

The R.U.S.H. Bible Study Apologetics Project

The Case for Modern Zionism



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This one should be a hoot. DH

For the record, I don't care what you think on this subject. The main reason for that position is because you and I really can't control events of this magnitude with a discussion at Starbucks sucking on a couple of lattes and eating croissants. The decision makers involved aren't asking for our thoughts on the matter, and I'm not going to go to war with friends over things we can't change. This is simply the pro-Zionism argument made because I am pro an Israeli state.

That makes this discussion purely academic. An exercise of wit and hopefully wisdom. The purpose of this paper is not to change your mind. Believe what you want to believe.

The R.U.S.H. Bible Study position officially is to win souls not arguments.

However, if you want me to change my mind, you will not be able to do so without a clear and concrete Biblical argument on the matters here-in discussed with scripture references included and typed out. That is what I did here for you, if you are too lazy to do the same for me, keep your opinions to yourself. The reason I say that in this paper, and on this topic is,

- 1. The paper-thin quality of the arguments I have been exposed too so far. No less than a dozen anti-zionist proponents who have almost to a man mentioned the Brandenburg's and Black Rock etc. could not even identify one prominent CEO, CFO or COO by picture of any of the guilty parties they accuse. Not one. They slander people they don't even know. That's how lazy their research is.*
- 2. The company you are keeping that hold the same opinion. Drug users, homosexuals, atheists, Muslims, nazi's, communists, the worst of the worst, ALL are overwhelmingly anti-zionist. The numbers are staggering. That's a BIG RED FLAG.*
- 3. The volume the pro-Hamas crowd uses when the scripture I quote unravels their flat earth, alien abductions, Elvis killed JFK brains. By my last check Roget's had 31 synonyms for accuracy. Volume wasn't one of them. We will disagree with inside voices.*

A note of clarification so as not to be vague. I am not a rubber stamp for Israel, nor should America be. I believe in American interests above those of Israel, and Israel needs to be held accountable for their behavior just like everybody else.

Having said that, America *should very much so* aid Israel in defending themselves, eliminating their enemies, ending Hamas and all their supporters in Israel, and we should do the same here ourselves. A war tribunal is mandated without question.

None of the global terrorism would be happening today if the global leaders during the Carter administration would not have made one very crucial mistake. They over threw the Shah of Iran under the guise of freedom of religion. Islam is not a religion. It is a very religious political system. Political systems don't deserve protection. They deserve only scrutiny. The Muslim may serve God as he/she pleases I agree. But Islam should be banned as an organization,

because it's tenets of faith violate the constitution. They should not be protected, they should not be allowed to build buildings etc. The purpose of those is Calafat, and that means war.

Definition and Significance of Zion

Zion originally referred to the Jebusite fortress in Jerusalem that David captured.

"Nevertheless, David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David." 2 Samuel 5:7

Zion came to denote not only the physical city of Jerusalem but also the heart of God's relationship with His covenant people. Throughout Scripture, "Zion" symbolizes both the location of the city and the spiritual center of divine promises. Its walls, Temple, and inhabitants were set apart as a demonstration of God's covenant faithfulness and sovereign plan. The purpose of Israel is to demonstrate to the world how God punishes, rewards, loves, and guides people, but most importantly, so Israel could proclaim God's praise.

"For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession." – **Deuteronomy 7:6**

"Therefore say to the Israelites: This is what the Sovereign Lord says: It is not for your sake, people of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone." – **Ezekiel 36:22-23**

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." – **Jeremiah 29:11**

"I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you." – **Genesis 17:7**

"You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with the Lord your God, a covenant the Lord is making with you this day and sealing with an oath, to confirm you this day as his people, that he may be your God as he promised you and as he swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." – **Deuteronomy 29:12-13**

"This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people." – **Hebrews 8:10**

"He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations, the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac." – **Psalms 105:8-10**

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." – **Ezekiel 36:26**

*“And provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.” – **Isaiah 61:3***

*“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for.” – **Isaiah 40:1-2***

*“This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘I will save my people from the countries of the east and the west. I will bring them back to live in Jerusalem; they will be my people, and I will be faithful and righteous to them as their God.’” – **Zechariah 8:7-8***

*“If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself.” – **2 Timothy 2:13***

*“But I will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness.” – **Psalms 89:33-34***

*“For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.” – **Psalms 100:5***

*“I ask then: Did God reject his people? By no means! I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew.” – **Romans 11:1-2***

*“I the Lord do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.” – **Malachi 3:6***

*“And say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land.’” – **Ezekiel 37:21***

*“It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.” – **Revelation 21:12-14***

*“In the last days, the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.” – **Isaiah 2:2***

*“I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.” – **Romans 11:25***

Old Testament Foundations

1. Abrahamic Covenant and the Land

In Genesis, God makes a covenant with Abraham, promising a specific land as an everlasting possession.

*The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you."² "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.
³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." **Genesis 12:1-3***

*And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." **Genesis 17:8.***

This promise is renewed with Isaac and Jacob, and establishes a deep historical bond between the descendants of Abraham and the land. While the term "Zion" specifically emerges later, the covenant framework underscores the notion that the territory surrounding Jerusalem holds significant spiritual value.

*But I will establish My covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time next year." **Genesis 17:21***

God appears to Jacob in a dream, standing above a ladder reaching to heaven, and declares: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you now lie. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All the families of the earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. Look, I am with you, and I will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

2. Davidic Covenant and Zion

When David conquered Jerusalem (quoted above from 2 Samuel), the city became the political and religious center of ancient Israel. Subsequently, God made a covenant with David:

*"Your house and kingdom will endure before Me forever, and your throne will be established forever" **2 Samuel 7:16.***

Jerusalem, often synonymously referred to as Zion, became the focal point for worship and the monarchy of Israel. This dual role of both political and spiritual purposes would shape how later generations viewed the city's enduring significance. I have listened to many people say that God has ended this covenant. But I have not seen that in scripture.

3. Temple as God's Dwelling Place

We all agree that Solomon constructed the Temple on Mount Moriah in 2 Chronicles 3:1, which is within the broader area of Zion.

Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite. 2 Chronicles 3:1

Repeatedly, Scripture emphasizes that God chose Zion as His dwelling place among His people. This highlights the deep covenantal relationship in which the physical place became closely tied to divine revelation, worship, and the sacrificial system.

*"For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation.
This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it." Psalm 132:13-14*

Prophets and Promises of Restoration

1. Prophetic Witness

The prophets repeatedly affirmed both judgment and hope for Zion. Books like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel declare that though the city would face consequences for Israel's disobedience, God would not forget His covenant promises. In Isaiah, we read:

"For the LORD has comforted His people; He has redeemed Jerusalem" Isaiah 52:9.

This vow of restoration stands at the heart of Zion's ongoing biblical importance.

New Testament Perspectives

1. Jesus' Ministry and Zion

Jesus taught in Jerusalem's Temple courts (Luke 19:45-48) and was crucified and resurrected in the vicinity of the city. Early believers assembled in Jerusalem awaiting the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). Thus, Zion remains a central fixture in events culminating in salvation history.

2. Spiritualization of Zion

The New Testament also uses Zion imagery to emphasize believers' spiritual inheritance. The writer of Hebrews proclaims:

“Instead, you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem”
Hebrews 12:22.

This indicates an additional dimension: though Zion retains its historical-geographical significance, it also represents the eternal reality of God’s kingdom, into which believers from all nations are invited.

3. Promise of Future Fulfillment

Romans 11 suggests that God has not cast-off Israel. Paul’s discussion alludes to a future unfolding of divine purposes that will again bless physical Israel. Many theologians see that culminating around Jerusalem (Zion) in the eschatological plan, pointing to prophecies such as Zechariah 14, which anticipate the Messiah’s return to Jerusalem.

Understanding Modern Zionism Through a Biblical Lens

1. Historical Context

The term “Zionism” in current usage typically refers to support for a Jewish homeland in the land of Israel. Although the modern movement arose in the late 19th century among secular Jewish thinkers, many Christians look back at the biblical covenants and prophecies to see continuity with God’s promises of restoration. Even before the formal establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, there were Christian voices that drew on Scriptures such as Jeremiah 31:35-37 to assert that God’s covenant with Israel ensures an ongoing, tangible relationship with the land.

2. Varieties of Christian Perspectives

The question of “Christian Zionism” can elicit different responses:

- Some believers emphasize the literal fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies regarding Israel’s gathering and the significance of events taking place in the modern State of Israel.
- Others contend that many Old Testament promises are realized in Christ’s Church and interpret the land theme more symbolically, though still acknowledging a final eschatological resolution involving Jerusalem.

3. Points of Convergence

Despite varying interpretations, a broad consensus among Bible-focused believers acknowledges God’s unique dealings with Israel. Paul underscores that Israel remains “*beloved on account of the patriarchs*” (Romans 11:28). Even those with different theological emphases often converge on the significance of Jerusalem in biblical prophecy, the abiding place of God’s covenant, and the eventual culmination of redemptive history there.

Archaeological and Historical Corroboration

1. City of David Excavations

Archaeological work in the City of David area south of today's Old City walls has unearthed structures from the time of King David and Hezekiah's tunnel system (2 Kings 20:20). These findings underscore the Bible's historical portrait of Jerusalem as a hub of Israel's monarchy.

2. Dead Sea Scrolls and the Covenant Community

Discovered at Qumran, the Dead Sea Scrolls (including portions of Isaiah and other Old Testament writings) affirm that proclamations of God's promises to Zion remained central to Jewish identity through centuries of upheaval. The textual alignment of these manuscripts with later biblical copies underscores the reliability and consistency of passages proclaiming Zion's significance.

3. Secular Historical Sources

Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (1st century AD) provided extensive documentation on the city's fortifications, the Second Temple, and Rome's destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70—events that align closely with Christ's prophecies in Matthew 24. Though not a Christian source, Josephus's writings add corroborative weight to the biblical narrative and its locus in Zion.

Eschatological Role of Zion

Biblical passages like Zechariah 14, Revelation 21, and Romans 11 point to Zion's continuing centrality in God's future plan. Revelation 21:2 pictures the "New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God," connecting the redemptive story from the Old Testament's emphasis on Mount Zion to the ultimate consummation of all things in Christ.

Many conservative readers of Scripture today hold that God's covenant promises retain an ongoing application for Israel and the city of Jerusalem. They see modern events as a stage within God's sovereign timetable that began long ago in Abraham's calling, persisted through Babylonian and Roman exiles, and culminates in societal and spiritual restoration at Christ's return.

Concluding Observations

From a biblical perspective, Zion is more than just a name for Jerusalem. It is a conveyance of God's covenant faithfulness, the site of the ancient Temple, a symbol of the Messiah's earthly ministry, and a prophetic sign of final restoration. While approaches to modern Zionism differ among Christians, a thorough reading of Scripture shows that Zion remains unique in redemptive history. God's past dealings with Israel, present workings among nations, and future promises of ultimate restoration converge upon this pivotal name and place.

Zion, therefore, is not an incidental footnote. It is woven throughout Scripture, from the promises given to Abraham to the prophetic glimpses of the “heavenly Jerusalem.” Whether interpreted in a literal or spiritual sense, Zion draws the eyes of believers to God’s covenant love, invites reflection on His unfolding plan across millennia, and points to the final consummation of salvation when Christ establishes His reign in fullness.

Defining Key Terms

To frame the discussion, we must first clarify the terms at play:

- **Zionism:** Historically, Zionism is the movement advocating for a Jewish homeland in the biblical land of Israel, culminating in the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948. For Christians, Zionism often carries theological weight, rooted in biblical promises about the land (e.g., Genesis 12:7, “To your offspring I will give this land”).
- **Christian Zionism:** The belief that Christians should support the Jewish people’s right to a homeland in Israel, often based on biblical covenants. McDermott argues this support can stem from Scripture without dispensationalist assumptions.
- **Dispensationalism:** A theological system, popularized by John Nelson Darby in the 19th century, that divides salvation history into distinct periods (“dispensations”) and emphasizes a strict separation between Israel and the Church. It often includes premillennial eschatology, anticipating a rapture, tribulation, and Christ’s literal reign from Jerusalem.
- **Supersessionism (Fulfillment Theology):** The view that the Church replaces or fulfills Israel’s role as God’s covenant people, rendering Old Testament land promises obsolete or spiritually fulfilled in Christ. McDermott critiques this as misinterpreting the Bible’s narrative.
- **New Christian Zionism:** McDermott’s framework, which affirms Israel’s biblical significance—particularly the promise of the land—without requiring dispensationalist eschatology. It draws on a historical and biblical case for Israel’s enduring role in God’s plan.

Perspectives on Israel’s Role

The debate over Christian Zionism hinges on differing interpretations of Scripture regarding Israel’s place in salvation history. Here are the three major perspectives that dominate:

1. **Dispensationalist Zionism:**
This view, prevalent among evangelical Christians like ourselves, holds that God has distinct plans for Israel and the Church. Dispensationalists cite passages like Romans 11:26 (“*And in this way all Israel will be saved*”) and Ezekiel 37:1–14 (*the vision of dry bones*) to argue that God will restore Israel nationally before Christ’s return. They often link this to end-times events, including a rapture and tribulation. While influential, this perspective is criticized for its speculative timelines and perceived

instrumentalization of Jews for eschatological purposes. This is the most popular view, but the problem is most Christians don't adequately prepare for the apology. The church doesn't know the Bible like it once did.

2. Supersessionist (Fulfillment) Theology:

Common in Reformed, Lutheran, and Catholic traditions, supersessionism argues that the Church inherits Israel's promises, with Christ fulfilling the law and the prophets (Matthew 5:17). Texts like Galatians 3:28–29 (*"There is neither Jew nor Greek... for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise"*) and Hebrews 8:6–13 (*the new covenant supersedes the old*) are seen as redefining "Israel" as the universal Church. This view often dismisses territorial promises as historical or symbolic, leading some to reject Christian Zionism as unbiblical.

3. New Christian Zionism:

This approach bridges these perspectives, affirming Israel's ongoing covenantal role without the typical dispensationalist arguments. The R.U.S.H. Bible Study holds to dispensationalism, but that is not a hill we are going to die on. Here the argument is that the Old Testament promises of land (e.g., Jeremiah 16:15, *"I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers"*) and New Testament affirmations (e.g., Romans 9:4, *"to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises"*) remain valid. This view avoids rapture theology or rigid eschatological frameworks, focusing instead on God's faithfulness to His covenants.

A Biblical Apologetic for New Christian Zionism

McDermott's (The main proponent of this view) thesis rests on a straightforward yet profound claim: Christians can support Zionism because Scripture affirms God's enduring covenant with Israel, including the promise of the land, without requiring dispensationalist eschatology. This apologetic defends his position through three key arguments, grounded in Scripture, reason, and historical theology.

God's Covenants Are Irrevocable

Scripture consistently portrays God as faithful to His promises. In Romans 11:28–29, Paul declares,

"As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."

This passage underscores that God's covenant with Israel, including the promises of land and nationhood (Genesis 15:18, Deuteronomy 30:3–5), remains in effect. McDermott argues that supersessionism misreads texts like Galatians 6:16 (*"the Israel of God"*) by ignoring their context—Paul's focus on Jewish believers, not a replacement of Israel by the Church.

Apologetic Defense: The principle of God's covenantal faithfulness is central to Christian theology

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful"
Hebrews 10:23.

To deny Israel's ongoing role risks undermining the reliability of God's promises, including those to the Church. McDermott's reading aligns with a plain interpretation of Romans 9–11, where Paul warns Gentiles against arrogance toward Israel (Romans 11:18), affirming their enduring place in God's plan.

The Land Promise Persists in the New Testament

McDermott cites Old Testament prophecies of Israel's restoration (e.g., Jeremiah 24:6, Hosea 11:11) and connects them to New Testament hints of a future return, such as Acts 3:21's reference to the "restoration of all things." While supersessionists argue these promises are fulfilled spiritually, McDermott contends that

the New Testament never explicitly nullifies the land promise.

For example, Jesus' promise of a future role for the apostles in a restored Israel (Matthew 19:28) suggests continuity with Old Testament expectations.

Apologetic Defense:

Critics like Gary Burge (*Whose Land? Whose Promise?*) argue that the New Testament spiritualizes the land, citing Galatians 3:29 or Hebrews 11:16 (a "heavenly country"). However, these texts do not negate the physical land promise; they expand it to include Gentiles without erasing Israel's role. Reason demands consistency in biblical interpretation—if God's promises to Abraham's seed include land (Genesis 12:7), and Paul affirms Israel's covenants (Romans 9:4), then denying the land's significance requires a stronger scriptural rebuttal than supersessionism provides.

Historical Precedents Beyond Dispensationalism

McDermott notes that Christian Zionism predates dispensationalism, citing figures like Justin Martyr, Jonathan Edwards, and Charles Spurgeon, who saw Israel's restoration as part of God's plan. For example, Edwards, a Puritan, interpreted Ezekiel 37 as pointing to a future Jewish return, centuries before Darby's dispensationalism. Similarly, the Balfour Declaration (1917) was influenced by British Christian Zionists like Lord Shaftesbury, who drew on biblical promises, not rapture theology.

Apologetic Defense:

The historical witness of the Church supports McDermott's thesis. Supersessionism, while dominant in some periods, was not universal—early Church fathers like Irenaeus affirmed Jerusalem's role in salvation history. Reason suggests that dismissing this tradition in favor of a Church-centric view ignores the diversity of Christian thought. Moreover, the reestablishment of Israel in 1948 aligns with biblical patterns of restoration (e.g., the post-exilic return in Ezra-Nehemiah).

Engaging Counterarguments

While McDermott's thesis is compelling, it faces challenges from supersessionist and Palestinian Christian perspectives, which must be addressed to strengthen the apologetic case.

Supersessionist Critique

Supersessionists, like Burge, argue that the New Testament redefines "Israel" as the Church, citing Galatians 3:28–29 and Hebrews 8:13. They contend that land promises were conditional (Deuteronomy 28:15–68) and fulfilled historically or in Christ's universal kingdom. Not a bad argument.

Response: While the New Testament emphasizes unity in Christ, it never explicitly cancels Israel's covenantal promises. Never. Romans 11:29's "irrevocable" nature of God's gifts to Israel counters the claim that the Church wholly replaces Israel.

Furthermore, the conditional nature of the covenant (e.g., exile for disobedience) does not negate its ultimate fulfillment, as seen in prophecies of restoration (Jeremiah 31:31–34). McDermott's plain reading of these texts as affirming Israel's role aligns with their historical and literary context.

Palestinian Christian Perspective (*Kairos Palestine*)

The *Kairos Palestine* document (2009) rejects Christian Zionism as a theology that justifies the Israeli occupation, arguing that biblical promises are fulfilled in Christ's universal kingdom, not a modern nation-state. It calls for justice and reconciliation, emphasizing Palestinian suffering.

Response: While *Kairos Palestine* highlights the ethical need for justice, McDermott's *New Christian Zionism* does not endorse all Israeli policies, as he explicitly states. His focus on biblical promises allows for a nuanced stance—supporting Israel's right to exist while advocating for justice, aligning with the document's call for reconciliation. Theologically, the document's universalist reading risks overlooking Paul's affirmation of Israel's distinct role (Romans 11:28), which McDermott upholds without dispensationalist extremes. The R.U.S.H. Bible Study empathizes with Christians living under Hamas, but regardless, Hamas was elected by a Muslim majority that should not even exist as a religion as I stated earlier. Islam is not a religion, but rather a political position.

Dispensationalist Overlap

Critics argue that McDermott's literal interpretation of land promises resembles dispensationalism, despite his disclaimers. Dispensationalists also cite Romans 11 and Jeremiah to support Israel's restoration.

Response: McDermott's framework avoids dispensationalism's speculative eschatology, focusing solely on biblical covenants. His approach aligns with historical Christian Zionism (e.g., Spurgeon), which predates dispensationalism, and emphasizes God's faithfulness over apocalyptic timelines. This distinction allows Christians to support Israel without endorsing controversial end-times narratives.

Conclusion: A Balanced Biblical Vision

McDermott's *New Christian Zionism* offers a biblically grounded, theologically balanced approach to supporting Israel's right to a homeland without the speculative excesses of dispensationalism.

Through an apologetic rooted in Scripture—Romans 11's affirmation of Israel's irrevocable calling, Old Testament land promises, and New Testament continuity McDermott, I believe, demonstrates that Christians can affirm Zionism as an act of faithfulness to God's covenants.

Historical precedents, from Edwards to Niebuhr, reinforce this view, showing that Christian Zionism is not a 19th-century invention but a tradition rooted in the Church's history.

While supersessionists and Palestinian Christians raise valid concerns about spiritual fulfillment and justice, McDermott's framework does not preclude these values.

The call to support Israel's biblical significance while critiquing specific policies aligns with a commitment to justice and reconciliation, as long as Christians remain mindful of all parties in the conflict.

By grounding Zionism in God's unchanging character and covenantal promises, *New Christian Zionism* invites believers to honor Scripture's clear teachings without ignoring or being bound by dispensationalist dogmas, offering a path forward that is both faithful and reasoned.

That is the view of The R.U.S.H. Bible Study.

(at least until tomorrow. DH)

