism's Achilles' Head: Comments on Hal Lindsey's The Road to Holocaust' *Dispensationalism in Transition*, Institute of Christian Economics, Vol II, No. 8 & 9, 1989; Steve Schlissel & David Brown, *Hal Lindsey and the Restoration of the Jews* (Edmonton, Alberta, Still Waters Revival Books, 1990); Curtis Crenshaw, a review of Steve Schlissel & David Brown, *Hal Lindsey and the Restoration of the Jews* (Edmonton, Alberta, Still Waters Revival Books, 1990) *Contra Mundum* No. 3, Spring 1992.; C. Van der Waal, *Hal Lindsey and Biblical Prophecy*, (Neerlandia, Alberta, Inheritance Publications, 1991); Stephen O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (Oxford, Oxford University Press); John Mann, a review of Stephen O'Leary's, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (Oxford, Oxford University Press), http://homepages.anglianet.co.uk/johnm/apoc.html . See also *Dispensationalism in Transition* (Institute of Christian Economics, Tyler, Texas); Center for the Refutation of Dispensational Falsehoods (CRDF) web site: http://village.ios.com/~dougg/biblstud/crdf/crdf.htm ; *Contra Mundum* web site: http://www.wavefront.com/~contra_M/cm/reviews.cm03_rev_jewish.html ;
[341]Blaising & Bock, *Dispensationalism*., pp. 14-15.

Lindsey had not intimated at dates, and used the regathering of unbelieving ethnic Israel to their land as the basis for his speculations, The Late Great Planet Earth would not have been an eschatological novelty. It was the predictions that sold the books. Therefore, many who call themselves dispensationalists are really 'Lindseyite dispensationalists.'[342]

Lindsey's most controversial book is probably *Road to Holocaust*. In it, like Darby, he makes eschatology a test of orthodoxy.[343] He accuses those who refuse to accept dispensationalism's distinction between the Church and Israel of actually encouraging anti-Semitism since they deny any future role for the State of Israel within the purposes of God.

...the same error that founded the legacy of contempt for the Jews and ultimately led to the Holocaust of Nazi Germany.[344]

The purpose of this book is to warn about a rapidly expanding new movement in the Church that is subtly introducing the same errors that eventually and inevitably led to centuries of atrocities against the Jews and culminated in the Holocaust of the Third Reich... They are setting up a philosophical system that will result in anti-Semitism.[345]

As I wrote in my book. The Road to Holocaust, the allegorizing of prophetic passages and the unconditional covenants made to the believing Jewish remnant, in which future national blessings are guaranteed to them, open the door to Christian anti-Jewish attitudes.[346]

Given that Lindsey's form of pre-tribulational dispensationalism with its rigid distinction between Israel and the Church, was unheard of prior to 1830, he is essentially condemning all Christians before then as well as those since who hold contrary views of the relationship of Israel to the Church. Lindsey is less than charitable toward those affirming a covenantal post-millennial eschatology.

Man, this is one of the things that's dangerous. This is the most anti-Semitic movement I've seen since Adolf Hitler.[347]

Critics argue that it is actually Lindsey who is perpetuating the legacy of racism and anti-Semitism.

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[342]Gary DeMar and Peter J. Leithart, *The Legacy of Hatred Continues: A response to Hal Lindsey's The Road to Holocaust* (Tyler, Texas, Institute for Christian Economics, 1989), p. 17.
[343]J. N. Darby, 'The Rapture of the Saints and the Character of the Jewish Remnant,' *Collected Writings,* Prophetic. IV, Vol. II, p. 154.
[344]Lindsey, *Road.,* back page. Refuted by Gary DeMar and Peter J. Leithart, *The Legacy of Hatred Continues: A Response to Hal Lindsey's The Road to Holocaust* (Fort Worth, Dominion Press, 1989)
[345]Lindsey, *Road*., p. 3
[346]Lindsey, *Final.,* p. 36.
[347]Hal Lindsey, *The Dominion Theology Heresy*, Tape 217, 1987, quoted in DeMar & Leithart, *Legacy*., p. viii.

The ongoing attempt to identify the real Antichrist is still spawning racism, polarization, and conflict. In a chapter of The Late Great Planet Earth entitled 'The Yellow Peril,' Lindsey describes how 'vast hordes of the Orient' are likely to threaten our future... I am convinced that the relentless and impassioned search for the Antichrist through the years has produced a tragic amount of racism, religious hatred, and violence. It both nourishes and feeds off the illusion that the world can best be understood in simple black-and-white apocalyptic terms - the powers of Antichrist verses the powers of God.[348]

Harold Brown traces the link between Marcion's heretical view of a radical discontinuity between the Old and New Testaments and anti-Semitism.

One consequence of Marcion's rejection of the Old Testament was hostility to the Jews. Both Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism which were much more critical of Old Testament Law than the Reformed tradition are also more inclined to anti-Semitism. The rejection of the authenticity and authority of the Old Testament by nineteenth-century liberalism was followed by virulent anti-Semitism, especially in Germany.[349]

Following traditional dispensationalism, Lindsey does not believe the moral law enshrined in the Ten Commandments has any abiding relevance for Christians.

The Law of Moses was specifically given only to the Nation of Israel. More than 150,000 of the first believers in Jesus as Messiah were all Israelites. When the early Jewish believers first had to deal with the problem of Gentile converts, many were still confused about the purpose of the Law. They tried to put the Gentiles under the Mosaic Law... Israel's failure under the Law serves as an historical lesson to all of us today that religion of all kinds blinds us to the truth.[350]

Brown's observations concerning the environment which gave rise to anti-Semitism could therefore justifiably apply to dispensationalists such as Darby, Scofield[351] and Lindsey who deny the validity of the Old Testament moral law, such as the prohibition to commit murder, on the Gentiles.

Dispensationalism creates an environment for any despot to do what he wants, even murder, since Jewish law, the Old Testament was never intended for the Gentile nations. Hitler murdered millions of Jews, but what law would

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[348]Tom Sine, *Cease Fire: Searching for Sanity in America's Culture Wars* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1995), p. 58.
[349]Harold O. J. Brown, *Heresies: The Image of Christ in the Mirror of Heresy and Orthodoxy from the Apostles to the Present* (Garden City, New York, Doubleday, 1984), p. 455, note 38.
[350]Lindsey, *Road.,* pp. 153-154. Lindsey's disdain for the Mosaic Law may have contributory in his justification in divorcing not just one wife but two and his marrying a third, Kim, 25 years his junior. http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/lindsey/lindsey.htm
[351]Scofield, *Scofield Reference Bible*., fn. 1, p. 20, p. 989.

Hal Lindsey use to judge him? The Ten Commandments? But that's Jewish law.[352]

Donald Grey Barnhouse, another leading dispensationalist insisted, however,

It was a tragic hour when the reformation churches wrote the Ten Commandments into their creeds and catechisms and sought to bring Gentile believers into bondage to Jewish law, which was never intended either for the Gentile nations or for the church.[353]

Without the law of God, protection against anti-Semitism and other forms of racism are removed. It is ironic that Lindsey should charge his critics with anti-Semitism while he believes Israel will make a '*Treaty with Hell',*[354] that two-thirds of all Jews will die in the battle of Armageddon, that the 200 mile valley from the Sea of Galilee to Eilat will flow with blood several feet deep,[355] and with,

...death on a massive scale... One-fourth of the world's population will be destroyed within a matter of days... Nearly one billion people.[356]

Given his apocalyptic dispensational eschatology in which the 'church age' will fail just like the previous five, Lindsey is intensely pessimistic about the Middle East peace process and any possibility of co-existence between Jews and Arabs. He insists,

It is this kind of fierce pride and smoldering hatred against Israel that will keep the Middle East a dangerous trouble spot. No Arab leader could hope to remain in power if he were willing to make concessions in negotiating with Israel.[357]

Demar suggests a reason why Lindsey should charge his critics with anti-Semitism.

The futuristic and unwarranted literalistic interpretation of these passages forces the dispensationalist to predict the greatest holocaust the world has ever seen, all in the name of dispensational premillennialism! Is it any wonder that Hal Lindsey wants to paint non-dispensational premillennialist (sic) *as holocaust-orientated? He must cover up the inevitable holocaust predicted by dispensationalism.*[358]

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[352]Gary DeMar and Peter J. Leithart, *Legacy.,* p. 25.
[353]S. Lewis Johnson, 'The Paralaysis of Legalism' *Bibliotheca Sacra* (April/June 1963), p. 109. Cited in Gary DeMar and Peter J. Leithart, *The Legacy.,* p. 24.
[354]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 151.
[355]Hal Lindsey*, The Final Battle* (Palos Verdes, Western Front, 1995), pp. 250-252; *Israel and the Last Days* (Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House, 1983), pp. 20-30.
[356]Hal Lindsey, *There's a New World Coming* (New York, Bantam Books, 1984, p. 90.
[357]Lindsey, *Late.,* p. 76.
[358]Gary DeMar and Peter J. Leithart, *The Legacy of Hatred Continues: A response to Hal Lindsey's The Road to Holocaust* (Tyler, Texas, Institute for Christian Economics, 1989), p. 27.

Perceptive Jews are not surprisingly cynical of Christian Zionist support for the State of Israel when it is realised that they largely share Lindsey's dispensational views on the fate of the Jews, while Christians are safely 'raptured' to heaven to escape the mother of all holocausts.

6. A Summary and Critique of Hal Lindsey's Christian Zionism

Lindsey is a pessimistic dispensational futurist premillennial Christian Zionist - He sees no future in the peace accord and is mistrustful of and implacably hostile toward Israel's Arab neighbours. His declared mission is to shock people into believing in Jesus to avoid going through Armageddon. He is committed to Jewish evangelism although he believes most will only be converted after the Messiah returns.

Lindsey's particular kind of reading of history, coloured by a literal exegesis of highly selective biblical scriptures, is essentially polarised, dualistic, racist and confrontational. He justifies the continued demonisation of Russia, China, Islam and the Arab nations; he encourages the continued military and economic funding of Israel by the United States; he urges Israelis to resist negotiating land for peace and instead, maintain their apartheid policies, settling and incorporating the Occupied Territories within the State of Israel; and he incites fundamentalist groups committed to destroying the Dome of the Rock and rebuilding the Jewish Temple. In so doing Lindsey identifies unconditionally with the political as well as religious far right both in the United States as well as in Israel. Ironically, as the 'father' of 'armageddon theology' his attempts to defend Israel and to refute anti-Semitism may actually be leading to the very holocaust he abhors but repeatedly predicts.

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