

Refuting Realized Eschatology

Michael Hatcher, Editor

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Refuting Realized Eschatology

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WHAT IS REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY AND ITS HISTORY?

Jess Whitlock

Jess Whitlock grew up in Duncan, Oklahoma. He attended Oklahoma Christian College, Preston Road School of Preaching (under direction of the late Eldred Stevens). He also audited Elk City School of Preaching (W. R. Craig) and was an instructor for the West-side School of Preaching in Duncan, Oklahoma (J. T. Marlin). He began preaching full time in 1970, serving congregations in Oklahoma and Texas. He has done radio work, debates, and 33 years in Christian camps. He has had articles in books, periodicals, and church bulletins. Jess is currently working with the Evant Church of Christ in Evant, Texas. Jess and Terry were married in 2002. They have three daughters and six grandchildren.

The brotherhood is indebted to the Bellview congregation and its elders for making this material available in book form, CD, and *Defender*. Let me tell you why. In 1999, I received a call from brother Ben Phillips, an elder in the Lord's church at Rio Rancho, New Mexico. Two families had moved into the area and placed membership. They began to teach a doctrine in personal studies that sounded "strange." The elders contacted the Southwest School of Biblical Studies in Austin, Texas, and found out they were dealing with Max King's AD 70 doctrine. My name was brought up in that discussion. The elders contacted me in Beeville, Texas, and a few weeks later I was flying to New Mexico. I presented three lessons on the Lord's Day dealing with Max Kingism. Then, Monday through Wednesday evenings I had a one-hour lecture, followed by an hour for questions and answers. A couple of weeks later the elders called me with another expression of thanks and informed me the two families had left, and not one soul had been deceived by this damnable doctrine of the devil.

Just recently I talked with the current minister, brother Haskell Hallmark. You will be glad to know that the congregation in Rio Rancho is still free of the divisive doctrine known as Realized Eschatology. Think about this: today, if a church is invaded by supporters

of the AD 70 heresy, instead of having to call and find a preacher who can help them understand and deal with the multitudinous errors of Kingism, they can order the book, *Refuting Realized Eschatology*. With this volume in their hands they will be “set for the defence of the gospel” (Phi. 1:16).

One thing I have learned over the past quarter of a century in dealing with Realized Eschatology is that no Scripture is safe from being reinterpreted by the AD 70 errorists. Kingism takes all focus away from the precious cross of Christ and shifts full and all attention to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

TRANSDENOMINATIONAL TRANSMILLENNIALISM

The AD 70 doctrine, which is often called Max Kingism, is known by many appellations, such as Transmillennialism, Covenant Eschatology, Fulfilled Eschatology, Preterism, etc. Regardless of the *handle* chosen, these false teachers are all saying essentially the same thing. Max King affirmed in public debate in 1973 that

the Holy Scriptures teach that the second coming of Christ, including the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead, occurred with the fall of Judaism in 70 A.D. (*Nichols-King Debate* iv).

As for “transmillennialism,” we will allow Timothy King to speak for himself:

By the Spring of 1999, I knew that we needed to model something other than sectarianism. That summer for our annual conference, I invited Leigh Halliwell, an Episcopal scholar, to join our program (*Give Me This Mountain* 86).

Since that time, the annual gatherings have invited dozens of denominational speakers to stand side by side with them in this error. Tim King admits:

Preterism was exclusively tied to the past... We needed something capable of existing beside the other three millennial views... “Transmillennialism” was coined...needed to be trade-marked (*Give Me This Mountain* 86-87).

Max and Tim King copyrighted this interdenominational term in 1999. This “would mean a plethora of speakers from various con-

fessional backgrounds.... Presence Ministries is a transdenominational ministry in every sense of the word” (*Give Me This Mountain* 88-89). One of the most revealing statements from Tim King that he and his father are in full-blown fellowship with the manmade denominations is seen in this simple statement: “Adam’s curse is now removed. [Oh, really?—jlw]. God no longer is at war with humanity. [Oh, really?—jlw]. We now are at rest.” (*Give Me This Mountain* 66). It would appear that the Kingites have simply dismissed the words of Paul to “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them” (Eph. 5:11). How do you reprove them, while agreeing with them in their error? It would be good for King and all the “King’s men” to consider well Paul’s writing in Ephesians 5:15-17.

Covenant Eschatology simply deals with the transition from the Old Covenant of Moses to the New Covenant of Jesus Christ. This aspect of Kingism asserts that the “last days” can only apply to the Old Law, for it was temporary in nature, whereas the New Covenant will have no end; therefore, it cannot contain “last days.”

Fulfilled Eschatology asserts the same basic position. In this new theology the “last days” never apply to the Christian dispensation, but only to the waning moments of the Jewish age from AD 33 through AD 70. King and his duped disciples have taken away any thought of Christ and what He accomplished on the cross—and replaced it with the physical destruction of Jerusalem. The devotees of this pernicious parody must rewrite the Scripture to say Christ took the Old Law out of the way in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70!

The AD 70 sympathizers must insist that Paul was in error when he wrote, “For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2). These men had better test their theories now, rather than have them put to the test in the hereafter (Heb. 9:27; cf. Acts 24:25; Rom. 1:32; 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10; Heb. 10:27; Jam. 4:17; 2 Pet. 2:4, 9; 3:7; Jude 6, 15). These errorists must be related to Demas, whom Paul said, “forsook me, having loved this present world” (2 Tim. 4:10). The Premillennialists, the

Jehovah's Witnesses, and Max and Tim King and all the "King's men" have a love affair for **this present world**. Notice, please, that none of these wants to believe that Peter could be correct in warning, "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pet. 3:10). These false teachers are past experts in twisting the Scripture, just as Peter tells us "the ignorant and unstedfast wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (3:16). All the Kingites must surely be related to Demas.

Preterism comes to us from the Latin *praeteritus*, which means, "gone by, past." The preterists of all denominations love to force their view upon Revelation, and they have to get that book penned prior to AD 70. (But, that will be discussed in another chapter.) There are two camps of preterism that will be dealt with in this volume by Danny Douglas. Full Preterism has **all prophecies** fulfilled in the time of Jesus and the early church. Partial Preterism asserts that **many prophecies** were fulfilled during the time of Christ and the early church.

Not only do we see this damnable doctrine of the devil making these followers into a denomination of their own making, but also identifies them as being a cult. Anthony A. Hoekema in his book, *The Four Major Cults*, has a chapter devoted to "The Distinctive Traits of the Cults." Think about traits numbers three and five as relates to our study of Kingism!

(3) *The Devaluation of Christ*...does not need to mean a complete denial of Christ's mission and work; it may express itself simply in a *shifting of emphasis* (382).

There can be no doubt that Kingism has dismissed the New Testament's teaching of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection marking the end of the Old Law and the bringing in of a "better covenant" (Heb. 7:22; 8:6; cf. Col.2:14). Now, consider trait number five:

The Group's Central Role in Eschatology... The cult is convinced that it has been called into existence by God for the purpose of

filling in some gap in the truth which has been neglected by the ordinary churches (385).

All one must do is to read their own writings: *The Spirit of Prophecy*, *The Living Presence*, *Old Covenant Israel and New Covenant Salvation*, *The Cross and the Parousia*, and *Give Me This Mountain*, etc.

The doctrine of Kingism has disrupted, divided, and destroyed churches all across the nation and in other parts of the world. This doctrine is not simply a harmless hobbyhorse. If consistently followed to its ultimate conclusion, New Testament Christians must do away with any teaching on the one baptism, the Lord's Supper, the need of elders, or even the assembly of the saints (Mat. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27; Mat. 26:26-28; Luke 22:14-23; 1 Cor. 11:23-29; Acts 14:23; 20:17, 28; 1 Tim. 3; Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 5:1-2; Heb. 10:25).

BY WHAT AUTHORITY DOEST THOU THESE THINGS?

The chief priests and elders had a question for Jesus (Mat. 21:23; cf. Mark 11:28; Luke 20:2). Christ responded with a question for them concerning the baptism of John: "whence was it? from heaven or from men" (Mat. 21:25; cf. Mark 11:30; Luke 20:4)? This would be a good question worthy of consideration when it comes to the present stance of the AD 70 doctrine of Max King. When one looks at the history of this AD 70 movement in the Lord's church, from whence does it come, from heaven or from men? The late brother J. T. Marlin often said to me, "Jess, if a doctrine or teaching is not as old as the New Testament, then it is entirely too new to be the doctrine of God."

The Athenian mindset (Acts 17:19-21) comes shining through in Max King's second edition: "Prophecy found its complete fulfillment in the second coming of Christ, and now may be regarded as closed and consummated" (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2002, 113).¹ In reference back to his first edition, Max King finally admitted that "At that time [1971—jlw] I was not aware that others had written on this subject in earlier centuries, such as J. S. Russell (1816-1895)" (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2002, 5). In the first edition C. D. Beagle said, "Several years ago I started a study of the church and

the kingdom as **I believed it was taught** in the parable, and in the book of Revelation” (emphasis added) (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 1971, v). Did you notice how C. D. Beagle began his study of the church and the kingdom? He himself said, “as I believed it was taught.” Man is in error anytime he approaches the Scripture to prove things as **he** perceives them to be, and that is precisely what C. D. Beagle, Max R. King, and now, Timothy R. King have done to bring us their manmade heresy of Kingism. It is no wonder, then, that Beagle stated, “I am certain a whole new view of the scriptures will open up before you” (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 1971, v).

HOW IT ALL BEGAN IN THE BEGINNING

It all started among the churches of Christ in Warren, Ohio. C. D. Beagle introduced his son-in-law, Max King, to this heretical teaching in the 1960s. Max King had preached the truth for almost forty years. On April 22, 1971, Max King introduced his **new doctrine** to the preachers’ meeting in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. It was July 22, 1971 when Max King debated Joe Taylor. King affirmed, “Jesus and the eternal kingdom came in power in 70 A.D. rather than 33 A.D.” Later that year Max King released *The Spirit of Prophecy*. He captured the attention of all faithful brethren when he wrote, “The center and heart of prophecy is not Pentecost, (the birth of Isaac) so much so as the fall of Jerusalem (the casting out of Ishmael). This fact will become evident...” (*Spirit of Prophecy* 1971, 33).

The year was 1972 when Max King engaged in private studies, first with the late Franklin Camp, and then, with Robert Taylor, Jr.

In July 1973, Gus Nichols met Max King on the polemic platform as Max affirmed:

The Holy Scriptures teach that the second coming of Christ included the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world, and the resurrection of the dead, occurred with the fall of Judaism in 70 A.D. (*Nichols-King Debate* iv).

It was 1975 when Max King engaged Jim McGuiggan in debate wherein Max affirmed, “The New Covenant was not completely established until the fall of the Jewish commonwealth in A.D. 70.” (*McGuiggan-King Debate*).

Then, January 1977 marked the beginning of Northeast Ohio Bible College (Institute), to promote this manmade doctrine of the devil. About ten years (1987) later King published *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*.

In 1990, King began publishing a monthly journal, *The Living Presence*. I received that paper, free of charge, for over ten years. I must have been a bad influence on the church secretary in Ardmore. One day she brought in the mail and said, "Jess, you just got another issue of *The Lying Pestilence!*" I learned the names of men like William Bell (marked by Easthaven Church of Christ in Memphis), Rick Calvert (marked by West End Church of Christ in St. Louis), Charles Geiser (debated Terry Varner), Don Preston (in the 1990 split the Maxwell Avenue congregation in Ardmore, Oklahoma and in 1992 stated that splitting theeschaton [sic] was more sinful than splitting churches), Jack Scott (divided and led off an entire congregation in Pinole, California, and then took over the Ardmore Family of God), Larry Siegle (began *Covenant Messenger* publication to promote Kingism), and do you realize that not one of these men wrote one line, that I can find, defending King's doctrine prior to the decade of the 1970s? The same can be said of men like Steve Baisden, Alan Bondar, David Boone, David Curtis, Jerel Kratt, Holger Neubauer, et al. These are all puppets in the hands of Max King.

1990 also marked the release of King's book, *Old Testament Israel and New Testament Salvation*. This diatribe is a cross-diminishing doctrine of Satan.

King's annual "Covenant Eschatology Seminar" spanned the 1990s and continues today in Colorado as the "Transmillennial National Conference." Max and Timothy King now head up a preterite organization in Colorado Springs, known as "Presence International." These conferences teach that all prophecy has been fulfilled, including the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment, all of which culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. These conferences, headed up by erring brethren and denominational men, are found all over

the nation. I have found such in Warren, Ohio; Colorado Springs, Colorado; Ardmore, Oklahoma; Memphis, Tennessee; Omaha, Nebraska; Carlsbad, New Mexico; Columbia, South Carolina; Cape May, New Jersey; Virginia Beach, Virginia; et al. This is only a partial listing, and I am certain we cannot find them all. Brethren, we must, like Paul, be “set for the defence of the gospel” (Phi. 1:16).

TIME FRAMES

These erring brethren are riding a “hobbyhorse” and are set to ride it to their graves! Consider Max King and his obsession with the “new heaven(s) and new earth.” This expression is found twice in the Old Testament (Isa. 65:17; 66:22) and twice in the New Testament (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1). Yet King uses this term almost 100 times in his book *The Spirit of Prophecy* (2002).

When Don Preston built his church in Ardmore, Oklahoma, you could only reach him in the office by dialing the prefix followed by 7070, and that number remains to this day. To talk to Don Preston today you must also dial 7070. Does anyone really think that is just coincidence?

During the 1990s I noticed in the writings, teachings, and debates an obsession with the “time frames” of eschatology. Tim King wrote a biographical sketch of his father, Max King. Tim King challenges the readers to “check the copyright dates of any fulfilled prophecy author from last century—none are earlier than 1971” (*Spirit of Prophecy* 2002, 417). That statement caught my attention. Let us do this backwards!

Give Me This Mountain: The Story of Presence Ministries, by Timothy King (2003). *The Spirit of Prophecy* by Max King (2002). *Old Testament Israel and New Testament Salvation* by Max King (1990). *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ* by Max King (1987). *The Spirit of Prophecy* by Max King (1971). Be aware brethren, there are some differences in the first and second editions of King’s two books. To find the page numbers of “quotes” you must have both books in hand, as it depends on the edition that is being used. The second edition contains an added chapter (14) on “The Transmillennial View” written by Timothy R. King. Now, remember the chal-

lunge Tim King has offered us, to “check the copyright dates of any fulfilled prophecy from last century—none are earlier than 1971” (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2002, 417). Remember, we are doing this backwards.

In 1936, Charles H. Dodd wrote *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Development*. C. H. Dodd taught that the **final events** were fulfilled during the personal **ministry of Christ**. His teaching was described as “realized eschatology.”

In 1917, Marion Morris published *Christ’s Second Coming*. On page 48 he wrote, “Finally the ‘last days’ with the spiritual night came to an end, and we are now living in God’s eternal day.”

In 1900, Dr. William S. Urmy of the California Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church presented his *Christ Came Again*. I suspect these copyright dates all pre-date 1971. What say ye? I wonder, can we go back any further?

In 1898, Dr. Milton S. Terry, a Methodist Episcopalian trained at Yale Divinity, presented *Biblical Apocalypics*. He presents the preterist arguments for Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.

In 1878, Dr. James S. Russell, a Congregationalist preacher, wrote *The Parousia*.² At the time he did not admit to being the author, but in a second edition released in 1887 he attached his name. It seems that in 1878 most serious Bible students rejected his heresy. Ninety-three years **after** Russell’s work, Max King brought out *The Spirit of Prophecy*. Mr. Russell wrote, “We conclude that the parousia, the resurrection, the judgment, and the last day, all belong to the period of the destruction of Jerusalem” (126). Max King writes, “There is no scriptural basis for extending the second coming of Christ beyond the fall of Jerusalem” (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2002, 103). Again, “the second coming of Christ is associated with...the judgment, the resurrection, the end of the world, and the establishment of the eternal kingdom” (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 2002, 105).

In 1787, N. Nisbett, M.A., released his book, *An Attempt to Illustrate Various Important Passages in the Epistles, etc. of the New Testament*. So you see, “there is no new thing under the sun” (Ecc. 1:9).

We have not dealt with some of the Jesuits of the 16th and 17th centuries—i.e., Alfonso Sameron (1515-1585); Jerome De Prado (1547-1595); and Luis Del Alcasar (1554-1613), who also wrote in defense of “realized eschatology.”

I SEE MY TIME IS UP

Only the Universalists of the past two centuries have focused so intently on the AD 70 theme as to have missed the importance of Christ on the cross. All of this reminds me of Paul’s warning found in 2 Timothy 2:16-18: “But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some.” This manmade system of error has indeed overthrown the faith of **many**.

While Christ hung upon the cross, suspended between heaven and earth, He Himself noted God’s redemptive work was coming to an end.

After this Jesus, knowing that **all things are now finished**, that the scripture **might be accomplished**, saith, I thirst.... When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished**: and he bowed his head, and gave up his spirit (John 19:28, 30).

The powerful verb *teleo* means “to complete, to accomplish.” The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ the third day shows that nothing else was required of heaven (1 Cor. 15:1-4) for Christ to establish His church (Acts 2).

The child of God will reject this attack on the very foundation of Christ’s church. The words of the inspired apostle Paul should settle the matter for all true believers. “For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and **him crucified**” (1 Cor. 2:2).

The challenge of Tim King has been met and defeated. Let us offer this challenge to Tim King and his cohorts. Where is the inspired statement of Scripture which states, “For I determined not to know anything among you, save the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70”? We will wait, and we shall see what we shall see!

ENDNOTES

¹The 2002 revision of this work has this statement attached: “This book was originally published in 1971...this second edition is completely revised and updated.”

²Published anonymously in 1878; again in 1887 with author’s name added.

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All Scripture quotations are from the American Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.

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THE NATURE OF PROPHECY

Jerry C. Brewer

The great grandson of a gospel preacher, Jerry Brewer was born in Childress, Texas in 1941. He preached his first sermon when he was 16 years old. He attended the Elk City, Oklahoma School of Preaching, directed by W. R. Craig, and has done local work in Texas and Oklahoma. Jerry preached and taught classes for preachers in Kenya in 2012 and 2014. He has spoken on numerous lectureships. He edited *The Gospel Preceptor* for a number of years and has written for various brotherhood publications. He is the author of three books, including a commentary on the book of Galatians. Jerry is married to the former Sherlene Holley of Carter, Oklahoma. They have six children and 17 grandchildren. He currently preaches for the Northeast Church of Christ in Elk City, Oklahoma.

INTRODUCTION

But shun profane *and* vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some (2 Tim. 2:16-18).

Modern seers and “interpreters” of Bible prophecy are charlatans—an appellation that is no less descriptive of Max R. King, who, as Hymaneus and Philetus, also claims the resurrection is past. He arrives at that conclusion by *interpreting* all promises relating to eschatology as figurative (spiritual) prophecies—including the end of the world, the resurrection, and final judgment. In this, he tacitly claims inspiration because the only correct interpretation of Bible prophecy is an inspired one.

There is an element in the Old Testament that no criticism on natural principles can explain away. That element is prophecy. It does not exist in mere prediction. In prediction there are circumstances in existence upon which we may base a premise and from that premise draw a conclusion. But in prophecy the thing prophesied must be so far removed from any existing circumstance that there could be no possibility of forming a premise upon which to predicate a conclusion with reference to the thing foretold. Therein is the divine element of prophecy (Wallace, *God's Prophetic Word* 61).

The only infallible interpretation of prophecy is an inspired interpretation. This statement is sustained by Paul's remarks on God's wisdom in the revelation "the mystery" in the second chapter of first Corinthians, verses 7 to 13. Note first the seventh verse: "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery." This is that which Paul said in Rom. 16:25 had been "kept secret since the world began," now "made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." Verse 8 says "which none of the princes of this world knew." They did not know the "mystery"—the plan of the ages hidden in the prophetic word of God. Verse 9 says: "even as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God prepared for them that love him." The things that no eye had seen, that no ear had heard, and that no man's heart had contemplated, are the things out of God's prophetic word revealed in the New Testament—verse 10—"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit"—then verse 13, "which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth."

It is thus that Paul declares that revelation (the thing revealed) plus inspiration (the words by which to teach it) is the only true and infallible interpretation of the prophetic word (Wallace, *God's Prophetic Word* 64).

Fundamental to King's AD 70 heresy is his own "interpretation" of prophecy, using assumptions that are not borne out in the prophecies he cites to support his doctrine. For instance, King says God's promise that the seed of woman would bruise the serpent's head **be-gan** to be fulfilled at the cross, **but was not completed** until about 37 years later in what King calls Christ's second coming in AD 70.

Satan's concern over the second coming of Christ stems from the garden of Eden, and a promise God made to fallen man with respect to his restoration. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15).

This promise is commonly related to the first coming of Christ, which did initiate the beginning of its fulfillment, but the completion of that promise depended upon the second coming of Christ. At the cross, Christ announces the sentence of Satan that would be executed at his second coming. "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John 12:31).

The battle began at the cross, but the victory was achieved at the end of the world, or Jewish age (100-101).

King cannot lay his finger on a syllable in Genesis 3:15 that relates to Christ's "second coming." That prophecy contains the entire scheme of redemption in germinal form. It describes the struggle between the Messiah and Satan and the Messiah's ultimate triumph over Satan by His death and resurrection—without the mention of His "second coming." Christ's triumph was foreshadowed in the battle between David and Goliath. David (a type of Christ) did battle with the Philistine giant, Goliath (a type of Satan), and defeated Goliath with his own weapon.

And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang *it*, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but *there was* no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith (1 Sam. 17:48-51).

From man's fall until Christ died and was resurrected, Satan held the human race in bondage to death, and it was by Christ's death and resurrection, using Satan's own weapon—death—as David used Goliath's, that He bruised the head of the serpent.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. 2:14-15).

Satan delivered a damaging, but not fatal, blow to Christ (bruised His heel) in the crucifixion, but by His death and resurrection, Christ delivered a fatal blow to Satan (bruised his head). There was not a 37-year delay of the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 between the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusa-

lem. The “battle began” after Jesus’ baptism when He was tempted in the wilderness—not at the cross—and raged until His resurrection, where it ended. Jesus said, “Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out” (John 12:31). *Now* indicates immediacy. Now—immediately—is the judgment of this world and now—immediately—the prince of this world shall be cast out—not 37 years from now.

When Jesus came to be baptized, John said, “I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness” (Mat. 3:14-15). John knew Jesus had no sins to remit in baptism, but Jesus used *now* in His reply, signifying that this moment, this act, was immediate. When He said, “suffer it” He indicated this would be an exception to John’s baptism for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4). *Now* meant immediately, without delay.

The Greek word, *arti*, translated “now” in Matthew 3:15 is defined by Strong as, “Adverb...through the idea of suspension; just now:—this day (hour), hence [-forth], here [-after], hither [-to], (even) now, (this) present” (16). The Greek word, *nun*, translated “now” in John 12:31 is defined by Strong as, “a primary particle of present time; ‘now’ (as adverb of date, a transition or emphasis); also as noun or adjective present or immediate:—henceforth, hereafter, of late, soon, present, this (time)” (50). In both cases and in both words, the meaning is immediate, without delay. King perverts Scripture to find: “The battle began at the cross, but the victory was achieved at the end of the world, or Jewish age,” in his “interpretation” of Genesis 3:15.

PREDICTION, PROPHECY, AND PROMISE

King and his minions either do not know how to distinguish between prophecy and promise in Biblical language, or they are dishonest in their applications of those terms. In the AD 70 world of King, the promise of Christ’s Second Coming is prophecy and applies solely to the destruction of Jerusalem. Of prophecy and prediction, brother Wallace again wrote:

There is a distinct difference in prophecy and prediction. Any man may predict. There may be something in the present upon which he may base a premise and from that premise draw a predicted conclusion. But prophecy must be so far removed from the event that fulfills it as to be wholly detached from the present. No conclusion can be drawn from anything in the present with respect to the event mentioned in the future. It must be detached from everything connected with such an event, having none of the earmarks of mere prediction in order to classify as prophecy (*God's Prophetic Word* 21).

The prophets of the Old Testament were the “men of God” whom God authorized and inspired to reveal the things of the future, whose prophecies were not mere prognostication and human interpretation based on current events as the premise from which to draw their conclusions for future development. The character of true prophecy is such that there is no example in the present upon which to form a prophetic premise from which to draw a prophetic conclusion. “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” (II Pet. 1:20-21) Thus prophecy must be so far removed from anything in the present that there is no existing example of the thing prophesied upon which to base the prediction of the future event. Otherwise there would exist in the prophecy itself the element of human foresight (*The Book of Revelation* 4).

Consider Isaiah's prophecy of the virgin birth in Isaiah 7:14. No such birth had ever occurred in man's history at the time Isaiah wrote. Nor was there any instance of a virgin birth in Isaiah's time, a premise upon which he could have based that prophecy. Now, contrast that with Christ's promise of Jerusalem's destruction in Matthew 24. It was not a prophecy in the same sense that Isaiah prophesied of the virgin birth. Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, nearly six centuries before Christ promised its destruction again in Matthew 24. That was an historical fact of which Jesus' hearers were well aware. Jerusalem's destruction in AD 70 was not something that had never before occurred. That is also true of Christ's Second Coming. He has already come in His work of redemption so His Second Coming is not a prophecy, but a prom-

ise of what has previously occurred. Peter refers to Christ's Second Coming as a "promise"—not a prophecy. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming?... The Lord is not slack concerning his promise" (2 Pet. 3:3-4, 9). There is a difference between a "promise" and predictive prophecy—something King fails to understand.

FIGURATIVE AND LITERAL LANGUAGE IN MATTHEW 24

Corollary to King's assumption that a promise is prophecy is his notion that all such utterances have figurative meanings. One example is his "interpretation" of *world* to mean Judaism, as he does with David's words in Psalms 102:25-28:

On the surface this passage might appear to be predictive of the material heaven and earth of Gen. 1:1, but a closer examination will reveal otherwise. "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands." Laying the "foundations of the earth" is a common expression in scripture, and seldom is it in reference to the Gen. 1:1 creation. See 1 Pet. 1:20, 2 Tim. 1: 9, Eph. 1:4. The world in reference is the one founded of Abraham's fleshly seed, the world formed at Mt. Sinai (40).

"On the surface," this passage is a prediction of "the material heaven and earth." A primary rule of Bible study is to consider its language as literal, unless the context demands a figurative construction. There is nothing in Psalms 102:25-28 that indicates the heavens and the earth are figurative terms referring to a "world formed at Sinai." In King's AD 70 world, *world* is **always** a figure meaning Judaism.

It is the conviction of the author that the ending or the continuity of God's material world is totally unrelated to God's scheme of redemption. This is not a denial of the fact that "a world" was going to end at the second coming of Christ, for this is affirmed within the scriptures. Denial is made, however, that the world involved in redemption and destined to end at Christ's return is the physical or material world. The author's position is made clear in chapter three, where indisputable evidence is presented that identifies the world marked for removal as the Jewish world, born of Abraham's fleshly seed and governed by the law of Moses (181).

In Matthew 24, Jesus answered two questions, although one was not what His disciples asked. That kind of response characterized His teaching in another place. When Nicodemus came to Him by night, he said, “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him” (John 3:2). Knowing the hearts of all men (2:25), Jesus launched into His discourse on the new birth: a subject Nicodemus did not broach but which was closely akin to what was in his mind. Nicodemus thought since he was of the seed of Abraham, he had a free pass into the kingdom by virtue of the fact that he was a Jew. However, Jesus directed his attention to the truth on entrance into the kingdom.

When the disciples said, “Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” (Mat. 24:3), Jesus responded to two questions. The disciples **assumed** that the figurative coming of Christ in the events surrounding Jerusalem’s destruction would signal the end of the world. They still believed that, as the Messiah, He would reconstitute the nation of Israel as it was under David, and overthrow Rome, which is evident from their question to Him just before His ascension. “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). Therefore, in their minds, if the temple was destroyed, the entire world would come to an end.

Jesus’ answers indicated that the destruction of Jerusalem and the “end of the world” were two different events. Jerusalem’s destruction **was** an **illustration** of the final judgment in which the righteous will be rewarded and the wicked punished. Like the flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the destruction of Jerusalem was a **type** of the end of the world and God’s final judgment on man, and Jesus addressed both of those events. In Matthew 24:4-34, Jesus dealt with the question of “when shall these things be” and the signs preceding them. In that passage, He first warned of things that would presage Jerusalem’s destruction (24:4-13), but would come to pass in the intervening 37 years. In verse 15, He described the **lone sign** that Jerusalem and the temple would soon

fall—"the abomination of desolation" prophesied by Daniel (Dan. 11:31). None of the "signs" prior to this signaled the destruction of the temple. When Cestius Gallus' legions entered the temple confines, that meant the fall of the city was imminent and the faithful were to flee.

This description refers to the heathen symbols and the Roman standards raised in the temple. Every orthodox Jew looked upon the temple as sacred and holy. When the Romans conquered the city, and entered it, the Roman soldiers marched into the temple, hauled down the ornaments and images of the temple, and raised instead the symbols and standards of paganism and Romanism. That is what was called the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place. The "abomination of desolation" was fulfilled when those Roman standards and pagan symbols were seen in the holy place "where they ought not to be" (Wallace, *The Book Of Revelation* 351).

The destruction of Jerusalem was regarded by all pious Jews as pestilence and desolation and was taken as a sign that the time for them to escape had come—to do what Jesus had warned them to do—to flee to the mountains. The disciples did as Jesus said—they heeded the warnings and fled. From the flat roofs of their houses in the city or from their fields in the country, they saw the Roman army in full march, there was no time to go inside for goods or raiment. Life was more than personal property. When they saw the sign of the standards and symbols of the Romans in the temple, they remembered that Jesus had warned them of that very thing, and at the news of the Roman approach they fled to Pella, the northern boundary of Perea (Wallace, *The Book Of Revelation* 351-52).

In Matthew 24:16-33, Jesus described the events surrounding the city's destruction and the consequences of it in figurative language, and concluded that section with, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Mat. 24:34). Then, in the verse that Max King scoffs at as "transitional," Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (24:35). King's problem here is that he does not understand that Jesus has already addressed the destruction of Jerusalem and now begins a discussion of **when** "Heaven and earth shall pass away." King wants all of the language of this chapter to be figurative. If it is not, his

heresy falls by the wayside. However, there is a mixture of the literal and figurative which King fails, or refuses, to comprehend. The “signs” preceding Jerusalem’s destruction (24:4-15) are literal. The consequences of Jerusalem’s destruction (24:16-28) are literal. King claims that the end of the world, which he says took place in AD 70, resulted, not in a bodily resurrection of man, but of the church.

If proper distinction is not made between the various kinds of resurrections in the Bible, textual confusion and error can reign supremely. Romans 8:11 applies to the process of spiritual regeneration and its effects upon the deeds of our mortal bodies, and in Phil 3:21 deals with the resurrection of the body or the church from the Jewish body into its heavenly inheritance at the fall of Judaism (195).

Christ took the law (and thus Judaism) out of the way, “nailing it to his cross” (Col. 2:14). The church was not “dead” and had no need to be resurrected “from the Jewish body.” The “**Jewish body**” was dead. From the cross, onward, Israel’s altar fires burned, incense was offered, and animal blood was sprinkled, but all for naught. It was a dead system. The church was never a part of the “Jewish body.” **That** “body” was dead, not the church. If the church was dead, then Paul lied when he wrote, they had been “quicken[ed] [made alive] together with him” (2:13), and that verse immediately preceded his statement that Judaism was dead through the cross. King is batty to say Paul’s statement that Jesus, “shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body” (Phi. 3:21) refers to a “resurrection” of the church. Judaism was already dead, not the church, and it was the carcass of Judaism that the Roman “eagles” would remove (Mat. 24:28). King has the church, a living body, inside a carcass which would be removed. He has the church in a “zombie” state—a walking dead entity. Who can believe it?

Then, following His description of the literal events surrounding Jerusalem’s fall to the Romans, Jesus employs figurative language in verses 29 and 30.

The signs in the heavens, the darkening sun and falling stars, refer to the falling of Jewish dignitaries, casting down of authorities

and powers, long established, and signified the darkness that settled upon the Jewish state.

The sun of the Hebrew temple was darkened, the moon of the Jewish commonwealth was as blood, the stars of the Sanhedrin fell from their high seats of authority. Isaiah and Joel describe the ruin of both ancient Babylon and Jerusalem in similar description, in Isaiah 13 and Joel 2.

The coming of the Son of man—verse 30: “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.”

The sign of the Son of man in the heaven was a signal, the evidence of divine visitation and intervention in the downfall of the Jewish authorities and in all the transpiring events. The mourning of all the tribes of the earth refers to the lamentation of the Jewish families all over the world because of the destruction of their city and their temple and their state. The coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven is not a reference to the second coming of Christ but to the coming foretold by Jesus to Caiaphas in Matthew 26:64: “Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Jesus told Caiaphas that he would see it, he would be a living witness to these events. The reference to the Son of man coming “with power and great glory” and “sitting on the right hand of power” is emphasis on the magnitude of the things that occurred. The Son of man came in power in the transpiring events (Wallace, *The Book Of Revelation* 354).

Jesus then turned His attention to the question about the “end of the world.” King cannot have a literal destruction of the heavens and the earth since that would eradicate the premise upon which his entire heresy is built.

Christ ascribed his coming, the end of the world, and the destruction of the temple to “that generation.” . . . The temple’s destruction, the coming of Christ, and the end of the world (Matt. 24:3) are inseparably related. They stand or fall together. It was all going to happen in the same generation, and Jesus said it was “that generation.” It is the same “generation” of Matt. 23:36; “Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation.” It is the same “generation” of Matt. 23:33, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers,

how can ye escape the damnation of Hell?" The Jews of *that day* were the serpents, vipers, and hypocrites upon whom vengeance was going to fall...(Verses 20, 21) (King 109-110).

Prior to Matthew 24:36, Jesus used "days"—plural—to describe the time of Jerusalem's destruction, but in verse 36 He uses "day"—singular—saying, "But of that **day** and **hour** knoweth no *man*." What **day**? When "heaven and earth shall pass away." What **hour**? When "heaven and earth shall pass away." The Jews knew no smaller unit of time than the "hour," by which they expressed immediacy as we use "moment." In the twinkling of an eye, heaven and earth shall pass away, and, from Matthew 24:36-44, Jesus warns all to watch and be ready for that **day and hour** because no signs will presage it. No one, not even the angels, knows the time that day will come when heaven and earth shall pass away and Mark adds, "neither the Son" (Mark 13:32). That Jesus spoke of the final judgment of all men at the end of the world is clearly illustrated in parables He set forth subsequent to His warnings in Matthew 24:36-44. The first is the parable of the unfaithful servant (24:44-51). In Matthew 25, He relates the parable of the ten virgins and the parable of the talents, concluding with a description of the final judgment of the nations, all of which relate to His warning in Matthew 24:42 concerning His second coming at the end of this material universe.

As with Nicodemus, Jesus answered His disciples' questions, treating them not precisely as they were asked, but showing that two great events were closely connected in meaning—the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the material world, the latter of which will be concurrent with the resurrection of all who are in the graves and the judgment of the nations at the last day.

CONCLUSION

Like Carl Ketcherside and other heretics before him, Max King has embraced one extreme error in running from another, but his "Realized Eschatology" extreme is not—and never will be—the answer to millennialism in any form. Like Hymaneus and Philetus, he teaches that which can, and will, "overthrow the faith of some."

Like Millennialism, which he claims to abhor, he uses Old Testament prophecies, which were all fulfilled in Christ's first coming, to teach his damnable doctrines. The Hebrews' writer says:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds (Heb. 1:1-2).

The prophets spoke to "the fathers" in times past. They do not speak to us today. Christ is "the heir of all things," meaning all things spoken by the prophets in time past. Those prophetic telescopes in "time past" were all focused on Christ and His work of redemption, and all have been fulfilled. God, "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

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INTERPRETATION OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

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I was in attendance at the 1972 Freed-Hardeman College Lecture-ship when brother Max King was present. The late brethren Guy N. Woods and Gus Nichols publicly dealt with his erroneous "AD 70 Doctrine" with King present in their respective audiences. Brother King circulated among the lectureship attendees, advertising his book and discussing his doctrine with numerous people. In 1973, brother Nichols debated King on the issue. Since that time, nearly 45 years ago, many brethren have examined and refuted King's error in various venues and with several of his disciples, but the doctrine continues to be propagated widely.

Without going into detail it needs to be pointed out that King's doctrine is a variation of what was called "Realized Eschatology" (hereafter RE) long before brother King developed his particular brand of it. Earlier in the 20th Century Albert Schweitzer, C. H. Dodd, Joachim Jeremias, and A. T. Robinson, to name some of the more well-known proponents of RE taught views similar to King's doctrine. It may be that King's father-in-law, C. D. Beagle, who believed in RE before King, first learned directly or indirectly about said views from one or more of the afore listed men. Beagle is the man who started his son-in-law down the road of RE.

James Orr said:

By “eschatology,” or the doctrine of last things, is meant the ideas entertained at any period on the future life, the end of the world (resurrection, judgment;...), and the eternal destinies of mankind (II:972).

Realized pertains to “accomplishment,” so, *RE* is a doctrine of completed last things. According to its interpretation of the Bible, the end times were realized and accomplished in AD 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem.

In exposing and refuting brother King’s erroneous doctrine, we will approach its destruction in as simple a method as possible. We begin by setting out just what King teaches and how he came up with his false doctrine or RE.

KING’S PARTICULAR SLANT ON “REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY”

It was in 1971 that Max King first presented his views to the public in his book, *The Spirit of Prophecy*. In his book he states that “the reason for exegetical confusion and disharmony in prophetic interpretation” is because of “a failure to discern the true spirit of prophecy or the *manner* in which it has fulfillment, and second, a failure to observe the *time* of prophecy’s fulfillment” (iii). He revealed the thesis of his book when he wrote that God’s scheme for man’s redemption must reach its fruition, “at a *time* and in a *manner* that do not require the abolition of God’s material creation, or the cessation of time as known by man” (iii). Then brother King informs us that eschatological prophecy must fundamentally be “spiritual” in its fulfillment and not literally fulfilled. His conclusion is seen in the following comment that is the proposition King affirmed in his debate with Gus Nichols:

The second coming of Christ, including the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead, occurred with the fall of Judaism in 70 AD (Nichols/King Debate).

Again King tells us that “the fall of Judaism (and its far reaching consequences) is, therefore, a major subject of the Bible” (239). We are informed that the Second Coming of Christ took place in AD

70, at which time every spiritual blessing was perfected and made available to the world. The proponents of this doctrine tell us that if we understood sound, Biblical interpretation, we would know that all prophecies pertaining to end-time events were fulfilled in AD 70, that we are not to look beyond that date for the personal coming of Christ, the bodily resurrection of mankind, a final judgment of all men, because all such is contrary to Bible authority.

“If the plain sense makes sense, don’t look for other sense, else all you will come up with is utter non-sense.” I have no idea who made the foregoing comment, but it well represents the consequences of Bible *studies* employing a false hermeneutic, especially regarding what is and what is not figurative language and its meaning. It specifically finds application in this study of King’s *RE*, concerning what its adherents, advocates, and defenders understand not to be figurative language, along with its interpretation.

In the *light* of the following thesis or premise, King and his followers interpret all Scripture. It is the single rule that dominates all their efforts to interpret the Scriptures. They believe the Bible teaches that Jesus would come once after ascending to heaven. Furthermore, they dogmatically teach that Jesus came when Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70. This means, in King’s and his disciples’ minds, that all end-time prophecies were fulfilled in AD 70 at the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus, the basic rules for interpreting the Scriptures as previously listed cannot be adhered to because of this overriding thesis. In fact any conclusion reached that contradicts King’s thesis will be considered wrong because it does not harmonize with it. We have long understood that one does not formulate a doctrine, then go to the Bible to make it support said doctrine. This is the fundamental error employed in their approach to Bible study as they labor to propagate their doctrine of realized eschatology.

THE CAUSE OF KING’S ERRORS

Everything has an adequate cause to bring it into existence. The cause of King’s RE is his erroneous view that end-time prophecy is fundamentally a spiritual rather than a material fulfillment. His doctrine is dependent on his definition of “the spirit of prophecy”

(Rev. 19:10). King thinks that since Christ's work was spiritual in nature, that Revelation 19:10 has to do with the nature of prophecy. However, he has no ground upon which to make that assumption. Revelation 19:10 is referring the reader to the source or purpose of prophecy. We are told by an angel that it is "the testimony of Jesus" or "the word of God" (1:2).

Our Lord's work was to magnify the spiritual, causing men to understand the high level on which they were to live while on earth in service to Him, not to emphasize things of this present material world (1 Cor. 3:1). The foregoing does not mean that Jesus was making the non-material to be greater than the material as King thinks (2, 4). After all, Jesus was raised from the dead in a physical body (Luke 24:39; Acts 1:11). Thus, when King and his converts think of anything that is "spiritual," they are thinking of that which is non-material (1). King has "spiritualized" the resurrection of mankind, the Day of Judgment, Heaven, and Hell. He even teaches that Christ "exited" His body when He returned to heaven (3). Christians are born after the Spirit, but we are nevertheless the literal children of God in physical bodies on earth. Thus, during our time on earth we serve God in our physical (flesh, blood, and bone) bodies (Rom. 12:1-2).

Kings Spiritual Method of Bible Interpretation

From the Abrahamic allegory in Galatians 4:21-31, King developed his false hermeneutic. He called it the spiritual method of interpretation. Although he states that his method is well established in the Bible, he has no proof for his declaration. Remember, it is his fundamental and primary method for interpreting end-time prophecy (King 19).

To create his spiritual method of interpretation, he wrests (tor- tures) the allegory of Abraham and his two sons of which the apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 4:21-31. He then concludes that the alle- gory represents the two comings of Christ—one coming of Christ to fleshly Israel, and the other coming of Christ to spiritual Israel. Again, without proof he continues to assert that the spiritual method of interpretation is outstanding in the works of the New

Testament writers regarding the establishment and development of spiritual Israel (King 20).

We have noticed King's erroneous belief concerning the meaning of Revelation 19:10, the verse from which he derived the name of his book, *The Spirit of Prophecy*. Although he admits the verse "does not speak directly to the nature of prophecy," nevertheless he appeals to the verse to justify his spiritual method of interpretation (20).

At this point in our study we want to examine more closely brother King's hermeneutic and what he developed and called *Transmillennialism*. Following that examination, we will prove from the Bible that both are false.

The Basis for King's False System of Religion

Often a false system of theology is built on a hypothesis conjured up in the fermented minds of men. Having developed their hypothesis, they go to the Bible to make it support their false doctrine. As it is in a viper's nature to bite man or animal, so wresting or twisting the Scripture is a part of the nature of false teachers (2 Pet. 3:16).

Regarding the previous paragraph, consider the Sadducees. These Jews did not believe in the resurrection of man at the end of time. In their vain attempts to prove their case, they began with Moses' teaching in Deuteronomy 25:5. In that passage Moses instructed that when a husband dies, his brother is to marry the dead brother's widow. Thus, the Sadducees manufactured a story of a woman who had seven husbands before she died. Each husband was a brother to the woman's first husband. Upon the death of each brother another brother married her, and then the woman died. So, the Sadducees wanted to know whose wife she would be in the resurrection (Mat. 22:29-32). Jesus told the Sadducees that they were in error and did not know the Scriptures or the power of God. Clearly, the Sadducees had ignored the Bible's teaching on marriage and did not consider God's power in the matter. They were determined to support a man-made doctrine with the Bible and their dogmatism regarding their false belief about the resurrection caused them to reason incorrectly from a skewed view of the Scriptures. In King's case, in

the second edition of his book, he writes, “If our hypothesis holds” (13). Explicitly, King says his doctrine is built on a hypothesis that he developed earlier in his book.

King’s Hypothesis and Method of Interpretation

His hypothesis is this—the Bible teaches that Jesus would come once after ascending to heaven. This coming would take place when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70. Therefore, all end-time prophecies were fulfilled in AD 70 at the destruction of Jerusalem. This, King seeks to develop throughout his book.

Although King states that Revelation 19:10 “does not speak directly to the nature of prophecy,” nevertheless he references it as if it did, in an attempt to justify his false spiritual method of interpretation. Remember, it is from this passage that King gets the name for his book (20).

Transmillennialism is a term of King’s invention (another term for this doctrine is *Covenant Eschatology*). It teaches that both the Old and New Testaments were simultaneously in force between the crucifixion of Christ and Jerusalem’s destruction in AD 70. According to King, the 1000 years reign of Revelation 20:4-6 was that period between Christ’s crucifixion and Jerusalem’s destruction in AD 70. Literally, however, the time between the two events was 37 years. Thus, according to King, it was during this 37 years that both the Old and New covenants were in force (58-59). Any doctrine teaching that the Old and New Covenants were in force between Jesus’ crucifixion and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 contradicts the Bible and is, therefore, false.

In an effort to anchor his hypothesis to the Bible, King misuses Galatians 4:21-31 to develop his hermeneutic. The apostle Paul by inspiration of the Holy Spirit tells us explicitly (in just so many words) that the historical account of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Hagar, and Ishmael in the foregoing passage is an allegory. On the basis of this allegory, King dogmatically affirms and teaches that his **spiritual method** of interpretation is the fundamental and primary method of interpreting prophecies of the end-time (19).

King wrests the allegory of Galatians 4:21-31, teaching that Abraham and his two sons represent the two comings of Christ, one to fleshly Israel and the other for spiritual Israel. This is how he begins the development of his erroneous spiritual method of Bible interpretation. With another assertion we once again note that King tells us that his spiritual method is foremost among New Testament writers concerning the establishment and development of spiritual Israel, the church (20).

What is the Meaning of Allegory of Galatians 4:21-31?

Please notice the context leading up to the allegory. This reveals the point Paul desires the Galatians and all readers to get from it. That point is understood by the conclusion Paul makes concerning it. Paul points out that the allegory teaches:

1. Christians are God's children. They, like Isaac, are children of promise and free (Gal. 4:28, 31).
2. However, the Jews are as the children of the bondwoman (Hagar). As she and her son Ishmael were cast out of the Messianic family, so the Jews are not children of God by the Law of Moses (4:23-25, 30). Under the authority of Christ in the Gospel, people become children of God by their belief in Christ. Then, upon their repentance and confession of faith in Christ, they are qualified to be baptized (immersed in water) into Christ—the only doorway into Christ and having become children of God in His family, they enjoy freedom from their bondage to sin (John 8:24; Heb. 11:6; Rom. 10:17; Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:10; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4, 17-18; 1 Pet. 3:21. Note specifically Gal. 3:24-4:7).

Thus, Galatians 4:21-31 teaches us that those under the Law of Moses were “cast out,” because both the Old and New Covenants **did not** coexist. Only the New Testament extends salvation to mankind. King's teaching about the allegory is wrong. Thus, his spiritual method of interpretation and his Transmillennialism are palpably false.

On the Day of Pentecost, when the Jews inquired of Peter what they should do, the apostle did not answer their question by saying they should continue keeping the Law of Moses. He told them in so many words to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:37-38). No choice was given to the Jews as to whether they could continue keeping the Law of Moses or obey Jesus (Rom. 1:16). Salvation was in the name or by the authority of Jesus, and it was mandatory that they obey Jesus (Acts 4:12; Col. 3:17; Acts 10:34-48; also see Mat. 28:18-19; Mark 16:15-16).

Paul tells us that the old covenant (Law of Moses) was abrogated at the cross, indicating it was fulfilled, with no man being any longer amenable to it. Thus, with the Mosaic Law abolished, how could it continue to be in effect at all (Col. 2:13-15; Eph. 2:13-16).

Furthermore, the Hebrews' writer tells us that God changed the law. Thus, because the law was changed Jesus could be the high priest and king in the Christian system (Heb. 7:12-14). Seeing that Jesus could not be a high priest under the Law of Moses, but He is our high priest under the New Testament system, there is no way the Law of Moses and the New Testament could be in effect at the same time. Jews could not be saved by keeping the Law of Moses and rejecting the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 10:1-4; Gal. 1:8-9; 5:4).

THE IMPORTANCE OF CORRECT HERMENEUTICS IN STUDYING THE BIBLE

The following was gleaned through many years studying Biblical Hermeneutics and is a brief synthesis of that study. Thus, no one text on Biblical Hermeneutics can be cited to direct the reader to the source or sources of the following information.

It is imperative that we have a correct method (hermeneutic) for interpreting the Bible. Although not all-inclusive, the following rules will help us understand the whole counsel of God. We must consistently interpret the Bible literally. Contrary to what King teaches, this is the case because (1) words must have one meaning in a given context if communication takes place. Words cannot have two or more meanings. There is a great difference in a word that can

be used in several different ways and the same word having many definitions in a single context. For example *run* can be employed as a verb, a noun, and an adjective. When used as a verb it can be used in 12 different ways without an object and 15 different ways with a subject. As a noun *run* can be defined 12 different ways and as an adjective it can have three different meanings. Thus, although *run* can have 39 definitions, **in a sentence it can only have one meaning.** Therefore, a Bible passage cannot have a “deeper” or “spiritual” meaning or more than one meaning.

(2) Who determines the definition of a word? It is the author who determines a word’s meaning. Whether we are studying poetry, history, an epistle, the gospel accounts, or prophecy, we want to know **what the inspired writer meant when he wrote a sentence.** Although I do not know who said it, one person said, “A text cannot mean what it never meant.” This idea is fundamental to helping us grasp what a passage meant and what it did not mean. **We must give the same meaning to a word today that the inspired writer intended it to have when he wrote it.**

(3) God wrote the Bible. Thus, there is only one author of the Bible. The Holy Spirit inspired the human writer to write what God directed him to write. The only way we can know what God meant is by the words He inspired the writers of the Bible to write. **Thus, what the inspired human writer meant by his words is what God meant.**

(4) The meaning of the word is basic to understanding the Biblical text. It is the only place where we can learn what the inspired writer meant. Thus, there is only one correct interpretation and meaning of a Scripture passage—the message the inspired writer intended. Therefore, there cannot be two or more meanings to the same Scripture text.

How do we discover what the inspired writer meant? One must practice a careful and consistent application of a **grammatical-historical hermeneutical** (method) of interpretation of the sacred text. By *grammatical*, we mean what the definitions of the words were and how they functioned at the time of the writing. By *histori-*

cal is meant the setting of a particular book of the Bible—the culture, geography, and the like—in the past time and space in which it was written.

Summarizing What We Have Studied

To learn what a writer meant, we must study the meaning and use of the words in a given text. Also, we must understand the important historical and cultural factors in which the words were used at the time of their writing. Furthermore, we must only discern the meaning of a passage by the words in the text. Finally, **if we cannot find a certain meaning in a passage, it is because it is not there to be found.** We dare not read into the passage what is not there.

A Few General Rules for Interpreting the Bible

1. We must know the **context** (the book itself, the section of the book, the immediate context, the remote context, and parallel passages). The context is the literary environment of the document.
2. The **definition of the words** in the original language must be closely examined. A modern dictionary only gives the modern **usage** of words.
3. It is imperative that we understand the **purpose** (the “why” it was written) of the book and **to whom** it was written.
4. We must grasp the **history and culture** in which it was written (e.g., Esther).
5. The **type of literature** we are studying must be identified (called *genre*, e.g., narrative, poetry, epistle).
6. We are to **compare Scripture with Scripture**. The Bible is coherent, unified, and non-contradictory.
7. We are to **be aware of figurative language** (trees clapping and Jesus is a door).
8. It is imperative that we **follow the plain sense meaning** of a passage.
9. Always know what the **Historical-Cultural situation** is (specifically in studying Old Testament prophecy).

10. It is important to know **how to recognize figures of speech**.
11. We must understand that **prophecy focuses** primarily on the Messiah and the establishing of His kingdom that began in Jerusalem.
12. Since every **fulfilled** prophecy was literally fulfilled, expect the same regarding unfulfilled prophecies.

CONCLUSION

Thus, we have seen that brother Max King's effort to base his spiritual method of interpretation and his Transmillennialism doctrine on Galatians 4:21-31 are spurious because he twisted said passage to his own purposes and approaches all other Scriptures to conform with his false interpretation of Galatians 4:21-31. Furthermore, we have shown that the Law of Moses and the New Covenant never coexisted with one another. Thus, King's Transmillennialism is erroneous. So, King's so-called RE is unrealized and a waste of the paper and ink used to write it.

We are sons of Abraham through an obedient faith system, not the Mosaic Law system (Gal. 3:6-9). If we (Christians) are under the works of the Law of Moses, we are under a curse (3:10-12). Under the law we are slaves and do not know God (4:8). It was Christ who redeemed us from the curse of the law (3:13-14).

The Law of Moses did not impart righteousness (3:21). It was a schoolmaster (tutor) to bring people to Christ (3:23-24). With the coming of the obedient faith system (the Gospel system, the New Testament) of actual salvation, we are no longer under a schoolmaster (Mosaic Law) (3:25). Instead, people become children of God by an obedient faith when they are baptized into Christ, not by keeping the Law of Moses (3:26-29; Heb. 5:9). Those who lived under the Law of Moses did not actually know God, but continued to be in bondage to sin (Gal. 4:8-9). Here it is important to remind ourselves that Moses' Law was abolished when Christ died on the cross (Eph. 2:15-16; Col. 2:13-14). Therefore, Christians faithfully adhere to the Gospel system of salvation, not the works of the Law of Moses (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 15:58).

We conclude this study with the familiar words of the apostle Paul to the church in Rome and the church in Thessalonica:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith (Rom. 1:16-17).

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 The. 1:7-8).

The epistles to the churches in Rome and Thessalonica were written at a time when King erroneously says the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ were both in effect. However, from the foregoing quotations from those letters alone we see that such was not the case.

To derail a train one does not have to derail every car making up the train. All one must do is derail the front wheels of the engine pulling the train. With that done, the whole train is derailed. This has been the approach taken in this study and refutation of King's theology. Having proved King's interpretation of the allegory of Galatians 4:21-31 and his Transmillennialism to be false, none of the cars in his theological train can remain on track. So, King's so-called RE is unrealized and nothing more or less than another man-made realized theological train wreck.

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ARGUMENTS AGAINST REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY

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WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOGIC?

To a great extent, you and I live in an illogical world. If you doubt this fact, just flip on the evening news or truly listen to the sectarian preacher in the church building nearest to yours—or, better yet, spend the weekend with your in-laws who emphasize emotion and “never fight fair” in a dispute. Whether you know it or not, you already understand a good bit about logic. In fact, I can prove that you already have a built-in logic detector. You do not believe me? Take this quick test to see whether you are logical:

Question: How many pancakes does it take to shingle a doghouse?

Answer: Twenty-three, because bananas do not have bones.

If the question and answer here seem **unreasonable** to you, this is a good sign that you are well on your way to being a critical thinker! Why? Simply because **if** you can spot something that is irrational, **then** you must have a decent sense of what actually is logical. In fact, this last statement is an argument! The Latin *argutus* means “clear, bright, distinct, or penetrating,” with the Latin noun *argumentum* meaning “evidence or proof.” The verb *arguo* means “to prove or reveal.” To the Latin mind an argument was not necessarily

an emotional disagreement, but rather an attempt to reveal what was true on the basis of evidence and reason.

In this sense the emphasis should be on the relevance and clarity of the evidence. So, *logic* is simply the study of the rules of reasoning and constitutes a science which we should all be diligently studying, either in school or out of it if we desire to be good Bible students “handling aright the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). It means putting your thoughts in order as Luke (with the direct help from the Spirit in his case) refers to in Luke 1:3. All of us actually use (or misuse) these rules of logic whether we are consciously aware of it or not, because these maxims apply to all reasoning everywhere, no matter whether the subject is a **religiously doctrinal** one or not.

For example, suppose your friend says to you, “I’m going to study at the library today.” And you say, “You can’t do that today.” “Why not?” he asks. “Because today is Sunday,” you explain, “and the library isn’t open on Sunday.” Do you realize that you have just presented a logical argument to your friend? You have reasoned:

1. If today is Sunday, the library is closed. [If A, then B].
2. Today is Sunday. [A is true].
3. Therefore, the library is closed. [Therefore, B is true].

Sentences (1) and (2) are called **premises**. Sentence (3) is the **conclusion**. You are saying that if premises (1) and (2) are true, then the conclusion (3) is also true. It is not just your opinion that the library is closed; you have given an **argument** for that conclusion. But that is not the end of the story. You are also reasoning:

1. If the library is closed, you cannot study there. [If B, then C].
2. The library is closed. [B is true].
3. Therefore, you cannot study there. [Therefore, C is true].

Here the conclusion of the first argument becomes a premise in the second argument (Craig 7-8). Even though you may not consciously know the fundamental rules of logic, nevertheless you use them all the time—either **properly** or **improperly**.

You may have automatically *jumped* in your mind to another rule which comes into play here: Hypothetical Syllogism (**HS**). The

form of this logical rule says, “If P implies Q, and Q implies R, then P implies R. In our example above we used the letters A, B, and C for the library illustration. The letters chosen are unimportant, but the form of the argument can serve as a reliable instrument in determining whether the correspondence between truth and reality actually takes place. The apostle Paul set out an extended version of this form in a **HS** chain (1 Cor. 15:12-15a) called a *sorite*, in which he finally is seen to be using a Modus Tollens form of reasoning (15:15b-19) to demonstrate the truth about the reality of the resurrection of the dead.

Premise 1: *P implies Q;*
 Premise 2: *Q implies R;*
 Conclusion (Premise 3):
Therefore P implies R.

On the basis of the truthfulness of Premises 1 and 2, if P is true, then R is true.

DENYING THE LEGITIMACY OF PROPER DEBATE IS TRAGIC

Though some have mistakenly understood *debate* in the KJV rendering of Romans 1:29 (cf. the more precise *strife*—ASV) as forbidding all polemic discussion, this would imply that the greatest polemicist or debater of all time, Jesus Christ, violated God’s Word (cf. Heb. 4:15). However, critical thinking does not mean merely being skeptical or critical of others in a hostile wrangling, fussing, or feuding manner which merely exhibits a bad, un-Christian attitude to no real point. Rather it means weighing the evidence or reasons people give for the conclusions they have drawn and (usually) want us to believe, so by becoming aware of the axioms of logic we can become better, clearer thinkers (Acts 17:2-3, 11, 17). In our Post-modern world, people who do not understand the tenets governing logic are often reduced to “fighting” and name-calling with one another, even trying to settle disagreements by force or by mere personal (i.e., *abusive ad hominem*) attacks upon their opponent (e.g., John 8:41; 9:34). Or sometimes all they can say to defend their view is, “This is just my personal belief,” which makes everything just a matter of opinion. Persons who understand logic can give **rea-**

sons for their views, exactly as the apostle Paul demands: “prove all things; hold fast to that which is good” (1 The. 5:21; cf. 1 Pet. 3:15).

“Logic is reason looking at itself to see how good reason works. It studies the methods that we use to analyze information and draw valid conclusions” (Geisler and Brooks 12). When we give reasons for what we believe, we are presenting an **argument** for our view and this does **not** mean a quarrel or a fight. Rather, as we see in the examples in regard to the Sunday closing of the library, an argument is a set of **premises** leading to a **conclusion**. When we draw or deduce a conclusion on the basis of a set of premises, we are engaged in reasoning. We are saying that if certain statements or premises are true, then the concluding statement is also true. In other words, the premises **imply** the conclusion. Thus, your goal is to get someone agreeing with your premises, to **also** agree with your conclusion. Just to read the life of Jesus is to marvel at His ability to do this or to at least bring others *face-to-face* with the correct evidential reasoning process—even if they stubbornly rejected it!

For example, as an inspired Gospel writer Mark recognizes that to accept the Lord’s statement (i.e., premise) “that whatsoever from without goeth into the man, *it* cannot defile him; because it goeth not into his heart, but into his belly, and goeth out into the draught” (Mark 7:18-19; cf. Mat. 22:31-32, 36-40) is to logically accept the implications (i.e., conclusions) stemming from it. Namely, real or genuine uncleanliness is a matter of one’s spiritual heart or inward being. The inspired Mark points out that by this declaration Jesus ultimately rendered obsolete all distinctions between clean and unclean foods, vessels, and people (cf. Acts 10:11-16; 11:4-10): “*This he said, making all meats clean*” (Mark 7:19). A whole section of Old Testament legislation, having served its purpose for its time, was thus “fulfilled” and “finished” by Jesus (Mat. 1:22; 2:17-18, 23; 4:14; 5:17; John 19:28, 30). Only Old Testament eternal principles continue today as part of the New Covenant law of Christ (1 Cor. 9:21, 8-14).

Also, the Lord recognized crucial flaws in Pharisaic expectations regarding the Messiah, but since the Pharisees agreed with Him that

Scripture is inspired and flawlessly consistent with itself, Christ attempted to get them to recognize what they failed to see, namely that the Messiah was Deity. Using pertinent and powerful questions in Matthew 22:42-45, Jesus was in effect arguing as follows:

1. If the Messiah was referred to in the Scriptures as: (A) David's genealogical, human son and as (B) one to whom David by inspiration refers to as his (i.e., David's) Lord, then (C) since He had to be in existence for David to rightly call Him such, the Messiah is not just a human but is also Deity.
2. The Messiah was referred to in the Scriptures as (A) David's genealogical, human son.
3. The Messiah was referred to in the Scriptures as (B) David's Lord.
4. Therefore, (C) since He had to be in existence for David to rightly call Him such, the Messiah is not just a human but is also Deity.

Now obviously a particular set of premises does not imply just any old conclusion, because otherwise people could draw opposite conclusions from the same premises! As demonstrated above, Jesus Christ did not believe that such evidence (i.e., premises) allowed one "to make his own personal, subjective truth" (cf. John 8:32; Rom. 3:4)! So how do we know what is the right conclusion to deduce or infer? The answer is **logic**. The basic rules of logic common to all mankind determine whether or not your conclusions are implied by your premises. Thus, an argument which obeys the principles or axioms of logic is called a **valid** argument. The argument you gave your friend about the library being closed obeys the rules of logic and so is a valid argument. If an argument does not obey the rules of logic, then it is called an **invalid** one. Even though the terms **valid** and **invalid** may loosely or imprecisely be used to refer primarily to **conclusions**, this is **not** how logicians use such terms.

A **valid** deductive argument refers to one in which it is impossible for the conclusion to be false given that the premises are true; the conclusion follows with strict necessity from the premises. Conversely, an **invalid** deductive argument is one in which it is

possible for the conclusion to be false given that the premises are true. Though most of us are pretty good thinkers, you can of course (since we possess no direct inspiration by the Holy Spirit) be mistaken about the truth of the premises. In our example about the library, maybe you lost track of which day of the week it is, and it is in fact really Monday. In that case your conclusion that the library is closed may be false. So it is not enough for our arguments to be valid, they must also have **true premises**. If an argument is valid and has true premises, then the argument is called a **sound** argument. If an argument is either invalid or has a false premise, then it is called an **unsound** argument. We conclude therefore that there are two conditions which must be met if an argument is to be a sound one: it must be **valid** and it must have **true premises**.

There is tremendous power in being able to present sound arguments and to spot mistakes in the reasoning of those who disagree with you, as did our Lord and other inspired spokespersons for Jehovah. While those of us living after the first century AD (1 Cor. 13:8-9) are fallible, with careful, studious thinking we can set forth valid arguments with true premises. We are told by Peter not only to do such to “sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: *being* ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you” but to do so “yet with meekness and fear” (1 Pet. 3:15). Therefore, it is important that we not only love the **truth** but that we join our sound reasoning with the attitudes or virtues of humility, love, and respect for the persons whom we are trying to persuade with that truth. Individuals who do not know logic get themselves into deep trouble by not knowing how to distinguish sound from unsound reasoning. Much of what they believe is based on just their feelings and opinions, with *valid* in their mind merely reflecting their view that what they are saying on behalf of their side in a dispute is only in a very general way *right* or *correct*. This is not how trained thinkers mean such. Logic is defined by them to be the organized body of knowledge, or science, that **precisely evaluates arguments**. “God is rational, and the principles of good reason do flow from [H]is very nature. Consequently, learn-

ing the rules of clear and correct reasoning is more than an academic exercise. For the Christian, it is also a means of spiritual service” (Geisler and Brooks, Preface). A more formal study of the art of legitimate logic will give you the tools for thinking, reasoning, discussing, and evaluating anything you want to talk about to correctly examine whether the things you and others believe “are so” (cf. Acts 17:11). This preparation is helpful when evaluating arguments against religious error, including the errors of Realized Eschatology.

SYMBOLS AND TRANSLATION

The validity of a deductive argument is purely a function of its **form**. Many of the arguments that occur in propositional logic have forms that bear specific names and often can be immediately recognized as either valid or invalid. Unfortunately, however, ordinary linguistic usage often obscures the form of an argument. To dispel or dislodge this obscurity, logic introduces various simplifying procedures. **Letters** are used to represent the terms of the **syllogism** (i.e., a deductive argument consisting of two premises and a conclusion), and rules are used to reduce syllogisms to what is called **standard form**. Form recognition is facilitated through the introduction of special symbols called **operators**, or **connectives**. When arguments are expressed in terms of these symbols, determining validity often becomes a matter of mere visual inspection. Since the Bible is made up of propositional truth, we are mostly interested in propositional logic. The fundamental elements of propositional logic are whole statements (or propositions). Statements are represented by letters, and these letters are then combined by means of the operators (connectives) to form more complex, symbolic representations.

A **simple** statement is one that does not contain any other statement as a component, such as: “Bald eagles are birds”; “Fast food restaurants tend to be unhealthy”; “Terry Hightower wrote *The Case For the Christian Policeman*”; “Jesus was a lion out of the tribe of Judah.” Usually, any convenient upper-case letter may be selected to represent each statement. Thus **A** might be used to represent the first statement, **B** the second, **C** the third, and **D** the fourth. Lower-case letters are usually reserved for use as **statement variables**. A

compound statement is one that contains at least one simple statement as a component, such as: (1) “It is not the case that ISIS is a humanitarian group.” (2) “Kenny Vance sings doo-wop, and Elvis sings rock-n-roll.” (3) “Either people get serious about conservation or energy prices will soar.” (4) “If the world’s nations ignore international law, then future wars are guaranteed.” (5) “The Dallas Cowboys will win if and only if they run the ball.” Using letters to stand for the simple statements, these compound statements may be represented as follows:

1. It is not the case that **I**.
2. **K** and **E**.
3. Either **P** or **E**.
4. If **W** then **F**.
5. **DC** if and only if **R**.

Did you pick up on the fact that the upper-case letters came from each particular compound statement? **I** stands for “ISIS is a humanitarian group,” **K** for “Kenny Vance sings doo-wop,” and **E** for “Elvis sings rock-n-roll,” and so on. Note that in the first example the statement is compound even though it contains only a single component (**I**). In general, negative statements are interpreted as compound units consisting of an affirmative statement and the phrase “it is not the case that.” The expressions “it is not the case that,” “and,” “or,” “if...then...,” and “if and only if” are translated by logical **operators**. Here are some primary logical operators/indicators.

Operator:	Name:	Logical function:	Used to translate:
\sim	tilde	negation	not, it is not the case that
\bullet	dot	conjunction	and, also, moreover
\vee	wedge	disjunction	or, unless
\supset	horseshoe	implication	if...then..., only if
\equiv	triple bar	equivalence	

Indicator:	Name:	Logical function:	Used to translate:
∴	three dots	explicit conclusion indicator; (if no indicator words = implicit); indicates inferential relationship between statements	therefore, wherefore, thus, so, consequently, entails that, we may infer, accordingly, hence, for this reason, it must be that, as a result, implies that, hence, since, because

When we use logical operators or indicators to translate the previous examples of compound statements, the results are as follows:

It is not the case that I.	$\sim I$
K and E.	$K \bullet E$
Either P or E .	$P \vee E$
If W then F .	$W \supset F$
DC if and only if R .	$DC \equiv R$

For lack of space, the reader is urged to purchase and read a standard logic textbook such as Patrick J. Hurley's *A Concise Introduction to Logic* to learn more details as to the procedure in logic whereby we use letters and symbols to stand for sentences and the words that connect them. These can sometimes vary in different textbooks, but by using symbols and letters instead of the sentences themselves we can bring out the logical form of a sentence without getting distracted by the wording. This has nothing to do with *flaunting* or *parading* one's intellectual prowess, but it truly helps to *objectify* the reasoning involved. I have elsewhere answered another foolish criticism as follows:

To consciously use facts coupled with a solid, accurate, and orderly mental process (i.e., reason) to reach conclusions that are warranted by the evidence, is alleged by some to be "cold logic" that they claim strips all feeling and emotion from our faith. What these individuals fail to see is that in ascertaining truth such "cold logic" is exactly the right way to go about it! Heartfelt emotions should follow after knowledge of the truth, not the other way around. In the

method under review, subjective feelings or emotion are allowed an opening to lead or bend the “evidence” to conclusions which we want or expect (Jer. 17:9). I am reminded of the farmer who was approached by a stranger one day who asked him how much he thought his prize Jersey cow was worth. The farmer thought for a moment, looked the stranger over, then asked: “Are you the tax assessor or has she just been killed by your car?” (Hightower 33).

We must not presuppose our conclusions and then merely seek facts favorable to them, nor fail to consciously arrange our arguments from the Bible in proper, truthful forms. “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?” (Jer. 17:9—NKJV). We must also learn all of the most important logical **fallacies** to not be deceived by *bad* or wrong argumentation—and even learn the names for the ways that arguments can be illegitimate. We hope that you will learn to sniff out bad reasoning like a hound dog! In fact, I consider a study of logic as more crucial than even knowing the original languages of Scripture, for to think properly from a reliable Biblical text in one’s own native tongue is better than knowing the Hebrew or Greek Scriptures only to incompetently reason from them. For proof of this, just read some of the books by our own New Hermeneutikers! With this in mind, why not buy some books like: *The Art of Argument: An Introduction to the Informal Fallacies* by Larsen and Hodge, or *Come, Let Us Reason* by Geisler and Brooks?

SOME MAJOR ARGUMENT FORMS

We will now examine some of the major or common argument forms. An argument form is an arrangement of statement variables, operators, and indicators such that the uniform replacement of these by statements result in an **argument**. The following propositions are true for all **valid** arguments: (1) if the premises are true, the conclusion must be true; (2) you cannot accept the premises and deny the conclusion without contradicting yourself; (3) the conclusion asserts or affirms no more than what is already contained, implicitly, in the premises. Note how this last proposition (3) relates to our phrase “Deductive Reasoning” which comes from *deduco*—Latin

for “I lead down.” We are not to subjectively *put in* or **insert** truths, but only to lead them out! Thus, D. R. Dungan properly defines hermeneutics as the **science** of interpretation and exegesis as coming “from *ex*, out, and *egeisthas*, to guide or lead” thus meaning “to lead out” (1). (One can see from this how New Hermeneutikers foolishly misunderstand the cruciality of logical precision in Bible interpretation and especially the absolutely vital role of **implication!** Instead of blatantly attempting to throw out completely what they deem as the Old Hermeneutic, let them face up to the task of demonstrating wherein our biblical argumentation is logically wrong—i.e., either as invalid or as to which premises are not true!)

The first rule of inference or valid deductive argument form we will consider is:

Modus Ponens (MP): “Asserting Mode”

Premise 1. **P** \supset **Q** (proposition P implies proposition Q)

Premise 2. **P** (proposition P is true)

Conclusion: \therefore **Q** (therefore, proposition Q is true, by MP from premises 1 and 2)

Here is a rather simple biblical example of the principle involved by “way of affirmation”:

Premise 1. **If** it’s true that (P) “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,” **then** (Q) “God so loved **you** that He gave His only begotten Son.”

Premise 2. (P) is true. (Using John 3:16; if God loved the world then He also loved you because you are a part of the “world” as meant in the first statement. The explicit verse of John 3:16 implies God gave His only begotten Son for you.)

Conclusion: Therefore, (Q) is true: “God so loved **you** that He gave His only begotten Son.” (by MP from premises 1 and 2)

It is impossible for **P** to be true and for **Q** to be false! While John 3:16 is an explicit Bible verse, the conclusion is not, yet we can know that both are absolutely true! This fact is due to Deity

explicitly stating John 3:16 and His (i.e., God's) **implicitly** stating the conclusion. We correctly inferred what the Lord implied. Thus, the authority or *bindingness* is **His**, not ours as some have foolishly claimed in their effort to do away with "Necessary Inference." The rule *Modus Ponens* tells us that from the two premises $P \supset Q$, and P , we may validly conclude the truth of statement Q . In premise one, the P and the Q stand for any two different sentences and the horseshoe or " \supset " stands for "implies" (or the connecting words "If..., then") P is the **Antecedent** (cf. *protasis* in Greek grammar) being affirmed, while Q is the **Consequent** (cf. *apodosis* in Greek grammar) being alleged to follow from the truth of the antecedent. To read the first premise, you say, "If P , then Q " or "If P is true, then Q is also true." Another way of reading $P \supset Q$ is to say: " P implies Q ." To read premise two, you just say, " P " or " P is true."

Another familiar example of **modus ponens** comes from Christian Evidences:

1. If there is design in the universe, then there must have been a Designer.
2. There is design in the universe.
3. Therefore, there must have been a Designer.

This argument fits the model **modus ponens** precisely:

1. $d \supset D$
2. d
3. $\therefore D$ (Modus Ponens or MP, from premises 1 and 2)

A Word about Implication

Since **implication** is a relationship between two statements in which the truth of one statement necessarily requires or depends upon the truth of another, one can readily see its importance and why there has been such a concentrated attack upon it by New Hermeneutic deceivers. Many of them set out passages lacking in a real inferential relationship between statements, and any passage not having an inferential claim cannot be a genuine argument. For instance, to say, "Tuition at the University of Texas has increased every year, except for the summer term, for the last five years" does

not contain an **argument**. One should watch for: reports (as here), loosely associated statements, warnings, pieces of advice, mere statements of belief or opinion, a hodge-podge group of crowded facts and figures, and illustrations. (An example of the latter is when an advocate of “faith only” salvation may attempt to blunt the force of Jesus’ requirement of baptism in Mark 16:16 by saying: “That’s like saying ‘He that gets on a train and **sits down** shall go to his destination.’” Funny, is it not, how he did not use as his chosen illustration “He that buys a ticket and **gets on a train** shall go to his destination”!) False teachers in our own brotherhood may consciously or unconsciously be involved in this failure to set forth valid arguments, and this includes those involved in “anti-ism” and liberalism.

The second rule of inference or valid argument form we will consider is:

Modus Tollens (MT) or “Denying Mode”

Premise 1. $P \supset Q$ (proposition P implies proposition Q)

Premise 2. $\sim Q$ (not Q; proposition Q is false)

Conclusion: $\therefore \sim P$ (therefore, it is false that P, from premises 1, 2)

The Latin phrase means “the way of denial” and this consists of one conditional premise, a second premise that denies the consequent of the conditional premise, and a conclusion that denies the antecedent. Once again the P and the Q stand for any two sentences, and the horseshoe “ \supset ” stands for “implies or ‘If..., then...’.” The tilde “ \sim ” sign stands for “not” or “it is not the case that” and thus performs the function of **negation**. We use it whenever we want to deny a term or proposition; that is, when we want to say that something is false. If there were a real connection between the antecedent (P) and the consequent (Q) (or the “If” and the “then”), and the consequent is false, then the **antecedent** must be false also. If the antecedent were true, then the consequent would not be false. So premise one reads: P implies Q, and two reads, “Not Q.” The Modus Tollens form is: If P implies that Q is true, when in fact Q is false, then P must be false also! If anything implies that something is

true, when in fact that something is false, then that “anything” must be false itself. So the conclusion reads: “Therefore, it is false that P.”

As exhibited in Scripture we could use 1 John 4:19-21:

If anyone loves God, then he loves his brothers. $TLG \supset TLB$

Terry does not love his brothers. $\sim TLB$

Therefore, Terry does not love God. $\therefore \sim TLG$

Although the antecedent is true, it is not true of Terry and our symbols convey this. You may also use a logic text to study Venn diagrams which will help visualize or demonstrate these sentences and their relationship to one another. Think! Would one circle (LB) inside a larger circle (LG) be appropriate here? If Terry loves his brothers (TLB) could we not properly put a third circle (TLB) inside the smaller circle? Yes. However, since it is false that Terry loves his brothers ($\sim TLB$), would we not have to place it **outside** the smaller one? Would this not also place him outside both circles? Come on folks, our kids in school use Venn diagrams like this all the time!

The next valid argument form we will consider is disjunctive syllogism which is defined as follows:

DISJUNCTIVE SYLLOGISM (DS) or “Dilemma Form”

Premise 1. $P \vee Q$ $P \vee Q$

Premise 2. $\sim P$ $\sim Q$

Conclusion: $\therefore Q$ $\therefore P$

Disjunctive Syllogism tells us that if a strong disjunctive (i.e., alternative) syllogism of two sentences making up the major premise is true, and one of the sentences is false, then the other sentence is true. The major premise **must** be an “either/or” kind of sentence.

Only one of the “alternates” can be true. Example:

Premise 1. Either Freed-Hardeman University or FSU is in Tennessee. $FHU^T \vee FSU^T$

Premise 2. FSU is not in Tennessee. $\sim FSU^T$

Conclusion: Therefore, Freed-Hardeman is in Tennessee.
 $\therefore FHU^T$

The validity of a disjunctive syllogism arises from the fact that one of the premises presents two alternatives and the other premise **eliminates** one of those alternatives, leaving the other as the conclusion. This “method of elimination” is essential to the validity of a disjunctive syllogism. The tricky thing about logical disjunctions is that **both** of the sentences connected by “or” could be true (sometimes called **weak** disjunction). In other words, the alternatives do not have to be mutually exclusive as they are in “*strong* disjunction.” Geisler and Brooks (66) cite where Moses gives us an almost textbook example in Deuteronomy 30:15-19 of strong disjunction. He lays out the exclusive alternatives, negates one, and draws the conclusion:

Premise 1. “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.” (Form: **LG v DE**)
(You can allege that this is exclusive by placing a circle around the wedge).

Premise 2. “But if thy heart turn away, and thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish” (\sim **DE**) In other words he negates death and evil, as everyone should.

Conclusion: “[T]herefore choose life, that thou mayest live”
(\therefore **LG**) (**DS**, 1, 2)

“What could be more clear? You have a choice between life and death. You don’t want to die. Therefore, choose life” (Geisler and Brooks 66). Here is a more present-day example:

Premise 1. Either Karen worked in the garden or Michael spent his Saturday morning napping. **K v M**

Premise 2. Michael did not spend his Saturday napping.
 \sim **M**

Conclusion: Therefore, Karen worked in the garden. \therefore **K**

Both sentences in premise 1 could be true. Therefore, you cannot conclude that because one of the sentences connected by “or” is

true, that the other one is false! That is invalid. Both could be true in spite of the fact that it is unlikely that the Michael most of us know did not nap away his Saturday. After all, his in-laws may have been visiting on Saturday! So DS, or Disjunctive Syllogism only allows you to conclude that if one part of a true disjunction is **false**, then the other part is **true**. The sense of the sentence must exclude the possibility of both alternatives being true. This is referred to as **strong** or **exclusive** Disjunction (Hurley 293). Jesus was a master of its use (e.g., Mat. 21:25-27).

We must even use this type of critical thinking to determine the meaning from a text as to something as simple as the age of a child, a menu, or which track a train is on! What about the following examples? “Susan is either nine or ten years old.” “You can have either soup or salad with this meal.” “The Burlington-Santa Fe is on either track A or B.” If you deduced that these sentences are all logically to be seen as “strong” disjunction, you are correct! Hurley (293) points out that: “If the exclusive aspect of these ‘either...or...’ statements is essential, then the symbolic equivalent of ‘but not both’ can be attached to their logical translations”. Thus, all three statements can be translated as, $(A \vee B) \cdot \sim (A \cdot B)$. (In figuring out whether more complex arguments are valid, it is important to remember that you cannot use a logical rule on just **part** of a step, but only on the **whole** step.) I was taught to use the simpler indicator of placing a **circle** around the wedge or “ \vee .” In such strong disjunctive statements, “a portion of their ordinary meaning would be lost if they were translated by using only a wedge” (Hurley 293).

A fourth valid form of inference needing to be learned is the hypothetical syllogism (HS) which is defined as follows:

HYPOTHETICAL SYLLOGISM:

- Premise 1. $P \supset Q$
 Premise 2. $Q \supset R$
 Conclusion: Therefore, $P \supset R$

This rule says that if P implies Q, and Q implies R, then P implies R. Since we do not know the particular propositions yet, we do not know if Premise 1 is true nor if Premise 2 is true, so we cannot

conclude that R is true. But at least we can know on the basis of premises 1 and 2 that **if** P does imply Q and that Q does imply R, then we can know that P implies R is true. In other words, if the premises are true, and the argument is valid, then the conclusion **has** to be true. Some students have trouble with this at first. When the student of logic examines an argument, the first thing he looks for is validity. We say that an argument is valid, remember, if the conclusion necessarily follows **given that the premises are true**. If an argument has true premises and a false conclusion, we know it is invalid. Here is an example of a valid argument. **Note:** One of the premises happens to be false, but the **argument** remains valid:

Premise 1. If all dogs are brown, and all poodles are dogs, it follows necessarily that all poodles are brown. (Form: If all D are B • all P are D, then all P are B)

Premise 2. All dogs are brown and all poodles are dogs. (All D are B • all P are D)

Conclusion: All poodles are brown. [\therefore all P are B] (HS 1, 2)

Can you draw this out using a Venn diagram? Draw a large circle and color it brown. Draw a smaller circle totally inside the larger one and mark it with a P. Now examine to see if all P are brown. If it were in fact true that all dogs were brown, then all poodles would **necessarily** be brown. The problem with the argument is the falsehood of the first (or major) premise, not the **structure** of the argument. To test for validity, grant **provisional truth** to the premises, and then see if the conclusion would have to be true.

Here is an example where the premises are true, and the conclusion is necessarily true, so now we have what is referred to as a **sound** argument.

Premise 1. If all Christians are forgiven and the apostle Paul was a Christian, then it follows that the apostle Paul was forgiven. (If all C is F • P is C, then (\supset) P is F)

Premise 2. All Christians are forgiven and the apostle was a Christian. (All C is F • P is C) Use Scriptures showing this to be true!

Conclusion: Therefore, the apostle Paul was forgiven. [∴ P is F]

Roy Deaver used to use this same basic argument to show or prove that in spite of the fact that Scripture does not **explicitly** record that Paul repented, we can know he did so because he was a Christian (Acts 26:28-29). From the additional Bible fact that all Christians were required to repent (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38), we properly deduce or infer that Paul repented. God implied this in His Divine Word; so the authority is His and not ours!

Can you use this same type of argumentation to prove that Peter was **married** and **had children**? How do we know that he was married? Would you know this from the fact that he had a mother-in-law (Mark 1:30)? Yes! Or, from the fact that he was an **elder** (1 Pet. 5:1)? Were New Testament elders required to have had children (1 Tim. 3:4-5; Tit. 1:6)? **Fill in the blanks:** If all _____ had to have believing _____ and _____ was an elder, then _____ had believing _____. This is the first premise. What is the second? What is the conclusion? Come on, this type of reasoning is what “rightly dividing” or “handling aright” the Word of God is all about!

SPECIFIC ARGUMENTS AGAINST REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY

Ongoing Nature of Prophecy

Argument in Modus Ponens (MP) form:

Premise 1.

If it is the case that there is a prophecy in the New Testament that teaches that an action or state entailed in the fulfillment of the prophecy is an ongoing action or state, then it must be the case that the ongoing nature of the action or state is part of that prophecy and its fulfillment. (Form: $P \supset Q$ — P implies Q)

Premise 2.

It is the case that there is a prophecy in the New Testament that teaches that an action or state entailed in the fulfillment of the prophecy is an ongoing action or state. (P — P is true) (See 2 Cor. 5:10-11 below.)

Conclusion:

Therefore, it must be the case that the ongoing nature of the action or state is part of that prophecy and its fulfillment. ($\therefore Q$ —therefore Q is true—MP, Modus Ponens from the two premises)

This argument serves as a presupposition to the arguments which follow.

New Testament Prophetic Text

Argument in Modus Ponens form:

Premise 1.

If it is the case that a prophetic New Testament text applies to anyone living today, then it must be the case that all prophecy was not completely fulfilled by AD 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem. (Form: $A \supset B$ —A implies B)

Premise 2.

It is the case that a prophetic New Testament text applies to someone living today as shown by 2 Corinthians 5:10-11. (Form: A —A is true)

Conclusion:

Therefore, all prophecy was not completely fulfilled by AD 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem. ($\therefore B$ —therefore B is true) (MP or Modus Ponens, from Premise 1 and 2, or write (1, 2))

All Prophecy Was Not Completely Fulfilled

Argument in Modus Ponens form:

Premise 1.

If it is the case that all prophecy was not completely fulfilled by AD 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem, then it is the case that the Full Preterism teaching that all prophecy was fulfilled by AD 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem is a false doctrine. (B \supset C)

Premise 2.

It is the case that all prophecy was not completely fulfilled by AD 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem. (B) (**See conclusion above**)

Conclusion:

Therefore, the Full Preterism teaching that all prophecy **was** fulfilled by AD 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem is a false doctrine. (\therefore C) (MP 1, 2)

All three of these syllogisms are in the form **Modus Ponens** because their first premises involve an “If...then” (or **antecedent** then **consequent**) relationship wherein the antecedent is affirmed in Premise 2 to be true and so related to the consequent in Premise 1 that the conclusion, or **consequent** is true. Could one have used letters less generic and more aligned with the actual wording of the text? Yes! We could have used pNTt \supset apncfAD70idJ in Premise 1 (and throughout) the second argument. Do you see how I got these letter symbols from the actual words in the sentences from the argument? Similarly for the third argument, could we use apncfAD70idj \supset FP-tapfAD70idJiFD? Yes, but it is obviously best to simplify and make it easier to follow the argument form to determine if its form is valid or invalid. Why use so many letters to symbolize argumentation when one letter will accomplish the same thing? We are not trying to be complex, but rather to be transparent and understandable! (**Caution:** If you are a New Hermeneutiker please take some Xanax or Valium before reading the next sentence!) Logic is the study of valid **inferences** and the possible attending fallacies (i.e., mistakes).

John 8:51

Argument in Modus Ponens (MP) form:

Premise 1.

If it is the case that John 8:51 is a prophecy that applies to a person living today, then John 8:51 must have a scope as to its fulfillment that (at the very least) includes the time period from AD 70 until now. (Form: $A \supset B$)

Premise 2.

It is the case that John 8:51 is a prophecy that applies to a person living today. (A)

Conclusion:

Therefore, John 8:51 must have a scope as to its fulfillment that (at the very least) includes the time period from AD 70 until now. [$\therefore B$] (MP 1, 2)

One should further note that this same argument can be used concerning every prophetic text that Realized Eschatology advocates try to apply to themselves and their salvation this side of AD 70.

False That All Prophecy Was Fulfilled by AD 70

Argument Five in Modus Tollens (MT) form:

Premise 1.

If it is the case that Realized Eschatology is true, then all prophecy was fulfilled by AD 70. (Form: RE \supset APF)

Premise 2.

It is false that all prophecy was fulfilled by AD 70. (\sim APF)

Note: Daniel 2:32-33 describes four kingdoms: The head of gold is Babylon; breast and arms of silver is the Medo-Persian empire; the belly of brass is describing the Grecian empire; the leg of iron, and feet of iron and part of clay is the **Roman** empire. Was the Roman empire destroyed by AD 70? No, it was not destroyed until AD 476! Since this one prophecy was not fulfilled by the necessary date of AD 70, Realized Eschatology is false.

Conclusion:

Therefore, Realized Eschatology is false. ($\therefore \sim$ RE) (MT 1, 2)

Acts 17:31

Argument in the form of Modus Tollens (MT):

Premise 1.

If it is the case that Paul taught in Acts 17:31 that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent at the time of his sermon on Mar's Hill, then the Second Coming of Christ was imminent at the time of the penning of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10. (Form: $P \supset Q$)

Premise 2.

It is false that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent at the time of his penning 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10. [$\sim Q$]

Conclusion:

Therefore, it is false that Paul taught in Acts 17:31 that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent at the time of his sermon on Mar's Hill. [$\therefore \sim P$] (MT 1, 2)

Christ Was High Priest Before AD 70

Argument in the form of Modus Ponens (MP):

Premise 1.

If Jesus Christ was High Priest before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, then the law had been changed with the Law of Moses being abolished before AD 70. (J \supset L) (Heb. 7:11-16)

Premise 2.

Jesus Christ was High Priest before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. (J) (Heb. 1:3; 3:1; 4:14-16; 8:1-6; 9:11-15, 23-28).

Conclusion:

Therefore, the law had been changed with the Law of Moses being abolished before AD 70. (\therefore L) (MP 1, 2)

The reader is urged to consider the following passages affirming that Christians were priests prior to AD 70 (1 Pet. 2:4-9; Rev. 1:6). If Christians comprised a royal priesthood (literally in Greek “a kingdom of priests”) prior to AD 70, then who was the High Priest of that priesthood? (Here is a hint: It was neither Annas nor Caiaphas!) Can you put this argumentation into a well-formed formula in words? Can you then use letters as symbols of those words? Is it a valid argument? Are all premises provable by the Scriptures?

New Birth

Argument in the form of Modus Ponens:

Premise 1.

If there were any persons born again prior to AD 70, then they were in the kingdom of God before AD 70. ($P \supset K$; or If P, then K)

Premise 2.

There were persons born again prior to AD 70. (P) (John 3:3, 5; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 4:15; Jam. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:22-23)

Conclusion:

Therefore, they were in the kingdom of God before AD 70. [$\therefore K$]
(MP 1, 2)

False That All Prophecies Ended by AD 70

Argument in the form of Modus Tollens:

Premise 1.

If Realized Eschatology implies everything ended with the fall of the Temple in Jerusalem by AD 70, then all prophecies were fulfilled by AD 70. (RE \supset A)

Premise 2.

It is false that all prophecies were fulfilled with the fall of the Temple in Jerusalem by AD 70. (\sim A) (If even one prophecy was fulfilled **after** AD 70 then the whole system is incorrect.)

Note: The devotees of Realized Eschatology leave Daniel's prophecy of the "70 sevens" three and a half years too short by stopping in the middle when the Temple is destroyed. This ignores the last half of the last seven years, but Daniel's prophecy is not fulfilled until **after** AD 70 (Dan. 9). Thus, if this one prophecy can be fulfilled after AD 70, then others can as well.

Conclusion:

Therefore, Realized Eschatology is false. ($\therefore \sim$ RE) (MT, 1, 2)

Hope

Argument in the form Modus Tollens:

Premise 1.

If Realized Eschatology is true, then all hope of eternal life and salvation is removed for anyone living today. (Form: $RE \supset H$)

This is true because according to Realized Eschatology, all promises and prophecies have been fulfilled by AD 70 and the promise or prediction of hope/salvation has thus been fulfilled and there is no hope remaining.

Premise 2.

It is false that all hope of eternal life and salvation is removed for anyone living today. ($\sim H$)

Note: Paul says: “For in hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for it” (Rom. 8:24-25). If there is no hope then there is no salvation (yet Paul declares that we are saved by hope)!

Conclusion:

Therefore, Realized Eschatology is false. ($\therefore \sim RE$) (MT, 1, 2)

Note: Realized Eschatology must still maintain hope of eternal salvation, and when it does then it is false that all promises and prophecies have been fulfilled by AD 70!

No Marriage Today and No Death

Argument in the form Modus Tollens (MT):

Premise 1.

If Realized Eschatology's claim that the resurrection is already past is true, then no one today rightfully ought to be marrying, or being given in marriage, or dying any more. (Form: RE \supset MGD) (See Mat. 22:30; 1 Cor. 15:20-26).

Premise 2.

It is false that no one today rightfully ought to be marrying, being given in marriage, or dying any more. (\sim MGD)

Note: It is obvious that we are still rightfully marrying, being given in marriage, and we are still dying in accordance with the above Scriptures! Will Realized Eschatology become like some cults wherein marriage was forbidden (1 Tim. 4:3) or similar to Mary Baker Eddy's proclamation that death is only something in the mind and does not really happen? If the Realized Eschatology advocates attempt to make *dying* a spiritual concept (cf. 1 Pet. 2:24; Eph. 2:1, 5; John 11:26; Rom. 6:1, 8), then this means we cannot sin, because sin is what causes spiritual death (3:23). (Can you form this into another Modus Tollens argument in refutation of this attempt? Just follow the correct form and try it!)

Conclusion:

Therefore, it is false that Realized Eschatology's claim that the resurrection is already past is true. ($\therefore \sim$ RE) (MT, 1, 2)

The Throne of David

Argument in the compound form of two Hypothetical Syllogisms (HS) and a Modus Ponens (MP) one:

First HS Syllogism:

Premise 1.

The exaltation of Jesus by way of ascension to heaven is the time when Jesus began to sit at the right hand of the Father. (Acts 2:30-36). (E \supset S)

Premise 2.

The time when Jesus began to sit at the right hand of the Father is the time when Jesus began to reign over His kingdom. (Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21). (S \supset R)

Conclusion:

Therefore, the exaltation of Jesus by way of ascension to heaven is the time when Jesus began to reign over His kingdom. (\therefore E \supset R) (HS 1, 2)

Second HS Syllogism:

Premise 1.

The throne of Jehovah is the throne of Christ. (Rev. 3:21) (J \supset C)

Premise 2.

The throne of David is the throne of Jehovah. (1 Kin. 2:12; 1 Chr. 29:23) (D \supset J)

Conclusion:

Therefore, the throne of David is the throne of Christ. (\therefore D \supset C) (HS 1, 2)

Third MP Syllogism:

Premise 1.

If the throne of David is also the throne of Jehovah God, and Christ is seated on the throne of Jehovah God, then Christ is seated on the throne of David. ([D \supset J] • [C \supset J]) \supset \therefore (C \supset D)

Premise 2.

The throne of David is also the throne of Jehovah God. [D \supset J]

Premise 3.

Christ is seated on the throne of Jehovah God. $[C \supset J]$

Premise 4.

$(D \supset J \bullet C \supset J)$ (Conjunction 2, 3) Instead of the dot “•” a symbol sometimes used for conjunction is “&” which you can read as “and.” It should be obvious that given two statements, one is warranted in asserting the conjunction of the two!

Conclusion:

Therefore, Christ is seated on the throne of David. $(\therefore C \supset D)$
(MP 1, 4)

Note: This condition of things existed even **prior** to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 according to Revelation 2:26-27 and 3:21! Furthermore, it existed as per the first syllogism above, from the time Jesus upon His ascension to heaven sat down of His Father’s right hand. This destroys the theories of both the Full Preterists (i.e., Realized Eschatology) and the Premillennialists regarding the kingdom of Christ and His reign on David’s throne.

2 Timothy 4:1-4

Argument in the form Modus Tollens (MT):

Premise 1.

If the judgment of the living and the dead at the appearing of Christ and His kingdom occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, then the prophecy of the apostasy of 2 Timothy 4:1-4 and the preaching of the Word to counter it were limited to a two-year period from AD 68 to AD 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem. (J \supset [PA • PW])

Premise 2.

It is false that the prophecy of the apostasy of 2 Timothy 4:1-4 and the preaching of the Word to counter it were limited to a two-year period from AD 68 to AD 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem. (\sim [PA • PW])

Ask yourself, was Timothy (and by implication those of us living today) not to continue steadfastly in preaching the Word **past** or **beyond** the destruction of the temple in AD 70?

Conclusion:

Therefore, it is false that the judgment of the living and the dead at the appearing of Christ and His kingdom occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. ($\therefore \sim$ J)

Second Timothy 4:1-4 entails a prophecy that clearly looks **beyond** AD 70. Paul commanded Timothy to keep on preaching the Word of God:

For the time **will come** when they **will not endure** sound doctrine; but after their own lusts **shall** they **heap** to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they **shall turn** away *their* ears from the truth, and **shall be turned** unto fables (4:3-4—KJV).

Now that was written in AD 68 shortly before Paul's execution. According to Realized Eschatology there were **only two years** left before this would be completely and utterly fulfilled, which means that Timothy **would only have about two years to carry out his part**, because at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 God would judge "the living

and the dead at his appearing and His kingdom” (4:1—KJV)! This is ludicrous on its very face! Perhaps the advocates of Realized Eschatology ought to try to turn this around and attempt to use it to *prove* that we ought to leave **them** alone and not oppose their own itching ears, turning their ears from the truth, and their Realized Eschatology “fable”! If they were to do so, then **they** themselves would be merely proving that those verses still apply today by their opposition to what they would be claiming were **our** itching ears, turning from their *truth*, and Realized Eschatology fable!

The General Resurrection

Argument in the form Modus Ponens (MP) and likely in its simplest structure:

Premise 1.

If the general resurrection is yet future, then it is false that the general resurrection occurred in AD 70. ($GR^F \supset FGR^{70}$)

Premise 2.

The general resurrection is yet future. (GR^F)

Note: Show from immediate context that 1 Corinthians 15 is addressing bodily resurrection and how it fits perfectly with remote contexts (i.e., other interrelated biblical verses).

Conclusion:

Therefore, it is false that the general resurrection occurred in AD 70. ($\therefore GT^F$) (MP) It is usually best to not try to turn a negative phrase into a positive one, but just to leave it as if the negative word—in this case “false”—is a positive statement. In other words, it is saying that our conclusion that, “it is false that the general resurrection occurred in AD 70” is **true**.

Note: The proposition that, “The Scriptures teach that the general resurrection is yet future” has apparently stymied Don Preston from agreeing to a public debate on his AD 70 heresy. He claims that it is “not precise.” Yet, it obviously is precise to anyone with even a simplistic knowledge of logic. One brother has suggested three reasons he believes Preston does not want for anyone to affirm this proposition:

A. He (Preston) knows that such a simple wording, being so precise and quick to the central point at issue (whether or not the Second Coming of Christ has already occurred) would be easily remembered by the audience. A complex-compound proposition entails far more parts that are hard for many people to remember, much less keep straight as to what parts of the proposition have been established by its proponent.

B. He desires that the adversary affirm a proposition that entails within itself actually part of his own case, as though

his allegedly certain **assumptions** on 1 Corinthians 15, that he and his cohorts make, are true. The most important one to their case is that the *death* which is destroyed is not **physical** death, but is either “the grave of Judaism” or “spiritual” death, or even perhaps a combination of these two. Such an aspect of things alleged by him can be dealt with under his own proposition, if he considers them to be so vital to the discussion.

C. He knows that if one proves that the general resurrection “is yet future,” then his AD 70 claim is patently false! His own proposition then becomes absolutely meaningless and all the quibbles he makes on certain Bible texts about the body, bodies, death, and so on count for naught. The conclusion becomes academic, and the debate is effectively over, as is his debating career.

Judged for Idle Words

Argument in the form Modus Ponens (MP) and ultimately Hypothetical Syllogism (HS):

First Syllogism:

Premise 1.

If we will give account of the idle words that we speak in the day of judgment, then the judgment is yet future and not past. ($G \supset J^F$)

Premise 2.

We will give account of the idle words that we speak in the day of judgment. (G)

Note: From Jesus' own words, it is the case that Matthew 12:34-35 teaches that we will all give account for every idle word that we speak. Will the Realized Eschatology advocates deny our accountability in 2015?

Conclusion:

Therefore, the judgment is yet future and not past. ($\therefore J^F$) (MP 1, 2)

Second Syllogism:

Premise 1.

If the judgment is yet future and not past, then Realized Eschatology is wrong. ($J^F \supset RE^W$)

Premise 2.

The judgment is yet future and not past. (J^F) (See conclusion in first syllogism above).

Conclusion:

Therefore, Realized Eschatology is wrong. ($\therefore RE^W$)

Third Syllogism (HS):

Premise 1.

($G \supset J^F$) First syllogism.

Premise 2.

($J^F \supset RE^W$) Second syllogism.

Conclusion:

($\therefore G \supset RE^W$) (HS 1, 2)

Death Destroyed

Argument in the form involves Modus Tollens (MS), Modus Ponens (MP), Disjunctive Syllogism (DS), and also Conjunction:

First Syllogism:

Premise 1.

If death was destroyed in AD 70, then either **physical** death was destroyed in AD 70 or **spiritual** death was destroyed in AD 70. (Form: Disjunctive Syllogism.) $D \supset (P \vee S) \bullet \sim (P \bullet S)$ Strong or Exclusive Disjunctive Syllogism (DS)

Premise 2.

It is false that **physical** death was destroyed in AD 70. ($\sim P$) See our cemeteries where many people are buried—people still die physically!

Premise 3.

If it is true that **spiritual** death was destroyed in AD 70, then no separation from God by anyone has occurred since AD 70. ($S \supset$ NSG)

Premise 4.

If there is no separation from God by anyone has occurred since AD 70, then **no sin** has occurred since AD 70. ($NSG \supset N^{\text{SIN}}$)

Premise 5.

It is false that **no sin** has occurred since AD 70. ($\sim N^{\text{SIN}}$)

Premise 6.

Therefore, it is false that no separation from God has occurred since AD 70. ($\sim NSG$) (MT 4,5) Sin **has** occurred since AD 70 (Isa. 59:1-2; Rom. 3:23; 6:23).

Premise 7.

Therefore, it is false that **spiritual** death was destroyed in AD 70. ($\sim S$) (Modus Tollens, 3, 4)

Premise 8.

If it is false that **physical** death and **spiritual** death were destroyed in AD 70, then it is false that death was destroyed at all in AD 70. ($[\sim P \bullet \sim S]$) (Conjunction 2, 5)

Premise 9.

Therefore it is false that death was destroyed at all in AD 70. (\sim D) (MT 1, 8)

From this truth you can see that Realized Eschatology is a false doctrine.

Spiritual Resurrection Out of the Grave of Judaism

Argument in the form Modus Tollens (MT):

Premise 1.

If the resurrection of the righteous dead occurred in AD 70, then it is the **spiritual** resurrection of the church out of the “grave” of Judaism. ($R \supset S$)

Premise 2.

It is false that it is the **spiritual** resurrection of the church out of the “grave” of Judaism. ($\sim S$) **See the argumentation below.**

Conclusion:

Therefore, it is false that the resurrection of the righteous dead occurred in AD 70. ($\therefore \sim R$) (MT 1, 2)

If the **church** was spiritually dead in Judaism and was “resurrected” from that grave in AD 70 as Max R. King and others (including Don Preston) have affirmed, then by definition: (1) something and/or someone was responsible for “killing” it, (2) it had to “die” at some point to enter into that “grave,” (3) it was thus at some point in some meaningful sense “alive” before dying and entering that “grave,” and (4) its condition of being “alive” before dying was separate and distinct from the Jewish system. This explains why the following questions have been repeatedly asked of Realized Eschatology proponents (e.g., Bell, Preston, Baisden, and their supporters): What or who killed the church? When was it killed? Why was it killed? How was it killed? When was it “alive” before being killed? How was its “living” condition distinct from and independent of the Jewish system? What about the Gentiles who were in the church prior to AD 70 who were, by admission of these advocates of Realized Eschatology, never even part of the Jewish system or under the Mosaic Law? Contemplation on these unanswerable questions will cause one to realize that the claim of the resurrection of the righteous dead is a spiritual, not physical resurrection of the church out of the alleged “grave” of Judaism is false.

Matthew 22:23-34

Argument in the combined forms of Modus Ponens:

Premise 1.

If the resurrection of Matthew 22:23-34 (cf. Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40) is a resurrection of human individuals (i.e., the eight people in view in that passage), then the resurrection being referred to is in regard to the bodily death of human individuals. (R \supset B^D)

Premise 2.

The resurrection of Matthew 22:23-34 (cf. Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-49) is a resurrection of human individuals (i.e., the eight people in view in that passage). (R)

The Sadducees background of denying a bodily resurrection and the soul or spirit re-entering the body (Acts 23:8) proves that the discussion is centering on just that: the resurrection of the **literal human body** from the grave. To study through verse-by-verse from the beginning is to determine that the seven brothers are in the mortality or flesh of this life and not involved in some concocted spiritual resurrection. They are literally married to the woman, and were to physically raise up seed to their brother (Mat. 22:24-28). Thus, *die* and *deceased* references death bodily (22:24-25). The truth is that the human spirit re-enters the human body (10:28). Though Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead in body, they were alive in spirit as Jesus said (22:32). Though the human spirit can *die* by committing sin and therefore being separated from Deity (Isa. 59:1-2; Eze. 18:20; Mat. 10:28), the Scriptures teach that one's human soul can never die in a literal sense (2 Cor. 5:1-5; Mat. 10:28). It is immortal and will not die in the sense of ceasing to be somewhere eternally! The context in this confrontation with the Sadducees indicates our main point that absolutely **nothing** about this resurrection refers to the idea of a spiritually "resurrected church" or "resurrection from the grave of Judaism."

Conclusion:

Therefore, the resurrection being referred to is in regard to the bodily death of human individuals. ($\therefore B^D$) (MT 1, 2) **See argumentation in premise 2.**

CONCLUSION

This chapter has set forth only a few of the primary rules of inference: Modus Ponens (MP), Modus Tollens (MT), Hypothetical Syllogism (HS), and Disjunctive Syllogism (DS). These have been applied to some arguments regarding doctrines involved in the Realized Eschatology movement (especially among our brethren). There are many more. We urge the reader to gradually learn more rules involved in implication/inference which should govern all reasoning, including a more complete study of **fallacies** which can occur in thinking. Learning the maxims of clear and correct thought is more than an academic exercise. We cannot afford to let false brethren (Mat. 7:15) rob us of our crown of righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8), including men who err concerning the truth in their allegation that the “resurrection is past already” (2:19). As an added and wonderful bonus, we can revel in the knowledge that in such a study we are privileged to learn these principles which flow from God’s very own nature! What a magnificent entity He is in never making a mistake, including in His omniscience never having an unsound thought!

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WORD STUDIES REFUTING REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY

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Realized Eschatology (hereafter referred to as RE) ensnares its advocates in the postmodern trap of redefining key terms pertaining to the general subjects upon which it encroaches. The heretics promoting the system are compelled by the concept to change not only the meaning of words, but invent new meanings and phraseology.

In this study, we shall look at several key words that RE redefines to fit the error, and show that these redefinitions are false. Certain texts show that the proper definitions actually refute RE.

AION

The Greek noun *aion* is a key term misused by RE to teach that Judaism was “the age that now is” with the period following the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 as “the age which is to come,” of which Jesus spoke during His earthly Ministry. It occurs some 128 times in the Greek New Testament. It is most often translated as either “world” or “age” in the KJV. It also is found over 200 times in the Greek LXX text of the Old Testament and is similarly translated.

The cognate *aionios* occurs 71 times in the Greek New Testament and about 100 times in the LXX text. The word is translated as either “forever” or “everlasting” by our English versions. In the LXX it

basically conveys the same ideas as the Hebrew term *olam*, for which it was used by the translators.

While it is not disputed that *aion* often means “age,” it is a *non sequitur* to contend that because it can mean “age,” it therefore **must** refer to the Jewish age, etc. There are a variety of ways to view time in regard to the idea of an “age.” It is a time-related word, but it also can stand for eternity itself (i.e., the absence of time), as the use of *aionios* as “everlasting” in relation to Divine attributes shows.

RE, because of its rejection of the doctrine of the end to the physical Universe, most often affirms that the physical Universe will literally continue to exist forever. They premise this on their assumption that “the age that now is” is the Jewish age, which they assert was to last until AD 70. This assumption is a lynchpin to their doctrine.

The ancient Greeks used *aion* in a relative sense of time as tied to man’s existence, while *chronos* was used of time itself. *Aion* with its cognates (especially *aionios*) was also frequently used during Second Temple period of Judaism in the sense of “forever, everlasting” or simply to mark a great expanse of time indefinite in duration. In this regard it is similar to our word *epoch*. It just as often, however, referred simply to eternity. This accorded with early Greek use as well (Sasse 1964:197-99).

In typical Jewish fashion, “the age” of which the Jews spoke as then existing most often contemplated the time frame of the earth’s existence, while “the age to come” referred to the new order of things to be ushered in at the destruction of the physical earth, thus dividing human existence into two stages.

It is undoubtedly this latter usage that both Jesus and the apostles employ in prophecy, as that would have been **the basic understanding of the people whom thy taught regarding these expressions**. RE has to ignore common Greek and Jewish use in the time of Christ to devise their assumed definitions for these phrases.

In Jesus’ use of *aion* in Matthew 13:39 we have clear indication of the meaning of the term in His own thought. It is found in His explanation of the Parable of the Tares (cf. 13:24-30, 36-43). The

field in the parable is “the world” (13:38). The word here is *kosmos* and obviously refers to the physical world or earth. Some will try to ascribe to that word the idea of the order of things concerning Judaism, but that would entail Jesus in an obvious tautology. If it refers to an order of things, its **contrast** with *aion* would have to apply to the physical order. Further, it certainly was not “the Jewish world” that comprised the whole scope of the work of preaching the Gospel. It was the physical world into which Christians were charged to go (Mark 16:15-16). God also loved the inhabitants of the whole earth, not just those in Judaism (John 3:16). Thus the tares are sown, according to the parable, in the physical world and are to be rooted up “in the end of the world” (Mat. 13:39). The “world” here is *aion*, “age.” As a time referent contextually, it must then be concerned with the period of the existence of the physical earth (*kosmos*), which obviously did not end in AD 70.

Jesus describes the “tares,” which He says are “the children of the wicked *one*” (13:38), as being rooted and gathered to be burned. There is no textual or logical reason to limit the scope of this expression only to evil Jews living prior to AD 70. The children of the wicked one still abound on planet earth today (1 John 5:19).

Aion must **therefore** in Matthew 13:39 contemplate the time period for the existence for the physical world (*kosmos*), which would then logically indicate the end of the age of which Jesus speaks. In the Parable of the Tares, we thus find a prophecy that looks beyond AD 70 and refutes the major tenet of RE.

The use of *aion* in Luke 20:34-35 also reveals the idea associated with the word in Jesus’ thought. The background of this text is set against the challenge of the Sadducees to Christ. They denied the resurrection of the dead, and sought by way of a false dilemma to refute that doctrine and put Jesus in His place before the people. They postulated a case involving the Levirate law wherein a woman was in turn passed on through a chain of seven brothers from the eldest to the youngest, because each husband died without children. The question of the Sadducees in trying to complete the dilemma was simply, “Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for

seven had her to wife?” (20:33). Jesus’ answer was both succinct and pointed. He said in part:

The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection (20:34-36).

Twice the Lord uses *aion*, which is translated in the KJV as “world.”

That this contemplates heaven, the ultimate state of the righteous, is seen in that the reference to “the children of this world” must refer to the present time of the earth’s existence, as it is the case that marrying and giving in marriage **are still occurring**, well beyond the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Even a lot of the RE people are marrying and giving in marriage, thus refuting their own doctrine. The text also implies that the resurrection of which Jesus speaks is yet to occur.

KOSMOS

Kosmos appears 187 times in the Greek New Testament. It is translated in the KJV every time but one as *world*. The one exception is in 1 Peter 3:3 where it is rendered *adorning*. This latter use is actually a reflection of its original idea of “adornment.” It came to mean secondarily, by way of extension, “the world, the universe, the earth, the natural order, etc.” It also took on in metonymy reference to the inhabitants of the same, especially humanity. It is sometimes used of the *world* in the sense of the realm of carnal pleasures, joy, labors, possessions, and cares.

As seen in the Parable of the Tares, it clearly refers there to the physical earth, while *aion* contemplates the time of its existence. It is clear that when the Bible affirms the love of God for the “world,” it is not affirming that love for just the Jewish order of things or even for the inhabitants of that order, but rather His love for the inhabitants of the whole earth (John 3:16-17). The same context affirming His love for all humanity also implies He even came into

that physical world (3:19). Further, Jesus Christ as Savior of the world is not just the Savior of the inhabitants of Judaism, as even the Samaritans recognized (4:42). Jesus gave His life for the inhabitants of the physical world, not just the Jewish world (6:33, 51).

John especially refutes RE in 1 John 2:15-17. It reads:

Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

RE interprets this text as referring to ancient Judaism, but that would imply that lust ceased in AD 70, an obvious absurdity. Many RE advocates have adopted that position and gone off into Universalism by contending, therefore, that there is no sin today.

John affirms that someday the avenues of temptation will cease, and with them so also the world—whether the order itself or the physical planet containing it all—will pass away. RE quibbles that the text says, “the world is passing away,” but that does not avail their case. The Second Law of Thermodynamics has been in force for some time. It implies an end to the physical world and thus of the order that it contains or comprises. Everything is in the process of wearing out, running down, and moving toward some future moment of passing away.

OIKOUMENE

Another term translated *world*, *oikoumene*, has a significant place in Biblical eschatology. It often refers to “the inhabitable earth or land.” It too is used, like *kosmos*, not only of the planet earth but also of its inhabitants. It is found some 15 times in the Greek New Testament and is translated *world* 14 of those times and *earth* once (Luke 21:26).

In Acts 17:30-31 it is used of the judgment. Paul said to the Athenians:

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a

day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

World here is *oikoumenee*. Paul had pointed out God had created the physical world (*kosmos*) and everything in it (17:24). God made humanity and set the boundaries of its habitation within that world. It is with focus upon the **inhabitants** of this world that Paul addresses then the need of human beings to seek after and serve the living God (17:28). It is also with that focus that Paul emphasized the accountability of the human race to God. This **included the Greeks and all other nations!**

It is clear that Paul uses *oikoumenee* of the inhabitants of the whole earth. God commands, “all men every where to repent.” Why? Because all men everywhere are going to be judged by Jesus Christ. Proof of that **universal** judgment is seen in the fact of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. By it God has given proof “to all men.” Note the use of the universal term *pasin* (from *pas*). It certainly included the Athenians. It thus could not refer to the **localized** judgment on Jerusalem.

In Matthew 24:14 one of the signs given for the destruction of Jerusalem was that the Gospel would be preached “in all the world” (Gr. *oikoumenee*). RE knows that this refers to the whole inhabitable earth. It is of interest that Paul uses *kosmos* synonymously with *oikoumenee* in this regard in Colossians 1:6 in noting that the Gospel had gone into all of the physical world by AD 63. He adds that “every creature under heaven” (1:23) had heard it.

MELLO

Perhaps, the most misused term by RE is the verb *mello*. They claim that this verb **always** means “about to be, to be on the edge of occurring,” stressing the idea of imminence. Thus, in prophetic texts it must mean, according to the theory, the prophesied event was about to occur at the time the prophecy was given.

The word occurs 110 times in the Greek New Testament and is actually translated a multiplicity of ways in every version, **most of which are completely ignored** by RE. That *mello* frequently is used

in New Testament prophecies is a true statement, but that it carries within it the idea of imminence is simply not true.

In a personal email to me, Dr. Buist Fanning stated that the idea of imminence in Acts 17:31 is not present. He observed that there are a number of meanings for *mello* depending on context that do not entail the idea of imminence, citing the more extensive lexicon of BAG (Bauer, Arndt, and Gringrich) as proof. It categorizes the use in Acts 17:31 as “denoting an intended action” with the meaning thus of “intend, propose, have in mind.” They also observe it is used elsewhere “in a weakened sense...simply as a periphrasis for the future.” Another idea is that of “to be destined, must, will certainly” occur. It can even mean to be ever on the point of being done without ever being done and, hence, actually bears the idea of “to delay” in such cases (501).

This is also reflected in the vast majority of translations on Acts 17:31, which render *mello* as simply “will” (e.g., KJV, ASV, Douay-Rheims, Geneva Bible, Tyndale, ESV, NAB, NASB, NIV), “intends” (e.g., CEB or Common English Bible), or “is going to” (God’s Word Translation, International Standard Version, HCSB, Lexham English Bible). In the lexicons as well, there is lack of support for RE’s assertions on *mello*. Thayer, for example, gives the meaning of “*to be destined*,” similar to the German verb *sollen*, for *mello* in Matthew 16:27. He categorizes the use in Acts 17:31 as “*to intend, have in mind, think to*” (396-97). So also G. Abbott-Smith gives “of compulsion, necessity, or certainty” as its use in Matthew 16:27 (283).

The seminal work of Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider certainly bedevils RE on *mello*. They state: “Clearly...*mello* does not always have a fixed meaning” (404). The meaning is context affected. They thus give the following possible meanings in any given text: “intend, be about to, will (as auxiliary verb for the future), be destined to; consider, hesitate, delay” (403). Relative to the use of this construction in Acts, including Acts 17:31, they observe that, “in Acts *mello* contains no suggestion of a near future” (403).

Grammars in like manner show that RE's assertion on *mello* is false. Alpheus Crosby states:

583. III. A future action may be represented more expressly as *on the point of accomplishment*, or as connected with *destiny, necessity, will, purpose, & c.* by the verb(s) *mello*...with the Inf. [infinitive] (emphasis added) (366).

P. Thomson observes how *mello* with the infinitive is often used “as a kind of Periphrastic Future” that emphasizes “the intention or desire to do a thing” (26). William Watson Goodwin, similarly, notes this, adding that it stresses “sometimes intention, expectation, or necessity” (20).

Dr. Theodore Markopoulos, in his monograph titled *The Future in Greek: from Ancient to Medieval*, examines three periphrastic forms, entailing the use of auxiliary verbs to do what normally the Greek future tense would do semantically and syntactically. One of those constructions is *mello* with the infinitive. He surveys the use of *mello* through the Homeric and Classical periods and draws the conclusion that with animate subjects it carried **primarily** the idea of “intention” to do an action, rather than imminence. He concludes that, “*mello* itself should be seen as a modal verb with an ‘intention’ meaning which, in the appropriate context (i.e. 3rd person inanimate subject) acquires a predictive sense through an implicature” (33).

Relative to use in the Koine period, he observes that *mello* plus the infinitive should still be considered “an ‘initial stage’ AVC.” He also states, “Firstly, regarding semantics, it continued to convey future reference, based on the notion of intention when the agent is animate” (47-8). He notes that there was the development in the first century AD of a “deontic-future” meaning. This “deontic-future meaning” he also terms a “future certainty marker” (48). Certainty of the fulfillment or accomplishment of the action by virtue of moral necessity is the essential idea. It is especially associated with divine decrees. Hence, it is the idea of “to be destined, to be certain” to occur, as reflected in the lexicons.

The association between deontic modality and future reference is very well known and widely attested cross-linguistically (cf. for example, Bybee, Perkins, & Pagliuca, 1994) and, therefore, this development is rather expected (48).

Deontic modality refers in linguistics to a literary or linguistic modality expressing **how things ought to be** or **how things will occur to insure that condition of things**. *Modality* refers to the mode in which the matter is cast, as in the moods of a language. *Deontic moods* are those moods that express the idea of **obligation** in some capacity. In Greek the imperative, subjunctive, and optative are viewed as deontic moods. The point here with Dr. Markopoulos is that *mello* plus the infinitive developed the capacity to be used as a deontic kind of construction—one that expresses something that will certainly occur because it must occur, as in the case of those things that **Deity has decreed to occur**. This is one of the most predominate ways in which this construction is used in the Greek New Testament when the subject is animate. Acts 17:31 is a prime example: “he hath appointed a day, in the which **he will judge** the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.”

Markopoulos cites for a parallel the development of the English verb *will*. He adds: “The deontic undertones in the meaning of this AVC features prominently in its subsequent developments” (48). As concerns *mello* plus the infinitive, he states further:

Apart from acquiring a new modal (deontic) undertone in its meaning, this AVC does not exhibit any major changes between the classical and post-classical period regarding its grammatical status (53).

The meaning of *mello* with the infinitive then never developed into a form to express **only imminence of action** as has been claimed by RE. The history of the development and use of the construction from the Homeric age even into the medieval period shows that such never occurred (121ff).

What began as a means of expressing “intention” relative to animate subjects and **developed** as a way of expressing a weakened form of the simple future eventually came to acquire the idea of

a deontic-modality. A person or persons **will do** the action. It is **certain** to occur, **because it has been destined or decreed that it occur**. There is a moral necessity that compels the fulfillment of the prediction.

The implications of Markopoulos' work on the study of the Greek New Testament are profound. In Matthew 16:27, the text reads: "The Son of man **will come** in the glory of His Father." He not only **intends** to come, but He is **certain to come**: for it has been **determined** that He does so! When Paul declares that God "**will judge** the world in righteousness" in Acts 17:31, he is affirming **both** the deontic **necessity** of that judgment and its **absolute certainty**. God not only intends to judge accordingly, but also will certainly do so, as sin demands the accountability that Paul had just delineated (cf. Acts 17:28-30). In fact, God has "appointed a day" in which He "will" do so—the verb *esteesen* (lit., "he set, he ordained") stressing the Divine decree that judgment must occur at a given point in time.

DEATH

Thanatos is the Greek term for *death*. The word occurs some 119 times in the Greek New Testament. Its verb form *thanatoo* is found 11 times. In the New Testament, the universal testimony of the lexicons is that it is used in **but two senses**, despite the efforts of RE to invent others. It is used of **physical** death, the extinction of life from one's physical body, and of **spiritual** death, the separation of one's spirit from fellowship with God. In this latter sense, it is applied to the ultimate state of the wicked in Gehenna in "the second death" (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:14).

The term for those who are *dead* is actually the adjective *nekros*, which like all adjectives in Greek can be substantivized and serve as a noun. The term occurs 132 times in the Greek text. Its verb form *nekroo* (to mortify) is used thrice, and the cognate noun *nekrosis* (deadness, dying) twice. Obviously, it often contemplates those who are physically dead.

The key text relative to physical death is 1 Corinthians 15, which cannot be dealing with spiritual death as that which was to be de-

stroyed as that would entail Universalism for RE (cf. 15:23-28). The chapter also begins with an affirmation of the historic reality of the bodily death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (15:1-4). It is followed with appeals to eyewitnesses as proof of that bodily resurrection (15:5-9). Paul sets forth a logical case in a sorites format (a series of propositions in which the premises are so arranged that the predicate of the first is the subject of the next) that demands the conclusion that Jesus of Nazareth did indeed rise bodily from the dead (15:10-20). There is no intimation throughout this material that Paul is speaking in any way other than of a literal, bodily resurrection. Paul notes that physical death was one of the consequences of Adam's transgression. God told Adam that he would return to the dust of the ground from whence he came (Gen. 3:19). In a very real sense, in Adam all die, while those "in Christ" shall be made alive (1 Cor. 15:19).

Verse 20 closes with the affirmation that Christ by His bodily resurrection "became the firstfruits of them that slept." The imagery alludes to the wave offering made by the Levitical high priest on the day after the weekly Sabbath of Passover week. On that day a barley sheaf was waved as "the firstfruits" before the Lord in the temple to symbolize the dedication of the coming harvest to Jehovah God. Jesus is said to be "the firstfruits" pointing to a coming harvest. The wave offering in Israel was a barley sheaf with the harvest involving the barley in the nation's fields. So too, there must be some logical and natural correspondence between the nature of the firstfruits and that of the harvest.

A barley sheaf was waved to signal that a general harvesting of barley sheaves would follow. The bodily resurrection of the Son of God occurred and signaled that a general harvesting of the bodies of the righteous dead would follow. The typology would certainly not entail further shrouding of mystery by yet another layer of symbolism as RE tries to do in applying this to spiritual death. In fact, those who were righteous prior to AD 70 and remained righteous during and after AD 70 would have needed no spiritual resurrection in AD 70.

The antitype of the barley sheaves is described by inspiration as “those who slept” (15:20). Verse 18 identifies them specifically as those who have “fallen asleep in Christ.” The metaphor is a common one for physical death, especially in Paul’s teaching (cf. 1 The. 4:13-15).

If this were spiritual death, then it would imply that all spiritually dead prior to and up until AD 70 would be suddenly made spiritually alive, i.e., brought into fellowship with God. That entails Universalism, as previously noted. Even if one admits that the scope concerns only the righteous, it would imply that the righteous were not in fellowship with God prior to AD 70. This is directly contradicted by plain Scriptures (1 Cor. 1:9; Phi. 2:1; 1 John 1:3, 7; 2 John 9-11).

The imagery thus must be referring to a literal bodily resurrection of the righteous dead. At that time the end will come and with it the destruction of physical **death** (1 Cor. 15:23-28).

The fact that physical death is contemplated is further confirmed by Paul’s discussion of the resurrection body (15:35-49). It bears a direct connection with that which is “sown” (or buried) but is nonetheless distinct in its **essence** when raised. While it is sown a natural (flesh and blood) body, it will be raised a spiritual body (15:44). It will be like that of the Lord (15:45-49; cf. 1 John 3:1-3).

The reference to those who shall not sleep but who will be changed adds even more evidence that physical death is contemplated in the chapter. If “sleep” here referred to spiritual death, then it would imply that there are accountable persons who would never be separated from God’s fellowship at any time, and Paul implies that possibility for some of those to whom he was writing. Yet, Romans 3:23 would directly contradict that view. It must therefore refer to physical death, and thus it is physical death that is to be defeated and “swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15:50-58).

RESURRECTION

The most common Greek word for *resurrection* in the New Testament is *anastasis*, which basically means “a standing or rising up.” It occurs 42 times in the Greek text most being translated “resur-

rection” (39 times). It is used in Luke 2:34 in a figurative sense concerning the effect of the ministry of John the Baptist and there properly should be translated by our gerund *rising*. Also, the preposition *ek* (*ex*) is prefixed to *anastasis* to emphasize the idea of “out of,” i.e., out of death. The form is found but one time, where Paul expresses his desire to attain to the **resurrection** (Phi. 3:11). Another word used for *resurrection* is *egersis*, from the common verb *egeiro*, where the emphasis is upon the raising of the individual. It too occurs only one time in the Greek testament. It is used of Jesus’ bodily resurrection in Matthew 27:53.

Anastasis is not only used of Jesus’ resurrection (e.g., Acts 1:22; 2:31; 4:33; 17:32; Rom. 1:4; 6:5; Phi. 3:10; 1 Pet. 1:3; 3:21), but also of the general resurrection at the end of the world (cf. Mat. 22:30-31; Luke 20:34-37). It should be noted that Mark, in his parallel to Matthew 22:30, uses the verb *anistemi*, which is a cognate of the noun *anastasis*. It means “to rise” (Mark 12:25). He uses the passive of *egeiro* in Mark 12:26 in parallel to Matthew 22:31.

The idea of resurrection implies five basic things. (1) It involves some form of resuscitation to life. In the case of Christ it entailed a rising up to die no more, which sets it apart from the raising of the dead done by Christ and the apostles in the miraculous era. Those so raised up died again later. It is significant that the noun *anastasis* is never used of this latter class of raisings.

Anastasis is used in comparison to the raising up of those who have been baptized into Christ. Their raising is “in the likeness of” Christ’s **resurrection** (Rom. 6:5), where the prepositional phrase “in the likeness of” is provided by translators as an enthymeme due to the parallel construction “in the likeness of His death” (*to homoiomati tou thanatou autou*). While expressing a similarity between the two (Jesus’ resurrection and the consummation of baptism), it also implies **some distinct differences** between the two, especially **the literalness of the former and the figurativeness of the latter**. Thus, it is significant that *anastasis* is never used of baptism itself, but **only of the similarity** between Jesus’ literal rising up from the

dead and the raising up of the baptismal candidate from his watery grave.

(2) The idea of resurrection implies something out of which those who are raised or that which is raised up has been buried or entombed. Again, the word indicates a rising up out of or from something.

(3) *Anastasis* also presupposes the death of the one or ones to rise up. It is thus used in contrast with the condition of the party or parties being in some sense dead.

(4) It implies a **cause** of death, even if the cause is not immediately known or specified. For someone or something to die, an adequate cause has to have existed to produce the effect.

(5) It therefore presupposes a state or condition of being alive **prior** to becoming dead. That is inherent in the idea of death itself. For something to die it had at some point prior to be alive.

In view of the fact that neither physical death nor spiritual death (separation from God) was destroyed in AD 70, then, pertaining to the problem that RE has with *anastasis* as applied to human beings, especially the saints (e.g. Mat. 22:30-31; John 5:29; 11:24-25; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:42; Heb. 11:35), there are five questions that must be answered by its advocates. (1) What or who specifically were to be raised up? (2) Out of what was it or were they to be raised? (3) What killed it or them? (4) When did it kill it or them? And (5) how long did it or they live or exist prior to dying? These are questions I have asked RE proponents repeatedly for about 40 years and am still awaiting their answer.

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PARTIAL VERSUS FULL PRETERISM

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Our topic is a very important one in view of the overall theme of the 2015 Bellview Lectures, *Refuting Realized Eschatology* as this study will serve to explain the meaning of *partial preterism* and *full preterism* and the distinction between the two. It will be emphasized in view of the Scriptures that a correct interpretation of Biblical prophecy will necessarily result in the *partial* preterist view, while, on the other hand, the ideas in the teaching of *full* preterism is the result of mishandling the Word of God, which is a doctrinal system that is nothing less than fatal error.

Our study is of tremendous importance, in that it has to do with eschatological matters or, in other words, the study of final things. It is vital that man have a Scriptural understanding of such things because they pertain to the eternal destination of the soul. The apostle Paul indicated that false teaching in such areas results in the overthrowing of a person's faith:

But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some (2 Tim. 2:16-18).

Like the teaching of Hymenaeus and Philetus, the *full preterism* teaches that the resurrection is past already and, like their doctrine, does indeed overthrow the faith of precious souls.

In this same context, Paul stated the necessity of rightly dividing the word of truth: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2:15). Surely, the way to avoid such damnable heresies as “realized eschatology” is to continuously be involved in “handling aright the word of truth” (2:15—ASV). It is our purpose in this lecture series to present a solid refutation of realized eschatology, that is, to refute the idea that things which will come in the end, such as the Second Coming, the Resurrection, and the Judgment Day, have already taken place.

THE DEFINITION OF TERMS

What is *preterism*? This term derives from the Latin word, *praeter*, “past,” because *preterism* has to do with the idea that certain Biblical prophecies are past or already fulfilled (Theopedia).

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PARTIAL PRETERISM AND FULL PRETERISM

It is important to distinguish between partial preterism and full preterism. Those who contend for full preterism declare that prophecies concerning final things have already been fulfilled, and this is why it is styled as *full* preterism, or Realized Eschatology. According to this view, Jesus made His Second Coming in AD 70, and matters pertaining to final things occurred at that time. This is why “full preterism” is often called the AD 70 doctrine. According to those who contend for this, there is no “day of the Lord” beyond AD 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed.

They aver that:

“all biblical prophecy was finally realized in the epochal events of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies in A.D. 70... Thus:

1. The second coming of Christ occurred in A.D. 70; there is, therefore, to be no future return of the Lord.
2. The resurrection of the dead took place with the fall of Jerusalem; there will be no future resurrection of the body.

3. The day of judgment transpired with the Roman invasion of A.D. 70; there is no judgment yet to come.
4. The end of the world was realized when the Jewish system ended in A.D. 70. Biblical references to the end of the world, therefore, relate to the end of **Judaism**, not this material globe (Jackson).

Partial preterists hold that the kingdom has been established, that the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of Judaism has occurred, but that the Second Coming of Christ, the End of the World, the Resurrection, and the Day of Judgment are still future. Hence, it is called *partial* preterism. Certainly, the Scriptures uphold this teaching (cf. Heb. 9:27-28; Acts 17:31; 2 Pet. 3:10-12; Rev. 1:7; John 5:28-29).

“THE DAY OF THE LORD”

Those who contend for the AD 70 doctrine (i.e., full preterism or Realized Eschatology) say that “the day of the Lord” in a final sense came in AD 70, and that there is no future “day of the Lord.” Is this the case? This expression, “the day of the Lord,” is often used to refer to God’s coming in judgment against a people. There are several references to “the day of the Lord” in the Old Testament prophets, and some of these expressly state that “the day of the Lord” is near or at hand (e.g., Eze. 30:3; Oba. 15; Zep. 1:7; Joel 2:1; 3:14).

It is a fact that the “day of the Lord” did come upon many people in history, because God came upon them in punishment. However, when pertaining to the end of the world, the expression “the day of the Lord” obviously refers to events that will bring to a conclusion the entire material universe. The apostle Peter states:

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? (2 Pet. 3:10-12).

Obviously then, there is a certain and specific day of the Lord which is still future, after which no one will be alive physically. The

apostle Paul refers to that specific day, and taught what Jesus did concerning it, when he taught that “the day of the Lord” will come unexpectedly, as a thief in the night (cf. 1 The. 5:1-4; Mat. 24:36-44).

But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief (1 The. 5:1-4).

Moreover, Jesus gave certain signs to be aware of when the destruction of Jerusalem would occur so all saints would be able to flee and get out of Jerusalem safely (cf. Mat. 24:4-25). Yet there would be no immediate signs signaling the end of the world and the Second Coming of Christ. Jesus warned:

But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be (Mat. 24:36-39).

THE FULFILLMENT OF CERTAIN PROPHECIES

Prophecies concerning the establishment of the kingdom of God, the church of Christ, have been fulfilled and were so in Acts 2. Prior to His ascension, Jesus had commanded His apostles “that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence” (Acts 1:4-5). It should be noted that the Holy Spirit coming upon them would mark their reception of power, and that the kingdom of God would come with power (cf. Acts 1:8; Mark 9:1). These things would occur “not many days hence.” Thus, some ten days after the Lord’s ascension, they were baptized with the Holy Spirit on Pentecost day in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 2:1-4). On that day in Jerusalem, they preached the Gospel for the first time and the message of salva-

tion in Christ began to be preached, which included repentance and remission of sins (2:1-38; cf. Luke 24:47). Isaiah (2:1-3) and Micah (4:1-3) also had predicted concerning the house of the Lord, the church (1 Tim. 3:15), that “out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Isa. 2:3). All these things, no doubt, are the fulfillment of the Lord’s promise to the apostles:

Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high (Luke 24:45-49).

Further Biblical evidence that the kingdom is already in existence is the fact that all who have been born are added to the church—the kingdom of God (cf. John 3:5; Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:9), the fact that Jesus is now reigning over His kingdom as High Priest and King (cf. Zec. 6:12-13; Mat. 16:18; Heb. 4:14; 1 Tim. 6:15), and the fact that “all nations” may be saved and flow into the house of God, the kingdom (cf. Isa. 2:1-3; Mic. 4:1-3; Gal. 3:26-28; Mark 16:15-16; 1 Pet. 2:9-10; Mat. 28:18-20; Rom. 1:16). The kingdom of God, which men could not move and which will stand forever is now existent! (cf. Dan. 2:44). “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Heb. 12:28).

The AD 70 people such as Max King, William Bell, Don Preston, et al., would not deny that the kingdom of God has come. However, they teach that the kingdom did not come in its fullness until the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. In fact, it could be argued that from their perspective the destruction of Jerusalem was the greatest of all historical events.

Furthermore, the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of Judaism has come. Jesus said that these things would come in the generation to which He spake concerning the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem (Mat. 24:1-34; cf. Mark 13; Luke 21). “Verily I say unto

you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (Mat. 24:34). Like the dispensationalists, those of the full preterist position seem unable to distinguish between the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. Jesus addressed both matters in Matthew 24, and there is a clear distinction between the two. No man knows the day or the hour when the Son of Man will come in the end, according to Jesus (cf. 24:36). Yet, the destruction of Jerusalem would come in the generation to which Jesus spake at that time (cf. 24:34). There are many other evidences that can be offered to set forth the clear distinction between the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. Sincere and diligent students of the Bible, who handle aright the Word of truth, are readily able to do this (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 3:15; Mat. 4:4).

Attending the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem, would be the end of the Jewish state, which was ready to “vanish away.” The inspired Hebrews’ writer declares: “In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away” (Heb. 8:13). Christ had already made provisions for the coming of the New Covenant and the removal of the Old, in His redemptive work (cf. Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14; Heb. 7:22; 13:20-21). The New Testament had already replaced the Old, with the coming of the Spirit and the Gospel with the establishment of the church on Pentecost (cf. Acts 2:1-47). Yet, the Jewish state continued on for decades afterward. Robert Miligan states regarding Hebrews 8:13:

As a religious Institution, it was, as we have seen, abolished when Christ was crucified. He then took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. (Col. 2:14.) And as a civil Institution it continued for only about seven years after the writing of this Epistle. God then took it entirely out of the way, forever abolishing at the same time the whole Tabernacle service in order to stay more effectually the hand of persecution, and correct the extreme judaizing tendencies that were then threatening to corrupt the simplicity of the Gospel, especially throughout Palestine (301).

It was the end of Judaism to which Jesus referred when He said, “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world

for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Mat. 24:14). Indeed, before the end of Judaism in AD 70, Paul declared that the Gospel had gone into all the world, and had been “preached to every creature” (Col. 1:23, cf. 1:6).

This is the end of which Peter speaks when he states, “But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer” (1 Pet. 4:7). Obviously, this cannot refer to the end of the world, which would be far removed from Peter’s day. Of this fact, brother Guy N. Woods states on 1 Peter 4:7:

It thus follows that the “end” was not the judgment day and the consummation of the age. It should be remembered that these words of the apostle were written on the eve of the destruction of the Jewish state. Already terminated as a system of acceptable worship, its forms and ceremonies had persisted through the efforts of unbelieving Jews who had desperately resisted the march of Christianity. Soon, the temple, the Levitical system, and the Jewish economy were to perish in the fearful destruction about to fall upon Jerusalem. For these relics of a former system of worship the end approached, and with it would come times of trial and difficulty for all and particularly those who had espoused a religion traceable to Jews.

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF FULL PRETERISM

In view of the Scripture, the doctrine of Full Preterism (Realized Eschatology) is an utter impossibility. It is grievous that anyone could embrace such an absurd and dangerous idea, and especially is it difficult to conceive how that members of the body of Christ could do so!

First of all, at the Second Coming of Christ, when the end comes, God will completely destroy the material universe (cf. 2 Pet. 3:10-12). The fact that the earth still stands is proof enough that Christ has not returned, and that the end has not yet come.

Moreover, the Second Coming of Christ will be visible to the entire world. According to Scripture, His coming will not be a mere earthly punishment upon a nation, but something that will be seen and affect the entire world. How could anyone believe otherwise and believe the Bible. John plainly states, “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all

kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen” (Rev. 1:7).

Furthermore, Jesus refers to the end as “the last day,” and repeatedly declares that those who belong to Him will be raised up at “the last day,” and will have everlasting life (cf. John 6:39-40, 44, 54). Faithful followers of Jesus, such as Martha, had this hope in their hearts (cf. 11:24). Jesus plainly stated, “I am the resurrection, and the life” (11:25). Yet those who hold that the resurrection is past have removed that hope!

In fact, at that day all will be raised at the command of Christ’s voice:

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (5:28-29).

This is one of the great consolations that saints have. When Christ comes in the clouds of the air, the dead in Christ will rise first, and then those still alive shall “be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 The. 4:17). The Christians at Thessalonica were to “comfort one another with these words” (4:18). These things did not happen in AD 70!

Yet, the AD 70 doctrine completely destroys this hope. It removes the “hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began” (Tit. 1:2). It also creates skepticism toward the Lord’s warnings against hell (cf. Mat. 10:28; 25:41).

In keeping with this, the Judgment Day will take place in “the last day.” “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48). Now, there can only be one “last day.” Perhaps, Max King and his fellow false teachers need to take a basic English course and, most importantly, go back and study their Bibles!

All will appear before Christ in the judgment at the last day, which serves as further proof that AD 70 was not the last day. The inspired Paul emphatically stated:

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad (2 Cor. 5:10; cf. Rom. 14:10-12).

This will be the judgment of the entire world, both righteous and unrighteous (cf. Acts 17:31; Mat. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:12). This event will be such that no one will miss it, and it will mark the end of earthly life and the beginning of eternity (Mat. 25:34, 41, 46).

CONCLUSION

The Second Coming of Christ, the Judgment, the Resurrection, and the End will not be some mystical, figurative, or symbolic event, but something that will be universally seen, known, and experienced by every person who has ever lived. Those who claim that these events are already past seem to be living in some kind of religious *dream*. This is, simply put, deception. The AD 70 people have deceived themselves into believing this pernicious and fanciful doctrine, and are busy going about seducing others into believing it. “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Tim. 3:13).

Jesus warns against being deceived: Take heed that no man deceive you” (Mat. 24:4). Paul also said, “Let no man deceive himself” (1 Cor. 3:18). James warns against self-deception, when he speaks of, “deceiving your own selves” (Jam. 1:22). “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal. 6:7). Those who hold to full preterism are deceiving themselves and others!

It is easy to understand how that the teaching of a past resurrection destroys the faith of people (cf. 2 Tim. 2:16-18). For one thing, it makes the literal promises of the Bible obscure, confusing, and meaningless. As Christians, we are to “look for new heavens and a new earth,” that is, Heaven (cf. 2 Pet. 3:9-15; Rev. 21:1-3). Yet, according to Full Preterism, man has been in the new heaven and

new earth since AD 70. We are to set our affections on things above, where Christ is on the right hand of God (cf. Col. 3:1-2; Phi. 3:20-21), but, according to this damnable heresy, there is nothing above to look forward to and to set our hope upon. This doctrine of men basically destroys faith in the Word of God and creates a system of infidelity toward Biblical promises and all prophecies that pertain to future events.

Let us not base our lives and the salvation of our eternal souls on the doctrines of men (Mat. 15:9; Tit. 1:14; Col. 2:22) but on the doctrine of Christ, in which we must abide. There is no other way to have the Father and the Son (cf. 2 John 9). Let us put our full trust in the “exceeding great and precious promises” of Christ (2 Pet. 1:4) and live in view of the Second Coming of Christ, the Judgment Day, the end of the world, and the resurrection of the dead, which are all still future events:

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead (Acts 17:31).

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OLD TESTAMENT TEXTS MISUSED BY REALIZED ESCHATOLOGISTS

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For brevity's sake throughout this chapter I will reference AD 70 Realized Eschatology doctrine as "RE." In this chapter we will notice some Old Testament passages to which the RE theorists appeal in their efforts to prove their fallacious doctrine.

DOES THE PERIOD KNOWN AS THE "LAST DAYS," REFER TO THE END OF THE JEWISH ECONOMY?

We begin our study by noticing the RE view of the meaning of the "last days." Max King wrote:

Applying the **last days** to the **Christian age** is a misapplication fostered by a misconception of such terms as "**this world**" and the "**world to come**." While Pentecost, in a sense, was the beginning of the Christian [sic] dispensation, yet the New Testament writers often spoke of it as a world or age to come, because the Jewish age had not ended at the time of their writings.... Therefore, statements such as "**this world**" are interpreted as meaning this **present material world** rather than [sic] the **Jewish age**, and the "**world to come**" is interpreted as meaning **what follows the end of this present material world** rather than **the new heaven and earth**, or Christian age that followed the end of the Jewish age (emphasis added) (79).

With the foregoing definition and explanation from brother King before us we see the mindset behind the thinking of those who espouse the RE heresy in their approach to Bible study in general and the Old Testament in particular. They argue that *last days* references the end to the Jewish economy wherever used in the Bible. They reason in the following manner.

- Since it is the case that Jesus spoke for God during the “last days,” and since it is the case that Jesus Christ was God’s spokesman before Pentecost during His Personal ministry (Mat. 17:5; John 12:48);
- Then, it is the case that the “last days” began before Pentecost.

Furthermore:

- Since it is the case that Joel prophesied that the “last days” would be identified by miracles, signs, and wonders (Joel 2:28-32), and since it is the case that the apostle Peter declared that Joel’s prophecy began to be fulfilled on Pentecost (Acts 2:16-21);
- Then, why is it not the case that genuine miracles are not being worked by God’s people today?

Then:

- Since it is the case that Jesus said “this age” (the last days) would be followed by “the *age* to come” (Mat. 12:32);
- Then it must be the case that the “last days” did not continue until the end of time.

We will now examine and refute the doctrine just presented. Notice that it is the case that the RE assumes:

1. *Last days* must always refer to the end of the Jewish economy.
2. They also assume that *last days* always means the same thing in every context where it is employed.
3. Thus, they conclude that *last days* is synonymous with the “last times” and equals *this age*.
4. So, this drives them to assume that the last *day* of John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24; 12:48, is not in actuality the “last day.”

5. They also assume that all the New Testament books were penned before AD 70.

However, *last days* does not always refer of the end of the Jewish dispensation of time.

Please consider the following concerning the affirmation that *last days* does not always refer to the end of the Jewish dispensation. It was “in the last days” that Jacob prophesied what would come upon his sons (Gen. 49:1). However, he prophesied about a number of things that came to pass long before AD 30-70 period of the RE doctrine (49:3-4, 7, 10, 13, 16). Clearly, *last days* does not always reference the end of the Jewish age. Paul, James, and Peter used the expression *the last days*; and, yes, the expression could pertain to the destruction of Jerusalem, but it could also reference events following the destruction of the city (2 Tim. 3:1, 5; Jam. 5:3; 2 Pet. 3:3).

Latter days was used by Balaam when he prophesied of what the Jews would do to the Midianites (Num. 24:14). However, some of the things about which he prophesied came to pass long before the AD 30-70 time frame of the RE scheme of things (24:17-19). The prophecy found partial fulfillment when Moab and Edom were conquered by David (2 Sam. 8:2, 14). However, its complete and final fulfillment was in Christ.

Regarding Joel’s prophecy of Joel 2:28-32, how do the REs know *last days* does not mean “afterward”? We point out that Joel’s prophecy does not say the “last days” would end with miracles, signs, and wonders being poured out before the coming of the day of the Lord (2:28-31). Joel did not say anything about the duration of miracles. Words have meanings and the prophet wrote that miraculous power would be poured out “in,” but not “**throughout**” the last days.

We must look to other New Testament passages to learn when miraculous power would cease. It is the apostle Paul who tells us that spiritual gifts would cease when the “perfect” would come (1 Cor. 13:8-13). The *perfect* refers to the completion of the revelation of God’s Word (Jam. 1:25). Upon its completion the miraculous gifts ceased to function. However, if “that which is perfect” pertains to Jesus’ Second Coming, then the part and partial (miraculous gifts)

would continue until the Lord's Second Coming. The New Testament teaches that from Pentecost forward miraculous power was imparted to men in two ways: (1) Holy Spirit baptism (Acts 2:1-4; 10:44-48) and (2) the apostles of Christ laying their hands on church members (8:14-18; 19:1-7; 1 Cor. 12:10).

There are only two instances of Holy Spirit baptism recorded in the New Testament. However, when Paul wrote his epistles to the Ephesians (AD 61-63), he declared there was only "one baptism" (Eph. 4:5). This one baptism had to be water baptism to which Paul refers in other places in the letter (5:26). This also had to be the case because it was water baptism that was to be preached until the end of the world (Mat. 28:18-20). So, Holy Spirit baptism was no longer available by the time the epistle to the Ephesians was written. This means that only the apostles of Christ could impart spiritual gifts through the laying on of their hands (Acts 8:14-19; 19:6; Rom. 1:11). Thus, when the last apostle died, spiritual gifts could no longer be imparted through the laying on of hands, and when the last person with spiritual gifts died, spiritual gifts ceased to exist on earth. Therefore, the conclusion that we should still be performing miracles if we are still in the "last days" does not follow.

DOES "THIS AGE" REFER EXCLUSIVELY TO THE JEWISH AGE?

RE doctrine also teaches *this age* refers to the Jewish Age, ending in AD 70. If that view is true, please consider the following questions that the RE devotees must answer.

1. According to the inspired Luke, the Old Testament prophets prophesied of the Christ "since the world [Greek: *aión*—age] began" (Acts 3:21). Are we then to conclude that no Messianic prophecies were uttered before the Jewish Age began at Mt. Sinai (Gen. 3:15; 12:3; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; 49:10)?
2. Jesus made a promise in His Great Commission. Did that promise pertain only to His apostles—that He would be with them only until the Jewish age ceased (Mat. 28:20)?

3. When Paul wrote that Satan is the god of this world, did the apostle mean that Satan was only the god of the Jewish age (2 Cor. 4:4)?
4. When Paul penned that Jesus gave Himself for our sins to “deliver us from this present evil age,” did Paul mean that Jesus was only delivering those Christians living then from the then present evil Jewish dispensation (Gal. 1:4)?
5. If there are only two ages, “this age” and “the age to come,” what are the past “ages” of the following passages: 1 Corinthians 2:7, 10:11, Ephesians 3:5, 9, Colossians 1:26, Hebrews 9:26, and “the ages to come” of Ephesians 2:7?
6. With the REs teaching that there are only two ages, are we to understand that the first-century Christians wrestled against the principalities, powers, and rulers of only the Jewish age (6:12)?
7. Paul told Timothy to charge “the rich in this world” (KJV) not to be high minded. Was it only the rich in the Jewish age who were charged not to be haughty (1 Tim. 6:17)?
8. Paul instructed Titus that Christians are to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts in this present world. Did the apostle have in mind only the Jewish age (Tit. 2:12)?
9. In view of the text of Hebrews 1:1-2 and the REs view of the meaning of *last days*, was Jesus God’s spokesman only in the Jewish age (1:1-2)?
10. Peter charged his auditors on Pentecost to call on the name of the Lord. Peter said that what happened at that time and place was the “last days” of which Joel prophesied (Joel 2:28). That being the case, was it only possible for people to call on the name of the Lord in the Jewish age but not later than that (Acts 2:16-21)?

DOES “ALL THINGS WRITTEN” ALWAYS REFER TO EVERY OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY?

The RE disciples tell us that Jesus’ resurrection (Psa. 16:8-11; cf. Acts 2:25-32), the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-32; cf. Acts 2:16-21), the Gentiles being called by the Gospel (Amos

9:11-12; cf. Acts 15:13-17), Jerusalem's destruction in AD 70 (Dan. 9:24-27; Mal. 3:1-3; 4:1, 5-6), the end of animal sacrifices in the temple (Dan. 9:27), the cessation of Jewish economy in AD 70 (Deu. 32:20-29), and Israel's resurrection (Dan. 12:1-3)—**all that was written**—was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus, they reason that the Law of Moses did not cease until AD 70. (Please see my other chapter in this book concerning the end of the Law of Moses—DPB.)

Let us now examine the passage where *all that was written* is found. In Luke 18:31-33, we are told that Jesus took the twelve aside and said to them:

Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge *Him* and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.

The “all things” of the latter part of verse 31 is limited by verse 32. Now notice Luke 24:44 where it is recorded that Jesus stated to them, “These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.” Also, consider what Luke said in Acts 13:29: “Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took *Him* down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb.” In the light of the preceding Scriptures, we ask, was every Old Testament prophecy concerning Jesus fulfilled at the time of His suffering and death? Furthermore, regarding Daniel's Vision of the Seventy Weeks, was it fulfilled in at the time of Jesus' suffering and death (Dan. 9:26-27)? Also, was Malachi's prophecy of the coming of the Lord fulfilled at the time of our Lord's suffering and death (Mal. 3:1-3; 4:1-5)? If they were not fulfilled at that time, is Jesus guilty of lying, or was He mistaken when He said “all things that are written by the prophets”? Assuredly Jesus did not lie, and He was not mistaken.

The meaning of “all things that are written by the prophets” is limited by its context. The context indicates that “all things” has

reference to Jesus' death and resurrection. Please consider, if it is possible for the "all things that are written" to refer to Jesus' suffering and death in these passages, then why can it not be the same in Matthew 5:17-19? If that is the case, and I believe that it is, then Jesus did what He came to do. If it is not the case, then Jesus failed. However, our Lord did not fail in what He came to do.

We must interpret the "all things which are written" of Luke 21:22 in light of that Scripture's immediate context (21:20-21). Thus, we conclude that the "all things which are written" does not reference every Old Testament prophecy, but rather the prophecies concerning Jerusalem's destruction in AD 70 (Mark 13:23). No wresting or violence is done to the "all things which are written" when we read the text explicitly as the context of it sets it out to be—all that is written about it, or, about those days, or, about the coming judgment.

Why limit the meaning of some of these passages by their immediate contexts, but then not limit all of them? Please consider the following questions regarding this matter of the importance of context in determining the meaning of a passage. If the "all things which are written" is not limited by its context, we find ourselves pitting Jesus in Luke 21:22 against Himself in what He said in Luke 18:31-33. Are we ready to affirm that Jesus contradicts Himself (Luke 21:22 vs. Luke 18:31-33; 24:44-46)? Is it the case that Jesus contradicts John (Luke 21:22 vs. John 19:28)? Is the apostle Paul contradicted by our Lord (Luke 21:22 vs. Acts 13:29)? The answer to the foregoing questions is that there is no contradiction at all when the "all things which are written" is seen and understood in the light of each specific context.

When studied with their immediate contexts in mind, Jesus' resurrection (Psa. 16:8-11; cf. Acts 2:25-32), the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-32; cf. Acts 2:16-21), the Gentiles being called by the Gospel (Amos 9:11-12; cf. Acts 15:13-17), Jerusalem's destruction in AD 70 (Dan. 9:24-27; Mal. 3:1-3; 4:1, 5-6), the end of animal sacrifices in the temple (Dan. 9:27), the cessation of Israel as a civil nation in AD (Deu. 32:20-29), and Israel's resurrec-

tion (Dan. 12:1-3) were not all fulfilled at the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem.

A BRIEF LOOK AT DANIEL 2

In the light of the foregoing information, let us notice Daniel 2 to further prove that not every Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled by AD 70. Specifically, let us focus on the striking of the great image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream that Daniel interpreted. It must be noted in the study of the great image that Rome, the fourth kingdom, at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, was not destroyed and did not become "chaff" with no trace of it to be found (Dan. 2:35). Neither was it broken in pieces and consumed prior to AD 70 (2:44).

History records the Western Roman Empire fell in AD 476 when Odoacer forced Romulus Augustus to abdicate. It was not until 1453 that the Byzantine Empire ceased to exist when Constantinople was captured by the Ottoman Turks led by Mehmed II and the Emperor Constantine XI was killed ("Fall of Constantinople").

Were the four kingdoms represented by the giant image physical kingdoms or spiritual kingdoms? Let it be clearly understood that the kingdoms represented by the different parts of the image of Daniel 2 were physical and not spiritual kingdoms. The great image of the dream is intact when the stone struck it. Daniel interpreted the dream historically with each of the four kingdoms succeeding one another. Additionally, Daniel interprets the image of the dream historically. Daniel said the first kingdom was King Nebuchadnezzar or Babylon (Dan. 2:37). Daniel continued with, "after you...another kingdom" would arise, that of the Medes and Persians (2:39), "then another," the Grecian kingdom (2:39), and finally "the fourth kingdom," Rome (2:40). It was this fourth kingdom that broke in pieces and destroyed all the others (2:40). Any student of ancient Western history knows that Rome incorporated features of the preceding kingdoms into itself. Thus, in that sense the image was still together as one image (7:12). However, Daniel teaching that the image represented a succession of kingdoms is not altered at all. Daniel said the stone struck the image, breaking it in pieces (2:34),

then the stone crushed the image and it became like chaff (2:35). Notice two different things took place: (1) the stone struck the image, breaking it into pieces, and (2) it crushed the image and it was as chaff. One does not make a speculative leap, doing violence to the Scripture, to conclude that the striking of the image happened when Christ's kingdom was established (on Pentecost of Acts 2) and the crushing of the image took place when Rome, the fourth kingdom, a destroyer of other kingdoms, was itself destroyed. Notice that Daniel declared of the Lord's kingdom that "it shall break in pieces and consume [or "put an end to"] all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever" (2:44). This raises the following questions, how did the Lord's kingdom put an end to all these kingdoms? Because Rome had taken much from the three kingdoms preceding it, when it was "crushed" they too were destroyed (7:12; Rev. 13:1-2). We have no grounds to conclude that the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and the Grecian Kingdoms were crushed when the Lord's kingdom was established. Daniel wrote, "And in the days of these kings [the fourth or Roman kingdom] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2:44). That being the case, how could the fourth kingdom (Rome) be crushed at this point if it still had kings? Also, please notice that Daniel did not say that the Lord's kingdom destroyed all of these other kingdoms spiritually. What Daniel said was that these kingdoms would be destroyed and the Lord's kingdom would be established during the fourth kingdom. Because the Lord's kingdom is a spiritual kingdom (notice John 18:36), we should not infer that the four kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's dream were spiritual kingdoms or that they were spiritually destroyed when the Divine record, as well as secular history, tells us otherwise. One thing Daniel said about God's involvement with civil governments of this world is, "And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings" (Dan. 2:21).

Daniel tells us "the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" (2:35). The stone is the Lord's kingdom, but did it become the great mountain that filled the whole

earth by AD 70? Thus, in Daniel 2:32-35, the prophet discussed the destruction of the Roman Empire, taking place in AD 70, but it was not the fourth kingdom (Rome) that was destroyed at that time, but the city of Jerusalem and with it the civil state of Israel.

WHAT DID THE PROPHETS SAY ABOUT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM?

In the book of Daniel we learn when the Christ ascended to the Ancient of Days (God the Father) He would receive a kingdom (7:13-14). Our Lord returned to heaven following His resurrection from the dead and that was not in AD 70.

The seventy weeks of Daniel 9 have a thirty-year gap between the 69th and 70th weeks, and then the six items are fulfilled in the 70th week (AD 63-70). No matter if the fore going Scripture ends with the destruction of Jerusalem, it does not prove that such was the Second Coming of Christ. It proves only that Daniel had a Divine revelation regarding the time of the end of Jerusalem.

The prophet Zechariah declared that the Branch would “build the temple” and “sit and rule on His throne...and be a priest on His throne” (Zec. 6:12-13). We learn from the New Testament that the temple is the Lord’s church (1 Cor. 3:16), and that the throne of the kingdom is in heaven (Rev. 3:21). Notice that His priesthood serves at the same time as the kingship (Heb. 8:1-2). Assuredly, the “temple” was not built, nor did Jesus become King and Priest in AD 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem.

We should remember that the fundamental purpose of the Old Testament, especially the Law of Moses, was to bring the Jews “to Christ” (Gal. 3:24). Therefore, we should not be surprised that fundamentally the prophecies thereof were fulfilled in the first century.

MORE IMPORTANT PASSAGES POINTING TO THE CHURCH’S ESTABLISHMENT

First we notice Isaiah 2:2-3 (almost the identical prophecy is found in Micah 4:1-2). Almost 750 years before Christ walked this earth Isaiah wrote:

And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. and many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem (KJV).

The prophet informs us that God's house would be established in Jerusalem. He then tells us that it would be exalted and all nations would flow unto it. Further, he informs us of the time of its establishment—during the last or latter days.

In Paul's first letter to Timothy the apostle tells us that "the house of God...is the church of the living God" (1 Tim. 3:15). Paul wrote his epistles several years before the destruction of Jerusalem. At the time of his writing to Timothy both he and Paul were in God's house, His church, the Kingdom of Christ (Col. 1:13; also see 1:24). Zechariah also prophesied of God's house saying, "Therefore thus saith the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: My house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, And a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem" (Zec. 1:16—KJV).

Jesus, in giving the Great Commission said:

And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high (Luke 24:46-49—KJV).

We learn from this passage that Jesus would suffer and rise from the dead prior to the preaching of repentance and remission of sins in His name. He tells us that the preaching of the Gospel would begin in Jerusalem and that the apostles would be endued with power from on high.

In John 14:26, 15:26-27, and 16:7-8 our Lord had promised the Holy Spirit to the apostles. Moreover, it is clear that following our

Lord's return to heaven, the Holy Spirit came to teach the apostles all things, cause them to remember all Jesus had taught them, and convict the world of sin. This is the power for which Jesus instructed the apostles to wait in Jerusalem.

In Acts 2:1-4 Luke writes:

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance (KJV).

The Holy Spirit was not to come until our Lord had left this earth (John 16:7). In Acts 1:9, the apostles saw Him ascend to heaven. Having been commanded by our Lord to wait in Jerusalem, the apostles returned to Jerusalem—the appointed place for them to wait. It was in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost following Jesus' resurrection and ascension that the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles to impart the Divine power they needed to perform the work Jesus had called them to do.

We noticed that it had been prophesied that the Word of the Lord would go forth from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3; Mic. 4:1-2). It was fulfilled according to Luke in Acts 2:14-42. Peter pointed out that what was happening at that time and place had been prophesied by Joel (2:28-32). Again, we emphasize what was noted previously in this chapter, Joel's prophecy does not say the "last days" would end with miracles, signs, and wonders being poured out before the coming of the day of the Lord (2:28-31). Joel did not say anything about the duration of miracles. Words have meanings and the prophet wrote that miraculous power would be poured out "**in,**" but not "**throughout,**" the last days. As we have stated earlier, *last days* does not always mean the same thing in every context where it is employed.

CONCLUSION

In this brief study we have only centered in on a few of the Old Testament passages that are abused by the RE faction in their efforts to fit their theory to all parts of the Scriptures. Of course, this has driven them to make far-fetched and spurious claims regarding many Scriptures in their efforts to create and systematize their false “theology.”

In King’s book, he tells his readers that the manner and time of prophetic fulfillment must undergo radical reconstruction. Thus, he and his followers have reinterpreted much of the Old Testament and all of the New Testament (16, 38). As this chapter and the other chapters in this book will show, King has done nothing more by his confused efforts than create for him and his followers insurmountable problems in their attempts to apply his fundamental false view to all the Scriptures, that error being that all the events of the book of Revelation have been already fulfilled, as is evidenced by what we have studied in this chapter.

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THE SIN-DEATH DOCTRINE OF REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY

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The doctrine of Realized Eschatology (hereafter known as RE), also known as Hyper-Preterism or Full Preterism, has many facets of error entailed in its system of belief and its web of deception. The tendency of the system is to devolve into the error of crass Universalism by implying that no one since the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 has been lost or even can be lost. In fact, the system implies that no one actually has sinned since that event, much less been lost at any point due to sin.

This situation arises from the warped view of the General Resurrection held by advocates of the system, which has given rise in turn to equally warped views of “death” as depicted in the Scriptures, especially as pertains to eschatological matters. More precisely it is a disingenuous attempt to cover for the failures of the system by a form of verbal misdirection.

TWO KINDS OF DEATH

The Bible has affirmed all along the fact of two kinds of death—one physical and the other spiritual. The former is the death of the physical body entailing the subsequent separation of one’s human spirit from his corporeal body (Jam. 2:26). The latter is the spiritual

separation from God and His fellowship brought about by sin (Isa. 59:1-2).

This latter kind of death is also the kind contemplated by Paul's statement, "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). The fullest experience of this separation will be the consignment of the lost to Hell following the Judgment (6:23; Mat. 25:41, 46). This dichotomy on death has been the historical position of the church down through the ages based on Biblical teaching. With the rise of RE, certain folks have sought to redefine *death* itself and thus, the nature of the General Resurrection, which is a prominent theme in the Bible's teaching on last things.

MAX KING AND "THE GRAVE OF JUDAISM"

When Max King concocted his own doctrine of RE, he affirmed virtually from the start that the death that was to be conquered at the coming of Christ was a metaphorical, figurative death of the church and that the General Resurrection was the raising up of the church out of "the grave of Judaism."

This view avers that in some mystical sense the church was dead in Judaism itself for some time prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Various prophecies and other texts were twisted so as to have the church being buried in Jewish law and custom, from which Christ was to deliver it by Jerusalem's fall to the Romans. Max King, playing on the figurative imagery of Isaiah 26 and Ezekiel 37, affirmed this view in his book, *The Spirit of Prophecy* (200-19).

A number of key questions bedeviled the doctrine from the start, which questions posed serious problems for Kingism. (1) If the church was dead in Judaism, then what killed it? What was the cause of death itself that caused it to be buried in Judaism? (2) When did the church go into the grave of Judaism? As it is the case that *resurrection* implies that what is raised again from the dead was at some point alive before dying, then it must be the case that the church existed as a live, ordinal body prior to going into the grave of Judaism. (3) What about the Gentile Christians who the New Testament teaches were never under the Law of Moses? How did they get caught up in the grave of Judaism, since they were nev-

er amenable to its laws and customs? Were only the Jewish members of the church therefore the ones actually buried in Judaism?

THE RISE OF THE SIN-DEATH DOCTRINE

The several critical problems that immediately attended the “grave of Judaism” view led a few of King’s followers eventually to reject it, especially as they had to confront these defects in debate. King even hinted at this spiritualization of all texts pertaining to death in eschatological texts in his debate in 1973 with Gus Nichols (Nichols and King 122). However, that position entailed the idea of separation from God (as described previously) and led ultimately for King and many of his followers, due to the New Testament stress on the destruction of such death at the coming of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 15:23-58), to adopt Universalism by affirming that such separation was completely destroyed in AD 70. If it is the case that no one has been separated from God since AD 70 as King finally concluded, then no one has been lost since then as well. The conclusion, though, is incompatible with the bulk of New Testament teaching on salvation, especially those texts stressing how few souls will ultimately enter heaven (e.g. Mat. 7:13-14).

As a result, other Hyper-Preterists who had been followers of Max King, notably Don Preston and William Bell, contrived a new explanation of the General Resurrection to try to avoid, at least in part, some of the pitfalls into which King’s system had fallen—in particular the error of Universalism. They began to affirm that the “death” that was to be destroyed was a spiritual “sin-death,” though neither has openly repudiated the “grave of Judaism” doctrine but rather have slid off into this new attempt to avoid the obvious while holding to their Hyper-Preterist mania. However, they have never fully renounced the “grave of Judaism” view as being errant.

William Bell’s transition to the “sin-death view” is especially intriguing and illustrative as to how far they will go. In an article titled, “Challenging Concepts of the Resurrection,” Bell quotes approvingly from page 219 of Max King’s book, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, which quote as noted vividly describes the “grave of Judaism” concept. One is clearly led to believe that Bell endorses that error

even now. By the end of the article, however, he swerves off into the “sin-death” view, using the equivalent phrase “soul-death” (*Preterist Archive*). He avers that “soul-death...according to scripture means separation from God (Isa. 59:1-2; Jas. 5:20).”

He is, in effect, affirming both concepts simultaneously. In an exchange with him, he acknowledged that he did write the article. He said that he obviously would not disavow having done so. But he would neither defend nor deny the “grave of Judaism” view, even though it mutually excludes the “sin-death” view. It is as though he seeks to hold onto each, despite it being in a tentative manner, to quibble around whatever problem may afflict either view in any given text. Where the “grave of Judaism” view has an insurmountable or obvious problem, then he inserts the “sin-death” or “soul-death” view, and vice versa. The questions I have raised above concerning the former error Bell totally refused to address.

Don Preston has been no less disingenuous in his shift. He has never publicly declared the “grave of Judaism” view to be in error, but also would never defend it during our exchange. In fact, he published Bell’s above-mentioned article clearly endorsing its claims. In his oral debate with Mac Deaver at Carlsbad, New Mexico, Preston affirmed the “sin-death” view as concerned the “death” to be destroyed according to 1 Corinthians 15.

AN IMMEDIATE PROBLEM

One of the immediate problems with their own theory is that it entailed a quite nebulous and nondescript entity which they would not, and perhaps even could not, of themselves fully or properly define. Every attempt they have made eventually dovetailed back into the traditional view of spiritual death itself—separation from God. They try in vain to escape this signification of *death* as it has been traditionally taught concerning spiritual death.

They rail against the “tradition,” but must fall back on it for any lexical substance for their own theory. Yet, in doing so, they forfeit the very theory they so feverishly seek to protect. It is one reason why they do not want to focus solely in debate on the doctrine of the General Resurrection and especially so if the debate is to last

four nights. The weakness of their system becomes quite evident under such a burden.

The doctrine of the General Resurrection was recognized early on to be the weakest link in their doctrinal chain. The failure of that aspect of their system collapses every other aspect of it, just as surely as the failure of the doctrine of Hereditary Total Depravity collapses Calvinism's other postulates in the TULIP.

THE COMPLETE FAILURE OF THE SIN-DEATH VIEW

This attempt to hide the concept of spiritual death under the rubrics of "sin-death" and "soul-death" is not only deceitful. It is ultimately self-defeating for RE. The failure is summarized in the following argument showing the implicature of the doctrine as applied to the Hyper-Preterism of William Bell and Don Preston:

Major Premise: If it is the case that "sin-death" (also known as "soul-death") is the same thing as spiritual death (i.e., separation from God), and if it is the case that spiritual death was destroyed in AD 70 at the destruction of Jerusalem, then it is the case that no one has been separated from God since AD 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem.

Minor Premise: It is the case that "sin-death" (also known as "soul-death") is the same thing as spiritual death (i.e., separation from God), and it is the case that spiritual death was destroyed in AD 70 at the destruction of Jerusalem. (William Bell and Don Preston affirm this!)

Conclusion: Then, it is the case that no one has been separated from God since AD 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem.

In discussion with them, neither man nor any of their acolytes (e.g., Steve Baisden) would accept the implication of their position. Instead, they tried to quibble around the problem facing their obvious error. To their credit they could not accept the false doctrine of Universalism, which is the force of the conclusion above, but neither would they give up their own false doctrine concerning death being destroyed in AD 70, which implies the false doctrine of Universalism.

While I would hope that it is because they do not really understand the implicature, there does remain the possibility that they do see it but are committed to their error regardless; which, if so, would imply that they have taken the position not for the sake of truth but simply to avoid the more obvious failings of “the grave of Judaism” doctrine. If that is so, then they are not only teaching Universalism by implication but are inevitably practicing Universalism even if they profess not to believe it. Their system of error would then be logically adversely affecting their intellectual ethics.

A LOOK AT THE PRIMARY QUIBBLE FOR THE VIEW

The quibble that they offer ultimately is two-fold. (1) They seek to limit the end of spiritual death to the saints alone. (2) They claim that the destruction of “sin-death” is conditional and not absolute by utilizing such texts as Romans 6:3-6, Ephesians 2:1-10, and Colossians 3:1-3 as prophecies of the AD 70 event to support their thesis.

While the first point seems to be reasonable, on the surface, as far as such texts as 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 are concerned, as these texts focus on the resurrection of the righteous dead, it clearly ignores the fact that there was also to be at the same hour as the former a resurrection “unto damnation” for the wicked dead (John 5:28-29). If in John 5:28-29 the righteous dead are raised out of “spiritual death” to eternal life as the doctrine holds, then why are not the wicked also raised out of “spiritual death”? If it is the case that the grave in John 5 is “sin-death” (or spiritual death) for the first group, then why is it not also the same for the latter group as well?

However, that also, just as clearly, would contradict the Lord’s statement that the resurrection of the wicked is “unto damnation” and thus not unto eternal life. The ending of spiritual death would mean that one would no longer be separated from God, but would be in fellowship with God. On the other hand, damnation implies separation from God and consigned to a place or state of ruin (destruction) from His fellowship. The two thoughts are diametrically opposed; they are polar opposites. Both could not be true. Yet, if

the Hyper-Preterists holding the “sin-death” view redefine the grave for the wicked dead as being something other than spiritual death in John 5, then on what hermeneutical basis could they logically do so? If it is not spiritual death, that only leaves physical death, which would take the whole matter right back to the traditional view of the text which the Hyper-Preterists so abhor! If the grave then is the physical grave with physical death being understood for the wicked dead, then why is the grave for the righteous dead not also the physical grave? Thus, they meet themselves coming back!

Furthermore, why are the righteous dead still in “spiritual death,” if they are already righteous? If they are righteous, then by definition they are right with God and in His fellowship! There is no separation between them in that regard. The whole point then is absurd. The only ones in spiritual death are sinners, the wicked! But we have just seen that that would not work either. The silliness of this entire doctrine is obvious!

The second part or point in their quibble also poses its own problems for the theory. First, since “sin-death” or “soul-death” is in reality simply “spiritual death,” which is separation from God’s fellowship (cf. 2 John 9; Isa. 59:1-2; Jam. 4:4), the position implies that there is no time in the existence of the righteous where they are not potentially subject to separation from God’s fellowship, even after physical death this side of the Jerusalem event. Certainly, the Hyper-Preterists will quibble that after physical death the righteous will no longer be subject to “sin-death,” but in doing so they imply that there are some eschatological realities that **are not realized** until after AD 70 in the individual cases for the righteous dead. It must be remembered that Hyper-Preterism entails the affirmation that not only was every eschatological event prophesied before AD 70 but also that every fulfillment of these prophecies occurred in AD 70 as well. This would also logically have to apply to the specific fulfillment in individual cases. They are still fulfillments, regardless of the protests of the advocates of this theory.

For example, Joel’s prophecy stated in part that, “whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21; Rom.

10:13). The fulfilling of that promise was not ended in the AD 70 event. Instead it will continue as long as there are those who obey the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16-17; 10:9-17). They are part of the “whosoever” and thus fall within the scope of the prophecy. Steve Baisden, Don Preston, Holger Neubauer, Scott Kluft, William Bell, et al., all miss this simple point, which by itself refutes RE. So, whatever text they may appeal to in order to try to establish the idea that, at physical death, the righteous are no longer subject to “sin-death,” they invariably imply a continuing fulfillment of that prophecy or promise.

Second, the texts used to justify the RE position relative to the righteous were written prior to AD 70, even according to RE itself, and described a set of circumstances already existing prior to AD 70. It is not the case that the texts of Romans 6, Ephesians 2, and Colossians 3 are prophetic in the way RE seeks to use them.

Romans 6

In Romans 6, Paul, writing about AD 57 or 58, ties the consequences of being free from the tyranny of sin and its punishment to the individual baptisms of the Roman brethren. Those baptisms had already occurred. They were not being prophesied of as occurring at some point in their future. Paul was showing what their baptism entailed and thus how they were to behave in view of that. He was not telling them to wait until AD 70 and then begin yielding their members as instruments or weapons of righteousness. That is simply silly! They “were baptized.” The aorist passive indicative *ebaptistheemen* indicates completed action. The aorist indicative denotes completed action in the past; even the most basic Greek grammars state so. The action is also viewed as a single event.

According to Romans 6:17-18, it was when this occurred in their individual cases that they “were made free from sin.” The verb form here is an aorist passive participle, which is circumstantial in nature. Its action **coincides** with the verb in the clause translated “ye became the servants of righteousness.” The action of the aorist participle is also that of completed action but at the time of the action of the main verb in this latter clause. The main verb is *edoulotheete*,

another aorist passive indicative expressing completed action in the past. It literally means, “you [all] were enslaved,” i.e. “to righteousness” (*tees dikaioisuee*).

Ephesians 2

As to Ephesians 2, Paul, likewise, was dealing with things that were already accomplished or in place. Writing about AD 62 or 63, he was not prophesying of what was to come into place in AD 70. God “made live” (*sunedzooipoieesen*) the Ephesian brethren. The verb is an aorist active indicative, again indicating by being an aorist indicative completed action in past time. They were not waiting to be made alive in AD 70, as the RE quibble presumes. They had already been made alive, despite having previously been dead in their trespasses and sins (2:1-5). The consequences of which Paul then writes in the rest of the chapter were then already in place.

They had been “saved by grace through faith” (2:8). They were not waiting to be saved by grace through faith. The predicate construction is *este sesosmenoi*. The participle *sesosmenoi* is a perfect passive united with *este* used as a helping verb. This latter word is a present active indicative placing stress on the abiding condition expressed by the perfect tense of the participle. The Greek perfect, especially in the participle, denotes an abiding condition in the present from the perspective of the speaker/writer predicated on a completed action. In Koine Greek the abiding condition is principally what is stressed.

In Ephesians 2:11-13 there is a stunning contrast that destroys the RE quibble that Ephesians 2 is prophecy pointing to AD 70. Paul refers first to the past lives of the Ephesians when they, being Gentiles in the flesh, were “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world” (2:11-12). Paul then says forcefully, “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (2:13). He does not say, “But in AD 70 in Christ Jesus you...will be made nigh by the blood of Christ.” The verb is another aorist passive indicative, denoting a completed action in the past. It will also be observed that Paul clearly states

that this completed action in the past had been accomplished “by the blood of Christ,” which, in Greek, here is a dative of means. The phrase demonstrates that the application of the atoning work of Christ in their specific cases had already been accomplished. That refutes the silly notion that the atonement occurred in AD 70.

As a result of Christ having removed the Law of Moses, the middle wall of partition dividing Jew from Gentile, and having made peace through Jesus’ blood, both Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians “through him...have access by one Spirit unto the Father” (2:14-18). The verb *echomen* is present active indicative and clearly refers to the condition of things then existing as Paul penned these words. They add this condition existing then and there! They were not waiting until AD 70 for it to come into existence. It was an existent reality.

Furthermore, as that reality was then in existence and its existence was contingent on the removal of the Law of Moses, then it must be the case that that Law had already been removed. Thus, the RE doctrine that the Law of Moses remained in force until AD 70 is also false.

Paul said to the Ephesian brethren:

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit (2:19-22).

Needless to say, all of these things obtained prior to AD 70. Paul did not tell them to wait until then for these things to occur. Ephesians 2 opposes the RE quibble and doctrine. It devastates some of the basic tenets of the whole system.

Colossians 3

Colossians 3 also fails to support the RE doctrine on “sin-death.” The first verse begins with a conditional statement wherein the condition is taken for granted as having been fulfilled. It is called a First

Class Conditional (using the particle *ei* with an indicative verb) which sets forth an argument based on the truth of the antecedent (also called the protasis in linguistics), which in turn implies the truth of the conclusion. In many First Class Conditionals the idea is so strong that one could virtually render *ei* as “since,” instead of “if,” because contextually the proposition of the antecedent is granted as true in the argument.

The verb in the antecedent is *suneegertheete*, aorist passive indicative. So, it too indicates a completed action in past time. It is not supposing a potential future event, as RE would have us to believe, but something already realized by the Colossian brethren **prior** to AD 70. Colossians was penned about AD 63. Thus, it does not accord with the quibble of RE relative to “sin-death.” These brethren had already been raised at some point in the past. In fact, the statement reflects back to Colossians 2:11-14 and baptism as that point in time in which they had received their spiritual circumcision, having been buried and thus have also risen with Christ out of spiritual death, and having therefore been made alive with Him by God.

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross (2:11-14).

At their respective baptisms they were raised up with Christ out of or from spiritual death. Also, it will be observed that Paul declared that the Law of Moses was nailed to the cross and thus blotted out. It was thus no longer in force, and this was prior to AD 70, which is again contrary to RE doctrine.

Thus, Colossians 3:1ff begins with a premise that negates the RE quibble on “sin-death” at the very start. It offers then no support, but actually refutes the heresy.

A SECOND QUIBBLE

A second quibble is also often raised, especially when the former one has been proved ineffective. This second quibble goes back to Genesis 2 and 3 concerning the kind of “death” that Adam and Eve were threatened with if they should eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (cf. Gen. 2:17; 3:1-4). The advocates of RE assert that the death was “sin-death” only. They would suffer separation from God—hence spiritual death. To complete the quibble, they then assert that Jesus came to set at naught or offset this consequence of Adam’s transgression and that alone. They appeal to such texts as Romans 5:12-19 where Paul draws a contrast between Adam’s one act of rebellion and Jesus’ one act of obedience and how the latter was designed to counter the effects of the former. They thus conclude that the general resurrection of which the New Testament speaks has nothing to do with physical death but only spiritual death—“sin-death.”

However, they ignore the fact that Adam and Eve did begin to die physically the very day they ate of the forbidden fruit. They were driven out of the Garden of Eden and severed from access to the tree of life, whose life-perpetuating fruit they could no longer enjoy and “live forever” (Gen. 3:22). God told Adam in particular, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return” (3:19). Physical death was also a consequence that came upon the whole of humanity by virtue of Adam’s transgression. Thus, “it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27). That is an appointment that God made for us back in the woeful scene centuries ago in the Garden of Eden, as Adam and Mother Eve forfeited the right to the tree of life.

That consequence has stalked the human race like a hunter ever since. Even Job asked, “If a man die, shall he live *again*?” (Job 14:14). He was not contextually talking about spiritual death, but obviously physical death (cf. 14:1ff.). Jesus Christ is not only God’s answer concerning spiritual death and the means for fellowship with God, but He is also God’s answer to physical death. Jesus is the answer to

Job's inquiry. Thus, Job could say: "For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, And *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, Yet in my flesh shall I see God" (19:25-26).

Some versions render the last clause, "apart from my flesh" or "without my flesh." The LXX text, however, renders the last verse in part, "May my skin...rise up": thus expressing hope for the resurrection of his physical body. Whether in or out of his flesh, Job clearly expected, on the basis of God's promise, to see the Redeemer despite physical death. That great terror would be overcome!

Another text appealed to by RE is John 5:24-25, but it too describes a condition of things that already was in existence at the time Jesus spoke the words. He did not speak of the destruction of Jerusalem in the text. That is read into it by the advocates of RE. Further, that He speaks of being raised from spiritual death in verses 24-25 does not logically preclude the fact that He speaks of physical death in verses 28-29. He sometimes used the same term in two differing senses by way of contrast, emphasis, or even expansion. For example, He said, "Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:60). We have also seen that John 5:28-29 also refers to a resurrection unto damnation for the wicked. If verses 28-29 are taken as referring to spiritual death, then one is left with an absurdity and self-contradiction as we have noted.

Finally, in 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4, the metaphor "sleep" is used of physical death, not spiritual death. While the metaphor is used in some texts of spiritual idleness or apathy (cf. 1 Cor. 11:30; 1 The. 5:6), it is used also to describe vividly by referencing the repose of the body the state of physical death for the righteous, even as the lexicons so classify it. A cursory perusal of 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4 shows this is certainly so without having to appeal to the linguistic and grammatical authorities.

In 1 Corinthians 15:6 Paul referred to the 500 witnesses, "of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep." He is not saying that some have apostatized, which would

have been the case if spiritual death was contemplated in the imagery. *Present* refers to the present time. Most are still alive, though some have died. Verse 18 then uses the imagery again of those who “have fallen asleep in Christ.” The latter phrase means that these died while faithful to the Lord (cf. Rev. 14:13). Surely, that could not mean “spiritual death,” as that would imply that they died out of fellowship with God. How could they die faithful to the Lord but out of fellowship with God?

In fact, that question can be restated to cover the entire 40-year period from Pentecost to the destruction of Jerusalem. How could the church be spiritually dead—and thus out of fellowship with God—from Pentecost until AD 70, while also being faithful to and in fellowship with the Lord at any time or to any extent? How could 2 John 9-11 be true concerning those who “have both the Father and the Son”? The entire RE doctrine on the matter entails an absurdity of immense proportions!

In 1 Corinthians 15:20 Paul again uses the sleep metaphor for those who are next to be raised after the Lord, who was “the first-fruits.” That Jesus was raised from physical death and not spiritual death must certainly be admitted, even by the most ardent RE advocate. The correspondence of the typology would demand that those who are asleep here then also be the righteous who are to be raised from physical death. Then, in verse 51 Paul wrote, “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.” He then describes the nature of the change in verses 52ff. He is referring to the righteous. So, it cannot be that spiritual death is contemplated here either. That would entail some of the saints apostatizing and yet being glorified despite it. Yet another absurdity!

In similar fashion as in 1 Corinthians 15, Paul used the sleep metaphor to describe those who die faithful to the Lord in 1 Thessalonians 4. They are described as those who “sleep in Jesus” (4:14). While they were asleep, they were in fellowship with the Lord. They are also said to come “with” God, which implies fellowship with Him. These “dead” are said to “rise first” at the time of the general resurrection (4:16). Verse 14 simply refers to their human spirits,

the essence of who they are, coming back to be rejoined with their bodies in the general resurrection, which is thus described in verse 16. At any event, the metaphor well suits physical death pertaining to the righteous but does not fit the idea of spiritual death in this text. RE entails more absurdity in its mishandling of it.

CONCLUSION

Much more could be written on the falsity of the “sin-death” doctrine of RE. There are many absurdities, fallacies, and self-contradictions involved in the system.

We have looked at the basic idea and those failings. In doing so, we have also examined a number of key passages that are used to support the error. We have seen that these texts not only do not support it but also actually refute it and expose the danger of it. Let us be steadfast against it, as it ultimately implies the false doctrine of Universalism, which directly contradicts God’s Word (Mat. 7:13-14).

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EXPOSITION OF DANIEL 7:13-14

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INTRODUCTION

The Old Testament clearly teaches that the day would come when the God of heaven would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed. The prophet Isaiah tells us **where** that kingdom would be built, that the Lord's Word would go forth from there when it was built, and that it would command a very lofty spot (Isa. 2:2-3):

And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Daniel 2 informs us of the general time period (during the Roman Empire), when God would set up that kingdom. In Daniel 7, the prophet pinpoints the **time** when that kingdom would be built. That would be when the Son of man returned to heaven from His earthly sojourn. It was after His ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension.

Knowledgeable and honest Bible scholars and students understand the above chronology. However, in the Lord's church there has arisen through C. D. Beagle, and more so, as spread by his son-in-law, Max R. King, the theory that the kingdom was not established until the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. King, in fact, claimed that all prophecies regarding the end of time were consummated in the ministry of Christ or shortly thereafter.

DEFINITIONS

Eschatology: The study of end time things is known as *eschatology*. According to Wikipedia, the word derives from a combination of two Greek words, *eschatos*, meaning "last," and *logia*, which means "study."

Realized Eschatology: Understanding the meaning of *eschatology*, it naturally follows that *realized eschatology*, as it relates to Bible prophecy, would mean that all such prophecy has come to pass or been fulfilled.

MAX KING'S THEORY AND ERRORS

Max King made popular the theory that all Bible prophecies regarding the end of time were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70. In July, 1973, King debated his doctrine (hereafter referred to as the AD 70 theory) with brother Gus Nichols. The proposition that King affirmed in that debate was as follows:

The Holy scriptures teach that the second coming of Christ, including the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead occurred with the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (Nichols and King IV).

As the reader will notice, one of the things King affirmed in that proposition was that the eternal kingdom was established in AD 70. There are many facts that show the fallacy of King's position. One of those facts is that King does it himself. How so? In his book, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, King opts for the early date for the Revelation letter (256). That is, that the book Revelation was written prior to AD 70. However, in Revelation 1:9, the apostle John wrote, "I John,

who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” If the Revelation was given to John prior to AD 70 and John was a brother and companion in the kingdom, then how could the kingdom not be in existence at that time? John could not have been in something that did not exist.

The apostle Paul also informs us that both he and the Colossian brethren had been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God’s Son (Col. 1:13). In his book, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Max King is what we might call disingenuously complementary in that he admits there are strengths involved with the teaching that the kingdom came on Pentecost. He alludes to a couple of passages that give strength to the position. One of those, he says, is Daniel 7:13-14 (135). Contrary to all reliable scholarship, King claims the phrase, based on what he refers to as “The version of the Septuagint” (whatever *The version of* means) “came to the Ancient of days,” should be “came as the Ancient at days” (142). No reliable translation of the Old Testament agrees with King, not to mention that the implication of the claim would have the Lord coming literally and bodily at the destruction of Jerusalem. Such an incident would be so noticeable that it would not be overlooked by any historian of the day, but no such thing is recorded anywhere.

King failed to realize that some New Testament passages that seem to him to indicate a coming kingdom that had not yet been established actually refer to the heavenly phase of that eternal kingdom rather than the time of its establishment. One of the verses King attempts to push this idea with is Acts 14:22 (136). In that verse Luke writes, “Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” Paul and the souls he was confirming were already in the kingdom of God. Paul is not by any means suggesting that the end and Christ’s coming would necessarily occur within their lifetimes. Without doubt, Paul is referring to the final or heavenly phase of the eternal kingdom,

when all of the faithful will live with the Godhead and all of the redeemed forever. To claim otherwise contradicts both the writing of John in Revelation 1:9, and Paul's reminding the Colossian brethren that they had been translated into the kingdom of Christ.

King attempts the same argument with 2 Peter 1:11 (137). After relating the list of Christian virtues the saints are to add to their faith, Peter wrote, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The Christians of Peter's day were already in the eternal kingdom. They would gain an entrance into the heavenly phase of the kingdom if they lived the lives of faithfulness that Christian duty requires.

It is this writer's belief that one of the greatest reasons that King and his followers have so misunderstood the New Testament prophecies concerning all of the things having to do with Christ's coming, the kingdom, the resurrection, and the judgment is that they miss the very crucial point that a number of New Testament verses refer to the heavenly phase of the eternal kingdom. Instead, these theorists erroneously apply them to the establishment of the kingdom. How sad it is that missing one important point can lead an individual or individuals down a path filled with false teaching that will lead to the destruction of the souls of many.

One other point we would like to make before looking more closely at Daniel 7:13-14 is that Max King's AD 70 theory adds up to a denial that the church and the kingdom are one and the same institution. Taking the theory's entirety, this error cannot be successfully denied by King or any of his followers. Matthew 16:18-19 make it unmistakably clear that church and the kingdom are one and the same.

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

King claims that when Jesus told the apostles that some of them would not taste death until they saw the kingdom come with power (Mark 9:1), it could not refer to the kingdom coming, because the New Testament says the apostles received power on Pentecost, and that it is vastly different to say the kingdom came with power and that the apostles received power (138). Apparently, the power King expected was the slaughter of the Jews rather than an attempt to convert them by the preaching of the Gospel! What a perfect example of King's mixed up thinking! Not only is the claim laughable, but it is a very plain confession that the church and the kingdom are two different entities. Even if there were not all of the other fallacies in King's theory, this one is enough to show his apostasy and convoluted thinking.

DANIEL 7:13-14

Daniel 7:13-14 is a passage that very clearly (clear, that is, to all except those who hold to the AD 70 theory) states the time frame in which the eternal kingdom would be set up or established. These verses read:

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed.

It is readily apparent that the everlasting kingdom is the same kingdom of which Daniel prophesied concerning in chapter two when he gave to Nebuchadnezzar both the content and interpretation of the king's dream.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever (2:44).

A very brief review of Daniel 2 reminds us that the dream revealed that after the reign of Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon, a sec-

ond kingdom would arise, being the Medo-Persian empire. After the Persians, a third kingdom would be the Grecian empire. Finally, the Grecian empire was followed by a fourth one, the Roman Empire. It would be in the days of this fourth kingdom or empire, that God would set up the everlasting kingdom.

In Daniel 7, the prophet refers to and discusses four beasts. These are obviously the same four kingdoms Daniel pointed out as the content of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Verses 9-10 indicate that God and His kingdom would prevail over all of the kingdoms of men and would finally result in the day when eternal judgment would come to pass. "And the books were opened." Not only were the four beasts destroyed, but also all of the kings of the earth, the earth itself, and Satan himself will all finally be subdued when man is judged and the evil are cast into the lake of fire.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works (Rev. 20:12).

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (21:8).

Daniel 7:13-14 are obviously not in chronological order with some of what comes before them. However, beginning with verse 13, there appears to be a reiteration of what comes before, but this time beginning with establishment of the kingdom of heaven, the battle of the saints against the ten horns, and the one horn that came up among them. In the end, the saints and the Ancient of days would overcome them all.

DANIEL 7:13

Daniel begins the two verses for our consideration with the words, "I saw in the night visions." This phrase tells us that Daniel had more than one vision, and that these visions may not have all come to him in one night. That would explain somewhat the apparent reiteration and change of chronology in what he had already

recorded. This phrase also indicates that what the prophet is about to relate to us is of very great significance among the other prophecies given in the rest of the chapter.

What did Daniel see in these night visions that was so **important**? He saw “*one* like the Son of man.” It would be unreasonable to assume this phrase appears by accident or that it was the concept of the prophet himself. The Holy Spirit, either at the time of the vision, or at the time Daniel wrote the book, inspired him to use that term. *Son of man*, as we know, was by far Jesus’ most frequent descriptive application given to Himself. Some 80 times in the Gospel accounts Jesus referred to Himself by that term.

What did Daniel see regarding this Son of man? He saw Him come with the clouds of heaven. After Jesus instructed the apostles in Acts 1:4 not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or as Acts 1:8 refers to it, their receiving power after the Holy Spirit came upon them, Luke records, “And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight” (1:9). This is the scene that was shown to Daniel many years prior.

Where did the Son of man go in the clouds? He came **to** the Ancient of days. Many of the Old Testament commentators believe the wording, “came with the clouds of heaven,” have the Lord descending to the earth rather than ascending to heaven. To derail this claim may be the very reason Daniel was inspired to use the descriptive name, *Son of man*, showing that the coming with the clouds was in close proximity to Him being referenced by that term. Not only so, that He came to the Ancient of days does not make sense if He were descending as opposed to ascending.

Max R. King, as we have mentioned already, wishes us to believe that all of the reliable translations are wrong on this wording, opting instead for, “As the Ancient of days he came, and those standing around were present with him” (142). Not only does scholarship disagree with King, so does common sense. If, as King claims, Daniel 7:13-14 refers to Christ coming in judgment against Jerusalem

in AD 70, no one would just be standing around. Thus, the rendering King advocates does not even support his own theory.

DANIEL 7:14

Jesus, the Son of man, ascended to the Father, the Ancient of days, and then what? There was given Him dominion, glory, and a kingdom. When He came to the Father, there was given Him dominion or sovereignty. Paul wrote in Philippians 2:9-11:

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

In his sermon on Pentecost, Peter told the multitude: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). The past tense is used there. Realized Eschatology has Christ coming to His Kingdom in AD 70. No, that had already occurred before the Roman invasion of Jerusalem.

Daniel also says that when the Son of man came to the Ancient of days there was given unto Him glory—that is honor or esteem. What he was given in simple terms was a kingship. That naturally precedes the next thing Daniel said He was given, a kingdom. It is the same kingdom mentioned in Daniel 2:44. In Daniel 7:14, Daniel describes the universality and endurance of the kingdom. All nations and people are called upon to serve Him, submitting to His dominion which would be everlasting, and His kingdom that would never be destroyed.

The false position many men, including both Max King and the Premillennialists, have embraced is that in Daniel 7:13-14 Christ is coming to earth to establish that kingdom rather than ascending to the Father to receive it, as the passage plainly describes.

CONCLUSION

Realized Eschatology, or the AD 70 theory, is a convoluted, complicated, and corrupt teaching regarding all of the things that have

to do with the end of time. It places everything, including the establishment of the kingdom at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. The fact is that Paul in Colossians 1:13 and the apostle John in Revelation 1:9 explicitly tell us that the kingdom was in existence at the time of their writings. If we are wrong in teaching, as Daniel 7:13-14 clearly states, that the kingdom was in existence before AD 70, then both the inspired apostles Paul and John were also wrong, and Max King and his followers are right. It is not a position that bodes well for anyone to deny the inspiration of those who were guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit!

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EXPOSITION OF DANIEL 12

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INTRODUCTION

Some Preliminary Considerations

To mutilate lines from Shakespeare's "Sonnet 43," "By how many names do we know thee? Let us count the ways": "Kingism," "AD 70 Theology," "Realized Eschatology," "Preterism," "Covenant Eschatology," "Transmillennialism" (trademarked by its advocates in 2001), and likely others. I observed years ago (and have stated many times) that novel doctrine always requires novel terminology to communicate it, and there is no better demonstration of this fact than the foregoing list of terms.

I wrote the following comments about "Realized Eschatology" several years ago:

This maverick movement would not be worthy of the notice I am giving it here except for two factors: (1) It is a prime demonstration of just how far men can go into error when they grow weary of the

old paths of Truth and believe they have discovered some new and radical doctrines that were hidden until they came along. (2) Brethren need to be warned. Some people, including brethren (given the general extent of Biblical ignorance), are so gullible that they will swallow almost anything in religion—even this extreme perversion of the Gospel (“Editor’s Clippings” 28).

I caution the reader not to consider “Realized Eschatology” as merely a “doctrine.” It is far more. It is a **system of theology** every bit as much as dispensational premillennialism and Calvinism are. Just as the *1,000-year* passages in Revelation 20 constitute the “tail” that wags the entire premillennial “dog,” so the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem wags the whole “Kingism” dog. Premillennialism makes the disastrous error of perverting the highly figurative language of the book of Revelation into literal interpretations. Contrariwise, Transmillennialism perverts the literal terms concerning the fundamentals of the Second Coming, the bodily resurrection, the Judgment, and like doctrines into figurative/spiritual meanings. They are equally damnable in their consequences.

I congratulate the Bellview church for planning this altogether appropriate program of lectures and publishing this volume devoted to this system of error. These studies will doubtless compose the fullest refutation of this heresy yet undertaken and will constitute a ready reference work for many.

Introduction To Daniel 12

The final chapter of Daniel is by far the shortest of the book with only 13 verses.¹ However, it is an important chapter, if for no other reason, because it is the last and culminating chapter. A primary rule of Biblical exegesis and hermeneutics is that one should not study or interpret any passage of Scripture in isolation, but in context. The importance of this principle is no more clearly demonstrated than in the study of Daniel 12. Indeed, this chapter is but the continuation and conclusion of the vision begun at chapter 10. It is difficult to imagine the basis on which Hugo, in the thirteenth century chapter-divider, made his beginning point for chapter 12.

Butler is correct in observing as follows: “If the reader would disregard, momentarily, the imposed chapter and verse divisions, and read chapters 10 through 12 as one unit, he would readily observe the continuity of purpose” (450). McGuigan does not even attempt to outline or deal with chapter 12 apart from chapters 10 and 11 (157-84). This improper division is especially apparent concerning 12:1-4. A far more logical beginning for chapter 12 would have been with our present verse 5, leaving verses 1-4 as part of chapter 11. This will be readily observable when we begin the exegesis of the text. The exposition of chapters 10 and 11 are not within the purview of the title of this chapter. However, it will be necessary to review those chapters to some extent (especially the closing section of chapter 11) to establish the basis of our comments on chapter 12.

I have outlined the chapter as follows:

- I. The conclusion of the vision given Daniel by the marvelous (angelic) messenger (see 10:5-6) concerning the future of God’s people (12:1-4).
- II. Two other persons (likely angels) converse with the messenger (12:5-7).
- III. Daniel asks the messenger for further information about the outcome of the vision and is given a few additional details (12:8-12).
- IV. Daniel is told to go his way with words of assurance for his future (12:13).

One more comment before beginning our study: I freely admit that I have been unable to find any approach to this interesting, yet difficult, chapter that is free of all problems. I have chosen the one that seems most satisfying to me. There is room for others to hold a divergent view as long as said view does not involve any contradiction of truths clearly taught elsewhere in the Scriptures. Now, let us study the text of this important chapter.

EXEGESIS AND EXPOSITION OF DANIEL 12:1-13

Verses 1-4—The Conclusion of the Vision Concerning the Future of God’s People

Verse 1

The opening words, “And at that time,” connect what is about to be revealed with what has just been revealed. We are made to ask, “At what time?” and to find the answer we must back up into chapter 11. The final verse (45) speaks of someone of great power who would encamp between the sea and the “glorious holy mountain,” but who would meet his end with no rescuer. Obviously, to know what “that time” is we must determine, if at all possible, who this ruler was, what this encampment was, and when it occurred.

I remind the reader that Daniel is apocalyptic in nature and contains much imagery, various figures, signs, and symbols. However, it also gives a rather detailed panorama of the sweep of the heathen empires from Daniel’s time to some future point and how God’s exiled people would relate to them and be affected by them. It is so detailed and explicit for the most part that the identities of the various empires and even rulers are generally identifiable. The principal reason for the revelation of these events was apparently to give hope to the beleaguered Jews of the captivity. As a captive, displaced people, they were all but hopeless. They wondered if God had completely forsaken them or if there was still the possibility that He would fulfill His promise of a new king of David’s seed who would be given the eternal kingdom (2 Sam. 7:12-16; 1 Chr. 17:11-14). The meaning of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream answered this question: In the fourth empire from Nebuchadnezzar’s, God would set up His kingdom, which would stand evermore (Dan. 2:31-44).

In the dream and its interpretation (the kernel of the book) the first of these empires was Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon, in which Daniel lived. The second was that of the Medes and Persians, which conquered and succeeded Babylon. The third was the Grecian Empire (referred to **by name**—8:21; 10:20; 11:2—which overwhelmed Persia) under Alexander and his successors. The fourth was the Ro-

man Empire (which rolled over the remnants of Alexander's once-mighty domain), in the days of whose kings God would (did) set up His everlasting kingdom (I have written at some length on Daniel 2—McClish, *Daniel* 68-87). The message of the interpretation of this dream was one of marvelous hope for these downtrodden people.

It is important to note that the time span covered by Daniel is circumscribed and limited by events related to these four empires of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the last of which was the Roman Empire. Although those mighty world empires seemed to be all-powerful and invincible at the apex of their power (with the Roman Empire the mightiest of all) as impossible as it seemed, God would still establish His kingdom which would have no successor (as indeed He did!). This would finally bring the relief and security to God's people for which they yearned. The point I want to keep before us is that just as the **beginning** point of Daniel's prophecy is identified as the Babylonian Empire, the **ending** point is also identified as sometime in the Roman Empire **and no later**.

This necessary premise to understanding the book is evident on at least three other bases besides Nebuchadnezzar's dream: (1) The same limitation of four kings/kingdoms is set forth in Daniel's dream (7:1-8, 17, 23). (2) The book is written to give hope to Daniel's people, that he and they might know what would befall them "in the latter days" (10:14), which we believe to be the final days of Israel as God's Old Testament covenant people. (Remember, their **covenant** identity as God's people ended at the cross [cir. AD 30—Col. 2:14; Heb. 9:16-17; 10:9-10; et al.] and their **national** identity in God's sight was forever terminated when Titus, the Roman general, besieged and then obliterated Jerusalem in AD 70). (3) In almost the closing words of the book, the angelic announcer told Daniel that the "end of these wonders" (i.e., the wonders revealed in chapters 10-12, or perhaps the entire book) would coincide with "when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people." This would be the time when "all these things shall be finished" (Dan. 12:6-7). Thus, when the Jews were finally and

irretrievably broken (by the Roman Legions in AD 70), the visions of Daniel would be fulfilled and finished.

I believe McGuiggan is right about this:

The scope of the book has consistently been from Babylon (at the earliest) to Rome (at the latest). See this in Chapters 2 and 7. In Chapter 8 we go from Persia to the Seleucids. In Chapter 9 we went from Persia to Rome. In Chapters 10 through 12 we do the same thing—from Persia to Rome (159).

If I am right in this (and I believe I am), there is not even a toe, much less a leg, left upon which the premillennialist can build a case for his mythical one thousand-year literal future kingdom scheme! You see, the establishment of the eternal kingdom of God and the enthronement of His/David's Son, the Messiah/Christ, took place in the days of the Roman "kings" "in the latter days" of Daniel's people, the Jews, long since passed. In fact, this eternal kingdom (the church of Christ—Mat. 16:18-19) was established in the first century of our era (McClish, "Daniel 2" 68-87).

Now, back to the antecedent of *he* in Daniel 11:45: Who is this "he"? We get no help in verses 41-44, which oscillate between *he* and *him* several times, but with no fuller identity. Not until we get to verse 40 do we find a more specific identity: *the king of the north*. However, this is so general that we must move yet farther back in the chapter to determine who this is to know the time of which Daniel 12:1 speaks.

Note the following review of chapter 11:1-6:

1. Beginning with Darius, several Persian monarchs are introduced (11:1-2).
2. A mighty king of Greece (Alexander) would overcome the last Persian and rule an even larger empire (11:3).
3. Alexander's empire would not be given to kindred when he died, but would be divided among four of his generals (11:4). Within a few years two of these (the Ptolemies and the Seleucids) established dynasties that controlled most of Alexander's former empire.

4. The originator of the Ptolemy dynasty, Ptolemy I Soter (one of Alexander's generals), was strong to begin with and controlled Egypt. He and his successors are called "the king of the South" (11:5). "The king of the north" (11:6) is a reference to the Seleucid dynasty (begun by Seleucus I Nicator, another of Alexander's generals, in 312 BC), which controlled much of the former Persian Empire, particularly Syria.

There is general agreement among expositors with these respective identities of "the king of the south" and "the king of the north," **through 11:35**. More particularly, practically all exegetes identify "the king of the north" in verses 21-35 (some say 21-39) with Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the last Seleucid king. However, as indicated below, a wide variety of opinions exists concerning the kingdom/king who is the subject of verses 36-45. Since this identity bears directly and heavily upon the understanding of chapter 12, we must give careful study to it.

There are perhaps a dozen diverse suggestions as to who "the king" of verse 36 might be: Antiochus Epiphanes, a Jewish Antichrist, the New Testament "Antichrist," Antiochus **and** Antichrist (type and antitype), Herod the Great, the Roman Pope/papal system, Mohammed, the Roman Empire, et al. Most conservative commentators I have read apply verses 36-45 to Antiochus in one way or another (e.g., Barnes 2:207, 240; Butler 434; Copeland 61; Henry 4:1106; Zerr 4:273). Barnes, attempting to avoid the difficulties involved in applying verses 40-45 to Antiochus as a continuation of his exploits from verses 36-39, suggests that they are a "recapitulation" of the material found in verses 21-39 (246-47). At the same time, however, many of the commentators admit the serious difficulties encountered in applying these verses to him. In fact, some demonstrate that one must torture the text to do so (McGuigan 170-71; Young 246-51).

Without doubt, at **first glance** verse 36 **seems** to refer to Antiochus (the subject of the preceding verses). However, with the difficulties involved in consistently applying this and succeeding verses

to him, many commentators believe some different king or government is introduced in this verse. To me, the difficulties involved in assigning a new kingdom/king to verses 36-45—while not totally absent—are indeed fewer than in attempting to assign them to Antiochus.

If this is the case, who then is the most likely ruler or empire under consideration? The answer that makes the most sense is the Roman Empire, for at least three reasons: (1) “The king” of verse 36 is “the king of the north” (11:15, etc.). The Seleucid Empire was thus referred to because it was to the north when compared with the Egyptian Empire of the Ptolemies to the south (“the king of the south”—11:15, etc.). When compared with Egypt as to direction, Rome could also be appropriately called “the king of the north.” (2) Remember that the period covered by Daniel embraces the time from the Babylonian Empire to sometime in the Roman Empire, during which God would set up His eternal kingdom. To end the book with Antiochus of the Seleucid Empire would be anticlimactic, drawing the book to a close without the establishment of the Messianic kingdom—the very source of Israel’s hope. (3) To identify the king of verse 36 with anyone **after** the Roman Empire (e.g., Antichrist, Mohammed, the Popes, et al.) runs beyond the boundaries of Daniel, as earlier indicated. I conclude with McGuigan: “There is nothing in the text [11:36-45] which the Romans couldn’t and didn’t do,” which he stated in an extended discussion of verses 36-45, giving bases for identifying *the king of the north* as the Roman Empire (170-72).

On the basis of the thesis thus set forth, let us turn our attention to Daniel 11:45, the concluding verse of chapter 11. The Roman authorities are described as being in such a position of power that they can set up their standards at will, including in Judah. This I believe to be the meaning of planting “the tents of his palace between the sea and the glorious holy mountain.” Although the Roman power would seem invincible (as had the previous empires), Daniel was not to think it to be indestructible. The time would also come when it would perish with none to rescue it. However, this

is not so much a definite prediction in regard to time, but merely a reminder to help Daniel keep things in perspective.

At that time in 12:1 refers to the time when the Romans were ruling Palestine. Michael (the archangel—cf. 10:13, 21) was to stand up. His name means, “Who is like God?” and thus he appears as the representative of God. He is described as “the great prince who standeth for the children of thy people” (12:1). It was apparently his function to keep a watchful and helpful eye over God’s people. In spite of Michael’s help, this would be a time of terrible trouble for God’s people, “such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time” (12:1). To what could this refer except the terrible clashes between the Jews and the Romans in the Roman occupation of Palestine that resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem as a city and of Israel as a nation in AD 70? Imagine how this sounded to Daniel, who had been through the awful trials of Nebuchadnezzar’s destruction of Jerusalem. He must have had a hard time imagining times of troubles worse than those, yet that is the message he received. One cannot read this without remembering that the Lord used almost these very words to describe that self-same destruction: “for then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be” (Mat. 24:21). I believe the Messenger to Daniel and the Lord were referring to the same event.

God’s true people would be delivered at this time of terror and tribulation. This is not speaking of the literal Jews, but of God’s people through His Son, Christians. When the Christ died on the cross, the Old Testament was taken out of the way (Col. 2:14), thus ending God’s covenant relationship with the Jews as a race of people. When God set up His eternal kingdom (the church), with His/David’s Son on its throne, the church, open to people of all the nations, became the “Israel of God” (Rom. 2:28-29; Gal. 6:15-16; Phi. 3:3). The eternal kingdom (thus, the consummation of God’s promise in Daniel 2:44) had been in existence for forty years when the Romans overran Jerusalem in AD 70. Those in the kingdom, not merely Jews according to the flesh, constituted God’s people at

the time of that great conflagration. Thus, I believe those referred to here as “thy people” who would be delivered because they were “found written in the book” were the Christians who escaped Jerusalem before it fell. Indeed, the Lord provided the very signs by which His people would be able to recognize this event and He told them to flee the city for their lives when they appeared (Luke 21:20-24; Mat. 24:15-21). The account of Josephus of the lifting of the siege against Jerusalem briefly, thus allowing every Christian in the city to escape, is well known. This is likely what the Lord referred to in His warning passage: “And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened” (Mat. 24:22). Compare this with the promise to Daniel that those written in the book of life would be delivered.

Verse 2

A resurrection is described in Daniel 12:2, but to what does it refer? Many, if not most, expositors believe this is a promise of and a reference to the final general resurrection when all who have lived and died shall be called forth from the tomb, either to eternal bliss or eternal shame. God’s Word most certainly sets forth just such a universal bodily resurrection to precede the final universal Judgment (John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:42-54; 1 The. 4:14-17; etc.).

Realized Eschatology proponents deny the straightforward Scriptural doctrine that there will be any such literal, universal, bodily resurrection of those who have died. As with the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, His glorious return, the end of the world, the Judgment, and the beginning of eternal life or death, so with the resurrection. All references to such in Scripture are figurative with only a “spiritual” fulfillment. Kingites aver that all of these came to a head in the one grand event of the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. They thus relegate Calvary and Pentecost to secondary status compared to the AD 70 event. In the theological system of the transmillennialist, **all** unfulfilled prophecies preceding that date were fulfilled in that occasion, including the passages that promise our resurrection. To what then do the resurrection passages point? They insist that these refer to the church, which, they allege was

“raised” from the “grave” of dead Judaism, and which—surprise!—occurred in AD 70.

The AD 70 hobbyists are the current version of the infidel Sadducees of old, who “say there is no resurrection” (Acts 23:8). We say to them now, as the Lord said to them 2,000 years ago, “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures” (Mat. 22:29). The Kingites are the modern reincarnation of a pair of false teachers in Ephesus. Paul wrote concerning these brethren and their doctrine:

But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; men who concerning the truth have erred, saying **that the resurrection is past already**, and overthrow the faith of some (2 Tim. 2:16-18).

The apostle would doubtless say the same of those who teach the same deadly and foolish doctrine were he among us today. As then, so now: AD 70 theology constitutes “profane babblings” and “ungodliness”—a spiritual cancer that consumes all who give heed to it. Those who imbibe it “err concerning the truth” and its teachers “overthrow the faith of some.” Except to refute their errors, these men should be “shunned,” as were those Ephesian apostates.

While I do not for a moment give ground to the absurd Scripture-denying error of the realized eschatology turncoats, nevertheless, I do not believe that Michael the archangel is describing the final, universal, literal resurrection of the dead in Daniel 12:2. I believe this “resurrection” is figurative in nature and application. It would seem inexplicably abrupt to move—with no obvious connection whatsoever—from the contextual description of the Jewish state in AD 70 to the general resurrection, which still has not occurred almost twenty centuries from that time. Further, we have emphasized the terminal point of the material in Daniel: in general, sometime during the Roman Empire, particularly, AD 70 (as demonstrated/discussed previously and as per 12:6-7). To suddenly introduce the general resurrection here would seem out of place and isolated from every other part of the immediate context—indeed from the entire book. Besides, this passage does not describe a universal resurrec-

tion, but a limited one. The text says **many** shall awake from their graves, not all (as the Lord stated) concerning the literal, general resurrection (John 5:28-29).

Rather, this resurrection has to do with the peculiar fate and future of the Jews of Daniel's time in some way, but in what way? Ezekiel was the "country prophet," contemporary with Daniel, the "city prophet," during the first several years of the exile. His challenge, perhaps even more than Daniel's, was to give a message of hope to the hopeless and downtrodden common people among the Babylonian expatriates. Although there seemed to be no ray of light to pierce their dark present existence and anticipated future, Ezekiel's message after the final fall of Jerusalem was one of hope. "This was accomplished not only through explicit promises (28:25; 34:11f; 37:21; etc.), but through the dramatic vision of the resurrected dry bones (37:1-14)" (McClish, "Ezekiel" 202). Could it be that **Daniel and Ezekiel both** described the ultimate revival of Israel in God's plan (i.e., restoration to Canaan, and longer range—the coming of the Messiah and establishment of the eternal kingdom) in terms of a resurrection? I believe this is, in fact, the case.

The people of God were so forlorn under the Gentile domination of their exile that it appeared that they had died as a nation, never to rise again. Isaiah used the resurrection figure of the ungodly heathen nations: "*They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise*" (Eze. 26:14). Not so with God's chosen nation—they would rise as it were from their place "in the dust." It is not God's fault that the Jews incorrectly assumed that these promises referred to the establishment of an earthly political kingdom with the Messiah as their king. Tragically, literal Israel would reject and crucify the very one who came to give them the real kingdom of God, even as He tried to teach them that God's eternal kingdom would be spiritual rather than political.

This "resurrection" of Daniel 12:2 occurred when the Christ came and established His everlasting **spiritual** kingdom (John 18:36—God's **spiritual** Israel, as noted above). His people were at last given perpetual independence and sovereignty, which overrides

all nations and their territorial boundaries (Dan. 2:44). Thus, Peter called the church, God's "holy nation" (1 Pet. 2:9). It is a great irony in the history of God's people that old fleshly Israel rejected—and for several years remained the chief persecutor of—God's new and true spiritual Israel. The great trouble and tribulation of Daniel 12:1 that literal Israel suffered in AD 70 was payment-in-kind in God's wrath for her rejection of the true King and His kingdom.

That some in this resurrection would be raised to everlasting life and some to everlasting contempt refers to the fact that some of the Jews would accept the Savior and others would reject Him. Note how similar the prophecy concerning the Christ-child of the righteous and devout Simeon is to the outcome of the resurrection of Daniel 12:2: "Behold, this *child* is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel" (Luke 2:34). It is a great tragedy that only a remnant of Jews believed and obeyed the Gospel, while the great majority remained (and remain) infidels (Rom. 10:1-3). While I do not believe this resurrection refers to the literal one that shall finally include all men, what is said of those who are raised is true concerning it. There will be only two classes of persons in the resurrection: those raised to everlasting life and those raised to everlasting contempt (Mat. 25:31-46; John 5:28-29).

Verse 3

"They that are wise" ("those who understand"—LXX) is likely a reference to those who have listened to the visions of Daniel, consequently remaining faithful to God, and, if living till the time of the "resurrection" of verse 2, who accepted the Christ and His spiritual kingdom. These would shine as the brightness of the heavens, a promise of their eternal bliss. A blessing is then pronounced upon "they that turn many to righteousness." Their eternal reward is likened unto the endless shining of the stars. These words of the angel to Daniel remind us of the ultimate wisdom of hearing, obeying, and serving the Lord Jesus Christ and of helping as many as possible to walk in the same way.

Verse 4

The angel commanded Daniel to “shut up the words, and seal the book.” Some think this refers only to the latest vision, beginning in chapter 10. However, I understand it to be of the whole book. Thus, I agree with Keil: “We understand...the whole book” (9:485) and with Young: “Evidently Daniel had written down his revelations, as he received them. This last revelation formed a conclusion, and the entire body (i.e., the book) was now to be sealed” (257). To shut up the book and seal it means that Daniel is to see that it is protected and preserved until the time of the end. This is not until the “end of time,” but the time of the end of the things prophesied in the book. We have seen that this refers in its extremity to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

The last part of the verse is very difficult to unravel. It seems to speak of the desire on the part of many to know the events of those times embraced by and prophesied in the book, apart from which they will seek in vain. Young probably makes as much sense as anyone in his paraphrase of the entire verse: “Preserve the book until the end, for it contains the truth as to the future. Many shall go to and fro in search of knowledge, but they shall not find it” (258).

Verses 5-7—Two Persons (Likely Angels) Converse with the Messenger

Verses 5-6

After the vision which began in chapter 10 was concluded, Daniel saw “other two” persons (not otherwise described, but apparently angels), one on either side of “the river.” That is, these were in addition to the original Messenger of the vision. We will pause long enough to ask who this glorious Messenger was. He is identified as “the man clothed in linen,” which refers to the description of the glorious and awesome One mentioned in 10:5-6. The appellation, “a man,” simply means he appeared as a man, in the form of a man, which is the common Biblical description of a Heavenly being who appears to human beings. Some have tried to identify Him with either Michael, the archangel (Jude 1:9; Rev. 12:7), or with Gabriel,

another prominent angel (Luke 1:19). However, “the man in linen” is distinguished from them both and is apparently their superior (Dan. 10:13; 8:16). I believe the Second Member of the Godhead, the Divine Logos, the pre-incarnate Christ, is the proper identity of this One on the following grounds:

1. There are several similarities between the description of this marvelous One and the “man” seen by Ezekiel at the beginning of his prophetic work who was “the likeness of the glory of Jehovah” (Eze. 1:26-28).
2. There are similarities between Daniel’s description of this One and of the transfigured Christ (Mat. 17:2; Mark 9:3; Luke 9:29).
3. The identification with the description of the crucified, resurrected, all-powerful Christ who walks among the candlesticks is all but unmistakable (Rev. 1:13-18). Further, the mission of “the man clothed in linen” in relation to Daniel and the mission of the risen Christ in relation to John are the same—to reveal future events to them (Dan. 10:14; Rev. 1:19).

“The river” refers to the river Hiddekel, mentioned as the location of Daniel when the last vision of the book began (Dan. 10:4). This is one of the most famous rivers in the world and is the third river mentioned in the Bible, one of the four to flow out of the Garden of Eden where God placed the first man and woman (Gen. 2:10-15). According to Hackett, who provides a summary of the evidence for the identity, a better-known name for this river is “Tigris” (2:1062).

Verse 7

One of the angels asked the original Messenger how long it would be until the consummation of the events prophesied in the vision. In verse 7 we have the immediate response, made more solemn by the uplifting of His hands and His swearing in the presence of the Father. The response has two parts: (1) The end of these foretold events is somehow measured by or related to “a time, times, and a half” (literally, 1 time + 2 times + 1/2 time, or 3 ½ times). (2) The

time of the end is tied to the occurrence of an historical event—the “breaking in pieces the power of the holy people.” The 3 ½ times may be hard to decipher, but there can be little doubt about when the “power of the holy people” was broken. It was when the incomparable trouble and tribulation of the awful destruction of Rome was unleashed on Judah and Jerusalem in AD 70 (12:1; Mat. 24:21).

What is meant by the 3 ½ times? This number, along with the numbers of days mentioned in Daniel 12:11-12, and other symbolic time periods in the apocalyptic books of the Bible, excite the fertile imaginations of dispensational premillennialists to no end. We first encounter this symbolic number in Daniel 7:25 and it is almost universally understood to mean 3 ½ years. It, or its equivalent in days or months, is found several times in the Revelation (Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). The earliest Biblical incident that is expressed in this time period is the literal period of three years and six months in which Elijah was a fugitive from the wrath of Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kin. 17:1-18:46; Jam. 5:17). McGuiggan points out the fact that in each of these episodes related to a 3 ½-year period there is this common theme: It is a time when God’s people are suffering, but are still sustained by God in their suffering. Given the fact that 7 is the number for completeness and perfection in the Bible, he theorizes that 3 ½ stands for something incomplete, short of totality or absoluteness.

In each case tied to this time frame there is a fiendish power which seems absolute and invincible persecuting God’s people. However, it is represented by a number which is far short of absoluteness (i.e., 7), in fact, only half of it (3 ½). The message, according to McGuiggan, is that in spite of all appearances, no earthly power is absolute and they will all eventually fail. When applied to Daniel 12:7, this means that although the Roman Empire would seem to be, in its utter crushing and scattering of the Jews, so powerful that it would stand without end, like its predecessors, it was incomplete and limited, both in power and duration. Thus, the 3 ½ times here relates to the nature of the oppressing power (Rome) at the end of the vision, rather than to an actual time element (McGuiggan 180). His

view of this passage makes sense to me. However, one may view the 3 ½ years, we may lay to rest all of those vain and foolish attempts based upon them to predict the end of all things. Remember: Whatever might be the meaning of these numbers, they **must be understood as bringing us no farther down the stream of time than the “breaking in pieces the power of the holy people”**—AD 70.

Verses 8-12—Daniel Asks the Messenger for Further Information about the Outcome of the Vision and Is Given a Few Additional Details

Verse 8

Daniel did not understand what he had just heard about how long it would be till “the end of these wonders” would transpire. Matthew Henry observed concerning Daniel’s perplexity: “The best men are often much at a loss in their inquiries concerning divine things, and meet with that which they do not *understand*” (1115). We are reminded also that here we see demonstrated the fact that, while inspired men might receive and comprehend the words of the message revealed to them, they did not necessarily understand the meaning of the words or the message itself (1 Pet. 1:10-12). Daniel lived about five centuries before the consummation of these events shown to him, and he and his people were in captivity. The number of explicit facts and symbols he had been given in such a short period of time must have been all but overwhelming. He may have feared that he would suffer the times of awful trouble of which he had been told. He wanted to be sure of all the details of these matters as much as possible. Daniel pleaded that he might know more particularly exactly what the final outcome of these wonders should be. Perhaps it was hard for him to see the vision end with the breaking of his people.

Verses 9-10

The response of the Messenger initially is one of comfort and consolation, rather than additional information, although He would shortly give some additional hints. Daniel was told to go on his way, reminded that the visions were ended and were to be

shut up and sealed till the end (as he had been told in verse 4). Verse 10 is apparently designed to comfort Daniel by reminding him of the message he had already delivered in verses 1-3. Many would be purified by the fire of tribulation, but the wicked, being ignorant of these foretold events, would continue in their wickedness. While not restated in verse 10, verses 1-3 explicitly stated that righteous and wicked alike would receive their just rewards. There is the promise that those who are wise (the ones who shall shine as the brightness of the firmament—12:3) shall be able to understand. In other words, those who are faithful to God will be able to recognize the foretold events as they occur. In response to Daniel's plea that he did not understand (12:8), the Messenger promised that enough had been revealed that those who are wise in days to come could understand. Daniel apparently did not need to understand more than he did.

Verse 11

The Messenger doubtless surprised Daniel (as He does us) by giving an additional tidbit of revelation concerning these final events of the prophecy. Something was to occur 1,290 days after a two-fold event: (1) the taking away of the continual burnt-offering and (2) the setting up of the abomination that makes desolate. This is admittedly a passage of extreme difficulty. Numerous attempts have been made to make the 1,290 days (a figure found nowhere else in the Bible) fit some historical period. However, whether taken as days (3 years, 7 months) or as years (day-year theory), no one to my knowledge who attempts to find some specific measurement of time in this figure has supplied anything that fits. Perhaps the best approach is to take the same view of this number as we did of the 3 ½ years of verse 7. That is, it is not intended to convey a period of time except very indirectly. Its real purpose is to indicate the impermanent nature of something.

To what do the taking away of the continual burnt-offering and the setting up of the abomination that makes desolate refer? Of course, all of those who apply Daniel 11:21-45 to Antiochus Epiphanes believe these two events are describing what he did. They

do indeed fit, in almost identical words, the description of what he did in Jerusalem on December 25, 167 BC (Dan. 8:13). In fact, much nearer the context of 12:11, his two abominable acts in the temple are referred to again (11:31). However, this does not necessarily mean that the words in 12:11 refer to his dastardly behavior, **especially if there is someone else who also did these things**. Remember, my thesis is that the Romans and their treatment of the Jews are the subject-matter beginning in 11:36 and continuing into chapter 12. Remember also that under discussion in this chapter is the crushing of the power of the Jews involving a time of trouble previously unknown by a nation.

Now note: (1) While Antiochus interrupted the daily sacrifices of the temple and profaned the sacred precincts of the temple, **so did the Romans** under Titus when they destroyed the city and the temple in AD 70. (2) While Antiochus brought grave suffering on the Jews, he did not finally break in pieces their power (12:7). (The Maccabees arose in rebellion against Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 BC and their efforts eventually resulted in restoring a measure of Jewish independence for some years, which continued to a degree even until the birth of our Lord.) **It was the Romans**, not Antiochus, who broke in pieces the power of the Jews as a nation.

(3) The Lord (as already noticed) applied the *abomination of desolation* phrase to the destruction of Jerusalem **by the Romans** (Mat. 24:15). His description in Luke's parallel account defines what desolation He had in mind very specifically: "But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand" (Luke 21:20). These armies and this desolation were most certainly **those of Rome in AD 70**, not those of Antiochus two hundred years before! (4) Matthew and Mark must have known that Jesus was referring to words (and therefore events) from Daniel 12, as demonstrated by their parenthetical statement, "let him that readeth understand," immediately after His warning about the "abomination of desolation" (Mat. 24:15; Mark 13:14). Notice how closely this resembles what the Messenger said to Daniel in the same breath with his reference to the cessation of the continual burnt-

offering and the abomination on of desolation: “But they that are wise shall understand” (Dan. 12:10-11).

Since the Lord used these words in warning about **the desolation Rome would inflict on Jerusalem**, I believe this is strong proof that **the Roman destruction is what Daniel 12:10-11 describes**. Matthew probably wrote his book in about AD 60 and Mark probably wrote in about AD 64. Thus, Christians would have been reading these books only shortly before the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. (It is almost as if Matthew and Mark were encouraging their readers, especially Jewish Christians, to heed the Lord’s warnings as repeated from Daniel 12 and thus be among the wise who understood them—12:10!)

Now, if I have reasoned correctly thus far, the 1,290 cannot refer to an actual number of days or years because the vision only takes us through the AD 70 destruction and the 1,290 is said to be “from” that catastrophe. These days must be taken as symbolic of something else. Could it be that they are another way of teaching Daniel that, although the Romans would seem unconquerable and supreme without end as they broke Israel to pieces at Jerusalem, they really were not? I have indicated this to be my view of the 3 ½ times of verse 7. I believe it to be here also. God is telling Daniel through His Messenger how to measure the great power of Rome—by 1,290 days. Again, when broken down into times (or years, at 30 days per month, per the Jewish calendar), 3 years and 7 months, **falls far short of 7 times** (absolute, perfect power)! Compare this with Revelation 13:5 where the beast is given authority for only forty-two more months (3 ½ years or a time, times, and a half time). The lesson is that the oppressive power of this fourth kingdom, this fourth beast, is limited and it would end, as would (did) all of the others. If this is the meaning, it is another way of reassuring Daniel that God is in control, not heathen political nations.

Verse 12

This verse is very enigmatic. The purpose of the pronouncement of blessing seems obvious enough: to lend encouragement to the reader to persevere and endure through the times of trial and thus to

enter into his reward. However, the way of describing the blessed reward sets before us another puzzling number. The 1,335 days equals 44 ½ months or 3 years, 8 ½ months in literal time. The 1,335 days is 45 days (1 ½ months) beyond the 1,290 days (12:11). There are no such periods of time to be found elsewhere in the Bible of which I am aware; so there is no help from comparative passages. As with the other measurements of time in this chapter, I also take this one to be symbolic of something other than an actual period of time. Again, I believe we can see what the 1,335 days is intended to convey, namely the reward of the righteous. How it does so is a complete mystery to me. Perhaps we can see a similarity in the symbolic number of 1,000 years in Revelation 20:1-6 that is used to describe the reign of triumphant saints with Christ.

Verse 13—Daniel Is Told to Go His Way with Words of Assurance for His Future

The Heavenly Messenger now dismisses Daniel a second (12:9) and final time, indicating that He has finished the revelation and will speak no more mysteries to him. He must be satisfied with what has been revealed. He was to go his way. After the vision concluded in chapter 8, he fainted and then rose up once more to do “the king’s business,” all the while pondering the meaning of the vision (8:27). Perhaps this is what the Messenger was telling him to do once more. Another thing he was to do most certainly was to record all of his visions so they might be shut up and sealed in a scroll, as Daniel faithfully did (12:4).

Daniel was given the assurance that after his rest (i.e., death, *I opine*), he would receive his reward for faithful service. *Lot* is a word that refers to that which God allots or assigns in judgment (cf. Jer. 13:25) (Thompson 342). Thus, there is in this assurance the implicit promise of Daniel’s resurrection to receive judgment and eternal life. To this hope all of the faithful of God’s people, whether before or after the cross, cling.

CONCLUSION

Daniel is one of the most intriguing books ever written. While this chapter contains many mysterious things about which we would like to be more certain, besides its prophetic content, it also contains several practical principles and truths:

1. Those who will be saved are those who are “written in the book” (12:1).
2. Just as in the figurative resurrection, so in the great final resurrection of all, we will be raised either to everlasting life or to everlasting contempt (12:2).
3. There is great wisdom in turning others to righteousness and those who do this shall be especially rewarded with great glory (12:3).
4. God has providentially preserved His Word with great care through the centuries (12:4).
5. God is able to see the future as clearly as the past (12:1-11). This chapter, as with all of Daniel, foretells so much historical detail that infidels and liberal critics have said it must have been written “after the fact” by someone using Daniel’s good name. For those who believe in the one God of the Bible and in the Bible of the one God, such plain, predictive prophecy poses no problem whatsoever.
6. God is faithful to His promises and will reward those who have diligently served Him (12:13).

We live in a day of great wickedness, a time in which those who are guilty of the most despicable abominations have great power and influence. These forces threaten to bring a great wave of persecution and suffering upon God’s people in the near future if history continues in its present course. Let us all strive to be faithful and to turn as many as we can into the way of righteousness in spite of what evil men may do to us. Only then will we have the assurance of life eternal.

ENDNOTE

¹The basis for this chapter is material the author wrote for and which appeared in *The Book of Daniel*, ed. Gary Colley. Austin, TX: Southwest, 1994.

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THE PROPHECY OF JOEL

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INTRODUCTION

The basic message and theme of the Bible is the glorification of God through the redemption of lost men. The constant theme throughout the Bible is summed up in three thoughts: (1) He is coming, (2) He has come, and (3) He is coming again. The *He* is the Christ, and Joel is full of this Messianic significance and promise. The basic message and theme of Joel relates directly to the whole of the Scripture. The inspired prophet sets this forth through two mediums—events contemporary with the prophet and future events. Both the contemporary and coming acts of God as described by Joel relate to the general theme stated above.

Joel vividly portrays the doom of the wicked nations and the ultimate glory of the Lord's cause. In this it sounds very much like the New Testament book of Revelation. This theme is focused through the reoccurring phrase, "the day of the LORD" which appears five times in the book (1:15; 2:1; 2:11; 2:31; 3:14). In reference to this basic message, the book falls into two distinct sections. In the first section the prophet speaks (1:2-2:17). In the second section God speaks (2:18-3:21). Joel describes an invasion of hordes of locusts that leave destruction in their wake. This graphic depiction is a

warning and call to national repentance that can only be achieved through rending the heart (2:13). Unless true repentance is forthcoming, the locusts will only be the forerunner of a greater judgment to follow. The latter section assures the people of the Lord's material blessings that are followed by spiritual blessings and divine retribution upon the Lord's enemies.

As with all other prophecies, Max King views Joel's messages completely fulfilled by AD 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem. In this lesson, we will examine King's application of Joel, discuss the meaning of "the day of the LORD" as used by Joel, "the last days" as mentioned by Peter, and the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy on Pentecost in Acts 2.

MAX KING'S VIEW OF JOEL

King devotes considerable space in his book, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, dealing with the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy on the day of Pentecost. King is particularly interested in the following:

And it shall come to pass afterward, *That* I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids In those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, Blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, Before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come (Joel 2:28-31).

King discusses two things regarding this passage: the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and Peter's use of *last days* in reference to this event. King states, "Joel uses the expression 'and it shall come to pass afterward,' but Peter gives the meaning of 'afterward' when he called it 'the last days' (Acts 2:17)" (84).

The battleground of **Realized Eschatology** is the time of the "last days." King recognizes this and states, "To what period of time are the 'last days' applied? The answer to this question is critical in the study of eschatology" (78). He further states:

Applying the last days to the *Christian age* is a misapplication fostered by a misconception of such terms as "this world" and the

“world to come.” While Pentecost, in a sense, was the beginning of the Christian dispensation, yet the New Testament writers often spoke of it as a world or age to come, because the Jewish age had not yet ended at the time of their writings (79).

In an effort to prove his point, King makes several assertions about several New Testament passages. Following is an example of his assertion without evidence:

One such example is Eph. 1:21: “Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” The statement “this world” was in reference to the Jewish age, which had not yet ended, and the statement “that (age) which is to come” was in reference to the Christian age, which would abide and follow the end of the Jewish age. The last days, therefore, *never* apply to the Christian age, but *always* to the closing period of the Jewish age, which ran from Pentecost to the fall of Jerusalem (79).

We respond to this in King’s own words: “Proof please!” (85). He does the same thing with passages in Hebrews and Galatians.

According to King, Hebrews 2:1-8, the Jewish (Mosaic) dispensation was under the dominion of the *angels*. He further concludes that Jesus did not have “complete dominion” over the world until after the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. King asserts that Jesus’ “complete dominion” could not begin because “of the Jewish world which was still standing and contesting the right of Christ to rule over Israel” (80). King goes so far as to state:

The New Testament saints preached, wrote, suffered, and died in the *last days*, but such is not true of us today. We are *now* in that world “which was to come.” We are in the eternal kingdom of Christ, and instead of being in last days we are in *eternal days*, world without end (Eph. 3:21). A world that is without end cannot have “last days” (81).

According to this, those living today are in error if they consider themselves “New Testament” Christians. Today, we are a *different* brand of Christian.

SOME PROBLEMS THAT KING'S VIEW PRESENTS

By Implication, His Position Denies the Deity of Christ

We have shown previously that King **asserts** that, for forty years, Jesus was unable to exercise “complete dominion” due to Jewish opposition. How absurd and arrogant it is to think that mankind in general and the Jewish nation in particular could have the power to stop the Son of God from accomplishing His will. This is very similar to the Premillennial idea that Jesus was forced to establish the church because the Jew’s would not allow Him to establish His kingdom. Both doctrines deny the omnipotence and the authority of Jesus. To do so is to deny His Deity.

Jesus stated, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Mat. 28:18). What part of *all power* does King not understand? Did Jesus not know that He would not have “complete dominion” until AD 70? The New Testament writers understood that Jesus was already on the right hand of God which is considered a place of power and authority (Acts 2:34; 5:31; 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22). Paul refers to Jesus as, “the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15; cf. Rev. 17:14; 19:16). All of these references point to the fact that Jesus already had all authority “in heaven and in earth.” Why did these inspired men write such things if Jesus was not to have “complete dominion” until the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70? I guess they did not get the memo!

Consider Some Problems with King's View of the “Last Days”

According to King, “We are in the eternal kingdom of Christ, and instead of being in *last days* we are in *eternal days*, world without end (Eph. 3:21)” (81). We remind the reader that King believes that the *last days* refer to the forty-year period preceding the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Thus, after the *last days* would come the present age which King says are the “**eternal days**” or “world without end.”

Joel's prophecy was to be fulfilled in the "last days" (Acts 2:17). According to Peter, the "last days" are the days of the Messiah's reign (Acts 2:36). There will be no subsequent time on earth after the *last days*. These *last days* are the days of the Christian or Gospel dispensation. Other New Testament writers make reference to the *last days* as the final age of time. The apostle John wrote: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (1 John 2:18). By inspiration, John informed his readers that they were living in the "last time." He knew he was living in the "last time" because the antichrist was already working. According to John, the "last days" are equivalent to the "last time." The *last days* or *last time* must refer to the Christian or Gospel dispensation, which will end at the Second Coming of Christ that is yet to come. Thus, there can be no *eternal days* or *world without end*, on earth, following the *last days* as asserted by King.

Joel's Use of the Day of the Lord As It Applies to the Day of Pentecost

As mentioned previously, *the day of the Lord* is used five times in Joel and best provides the correct understanding of the prophet's basic message. Joel's use of this phrase should be viewed in the following five categories: (1) A day of temporal judgment (1:15), (2) A day that leads men to repent and return to God (2:1-13) (3) A day that contains great promises for the faithful (2:31ff), (4) The day of Pentecost as described by Joel in 2:28-32 and divinely interpreted by Peter in Acts 2:16-21, and (5) The final day of judgment upon all humanity at the end of time, wherein the heathen are damned and the righteous enjoy God's eternal bliss (3:14ff).

The most significant of these categories as it relates to Joel is that which makes him known as the great "prophet of Pentecost." All the Old Testament prophecies merge in Acts 2. The Day of Pentecost is a *day* that is often mentioned in the prophecies of the Old Testament. It is the "day *which* the LORD hath made" (Psa. 118:24). In this day men should learn to rejoice and be glad in it, for it was a day when: (1) the gates of righteousness are opened to men

(118:19), (2) men may enter the gate of the Lord (118:20), (3) the Lord becomes man's salvation (118:21) (i.e., "the Saviour of the world"—cf. John 4:42; 1 John 4:14), (4) the Lord became the head of the corner (Mat. 21:42; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet. 2:7) (Psa. 118:22), and (5) men would bless the Lord out of the house of God (118:26) (cf. 1 Tim. 3:15). According to King, this day and all of its blessings ended in AD 70.

Malachi foresaw this *day* and discusses its importance in chapters three and four of his book (i.e., 3:1-6, 16-17; 4:1-6). He asks, "who may abide the day of his coming?" (3:2). Twice Malachi states that there is a coming *day* that the Lord is going to make (3:17; 4:3). He writes that Elijah is going to come before "the great and terrible day of Jehovah" (4:5—ASV), and then the hearts of men are to be turned to that which is true, righteous, and spiritual (4:6). "Shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings" (4:2—ASV). All of this culminates and transpires on the Day of Pentecost as discussed in Acts 2. Again, none of this applies to anyone living after AD 70.

Peter made it clear that the events of Pentecost were to be explained in light of prophecy. Peter says, "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16). The *this* referred to Pentecost. The *that* referred to Joel's prophecy found in Joel 2:28-32 (also cf. Acts 2:33).

Peter's use of Joel 2:28-32 in his great sermon on Pentecost follows his baptism in the Holy Spirit. He states, "This is that" (Acts 2:16), and then proceeds to unfold the happenings that are to begin on that day and continue throughout the period of miraculous signs (see Mic. 7:15). *All flesh* is to be understood in reference only to those to whom it was intended—and not in a purely literal sense. The Spirit did not come upon animal flesh, nor did the Spirit come upon those of the world, but in the baptismal measure solely upon the apostles and in the extraordinary measure only upon those whom the apostles laid their hands. The *day of the Lord* was that Pentecost day when these miraculous signs began and that day when men could begin to call upon the name of the Lord to be saved (see Acts 22:16; Rom. 10:13). By inspiration, Joel was able

to view all these wondrous events 800 years before their fulfillment. Indeed, “the LORD will do great things” (Joel 2:21).

Joel’s Use of the *Day of the Lord* As It Applies to the Day of Judgment

In the final sense, Joel’s phrase, *the day of the Lord* (3:14), refers to that day which will be the last of all days and when “there should be time no longer” (Rev. 10:6). In the Scriptures, *day of the Lord* (or its equivalent) always involves a divine act of judgment by God upon men. Such was the case in the events transpiring around Pentecost (see Mal. 3:1-6; John 9:39; 16:11; 12:31 i.e., “Now is the judgment of this world”). The events leading up to and culminating in Pentecost were in and of themselves a kind of judgment by God, but this latter use of the phrase is fully portrayed in Joel 3 and refers to the final judgment. The prophet’s words describe events not in history but at the end of history.

Joel’s *Great and Notable Day of the Lord* As It Applies to the New Testament

According to Joel, there will be a *great and notable day of the Lord* (Acts 2:20). Could Joel be prophesying about the day of Pentecost? Some say yes. It is true Pentecost was preceded by signs like those described in Joel’s prophecy (Mat. 27:51-54). Pentecost was the day the church began, the great commission began, the Holy Spirit began to direct the apostles into all truth with power, and Christ was made King with a new covenant.

Could this *great and notable day of the Lord* be the destruction of Jerusalem? Some say yes. The *day of the Lord* expression in the Hebrew prophets denoted a day when God would punish the wicked and save the righteous. Matthew 24:29 in its context described the destruction of Jerusalem and is compatible with the wonders and signs of Acts 2:19-20. Malachi 4:1-3 also describes the destruction of the Jewish nation. However, few agree with Max King’s doctrine that all prophecy was fulfilled in AD 70 at the destruction of Jerusalem.

Could this *great and notable day of the Lord* be the day of the final judgment, the day at the end of history? Some say yes. The outstanding Day of Judgment in the New Testament is the last day of the world (1 Cor. 1:8; 2 Cor. 1:14; Phi. 1:10; 2:16; 1 The. 5:23; 2 The. 2:1-2). The language of the wonders and signs may describe the destruction of the earth (2 Pet. 3:10-12). Furthermore, this view corresponds with the “last day” spoken of by Jesus as recorded in John’s gospel. At the risk of sounding redundant, the *last day* is the “last day.” There will not be any more days after this day. According to King, this had to occur on or before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Has this *last day* happened? This writer is convinced it has **not**. The resurrection of the body is on the last day (John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24). The judgment day of all men will be on the last day (12:48). With the exception of Nehemiah 8:18 and John 7:37, which do not seem to deal with “end time” events, the above list contains all of the Scriptures that refer to the *last day*. It is certain that the *last day* is the final day of the *last days*. But the *last day* is associated with resurrection of the dead and judgment of all men. The conviction and considered opinion of this author is that the latter view is correct.

CONCLUSION

Joel is a book that mostly deals with judgment by God in time and at the end of time upon sin and sinners. Like no other prophet, Joel exhorts and warns God’s people to see the coming crisis and impending judgment. Concerning that *last day* and final Day of Judgment, he asks, “who can abide it?” (Joel 2:11) The answer is obvious. The preaching and the teaching of judgment cause men to forsake sin and live righteously. Isaiah writes, “For when thy judgments *are* in the earth, The inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness” (Isa. 26:9). Often men deceive themselves into thinking that judgment is either not near or altogether impossible. The wise man Solomon wrote, “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Ecc. 8:11). Joel knew that, to be faithful to God and to his task as a preacher, he must preach judgment and

be negative in some areas of his preaching. When brethren ask for a preacher who is not negative, they do not know what they are asking for! Surely, they are not asking for John or Jesus (see Mat. 3:7-12; 10:34-39; 15:9-14; 23:13-36).

The events of the day of Pentecost and the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy were for the purpose of establishing what would be involved in "call[ing] on the name of the LORD" (Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21). To "call on the name of the LORD" one must follow the steps that lead to salvation (Rom. 10:8-17; Acts 22:16; Mark 16:16).

The truth revealed and confirmed by means of Holy Spirit baptism upon the apostles was for the purpose of teaching mankind how to "call on the name of the LORD" and be saved. To this end, Joel's prophecy and fulfillment concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit has benefited those in the church and those who will yet be added to the church.

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THE OLIVET DISCOURSE AND LUKE 17:20-37

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Misinterpretations of the Olivet Discourse lie at the root of likely more eschatological errors than those of any other Biblical passage. Those who have written on this discourse, found in Matthew 24-25, Mark 13, and Luke 21, have repeatedly noted the disagreements surrounding this passage:

In the Gospel of Mark there is no passage more problematic than the prophetic discourse of Jesus on the destruction of the Temple (Lane 444).

Few chapters of the Bible have called forth more disagreement among interpreters than Matthew 24 and its parallels in Mark 13 and Luke 21 (Carson 488).

This [is] one of the most perplexing chapters in the Bible to understand, for readers and interpreters alike (Edwards 383).

One of the most misused and abused chapters in the Word of God is Matthew 24 (Meadows 281).

The fault for this, of course, lies not at the feet of the Lord who spoke it, nor of the Holy Spirit who inspired its recording. God is thoroughly capable of communicating with man, and any rational human being has the capacity to understand any passage of Scripture (1 Cor. 14:33; Eph. 3:3-4; 5:17). However, one must readily admit the difficulty of the passage. When there are “things hard to

be understood,” there are those who are “unlearned and unstable” who will “wrest...the other scriptures, unto their own destruction” (2 Pet. 3:16)—and the destruction of others (3:17; 2:2, 18).

Jesus’ speech is termed “the Olivet Discourse” because Jesus delivered it on the Mount of Olives (Mat. 24:3; Mark 13:3). While the two parables and final Judgment Day scenario of Matthew 25 were spoken on this occasion, it is in the portion recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 that eschatological errorists claim to find their error. As such, this manuscript will focus on these passages before the portion recorded in Matthew 25.

Although delivered on a different occasion, a partial parallel with those passages is found in Jesus’ “Days of the Son of Man” (DSM) discourse recorded in Luke 17:20-37. Because of its close relation to the aforementioned passages, as well as the attempted use of this passage to defend the doctrine of realized eschatology, it will also be addressed in this manuscript.

TOPICS OF THE DISCOURSES

Whether listening to a classroom lecture, pulpit sermon, or just holding a conversation with a friend, it is essential that one understands what topic is under discussion. If one were to walk into an auditorium in the middle of a speech and hear the sentence, “I’m not a fan,” what would that mean? Would it mean that the speaker did not closely follow the New York Giants? Would it mean that they did not follow any sports teams at all? Would it mean that he did not like a particular action someone took? Would it mean that he did not consider himself to have fanatical traits? Would it mean that he was informing the audience that he was not a device designed for producing a current of air? Perhaps the hearer could continue to listen to the speech and hopefully gather from the context what topic was under discussion.

Thankfully, no Bible student is forced to enter the Olivet discourse or the DSM discourse mid-speech. Each discourse is introduced by informing the reader what the subject matter is.

The Prompting Questions

The Olivet Discourse is introduced by, and was prompted by, three questions that Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Jesus:

1. **“When shall these things be?”** (Mat. 24:3; Mark 13:4; Luke 21:7). Jesus had recently foretold of the destruction of the Jerusalem temple. As His disciples marveled at the beauty of Herod’s masterpiece and Israel’s glory, Jesus remarked, “See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down” (Mat. 24:2; cf. Mark 13:2; Luke 21:6). “Not” (*ou mē*) is an **emphatic** negation which could be translated “never” (Bauer et al. 646)—“There shall **never** be left here one stone upon another,” stressing the finality of the temple’s destruction and refuting Premillennial notions of the physical temple’s being rebuilt. This destruction of the temple is the “these things” about which the apostles asked Jesus, and is a key subject of His discourse.

2. **“What shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?” / “what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?”** (Mark 13:4; Luke 21:7). Again, “these things” continues to refer to the destruction of Jerusalem that would occur in AD 70. In their shock at the prophecy, they asked for a sign whereby they might confirm the prophecy’s veracity. Jesus expressed displeasure when previously asked for a sign (Mat. 16:1-4; Mark 8:11-12; Luke 11:16, 29). However, Jesus in this speech provides multiple signs, stating, “when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, *even* at the doors” (Mark 13:29). The signs that Jesus will provide during this discourse will prove immensely valuable for Judean Christians.

3. **“What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?”** (Mat. 24:3). Although Jesus would figuratively come at various times throughout the Christian Age to administer judgment (cf. Rev. 2:5, 16; 3:3), the apostles undoubtedly had in mind the Second (personal, literal) Coming of Christ. As they had asked for a sign of the destruction of the temple, they asked for a sign of Jesus’

Second Coming, very likely under the false impression that the two events were one and the same.

By understanding these questions, and by understanding that the Olivet Discourse is intended to answer those questions, one is more apt to “rightly divide” the content of the discourse. Throughout the entire discourse, whenever “these things” are mentioned, Jesus is discussing the destruction of Jerusalem. It is significant that neither Mark nor Luke record the apostles’ question pertaining to Christ’s Second Coming and the end of the world, as Mark and Luke only record a minute portion of Jesus’ discussion on the end of the world.

The phrasing of the apostles’ questions doubtless reflects misunderstanding on their part. This should come as no surprise, as **after** the resurrection of Christ, and **after** He had over a period of forty days spoken to them “of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,” they would ask Jesus, “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:3, 6). Christ was about to establish His kingdom, but it would not be a restoration of the political kingdom to fleshly Israel. Although the apostles’ questions were based in part upon a misunderstanding, Jesus would **correct** that misunderstanding in the course of His speech. “It is well to keep these questions in mind and apply the answer of Jesus to each question in order; otherwise confusion will arise and distorted interpretations be given” (Boles 459).

A Continuation of Matthew 23?

Max King, leading advocate of the AD 70 theory, alleges, “Matthew 24 is a continuation of the predicted fate of Israel, in which we have the Lord’s prophecy of the fall of Jerusalem” (92). This is an oversimplification. The beginning of Matthew 24 does discuss the destruction of Jerusalem, just as does the end of Matthew 23. However, it is not a continuous discussion in the same sense that Matthew 6 and 7 are a continuation of the Sermon on the Mount begun in Matthew 5. The discourse recorded in Matthew 24 took place at a later time and before an altogether different audience from that of Matthew 23. Furthermore, everything discussed in Matthew 24 is

prompted directly by the questions Jesus' apostles asked Him rather than by anything mentioned in Matthew 23.

The Topical Transition

Jesus begins the Olivet Discourse discussing the destruction of Jerusalem, but about one-third of the way through His discourse as recorded in Matthew, it is clear that He moves on to discuss a judgment of greater scope. To stress the certainty of everything He was saying, Jesus promised, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Mat. 24:35). His words held a permanence that even heaven and earth did not. However, His mention of heaven and earth's passing would lead away from discussing Jerusalem's destruction to discussing heaven and earth's destruction—"But of **that** day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (24:36). In his efforts to interpret the entire Olivet Discourse as discussing the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem, Max King attempts to classify heaven and earth's passing here as **figurative** (73-74). However, this would demean the significance of what Jesus said and the truth of His words—"actually, heaven and earth will not **literally** ever pass away"—making His words no more permanent and sure than heaven and earth. Jesus struck a clear contrast in verse 35, as indicated by the two opposite occurrences; however, King's interpretation would make the contrast nonsensical.

There are clear markers that this is indeed a transition from one subject to another. The "But of" (*peri de*) with which Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32 begin quite often serve this purpose. In 1 Corinthians, one can follow Paul's changes of topics between marriage (7:1), virgins (7:25), things offered to idols (8:1), spiritual gifts (12:1), the collection for the saints (16:1), and whether Apollos would come to Corinth (16:12) all by noticing how each new section begins with *peri de*. Jesus used this phrase one time previously when He transitioned from teaching that there will be no marriage in the resurrection to proving that the resurrection is true: "But as touching [*peri de*] the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying" (Mat. 22:31).

There is also a transition from speaking about “these things” and plural “days” to “that day.” As previously observed, “these things” refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, mentioned five times in Matthew 24:1-34, but not mentioned again during the remainder of the discourse as recorded by Matthew. A singular “day” is not mentioned once in Matthew 24:1-35, but one is mentioned four times in the remainder of the discourse.

What is “that day”? The most likely day is that day Jesus had just mentioned, in which heaven and earth would pass away. Consider what *that day* means even standing alone, with no previous reference to a particular day. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught, “Many will say to me in **that day**, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?” (Mat. 7:22). Which day is “that day”? As Jesus speaks of men giving account and of Himself pronouncing final sentence, He is clearly referring to final Judgment. The New Testament elsewhere uses *that day* without any previous reference to a *day*, to refer to that great and final Judgment Day (Blass et al. 151; Bauer et al. 302):

But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in **that day** for Sodom, than for that city (Luke 10:12).

When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in **that day** (2 The. 1:10).

For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against **that day** (2 Tim. 1:12).

In each of these passages, it is evident *that day* refers to the day of universal judgment, and *that day* of universal judgment is what Jesus discusses in the remainder of the Olivet Discourse (Mat. 24:36-25:46; Mark 13:32-37).

The Days of the Son of Man

Jesus’ “Days of the Son of Man” discourse recorded in Luke 17:20-37 bears obvious similarities in language to the Olivet Dis-

course. However, its subject matter is not introduced as specifically. Jesus began by saying, “The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see *it*” (Luke 17:22). What is a “day of the Son of Man”?

Some understand this to mean the disciples will desire one of the happy days when Jesus walked with them on earth; others take it to refer to the desire to enjoy one of the days of the peace of heaven in a time of trouble (Meredith 416).

When he was personally with them (Clarke 572).

One of the days that was then passing when mercy was offered by Jesus (Boles 334).

Days in which they will yearn for a foretaste of the coming glory (Plummer 407).

Light is shed on the meaning of a “day of the Son of Man” in verse 30: “Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.” The verses preceding this do not speak of a “happy day when Jesus walked with His disciples on the earth.” They speak of a day when Jesus reveals Himself **in judgment**. Furthermore, Jesus portrayed the days of the Son of Man as days yet to come at the time He spoke, not days past—“so **shall it be** also in the days of the Son of man” (17:26). The Lord punishes the wicked and vindicates the just when He acts in judgment. Faithful followers of Christ long for such a day, especially in times of persecution (1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 6:9-10; 22:20).

Jesus paints the “days of the Son of Man” in contrast with His description of His kingdom. Immediately preceding the DSM discourse, Luke records a conversation Jesus held with the Pharisees:

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you (Luke 17:20-21).

The kingdom, the church founded on the day of Pentecost (Mat. 16:18-19; Acts 2:47; Rev. 1:9), would be a spiritual kingdom—and thus, not outwardly visible. However, Jesus discussed the imped-

ing “day of the Son of Man” as being eminently visible (cf. Luke 17:24). As Noel Meredith observed, “Jesus taught the disciples that while the kingdom, being of its nature, could not be identified by visible, tangible manifestations, the coming in judgment...would be identifiable and obvious” (417). This aptly points out the distinction between the “without observation” kingdom and the **visible** “days of the Son of Man.”

“The day of the Lord” and similar expressions are commonly used to refer to various Divine judgments, such as the judgment against Babylon (Isa. 13:6, 9), the destruction of Pharaoh’s army at the Euphrates (Jer. 46:10), the destruction of Jerusalem at the hand of the Babylonians in 586 BC (Joel 1:15; 2:1), and, of course, the final Judgment (2 Pet. 3:10). Job asked the question, “Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, Do they that know him not see his days?” (Job 24:1). *His days* are

the days when God comes forth to punish his enemies. They are called “*his days*” because at that time God would be the prominent object that would attract attention. They would be days when he would manifest himself in a manner so remarkable as to characterize the period (Barnes 28).

His days—or the *days of the Son of Man*—do not necessarily have to refer to a **period**, as Barnes suggests, but could refer to any or all of the times when the Lord stretches forth His hand to judge.

So any of the Son of Man’s judgments are “days of the Son of Man.” However, after Jesus speaks of the disciples’ impending desire to see one such day, He proceeds through the remainder of Luke 17 to discuss one particular judgment. Which judgment, or particular *day of the Son of Man*, is under consideration?

Jesus described that judgment, in part, as follows: “For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day” (17:24). This verse is paralleled in the portion of the Olivet Discourse dealing with the destruction of Jerusalem (Mat. 24:27). A bolt of lightning will not strike the entire earth. It will strike a particular location in the earth. However, the bril-

liance of that lightning illuminates an area far greater than the area struck. When Jerusalem was destroyed, Athens and Alexandria still remained—but the denizens thereof were made acutely aware of what had transpired in Jerusalem.

“But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation” (Luke 17:25). Whenever Jesus refers to *this generation*, He refers to that particular generation **of Jews** (e.g., Mat. 11:16; 12:42; Mark 8:12; Luke 11:30-32, 50-51). The word translated *generation* (*genea*) does not only refer to temporal proximity but is “a term relating to the product of the act of generating and with special reference to kinship, frequently used of familial connections and ancestry. Generally those descended from a common ancestor” (Bauer et al. 191). As Jesus spoke of the Jews’ rejection of both John the baptizer and Jesus despite their varied approaches, He said, “Whereunto then shall I liken the men of **this generation**?” (Luke 7:31). He warned of judgment to come on that particular generation of Jews:

*Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon **this generation** (Mat. 23:33-36).*

As He spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem, He said, “Verily I say unto you, **This generation** shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled” (Luke 21:32). When a large group of Jews had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for Pentecost, the inspired apostle Peter admonished them, “Save yourselves from **this untoward generation**” (Acts 2:40). While perhaps not decisive, Jesus’ reference to “this generation” makes it natural to assume that Jesus is considering a judgment applying particularly to the Jews—and thus to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

More decisive are the instructions Jesus gave His disciples for when that particular “day of the Son of Man” arrives:

In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot’s wife. Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it (Luke 17:31-33).

These are flight instructions—that is, they are instructions and admonitions to **flee** when this judgment comes. Jesus gave similar instructions in the Olivet Discourse to flee Jerusalem at its destruction (Mat. 24:16-18; Mark 13:15-16), and this is what Jesus is discussing here. As Franklin Camp pointedly asks, “How much sense do you think that would make if it had reference to the second appearance of Christ?” Attempts to correspond these instructions of Jesus to the final Judgment Day range from unsatisfying to absurd. At the final Judgment, there will be no way to flee, no place to flee, and no reason to flee.

When fleeing the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot’s wife disregarded the angels’ admonition to “look not behind thee” (Gen. 19:17) and was turned into a pillar of salt (19:26). Similarly, Jesus’ disciples in Jerusalem were not to long for the city which had meant so much to them or for their possessions in that city—taking the time to go back for them would mean their destruction just as longing for Sodom and what she had left behind brought destruction to Mrs. Lot.

Jesus stressed that heeding these *flight instructions* could mean the difference between life and death. Just as Jesus had previously warned against equating one’s possessions with one’s “life” (Luke 12:15, 20, 23), so such focus on one’s possessions and determination to save them from the menace of the Roman army would lead one to lose his life.

At the conclusion of this discourse, Jesus’ disciples asked Him, “Where, Lord?” (17:37). They asked Him specifically **where** this judgment would take place, indicating that they certainly did not understand Him to be speaking of universal Judgment. Jesus did

not correct their understanding, as He corrected their misunderstandings during the Olivet Discourse, but rather He continued to point them to a specific locality: “Wheresoever the body *is*, thither will the eagles be gathered together.” Both in the Old Testament and in the Lord’s earthly ministry, allusion is made to Jerusalem’s state as a corpse (Jer. 6:8; Hos. 9:8; Mat. 23:38). By the Jews’ corruption, lack of good works, spiritual lethargy, and rejection of Christ, the once glorious Jerusalem had become nothing more than a stiff, decaying body. Such disobedience and spiritual vacuum comes with a price: “The eye *that* mocketh at *his* father, And despiseth to obey *his* mother, The ravens of the valley shall pick it out, And the young eagles shall eat it” (Pro. 30:17).

Lightfoot suggests that the reference to *eagles* in Luke 17:37 is to the eagle ensign emblazoned on the Romans’ shield (2:319); however, it is doubtful that Jesus uses *eagles* quite that specifically. This is a common figure. “The Old Testament often used the term ‘eagle’ to describe a foreign nation coming upon the Jewish nation for punishment (cf. Deu. 28:49; Hos. 8:1; Hab. 1:8)” (Meadows 291). The Romans would indeed be the foreign nation would come against Jerusalem for its ultimate judgment and for the destruction of the Jewish religion and state. Jesus thus answered His disciples by telling them when and where this judgment would take place—at the gathering of the Roman troops to devour the carcass of Jerusalem. “He is not talking about His Second Appearance...He is speaking about the end of the Jewish state. When we come over to chapter 21, He will discuss it more in detail” (Camp).

DO THESE PASSAGES TEACH REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY?

A major error of Max King is to assume that prophecies sharing similar language must speak of the same event. He points out that the DSM discourse, clearly focusing on one judgment, contains language from both the portion of the Olivet Discourse addressing the destruction of Jerusalem and the portion addressing the final Judgment. However this, in and of itself, proves nothing. It has been mentioned that the Bible applies *day of the Lord* to multiple judgments. Jesus often used very similar language on different occasions

to address different subjects (e.g., cf. Mat. 25:29; Mark 4:25; Mat. 20:24; Luke 6:40). Thus, similarity of language in no way proves that Jesus was addressing identical subjects in the two discourses.

Regardless of whether one views the DSM discourse as referring to the destruction of Jerusalem or to the final universal Judgment, it bears none of the marks of topical transition so obvious in the Olivet Discourse.

King tends to see the same event in passages of dissimilar language with slight similarities of subject. While using apocalyptic language to discuss the destruction of Jerusalem, Jesus said:

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Mat. 24:30).

King equates this with the time when all the saints would appear with the Lord in glory (Zec. 14:5; Col. 3:4; 2 Tim. 2:11-12) (177).

There is certainly a close link between the destruction of Jerusalem and the final Judgment. Hager sees “the parousia [coming] of the Son of Man” as “inseparable from the fall of Jerusalem” (684)—not actually identical, but very closely linked.

The two scenes of the retribution impending over Jerusalem, and the final judgment, are intimately associated together, in accordance with that almost constant practice in the Hebrew prophets by which one event is made the type and illustration of another much farther in the future (McClintock and Strong 3:297).

Often prophetic language has a double significance.... The prophet combined type and antitype in the same words. David spoke of the Messiah under the type of Solomon. Words and events, new kingdoms and dynasties, are the prophetic alphabet for spelling out the divine plan; so the destruction of Jerusalem becomes the type of the final judgment and destruction (Boles 472).

Such close links and type/antitype relationships do not make the two events the same. When Jesus compared the final Judgment or the destruction of Jerusalem to Noah’s flood (Mat. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27), He was not saying that either judgment was identical to Noah’s flood. To have a type, there must be a future antitype. Noah’s

flood served as a type of judgment yet to come. If the destruction of Jerusalem is a type—and it is—there has to be a later judgment to serve as the antitype.

King continually strives in his writings to equate all references to judgment yet to come with the destruction of Jerusalem. However, note a simple point of grammar—Jesus spoke of His disciples’ “desire to see **one of** the days of the Son of man” (Luke 17:22). As noted, these are days of judgment—and even though the DSM discourse focuses on one particular judgment, Jesus’ use of the plural stresses that there is not only one “day of the Son of man,” despite King’s insistence to the contrary. Yes, the destruction of Jerusalem is **one** of the days of the Son of Man—but the final, universal Judgment is another.

CONCLUSION

No Bible student would likely identify either the Olivet Discourse or the “Days of the Son of Man” discourse as the simplest passage of Scripture. As such, they are unwise places from which to begin formulating doctrines, as Premillennialists and Realized Eschatologists have done. However, by implementing a prudent, Biblical hermeneutic, one can come to an understanding of these passages that can help one appreciate Jesus’ warnings and admonitions in them. One can appreciate that Jesus’ promise that Jerusalem would be destroyed within that generation was realized, and one can appreciate that the warnings Jesus gave enabled Christians to escape that destruction. Likewise, one can appreciate that Jesus’ promise to appear again in final Judgment will be realized, and that the spiritual warnings and admonitions given to Christians in the New Testament can enable one to escape the destruction of the universe at the final Judgment.

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EXPOSITION OF LUKE 20:27-40

Harrell Davidson

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Then came to *him* certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him, Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her to wife, and he died childless. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife. And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him. Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said. And after that they durst not ask him any *question at all* (Luke 20:27-40).

We would like to begin our study by showing that there was controversy against Christ among all sects, especially the Jews. In Luke 20:40, Luke indicates that there were no more questions presented

to the Lord. Therefore, we need to look at some of the opposition to appreciate the text of Luke 20:27-40.

Please see Matthew 15:1-20 where Jesus enters a discussion with the Scribes and Pharisees. A scribe was a public writer or transcriber specialist in the Law of Moses. A Pharisee was a sect of the Jews who by definition were the keepers of the law. They believed in the resurrection, spirits, and angels. The apostle Paul defined this in Acts 23:6-8. The text of Matthew 15:1-20 has those who followed tradition.

We need to think seriously about traditions and study about them a little. It may be simply a custom of men. When we take a custom and make it equal to God's commands, we have gone too far. Too many times we are controlled by the way we have done things in the past. For instance, we assemble. We have no authority from Scripture on how things should be arranged. We do have authority for the things we do. Someone says, "Well, we have always done it this way." That means absolutely nothing because that is custom or tradition of men. The arrangement can be changed without violating Scripture. For instance, we always have a song and a dismissal prayer. Why not have a song and dismiss. At lectureships often times the director will say, "You are dismissed" for a certain length of time and there is nothing wrong with that. We can avoid great difficulties when we understand the difference in what we do and how we do it. This is where the anti-cooperation movement came in. They took a work that churches or individuals are supposed to do and bound on some the matter that it was unscriptural to take one cent out of the treasury to support a home or radio program. I debated one that said that we had no authority to spend one "thin dime on a dying starving hungry child from the church treasury." They started binding where God had not bound. We, as a congregation of the Lord's people, were never told how to do this kind of work, we were simply told to do it. It was left up to each congregation to make the determination. It was not wrong for it to be done on an individual basis or on a congregational basis. The problem was trying to bind either way when God had bound

neither. Sometimes it was a matter of tradition, and that tradition caused some to transgress—go beyond—God’s law.

Those from Jerusalem were trying to bind tradition. There was not one single solitary command in the Law that said anything about eating with hands that were not washed. Look at Matthew 15:2-4:

Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

Here is the problem. Religion should come straight from the Book. We need to realize the difference. We have made mistakes in mission work. We have taken the Gospel abroad in many places and then tried to Americanize them. People living on thirty cents a day—six hundred dollars per year—cannot have a building like we have. They can take three hundred dollars and build a shanty and that may be more acceptable than what we have with all of our creature comforts.

When these came from Jerusalem, they wanted the Lord and others to do things like they did in Jerusalem. Twice in Matthew 12 Jesus asked, “Have ye not read [the book].” We need to go by the book not by how someone else does something. Not washing hands was not a matter of cleanliness. It was a matter of ceremonial cleansing. In Mark 7:2, we have the record stated this way, “And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.” *Defiled* was a ceremonial word.

Pharisee means “the separated one.” Their ritual of washing hands separated them from other people. It was their ritual that did the separating and not their attitude. This is not to say there are no ritual or traditional things we ought to do. Notice it with me! Ritual—the right one—must be controlled by the right attitude. While their attitude was not correct and contributed no doubt to their ritual, it was their ritual that separated them from others.

In Matthew 15:3-5 Jesus expresses the same idea as His statements in the Sermon on the Mount, “Ye have heard it said...but I say unto you.” In verses 7-9, Jesus refers to the Pharisees as hypocrites. A *hypocrite* is a play actor—acting out a part. Isaiah said:

It shall even be as when a hungry *man* dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; But he awaketh, and his soul is empty: Or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; But he awaketh, and, behold, *he is* faint, and his soul hath appetite: So shall the multitude of all the nations be, That fight against mount Zion. Stay yourselves, and wonder; Cry ye out, and cry: They are drunken, but not with wine; They stagger, but not with strong drink. For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, And hath closed your eyes: The prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, Which *men* deliver to one that is learned, Saying, Read this, I pray thee: And he saith, I cannot; for it *is* sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, Saying, Read this, I pray thee: And he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the LORD said, Forasmuch as this people draw near *me* with their mouth, And with their lips do honour me, But have removed their heart far from me, And their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men (Isa. 29:8-13).

Wrong attitudes closed their minds. These people did the same as the Pharisees. Their attitude was based upon the wisdom of men and not on the commandment of God. Does this not tell us something? We must be careful that we teach faith, repentance, confession, and baptism. We tend not to teach the attitudes that go along with them.

Notice Matthew 15:10-12. We must realize that in Leviticus certain things could be eaten while others could not. The Pharisees had formed a system of worship here in this text that God had not commanded. They claimed to use the Old Testament, but they did not even know the law. They were blind according to verses 13-14. Additionally, Jesus had no pity for them at all. Any person who is willing to be humble our Lord was always interested in them in some way. The point is that the Scribes and Pharisees were trying to bind their traditions and/or doctrine on the Lord and His disciples.

Read carefully Matthew 23 and notice the notations of scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites. They all with one accord were against the Lord, and all of this led to Matthew 24 and the fall of Jerusalem and the promised coming of Christ, of which time no one knew.

The Herodians also tempted Christ with words, trying to destroy Him. Evidently, if Christ could be defeated by these sects, then the Law could keep on going. In Mark 12:13-17 the Herodians, along with the Pharisees, tried to catch the Lord about paying taxes. According to the context, He also put them to silence. Their doctrine would not *wash* in the time of our Lord. Next came the Sadducees and our Lord will also silence them. They were the direct opposite from the Pharisees in regard to doctrine. They did not believe in the resurrection, spirit, or angels, and our Lord will destroy them, using their doctrine against them in the same manner in which He put the Pharisees and Herodians to shame. He would do so to such an extent that no questions will follow.

The Herodians were a party among the Jews who accepted and worked with the Herod family and who were combined with the Pharisees to destroy Jesus. These folk wanted to “destroy” Jesus and evidently not just according to His words (cf. 3:6). They were adherents to Herod Antipas, and the Pharisees needed them because of that close connection to the Herods that Jesus might be put to death. McGarvey, in the *Fourfold Gospel*, wrote on pages 216-17, the following:

They needed the secular power of the Herodians to secure the death of Jesus. Its efficiency for such ends had just been shown in the imprisonment of John the Baptist. But the Herodians were no friends of the Jewish law; in fact, they were real perverters of that law which Jesus merely correctly interpreted. This party and its predecessors had flatteringly tried to make a Messiah of Herod the Great, and had been friends of Rome and patrons of Gentile influence. They favored the erection of temples for idolatrous ends, and pagan theaters and games, and Gentile customs generally. Unlike Jesus, the Pharisees grew angry and sinned, for it was against their conscience to consort with the Herodians.

Surely this gets the picture before us regarding the assessment of Christ by His arch enemies of that day, including the Sadducees. The Sadducees were materialists and did not believe in angels, spirits, etc. Hence, they think that they have Jesus trapped by quoting something from Deuteronomy 25. They did not believe in the resurrection. Mark's record of this event (Mark 12:24) indicates that these folks denied the power of the Lord. "And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?" If God can make one man from dust, can He not make another from dust in the grave (resurrection)? Luke 20:34-35 demonstrates that life in heaven will not be along fleshly ties. "And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage." You think you would love your wife or child that is lost more than God loves mankind. This was a foolish problem. In verse 35, Jesus said "the dead" and shows that death is not the end of life, but that the personality continues on. Jesus is saying that if you had known the Scriptures you would have known this.

We would like to borrow from Mark's record where Jesus said:

And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, *I am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? (12:26).

The "I Am" of God shows the eternal existence of God, and shows the unity of the Scriptures. If there is no resurrection there is no accountability. Man has no responsibility. If man is responsible, he is accountable, and if accountable, there is a resurrection and immortality. In the Nichols and King debate in 1973, brother Nichols kept Luke's inspired record of 20:34-36 before King on pages 20, 31, and 82 with chart 5 on page 149 by saying:

Notice here that in Luke 20:34-36 Jesus said, "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain *that world*, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they

die any more: and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.” Mark 10:30 says, “...and in the world to come, eternal life.” I want brother King to tell us if we are in that “world” now. If so, we have eternal life now! And we will never die! If so, we are not to marry at this time! Nor to be given in marriage at this time! I would like to see you untangle some of these things, brother King! God put them in there to keep us from believing your doctrine. If you don’t do something about it, you are going to be very much embarrassed before you get very far (20).

He should have been embarrassed because he could never successfully answer this argument. Max King evidently does not recognize that in heaven, where he claims man has been dwelling since AD 70, refutes his own doctrine since he is married—since in the great beyond there is no marriage, nor are they given in marriage. However, he continues to be in a married state where it does not exist—heaven—according the Inspired Scriptures and not King’s doctrine. Think about this for a moment, with me. Why would one now need Matthew 19 where Jesus taught great lessons on marriage and the home? Why would we need lessons on the Lord’s church from places like Matthew 16:15-19 or Acts 20:28? Matthew 16 was a promise that would be fulfilled on the first Pentecost after our Lord’s death, burial, and resurrection, and was the answer to the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 2:3-4. Acts 20:28 tells of the purchase of the church with the blood of the Lamb of God. If Kingism were truth, what need do we have of the kingdom now since it had to be delivered up to the Father according to Paul in 1 Corinthians 15? What are we doing participating in that kingdom today if it does not exist anymore on this earth, unless of course we are in heaven as King would have us believe? What need do we now have for the Bible, if King’s doctrine is true? On and on this could go!

Let us lay fundamentally that which Jesus is teaching and was written by brother Luke by inspiration. In verses 27-33, we note that it was the Sadducees who brought the question of there being a women who had seven husbands and asked in the resurrection whose wife she would be. Notice that Luke adds, by way of identifying the sect, that they are a people who believe in no resurrection. A

resurrection implies a burial; it is a coming forth from such a burial. Those who have never been buried cannot have a resurrection. The heavenly body with which we shall be blessed is a resurrected body, not one that a few modern Sadducees believe will be a created body much like the original and that it will be given a spirit in heaven. How can this be called a resurrection? This false position can be answered with the truth.

Those Sadducees in Luke's record pointed to a law given by Moses in Deuteronomy 25, and they based their hypothetical case upon those verses. Deuteronomy 25 is part of a *Levirate* law which means "husband's brother." A widow was to attempt to have a brother of her husband to take her in marriage, and if he would not do so in the presence of the elders of the city, she was to take off his shoe and spit in his face, and he would be known as "The house of him that hath his shoe loosed" (25:5-10). Evidently the purpose for this was the preserving of the nation at that time. This was not a problem during the time of our Lord.

An interesting thing in the life of Ruth was just such an occasion. Boaz was not the nearest of kin to Ruth, but the matter passed on to the nearest kin in which case the kin refused to marry Ruth, and he gave her the shoe off of his foot which indicated that she could marry another. The kin refused to do his part in that situation.

The answer that Christ gives is that in the resurrection there is no such thing as marriage. He further noted that marriage is for this world and not beyond (cf. Luke 20:34-36). Luke 20:35 says specifically that they cannot marry anymore! This is how those adherents to this doctrine defeat themselves because they are marrying all the time and rearing a family though they contend that we are in our final abode today.

What about the angels in verse 36? "Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels." The statement implies that angels have bodies and teaches that, in this respect, we will be as angels in the resurrected body. It looks to us like Jesus used this occasion to further condemn the Sadducees by mentioning the an-

gels of which they asked Him nothing. Why? They did not believe in angels! He used their own doctrine to find them in total error.

There is the application that is a must. The dead are raised as Moses proved in the burning bush (Exo. 3:1-6). God is the God of the living and not the dead, showing over and over that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and physically they had been dead for many years. These patriarchs are thus living though the physical body is in the grave.

A certain scribe commended the teaching of the Lord because the scribes were more closely associated with the Pharisees, and they rejoiced when one could defeat the Sadducees. Jesus was an expert in all the confrontations He had. He used logic and doctrine of His enemies to show their error. This stopped the questions to our Lord, according to Luke's divine record.

This record shows the danger of arguing things according to logic when you do not know what you are talking about. Logic can get you in trouble when you do not know the truth and are trying to avoid the truth.

May we say of these modern-day Sadducees what the Lord said in Mark 12:24 to those of old: "Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?"

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EXPOSITION OF JOHN 5:24-29

Charles Pogue

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Charles and Linda have been married for 38 years. They have two children and six grandchildren.

Few theories of man are as convoluted and confusing as the AD 70 theory, Realized Eschatology (hereafter RE), or Transmillennialism, founded by Max R. King. An overall study of King's book, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, reveals that King's belief was that the end of time things discussed by the Bible are not related to the end of the world such as a bodily resurrection of the dead and the judgment of all of those that are raised from the graves. Instead, King contended that those matters dealt with a transition from the Old to the New Covenant and that the eternal kingdom was established at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. He also taught that all men now living are in complete darkness about what shall transpire at the very end of time—that is, if there is such a thing as the end of time!

As it relates to the resurrection and judgment of the dead, perhaps no King contention is more amazing or revealing than his claim in his book, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, concerning Revelation 20:13. That verse says, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." King claims that the dead given up by Hades were the Jewish dead, and the sea refers to the Gentile

dead (356). It is a complete denial that the verse has any reference at all to the final judgment of all individuals.

As one would expect, King denies that the great resurrection chapter of 1 Corinthians 15 refers to the bodily resurrection of all of the dead. Instead, he teaches the resurrection in that chapter (as well as the one foretold in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-16) dealt with “the change or transition from Judaism to Christianity” (198). If it were the case that all resurrection and judgment passages refer to the period of time that ended with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, then it would be pure speculation on King’s part, or anyone else’s, as to whether there will even be a final resurrection of the dead. If one cannot show that the Scriptures teach a final and bodily resurrection, then how could he with any proof teach there will be such a judgment of the dead?

WHAT KING BELIEVED REGARDING JOHN 5:28-29

RE shares a foundational error with those who believe in some variety of premillennialism. That error is that all Bible prophecy dealing with end time events is ineluctably tied to the Jews and Judaism. That fact becomes obvious when one considers Max King’s wild theories regarding John 5:28-29.

In his aforementioned book, King states concerning John 5:28-29, “At the end of Judaism came the judgment announced of God. This is the resurrection of John 5:28, 29.” He continues, “Judaism was the metaphorical grave of the spiritual dead out of which this resurrection took place” (220). According to King, “These verses deal with the judgment of the dead who heard the voice of Christ in verse 25” (220). That would be true if it were not for the fact that he limits the judgment to only those Jews who lived between Christ’s life on the earth and the fall of the city. An exegesis of the passage reveals that the limitation of King’s position is false. In summation, King believed that the end of time message of prophecy dealt only with the Jewish age, and that coincided with the end of the world (85).

AN EXEGESIS OF JOHN 5:24-29

A brief outline of John 5 might be as follows:

Jesus heals the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda (1-9).

The Jews' displeasure with this occurring on the Sabbath (10-16).

Christ reproves the Jews (17-23).

Christ's discourse (24-47).

Our assignment in this chapter is an exposition of verses 28-29. It is important to notice what Jesus says in the verses prior to these. Thus, John 5:24-29 reads:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

John 5:24-27

In verse 24, Jesus defends His authority and the right to reward those who believe on Him. It is essential to hear and receive His Word, which creates faith in Him. The belief is not mere mental assent. We know that because in other Scriptures, such as Luke 6:46, Jesus connects the essentialness of doing what He says with believing Him. "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Merely calling on Jesus' name does not satisfy Biblical belief because merely calling upon the name of the Lord is not sufficient. Doing the will of the Father is required to enter the kingdom of heaven (Mat. 7:21). Those who believe in Him and on Him in this manner will not come to condemnation, but to everlasting life. This condemnation or life is individual. It does not refer to the judgment against Judaism and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70!

In John 5:25, Jesus says that the hour is coming, in fact, now is, that dead, the spiritually dead, shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live. It is important to notice that this is not a reference to the

resurrection in verses 28-29, because Jesus said the hour “now is” (5:25), but that phrase is not found in the latter verses. All of those who will hear the Gospel, believe it, and obey it will not come into condemnation, but by doing so have passed from spiritual death to the life that is in Christ Jesus. This is a spiritual resurrection, the deliverance from sin, through the Gospel.

In verse 26, Jesus refers to His own resurrection. That resurrection would be proof that He was the Son of God, as He made reference to in verse 25. The Jewish leaders, specifically the Pharisees, had already made up their minds to kill Jesus. The truth of the matter was that Jesus would willingly lay down His life. They could do nothing against Him by force in this regard unless His death was by the design and plan of the Father, and it was. John records Jesus’ answer to Pilate’s claim for power regarding Him: “Thou couldest have no power *at all* against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin” (19:11). One wonders if it has not dawned upon the Transmillennialists to consider that the implied resurrection of Christ in John 5:26 has a bearing upon the resurrection of the dead in verses 28-29. We suppose not.

Verse 27 declares that God the Father has conferred upon the Son the authority to execute judgment. This verse must tie in with both the verses that precede it and the two that follow. When Jesus comes (and He did not come in AD 70), all nations (not just the Jewish nation) will be before Him (Mat. 25:31). Jesus will judge all men at that great day, and separate the righteous from the unrighteous just as the shepherd separates his sheep from the goats. King and his followers have an unsurmountable obstacle at this point, because he asserts that there is only one Second Coming of Christ (391). That could not have been at the destruction of Jerusalem, because the judgment of God was not passed upon all nations at that time, but only upon the Jewish nation. Thus, for King, his followers, and everyone alive now, or who has lived since AD 70, the claim is that no judgment remains.

John 5:28-29

Now to more specific comments on the verses which are the two assigned for our consideration in this chapter.

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (5:28-29).

There is nothing to marvel or wonder at that the Son of God will execute judgment. Those who heard the Son speak should not be amazed at the fact that judgment would be committed unto Him. It was through and by Him that the will of God came unto the ears of man. It was Christ who gave Himself for the sins of the world (Gal. 1:4; Tit. 2:14). It was the Christ who was raised from the dead on the third day (Acts 10:40; 1 Cor. 15:4). In addition, it was to Him that all authority had been given (Mat. 28:18). Why, then, would not God the Father give Him the authority to judge mankind? Among all other authority God has in fact given Him that authority. In John 5:22, Jesus stated that truth: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Paul declared to the men of Athens that God appointed Christ to judge man (Acts 17:31). The only question is when will that judgment occur? Would the judgment occur in coincidence with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, as per Max King and his RE doctrine teaches, or at some other period? In addition, what of the resurrection that Jesus was speaking of in these two verses? Was He referring to a bodily resurrection or just a spiritual resurrection arising from the decaying corpse of Judaism?

We noticed in verse 25 that Jesus spoke of an hour. That hour, He said, "now is." The dead were already hearing the voice of the Son of God. The dead, though, were not the physically dead in the graves, for masses of the dead were not being raised from the graves. Jesus was referring to those who were spiritually dead in that verse. Those who were spiritually dead were hearing His voice then, and would continue to hear it through the preaching of the apostles when the Lord ascended back to the Father to receive His kingdom (Dan.

7:13-14). Jesus gave the great commission to His apostles before He ascended back to the Father, telling them to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature (Mat. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). According to the apostle Paul, the Gospel was taken to every creature under heaven (Col. 1:6, 23). Thus, in John 5:25, the hour already was when men were hearing the voice of the Son of God, and those who believed and obeyed Him would be saved, or raised from the condition of spiritual slumber.

In verse 28, Jesus also used *the hour is coming*. This is not the same hour He spoke of in verse 25. This hour was not yet. He did not include *now is*. He simply stated that at some hour in the future an hour would come when all who were in the graves would hear His voice and come forth. King claims that Judaism was the metaphorical grave out of which this resurrection took place (220). No, the reference here is to the general resurrection of all of the dead. In 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, Paul wrote:

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Inasmuch as King equated the Second Coming of Christ with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, and because he did not advocate a third coming (105), King had to take the position that 1 Thessalonians 4 referred to the destruction of Jerusalem. Since that is his position, he is forced to admit that the dead in Christ were raised in AD 70, met the Lord in the air, and even now are in the state of forever being with the Lord through eternity. Also, consistent with King's theory, those could only be Jews, and no others. However, such did not occur in AD 70. John 5:28-29 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 are referring to the same time period, the same hour, and even yet that hour is in the future.

At the hour of John 5:28-29, what would happen? Jesus said **all** who are in the graves would come forth. It means everyone, Jew and

Gentile alike. Both the good and the bad would be raised. In the Nichols-King debate, brother Gus Nichols pointed out that no one came from the graves in AD 70, thus King's theory was not fulfilled at that time (54). Brother Nichols was right. The graves in this verse are physical graves, and the resurrection is a bodily resurrection. In *The Spirit of Prophecy*, Max King claims a bodily resurrection is assumed in this passage (218). No, it is what Jesus said in simple and clear language. If clarity of language means anything at all, then it means all and the dead, both those who are in and those who are out of Christ, regardless of birth or nationality, are being raised in a bodily resurrection.

In other words, both those who heard the voice of the Son of God (either His personal voice or His voice through the preaching of His apostles) and obeyed that voice, and those who heard it and rejected it, would and will be coming forth from the tombs. That resurrection would take place upon every continent and in every nation, and they would all be judged. Such agrees with Jesus' description of the judgment in Matthew 25:32 when the Lord said that all nations would be gathered unto Him, and He would separate the righteous from the unrighteous as a shepherd separates his sheep from the goats. In that passage, the Lord gave the criteria for the judgment on that day. Jerusalem was not destroyed, per say, because as individuals or as a nation they failed in the things Christ stated in the judgment scene of Matthew 25. It was destroyed because Israel turned from God's law and for their refusal to accept Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God and the Messiah that He is.

The action that follows the statement that all would come forth from the graves affirms that the resurrection in this passage is the bodily resurrection at the end of time, not some spiritual movement arising from the dead corpse of Judaism. Nor is it the eternal kingdom of Christ being established at the destruction of Jerusalem. Nor again, is it in reference to God's judgment against the Jews, brought about and through the hands of the Romans in AD 70. The advocates of the AD 70 theory take the position that the passages in the New Testament which refer to the judgment of all just means all Jews.

No, the judgment referred to in John 5:28-29, as well as other New Testament passages dealing with the same, refers to all of mankind. Everyone who comes forth from the grave on that great resurrection morning will stand before the judgment seat of Christ where they will receive the things done in this body (in this life) according to that which they have done whether it be good or bad (2 Cor. 5:10). They that have done good will be raised unto the resurrection of life, and those that have done evil will be raised unto the resurrection of damnation.

CONCLUSION

The sad reality of denying that Jesus spoke of the bodily resurrection of the dead and the judgment of every individual (or that the prophecies that do, in fact, deal with the very end of time and those two events) is that one would have to take the position that God has left modern man completely in the dark as to whether there will be a bodily resurrection, whether this physical world will be destroyed, whether there will be an individual judgment, and whether heaven awaits anyone now living. King does not necessarily deny the possibility of those things, but his theory denies him the evidence or proof to accept them. If we do not know those things how can we be assured that there will be a separation of the just from the unjust. RE leaves us in exactly that condition.

John 5:28-29 is one of a number of passages that makes our destiny clear for us. If we obey the voice of the Son of God we shall be raised to life. Those who live in opposition to the Gospel of Jesus Christ will be raised to eternal damnation. It takes a vivid imagination and a twisting of many passages of Scripture to apply the words of the Master as recorded by John to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

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EXPOSITION OF ACTS 2:29-36

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INTRODUCTION

The Bible contains numerous outstanding sermons or at least briefs thereof. The minds of Bible students immediately go to the Lord's "Sermon on the Mount," Peter's Pentecost sermon, Stephen's oration to the Sanhedrin and the mob (costing him his life), Paul's sermons (in the Pisidian Antioch synagogue, to the Athenians in the shadow of the Parthenon, before Herod Agrippa and Governor Festus in Caesarea, etc.), and many other sermons by God's preachers in both Testaments.

The Pentecost proclamation may be the most significant sermon ever preached. It is Holy Spirit-empowered and inspired message announced the culmination of God's eternal purpose to save mankind through Christ and His church (Eph. 3:8-10). It presented the crucified Jesus as the sacrificed, resurrected, ascended, and enthroned Christ—the ultimate sacrificial Lamb of God Who could

fully take away sin (John 1:29). Peter declared to the Pentecost celebrants that the Father had exalted this Lamb to be the Lord on His throne at the Father's right hand.

Jesus' throne and royalty were not merely titular. Implicitly, His kingdom—that everlasting kingdom which Nathan had promised David God would give to His heir—came with His throne (2 Sam. 7:12-13). Jesus had prophesied the establishment of His church, which He identified as His kingdom (Mat. 16:18-19). This kingdom/church had its beginning on Pentecost as Peter used the kingdom's keys of Gospel obedience to open its gates. The Lord added those who obeyed Peter's words to His church (Acts 2:41, 47), which is simply an alternate way of saying that God translated them into the kingdom of the Son of His love (Col. 1:13-14).

Some may be curious about why an exposition of a portion of the Pentecost sermon belongs to a study, the purpose of which is to refute and expose the theological creed known as "Realized Eschatology." (Make no mistake; this dogma is not merely two or three strange doctrinal positions. It is as much a **system of theology** as Calvinism or dispensational premillennialism—and is just as deadly to the soul.) This study relates to the sermon in Acts 2 because of the exceedingly warped idea of the church and the kingdom that is an integral part of this theological system. While its advocates grant that the church/kingdom began on Pentecost, they aver that it came only partially, lacking fullness, power, and glory. The AD 70 folk insist that Pentecost marked only the beginning of the kingdom's "construction," not completed until 40 years later with the destruction of Jerusalem. Only then did the church/kingdom attain power, glory, and perfection.

To Max King and associates, the church was merely a "bridge" between the death and resurrection of Jesus and the passing of the Law of Moses. Thus, Moses' Law only **began** to be phased out and Christ's Law **began** to be phased in at the cross. By their dictum the two bodies of law overlapped in co-existence for four decades (which would seem to be a monumental case of "spiritual adultery," according to Romans 7:1-4). Just as the church was not completely

established, neither was the Law of Christ completely established until Jerusalem fell in AD 70. The Lord's kingdom, in a very insipid and half-baked stage, limped along for 40 years until the be-all, end-all of days arrived. For 60 years I have believed and preached that Pentecost was that historical landmark day. The realized eschatologists now come along and tell me I have had it wrong all these years. The day of days, the zenith event of all time, was the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans! No, it is the hyper-preterists who have it all wrong in their outlandish scheme that "spiritualizes" practically every prophetic statement in God's Word. We shall see in the course of our exposition of a portion of Peter's words that the aforementioned scheme regarding the church and kingdom of Christ is a fatal flight of foolish fancy.

THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT OF ACTS 2:29-36

Acts 2:1-13

The chapter begins with the apostles waiting in Jerusalem as the Lord instructed for the promised "power from on high," which He also identified as baptism in the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5, 8; cf. John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13). On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit filled these men, causing them to speak in the known languages (though unknown by them) of the multi-lingual multitude. This phenomenon was accompanied by what appeared to be split tongues of fire resting on each of the apostles and a tornadic-sounding wind. The crowds, both amazed and perplexed, began asking how and why these events transpired.

Acts 2:14-21

Peter and the other apostles stood and he began the pivotal Pentecost sermon. He denied the scoffing explanation some proffered that drunkenness enabled these men to speak in languages they had never learned. Rather, he credited the astounding events to the fulfillment of Joel's eighth-century BC prophecy (2:28-32) of God's unprecedented outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the "last days." The apostle's *this is that* concerning Pentecost settles the matter regarding the meaning of Joel's words. These introductory remarks estab-

lished the source of the miraculous manifestations and the implied authority of those thus empowered. The closing words of the quotation from Joel directed the attention of the awe-struck multitudes to the subject of calling on the name of the Lord for salvation.

Acts 2:22-23

It is not difficult to picture Peter's gesturing with both arms raised to the crowd as he called their attention to what he would say. He reminded his hearers of the incomparable miraculous manifestations they had witnessed at Jesus' hands. That these signs, wonders, and mighty works testified to God's approval was a fact that should have caused them to believe in Him rather than crucifying Him.

In spite of all the evidence that Jesus was Who He claimed to be—the Son of God (Mat. 26:63-64; John 5:36-37; 8:26-29; etc.)—He was “delivered up” (several times and by several people, including Judas, the Sanhedrin, Pilate, and the Jews in general at various stages of His arrest and trials). Ultimately, however, He delivered Himself up to His enemies (10:17-18), otherwise none could have touched Him (Mat. 26:53). Peter declared that Jesus' death at the hands of (and for) evil men was in God's “determinate counsel.” He later wrote that Jesus' self-sacrifice as the redeeming “lamb without blemish and spot” was “foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world” (1 Pet. 1:18-20). While it was in God's plan for Jesus to shed His blood for man's redemption, the individuals responsible for His death were under no compulsion to so act; they freely chose to do so and stood condemned.

The Jewish leaders, who delivered Jesus to Pilate and then incited a mob to madness, demanding His crucifixion, were apparently in Peter's audience. As Nathan had boldly charged, “Thou art the man,” to David's face concerning his sin with Bathsheba, so the apostle had no qualms about accusing the Jews of the murder of the Lord. As surely as David murdered Uriah by proxy a millennium earlier, so Peter charged the Jews with murdering the Son of God, though they manipulated Gentiles to pass the sentence and drive the spikes, as Jesus had prophesied (Mark 10:33).

Acts 2:24-28

Immediately after reminding the crowd of the death of Jesus (and their culpability in it), Peter announced the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead (of which they may not have been aware). The Jews could kill Jesus, but with their best effort they could not keep Him dead “because it was not possible that he should be holden of it” (2:24).

Peter next began citing the evidence of Jesus’ resurrection. He first turned to Scripture, which he knew his listeners revered. He quoted David’s words from Psalms 16:8-11, declaring that David wrote in reference not to himself, but to Christ and His resurrection. The Lord’s soul was not left in Hades (the unseen realm of departed spirits; *hell* is a very unfortunate and misleading rendering of the Greek, *hades*, throughout the KJV NT, but particularly so in this passage), and His physical body did not undergo the normal decay of a corpse. Body and soul, separated at death (Jam. 2:26), were reunited on the third day following His entombment. This announcement of the resurrection and David’s prophecy concerning it brings us to the assigned text for this chapter: verses 29-36.

EXPOSITION OF ACTS 2:29-36

Verse 29

Peter admitted that he spoke “freely” (i.e., plainly, boldly) in what he was about to say about David’s tomb as practical proof of the claim that he spoke of Jesus’ resurrection. David died and was buried in Jerusalem, as they all knew. He wrote of someone whose body would not be left in a tomb long enough for it to decay. They also knew that David’s unopened tomb (did Peter perhaps point toward it?) was still where it was when he died a millennium earlier and that his decayed remains were still in it. Thus, David could not have been referring to himself when he wrote of one’s death, burial, and his body’s being resurrected without its putrefying. Peter momentarily left his hearers to infer that David spoke his prophecy about Jesus’ resurrection, which he would soon state as a matter of fact.

Verse 30

Peter called David a prophet, connoting the authority pertaining to that office. He pointed out that David recalled that God had “sworn with an oath” to him that He would set one of his offspring upon his throne. This statement takes us to Nathan’s announcement to the king that God would set one upon his throne over an everlasting kingdom:

When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever (2 Sam. 7:12-13).

More particularly, Peter’s words take us to David’s statement in Psalms 132:11, which he almost quoted: “Jehovah hath sworn unto David in truth; He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.”

Although it should go without having to say it, God specifically stated the matter nonetheless. The throne and kingdom of David’s heir were to be concurrent: His reception of the throne would mark the beginning of His reign over His kingdom.

Verse 31

Being an inspired prophet, when David foresaw one who would some day die but whose soul would return from Hades and whose body would not be corrupted in the tomb, he spoke of Jesus. Moreover, David also foresaw in the one whom God would raise from the dead the fulfillment of God’s promise/oath. The resurrected “Jesus Christ, son of David” (Mat. 1:1) met the requirements of the prophecy perfectly.

Paul made the identical argument to the Pisidian Antioch synagogue attendees:

Because he saith also in another *psalm*, Thou wilt not give thy Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell asleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but he whom God raised up saw no corruption (Acts 13:35-37).

In effect, both Peter and Paul said concerning David's prophecy, "This is that," as Peter had earlier done concerning Joel's prophecy.

Verse 32

Peter now repeats, perhaps for emphasis' sake, what he had declared in verse 24—God raised **this** Jesus. He perhaps added **this** *Jesus* lest the hearers confuse Him with any other Jew by that name. More likely, he thus said to once more emphasize the One whom these Jews had slain and Whom Peter has declared to be resurrected.

The apostle now turns from David, the dead witness of the resurrection (through his prophecy), to living witnesses—the apostles. Although Jesus appeared to various ones in His resurrected body (to above five hundred at once—1 Cor. 15:6), He appeared to the apostles on more than one occasion. Luke told Theophilus that to His chosen apostles Jesus "showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:2-3). Although Paul was not among the original twelve, he nonetheless was a witness of the resurrected Christ as He halted Saul on his deadly mission to Damascus (9:1-5; 22:6-8; 26:12-15). Paul could thus declare that he was a qualified witness that God raised up Christ (1 Cor. 15:15). The Lord did not haphazardly appear to men after His resurrection. At Cornelius' house, Peter emphasized the fact that God carefully chose those to whom the resurrected Christ would appear:

Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, *even* to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead (Acts 10:40-41).

God thus *hand-picked* the witnesses, but not, as some critics have charged, because their closeness to and familiarity with the Lord would make them render biased testimony. If this were so, the Divine strategy miserably failed. The record shows that, in spite of Jesus' numerous clear prophecies of His resurrection (Mat. 12:40; 16:4; 20:19; 26:32; John 2:19), even some of the apostles did not at first believe in Jesus' resurrection (Mat. 28:17; Mark 16:11-14;

Luke 24:11, 41; John 20:24-25). God perhaps chose those who knew Jesus best to most often see Him and to converse and eat with Him after His resurrection so none could credibly charge that some imposter who looked like Jesus deceived them. There was no possibility of *mistaken identity* by these to whom He appeared.

Verse 33

Some of Peter's listeners may have been wondering, "If this Jesus was resurrected, why is He not here Himself, or where is He now?" Whether or not Peter was intending to satisfy such curiosity, he now abruptly takes the minds of his audience from the Lord's resurrection to His ascension, exaltation, coronation, and glorification in Heaven by the Father's right hand.

I remind readers that the hyper preterist advocates, while admitting that Jesus' kingdom (His church) began with the events of Pentecost, deny that it came in the fullness of its glory and power. They allege, without Scriptural basis, that it was thus weak, lacking in glory, and incomplete until 40 years later (AD 70) when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. Since Jesus' kingdom began when He was enthroned (see verse 30 above), if the kingdom/church He received was inglorious, weak, and incomplete, it must follow that Jesus' reign did not begin with glory and power, which it would not attain for another forty years.

Contrary to this irreverent depiction of the Lord's return to the Father, Peter did not say that God merely *placed* His Son by His right hand, but that He *exalted* Him. This is another way of describing the glory Jesus received upon His ascension. Note Jesus' prayer concerning His return to the Father: "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). Did He have only a little glory with the Father before His incarnation? Apparently the realized eschatologists believe so. Paul declared that the Lord had to empty Himself of His glory, which was equal to that of the Father, to take on the "fashion as a man" (Phi. 2:7-8). It is the restoration of this original fullness of glory for which Jesus prayed. Various Scrip-

tural statements indicate that this is exactly what He received, with not the slightest hint that it was merely partial or less than perfect.

- Luke 24:26: “Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?”
- John 7:39: “But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet *given*; because Jesus was not yet glorified.”
- John 13:31-32: “When therefore he was gone out, Jesus saith, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him; and God shall glorify him in himself, and straight-way shall he glorify him.”
- Heb. 2:9: “But we behold him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, *even* Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste of death for every *man*.”

Since Jesus’ glory and exaltation were complete when He received His kingdom, no Scriptural basis exists for the conclusion that the kingdom itself was less than complete from its inception.

When the Father set His Son at His right hand, He “received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit.” The Spirit had been “poured forth,” and they had seen and heard the results of it in the sounds of the rushing mighty wind and the tongues in which the Spirit enabled the apostles to speak. As Peter had earlier attributed those phenomena to the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy (Acts 2:16-21), so he here again assigns them to the Holy Spirit, as sent by the Father and as promised by Jesus to His apostles (John 14:26; etc.).

Verses 34-35

Having told the crowd that God had exalted Jesus by His right hand, He now proceeds to amplify this announcement. Peter had earlier argued in part the case of Jesus’ resurrection based on the fact that David could not have referred to himself in Psalms 16:8-11; his body had suffered corruption and its remains were still there in Jerusalem. Now he uses the same approach on David’s prophecy in Psalms 110:1. Before he quotes the passage, Peter first denies that

David could have referred to himself, for David had not done what his words described—he “had ascended not into the heavens.”

In David’s prophecy, Jehovah told David’s Lord to sit on His (Jehovah’s) right hand. While no ascension is mentioned in the Psalm, it is implied (one who is on earth can hardly sit at God’s right hand without ascending). Peter’s inspired exegesis of the prophecy is that David’s *Lord* is the Lord Jesus Who ascended to the Father, Who then seated His Son at His right hand. As before, this application of the prophecy has the same effect as Peter’s earlier applications of prophecy: “This is that.” The significance of this prophecy may be gauged, at least in part, by its being the most frequently noted Old Testament text by New Testament writers, quoted either fully or in part twenty-three times in ten different books.

To be at the “right hand” of one in authority is itself a place of great authority. Paul elaborates upon the extent of the authority the Father gave to Christ when He thus seated Him: “For, He put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that he is excepted who did subject all things unto him” (1 Cor. 15:27). In other words, the Father “turned everything over” to His Son except Himself. The Lord expressed this very thought in His preface to the Great Commission: “All authority [power—KJV] hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth” (Mat. 28:18). While He had not ascended when He spoke these words, His ascension was imminent, and the reception and exercise of this authority was so certain, He could state that He had already received it.

The apostles of the AD 70 theology apparently do not believe that Jesus received all authority when He ascended on high and was seated at the Father’s right hand. They must believe He at first had only limited authority, which then grew to perfection over the next four decades. If they profess to believe that the Father gave Him all authority at the time He occupied David’s throne, the authority was largely useless until AD 70. By their reckoning, His kingdom, which began concurrently with His reign, only limped along in impotence

for forty years. The fact of the matter is that both His authority and His kingdom were invested with full power from their inception.

Paul enlarged upon the authority of Christ. The Father demonstrated His great power

in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all (Eph. 1:20-23).

Note the following from this passage:

- God manifested His power in raising Jesus from the dead.
- God invested His Son with authority/power by seating Him at His right hand.
- The Lord's dominion was/is absolute, not merely superior, but far superior to all other rule, authority, power, dominion, and name.
- This rule encompasses all creatures, whether heavenly or earthly (cf. Mat. 28:18) and ages.
- His church/kingdom, which is His spiritual body, is particularly under His absolute headship.
- The church/kingdom/body is His "fulness."
- The church/kingdom/body "filleth all in all."

Paul wrote the Ephesian letter some eight or ten years before Jerusalem was destroyed. He must not have believed in realized eschatology, for he said that the church/kingdom was the *fulness* of Jesus that "filleth all in all." By this we understand that the church is the full expression of all that Jesus came to provide for mankind. Paul made the same point when he wrote that God has "blessed us with every spiritual blessing...in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). We do not see in such passages any insufficiency, weakness, or lack of glory or power in the kingdom, as promoted by the AD 70 peddlers.

It is absurd to attempt to separate the glory, power, and completeness of Jesus' kingdom from the glory, power, and completeness of

His rule. The fertile minds of men, not content with the doctrine of Christ, produce such wild conjectures. If His kingdom/church was not complete in its glory and power from its establishment, it must follow that His rule was likewise less than complete. Contrariwise, since His authority was absolute from the time Jesus sat down at the Father's right hand, His kingdom/church possessed its fullness of glory and power from that same moment—not forty years later.

The Christ would (and does) thus reign in full power (which, in the general sense, includes all mankind, whether in submission or rebellion—Mat. 28:18). He shall reign until all enemies have been subdued (made His footstool), the last of which is death (1 Cor. 15:25-26). The Lord has conquered death *in principle* by bringing “to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14). The universal and final conquest of death will occur when the Lord returns and calls good and evil alike from their tombs (John 5:28-29). Upon this final victory, the Lord will apparently return the royal reign to His Father (1 Cor. 15:27). Per David's further prophetic statement, the Lord shall until that time rule in the midst of His enemies (Psa. 110:2).

Verse 36

Peter has explained the miraculous incidents, accused the Jews of crucifying the Christ, and proclaimed His resurrection, ascension, and coronation. He has cited the prophets and the testimony of credible witnesses as proof of his proclamations, plus reasoning with them about these facts. From all that Peter declared from the moment he stood up with the eleven, he now draws a conclusion: “God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.”

The apostles were not agnostics. The proposition Peter set before “all the house of Israel” was one that they could not only know, but also “know assuredly.” He thus set before them with absolute certainty the ultimate authority of Jesus (He was Lord, ruler) and the fact that Jesus was their prophesied Messiah (the Christ, the One anointed by God). He reminded them once more that this Lord and Christ was the very one they had crucified fifty days earlier.

By implication, when Peter announced that Christ was on His throne as Lord-Ruler, he proclaimed the beginning of the kingdom. However, the New Testament likewise teaches this fact explicitly. John, Jesus, and the apostles all preached that the kingdom was “at hand” (i.e., nearby) (Mat. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7). More specifically, Jesus declared, “Verily I say unto you, There are some here of them that stand *by*, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power” (Mark 9:1). The AD 70 advocates argue that this was not fulfilled until AD 70, for until that time the kingdom, though in existence was weak and powerless. It did not “come with power,” they aver, until the destruction of Jerusalem. They are **dead wrong**, however.

Immediately before disappearing in the clouds to return to His Father, Jesus instructed His apostles to wait in Jerusalem after His departure until they received “power from on high” (Luke 24:49). He also identified this reception of power with “the promise of the Father” and baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5). In the same instructions, the Lord told them they would receive the promised power when “the Holy Spirit is come upon you,” after which they were to begin providing their testimony to all the earth, beginning at Jerusalem (1:8).

From the foregoing we note that the kingdom was to come “with power” and that the power would be theirs with the coming of the Holy Spirit, sent by God and described as a *baptism* (i.e., they would be overwhelmed by the Spirit’s power). Thus, the Spirit’s coming upon the apostles in this unprecedented measure of power would mark the beginning of the kingdom. The power came upon the apostles (Acts 2:1-4), which marked the time for the kingdom to begin—in AD 30, not AD 70! Far from beginning in weakness and insufficiency, it began in great power. The section of Scripture we have analyzed in this chapter exposes the grievous error of realized eschatology theology. As with the remainder of its doctrinal program, it is utterly wrong in its teaching concerning the kingdom’s gradual gaining of power, glory, and completeness over a forty-year span.

CONCLUSION

The prophet Daniel wrote of many marvelous and amazing visions and interpreted dreams with truly historical meanings. One of his very interesting visions is the following:

I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed (Dan. 7:13-14).

Some commentators see in this vision figurative speech concerning various persons and events related to Daniel's time. The AD 70 errorists hold this to be a description of the "coming of the Lord" in the destruction of Jerusalem. To so believe, they have to reverse the direction the "son of man" was traveling; He was going **to** "the ancient of days," not coming **from** Him. This vision appears simply to be a beautiful prophetic picture of the ascension and coronation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Accepting it as such, note that when the Lord came before the Father, He was given exceeding power and **a kingdom** in keeping with such power. Moreover, this kingdom matches perfectly in power, glory, and duration with the kingdom foreseen in Nebuchadnezzar's first dream, interpreted by Daniel:

And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these (Dan. 2:44).

This everlasting, powerful, and glorious kingdom was given to the Lord upon His ascension, **forty days** after His crucifixion. The Max King disciples say it was given to Him when the Roman general, Titus, overran the walls of Jerusalem and laid it waste, **forty years** after the Lord died. No, when He ascended He was crowned "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15)—and He was given a kingdom/church that fully comported to that great power and glory.

Paul described some false teachers and their doctrines in the Galatian churches, which description well fits the adherents of realized eschatology and their errors:

I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another *gospel*: only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema (Gal. 1:6-9).

As with the scribes and Pharisees of old whom Jesus so severely chastised, so with the adherents of realized eschatology: “For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is become so, ye make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves” (Mat. 23:15). It never ceases to amaze me what some folk will believe—as long as the Bible does not teach it.

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All Scripture quotations are from the American Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.

EXPOSITION OF 1 CORINTHIANS 15

Harrell Davidson

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What would our Bibles be like if it were not for these verses in 1 Corinthians 15? Yet, it was out of the problem that came about in Corinth that the Holy Spirit saw fit to give us this information. Remember that it was a problem of the dead that caused Paul to write 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18. A problem has occurred in Corinth, and it has to do with the resurrection. They are not denying the resurrection of Christ. We believe that this is indicated in 1 Corinthians 15:12: “Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?” It seems that they were not denying that Christ arose from the dead. They were denying that there would be a resurrection. It is on this basis that Paul deals with this problem. There are only two ways for us to get out of this world: one is death and the other is a change in this body if the Lord were to come while we are living. Those are the only two options that we have. This tells us something about death that helps relieve the pressure and the fear that has to do with death. It may not answer all questions, but it will answer many of them.

DEFINITION OF RESURRECTION

Resurrection means “a raising up, a rising...a rising from the dead” (Thayer 41). Some words have a literal meaning and the same

word can sometimes have a figurative meaning. For instance, Romans 6:3-4 is obviously a figurative use of the word. The old body is raised, but a clean soul arises from the watery grave that houses the soul. However, for there to be a literal resurrection there must be a literal dead body. Therefore, in this piece, when we refer to the resurrection of the dead, we will mean the coming again of that which is dead.

Brother Guy N. Woods wrote:

If the body, in no sense...comes forth, how can there be a resurrection? If that which comes forth from the tomb is no part of, and sustains no direct relationship to, the body which was buried, its coming forth must be a re-creation, rather than a re-surrection (213).

1 CORINTHIANS 15

Verse 1

Let us look at some of the words in this verse. "I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you" (15:1). There are fundamental truths that need continual emphasis and here is one of them. We need to think about fundamental truths that often need repeating so we will not let them slip from our minds. Things familiar can sometimes lead us to overlook vital truths.

He said that they had "received" these teachings. This means they welcomed the teaching. Living in pagan Corinth where they worshipped pagan idols which have no resurrection, they welcomed what Paul had to say. Suppose that among us there were some that had not heard of the resurrection. They would hear it, and it would thrill their hearts to know that the grave was not the end.

Paul explains in this chapter that Christ came to undo what sin had done and it was Christ as a man that died and was buried and arose as a man. If any of this does not affect us, the work of Christ would be incomplete. Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." He will say this same thing in 1 Corinthians 15:22 where he points out that "in Adam all die." What Jesus did He did it as a man. Regardless of what we

may or may not have, relative to the resurrection, man would not be man without a body of some kind. The Bible does not teach that, when we go into the spiritual world after the judgment, we will have a naked spirit. Jesus did not ascend back to the Father as a naked spirit, but as a man with a glorified body. This body that we have has an identity. The one that will be raised will have an identity. The body that was put in that grave had an identity with the body that He had when He ascended. It was not the same, but it had an identity. When we usually think about heaven, we think of souls. Seldom do we think about men and women, but that is what this chapter is teaching. This is one of the reasons why we are thankful that Corinth had problems with the resurrection to the extent that they did. We are not going to be naked spirits. There may be things about the body that I will not have, but I will have a body. It will be a spirit, clothed with a body that is adapted to that environment just as God made this body adapted to this environment. It will be spirit and body not just spirit. No wonder that Paul said that he declared the good news—the Gospel. It ought to be good news to us.

He said, “Wherein ye stand.” This is that we hold on to. How we regard the resurrection affects the way we live. No wonder that he said in 1 Corinthians 15:30-32:

And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.

What are you saying Paul? The resurrection has an effect on the way we live. If there is no resurrection, then live it up because at death this would be the end of everything. The resurrection changes all of that. It changes the way we look at life and the way we live.

Look at Philippians 3:20-21:

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

There is inspiration and motivation, not only in the fact that there will be a resurrection, but the kind of body that I will have—one that is adapted to that world. Later, he will say that this corruptible would put on incorruption. It has to be! How could the corruptible fit into the eternal? It cannot be fit for eternity. These bodies that we have are decaying bodies, but the new ones will not decay nor run down.

Verse 2

“By which also are ye saved” (1 Cor. 15:2). The passage literally reads, “By which also ye are being saved.” It is not over with. It is a process that is ongoing. We are in the process of it. “If ye keep in memory,” that is, we let it effect the way we live by letting the resurrection help mold our character. “What I preached unto you unless you have believed in vain” (15:2). *Vain* is something that is hollow, empty, without content, worthless, and without value. He delivered to them what he had received. It did not come from his imagination nor from man’s resources. He delivered it exactly the same way he received it. If he did that, and he did, why do men come along today and try to alter or change the Word? There is no place to compromise or change. Preach the Word and leave it there.

Verses 3-4

Notice in verse 3 that we have the little preposition *for*. *For* tells us something. It means in our stead. It means that someone took our place. What a wonderful thing to know—that someone, Christ, took my place in view of my sins. This is indeed good news. At the judgment bar of God, in Christ, faithful through His blood, I will not be accountable for my sins for He took my place, in my stead, in my behalf, for my sins. Think about standing before God in judgment, knowing our frailties and weakness and having to deal with it. Because of Christ dying for my sins, He stands in my place. Read Isaiah 53 and understand that this is what that little word *for* means in verse 3. He died for our sins. The Gospel through its provisions preached—what a thought—that through Him we are free. The knowledge of the truth will make us free. The resurrection of

Christ is tied to His redemptive work and is a part of His death. He was buried and He was raised.

Verse 5

None of the Gospel accounts record this meeting that Paul tells of here. This tells us that each book of the Bible is written for a specific purpose and does not go into specific details on everything. We would not have known this if Paul had not made it known here. *Seen* means to “appear to.” It was not just some kind of vision or dream. Christ actually appeared to them after He was buried and arose. Then “of the twelve” simply refers to the apostolic office. We all know that Judas was not there and Matthias had not been selected as yet.

Verses 6-8

Why bring up all these witnesses? If Peter had been the only one, it might have been questioned. Some might charge the twelve apostles with not telling it correctly due to the nature of His death and the tomb being sealed, with the thought that someone might steal Him away. However, He was seen of over 500 brethren. We do not have the record of when this happened, but they all saw Him at one time, and some of them were still living. He was seen by James the Lord’s half-brother who did not believe on Him at the beginning. Additionally, the apostles were witnesses of the resurrection.

Finally, He was seen of Paul as one born out of due time. There is an interesting thing about this appearance to Paul. All these others Paul says actually saw Him in a body that was raised from the grave. This is what Paul is pointing out in this chapter. Paul is stating that there will be a resurrection. It will not be the same kind of body, but it will be a resurrection and will have a body. When you realize that Christ had been raised, that this was after Pentecost, Jesus had already returned to heaven, then what Paul saw was the resurrected body as it was when it had already returned to heaven. Jesus was in heaven when Saul was on the Damascus road. This is a strong argument relative to the resurrection, because His resurrection is proof

that we will be raised. The kind of body He had will be the kind of body that we will have (cf. Phi. 3).

Verse 12

Verse 12 indicates that some denied the general resurrection. Christ was buried; the emphasis is not so much on the burial, but that He was dead. Burial was a natural consequence of death. This was a fulfillment of Jonah's sign in the belly of the whale. In essence he is saying, let us assume for a minute that Christ was not raised from the dead, and look at the consequences that come from it. Look at the "ifs." There is an "if" in verses 13, 14, 16, 17, 19. Here are some things that Paul is going to say by his admonishing them to think for a moment that Christ was not raised.

If there is no resurrection, all the apostles were liars about what they preached; they were false witnesses. If Christ did not rise from the dead, one can write "myth" across the face of the New Testament. It is not worth the paper that it is printed on. This tells us something about the importance of the resurrection. Do you want to give up the New Testament? To deny the resurrection would imply such a consequence!

Verse 20

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept." He states this as a fact. If Christ was raised, then we are not miserable—we are not in our sins. It has made it possible for us to have the forgiveness of sins. There will be a general resurrection because Christ was raised and the preaching of the apostles was true.

"Firstfruits" is based upon Leviticus 23. It was harvest time. They went out and gathered a sheaf. The first sheaf was dedicated to God. That sheaf was a guarantee of a general harvest. Christ, the firstfruits raised from the dead, is like that first sheaf. This is the guarantee that there will be a resurrection. The dead represents the first of the harvest back in Leviticus 23. The resurrection of Christ has guaranteed our resurrection. It means a great deal to know that that grave was empty.

Verse 24

“Then *cometh* the end.” *Then* means the point in which God is aiming at. There is a time that God is pointing to, and that will be the return of Christ. We do not know when that will be, but it is the time that God is pointing to. He has that laid out. All the things in the past and things happening now are pointing to that event. To us, this is very interesting. That God has so arranged things—planned it—that He has a particular point that everything is moving toward. Every day we live we are moving in that direction. The important thing is to be ready every day. It could be tomorrow, the next day, or a thousand years.

Verse 28

Not only that, this will be the end of Satan’s work. Had you ever thought that if Christ was not raised, then Satan has won the day? Verse 28 is talking about this very thing. If Christ is not raised from the dead, God is not “all in all” as verse 28 indicates. Another thing to think about is that the struggle of this life will be over. We will have a spiritual body. Paul said that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Never again will a Christian have to struggle and fight against Satan, sin, and evil. All the struggles and trials are gone. The Bible describes this place as one wherein dwelleth righteousness. No sin dwells there. What it must be like to live in a place like that! The resurrection of Christ is vital to the Gospel scheme of redemption. To deny it is to repudiate the whole Gospel.

Verse 33

What we believe affects our conduct. Evidently some of those Christians had been associating with these false teachers who said that there was no resurrection. No doubt this contributed to the way that some were living in Corinth. It might have had an effect on the man in chapter 5 that was living in fornication. It is certain that what we sincerely believe affects our conduct, so we must be careful what we believe.

Verse 34

Awake means to “be sober.” They had allowed themselves to drift and lose their sense of soberness. He is saying be sober to righteousness and sin not. Some lacked in understanding the will of God, and it shows up in conduct. He spoke this to their shame. There was really no excuse in them being influenced by these false teachers. Remember the miraculous endowments that they had that they could know what the revelation was all about. They had to take that revelation and apply it just like we do.

Verses 35-36

“But some *man* will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? *Thou* fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.” There are two questions being asked. Notice that *man* is italicized in the text. I am sure that those of us who have read our Bibles and thought of the resurrection have thought about this. It is only natural to think about this. In their minds there was the possibility that there is no resurrection. In other words, if the mind cannot conceive it, it must not be so. Human wisdom cannot understand this. How and what kind are their questions? He does not give a direct answer, but gives an analogy to help us understand it.

It is interesting that *fool* (15:36) is not the same word that our Lord warned us against. It means simplest person here in this text. This shows how he reacted to the idea that they had of there being no general resurrection. He says that they were simplest.

Verses 37-39

Look at the analogy that is used. When you take a grain (body), you take that and plant it in the ground, and that grain dies. It dies that it might live. Out of that grain comes another kind of body—the plant that comes up. Think about it for a minute. Here is someone that has never seen an oak tree. You have an acorn, and you ask, did you know that that tree came from an acorn like this, and given sufficient time to grow it may grow fifty feet high? It would be difficult to believe this having never seen it. What Paul is trying to do

is to give an analogy that they were acquainted with to help them see. It is difficult to understand that in the ground it must die that it might live. Paul pictures death as the sowing of a seed. When we stand by the grave of a loved one, we normally do not think about a seed being planted. It will be raised, but it will be different from that which is planted. There is an identity, but it is different from the seed that was planted. An acorn is not the oak tree. The plant does not look like the seed. Go to a garden and look at the seed that was planted and the plant that came up. It is difficult for us to accept this and rely upon it. That is, that for us to live, we must die, and then a transformation will take place in this body. Death is not a dead-end street. It is a door to life just like when you plant that seed. You plant that seed in the right environment, it receives sunshine and rain, and it will live again. This is what Paul is saying about our bodies. They die that we may live. There are two ways out of the world. One is to die; the other is to be changed.

Verse 38 says that God gives it a body. That is what happened to that plant. In the resurrection, we are given a body. There being different kinds of flesh is a denial of evolution (15:39). If we evolved from lower animals, then there are not different kinds of flesh, but the Holy Spirit said there were: one for man, one for animals, one for birds, one for fish, and I am not sure that the list is intended to be exhaustive. Each of these bodies is given and adapted to the environment in which they live. Notice that a bird has to have water, but does not live in the water. A fish has to have air, but does not live out of the water. There is oxygen in the water. God arranged these things this way as it pleased Him. Why did He not give us the same kind of body that He gave the fish? We are not adapted to living in the water. The point is that there will be a change and the body that we receive will be adapted to a new environment, an eternal life—a deathless life.

Verses 40-41

According to verses 40 and 41, Paul points out that there are different kinds of bodies—celestial and terrestrial. The sun is one, the moon is another, and every star is different. God made all of these

to differ. If God can do this, why can He not make this a new body adapted to the new environment that He has made for us? This is what Paul is arguing. In verse 42, Paul said, "So also *is* the resurrection." He did not use may be or could be, but states a fact based upon the illustrations that he has given. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. If you look at *it* here, it shows that there is some relationship between the body that is sown and the one that is raised.

Paul tells how the body is sown in dishonor, but raised in glory (15:43). It is sown in weakness, but raised in power. This shows the contrast between this body and the body that will be raised in the resurrection. We know it will be different. It will not decay and it will not be corruptible or undefiled, but outside of that we have no more information. Man as man is body and spirit and cannot survive this life without both. This is necessary, and this is what Paul is saying.

IT

In reading verses 42-44 we find the little word *it*. "It is sown...it is raised" occurs four times. The pronoun *it* is the "key" (not Max's book). "It is sown" refers to one's burial at death. "It," the literal body, is sown, and "it," the same body, will be raised. "If the 'it' raised is not the 'it' sown, then there is a loss of identity and thus no resurrection," wrote Jim McGuiggan (93).

Furthermore, our gardening proves arguments against a literal resurrection false as Paul also argues. In a funeral lately that we conducted, we mentioned the planting of a seed in the ground, and we did so in the graveside service. One of the family members came and remarked about this and how they had never thought of such in death and how it was a beautiful expression to them. I have raised a garden almost all of my life, having been schooled in this from a child in rural West Tennessee. We plant a pea seed, and we expect a pea vine to grow. The pea seed never turned into a tomato or vice versa. Kind after kind has always been the result and will be as long as the earth stands.

No, the pea seed does not come forth from ground as a seed, but as a plant that will have peas or seeds after the likeness of that which was sown. We have never seen one come back as a beet or radish! It has always been a pea. Paul is saying that one must plant the seed in the ground where it dies—that is, where it germinates and brings forth after its complete likeness. It did not lose its identity. Our physical body is the same. It is sown in the heart of the earth—the grave. When the Lord wills, it will come from a new body as it pleases Him. It will be the likeness of the old body that was sown, but a new body. The first must die and be planted for there to finally be a harvest. The pea seed must lay aside the body that was planted—die and then comes life. Doubters need to raise a garden.

“Is God incapable of raising from the decomposed outer seed a beautiful plant? He does it every day. And he is incapable of doing it with a man! It must be noted here that Paul is not affirming anything about the nature of the resurrection body, but merely showing the foolishness of the Corinthian incredulity,” wrote Jim McGuigan (92).

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ALLEGORY OF SARAH AND HAGAR (GALATIANS 4:21-31)

Jess Whitlock

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The late brother W. Gaddys Roy wrote: “An allegory is a series of actions symbolic of other actions as types and antitypes.... Paul presents the law in an allegory of Hagar and Sarah (Gal. 4:21-31)” (29).

Allegory: (Gk. *allegoria*, from *allo* and *agoreuo* to say something other [than normally intended by the words spoken] A figure of speech, often an extended metaphor...at Gal. 4:24.... This is not a true allegory because Paul does not explain every part...it is an example of typology (*Eerdmans* 39-40).

Typology: (Gk. *typos* “visible impression.... A relationship in which something occurring in the past is a copy or pattern of something in the present or future” (*Eerdmans* 1,024).

A. T. Robertson observed:

Paul does not deny the actual historical narrative, but he simply uses it in an allegorical sense to illustrate his point for the benefit of his readers who are tempted to go under the burden of the law (306).

In Galatians 3-4 Paul is justifying the Gospel of faith in Christ Jesus and demonstrating that it is not by the Old Law.

Albert Barnes commented:

Allegories are in words what hieroglyphics are in painting. The distinction between a *parable* and an *allegory* is said to be, that a

parable is a *supposed* history to illustrate some important truth...an allegory is based on *real facts* (370).

So then, the allegory of Galatians 4 is simply a continued metaphor. Paul's allegory is drawn from the events recorded in Genesis 16-21.

MAX R. KING'S KING-SIZED MISTAKES IN GALATIANS 4

Gary Workman said, "King's error here is a failure to see that Paul does not present the allegory to tell *what* was to be inherited but rather *who* was to inherit!" (184). As one considers the *king-sized* mistakes of Max King, he may recall Paul's earlier warning to the churches of Galatia:

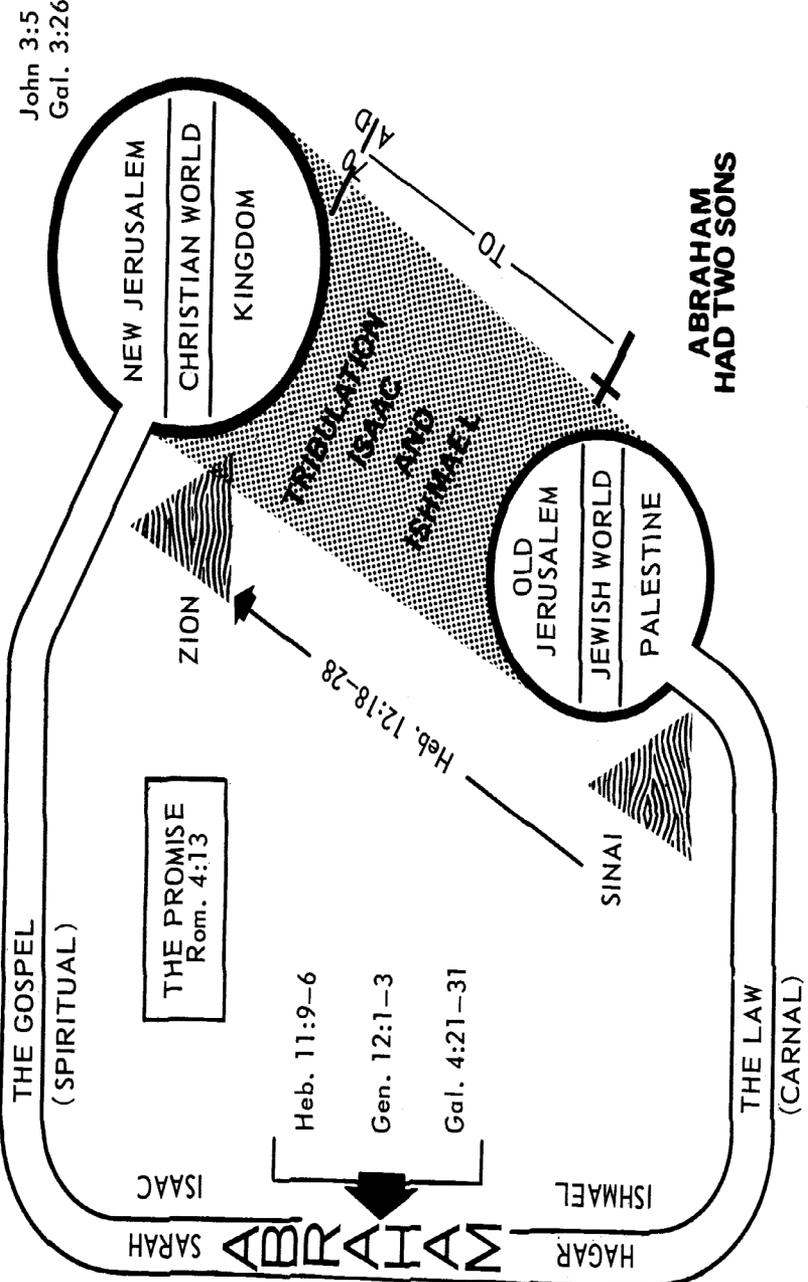
only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema (Gal. 1:7-8).

The AD 70 doctrine stands accursed of God.

Let us begin by noting Max King's chart of this allegory (see next page) in his book, *The Spirit of Prophecy* (1971 edition 28; 2002 edition 55). The timeline goes from Abraham to Hagar and Ishmael to "The Law" and on to Old Jerusalem, Jewish World, and Palestine. In the other direction you see Sarah and Isaac to "The Gospel" and it continues to New Jerusalem, Christian world, and "The Kingdom." Now, that is looking good. Hold on, look again! Do you see the line from Sinai to Zion? The reference cited is Hebrews 12:18-28. Notice please:

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh...whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only.... Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken (12:25-27).

That Voice that shook the earth takes us back to Mount Sinai (Exo. 19). That was the beginning of the Mosaic Dispensation of time. "Yet once more" is to inform the reader that there would only be one more shaking. This shaking would be so intense as to merit "receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken" (12:28). The Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations would be removed, "having blotted



out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross” (Col. 2:14). It is most interesting that Paul did **not say**, “nailing it to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.” Look at the chart. Cross over from Hebrews 12 where it has Tribulation, Isaac, and Ishmael. Notice the cross of Christ and the line going to AD 70. Now, ask yourself this question “what is missing”? It is like some commentaries I have read through the years. The writer comes to a rather difficult passage and reverts back to the Old Law as he observes the *Passover*. Max King observed the *Passover* regarding the notable Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). How could he possibly miss that? Look at the chart! Show me where the Day of Pentecost appears? It, quite simply, is not there!

Brother Jerry Brewer writes:

The entire context of Galatians is Paul’s refutation of Judaizers in the church, to show that the Law was done away at the cross. This allegory is simply one argument in the larger context to show that adherents of the Law are not the heirs of the promise God made to Abraham. It also shows that the Law was never a part of the promise (Letter to author).

Max R. King penned: “The center and heart of prophecy is not Pentecost (the birth of Isaac) so much so as the fall of Jerusalem (the casting out of Ishmael)” (2002 63). Brother Jerry hit the proverbial nail on the head, whereas Max King missed it by the proverbial country mile! Max King contends that since Ishmael and Isaac were together for a time in life, that in similar fashion Judaism and Christianity coexisted from the cross until the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem! (Look at the chart). Again, Pentecost is bypassed.

Max King writes:

The purpose of Paul in this allegory...to show that Abraham had two sons, which existed side by side for a time in the same household. **We must not miss this point** (emphasis added) (2002 58).

Jerry Brewer writes:

The point we must not miss in this allegory is that Abraham is not under consideration, but Sarah...and it is she who in this allegory,

is called “the mother of us all” (verse 26)... From both Abraham and Sarah sprang spiritual Israel—the church—through the promise of God (emphasis added) (*Unto* 69).

Paul’s purpose in the allegory is to show the Old Law had been abolished. In context, Paul is dealing with Judaizing teachers among the churches of Galatia. In personal correspondence to me, brother Jerry Brewer wrote of the “seed promise” of Genesis 12 (the Law of Moses) and the fulfillment of that promise in Galatians 3:16-18:

The allegory demonstrates that the law was never intended to be a permanent part of God’s scheme of redemption, as was the promise to Abraham and the fulfillment of it in Christ. In the allegory, Hagar “...is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children” (Gal. 4:25). Furthermore, Paul says, Sarah represents the new covenant (Gal. 4:26-31). The simple truth of this allegory is that the old covenant was fulfilled and taken away at the cross. If the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham had to wait for 37 years after Christ died, was buried, and resurrected, then Paul lied when he said “blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross” (Col. 2:14). The law and all of Judiasm [sic] died at the cross. There is not a single syllable in the allegory that extends the fulfillment of the promise past the cross. King takes an allegory and makes it say more than was intended. Judaism was dead when Christ died. That’s why Jesus said the ‘carcass’ would be removed by the Romans (Matt. 24:28). This passage is not part of the kingdom prophecies, but a simple statement that God would punish the murderers of His Son (cf. Matt. 23:37-38) (Letter to author).

Having used Galatians 3 to teach that Christians are not justified by the law of Moses but through faith in Christ Jesus, Paul now addresses those Christians who “desire to be under the law” (Gal. 4:21a) and shows them that the law of Moses itself contains information of how that very desire was out of place. We cannot apply the allegory beyond how and where it was applied by the inspired apostle Paul.

Tim King and other Kingites have actually described Max King as being a Bible scholar. I have never purported being a Bible scholar, but one cannot help but wonder how anyone with a casual acquaint-

tance with Scripture could compare Max King to being a scholar. How could a Bible scholar miss the significance of Daniel 2:37-44 which identifies the time the kingdom would be established? How could anyone miss the prophecy of Isaiah 2:1-3 which tells the place where the kingdom would have its origin? In Joel 2:28-29, God's prophet tells how God would use the Holy Spirit in ushering in the eternal kingdom, which is the church (Mat. 16:18-19). How could a scholar, so-called, miss the point of all these passages?

As a child in third grade Bible class, we studied the great "seed promise" to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 17:4-6, 19-21). We learned that powerful promise pointed to the coming Messiah and included His coming kingdom—"foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all the nations be blessed" (Gal. 3:8). Then, we read, "Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (3:16). Remember this was taught to third graders!

Christ promised His apostles, "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Acts 1:8). Take note that the power would come when the Holy Spirit came (2:1-4). The kingdom, which is the church (Col. 1:18-24) came on the Day of Pentecost in full accord with Old Testament prophets: Isaiah, Daniel, Joel, et al. Peter even proclaimed "this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16), and then quoted Joel 2:28-32. We have to ask again, how could any Bible scholar possibly miss all of this? How could a scholar (?) miss the events of Pentecost (Acts 2)?

The church of Christ was established on the Day of Pentecost around AD 33 in Jerusalem. Gentiles were granted repentance unto life around AD 41 (Acts 11:18). When did that kingdom, which is the church, come into existence?—AD 70 or AD 33?

Paul penned in AD 64 of those "translated...into the **kingdom of the Son of his love**" (Col. 1:13). In AD 59 Paul wrote, "unto the **church of God** which is at Corinth" (1 Cor. 1:2). It would have

been in AD 57 or 58 that Paul, by inspiration, stated in clarion tone, "All the **churches of Christ** salute you" (Rom. 16:16). In AD 54 Paul mentions some brethren that "became imitators of the **churches of God** which are in Judaea" (1 The. 2:14). Please take note that all of these passages were penned by inspiration of the Holy Spirit **prior** to AD 70.

In Acts we read of how the church gathered together (14:27). We know the church met at Antioch (13:1). The church was already meeting in Jerusalem (11:22). There was persecution against the church (8:1). Great fear came upon the church (5:5, 11). In Acts 2 we learn of the establishment of the church! Those passages that speak of the kingdom/church prior to Acts 2 speak of the church in future tense, but following the events of Acts 2 will speak of the church as being present. So, we ask again, how could a Bible scholar possibly miss these truths?

Max King states:

Abraham had two sons, and there was no gap between them. They overlapped for a season, but Isaac "came on" when Ishmael "went out." The son born of the spirit was given the place and inheritance of the son born of the flesh. This simple allegory (Gal. 4:21-31) establishes the "spirit of prophecy," confirming prophecy's fulfillment in the spiritual seed of Abraham through Christ (Gal. 3:16, 26-29), and these prophecies cannot be extended beyond the fall of Jerusalem (2002 370).

Max King seeks to make the whole purpose of the allegory the "time period" between the birth of Isaac and the casting out of Ishmael. Please notice that the application he gives to Galatians 3 and 4, where King instructs that those "prophecies cannot be extended beyond the fall of Jerusalem." I would have to rewrite King as he and his duped disciples attempt to rewrite the Word of Jehovah. The prophecies that Paul alludes to **cannot be extended beyond the cross of Christ**.

Christ said, "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished" (Mat. 5:18). Take note that Jesus Christ taught that none of the Old Law would pass away **till all be**

fulfilled. If any part of the law has passed away, then **all** of it has, and if not, then why not? None was to pass until **all be fulfilled.** Christ combines the law and the prophets. If the prophets were fulfilled and passed away—and they have—then the law likewise has passed away. Paul’s pen of inspiration records, “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law.... But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets” (Rom. 3:19, 21). Remember the words of Christ in Matthew 5:17-18. Hear Paul to the Romans once more: “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for **ye are not under law**, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14). In AD 58 when this epistle was written, Paul states unequivocally that saints in Rome were not under the Old Law. This inspired teaching is given more than ten years **before** the destruction of Jerusalem. The law of Moses was given to Jews **only.** That law was fulfilled by Christ (Mat. 5:17-18), nailed to His cross, and thereby taken out of the way (Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:15). Today, all men are amenable to the Law of Christ (John 14:6; Gal. 6:2; Rom. 3:19-27; 4:15).

Max and Timothy King in their mendacious subterfuge would make Paul and Jesus Christ both guilty of the sin of lying. They must deny Paul’s teaching in allegory and Colossians 2:14. Likewise, they must reject some of the final words of Jesus Christ! As Christ hung upon the cross, He speaks for the sixth time: “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost” (John 19:30—KJV). The Greek word *tetelestai*, translates the three words, “**it is finished,**” and tells us the completed work of redemption was done, Christ paid the price for our salvation. This was a shout of victory of a job well done and **finished.** Jesus had stated, “My meat is the do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish [finish—KJV] his work” (John 4:34). In John 17:4 Jesus prayed, “I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished [finished—KJV] the work which thou hast given me to do.” On the cross, the Messiah’s work of redemption was finished,

i.e., accomplished. Paul penned, “For Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth” (Rom. 10:4).

The cross of Christ and **not** the destruction of Jerusalem unleashed the power of heaven to save men from sin. Christ died a vicarious death. The Greek *tetelestai* in John 19:30 in the Greek is a perfect passive indicative verbal form of *teleo*. Christ died for our sins (Isa. 53:5; Rom. 5:8; 1 Cor. 15:3; 1 Tim. 2:6-7). This is a consummative perfect meaning, “that Jesus was looking backward to the state of affairs that had just been drawn to a close: the Old Testament sacrifices, rituals, typology, as well as His own life and sufferings. All this has finally been brought to completion” (Young 127-28). However, the perfect tense also denotes that the results of the completed action continue into the present and the future! This is why others look at it as an intensive perfect, “meaning that Jesus was looking ahead to the benefits of His death. They say it refers to the continuing state of a debt that has forever been paid and which is available to all” (Young 128). Thus, the Hebrews’ writer states, “By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:10). The sacrifice of Christ will never have to be done over, repeated: “but he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever” (10:12). Now, we can understand why “there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins” (10:26). The Hebrews’ author goes on, “looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter [finisher—KJV] of *our* faith” (12:2). The hymn writer was right: “What a Savior!”

The late brother J. T. Marlin described this Greek term as the word used when a bank note was paid off, when a job for commerce was complete, when a military battle was won, or when the last word and period was done in a manuscript, i.e., “Paid in Full!” When Christ cried from the cross, “**it is done**,” He was declaring the sin debt was “Paid in Full” and that the Old Law was **done!**

Let us quickly review the historical account behind the allegory of Galatians 4:21-31. There are two women: Sarah and Hagar. Sarah, who is barren, gives Hagar to Abraham to bear a child in her place (Gen. 16:1-3). Hagar is with child and despises her mistress,

Sarah. In return, Sarah deals harshly with the handmaiden (16:4-6). Hagar bears Ishmael (16:7-16). There are two sons: Ishmael and Isaac. God promises Sarah she will have a son and the covenant will be through Isaac and not Ishmael (17:15-21). Sarah gives birth to Isaac (21:1-8). Next, Sarah has Abraham to send Hagar away (21:9-14). This is the background to Paul's allegory in Galatians 4.

Paul reminds his readers that Abraham had two sons: Ishmael was born to the bondwoman (Hagar), and Isaac was born to a free woman (Sarah) in Galatians 4:21-22. Listen: "Howbeit the *son* by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the *son* by the freewoman *is born* through promise" (4:23). Abraham went into Hagar and Ishmael's conception was of the flesh. Isaac's conception in accordance with God's promise (21:1-2) was conceived by God's power. The Hebrews' writer states, "By faith even Sarah herself received power to conceive seed when she was past age, since she counted him faithful who had promised" (Heb. 11:11).

Since the law of Moses was a parenthesis between the giving of the promise to Abraham and its fulfillment, the law was no part of it. That is Paul's argument in the allegory. The law did not make void the promise (Gal. 3:17). When one reads a parenthesis, he can easily leave it out of the sentence and have full understanding of the sentence. So it is with the promise. Had God not given the law of Moses, that would not have negated His promise, since the law (and, consequently, Judaism) was no part of the promise. Hagar represented the law, which was no part of the promise. Sarah was representative of "Jerusalem which is above"—the new covenant, which was precisely the point of the promise and a constituent part of it. That is King's silliness gone to seed. Those who are "in Christ" are like Isaac (Gal. 4:28-31). New Testament Christians have Sarah as "our mother." We are **free**. "And being made **free** from sin, ye became servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:18). "But now being made **free** from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life" (6:22).

Paul is challenging the Galatian Christians to not give in to the Judaizing teachers of that day. It would be like a freeman willfully

returning to slavery (the Old Law). The believer in Christ is dead to the law of Moses and alive unto God (7:1-6). “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death” (8:2). Only those “in Christ” can be the free children of promise today.

What is the whole purpose of Paul’s allegory? Go back to the beginning. “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?” (Gal. 4:21). Paul’s teaching is that the Law of Moses was invalid. The Law of Christ (the New Testament) has been established. Most scholars are agreed that the Galatian correspondence was written around AD 57-58. This means the Law of Christ was in place, at least twelve years before the destruction of Jerusalem. Any other application of this allegory misses the whole point.

Abraham’s heir was to be Isaac; it was never to be Ishmael.

And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of Jehovah came unto him, saying, This man shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir (Gen. 15:3-4).

Now, listen to the words of the Lord: “Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah” (22:2).

This is a contrast of two covenants. Hagar standing for the Law gave birth to bondage. Sarah representing the Law of Christ gave birth to that one who is free. Ishmael was never heir to Abraham (15:3-4; 22:2). There is no overlapping of the two covenants (Rom. 7:1-6).

The late brother J. Noel Meredith commented on Paul’s words, “So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free” (Gal. 4:31—KJV). Now, listen carefully: “This is Paul’s conclusion of his argument by allegory. Paul uses ‘we’ here and so by use of the first person it includes, Paul, the Galatians, and everyone who accepted the gospel” (172). Remember, these inspired words of Paul the apostle were penned at least twelve years before Jerusalem was destroyed!

Warning: “and their word will eat as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some” (2 Tim. 2:17-18). Hymenaeus and Philetus have some modern-day counterparts! Let us like the apostle Paul be “set for the defence of the Gospel” (Phi. 1:16).

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EXPOSITION OF 1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-18

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But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words (1 The. 4:13-18).

INTRODUCTION: TO WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN

And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come (1:10).

Paul, at the end of the first chapter, introduces the theme that he will discuss in greater detail in chapter four, and which will be one of the two main subjects of his follow up (second) epistle to the Thessalonians. The apostle defines the life-aim of the converts in two specific areas: their service to God, and their waiting for the return of His Son from heaven. Paul is always anxious that the Thessalonian Christians should maintain a balance between the present and future dimensions of faithful and knowledgeable Christian experience. To wait for the Son of God is the most appropriate mark

of a true Christian. This agrees (and is connected) with the whole eschatological tenor of the Thessalonian epistles, as well as of the apostle's oral teaching at Thessalonica, and it contains a weighty warning (against false teaching) for the church.

With the aforementioned verses in chapter four, Paul again addresses one of the most significant questions for the brethren in Thessalonica. It is apparent that the concern is for those who have already died (presumably in the Lord) and whether they will also participate in the (anticipated) resurrection is fresh on the minds of those that "remain" (are alive), so much so that they have inquired of this to the apostle himself. Paul, in his response, wants to assure the inquiring brethren that it is not his intention that they be uninformed about these matters. The Thessalonians had concluded that "those who sleep" (the sleep of death—being a rather gentle euphemism) would miss the victories and glory of the Lord's return. They were looking for assurance that this was not the case.

The phrase itself (we would not have you to be ignorant, or uninformed) is similar to one Paul had used in other epistles when he was in the process of introducing new and important instruction (1 Cor. 10:1; 12:1; Col. 2:1; Phi. 1:12). Occasionally he also uses it in communicating something personal, something in which he exhibits a special interest (Rom. 1:13). Here in particular he now begins to supply their deficiencies (1 The. 3:10) by providing knowledge in a very gentle and loving spirit—and in a way not of rebuke but of encouragement.

Not unexpectedly, we can see that Paul's answer is in fact relatively plain and simple: Christians who have died will be raised (from their "sleep") to join the living at Christ's coming. However, for a number of reasons (generally to propose a false doctrine) this has appeared to many readers as too simple an explanation. This passage has therefore elicited considerable literature, not to mention a great deal of eschatological speculation, much of which seems extremely removed from Paul's primary concern—to offer reassurance to these relatively new converts in Christ regarding a recent death (or deaths?) among them. The one thing that seems certain as a

presupposition on their part regarding the *parousia* (“coming”) is its relative “nearness”; otherwise, their concern makes very little sense at all. The concern clearly is not intended for people **in general** who have died, but only for those who were members of the church in Thessalonica and who have (apparently though not necessarily unexpectedly) died before the Lord’s expected return.

We want to focus our attention on the two primary concerns covered by the apostle: first, what will happen to those who have died in the Lord, and second, how the Lord shall come and what that would mean for the Thessalonians and also for us today. The first concern is more pertinent when viewed in the historical context, while the second issue was one not only of tremendous importance for those brethren in first century Thessalonica, but also is one that has been exploited by many in efforts to bring in false teaching (doctrine) to the present-day church.

THEM WHICH ARE ASLEEP

Our initial understanding of the reasons for Paul addressing **this** subject in **this** manner comes with the obvious assumption that some members of the church had died within the short space of time between Paul’s hasty departure and the writing of 1 Thessalonians (4:13). We cannot now determine how these members died; we need not think in terms of large numbers or necessarily of death by martyrdom—but even one or two deaths would have shaken up the small church *family* in Thessalonica (as it would any congregation of the Lord’s church today). With this in mind, Paul, rather, reinforces a doctrine that, in the most reasonable interpretation, they had heard but forgotten or, perhaps, forgotten how to make the proper application: the resurrection of the saints.

“Those who sleep” (*ton koimomenon*) is an expression that was widely used in antiquity as a euphemism for death both in Greek writings from earliest times and here (in this epistle) chosen in lieu of the “the dead” (4:15) because of the belief in (physical) death as a temporary state for Christians. One might then come to understand that its perceived effects are no more lasting or harmful than sleep if it is eventually followed by resurrection. Paul wants the Thessa-

lonian Christians to know what happens to those who have died, and he gives the reason for this in the latter part of verse 13. He did not want the Thessalonians to be uninformed; so they needed the hope of resurrection (and eternal salvation) so they might not grieve in the same manner as unbelievers (“who have no hope”) without Christ.

When Paul says, “that ye sorrow not...as others” (4:13), these “others” here are “the Gentiles who do not know God” (4:5—NJKV). To be without God unequivocally is to be without hope (Eph. 2:12). *Hope* is looking forward to something with some reason for confidence with respect to fulfillment. The hopelessness of much of the pagan world of that day (and by extension ours) in the face of death was the apostle’s point of reference. Those without hope are the same group of people whom Paul has just called “without” in verse twelve—that is, those who are not members of the Christian family. The contrast really is not between kinds or degrees of grief, but between two groups of people—that is, Christians, who have every reason to hope (in Christ, in the resurrection of the dead), and non-Christians, who do not.

That sorrow of the world is a grief of the one *lost* to them as an earthly being. That grief (loss) is *real* only in the sense of the tangible material world. This is a corporeal temporal loss, as the eternity of that is *lost* on those who grieve, not with any anticipation of the eternal (everlasting) consequences. This grieving is for those without hope, and indeed it is the natural reaction for those who have no positive view or expectation of the afterlife. Paul is not suggesting, but explicitly stating that outside Christ there is no hope of life (that by definition being life with God in His glory) beyond death.

This “sorrow” that the Thessalonians are feeling should not be that filled with **hopeLESSness**, as they who are without God do not have the hope of an eternal resurrection, but rather Paul is attempting to bring the Thessalonians a larger degree of **hopeFULness**. Being **with** hope in the Scriptures always means the expectation of something good. In many passages hope (Gr. *elpis*) denotes not a personal attitude but the objective benefit of salvation toward

which hope is directed (Gal. 5:5; Col. 1:5; Tit. 2:13). Hope is never egocentric but always humbly centered on Christ and on God. This hope does not rest on one's own good works but on God's gracious work in Jesus Christ, who is therefore called "our hope" (1 Tim. 1:1; cf. Col. 1:27). For the faithful Christian, hope is always a confident and sure expectation of Divine saving actions. Hope looks at the coming city of God; faith gives certainty to our hope (Heb. 11:1).

Paul sadly accepted and acknowledged a further reason for the hopelessness of pagans: they had rejected God and acted disobediently in terms of His decrees; they would thus be subject to his wrath in the judgment (cf. Rom. 1:18-32; 1 The. 1:10; 5:9). According to 1 Thessalonians 4:14, another aspect of Christian hope versus non-Christian hopelessness is expressed by Paul (our belief that Christ died and rose again) and is the basis for the comparison between why Christians should not grieve (**without hope**) for their dead while pagans will inevitably (**and continually**) grieve for theirs.

So, as we enter the eschatological part of our study, the flow of thought seems clear enough. The matter is initially presented to the brethren in verse 13: the Thessalonians' sorrow regarding Christians who have died ("them which are asleep") and Paul's concern that those remaining live in hope. The next verse (4:14) then provides the basic reason for not sorrowing as though there were no hope. Faith (belief) in Jesus' own resurrection carries with it belief in the resurrection of "those 'in him' who have fallen asleep." This clause also explains clearly that the issue is not with brethren who are living at the time of the Lord's coming (*parousia*), but with those who have died beforehand. It is in the next sentence (4:15) that Paul offers a preceding word of explanation—a word attributed from Christ to the apostle himself—which anticipates what follows, namely, that the living do not have any superiority or advantage over the dead at the coming (*parousia*). His next sentence (4:16-17a) then spells out in vivid detail the nature of what he has affirmed in the preceding two sentences, whose concern nonetheless remains the same: the dead will be joined by the living at the coming of the Lord, so

(4:17b) both will then be together eternally. He concludes (4:18) by reminding them of what they should do in light of all this: encourage and bring comfort to each other. All of which seems so plain and transparent that one wonders why there has been seemingly endless speculation regarding this passage, which would probably never have happened had it not been for an insatiable desire by so many Christians (later) to know more than Paul has here told the Thessalonians.

THE COMING OF THE LORD

The information given us beginning in verse fifteen provides a flashpoint in the discussion of Pauline eschatology. From the way it is stated, some might argue that Paul believed that he would live to see the coming of the Lord. This, however, overlooks at least a couple key factors: Paul did not know (**could not know**) the time of his death in advance, and he argues that the Second Coming will happen at an unexpected time, like a thief in the night. The Lord could come soon, or He could come later; in either case the indeterminacy of the timing is what fuels exhortations that one must always be prepared and alert. Since Paul **does not claim to know the exact timing of either his own death or the return of Christ**, he could not have said, “We who are dead and not left around to see the coming of the Lord.” In short, he does not know that he will not be alive when Jesus returns, and so the only category in which he can logically place himself and the Christians he writes to here is the “living.”

What these verses surely do imply (at the moment of his writing) is that Paul thought it **possible** that he could be alive when Jesus returned. This means that Paul, until he was much older and near death, always had both possibilities before him. We do not hear the language of possible survival until the “coming” in the later Pauline letters because one of the two unknowns—the timing of Paul’s death—was becoming more likely to precede the other—the Lord’s coming. He did not change his view of the Second Coming or consider it delayed in the later epistles because, without knowledge of when it was supposed to happen, one cannot speak of it as

“delayed.” However, he will set an event marker that informs it will not be soon in the second epistle (2 The. 2:2-3). Paul’s imagery of the thief (1 The. 5:2) implies the **impossibility** of knowing with that sort of precision exactly when this will occur.

This might also be a time to address how/why the meaning of “by the word of the Lord” has often been debated. Some have argued that it refers to a saying of the historical Jesus and should be seen on a par with others of Paul’s texts such as 1 Corinthians 7:10, 9:14, or 11:23. Unlike at least the first of those suggested parallels, we do not have here a direct quotation of a saying of Jesus. Various possible sources of this verse have been suggested, but with the possible exception of Matthew 24:30, the parallels are just at the threshold of supposition, not actual wording (cf. Mat. 10:39; 16:25, 28; 20:1-2; 24:31, 34; 25:6; 26:64; Luke 13:30; John 5:25; 6:39-40; 11:25-26).

A different line of approach has suggested that “by the word of the Lord” refers to a prophetic word revealed to Paul himself by the risen Lord. This is certainly possible and has in its favor the fact that the very same phrase, “by the word of the Lord” (ἐν λόγῳ Κυρίου—*en logo kuriou*) appears in the LXX to indicate when someone speaks for God (cf. 1 Kin. 13:1-5, 32; Hos. 1:1; Eze. 34:1; 35:1). In view of this, it is the view that direct revelation/inspiration is what Paul has in mind as the source of authority for his statements.

We which are alive and remain has two present tense participles; however, the present tense does not necessarily imply that the actions take place in present time, as if Paul were speaking of those now alive and now remaining. Some present participles do not always (necessarily) indicate an action that takes place at the time of the statement. The King James translation restates what the Greek says, no more and no less.

Some Biblical scholars have always tended to overly interpret Paul’s use of the first person plural, that is, “We which are alive and remain.” There is sufficient evidence elsewhere (as we mentioned previously) that Paul did not expect necessarily to live until the Lord’s coming or that, by implication, His coming was near at hand. First, the fact that Paul faced death every day, his lifestyle

could by no means be thought of as normal. With his constant encounters with near-fatal beatings, exposure, imprisonments in unhealthy conditions, malnutrition, bandits, shipwreck, and other threats to life (2 Cor. 11:23-27), one should wonder how he could expect to see any future event, let alone Christ's return.

Second, Paul's intention here is to speak about believers who are living at the time of the *parousia*. He uses "we" for the simple reason that he was then alive and speaks of what living Christians should expect were the Lord's coming immediate. He goes further and includes the Thessalonians in the "we," even though some of them at that moment are facing death. Only the living write and read letters, and so the words are geared to those "who still live."

Third, in other contexts, where appropriate, Paul could speak as if he were identifying with believers who were already dead: "We know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us (the dead) with Jesus and present us (the dead) with you (the living Corinthians) to himself" (2 Cor. 4:14; 1 Cor. 6:14). Paul is offering no prediction in 1 Thessalonians as to whether or not the *parousia* would take place during his lifetime.

The coming of the Lord does not lack clarity, though there are those who would subscribe to a view (a false doctrine) that there is no "Second Coming"—*parousia*—to come, as it has (in their false view) already occurred. By this they propose that the Lord already came in AD 70 (thus finding total prophetic fulfillment in the destruction of Jerusalem), and that the language in Acts 1:11 is **merely** figurative. However, a reading of the passage in Acts 1:9-11 shows the fallacy of that argument at its very core:

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

No acceptable/credible hermeneutical reading here could possibly allow for a **figurative** interpretation of those verses, as it would render the whole context as imaginary. Yet, there are those who would attempt to find here some unequivocal evidence that we are now past the “Second Coming” that the Scriptures so clearly describe otherwise.

In Matthew 24:37 we are told about “the coming of the Lord.” We are told in verse 39 that it will come unexpectedly, just as the flood was unexpected. Continuing in the chapter, we are again reminded that no one knows when the time of the Lord’s coming will be (24:42-50):

Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite *his* fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of

In Matthew 25, we have the entire chapter devoted to scenarios of the Lord’s return to render judgment. The parable of the ten virgins ends with a warning to be prepared (watch) for we know not the day nor the hour (25:13) “wherein the Son of man cometh.” The scene of judgment is delivered with vivid descriptiveness in the verses (25:31-46) that follow:

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on

the left...these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Paul would later give even more explicit detail in his second epistle to the brethren in Thessalonica (2 The.1:7-10):

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

We would also like to point out that a fact mentioned by Paul in the aforementioned verses is also mentioned in Peter's last epistle: the flaming fire. Peter provides more detail with regard to the use of that fire (2 Pet. 3:7-10):

But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

If, as some would proclaim, the Lord has already come, then why is the earth still here? Of course, that would only be a logical question to ask in what perhaps ought to only be a rhetorical question. It is too obviously **not** figurative in that it would require judgment itself to be so.

Those who are living in this earthly body when the Lord returns shall not in any way precede (come before) those who have fallen asleep. This coming (1 Cor. 15:23) is coincident with Matthew 24:31. As we said previously, this is what troubled (created such anxiety among) the Thessalonians. They "sorrowed" on the supposi-

tion that whoever does not live to see the coming will suffer eternal loss.

COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS

When Paul concludes this series of thoughts with *wherefore* (so then, or therefore), he is doing so with the express purpose of reminding the Thessalonians what to do with the information he has imparted. If the Thessalonians properly grasp what the apostle is saying, it will lead them to “comfort one another.” “With these words” are not simply words for emotional support, but, rather, words of revelation that are by their very nature encouraging, on which they should base their speech to other brethren and help them throw away their un-Christian grief.

What is to bring about (the reason for) this comforting (encouragement)? The fact that “the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven” to render judgment is the event that should bring comfort to all faithful brethren. Peter tells us in his second epistle that we should earnestly desire the “coming” of God (2 Pet. 3:12). Those “in the Lord” are comforted by this glorious anticipation because in verses 16 and 17 in the Thessalonian text, the language becomes even more vivid. The coming of the Lord is comforting because we are awaiting the “mansions,” spoken of by the Lord in John 14, that are being prepared for us. The coming of the Lord is comforting to faithful Christians because we are looking forward to a place where there is no night, for the Lord God Himself shall give us light (Rev. 22:5), thereby overcoming their sadness about those who had died or would die before the coming of the Lord. The basis of the consolation was to be Paul’s assurance, **based on a word from the Lord**, that the living and the dead (who will be raised) will be assumed to heaven together with the Lord Jesus when He comes at His *parousia*.

Paul draws a picture of those meeting Jesus: first by those faithful brethren who have died, and then with those who are still alive. As is made quite clear (1 The. 4:16), Paul connects the resurrection of believers who are dead with the *parousia* and with the meeting of Christ in the air. The coming of the Lord precipitates these other

two events. Paul also makes quite clear (4:16) that we are dealing with a very public event, one announced not only by a loud command, as one might hear on a battlefield, and the voice of the archangel (Jude 9), but also by the trumpet call of God, though some have erroneously supposed these may be three ways of referring to the same sound. The images are martial, as if Jesus were summoning His army, and Paul seemingly considers the dead in Christ to be persons who can be “awakened” or “addressed.”

This is not an event that he supposes to occur soon, as he writes in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3:

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.

Nevertheless, the encouragement here is for perseverance, knowing that a victory has been won. Paul further strengthens the faith by giving emphasis to the expectation of seeing “the Lord Himself” coming down from the heavens. John also gives us another description and aspect of this final coming inaugurating the final judgment:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:25-29)

This is when “the dead **in Christ** shall rise first,” and there are no indications in the text or grammatical structure that indicate a millennial period between this and those dead **not in Christ**. All that

is stated here is that, after those who are dead rise, those (in Christ) who remain (are alive) will then rise and join them.

CONCLUSION

Now that the Thessalonians have been given a new understanding of one aspect of the Christian faith, they no longer need to grieve over the final outcome of those who have died. What Paul tells them and assures them can (should) change their sadness into a bold and confident hope; they can now be comforted and encouraged by this direct and specific teaching of the Lord's, and, as a result, they are to comfort, encourage, and give hope to one another.

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EXPOSITION OF 2 THESSALONIANS 2:1-12

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And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day (2 The. 1:7-10).

The subject of the Lord's coming (*parousia*—coming to be present; presence) remained indelibly etched in the minds of the brethren in Thessalonica, as can be ascertained by Paul again addressing the subject in this second epistle (written shortly after the first). The verses above are from the first chapter of that letter (2 The. 1:7-10) and are being discussed elsewhere; so we have alluded to them here only as a point of reference for the chapter we are examining (the second) and what Paul is imparting to the brethren with more clarity on a very specific (and still to the Thessalonians, confusing) subject. One might see this as an extension of the first letter and the comfort that Paul hoped to dispense to these brethren regarding the Second Coming of the Lord that had been the source of so much anxiety (and in need of such detailed explanation).

Paul's cogent argument, which begins at 2 Thessalonians 2:1, starts with an appeal ("now we beseech you, brethren") rather than

an exhortation or a command. The verb itself (*erōtōmen*) is the standard Greek word for requesting something from someone. There is an earnest urgency in the request **as well as a call to pay heed** to the instruction they are about to receive. The very nature of the art of persuasion is making effective appeals. Paul introduces an appeal or request similarly in 1 Thessalonians 4:1 and 5:12. Here, again, Paul immediately reminds his audience about something he has comprehensibly spoken of before: the “coming of the Lord” (*parousia*) and the gathering of the believers to Christ at His coming. These subjects were initially addressed in 1 Thessalonians 4 and 5 respectively.

Now, however, the apostle reveals the degree of disruption this concern has generated in the community (and the reason for it as well). Again the primary concern is **when** the coming of the Lord will take place, and it has reached this stage of urgency because some false teaching has permeated the church with the notion that it has taken place already. This is easily understood by simply reading the first two verses of the chapter (2 The. 2:1-2):

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

It is clear that Paul feels the need to bring closure to a subject that need not persist as a source of inquiry leading to worry, concern, or especially spiritual insecurity. Later, the apostle speaks of our having boldness (Eph. 3:12), which at this point, one can say the brethren here lack. Being secure in one’s faith is essential for growth in all areas of Christian living (especially with regard to hope) and Paul does not want false teaching, teacher, or ideology to derail the spiritual guidance these brethren have been given by allowing someone (or something) to divert their current direction. Even today Christians can sometimes easily become unsettled or alarmed when spiritual matters of doctrine are unclear, under attack, or falsely attributed, which certainly is the case here. So this occurrence, though historical, is not locked within the historical framework (meaning self-

contained) of the first century, rather the contemporaneousness of the topic is alive and **well** today.

In addressing this section of Scripture we will break down a number of phrases and provide some lucidity as to their intent and meaning, along with a look at current teaching that is not **only** similar, but also **similarly false** and error-laden.

THAT YE BE NOT SOON SHAKEN

The first chapter of Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians leads us very quickly to the notion that someone has become a very serious impediment (detriment) to the spiritual growth of the congregation and generated a chaotic upheaval of spiritual doubt and insecurity. The words used in English to describe the situation regarding the brethren there are *troubled* and *shaken in mind*, which have more literal translated words that are synonyms with similarly precise descriptions: afflicted (ASV, ESV, and NASB) and tribulation (NKJV) being the most often found in other translations.

The general external persecution these brethren were facing provided enough of a challenge, but here we see added an egregious and nefarious effort to undermine the truth of God by directly subverting the faith of brethren from **within** the brotherhood. Another New Testament example that also focuses on this particular error, and pointed out by Paul **as error** is found in Paul's later epistles to Timothy (2 Tim. 2:16-19):

Shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; **Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.** Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

The means of doing that (overthrowing faith by saying the resurrection was past) then had no specific name, but today a very similar teaching/doctrine is called *Realized Eschatology*. *Eschatology* derives from the Greek word, *eschatos*, which means "last." Its primary area of concern is with the Biblical doctrine of "last" or "end-of-time"

subjects/topics. The variety of doctrines associated with this unusual set of interpretations embrace such (collective or individual) matters as the return (or Second Coming—*parousia*) of Christ, the end of the world, the Day of Judgment, and the resurrection of the dead.

One sector of eschatology is currently known as “preterism.” *Preter* comes from an original Latin form of the word, *praeter*, meaning “past.” *Preterism*, then, can briefly be described as “an interpretive ideology that idiosyncratically interprets selective portions of Bible prophecy, generally associated with the Day of Judgment, as having been already fulfilled.” It would be easy to see how this might cause disruption to the faith and strong elicit consternation from the apostle.

One popular radical view of this doctrine was put forth by James Stuart Russell (1816-95), a denominationalist in England. Russell wrote the book titled, *The Parousia*, which was published in 1878. Russell’s idea (which obviously is not new) is that the Second Coming of Christ and the Day of Judgment are not **future events** at the end of the current dispensation. Quite the opposite, the particular prophecies relating to these events (according to Russell and many of those who have errantly followed in his steps) were fulfilled with the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. The result of such leads preterists to teach that there is, therefore, **no** future “Second Coming” of Christ (**this would completely eliminate the subject of “hope” as established by God regarding our being raised with Him in the coming of His glory**). In addition to that malarkey, they assert that there will be no resurrection of the human body (essentially calling Jesus a liar—Mat. 22:25-33). Laughably (or sadly), that would mean that the final judgment and the end of the world have already taken place—along with the destruction of Jerusalem.

If we consider the major points or arguments regarding the Lord’s Second Coming, the resurrection of the dead, the Day of Judgment, and the end of the world, dissect them and expose the obvious divergence from Scripture, it will allow more time to excavate the issues of the Thessalonians more easily. Though there were times in which the Lord came in a representative manner (a central claim

of the preterists with regard to the “Second Coming”), that which is described in these passages will be quite literal. He will be “revealed” (2 The. 1:7), or “appear” to all (2 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 9:28). One should be reminded that 1 Corinthians 15 was written specifically to counter this error when it appeared in the first century: “how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?” (1 Cor. 15:12). Those who hold to the tenets of Realized Eschatology view the resurrection as a spiritual (or representative) event, not a literal occurrence. This resurrection of which Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 15 has to do with the raising of “dead ones”—not some abstract “cause.” Significantly, the bodily resurrection of Jesus is cited as an antecedent to the general resurrection—in this very context (15:20, 23). Christ explicitly stated that **those who deny the resurrection of the body are ignorant of both the Scriptures and the power of God** (Mat. 22:29).

In addition to those arguments, contrary to preterist doctrine, Matthew 11:22 describes a “day of judgment” that is not limited to (or even associated with) the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. That event (the destruction of Jerusalem) was effectively limited in its effect to/on the Jewish people, but the Scriptures tell us that everyone will participate in the Lord’s coming:

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead (Acts 17:31).

Preterists, however, do not accept an end of the world, except the Jewish world in AD 70. As with the earlier points against this error-ridden doctrine and philosophy, one should also ask about the viability of the Lord’s comments concerning the Great Commission, meaning that if the world ended in AD 70, the call to preach/teach the Gospel is no longer necessary. A simple question is, “Has the world ended?” or rather, “Is that a serious question?”

Though one can look back at this from our present vantage point and vividly see the error of this doctrine, during the first century the idea of the Second Coming already having occurred was not so eas-

ily dismissed. There not being any “New Testament” Scriptures to reference, Paul here fears that these converts were disturbed by their continued confusion concerning the day of the Lord. He again explains the purpose of this epistle to his readers: (to paraphrase: in order that they not be quickly shaken from their spiritual comfort nor disturbed). The expression “That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled,” stresses the need for the brethren to be consistently vigilant against the possibility of wavering in their beliefs regarding the eventual, but not necessarily imminent, coming of Christ.

The second portion of the thought (“to be troubled”) is in the present tense and continues to indicate an ongoing state of mental anxiety or emotional disruption that Paul worried had been precipitated by some external factors. These factors had been manufactured by someone (wolves very likely within), giving the impression that this information (that the Lord had already come) **was coming from the apostle**, causing agitation for Paul, which is why he is covering (2 The. 2:2) the various means by which these false teachers must not be allowed to penetrate their consciousness: “neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.”

Through some *spirit* expresses the idea that this **revelation** refers to ecstatic utterances that were made by someone among the Thessalonians themselves who may have claimed to have had the spirit of prophecy. The other methods, (allegedly) by word or as a letter directly from the apostle are clearly aimed at the possibility of devious misrepresentation: “**as from us.**” Paul, therefore, is warning them ahead of time that this “**the day of the Lord**” is **not upon them.** Which surely suggests that certain vile **errorists** of that day were even then alleging that the Second Coming had already occurred.

THE MAN OF SIN

With so much mystery shrouded in the identity of this “man of sin,” the best way, perhaps, to address this is by seeing what the Lord has already revealed to us regarding his character:

Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be re-

vealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming (2:3-8).

The thought of the Second Coming **not** being imminent needed more assurance from the apostle as he stated the importance of their steadfastness in the faith; that they allow nothing (and no one) to shake their faith nor prohibit them from maintaining their spiritual perseverance and good works. Still, with what he had written in the first letter (1 The. 4:13-18; 5:1-2), it required something more substantial in terms of timing (though knowing that no one could offer specifics) to assuage their concerns. In an exceptional example of revelation, Paul divulges (or perhaps one should say that God through Paul reveals) that the Second Coming of the Lord (the Judgment) would **not** take place before there was a “falling away” first. He is so emphatic (“do not let anyone deceive you in any way”) that this would **not** occur until this “falling away” (literally rebellion) is engineered that there should have been quite a relief for this Divinely-delivered assurance (which is not what we might have today). Here the apostle makes explicit, as do virtually all translations from KJV onwards, an idea which is implicit in the Greek and which Paul would have expressed if he had not broken off his sentence at the end of verse 2. The key clause in verse 3 is literally “unless the apostasy comes first.”

In conjunction with the “falling away,” the “man of lawlessness” must be revealed. Arguments have been made as to whether the “falling away” is political or spiritual in the attempt to interpret this and the following verses with regard to “time” and element. Some have argued that this relates to the ancient Jewish state or Satan himself, while others have asserted that it describes pagan Rome.

Certainly one can make two points vigorously which will help put the issue into focus, and a the third is common sense. On the most fundamental level, neither Judaism nor pagan Rome can be understood as a “falling away” from what Paul is describing here. The immediate context clearly identifies this as some **movement** that is **an apostasy from the church (or Christianity)**. This apostasy is a desertion from the army of God, a recantation of faith in Christ. Our Lord and Saviour foretold that when “iniquity shall abound, the love of the many shall be blown cool” (Mat. 24:12). Additionally, neither Judaism (as practiced in the Old Testament) nor pagan Rome even exists today (so neither of these will likely be in existence at the time of the Lord’s coming). Satan was already known and not likely needing to be “revealed.”

These factors, which were directly related to the question of the Second Coming, are also easily understandable, precise, and exact evidence against those who would contend (then and now) that the resurrection had come and gone (as Paul addressed in his epistle to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:17-18) or that it occurred in AD 70. These loony ideas are parts or sections of a larger Realized Eschatology ideology (here again as a reminder of their foolishness): (1) That the Second Coming of Christ took place in AD 70, and as a result, there will be no future return of the Lord; (2) That the resurrection of the dead took place with the fall of Jerusalem, and there will be no future resurrection of the body; (3) That the Day of Judgment coincided with the Roman invasion of AD 70—with the subsequent false doctrine that there is no judgment yet to come; and (4) that the incredulous assertion that **the end of the world** took place when the Jewish system ended in AD 70 with the fall of Jerusalem. Therefore, any Biblical references to the end of the world actually relate to the end of Judaism, not this material globe. One would be hardly capable of taking any of these claims seriously were it not for the fact that so many people have (this includes brethren)—and in the face of **overwhelming** Biblical evidence to the contrary.

The evidence against these false claims is abundant. With the Scripture stating that the Lord would not come until a “falling

away” first appeared, and there not being any great apostasy recorded from the time of Paul’s writing of this epistle to the destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70), this demonstrates, with a force equal to the apostle’s original argument, that the Second Coming of Christ **did not** take place with the destruction of Jerusalem. In addition, during the period of Paul’s writing, no one appeared (as the “man of sin”) with the characteristics presented by Paul **before the fall of Jerusalem**, either.

One has to consider that the two mentioned “signs” are related, and that the identifiable element would be the “man of sin” (or lawlessness), who is tied to or inherently responsible for this “rebellion.” The “falling away” that is coming is **before** the Lord returns. The Greek word used for *falling away* is found in our English word *apostasy*, which generally refers to a defection from the religious ordinances of (or religion ordained by) God. One might also notice that the phrase actually contains a definite article (the falling away; the rebellion), which indicates the apostle is identifying a specific action or definitive movement.

This “man of sin” had not yet (at the time of the writing) been “revealed” (2 The. 2:3), which does not mean that the process had not begun, but that the one who ultimately would come to personify, embody, and symbolize that rebellion had not yet made themselves (been made) known. No one could be unequivocally identified as this figure. This lawless creature’s primary quality is sin, and included is the fact of this figure’s perdition or destruction by the Lord Himself (2:8). This personage is opposed to the righteousness of God and elevates himself against what is sacred and holy. He is representing himself to be God. He sets himself up in “the temple of God,” which is too obviously not a reference to the Jewish temple, as it is no longer referred to in that manner in the New Testament. This figure is an echo of the depiction found in Daniel 11:36:

And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

This man of sin will be the ultimate result of this “falling away,” as it is the falling away (the rebellion against all truth and righteousness) itself that identifies the lawless one. He will have no regard for the law of God as he elevates himself against all that is right and holy, but he will give every appearance that he **is** God through his pontifications and sitting in a place to be worshipped (with people kissing feet and rings) and adored (which shows his own arrogance as he mimics the throne in heaven by his actions). He could not be revealed in the “present” time frame Paul spoke of because he was being withheld. Likely the significance is that of a larger governing power, operating under individual rulers. Unlike the “man of sin,” whose identity was to be revealed later, the first-century brethren knew intimately of this restraining force (by the phrase “now ye know”). This indicates that the restraining power was a contemporary entity (current Roman rule), not a modern or future one.

This power would eventually be taken out of the way to allow this lawless one to reveal himself (2 The. 2:6-7). Thus, this man of sin, though having roots during the time of first century Christianity (2:6), would nevertheless endure, in some form or another, until the end of time—the Second Coming of Christ. Then (at the Lord’s coming) he will be destroyed by the Lord’s Word of Judgment (2:8; Rev. 19:15). In view of this, the man of sin cannot be some persecuting enemy that faded into oblivion centuries ago, as alleged by the preterists.

Who is the man of sin? All evidence taken into account only points in one direction. Though there is not time nor space to examine all of the theories, the one most conservative scholars agree on directs us to the papal dynasty of the apostate church of Rome. This apostasy did not spring up overnight, but it was the result of a gradual apostasy from the original faith. Paul declared, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith” (1 Tim. 4:1). He then goes on to detail some of the traits of this movement (4:1-4): forbidding marriage and commanding to abstain from meats, etc.

The pope claims that whereas Christ is the head of the church in heaven, the papacy is the head of the church on earth. Yet, Jesus affirmed that He alone possessed “all authority...in heaven and on earth” (Mat. 28:18—ASV). Paul stated that Christ is “the head [singular] of the body, the church” (Col. 1:18). The papacy presumes to act for God in matters pertaining exclusively to Deity, an example being their offering forgiveness of sins (not to mention indulgences). For example, in Catholic doctrine, absolution is considered a judicial act whereby a priest forgives the sins of a penitent who has contrition (repentance), has made confession, and promises satisfaction. Is there any clearer evidence needed that the papacy sees itself as the equal of God (only God can forgive sin), which by those very acts places them in opposition to God, with doctrines that are completely and utterly false (infant baptism) with regard to the Word of God as revealed by His apostles and other writers of the New Testament? The “man of sin” has been revealed, and it is the papacy in its entirety.

THE WORKING OF SATAN

Paul emphatically informs the brethren (2 The. 2:9) that Satan is the agent who works in the man of sin, he being the organ or instrument of Satan. That Satan is the root of the lawless one’s deception is explicit and undeniable. Satan is at the root of all error, and this working of error (using lies) is of such a grand scale that Paul is indicating its immensity as a counterpart to the Lord’s coming and as a correlation to final judgment. Religious errors and false teachers were present during the apostolic era, but there was no worldwide perpetration as yet on the scale that was to be introduced with the rise of the papal system. It is not to be supposed that the man of sin will be enabled to perform real miracles (they are the wonders of falsehood) but still by them his followers will be deceived. The powers displayed by the lawless one will be impressive but will originate from an evil source.

The language of power, signs, and wonders is used in 2 Corinthians 12:12 of the distinguishing sign of the genuine apostle’s work; so here Paul indicates that these are deliberately misleading or false

signs (Mark 13:22) and wonders. (One could also compare Romans 15:19 which again speaks of Paul's apostolic work. Acts 2:22 uses these same three things characterizing Jesus' ministry, and Hebrews 2:4 applies this same sort of language to God.) Paul, understanding the power of Satan and using the inspired revelation from God, prepares the brethren that the "man of sin" will be endowed with every kind of powerful display, both signs and wonders based on falsehood.

We might better describe it in that the miracles of Christ were miracles of truth; the miracles of the "man of sin" would be miracles of falsehood. There does not seem to be any essential difference between powers, signs, and wonders, but the words are employed as a mere rhetorical enumeration. It is not to be supposed that the man of sin will be enabled to perform real miracles (they are the wonders of falsehood), but his followers will still be deceived by them (Mat. 24:24). What is let loose then is not Satan's power to do miracles, but his power to deceive (power and signs and wonders that mislead means "counterfeit miracles")—that is, people become more gullible and fall for fakes and tricks that are not supernatural. Satan's deceit is of course "unrighteous," a genitive of description. His target is "those who are perishing." We may compare this with 1 Corinthians 1:18 where "those who perish" is contrasted with those "who are being saved." For those who are perishing, the Gospel message is foolishness.

STRONG DELUSIONS

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And like-

wise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient (Rom. 1:21-28).

These verses give, or represent, a longer description/illustration of what Paul writes regarding God allowing error to *work* in this world. When the apostle is explaining to the brethren the *why* of such undertaking, they need only re-read Paul's statement: "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (2 The. 2:10) as it aptly portrays the mind of those whom he is later describing in the Romans letter as well. The notion that God would **send** them error is preposterous (God cannot lie—Tit. 1:2), but that He would allow them to believe error as a result of their disposition toward sin is entirely reasonable. God did not hinder, but rather allowed, a power to be set in operation within them (as Satan entered the heart of Judas or those given over to a reprobate mind), which makes them prone to embrace error or be led astray, in the sense that to be misled by falsehood is the Divine judgment inevitably incurred in a **moral** universe by those who close their eyes to (or **received not the love of**) the truth.

In 2 Corinthians 4:4 Paul describes them as those in "whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." This being the working of Satan that is explicitly stated in 2 Thessalonians 2:9, by which "the lie" emphatically represents/meant a denial of the fundamental truth that God is God; it is the rejection of His self-revelation as Creator and Savior, the righteous and merciful Judge of all, which leads to the worship due Him **alone** being offered to another (the pope?), who would, of course, be the "man of lawlessness." What is remarkable here is the allowance by the people, rather, that they will not only accept wrong information, but they will trust what is not even worthy of trust. Paul, alluding to their willingness to put their faith in an utter fraud ("the lie"), indicates they were struck with confu-

sion so they cannot distinguish between the truth and the lie. In the end, **they believe the lie as if it were the truth**, which is one of the oddest sounding truths we have in the New Testament. Yet, as strange as this kind of judgment may seem to us, it is unequivocally in harmony with the Biblical evidence, which shows the way God gives sinners over to (allows them to continue in) the very sin and error they have embraced (Psa. 81:12-13; Rom. 1:24, 26, 28; 11:8; 2 Tim. 4:4).

That which emanates from the “man of sin” does so that they **should** believe a lie—or rather, **the lie**—namely the falsehood that the man of sin disseminates by his deceit of unrighteousness (**under the cloak of righteousness**). Being destitute of the love of the truth, they are necessarily led (by their own lusts) to believe a lie; their minds are then open to all manner of falsehood and delusion. If we return to Romans 11:8, Paul (quoting Isaiah 29:10) tells how God has given unbelieving Israel “the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear.” Here God is sending “strong delusion,” but the true God is not the deliberate author of this infatuation; it is, as Paul puts it in 2 Corinthians 4:4, “the god of this world” (or we might paraphrase it as the “activity of Satan” in 2 Thessalonians 2:9 above) who “hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

A similarly dangerous lie is being foisted upon the public today in the guise of “higher knowledge” in interpretation by those immersed in Realized Eschatology. The Lord provided us with a means to expose (Eph. 5:11) this charade with His Word, and we would be remiss if we did not “contend for the faith” regarding this error.

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EXPOSITION OF 2 PETER 3:1-13

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INTRODUCTION

There are three great watershed events in the world's history that have a common thread and demonstrate the goodness and the severity of God. The first is the flood from which Noah and his family were saved and in which the wicked perished (Gen. 6-8). The second is the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah from which Lot and his family were delivered, but in which the wicked perished. The third is the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, in which—according to Josephus—1,100,000 Jews perished, but from which Christ's faithful, who observed His warning in Matthew 24, were delivered. The common thread running through each of these cataclysmic events is God's deliverance of the faithful and His destruction of the wicked. Each of these events demonstrates the coming final judgment by Jesus Christ (Acts 17:30-31; Mat. 25:31-46), God's goodness in granting eternal life to the faithful and His severity in meting out eternal punishment to the wicked on that day. The end of the material world and an exhortation to ready ourselves for it, opposing those who scoff at the Lord's promise to return, is the thrust of Peter's teaching in 2 Peter 3:1-13.

In the introduction to his commentary on 2 Peter, Guy N. Woods said this epistle was written, "to guard them [the saints] against the errors being industriously propagated by false teachers"

(144). Among those, he wrote, was “a repudiation of the teaching of the apostles regarding the judgment, the end of the world, and the destruction of the heavens and the earth” (144).

This very epistle, written to guard against “a repudiation of the teaching of the apostles,” has been perverted by the proponents of “Realized Eschatology” (hereafter RE) to prop up their insidious heresy that the resurrection, the final judgment, and the end of the world all occurred in Jerusalem’s destruction in AD 70.

2 PETER 3:1-4

Peter wrote both epistles “to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1 Pet. 1:1). That is deduced from his words: “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance” (2 Pet. 3:1). That which he would have them to remember were, “the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour” (3:2). *Holy prophets* are key to the error of RE. A significant characteristic of RE is their use of Old Testament prophets and prophecies to bolster their position. That is also a marked characteristic of Millennialists. Both attempt to prove their errors by the Old Testament. The only difference between the two are their conclusions, both of which are erroneous. The RE says the end of the world and Christ’s kingdom came in AD 70, while the Millennialist says the kingdom will come in the millenium, after which the world will end. Ignoring the fact that all prophecy was fulfilled in the redemptive work of Christ, both believe and teach that the Old Testament prophets pointed to something beyond Calvary. While He was dying on the cross, Jesus said, “It is finished.” That meant the termination of His redemptive work, which included fulfilling all that was written in the law, the prophets, and the Psalms concerning Him (Luke 24:44). All Old Testament prophecy has been fulfilled. The Old Testament prophets focused on Jesus Christ’s first coming and His revelation of truth (Heb. 1:1-2). In these last days, God, “hath spoken unto us by *his* Son” and does not speak through either the Law or the Prophets (Mat. 17:1-5). RE is fatally wrong.

Don K. Preston is a disciple of Max King's AD 70 doctrine. In his attempt to place the end of the world in AD 70, Preston is in a footrace with the Millennialists back to the Old Testament to *prove* his point and focuses on *holy prophets* in 2 Peter 3:2.

Proof Peter has the Old Covenant prophets in view is found in his terminology, that is to say, how he refers to the prophets. He says he writes to remind his readers of "...the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets..." ...we maintain that when the NT writers refer to the prophets which have spoken or written before it is always allusion to OT prophets (4).

The close connection of *apostles* and *prophets* in this verse renders it unlikely that Peter refers to Old Testament prophets. The same association is found in Ephesians 2:20 where Paul wrote that the church is, "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*." Of the revelation of the "mystery of Christ," hidden in ages past, Paul said it has now been, "revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. 3:5).

It should be recalled that at the time when Peter wrote, the New Testament revelation had not been completed; and unable to appeal to it as a final and complete body of truth in the matters under consideration, it was necessary for him to direct his readers to the announcements of the prophets and to the oral deliverances of the apostles (Woods 180).

Peter did not recall things of the Law and prophets to their minds, but of extant utterances of inspired men in the first century. Preston fails to prove that Old Testament prophecy was not fulfilled until the fall of Jerusalem.

After telling his readers that they should remember the warnings of the Lord through His apostles and prophets about His coming, he wrote:

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation (2 Pet. 3:3-4).

Last days is another which REs have redefined to suit their theology. Their definition of *the last days* is “the time between Christ’s first coming and Jerusalem’s destruction in AD 70.”

Thus, when Peter said scoffers would come in the last days, he was not looking into the far off future. He was, as is evident not only from other books but as we shall see even further from this chapter, speaking of his own time, the waning days of the Jewish Age (Preston 25).

Eph. 1:21: “Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” The statement “this world” was in reference to the Jewish age, which had not yet ended, and the statement “that (age) which is to come” was in reference to the Christian age, which would abide and follow the end of the Jewish age. The last days, therefore, *never* apply to the Christian age, but *always* to the closing period of the Jewish age, which ran from Pentecost to the fall of Jerusalem (King 79).

In his quotation of Joel’s prophecy, Peter said, “And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God... And it shall come to pass *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:17, 21). Those are the first and last verses of the quotation. If calling on the name of the Lord is requisite to salvation (and it is) no one can be saved today, according to Preston and King, because the “last days” ended in AD 70. Their doctrine has Joel saying, “And it shall come to pass in the closing period of the Jewish age.” That means no one living past that “age” can “call on the name of the Lord.”

The last days is the Gospel dispensation that will last until the Second Coming of Christ in final judgment of the world, not merely until AD 70, and Peter warned of false teachers who would come during that age. If the last days ended in AD 70, then we should not expect any false teachers today. That is the consequence of King’s inane doctrine. Foy E. Wallace wrote:

In the third chapter of his second epistle, Peter, like Paul, cautioned the dispersed Christians against deceivers. He said that all along during “the last days”—all through the gospel dispensation,

on until the end of time, there would be such men to trouble the churches.... The promise of the Lord's coming was never used by the apostles as a theme for curiosity and speculation. Yet some extremists in our own brotherhood have seized upon the doctrine of the second coming and have attempted to make a *prophecy* out of a *promise*. They are teaching theories no less fanatical than the theories of Adventists, Russellites, Mormons, Christadelphians, and a horde of others of various shades and colors (262).

Although brother Wallace was refuting millennialism, he also described their blood brothers, the RE crowd. Both teach that Christ will not receive His kingdom until His Second Coming. The only shade of difference between King's crowd and the Adventist/Russelite crowd is that the former says Christ received it in AD 70, and the latter say it will be received when Christ comes at the end of the world.

The scoffers of whom Peter wrote did not cease their ranting against the Lord's promise in AD 70. They remain with us today. They are the uniformitarians who are willfully ignorant of the changes in nature. The earth on which we live today is not the same earth God created in the beginning (Gen. 1:1). It is vastly different from what God pronounced as *good* (4:4). Evolutionists assume that the earth today is what it has always been, vainly delving into the fossil records believing they will reveal our origin apart from God.

2 PETER 3:5-7

“By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water” (3:5). The seas of the earth are all connected and the dry land appeared when the waters were “gathered together unto one place” by the power of God's Word (Gen. 1:9; Psa. 33:6-9; Col. 1:16-17).

Whereby in 2 Peter 3:6 refers to the “water” of verse five and Peter says it was by this that the world perished, referring to the flood in Noah's day. The world that God created in the beginning “perished.” When Noah emerged from the ark, he was no longer in the world he left, but in a different one—a world now tilted 23 ½ degrees on its axis, a world in which animals feared man, a world with mountains created by upheavals in the flood, a world with

storms brought about by the cataclysm, a world in which bacteria and viruses would emerge. It was far different from the perfect creation Noah left behind and it would never again be the same. No, all things do **not** continue as they were from the beginning of creation, and the *creation* was not a spiritual one. Peter refers to the material world, and it is **this material world**—“the heavens and the earth” which “are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” that will be destroyed at Christ’s Second Coming (2 Pet. 3:7).

2 PETER 3:8-9

Peter disputes the scoffers’ contention that Christ has reneged on His promise to return. Men have always been wont to view God as they view themselves (Psa. 50:21). A continuation of “all things as they were from the beginning” was (and is) considered from man’s viewpoint. A man who borrows a sum of money, promising to, “pay it back later,” without a stipulated time, is considered to renege on his promise if 10 or 15 years intervene without repayment. Men look at God in the same manner, but Peter says, “be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (2 Pet. 3:8). Of that phrase, brother Woods writes:

“With the Lord” signifies the manner in which the Lord regards time. With Him, a thousand years is as a day; a day is as a thousand years. This does not mean that a day in “God’s calendar” is a thousand years long, as materialists allege.... The meaning is that the passing of time does not affect the promises and threatenings of God. Whether it be a day or a thousand years between the time of promise and the reward, the threatening and the retribution, God will perform it. In this he is wholly unlike man, who, the greater the interval between the promise and the fulfillment, the less likely that he will accomplish it (185).

God is not bound by time. The fact that the world is still standing is **not** *prima facie* evidence that Christ will not come. He has so promised, and He cannot lie (Tit. 1:2). Nor has He forgotten.

Peter delineates the reason for the long period between the promise and its fulfillment. God is “longsuffering to us-ward, not willing

that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9). The long delay in Christ’s Second Coming springs not from any “slackness” on God’s part, but from His love for man and His determination to allow all to repent and come to Him in obedience. Though untold numbers will be lost eternally, that is not God’s wish. He desires the repentance of all. Now, if the return of Christ was delayed only between His ascension in Acts 1 and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, is God no longer longsuffering? Does God no longer desire man’s repentance? Do REs preach that men must repent today? If God’s longsuffering “in the last days” (per their definition of that term) was to give time for repentance, then repentance is no longer required since the last days ended in AD 70. If not, why not?

2 PETER 3:10-13

“The day of the Lord” is another of the AD 70 crowd’s redefined terms. They say it is simply God’s judgment on Israel in Jerusalem’s destruction. Like the millennialists, they pull their *proof* about “the day of the Lord” from the Old Testament. However, “the day of the Lord” of which Peter writes does not refer to a **local** judgment on a particular people or nation. He writes of the **final** judgment of all mankind, and says it will “come as a thief in the night.” That term does not describe the stealth of a thief but the unexpected nature of his coming. The destruction of Jerusalem could hardly be described as *unexpected* when the siege of that city lasted for months and had been promised by the Lord with signs preceding its destruction. On the other hand, Christ’s Second Coming will occur without signs or warning. The Lord said He would come at a time when men were going about their daily lives, “as in the days of Noah” (Mat. 24:37).

In that day, “the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:10). Max King’s devious doctrine perverts this verse by redefining *heavens*, *earth*, and *elements*.

Why are the elements ascribed to the “heavens” rather than the “earth”? Peter said, “...wherein the heavens being on fire shall be

dissolved and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.” (2 Pet. 3:12). It would seem more natural to speak of the “elements” of the earth rather than the heavens, if the material world were the subject. However, the interpretation of the Jewish world gives a natural explanation for elements being placed in the heavens, as seen from the meaning of the word. The word element in the scriptures means “the rudimentary principles of religion...the elementary principles of the O.T., as a revelation from God, Heb. 5:12, R.V.” This same word is found in Gal. 4:3, 9 where it is used in reference to the rudimentary principles of the Jewish system. Since law or government is involved in the meaning of heaven, it follows that the rudiments or elements of Judaism properly belong to the region of heaven. These were the elements that would melt with fervent heat, fire being a symbol of destruction (186-187).

In answer to a question sent to him on the Greek term for *elements*, brother Daniel Denham wrote:

The word in 2 Peter 3:10 is from *stoicheion*. King is disingenuous when he argues that the term only means “the rudimentary principles of religion,” et al. Surely, he is aware that it also can be used of “elemental substances” in the sense of “the basic elements from which everything in the world is made” (BAG, p. 776). The sidereal heavens, which are what is specifically contemplated, are as material as the physical earth, and in fact Peter expands the thought in the very next clause to include in the scope of the verse the destruction of the world and its “works” which shall be “burned up” (*katakaio*), which itself suggests consumption by fire (expressed already specifically in v. 7 and implied in the expression “fervent heat” in v. 10). The Greek word for “elements” in 2 Peter 3:10 is *stoicheia*, the plural of *stoicheion*. Perschbacher applies it to the “natural universe” in 2 Peter 3:10 (The New Analytical Greek Lexicon, p. 379) (E-mail).

The eminent 19th century commentator, Adam Clarke, offers this comment on the creation and the elements in Genesis 1:1:

“The particle *eth*,” says Aben Ezra, “signifies the *substance* of the thing.” The like definition is given by Kimchi in his *Book of Roots*. “This particle,” says Mr. Ainsworth, “having the *first* and *last* letters of the Hebrew alphabet in it, is supposed to comprise the *sum* and *substance* of *all things*.” “The particle *eth* (says Buxtorf, Talmudic Lexicon, sub voce) with the cabalists is often mystically put for the *beginning* and the *end*, as alpha and omega are in the Apocalypse.”

On this ground these words should be translated, “God in the beginning created the *substance* of the heavens and the *substance* of the earth,” i.e. the *prima materia*, or first elements, out of which the heavens and the earth were successively formed (29).

King says the *elements* of the universe are figurative. He insists that **all** prophecy is figurative, unless it does not fit his hobby, and, of course, **he** is the *final authority* in determining what is figurative and what is literal—the convenient tactic of a false teacher. Like a Moslem *martyr*, King and his disciples are in for an eternal surprise at death, or when Christ returns.

Having described the world’s final destruction in verse 10, Peter exhorts us to be ready for that day in our “conversation [manner of living] and godliness” (3:11). Of those two words, brother Woods writes:

These words—living and godliness—are, in the Greek text, plurals, *livings* and *godlinesses*. They thus sum up all the duties and characteristics of Christians. In view of the transitory nature of the world and all that belongs to it, children of God should cease their concern about it and fix their attention on those matters that are eternal (187).

The exhortation in verse 11 is further explained in verse 12: “looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God.” Don Preston says, “They were looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God” (31), but the word is not *hastening*. Brother Wallace explains the difference between those words.

The word “hasting” is archaic, obsolete in general use but adapted to special context or biblical language. Though the word is seldom used now it is significant and full of meaning in the context of 2 Peter 3. *Hasting* does not mean hurrying—it is not a form of the word *hastening*, but a different word altogether. The expression *hasting unto* denotes making circumstances favorable, a readying of conditions. Peter’s use of the word *hasting* then is an exhortation to get ourselves ready for the Lord’s coming and by so doing the conditions of society will grow favorable for its occurrence. It is an admonition to faith and hope, “looking for,” that is, *living for* it. We look for it by living for it (266).

Emphasizing again the destruction of the present heavens and earth, Peter then assures us that, “we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (3:13). King and his cohorts set forth another fantasy concerning “new heavens and a new earth.”

The non-millennialist, often referred to as the amillennialist, is also faced with problems as a result of applying 2 Pet. 3:10 to this material world. First, since he has concluded that the world passing away is literal or material, he must now decide the nature of the new heavens and earth of 2 Pet. 3:13. Is it a literal or spiritual world? Again, men are divided on this question. However, if something in the text demands a literal application to the world of verse 10, why doesn't the world, the new one, of verse 13 also demand a literal interpretation? What is the basis for saying one is literal and the other is spiritual? If such a change in the nature of the world is without textual support, why could not a reverse interpretation be made of the nature of these two worlds? If it is a matter of choice, we could have either spiritual, both spiritual, or both literal.

Another difficulty that arises out of the traditional view is that when Christ comes at the end of the world (this present literal world) all the saved are going to heaven and all the lost to hell. This makes the new earth of 2 Pet. 3:13 a little superfluous, to say the least, unless God is going to put somebody there besides the saved or the lost! If that be true, Peter had no right to look for more than new heavens (2 Pet. 3:13, 14). But he said we look for both, new heavens and a new earth (43).

To prop up his heresy, King says that the “new heavens and a new earth” are figurative (“spiritual”). He is right in that those words are a figurative description of a literal place, but then he jumps in bed with the Jehovah's Witnesses in his insistence that the physical heaven and earth are not intended to be dissolved at the last day. King's imaginative meanderings about the new heavens and new earth are clearly refuted by the following from J. Noel Meredith:

There are two Greek words translated “new” in the New Testament: One is prospective and indicates that which is young as opposed to that which is old; the other is retrospective and points to that which is fresh in contrast to that which is worn and deteriorated. The second of these words, *kainos*, is used here. The heavens and

the earth, which Peter describes, are fresh and new, not worn and old, as are the heavens and the earth which now exist. In the new heaven and earth dwelleth righteousness, and it is here that righteous people live (466).

The present heaven and earth is the place where man now lives. Man is a creature of two worlds. He lives on the earth, from which he gets his food, and in the heavens, from which he obtains the air he breathes. Man cannot live long in either environment exclusive of the other. When man travels to outer space he must take an earth environment in order to live. Since man is a creature of heaven above and the earth below what would be more fitting than to describe his future abode by the same terms used in a figurative sense? So the present heaven and earth serve as a figure of the new heaven and earth to follow. In the antitype, the new heaven and new earth are regarded as a metaphorical designation of the future abode of the righteous. The place where the Father is—heaven—is the final abode of the people of God. Therefore, the new heavens and earth are simply heaven where our Lord is, and from which place He will return to claim His own and to take us back there with Him (467).

Guy N. Woods refers to the same Greek word, *kainos*, further explaining and refuting King's theory.

In this new heaven and earth righteousness will dwell. Righteousness dwells wherever righteous people live. The heavens and the earth here contemplated will, therefore, be the abode of righteous and obedient people.... From a careful consideration of the matters set forth in the foregoing passage, these facts seem to appear: (a) The present heavens and earth serve as a figure of the heavens and earth to follow. (b) The words "heavens and earth" are not intended to embrace all of God's material universe, but only that portion where His people dwell. (c) In the antitype [sic], this limitation must be understood, and the words "new heaven and earth" must then be regarded as a designation of where his people dwell, and not a detailed description of the future abode. (d) Heaven is the final abode of the people of God. (e) Therefore, the phrase "new heavens and earth" must be understood as a designation for *heaven!* (188-189).

CONCLUSION

Paul said the Galatians were "removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another;

but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ” (Gal. 1:6-7). That describes Max King and the AD 70 crowd. They have perverted the Gospel of Christ with their doctrine, which is “not another,” for there is only one. The Gospel mixed with error is no longer the Gospel and is as dangerous to the soul as a drop of arsenic in a glass of orange juice is destructive to the body. King’s doctrine does to the soul what Jim Jones’ “Kool Aid” did to his disciples’ mortal bodies in Guyana. Satan added a single word to God’s prohibition in the garden and deceived Eve and his minister, Max King, has taken a lot of truth, perverted it with his devilish doctrine, and corrupted the souls of all who follow him.

It is amazing that brethren suddenly *discover* a new truth we have not known since inspiration ceased and foist it on gullible hearers. Max King and Mac Deaver are two who come to mind. Despite King’s exegesis of 2 Peter 3, this material universe **will** come to a fiery end when Jesus comes in the air, all the dead of mankind **will** be resurrected, **all shall stand** before the judgment seat of Christ, the wicked **will** be banished to everlasting punishment and the righteous **will rise** with the Lord to the new heaven and earth—the eternal abode of righteous souls, saved by the blood of Christ.

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DOES REVELATION PROVE REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY?

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PRELIMINARY MATTERS

Without a doubt, Revelation is one of the most difficult, yet intriguing, books in the Bible. The apostle Peter said that some of the things Paul had written “in all His epistles” were “hard to understand” (2 Pet. 3:16). Certainly, what Peter said of Paul may also be applied to Revelation. There is no doubt, due to the symbolic nature of John’s writing, that Revelation, especially between chapters four and twenty-two, is indeed challenging. Of course, at the very outset of the book, John prepares his readers for how his message would be revealed. He says it was going to be “signified” (Rev. 1:1). When something was said to be *signified*, it was to be represented with “signs”—symbolized. The *sign* is insignificant compared to that which it represents. What it represents is most significant. Essentially, the *sign* does not matter, but what it communicates does. Being a representation of existing reality, a *sign* always points to something else. This symbolized message would be imbedded in the book’s literary form which consists of three genres:

Virtually all interpreters recognize that Revelation comprises three genres: letter (epistle); prophecy; and apocalyptic. The genres have been merged or mixed together. Therefore, as Beale puts it, “the most preferable view is that Revelation is a prophecy cast in an apocalyptic mold, and written down in a letter form in order to

motivate the audience to change their behavior in the light of the transcendent reality of the book's message" (Menn 182).

Revelation is prophetic in nature because it points to events soon to be fulfilled. It is apocalyptic, which is also a Jewish genre of literature, using symbols to convey Divine Truth. However, like all the other New Testament writings, Revelation was a circular letter to be shared and copied with other churches in the first century. While it may be "hard to understand," Revelation, like Paul's writings, is not impossible to understand! In providing the verbally inspired (and authoritative) Scriptures, God revealed His mind and Will. The implication is that Scripture is to be understood alike by all because it is God's revelation to mankind. John says what he was writing was: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:1), a phrase that should be identified as *Genitive of Source*, meaning Jesus is the source from which John received the revelation. Some, on the other hand, suggest the phrase is a *Plenary Genitive*, meaning both the *Subjective* and *Objective Genitives* are used simultaneously, creating an intentional ambiguity, to convey a deeper meaning.

However, John is not revealing the Person of Christ so much as he is revealing the "**things** which much shortly take place" (1:1), which is further qualified by: "Blessed *is* he who **reads** and those who **hear** the **words** of this **prophecy**, and keep those **things** which are **written** in it; for the time *is* near" (1:3). Therefore, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* is objective genitive—the message or revelation that was from (derived from) Christ, consisting of: (1) of a prophecy, (2) containing words both to read and hear, and (3) things needing to be kept which were written down. While the book is replete with "deeper meaning" due to its symbolic representations, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" refers to the Genitive of Source or Objective Genitive—the message John was told to write down. Unquestionably, however, the most common interpretive error in reading the symbolism of Revelation is to confuse the symbols of the book with its message. The symbols are not the message; they carry and embody the message.

John was writing to be understood. He was convinced his readers would understand and be blessed for having done so. Contrary to popular opinion, Revelation is not a **secret book** with hidden mysteries waiting to be revealed by some modern-day prophet with a calculator. It has already been revealed! There are no more secrets in God's plan of salvation! Revelation is just that—a revealing or unveiling of God's plan. *Revelation* translates the Greek *apokalupsis*, which is a compound word consisting of *apo*, meaning “off of” or “away from,” and *kalupto*, meaning “to cover” or “to hide.” Therefore, the word picture we have before us is that of removing a cover off of something. In this case, *revelation* means an uncovering or unveiling of that which was previously hidden or unknown. It is the revealing of Christ's will—or as John wrote, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” In fact, John tells us that he is going to reveal “things which must shortly take place” (1:1).

PERIOD AND PURPOSE OF REVELATION

The occasion and purpose of Revelation is not only to reveal those “things” that will shortly occur, but also to encourage the Christians to stand fast in the faith. Poythress provides a good summary for the purpose of the book:

Revelation is addressed to seven churches in Asia Minor, which is today part of western Turkey. Each church receives rebukes and encouragement, in accord with its condition. Persecution has fallen on some Christians, and more is coming. Roman officials would try to force Christians to worship the emperor. Heretical teachings and declining fervor would tempt Christians to compromise with pagan society. Revelation assures Christians that Christ knows their condition. He calls them to stand fast against all temptation. Their victory has been secured through the blood of the Lamb. Christ will come soon to defeat Satan and all his agents, and his people will enjoy everlasting peace in his presence (55).

John is told to write seven letters to seven churches who find themselves in the epicenter of a Caesar cult in Asia Minor, which began with Jupiter Julius (Julius Caesar) the father of the Roman Empire in 46 BC, to Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus (born Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus) who died in AD 68. Julius

Caesar (Jupiter) was voted into the hierarchy of the gods by the Roman senate, calling him “divine Julius.” His successor, Octavius, took on the title “Augustus,” meaning “venerable, worthy of reverence and worship.” Tiberius was worshiped, when the Roman senate voted to build a temple for him in Smyrna. Caligula, so convinced of his Divinity, erected a colossal image of himself in the temple of the Jews in Jerusalem. Claudius believed the spiritual supremacy of the state was paramount, being summed up in the phrase, “Caesar is Lord” (Burge and Green 36-446). This philosophical pretense was common among the people, including the Jews. When Pilate wanted to release Jesus, the Jews cried out, “Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar,” and when Pilate responded, “Shall I crucify your King?” the Jews answered, “We have no king but Caesar” (John 19:12, 15). A generation later, Nero succeeds Claudius and is worshiped not only as “Lord” but also as “Savior.” It is within this milieu John admonishes the seven churches to stand firm in the conviction that Christ, **not** Caesar, is both Savior and Lord! John writes:

Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.... He was granted *power* to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed (Rev. 2:10; 13:15).

It should be noted that the Jews are equating the title of “king” with the title of Caesar, making them synonymous; a concept which Suetonius, Josephus, Dio Cassius, and the Sibylline Oracles all refer to. “Caesar” was the family name of Julius, making him the first Caesar, which was also applied to subsequent Roman emperors or kings (cf. 17:9-11).

Revelation discloses things that “must shortly take place,” or things that were “at hand” or things that must “soon take place” (Rev. 1:1, 3, 22:6, 7, 10, 12, 20). When Jesus says things will happen “shortly,” He must mean “shortly.” When He says something is

“at hand,” it must certainly be near. And when He says “soon,” He must mean “soon.” Jesus is not linguistically challenged. He is not referring to thousands of years into the future or some other disproportionate time frame. Rather, He is using the language of the Old Testament prophets and is speaking to a crisis looming on the horizon, associating vindication for His people along with it. In fact, when Jesus uses *near* with reference to the fig tree and its “putting forth leaves,” He specifically says “you know that summer *is* near” (Mat. 24:32). In like manner, with regards to the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem, Jesus says, “So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!” (24:33). In a manner of a generation this prophecy would take place, not in hundreds or thousands of years later. Revelation is replete with Old Testament Scripture, demonstrating that the audience to whom John is writing was familiar with the Old Testament. In fact:

Of the 404 verses in the book of Revelation, seemingly **278** of them make some allusion to the Old Testament. That is **68.8%** of the verses! And some of these verses contain two, or even three, allusions to the Old Testament (emphasis added) (Lyons).

Revelation is a recapitulation of Old Testament, Jewish history, ranging from the Garden of Eden to Babylon, with the many references coming from Genesis, Leviticus, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah.

This brings us to the controversial dating of Revelation, which I humbly accept as being prior to AD 70. Since this is not a discussion about the dating of Revelation, and since there is too much information to include here, I will simply offer one “theo-philosophical” reason why, not only Revelation, but also all the books of the New Testament were written prior to AD 70.

As mentioned previously, Revelation is replete with Jewish history and with graphic Jewish imagery. Why, then, would John (and Jesus) not mention anything concerning the fulfillment of the greatest prophetic statement made concerning the Jews? Why is there nothing written concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple, and the end of the Jewish nation? Why does John write so

much about Jewish history, yet does mention anything concerning the greatest moment in Jewish history? Geisler asks it this way:

If you and your fellow followers write accounts of Jesus after the temple and city were destroyed in A.D. 70, aren't you at least going to mention that unprecedented national, human, economic, and religious tragedy somewhere in your writings, especially since this risen Jesus had predicted it? Of course! (qtd. in Hanegraaff 156).

Clement of Alexandria speaks to the end of inspiration and the close of the New Testament canon prior to AD 70:

For the teaching of our Lord at His advent, beginning with Augustus and Tiberius, was completed in the middle of the times of Tiberius. And that of the apostles, embracing the ministry of Paul, end with Nero (Miscellanies 7:17).

The Gospel Accounts retell the detailed story of Jesus, His teachings, and His prophetic statements, including the destruction of the temple. Certainly the fulfillment of such a prophecy as that of the destruction of the temple, one which the Deity of Christ relies upon for its fulfillment, would have been retold as well. The omission of the fulfillment of Christ's prophecy of the destruction of the temple seemingly provides overwhelming evidence, internal or otherwise, that the entire New Testament had been completed and written down before AD 70. If Revelation was written prior to AD 70, then the view which has as its central theme the events leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem would fit the best.

However, this view does not necessarily imply that **all** future events have been fulfilled. It is my studied conviction, that most of Revelation can be outlined with Matthew 24 (the Olivet Discourse), including Matthew 23:31-39 as well. Jesus answered His disciple's questions: (1) "Tell us, when will these things be?" (2) "And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and the end of the age?" (24:3). He answers the first part of their question, referring to the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem (24:4-34), then the second part, which deals with His Second Coming (24:36-51). Revelation simply unfolds and expands upon these events and questions of Matthew 24.

PRETERISM—REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY

A person claiming the entire New Testament was written prior to AD 70 is sometimes referred to as a “preterist,” but that is not necessarily true. Claiming the entire New Testament was written before AD 70 has no connection to claiming **all** Bible prophecy has been fulfilled. *Preterist* has come to be defined as a person who maintains that the prophecies in the Apocalypse have already been fulfilled, which I believe is a poor definition. The Latin word *preter* means “past, bygone, or former,” referring to one who believes any specific or given prophecy to have been fulfilled (occurred in the past). Just about anyone can be labeled a *preterist* who believes some prophecy has already been fulfilled. For instance, if one believes the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ has already occurred, then they are viewing that event from a “preterist” viewpoint—it occurred in the past. Therefore, it is imperative to understand there are varying degrees of **preterism** concerning just how much of Biblical prophecy is to be considered “preterate” or past. Anyone claiming that **all** Bible prophecies have been fulfilled, including the Resurrection of the dead, the Second Coming of Christ, and the Judgment are “full preterists” or “hyper-preterists.” Anyone claiming that some or most Bible prophecies have been fulfilled are “partial preterists.”

Associated with Full-Preterism or Hyper-Preterism (as opposed to Partial-Preterism) is Realized Eschatology (hereafter RE). For our purposes, anything that has been *realized* has already taken place. Having been fulfilled it has been **realized**. *Eschatology* is “the study of last or end time things.” It is comprised of two Greek words: *es-chato*, meaning “last,” and *logos*, meaning “word” or “study.” Therefore, RE is the study of already fulfilled end time things, such as the Resurrection, the Second Coming, and the Judgment. Therefore, Full Preterists or REs believe **all** prophecies in the Bible, and specifically in Revelation, have been fulfilled. The question now is does Revelation prove RE?

Preterists advocating the dogma of RE affirm that **all** end time events were fulfilled. When the Roman armies destroyed the temple and Jerusalem, the Second Coming of Christ, the Resurrection of

the dead, and Judgment are said to have occurred in AD 70. Therefore, REs claim the Second Coming, the Resurrection, and the Judgment are all past are now past, having been fulfilled (“Realized”). These preterists are REs or “Hyper” or “Full-preterists.”

It cannot be stressed enough that Partial-Preterists, such as myself, reject the fanciful and absurd doctrine of RE. Those of us believing much or most (not all) of Bible prophecy has been fulfilled, and who still yearn for the Second Coming of Christ, are not so much preterists as we are “exegeticalists”—students of the Bible. REs, on the other hand, consist of “hyper-eisegeticalists” in the line of Hymenaeus and Philetus “who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some” (2 Tim. 2:18). Students of the Bible respect God’s Word enough to know that the Second Coming did **not** occur in AD 70. In fact, God had several, unique “judgment comings” throughout the Old Testament, in which God *came* and destroyed a wicked nation by using another nation as His tool or agent of judgment.

MATTHEW 24—FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

The Bible is replete with the use of figurative language; therefore it is imperative to recognize it. The most common figures of speech in the Bible involve idioms, metaphors, hyperbole, metonymy, synecdoche, simile, locution, parallelism or synonymy, rhetoric, personification, sarcasm, ellipsis, etc. Since I have stated that Matthew 24 is, essentially, an outline of Revelation, I must address the figurative language found in it. The expression “the coming of the Son of Man” and “the Son of Man coming on the clouds” (24:27, 30), referring to the same thing, are both figures referring to Christ’s “judgment coming” in AD 70, in which He “came” and destroyed apostate Israel by using the Roman nation as His tool or agent of judgment. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple was the sign that the Son of Man was in heaven orchestrating His judgment upon His people. The wording of this passage refers us back to the expression, “the Son of man,” found in Daniel 7:13, which Jesus used concerning Himself when referring to His coming (Mat. 24:27). The judgment of Jerusalem was a sign that the Son of Man

was in heaven in fulfillment of Daniel 7:13-14. Here we see Jesus, the Son of Man, coming to the Ancient of days and receiving His everlasting kingdom. This prophecy was fulfilled at the Ascension (Acts 2:30-36). The kingdom received from the Ancient of days is no other than the kingdom symbolized by the stone cut out of the mountain (Dan. 2:34-35), His church (2:44-45). The kingdom of Christ was made manifest to all Israel in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Jerusalem's destruction was a sign that Jesus Christ was the Messiah of God, having all authority (Mat. 28:18).

In Matthew 26:63-64, Caiaphas, the high priest, asks Jesus if He is the Son of God, the Messiah. Notice the similarities between Jesus' answer to Caiaphas with what He said in Matthew 24:30: "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Jesus told Caiaphas, "you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the power" (26:64). He said to His disciples, "they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven" (24:30). He told Caiaphas, "you will see the Son of Man...coming on the clouds of heaven" (26:64). He told His disciples, "they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (24:30). Matthew is speaking of the same event in both passages.

It is significant to note Caiaphas' response to Jesus in Matthew 26:65. He understood the implication Jesus made, because only God is the One who can be said to be "coming on the clouds." Similarly, in Mark 14:62 it says they would see Him "coming with the clouds of heaven" while He is "sitting at the right hand of the power." Jesus' coming with the clouds was proof of His authority and reign, sitting on the right hand of power. Caiaphas knew the symbolic language Jesus used was the same language the prophets used concerning God, which was symbolic of His judgment.

For instance, God's coming in the clouds revealed His judgment upon His enemies. In Isaiah 20, we see God coming in the clouds as a figure for God using the Assyrians as instruments of His wrath upon Egypt: "Behold, the LORD rides on a swift cloud, And will

come into Egypt; The idols of Egypt will totter at His presence” (Isa. 19:1). God came to Egypt in judgment in 480 BC. His presence was made known in judgment, but it was the Assyrians who were literally present. Similar language is used of Nineveh’s fall (Nah. 1:3, 5-6). God, Himself, did not literally destroy Nineveh. He did not literally come out of heaven riding on the clouds as some cartoon might picture it. Instead “coming on the clouds” referred to the Chaldeans and Medes capturing the Assyrian capital of Nineveh in 612 BC (Spielvogel 46). In using the symbolic or apocalyptic phrase, *coming on the clouds*, Jesus was demonstrating His authority as both Messiah and Judge. After all, not only was He the heir of the language used by the prophets, but He also supplied it to them.

The prophetic language of the Old Testament clearly shows that the Lord coming on a cloud symbolizes His coming in judgment, and this very same symbolism is carried over to the New Testament when it speaks of Christ coming on clouds. Jesus came in judgment, not literally, not physically, and not visibly. The Jews witnessed His judgment but saw Him not, but Jesus did “come in the clouds” (judged). Jesus came on the clouds using Rome to carry out His judgment upon the Jews. A similar metaphor is found in the subsequent verse: “And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (Mat. 24:31).

We know the “coming on clouds” is figurative based on the usage noted previously, but we also know it is figurative because the “coming on the clouds” precedes Matthew 24:36-51, wherein Jesus answers the second part of His disciples’ question. It is here Jesus speaks of His Second Coming. Moreover, when Jesus told His disciples that He would “come again” to bring them with Him (John 14:1-2) He mentioned *again* only one time. He did not say **again and again**. So, the *coming* mentioned in Matthew 24:27-31, must be figurative. This proves that the doctrine of RE is false. Any one aspect of this multifaceted monster, shown to be false, brings down the entire heretical eschatological system.

When we consider the use of the *trumpet*, we know that it was used to call the people of Israel together (Num. 10:2) and on the Day of Atonement in the year of Jubilee in releasing slaves and debts. It should be noted here that AD 70 was a year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:9). The trumpet was used to call the perishing and the outcasts to worship God together (Isa. 27:12-13), which is the same gathering the prophet mentions earlier (11:1-12). This is the idea we draw when read of the gathering from the four corners of the earth.

These “judgment comings” of God in the Old Testament consisted of God using one nation as a tool of His judgment to destroy the apostate Jewish nation. In the same manner, the “coming of the Son of Man” in Matthew 24 is symbolic language for Christ’s punishment and the Roman army was His tool of judgment.

ALL PROPHECY NOT “REALIZED” IN REVELATION

I believe most of us would agree that Revelation would not be our primary reference book we would use to teach someone how to be saved and to understand the fundamentals of the faith. It would not be the primary book to prove faith, repentance, confession, or baptism. It would not be the book to turn to learn about the one church, the one Spirit, the one hope, the one Lord, the one faith or Gospel, the one baptism, or the one God and Father (Eph. 4:4-6). For all of these, we would consult other books of the Bible. Even if we were to going to teach a class on Eschatology, Revelation would be the last book we turn to, no pun intended.

While the concept of RE has been around for a long while, many of the arguments have not. In fact, like Deaverism (and other false and heretical systems), many of the arguments of RE have evolved and are continuing to evolve. In fact, I will be so bold as to claim that there really is no such thing as a formal system of RE, because it is simply a group of men having many unsound ideas, with a constant effort of forcing their ideas into a particular text. For instance, RE advocates disagree among themselves over various matters to the point of division. In fact, some today disagree with Max King who is one of the major pioneers and influences on RE. Some present-day advocates of RE might even call him a false teacher. Some have

gone so far as to publicly declare that those denying the necessity of baptism in denominations are saved and are their brethren, as RE evolves into universalism.

However, some of the strongest arguments for a preterist interpretation of Revelation come from within the book itself. The first would be the imminent time of fulfillment statements found in the beginning and end of the book (Rev. 1:1-3; 22:6-7, 10, 12, 20). The second is the statement found in Revelation 11:8: “And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” These were the bodies of the two witnesses which would lay in the streets of the Harlot City, Babylon, which is Jerusalem. I will address these two points later.

Of course, some preterists have evolved their view into RE, teaching that not only were **all** the prophecies Revelation made prior to the destruction of the temple in AD 70, but **all** were **fulfilled** by AD 70. Let us see if Revelation teaches such a thing. According to RE advocates, the Kingdom of Christ was not “Realized” and/or not fulfilled until AD 70. Accordingly, King writes:

The fall of Judaism (and its far reaching consequences) is, therefore, a *major* subject of the Bible. The greater portion of prophecy found its fulfillment in that event, including also the types and shadows of the law. It was the coming of Christ in glory that closely followed his coming in suffering (1 Pet. 1:11), when all things written by the prophets were fulfilled (Luke 21:22; Acts 3:21). It corresponded to the perfection of the saints (1 Cor. 13:10) when they reached adulthood in Christ, receiving their adoption, redemption, and inheritance. The **eternal kingdom** was possessed (Heb. 12:28) and the new heaven and earth inherited (Matt. 5:5; Rev. 21:1, 7) (emphasis added) (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 239).

While some in the RE camp teach the kingdom fully came in AD 70, others teach that the kingdom “began” on Pentecost, but did not reach its fullness until it came with “power and glory” (Mark 9:1; Mat. 24:30) when Christ’s judgment and wrath was poured out upon Jerusalem. Either way, the Bible does not teach that the kingdom was either fully established in AD 70, nor does it teach

a progressive establishment of the kingdom, reaching its fullness in AD 70. First, we note what John says about the kingdom in his writing:

I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:9).

While I hold to the “early date” (preterist view) of Revelation, having been written prior to AD 70, RE goes much farther, teaching that the kingdom, itself, did not come until AD 70. Of course, John was unaware of that, since he said he was actually in the kingdom prior to AD 70 when he penned Revelation.

Note what John did not claim. He did not claim to be in a partial kingdom or incomplete kingdom; neither did he claim to be in only some sense or aspect of the kingdom of Christ or that the Coming of Christ made the kingdom more complete or full. On the contrary, John simply said that he was in the kingdom and did so prior to AD 70. The first century Christians were also in the very same kingdom with John (Col. 1:13). The apostle Paul says, “Then *comes* the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power” (1 Cor. 15:24). Please note that coming of “the end” implies the end of all things, including prophecies. Paul is saying that at the end Jesus will deliver the kingdom to the Father. Paul does not say that the kingdom will be made more complete or “Realized.” He simply said, when Christ comes again, He will return the already-established kingdom. It is here we find some similarities between RE and Premillennialism, where both erroneous systems suggest Christ’s kingdom would come at a later time.

Regarding the coming kingdom, Isaiah wrote:

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days *That* the mountain of the LORD’s house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion

shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem
(Isa. 2:2-3).

We can read of the fulfillment of this prophecy in Acts 2, when the kingdom had come with power (Mark 9:1) We know the church is synonymous with the kingdom (Mat. 16:18-19) and that those who were added to the church (Acts 2:47) were also translated into the kingdom (Col. 1:13; cf. 1:2, 18). In the New Testament, we know Paul equates the “house of God” with the church (1 Tim. 3:15). Moreover, the prophet Micah prophesied the establishment of Jehovah’s mountain (Mic. 4:1-3). This passage uses “kingdom language.” Old Testament prophecies typically use the phrase or idiom “mountain” to symbolize that which is a kingdom (cf. Dan. 2:35, 44-45; Isa. 13:4; 41:11-16; Jer. 51:24-26). Therefore, according to both Isaiah and Micah, when the “mountain” of the house of God will be established and exalted, all the nations will flow into it and the Word or Law of the Lord will go forth out of Zion (Jerusalem). Both of these prophecies were fulfilled before AD 70.

The very fact that the church and the kingdom may be used synonymously, as well as the fact that both are connected with the descriptions “house of God” and “mountains,” demonstrates that if there is only one church or body (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23), then there cannot be “churches.” If there is only one church, then there can be only one kingdom, not kingdoms (Dan. 2:44, 7:14). Moreover, Daniel said the kingdom would be given to the Son of Man when He ascended to the Ancient of Days (7:13-14). When did that occur? Jesus ascended back to the Father in heaven ten days before Pentecost (Acts 1:3, 9-11; 2:1). Again, this is some forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70.

As noted previously, some within the RE persuasion teach that the kingdom “began” to be established (one part or aspect) on Pentecost, and progressively developed over the forty-year period until it reached its fullness when it came with “power and glory” in AD 70. Of course RE advocates take Mark 9:1 that “the kingdom of God come with power” to have reference to Jerusalem’s destruction. However, the apostle Paul refutes that silly notion. Paul says

“glory” was in the church/kingdom and was to be “forever and ever” (Eph. 3:20-21). Paul also says power existed in the church/kingdom before AD 70 saying, “For the kingdom of God *is* not in word but in power” (1 Cor. 4:20). Since there is only one kingdom, then there is absolutely no difference in meaning between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of God, especially since Paul makes no distinction between the two. The kingdom, then, whether described as the “kingdom of Christ” or the “kingdom of God,” was in existence when Paul penned the book of Ephesians and, specifically, Ephesians 5:5.

No inspired writer of the New Testament speaks of a partial kingdom. No inspired writer of the New Testament speaks of an incomplete kingdom. The kingdom is not spoken of as having any missing parts. The kingdom is not spoken of as being anything less than whole. On the contrary, the kingdom, all of it, every aspect of it, was fully and completely established on the Day of Pentecost 40 years before AD 70. Therefore, RE and its false doctrine of the kingdom is refuted by Revelation as penned by John.

Associated with the kingdom is the reigning of its King. Whoever heard of a kingdom without a king? In his Pentecost sermon, Peter declared that God had raised Jesus from the dead, exalting Him to the right hand of the Father making Him both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:32-35). Zechariah prophesied:

Then speak to him, saying, “Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: ‘Behold, the Man whose name *is* the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, And He shall build the temple of the LORD; Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both’ ” (Zec. 6:12-13).

Christ was to build His temple, which Paul says is the church (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 6:16), which was also bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:19-20; cf. Acts 20:28). Just as the kingdom had fully come on Pentecost, so Christ began to fully reign as King on His throne. However, if we are to believe RE, then if the kingdom did not fully

come on Pentecost, then Christ was not fully ruling and reigning as King on Pentecost. If He was not fully ruling and reigning as King on Pentecost, then He did not have all authority. Who could believe it in light of these Scriptures? However, RE wants us to believe that both the kingdom and the King became such in some sense on Pentecost, but the kingdom and the King were not fully the kingdom and King until AD 70. Again Max King writes:

The second stage of the resurrection takes place in conjunction with the Messianic reign of Christ, which we have placed in the period of time between His ascension and His parousia in the A.D. 70 consummation of the age. This means that Christ's reign was an age-ending reign, a transition to "the age to come" (*The Cross and Parousia of Christ* 415).

Where do the words of Zechariah and Peter even hint at the progressive fullness of both the King and His kingdom from Pentecost until AD 70 or that both Christ's kingdom and Kingship would evolve in stages? Not only is the Scriptural evidence missing, the logic is as well.

Another aspect that must be considered is Christ's Priesthood. According to Zechariah's prophecy, when Christ began ruling as King after building His temple, He would also become "priest on His throne." The Hebrews' writer points out that Christ began serving as Priest "when He had by Himself purged our sins" (Heb. 1:3). Now the purging of sin as Priest and His ruling as King are simultaneous, but just when did His Kingship rule and His Priestly duty of purging sin begin? The Hebrews' writer explains that all of this began when Christ "sat down at the right hand of Majesty on high" (1:3). His sitting down is representative of His ruling and reigning as all ruling Kings sit on the throne of authority and majesty. The writer of Hebrews was not finished. He goes on to say, "Now *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (8:1). The inspired writer declares at the time of his writing that Christ was serving as High Priest at that very moment and was seated at the right hand of the throne of Majesty at

that very moment, which is well before AD 70. According to Max King and all REs, however, Christ was not King, He did not have a kingdom, and He was not High Priest, until AD 70. In claiming the end of all things occurred on AD 70, then not only does RE reject the aforementioned Scriptures, but it also rejects the fact that Christ is **presently** serving as our King, that His kingdom **presently** continues, and that He is **presently** serving, not only as a Priest, but as our High Priest. The pathetic view of RE is that there is no hope for anyone living after AD 70. There is no answer to the problem of sin and death, because all things have ended. Physical life just winds down. Again we note Max King:

When the temple is destroyed, the world ends. The ending of the world is the coming of Christ. The coming of Christ is the fall of Jerusalem, or the destruction of the temple, etc.... ALL would come to pass before that generation passed into history, and that included the coming of Christ, as well as the passing of heaven and earth (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 39).

In quoting Psalm 2:9, John writes, “*He shall rule them with a rod of iron; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels—as I also have received from My Father*” (Rev. 2:27). Again, if John is writing Revelation prior to AD 70, then at the time of the writing, Christ received from the Father (past tense) His ruling authority, then Christ was ruling, not in part or in some measured sense, but as fully King, having full rule. To buttress this point, John records the Words of Jesus, declaring: “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (3:21).

Zechariah said Christ would rule from His throne upon the completion of His temple, the church, which was established on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2. It was on this very day that Peter declared Christ to have been raised from the dead, and exalted by God, sitting at the right hand of the Father (2:32-35). John in His Revelation tells us, plainly, that Christ had already “sat down” with the Father. When did Jesus sit down with the Father? When He was exalted by the Father being made to sit at His right hand on His

throne. When did that occur? When God raised Him up. All of this occurred forty years before AD 70, when Christ was ruling as both Priest and King, purging sin through His atoning blood. Revelation in no way proves a partial or incomplete Kingdom, Kingship, or Priesthood. Instead it clearly demonstrates that Christ was indeed ruling from His throne, just as John said, long before AD 70.

CONCLUSION—ACTS 1:11 AND REVELATION 19:19-20:15

It is not in the scope of this presentation to discuss any particular approach to Revelation or to give a defense to any one particular view. We all need to be independent thinkers, providing what best explains this wonderful book based upon reasoned evidence. However, as I said at the outset, we can understand this book. We may not understand every detail completely, but we can certainly understand what the book is about and be confident that we know it. Most importantly, we must recognize that the “sum of thy word is truth” (Psa. 119:160—ASV) as a guiding principle; it will help us in our understanding. Whatever conclusions one might reach about this book cannot contradict what is so plainly stated in the other twenty-six books of the New Testament. Any view of Revelation which contradicts even one passage from any other New Testament book is the wrong view and needs to be abandoned.

For instance, in speaking of Christ’s ascension and Second Coming, Luke writes, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11). It is a very simple and straightforward statement of fact. The apostles witnessed Christ ascend **into heaven**, and in like manner Christ will be witnessed when He comes again. Yet, in spite of this straightforward passage, RE advocates tell us Christ’s ascension was not seen. This implies that Jesus’ Second Coming cannot be seen, either. Their argument rests on their denial of the bodily resurrection which implies that Christ’s resurrection was not bodily.

While this verse [Acts 1:11] is generally cited to prove that the glorified Jesus will himself be personally visible at his second coming, it is in fact the case that the glorified Jesus cannot be seen by any

man because his glorified person is veiled, hidden, and enveloped within the cloud of God's presence.... Just as the disciples had not seen Christ going up to heaven, but rather the cloud which veiled him and his Divine Glory, so in the same manner, i.e., hidden within the cloud, he would return. It cannot be stated too strongly: the glorified Jesus himself will not be visible in his second coming for he was not visible in his ascension, but rather hidden (Otto 257-58).

This contradicts the plain statement of Acts 1:11. Concerning Christ's ascension, two men in white (presumably angels) specifically say, "as you **saw Him** go into heaven." Yet the RE advocate tells us that the Lord's "disciples had not seen Christ going up to heaven." It is amazing how someone could distort the straightforward language of this text. To reject such plain language demonstrates the desperate measures some will take to sustain their false doctrine. Of course, the point here is that, just as Christ's body was raised from the dead, so will ours. Concerning the resurrection, Paul writes, "And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power" (1 Cor. 6:14). Moreover, John tells us that when Christ is revealed (known by seeing), "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2). Whatever is true of Christ's resurrection and His body, will be true for us. As Christ's resurrection was an individual resurrection, so will ours be. This all demonstrates that the resurrection of the dead is bodily as opposed to some invisible, corporate style, symbolic resurrection put forth by RE:

There is nothing in Paul's corporate language of the 'body' of Christ that forces us to assume that the resurrection to come (in their day) would involve the literal process of individual corpses coming out of their graves. Instead, the expected eschatological resurrection was the translation of the children of God from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant (2 Cor. 3:18). The death from which we are corporately raised is from sin-death, or alienation from God (King, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, 2002, 309).

Here we see that RE teaches against, an individual, bodily resurrection being viewed. King says that "out of the decay of Judaism arose the spiritual body of Christianity" (*The Spirit of Prophecy* 200). The resurrection is defined as Israel being "spiritually raised from

the grave of sin,” rather than an individual, bodily resurrection of the dead which is a clear denial of the general resurrection.

Since the “sum of thy word is truth” (Psa. 119:160—ASV) is a divinely-established exegetical principle, and since Luke provides us with the foundational principle of the individual, bodily resurrection of the dead, and of the visible Second Coming of Christ by virtue of Christ’s example (Acts 1:11), then any view of the highly symbolic book of Revelation must not contradict the plain teaching of other passages dealing with the same subject, including Acts 1:11. In other words, the more difficult passages should be interpreted in the light of the simpler and more direct statements in Scripture. This is a universal hermeneutic principle for all Bible students. Why should we abandon that principle now? Since RE teaches the Second Coming has already occurred (AD 70), as well as the alleged non-bodily resurrection, which is allegedly the spiritual resurrection of Israel, then the straightforward and factual statement of Acts 1:11 must be consulted when this subject is discussed. This is especially valid when interpreting Revelation.

One of the more controversial chapters in Revelation is chapter twenty, where John mentions **one thousand years** six times (20:3-8). Of course, “one thousand years” is referred to as a “millennium,” or in this case, “The Millennium,” because those subscribing to the faulty view of Premillennialism hold to the idea that Christ is going to return to the earth, establish His kingdom, and reign on earth for “one thousand years.” Of course, this topic will be discussed at length by others in this book; however, one of the main reasons this doctrine is wrong is that the Bible plainly tells us Christ will not set foot again on this earth—ever (1 The. 4:17). When He does appear again, He is not going to establish a kingdom as is supposed, but, rather, He will deliver His already established kingdom back to the Father (1 Cor. 15:24).

While Premillennialism erroneously teaches that this **one thousand years** is to be taken literally, RE teaches that it is figurative and rightly so. Whenever we come across **one thousand years** in Scripture, it is to be taken in the figurative sense (Deu. 1:11; 7:9; Jos.

23:10; 1 Chr. 16:15; Job 9:3; 33:23; Psa. 50:10; 84:10; 90:4; 105:8; Ecc. 6:6; 7:28; Isa. 7:23; 30:17; 60:22; 2 Pet. 3:8; Rev. 20:2-7). The term is always used symbolically with reference to either “many people” or “many things.” In this case, the figure stands for “many years” or simply to an indefinite amount of time. However, RE advocates also use this term to refer their alleged incomplete reign of Christ, which again is said to have been finally made complete at AD 70. While the **one thousand years** is correctly seen as figurative, it is erroneously deemed to be for some forty or so years, between the beginning of Christ’s ministry and the destruction of Jerusalem. Don K. Preston writes:

Our purpose is to demonstrate two things: 1.) That the millennium of Revelation 20 began with the ministry / passion / resurrection of Christ, 2.) That the millennium terminated forty years later at the resurrection and termination of the Old Covenant age in AD 70.... The time of the end (1 Corinthians 15:24) is when Messiah finalized his triumph over his enemies, not the time when he would begin to put down his enemies. Revelation depicts that final victory, “when the thousand years are finished” (20:7). So, in Revelation, the beginning of the millennium is the beginning of Messiah’s conquering work. The millennium reign is the consolidation of Messiah’s rule. The end of the millennium is when that work was perfected.

While Preston correctly views *one thousand years* as figurative, nowhere in Scripture do we find one thousand years being anything less than a very long period time or seen as an indefinite period of time—i.e., an innumerable or immeasurable period of time. It is an absolute impossibility for the term to be arbitrarily forced into representing such a brief period of time as forty years. The term is never used to describe anything less than an over-extended duration, and is consistently used throughout the Bible representing a vast amount of time. Herein lies another blow to Hyper-preterism.

The approach one takes to Revelation dramatically affects one’s exegetical conclusions. I believe that the book itself demands a basically preterist approach, but this does not mean that all of the prophecies in the book have been fulfilled. For instance, while par-

tial or semi-preterists believe nearly all the prophecies in Revelation have been fulfilled, there are differences of opinion where that takes place. It is safe to say that differences will be found between chapter twenty and chapter twenty-two: the end of the book. Just here, Brother Daniel Denham has proposed two significant syllogisms titled, *Revelation Falsifies Preterism*:

First Syllogism:

Major Premise: If it is the case that Revelation 21-22 prophesied of an ongoing state of things that is still in effect, then it must be the case that the prophecy in Revelation 21-22 was not completely fulfilled in A.D. 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem.

Minor Premise: It is the case that Revelation 21-22 prophesied of an ongoing state of things that is still in effect. (Steve Baisden's own statements to that effect!)

Conclusion: It therefore must be the case that the prophecy in Revelation 21-22 was not completely fulfilled in A.D. 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem.

Second Syllogism:

Major Premise: If it is the case that the prophecy in Revelation 21-22 was not completely fulfilled in A.D. 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem, then it must be the case that Full Preterism teaching that all prophecy was completely fulfilled in A.D. 70 is a false doctrine.

Minor Premise: It is the case that the prophecy in Revelation 21-22 was not completely fulfilled in A.D. 70 in the destruction of Jerusalem.

Conclusion: It therefore must be the case that Full Preterism teaching that all prophecy was completely fulfilled in A.D. 70 is a false doctrine (Facebook Notes).

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THE END OF THE LAW OF MOSES

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INTRODUCTION

When God created the world, time began. In time, God dealt with man through different periods and law systems. These all related to one great aim: the reconciliation of man to God resulting from man's sin. These periods and law systems are commonly referred to as *dispensations* in which God was administering His will to man. Starting at the beginning of time, man was under what we generally call the Patriarchal Dispensation. During this time God would work through the heads of the families and those heads served as both priest (in offering sacrifices to God) and prophet (in speaking for God).

With the passing of time, God began dealing specifically with the Israelite nation. At that time He made a law only for the Israelites. Moses reminded Israel, "The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, *even* us, who *are* all of us here alive this day" (Deu. 5:3). With this covenant the Israelites entered into that dispensation called the Mosaic Dispensation. During this dispensation the law by which God dealt with the Israelites was named after Moses because God gave it to the Israelites through him. However,

the Law of Moses was never intended to be applicable either to all men or till the end of time. It looked forward to the coming of the Christ, which would end the Mosaic Dispensation and Law. Paul put it this way: “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. 3:24).

After Christ died on the cross, He ushered in the last dispensation of time, the Christian Dispensation. This period of time involves the dispensing of God’s law through Christ as God’s final spokesman on earth.

GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds (Heb. 1:1-2).

However, the subject of this lesson concerns when the Law of Moses came to an end.

REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY’S VIEW

Those holding the hyper-Preterist views change the thrust of the Bible from the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. For them, the entire Bible centers on the destruction of Jerusalem. It becomes the focal point of history, the most important event in the annals of human history. Thus, the church or kingdom did not come in its fullness on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), but only did so in AD 70. As a side note, since Jesus returns the kingdom to the Father (1 Cor. 15:24) at the “end” (which they claim was the destruction of Jerusalem), the kingdom would never reach its fullness.

As a result, they argue that the Law of Moses continued till the destruction of Jerusalem; however, they also will admit that the Law of Christ was also in effect from Acts 2. Marion Morris called this an “overlapping of the covenants” (39). Max King also states regarding the covenants “they *overlapped* a little” (239).

Don Preston states:

The law did not die at the Cross.... A common view says the Old Testament passed away at the Cross [Preston cites Mat. 5:17-18]. What did Jesus mean when he said the Old Law would not pass

until “heaven and earth” passed away? If he meant the physical heaven and earth then THE OLD TESTAMENT WILL NOT PASS AWAY UNTIL THE DESTRUCTION OF PHYSICAL CREATION. Could it be that...Jesus was saying the Old Law would not pass away until Israel’s World was destroyed? ...this is precisely the case (qtd. in Whitlock 1).

Preston goes on to say, “Those who place the passing of the Law at the Cross have all things fulfilled too soon! ...the law did not pass until the fall of Jerusalem” (qtd. in Whitlock 1).

Preston’s comment regarding having “all things fulfilled too soon” is a key to understanding one of their main arguments. They will appeal to Matthew 5:17-18 where Jesus says:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

They argue that since everything was not fulfilled by the time of the cross (specifically the destruction of Jerusalem), thus the Law could not be taken away at the time of the cross.

This argument gives them little comfort and actually falsifies their own doctrine. In Micah 3:12 the prophet refers to Jerusalem and says it will be “plowed *as* a field.” The prophet says, “Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed *as* a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.” While there is a limited fulfillment in the immediate historical situation with Nebuchadnezzar destroying Jerusalem in 586 BC, its true complete fulfillment is not till AD 135 and the time of Simon Bar Chochba’s rebellion against the Romans as the Jews made an attempt to rebuild Jerusalem and its temple (AD 132-135). Yet, this is 65 years **after** the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Thus, to make the application of their doctrine to Jesus’ statement, the Law of Moses would have had to continue till AD 135 and the literal fulfillment of Micah’s prophesy. However, the nature of their doctrine says that **everything** must be fulfilled by AD 70. Thus, the existence of any prophecy that has not been fulfilled by the destruc-

tion of Jerusalem (viz., Mic. 3:12) falsifies Realized Eschatology (hereafter RE).

Daniel 2 also falsifies RE when the mountain of the Lord's house would break in pieces and destroy the great image representing the four world empires (2:34, 44): Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, Roman. It is agreed that Rome's destruction did not take place till the fifth century: a few hundred years past the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Thus, by the RE viewpoint, the Law of Moses should have continued into the fifth century, but that does not fit their false theology.

WHEN THE LAW OF MOSES ENDED

It is clear from the Old Testament that the Law of Moses was never given as the last and final law God would give. Jesus stated such when He told the Israelites, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39). The Old Testament Scriptures were looking forward to the coming of Christ and His salvation. With that salvation also came a new covenant (testament): "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah" (Jer. 31:31). Thus, let us look and see when the Scriptures inform us that the old covenant Law of Moses would end. Did that Law God gave to the Israelites end at the cross or the destruction of Jerusalem?

Matthew 5:17-18

Since Matthew 5:17-18 is one of the RE's *sugar sticks*, it is important to note that *fulfill* is often used in New Testament teaching to simply mean to accomplish the purpose of a thing. Jesus fulfilled the Law in that He accomplished its purpose. The purpose was to bring men to Christ for the salvation of their soul. When Christ died as our sin offering (John 3:16-17; Rom. 5:8; Eph. 1:7; etc.), He accomplished the purpose of the Law of Moses. It does not necessitate that every prophecy within the Law would be fulfilled.

Then the comment about "heaven and earth" is simply stressing the certainty of His doing so. Jesus was not saying that heaven and

earth would literally pass away or that every jot and tittle would remain in force until heaven and earth passed away. Instead the Law would remain in force till its intended purpose is realized in Jesus. Thus, when Jesus said, “It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost” (John 19:30), He was saying that the Law and its purpose was fulfilled.

Romans 7

After showing that we are made free from sin by the power of the Gospel (Rom. 6), Paul then establishes that we are made free from the Law of Moses by that same power. He uses an illustration to demonstrate the point he is making after stating the principle: “Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?” (7:1). The principle is illustrated by a woman being bound to her husband as long as the husband lives and only free to marry someone else when the husband is dead. However, if she marries another man while her husband is alive, she is an adulteress (7:2-3). The RE doctrine says that both covenants (the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ) continued on at the same time; however, Paul shows that this would be an adulterous situation. Paul makes the application of what he has been saying in verse 4:

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

We are dead to the Law Paul says. Remember that Paul was writing prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and uses a verbal tense (aorist) that indicates completed action or past action that the Romans (and us) are dead to the Law. RE teaches that instead of the Law being dead by the body of Christ, the Law would become dead in the future by and when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman armies in AD 70.

Ephesians 2:14-15

Paul writes:

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace.

Paul is discussing that the blood of Christ saves the Gentiles even as the Jews. Christ is our peace in that He makes peace between man and God but also between Jew and Gentile. Prior to this, there had been a wall of partition between the two that kept them separate and distinct. That barrier was the Law of Moses. It prevented the Jew from marrying or even eating with Gentiles and required them to remain separated from them. To make peace between the Jew and Gentile, Christ abolished the Law, described as “the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances.” *Abolished* means “to make null and void” (Robertson) or “to cause something to lose its power or effectiveness, *invalidate, make powerless*” (Arndt). The question is: when did Christ make the Law “null and void”? The answer is given to us in the next verse: “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby” (2:16). Thus, Christ made the Law “null and void” by the cross. Yet RE says that it was not “null and void” by the cross but the destruction of Jerusalem in spite of what Inspiration says.

Colossians 2:14

This passage is parallel to the passage in Ephesians 2:15. Here Paul writes, “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.” The “handwriting of ordinances” refers to the Law of Moses. Inspiration adds that it was “against us” in that it revealed sin to man and convicted man that he was guilty of sin, but there was never true forgiveness of sins under the Law. Since it convicted man as being guilty of sin but never offered true forgiveness, it was “against us” and “contrary to us.” Thus, Paul affirms that Jesus “took it out of the way” so it is no longer the system of Law to

which man is subject (including the Israelites). Jesus nailed that Law to the cross, in spite of those RE who demand that it continued till the destruction of Jerusalem.

It is also interesting that while Paul has used three aorist tense (showing completed action) participles to show what Christ has done (blotted out, nailed it to the cross, and spoiled principalities and powers), when he says that Christ “took it out of the way,” he uses the perfect tense (action completed in the past with continuing results) in contrast to the aorist. Thus, Christ had already taken away the Law (when Paul writes this which is prior to AD 70) and it will forever remain taken out of the way. This removal of the Law paved the way for the cross to become the source for forgiveness, salvation, freedom, and peace.

Hebrews 7

The inspired writer is establishing that the priesthood of Christ is a greater priesthood than the Levitical priesthood. The writer points out that Jesus could not be a priest on earth because He was not of the tribe of Levi; He came from the tribe of Judah (7:14). Thus, for Christ to be a priest there must be a change in the priesthood from the Levitical priesthood to one after the order of Melchizedek.

If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? (7:11).

However, to change the priesthood, there must be a removal of the Law of Moses and thus a change of the Law.

For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.... For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof (7:12, 18).

While in verse 12 the writer uses *change* meaning “to transpose, to put one in the place of another,” in verse 18 he uses *disannulling* meaning “to abrogate, annulment, cancellation, or the doing away with something established.” Thus, no part of the Law could still stand and Christ be a priest. Yet, REs have the Law continuing till

AD 70 and still claim that Christ was a priest during that time from the cross to the destruction of Jerusalem which Inspiration says is impossible.

Galatians 3:19-25

One of the reasons for the Galatian letter is to combat the false doctrine of the Judaizing teachers. He shows that the promise God made to Abraham that all families of the earth would be blessed in Abraham is fulfilled in Christ. In showing this, he points out that the Law could not disannul the promise (3:17). Paul then states the purpose of the Law.

Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator (3:19).

The Mosaic Law was added to reveal sin and convict man as having sinned, thus showing him his need for a Savior. The Law thus concluded man has sinned: "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (3:22). The law could not save them, but it did point to the One who could: our Lord Christ Jesus. The law was looking to the New Testament system: the faith (3:23).

Then Paul states, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (3:24-25). He identifies the Law of Moses as being a "schoolmaster" or as the ASV and NKJV have, "tutor." Paul specifically states that once the faith came, we are no longer under the schoolmaster or tutor, which is the Law of Moses. He then explains that we are children of God by the faith in Christ by being baptized into Christ. We observe this taking place at Pentecost as Peter said to "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" and that those "gladly received his word were baptized" (Acts 2:38, 41). Thus, prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, the Law of Moses was removed so the Israelites were no longer under it since Pentecost of Acts 2 (the Gentiles never being subject to the Law

of Moses). However, that is about forty years too early for the RE viewpoint as they insist that the Law continued till the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

TWO PROBLEM PASSAGES

There are two passages RE call upon to try and establish their case that the Law of Moses continued to exist till the destruction of Jerusalem. Let us consider these two passages.

2 Corinthians 3:11

Paul is discussing the Old Testament Law and shows that it is passing away or done away. Paul writes, “For if that which is done away *was* glorious, much more that which remaineth *is* glorious” (3:11). Paul is showing that from the time the Law was given, its glory was fading away.

But if the ministration of death, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which *glory* was to be done away (3:7).

Thus, Moses “put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished” (3:13). He is likewise showing that the glory of the New Covenant was not fading away:

Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.... But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *vail* is done away in Christ (3:6, 14).

However, as Paul discusses the fact that the Old was “done away” and “abolished” (3:13), he uses present tense participles. Thus, those holding the RE doctrine advocate that since Paul used the present tense which carries the idea of continuous action, that the Law of Moses must still be in existence when Paul wrote this.

Hebrews 8:8-13

The Hebrews’ writer, as has been previously noted, is showing the superiority of the New Testament system to the Old Testament

system. In doing so, he points out that it has a greater mediator, greater priesthood and high priest, and a greater testament or covenant. The Old prophesied of the coming of this New covenant that God would make in which He would “put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people” (8:10) and where He would “be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more” (8:12). After stating that true forgiveness will be found under this new covenant, the writer states, “In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away” (8:13). Thus, as with 2 Corinthians 3, the RE advocates point out that it is “ready to vanish away” but such implies that it has not vanished away. They then claim it will not “vanish away” till the destruction of Jerusalem and if it has not vanished away when this letter was written, that it must still be in force (between Acts 2 and AD 70).

Answer

Both of these passages are answered in the same way. Both passages are writing from the perspective of the Old Testament time they are dealing with. In the case of Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, Paul is showing that from the time of Moses on, the Law was fading in glory to be replaced by a greater, more glorious covenant that will last. William Baker correctly pointed out:

Paul’s point is not that the old covenant gradually dissipates but rather that its obsolescence is built into it from its inception, signalled by the need for a veil to cover the glory of Moses’ face. It has now been abruptly replaced by the coming of a superior glory open for all to see in Christ through the gospel (154).

The same concept answers the Hebrews’ letter—except from the standpoint of the prophecy in Jeremiah’s time. When the prophecy was made in Jeremiah’s time, the Law was (at that time) ready to vanish away as it was old and worn out. Thus, the Hebrews’ writer was not writing from the perspective of his own day.

There are some who also take the position that these passages refer to the outward forms of Judaism and not the Law itself. They all

recognize that the Law of Moses had been nailed to the cross and its authority ended at the time of these writings. However, the civil aspect and the form of the temple still remained, but even that aspect of the first was ready to vanish away at the destruction of Jerusalem.

There is simply no reason to take the fanciful interpretation of RE regarding these two passages. Both of the two possible interpretations given stand united in the view that RE advocates deny—the Law of Moses was abrogated at the cross of Christ, not in the destruction of Jerusalem.

CONCLUSION

RE has invented a system of theology where everything in the Bible becomes centered in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Thus, when they come to the Law of Moses, its culmination is found not in the cross of Christ but in the destruction of Jerusalem. However, their unrealistic views contradict the Scriptures at almost every turn. This is certainly true regarding the cessation of the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses was nailed to the cross, not the destruction of Jerusalem.

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THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM

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Gene and Jerry obeyed the Gospel in 1975 at the old Andrews Avenue Church of Christ in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He began studying at the Florida School of Preaching beginning in 1976 and graduated in 1978. This was during the tenure of the late B. C. Carr as the school's Director. Gene began full-time preaching in 1982, serving congregations in Florida, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. He is currently working with the congregation in Indianola, Mississippi.

The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online* defines *realized* as, "to bring into concrete existence: accomplish 'finally *realized* her goal,'" and *eschatology* as:

1: a branch of theology concerned with the final events in the history of the world or of humankind, 2: a belief concerning death, the end of the world, or the ultimate destiny of humankind; *specifically*: any of various Christian doctrines concerning the Second Coming, the resurrection of the dead, or the Last Judgment.

Since this chapter deals with the establishment of the kingdom in regards to the doctrine of Realized Eschatology and fulfillment of prophecy, we will be considering what the Scripture indicates was prophesied and the fulfillment of those prophecies concerning the kingdom of which the prophets talked.

In the definition provided above is the idea that some thing or things have already happened or are now **accomplished** about the kingdom. *Preterite* denotes the verb tense that expresses or describes a past or completed action or condition (*American Heritage Dictionary* 982). This has become known as the doctrine of preterism covering a broad spectrum of belief about eschatology. Its extreme end holds that:

The Holy Scriptures teach that the second coming of Christ, including the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment,

the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead, occurred with the fall of Judaism in 70 A.D. (*Nichols-King iv*).

The view of this lecture is that the future Messianic kingdom prophesied by the prophets and established in the events on the day of Pentecost depicted in Acts 2, is the same organization as the church to which Jesus added saved souls on Pentecost Day and the body of which Jesus is the head.

The question to be answered in this lesson is when the prophecies concerning the kingdom/body/church were to have been fulfilled in the first place, whether there are prophecies yet to be fulfilled, and if so, what are they and when should they be fulfilled?

Let us first consider the life and times of Jesus as the prophets saw Him. The Lord informed the apostles of all that He must soon suffer (Mat. 16:21). Jesus taught the disciples on the Emmaus road all that Moses and the prophets had to say (Luke 24:27). James, in the Jerusalem conference over circumcising Gentiles, quoted Amos 9:11-12 to the effect that God would rebuild the tabernacle of David and the Gentiles would be able to seek after the Lord (Acts 15:13-19). Paul preached that the Scriptures revealed Christ in very specific ways (17:2-3; 1 Cor. 15:1-4).

Of the reign of Christ the Lord, David the Psalmist said, "Yet have I set my king Upon my holy hill of Zion" (Psa. 2:6). The prayers of the disciples (Acts 4:25-28), the preaching of Paul (13:33), along with the pen of the Hebrews' writer (Heb. 1:5; 5:5-6), all proclaim this prophecy's fulfillment in Christ's coronation and ruling from David's throne in heaven (2 Sam 7:12-13). Peter affirms that David's Seed would be established on his (David's) throne after David's death yet before His coming forth from His sepulcher which was still viewable in Jerusalem (Acts 2:30-31; 2 Sam 7:12-13).

When we read Zechariah 6:12-13, which the Hebrews' writer referenced and applied in Hebrews 8:1-4, the only proper conclusion is that when Jesus Christ the Lord began serving as our High Priest, He was also reigning as our King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Since Jesus has entered into the Holy of Holies and offered His blood of the New Covenant (9:11-14), and since only the High Priest can enter into the

Holy of Holies (9:7), then it is the case that Jesus is now serving as our High Priest and, of prophetic necessity, also reigning as our King.

We must now consider the time element as prophesied by Daniel in Daniel 9:1-27 for the events surrounding the kingdoms establishment and the death of Judaism. Daniel was reading the prophet Jeremiah (25:11-14; 29:10; 2 Chr. 36:21) in the first year of Darius and determined the time for the fulfillment had come, and he prayed (Dan. 9:3-19; 2 Chr. 6:36-39). His prayer was heard by God, Who sent Gabriel with a message (Dan. 9:21-23).

The vision given Daniel covers a period of seventy weeks or 490 years (9:24). A reading of the verse reveals the following things are accomplished:

1. Seventy weeks from the commandment—Dan. 9:23-27.
2. Finish the transgression and make an end of sin—Heb. 10:12; Eph. 2:15.
3. Bring everlasting righteousness—Rom. 3:21-31.
4. Reconciliation for iniquity—Col. 1:20; Heb. 2:17.
5. Anoint the most Holy—Acts 4:26-27; Heb. 1:8-9.
6. The Messiah cut off—Isa. 53:8; Acts 8:32-33.
7. Destroy the city and sanctuary—Matt. 24:1-34.
8. Covenant confirmed with many—Acts 10:34; Rom. 9:30.
9. Seal up the vision—indicating the completed vision by its fulfillment in the events specified (Wallace 517).

The beginning of the seventy weeks was to begin as Daniel indicated “from the going forth of the commandment” (Dan. 9:25). The ending of the seventy weeks is indicated by Jesus in Matthew 24:15 by the “abomination of desolation” which was fulfilled by the Roman army of Vespasian in AD 70. The prophet tells that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the prince is a period of seven weeks and threescore and two weeks. What about the seventy weeks of Daniel?

But why are the seventy weeks of Daniel’s prophecy divided into three segments—seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and the “midst” of one week? There was purpose in this breakdown.

1. The first division of “seven weeks” (literally, forty-nine years) covers that period of time during which the actual rebuilding of Jerusalem would be underway, following the Hebrews’ return to

Palestine (9:25b). This was the answer to Daniel's prayer (9:16). That reconstruction era was to be one of "troubled times." The Jews' enemies had harassed them in earlier days (see Ezra 4:1-6), and they continued to do so in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. [For further discussion of this circumstance, see Whitcomb 1962, 4435.]

2. The second segment of sixty-two weeks (434 years), when added to the previous forty-nine, yields a total of 483 years. When this figure is computed from 457 B.C., it terminates at A.D. 26. This was the year of Jesus' baptism and the beginning of his public ministry.
3. Finally, the "midst of the week" (three and one-half years) reflects the time of the Lord's preaching ministry. This segment of the prophecy concludes in A.D. 30—the year of the Savior's death (Jackson)

Jesus accomplished and fulfilled Daniel's prophecies concerning Him and His work (Dan. 9:26a, 27a). Jesus was cut off for our sins (John 1:29-34, 35-36; 3:16; Isa. 53:7-8; Acts 8:32-33; 1 Pet. 2:21-24; 1 John 2:2). He confirmed the covenant also (Isa. 42:6; Jer. 31:31-34; Mat. 26:28; Rom. 5:15, 19; 15:8-9; Gal. 3:13-17; Heb. 6:13-18; 8-13; 9:15-20; 10:4-22). The result of His offering on the cross was the ending of Temple service, and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease (Dan. 9:27a). Note also Matthew 27:51: "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent."

Reading any standard history book dealing with the time of Jerusalem's destruction, one cannot rationally deny that the Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70, fulfilling Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:26b, 27b) (*Siege of Jerusalem*). When then was the church/kingdom over which Christ is head and Lord established?

The church or body of Christ also known as the kingdom of God and/or heaven was in God's scheme of redemption from before creation. It is the church which had the task of making known the manifold wisdom of God purposed from eternity:

That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.... According to the

eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph. 3:6, 9-11).

This church purchased by the blood of God (Acts 20:28) is also called, “the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15). The significance of this statement is seen when we understand it uses prophetic language. In Isaiah 2:2 the prophet informs us that, “it shall come to pass in the last days, *That* the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow unto it.” Isaiah said that the house of God would be established in the last days, and Paul was issuing instructions to Timothy how to behave in that very same structure.

It is even more impressive when we hear Jesus promising to build His church (Mat. 16:18; Zec. 6:12-13; Heb. 3:3-4) which even death would not be able to defeat (Acts 2:24). Jesus then promised to give Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven (Mat. 16:19). In regards to the kingdom of heaven in Hebrews 12:28, the writer states that they were receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved when they came to the church (12:23). In Isaiah 9:7, Daniel 2:44, and 7:14, 27 we find prophecies of the longevity and indestructible nature of the kingdom. The descriptions of the prophets match the claims of Hebrews.

We will now consider the establishment of the kingdom, that is, at what point in time did it come into existence as a developing and functioning entity? John the Immerser came preaching the kingdom as being at hand (Mat. 3:2). After John was cast into prison, Jesus likewise began preaching the kingdom was at hand (4:17). Jesus commissioned the twelve apostles to preach that same message (10:7). During the last supper, He told His apostles that He would not drink the fruit of the vine again until the kingdom came (Luke 22:18). The kingdom was yet future when the disciples asked if Jesus was going to establish it at that time (Acts 1:6).

Jesus provided a time frame of sorts for the kingdoms establishment, as well as some indications which would confirm its establishment. In Matthew 16:21-28, Jesus informed His disciples that He was going to Jerusalem to die and be resurrected the third day (16:21; Heb.

2:9; Phi. 2:8, 11). He follows that up by telling them that some standing before Him would not die until they saw Him come in His kingdom (Mat. 16:28). Did they see Jesus come in His kingdom? With the eye of faith they most certainly did (Acts 2:33-36). Note that John 3:8 mentions observable effects.

Another indicator of the kingdom's existence and arrival would be the bestowal of the Holy Spirit with power. Jesus told the apostles that the Father was to provide power for them by sending the Holy Spirit or Comforter to them (John 14:16, 26; 15:26-27; 16:7, 13). Jesus reiterated and expanded on this promise in Luke 24:49: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high," which power would enable them to be His witnesses (John 15:26-27). Jesus also told the apostles that the power and the Spirit would come simultaneously:

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8).

The prophecy of Jesus was fulfilled in the events of Acts 2:1-4. Peter, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, informed his audience that those things which they witnessed were a fulfillment of the prophecy given in Joel 2:28-32.

Some of Jesus' disciples would be alive to see the kingdom come with power. The apostles were to receive the Spirit and power in Jerusalem after which they would be empowered to be His witnesses. They obeyed their Lord's command to tarry in Jerusalem, and the Holy Ghost fell on the apostles in a demonstration of power consisting of a sound "as of a rushing mighty wind" and the sight of "cloven tongues like as of fire" appearing to and sitting upon each of them. The ability to speak in the tongues were given to them, and those there in the audience were able to hear in their own languages (Acts 2:5-11). Since this is the case, then it must follow that the kingdom of heaven did not just exist, but was in active business. These witnesses saw Jesus come in the kingdom—come with power as He promised (Mark 9:1; Acts 2:30-36; John 3:8).

Christ was promised His father David's throne: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:32). Now notice whose throne it actually is: "Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him" (1 Chr. 29:23). It is important that we know exactly where this throne is:

Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and *as* a faithful witness in heaven. Selah (Psa. 89:35-37)

and again:

The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD's throne *is* in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men (11:4).

The Holy Spirit tells us that Jesus is currently reigning from His throne: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21). Finally we see the longevity of His reign is announced:

Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, Upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, To order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice From henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this (Isa. 9:7).

Between the ascension of Jesus (Acts 1:8) and the events of Acts 2, Jesus came before the Ancient of Days and received a kingdom (Dan. 7:13-14). On that Pentecost, Peter, using the keys given to him by Jesus, opened the doors of the kingdom through preaching the Gospel, allowing obedient souls to pass into the kingdom (Mat. 16:18-19; John 3:3-5; Mat. 7:21).

The kingdom of heaven, being a reality and populated by the purified (1 Pet. 1:22), sanctified souls (Heb. 10:10; 13:12) of the obedient (5:9), now continues to fulfill its prophecies. Isaiah (2:3) and Micah (4:2) both prophesy that the Gospel shall go forth after the advent of the kingdom of heaven. Jesus directed His disciples to begin that process (Acts 1:8). Read Acts for that unfolding process.

There is another prophecy of the kingdom to be addressed, and that is the delivering up of the kingdom to God. Without a detailed discussion of the last days, which is the topic of another lecture, it must be understood that this present plane of existence will cease to be and the kingdom in its current existence will cease to be.

Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 informs us that the earthly dominion of the kingdom of heaven will end when Jesus shall deliver it back to God. In this passage, we are informed that the resurrection from the dead came by Jesus and that at His coming all the dead will be raised. This is consistent with the Lord's words in John 5:28-29 when all that are in the graves shall come forth to then be parted based on the lives they lived on earth.

Matthew 25:31-46 provides more detail regarding this judgment. All nations shall be gathered before Him and separated according to the lives they lived. Some will be ushered into the heavenly kingdom prepared "from the foundation of the world" (25:34), while others will depart "into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (25:41). "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (25:46).

We see in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 this resurrection and judgment as it is in regards to the righteous souls of those that are dead in Christ, that at the voice of the archangel and the trump of God they shall rise and together with the righteous living, be caught up together to meet Christ in the air.

More detail of the return of Jesus is provided in 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10. Here we see flaming fire and a vengeful Lord Jesus Christ coming in judgment. Note Peter's description in 2 Peter 3:9-13 of the fire that destroys the material creation; it is complete and total with nothing left to occupy. The conclusion of this is when all rule, authority, power, and death are finally put down or destroyed, the kingdom will be delivered up to God (1 Cor. 15:24). This is the ending of the first prophesied dominion of the kingdom (Mic. 4:8).

The apostle Paul makes a passing reference to the outcome of this when he says:

I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.... And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen (2 Tim. 4:1, 18).

Paul says that He will judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom and that Jesus will preserve Him unto His heavenly kingdom. We have already established that the judgment will take place at His next appearance. It is also of note that kingdom in verse 18 is defined by Thayer as, “royal power, kingship, dominion, rule” and for its use in verse 18 as, “God’s heavenly kingdom...denotes the exalted and perfect order of things which already exists in heaven” (96-97). The kingdom’s first dominion began on Pentecost depicted in Acts 2 and will continue until the second dominion referenced by Paul begins at the next appearance of Jesus Christ the Lord to judge the world in righteousness.

The kingdom prophesied by Isaiah and Micah, preached by John, Jesus, the twelve, the seventy, and to which the Lord added the saved on Pentecost, came into existence precisely as prophesied. It is now existing and will continue to do so until such a time as Jesus returns. At His second, and as of yet future return, all of the dead will be raised and the souls of all who have ever lived and will yet live, will be judged. The material universe will be destroyed with an all-consuming fire. The righteous will enter into the rest prepared from the foundation of the world and the souls of the unrighteous will be sent into outer darkness which was prepared for the devil and his angels. At this time, the kingdom will be delivered up to the Father.

The destruction of the Temple and of Jerusalem in AD 70 by the Roman Legions under Vespasian and Titus is a fulfillment of prophecy uttered by Jesus in Matthew 24, the fulfillment of which proved Jesus to be the prophet Moses admonished the people to look for, as well as being the Lord Christ (Deu. 18:15-22).

We would do well to read, heed, and understand God’s revealed mind.

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:6-16).

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THE GRAVE OF JUDAISM DOCTRINE

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When it comes to Realized Eschatology (hereafter RE) I am reminded of Pilate's question to Jesus: "What is truth?" Whether his question was asked in sarcasm or not, Pilate was still questioning Truth and its existence. When a person questions truth, it is because they either have not diligently searched for it or, while searching for it, they at the same time suppress it. Paul speaks of this sort describing them as "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 3:7). Jesus says, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). How is it possible for Christians to arrive at such divergent and diametrically opposed views concerning Eschatology? While there are many reasons, there are two that stand out. The first is the failure to love the Truth enough to handle it correctly (2 Tim. 2:15; cf. 2 The. 2:10). RE is a system which forces symbolism into that which is literal—i.e., it makes that which is clearly literal, figurative. The second reason is the unwillingness to account for the significant principle that the "entirety [sum] of Your word *is* truth" (Psa. 119:160).

REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY IS "REALIZED REDEFINOLOGY"

What RE amounts to is some new *Bizarro World* where up is down and down is up, where in is out and out is in, and where a paradigm shift becomes an alternate universe of thought. The apostle Paul may have "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6), but

RE turns the Bible upside down and inside out. For instance, when it comes to understanding death and resurrection RE applies an entirely different definition. One proponent writes:

Paul's preaching on the resurrection was based squarely on nothing but the teaching of Moses and the prophets. Moses and the prophets knew nothing about a resurrection of physical bodies out of holes in the ground, yet Paul said he preached just like them, and that the Corinthians received that same teaching (Dawson 132).

Regarding the apostle Paul's teaching on the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15, Dawson writes, "[N]o one on earth interprets those Old Testament prophecies as of a resurrection of physical bodies out of holes in the ground" (133). While continuing to reject a literal resurrection, Dawson opines:

Paul never used "bodies" in this chapter. He spoke of the resurrection of one body, the Old Covenant faithful who were being transformed into the body of Christ. The question had to do with how Jewish and Gentile saints were going to be in that one body, along with Old Covenant saints who didn't even see or obey Christ (181-182).

The "father" of modern day RE writes:

Judaism was the metaphorical grave of the spiritual dead out of which this resurrection took place, just as ancient Babylon was the grave of national Israel. The fall of Judaism was the defeat of the "ministration of death" and the opening of the graves. Those who had previously heard and obeyed Christ were found worthy of eternal life in the new heaven and earth. The disobedient were raised to eternal hell or separation from God (2 Thess. 1:7-9) (King 220).

And again:

Thus, out of the decay of Judaism arose the spiritual body of Christianity that became fully developed or resurrected by the end-time. Hence, this is the primary meaning of Paul's statement "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body" (200).

Here we see how RE simply redefines every aspect related to our traditional understanding of Eschatology. From the above quotes we learn RE teaches that the resurrection of the dead occurs at Jesus'

Coming, and His coming was in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, which was His judgment upon Israel. Therefore, the literal death of the body is redefined as a spiritual death, and the resurrection is no longer defined as the raising of the body from the grave, but is redefined as the resurrection of Old Testament saints from the dead. *Body* in (1 Cor. 15:35) is redefined as a corporate body that is raised, not human bodies (plural). Then, the church is the body that was raised in AD 70. Therefore, even “redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:23) must be redefined as the “redemption of the church,” which is said to have been resurrected or raised in AD 70. After AD 70 it is claimed that there remains no bodily resurrection but at the moment of death the righteous dead go directly to heaven and the unrighteous dead go to hell.

Therefore, according to RE, when Paul speaks of the “corruptible” body (1 Cor. 15:50-54), it is not the dead human corpse but the fleshly system of Judaism. Moreover, the resurrection which Paul addresses is not that of the human body but is representative Christianity arising out of the figurative grave. Other words such as *flesh*, *fleshly*, and *world* must also be redefined as synonyms for the Judaism, while *spiritual* must be redefined as “Christianity.” In making that which is literal, figurative or “spiritual” dishonors the religion of Christ, especially when it is suggested that the Christianity is the merely the resurrection of dead Judaism.

The apostle Paul informs us that the purpose of the Law of Moses was to bring the Jews to Christ, serving as their “tutor” or “schoolmaster” (Gal. 3:24), which was for the purpose of human redemption. There is nothing in the entire Bible which describes redemption as the resurrection of the Law of Moses and Judaism, nor is there anything which teaches that human redemption springs forth out of the death of the Law of Moses and Judaism. The Law was simply a necessary vehicle in paving the way for human redemption to be provided through a new avenue or system. This was God’s plan in eternity long before the Law of Moses and the Creation of the world (Eph. 3:10-11; cf. Acts 2:23).

REFUTING “REALIZED REDEFINOLOGY” AND THE “GRAVE OF JUDAISM”

In this section we will address two primary passages which are fundamental to the RE and its erroneous concept of the “Grave of Judaism.”

1 Corinthians 15

As stated previously, RE arbitrarily turns the literal into the figurative, an approach that allegorizes and or spiritualizes literal words and events. This approach is reminiscent of one radical scholar, John Shelby Spong, who believes God is not a person but is rather a “god-essence” or a feeling “deep within us” (Jackson, “John Shelby Spong”). In much the same way, RE arrives at its conclusions because of its opposition to the literalism of the Bible.

Any cursory reading of 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 will show that the apostle Paul is speaking about the facts undergirding the Gospel: namely the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is also quite evident Paul is speaking about Christ’s physical body, rather than to an alleged representation of the burying of the Jewish system and the raising of the Christian system. This is fundamental to the entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 15. Therefore, the question we must ask ourselves as we examine various parts of this chapter is: How does a literal, bodily resurrection of Christ compare in any manner to a figurative representation of the resurrection of a class of people?

Paul begins the chapter by discussing the resurrection of Christ’s body and of the chronological events which follow, telling us of those who personally saw His resurrected body (15:1-8). Paul is indeed referring to a literal, human body. The apostle then proceeds to tell us that some in Corinth were guilty of denying the bodily resurrection of others, not just Christ’s resurrection (15:12). We know their denial was of a “bodily resurrection” because Paul begins by saying, “Now if Christ is preached that he has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?” Not only is Paul establishing his case that the general resurrection of the dead is founded upon the Christ’s own

bodily resurrection. Paul's point is that if they believed in Christ's bodily resurrection, then how is it possible to make the claim that Christians are not raised in the same manner as He? To deny one is to deny the other.

Notice what Paul says, "For if *the* dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen" (15:16). Paul is telling them that if they do not believe dead bodies come out of graves, then they will have to deny that Christ's dead body came out of the grave. This is the significance of denying the bodily resurrection. It should be underscored that *dead* is plural, and literally means "dead ones." It is referring to a plurality of bodies, not to a singular body representative of a concept or to a particular class. In fact, Paul goes on to use *those*, which suggests individuals and not a singular religious system (15:18, 20, 23, 48). How in the world could a rational person come along and demand that when Paul speaks of that which is "dead" that he is referring to Judaism (the Jewish system), and when he speaks of that which is being "raised" he is referring to the church or the Christian system? Amazingly amazing! But such is the fanciful notion of those touting RE. A "spiritualized" view destroys any connection Paul is making between Christ's literal, bodily, resurrection and to the general resurrection of the "**dead ones**" (plural). Paul is making an "apples to apples" comparison, i.e., he is connecting Christ's literal, bodily resurrection with the literal resurrection of the bodies of the "dead ones." On the other hand, RE takes Paul's comparison and turns it into an "apples to oranges" comparison—i.e., the literal resurrection of Christ is compared to the figurative "body" of Christianity out of Judaism. The absurdity of such an interpretation clearly demonstrated.

Body is found numerous times in thirty-five verses in 1 Corinthians (5:3; 6:12-20; 7:4, 34; 9:27; 10:16-17; 11:24-29; 12:12-27; 13:3; 15:35-44). When *body* refers to the church (6:19-20; 10:17; 12:12-27), it is clearly self-evident. The context will clearly indicate that *body* is referring to the church. However, every other time *body* is found it is referring to the physical body, including Christ's body

as it relates to the Communion. There simply is no guesswork involved in making these determinations.

Within the chronological unfolding of the context, Paul correlates the literal, bodily resurrection of Christ's physical body with the resurrection of other physical bodies we call the general resurrection of the "**dead ones.**" Paul then makes mention of Christ being the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (15:20). Again, Paul ties together Christ's resurrection from the dead to the resurrection of the "**dead ones.**" In other words, Paul is saying that the resurrection which occurred with Christ will be the same resurrection that will occur with the Corinthians (and all of us). Again, we must note Paul's use of "those" (15:20, 23). The word speaks of the plurality of individuals, not to a singular thing, concept, or to the singular Christian system. Then there is the meaning of "firstfruits." Just what does that imply? We understand from the Old Testament that the meaning of "firstfruits" was always the choicest part of the crop (Num. 18:12), and it guaranteed the rest of the crop to follow. The "firstfruits" were of the very same nature as the rest of the crop which would follow (Deu. 18:4; 2 Chr. 31:5; Neh. 10:35-37). Therefore, if Christ's bodily resurrection was the "firstfruits," and it was the literal resurrection of His human body, then the fruit which follows the "firstfruits" must be of the same nature, being the resurrection of the literal human body (cf. Phi. 3:20-21; 1 John 3:2). This is indeed the context and the connection Paul makes with Christ's resurrection and the general resurrection of the dead. Along the same line, one writer observes:

The resurrection of the dead endorsed by 1 Corinthians 15 is a future, bodily resurrection of mankind, based upon the fact of Christ's bodily resurrection. If, however, the body to be raised in 1 Corinthians 15 is "Christianity out of Judaism," why must we believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ? If the later fruit is not the bodily resurrection of mankind, there is no reason to believe that the "firstfruits" was the bodily resurrection of Jesus (Price 56).

Continuing through the chapter, Paul addresses the question that would naturally arise, "But someone will say, "How are the

dead raised up? And with what body do they come?” (1 Cor. 15:35). In other words, if my body is going to be raised from the dead, what will it look like? In explaining what the resurrected body looks like, Paul provides the illustration involving seed. When it is sown or planted it produces something that is based upon itself. What comes forth may not be identical to what was sown, but what was sown still comes forth nonetheless (15:42-44). Again, Paul says there is a correlation between what is sown and was raised. Then he says that, in like manner, literal human bodies are sown or planted in the ground and from them will come forth something that is connected. In this passage, Paul makes significant use of *it*:

So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. *The body* is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body (15:42-44).

What is obvious in the passage is that very same “*it*” that goes down is the very same “*it*” that comes back up. Whatever dies is what is resurrected. In this case, the “seed” that is sown and is dead (15:36) has a definite correlation and connection with the “seed” that is raised up (15:37-38). We must not press the illustration beyond its intended meaning. Quite simply, the body that died is the body that will be raised (15:35-38, 42-44). That means nothing is left behind in the grave, because what was placed in the grave is the very thing that comes out of the grave but is changed, fashioned for a heavenly dwelling (15:51-52).

The corruptible flesh (*it*) will have put on the incorruptible (*it*), which means the body (*it*) that comes forth is then changed. The natural body (*it*) is changed into a spiritual body (*it*), and the mortal body (*it*) becomes the immortal body (*it*). In other words, the “*it*” that dies is the very “*it*” that is raised, and the very “*it*” that is raised will certainly change, taking on a new look for the heavenly realm. Therefore, the question we must ask is, just what is it that dies and is raised (resurrected)? Is it just the human spirit that is being raised, which necessarily rejects the bodily resurrection? Is it

Judaism being raised, which means Judaism had never died even though Paul said it did (Rom. 7:1-6)? It also means that the obsolete (Heb. 8:13) has once again been made to have relevance, but for what? Is it the church and/or Christianity? Or is the human body the thing being raised? In noting all of this, Wayne Jackson writes:

In the burial/resurrection analogy, whatever is buried is raised; whatever dies, comes to life. If it is Judaism that dies, then it is Judaism that comes back to life. If it is Christianity that is 'raised,' then it was Christianity that was buried. The King theory has Judaism being buried, and the kingdom of Christ being raised (*The A.D. 70 Theory* 72).

Herein lies the dilemma for RE. If the church and Christianity is said to be that which is resurrected, then it is implied that the church and Christianity was dead prior to AD 70, which is an absolute absurdity. If it is Judaism that is resurrected, then this contradicts RE which teaches that there was an overlapping of the Covenants, in which the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ existed at the same time between Pentecost and AD 70 (King 239).

In closing out the chapter, Paul says, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed" (1 Cor. 15:51). He then says the "dead will be raised incorruptible," which he then equates with "and we shall be changed" (15:52). Here, the *dead* is plural, not singular. The "we" are individuals who Paul is addressing, and they are living human beings, not some representation of a concept or a system. Nowhere in this chapter is there even a hint that Paul has in mind that from out of the "Grave of Judaism" will Christianity be resurrected. Paul is discussing that which is connected to the bodily resurrection of Christ, the general bodily resurrection of the dead.

John 5:28-29

This is one of the clearest passages in all the Bible regarding the resurrection of the dead. Jesus says:

Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation (5:28-29).

However, as stated previously, RE “spiritualizes” the many passages dealing with end times in general and the resurrection in particular. Instead of taking this passage literally, it is viewed figuratively or spiritually. Note the following:

In order to understand John 5:28 and 29, we must first look three verses above it, in John 5:25, where Jesus said that the hour “now is” when “the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” As most Reformed interpreters agree, Jesus in that verse was referring to the preaching of His death and resurrection. The preaching of that message commenced at Pentecost. “The dead” were physically living people who were spiritually dead in sin, and “the voice of the Son of God” was the gospel. Having heard the gospel, those who were spiritually “dead” were spiritually resurrected. They lived in that they received eternal life through faith in the gospel (“the voice of the Son of God”).

Then, in verses 28 and 29, Jesus expanded His teaching on the resurrection to include those who were not only spiritually dead, but who were also physically dead. He did not call them “dead” (as He had already called the living who were spiritually dead), but He referred to them through another figure of speech as “all who are in the graves.” They were not literally in their graves or tombs, of course, but were in Hades/Sheol (Sullivan).

Here we see the gross spiritualization of the passage. All the dead are seen as only those who are spiritually dead—“dead in sin.” In this passage, however, Jesus does indeed speak of death in two ways. First there are the spiritually dead where these can pass out of death into life through hearing Jesus’ words and believing them. The time for this kind of resurrection, Jesus says, is at the very moment He is speaking. “The hour is coming, **and now is**, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live” (John 5:25). Even as He spoke, those who heard and obeyed would be able to enter the new kingdom in a very short time. However, it should also be noted that John 5:24-25 is completely divorced from John 5:28-29. When Jesus says, “he who hears My word and believes...has everlasting life and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life” (5:24), He also implied is that they

will be a part of the resurrection which He will discuss in verses 28-29.

Jesus then speaks of the dead who are “in the graves.” It is to this resurrection which Jesus says, “The hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth” (5:28). There is nothing within the context which demands the fulfillment of this resurrection to be at that time, because Jesus knew it was still in the future. It is from this resurrection, where the righteous saved “come forth...to the resurrection of life,” while those having done evil “to the resurrection of condemnation” (5:29). It is within this resurrection that Jesus is referring to the resurrection of those “in the graves.” There is absolutely nothing in the context showing that Jesus Himself changes the literal understanding of the concepts of *death* and the *graves* into something figurative. In other words, Jesus nowhere spiritualizes the literal meaning of the words of this text. The resurrection Jesus speaks of in John 5:28-29 is not some figurative pronouncement of the death of Judaism and the rise of Christianity, but is rather a presentation of the literal resurrection of the dead. Of this, Jesus says it will occur at the final hour, when the dead will come forth out of the graves and stand before the judgment seat of God.

There is a resurrection wherein all the dead will come forth from out of all the graves (5:28-29). However, what proponents of RE willingly overlook is the significant contrast between what Jesus says in 5:24-25 with what He says in 5:28-29. Moreover, there is no accounting for the resurrection of the evil (5:29). Where did they go? Paul declares, “I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of *the* dead, both of *the* just and *the* unjust” (Acts 24:15). We know that the righteous will be raised (John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 11:24) and those who have done evil will be judged on the “last day” (12:48).

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THE LAST DAYS

Gene Hill

Carl E. “Gene” Hill, Jr., was born in New Richmond, Ohio. He is married to the former Jerry Booker. They have one son and one grandson and two granddaughters.

Gene and Jerry obeyed the Gospel in 1975 at the old Andrews Avenue Church of Christ in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He began studying at the Florida School of Preaching beginning in 1976 and graduated in 1978. This was during the tenure of the late B. C. Carr as the school’s Director. Gene began full-time preaching in 1982, serving congregations in Florida, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. He is currently working with the congregation in Indianola, Mississippi.

Realized Eschatology is that system of theology that holds: The Holy Scriptures teach that the second coming of Christ, including the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead, occurred with the fall of Judaism in 70 A.D. (Nichols and King iv).

This quote is the debate affirmation which expressed the view of Max King in his debate with Gus Nichols. This is the doctrine of hyper-preterism or full-preterism, which is the teaching that all prophecies have been fulfilled, and in this instance that

the second coming of Christ, including the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead, occurred with the fall of Judaism in 70 A.D. (Nichols and King iv).

The topic, “The Last Days,” covers more ground than one might otherwise assume, for it deals with many prophecies and their fulfillment. Wallace says:

There is this to be remembered about the prophecies—they either had reference to the first coming of Christ or to the second coming of Christ, but whatever the prophecy meant at the time spoken or written, that is what that prophecy had to mean for all time to come (60).

The only infallible interpretation of prophecy is an inspired interpretation. This statement is sustained by Paul’s remarks on God’s wisdom in the revelation “the mystery” in the second chapter of

first Corinthians, verses 7 to 13. Note first the seventh verse; “We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery.” This is that which Paul said in Rom. 16:25 had been “kept secret since the world began,” now “made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.” Verse 8 says “which none of the princes of this world knew.” They did not know the “mystery—the plan of the ages hidden in the prophetic word of God. Verse 9 says: “even as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God prepared for them that love him.” The things that no eye had seen, that no ear had heard, and that no man’s heart had contemplated, are the things out of God’s prophetic word revealed in the New Testament—verse 10—“But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit”—then verse 13, “which things also we speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth.”

It is thus that Paul declares that revelation (the thing revealed) plus inspiration (the words by which to teach it) is the only true and infallible interpretation of the prophetic word (64).

Peter, in Acts 3:18-26, puts forth the argument that all that happened leading up to the sojourn of Jesus on earth: His birth (Gal. 4:4), death (Isa. 53), resurrection (Psa. 16:10), ascension into heaven, and coronation as King of kings and Lord of lords (Dan. 7:13-14) is a fulfillment of all that was spoken by the prophets (Acts 3:18-24). The “things” (3:18), “the times” (3:21), and the “these days” (3:24) all refer to this present Christian age, dispensation, or world which had its beginning in Acts 2 and will continue until the Second Coming of Jesus.

The prophet Daniel provides for us the prophetic time frame for the advent of Jesus all the way through to the destruction of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem by the Roman legions commanded by Titus and Vespasian in AD 70. In Daniel 2, he interprets the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. The king had a vision that awakened him (2:1) that he could not remember and demanded his magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans tell him what it was and then interpret it (2:2-3). They, of course, could not do and said as much (2:4), which brought a rather severe sentence of a gruesome death for failure (2:5-9). Daniel, hearing of the problem, intervenes,

asks for some time, and along with his friends goes to the God of Heaven for help (2:12-18). God provides help; so Daniel advised Arioch the captain of the king's guard that he had (2:19-24). This vision contains images of five distinct kingdoms that come in succession (2:31-36). The kingdoms are understood to be the Babylonian (gold), Medo-Persian (silver), Greece (brass), Roman (iron/miry clay), and the fifth, a stone cut out without hands, consuming all that came before.

It is important that we acknowledge the Divine time element indicated in the king's dream by such phrases as "what shall be in the latter days" (2:28), "what should come to pass hereafter," and "what shall come to pass" (2:29), "in the days of those kings" (2:44), and "what shall come to pass hereafter" (2:45). Notice how definite these phrases are and with what certainty they are uttered. These things would happen exactly as prophesied.

In Mark 1:14-15, Jesus alludes to Daniel's prophecy when He says, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." Likewise, the Hebrews' writer states in Hebrews 12:28 that they were "receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved," which is what Daniel says, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2:44). Paul tells the Colossian brethren that they had been translated into the kingdom (Col. 1:13).

Daniel's "in the days of these kings," in which days God would set up the fifth kingdom referred to by Daniel, is that of the Roman Caesars who ruled in the days Jesus was born (Gal. 4:4). The prophet tells us that one like the Son of Man would come in the clouds **to** the Ancient of days at which time He would receive a dominion and kingdom. This prophecy is distinctly fulfilled as depicted in the events of Acts 1:6-11. Peter cites this event in Acts 2:29-36 as the object of David's prophecies in Psalms 16:10, 110:1, and 132:11 as well as Isaiah's prophecy in Isaiah 9:6-7. The kingdom of heaven which was preached by Jesus as at hand in Mark 1:14-15 is not a material kingdom as expected by the Jews, but a spiritual one (Luke 17:20-24; John 18:36; Rom. 14:17).

The prophet Isaiah has very similar things to say about the **when** of the establishment of the kingdom. In Isaiah 2:2 it would be in the “last days” that it “shall be established.” In verse 3 we see both the law from Zion and the Word of the Lord would go forth from Jerusalem. Jesus gave His apostles commandments that would fulfill that prophecy in Acts 1:8. Isaiah’s last days and the latter days of Daniel 2:28 are one and the same. It was during the prophesied last days the kingdom of heaven was preached by Jesus (Mark 1:14-15); would be established in Jerusalem, from which city the Gospel would go forth (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; 8:1-25).

The prophet Micah (in 4:1-2) says almost word for word what Isaiah says in Isaiah 2:2-3. Micah 4:8 provides another significant piece of information describing this kingdom by describing it as “the first dominion.” The Bible teaches that the church Jesus promised to build (Mat. 16:18), to which the Lord added saved souls (Acts 2:47), purchased by God’s blood (20:28), which Paul said is the body (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18), as well as the house of God (1 Tim. 3:15; Isa. 2:3), is likewise the kingdom of heaven (Mark 1:14-15; Mat. 16:19; John 3:3, 5) into which those becoming Christians are translated (Col. 1:13-14).

Jesus promised to build His church (Mat. 16:18), which Paul described as a body (Eph. 1:22-23), personifying it as an organism with functioning parts (1 Cor. 12:12-31). Peter says that as individual members making up that body we gain spiritual sustenance by which we are able to grow (1 Pet. 2:2; note Heb. 5:12).

When Jesus talks of the kingdom, He alludes to the form of government through which His body is ordered (Isa. 9:6-7; Acts 2:30-37) and He rules over as King (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev 15:3). Luke tells us the saved are added to the church (Acts 2:47), and Paul says the Father translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son (Col. 1:13-14), which is the kingdom of the prophets (Dan. 2:44; 7:13-14).

The descriptive terms—church, body, kingdom—all refer to that same group of souls sanctified by the blood of Jesus (Heb. 13:7) when they obeyed the truth through the Spirit (1 Pet. 1:22; Acts 22:16; Rev. 1:5; 7:14). This heavenly creation came into existence

at the right time and in the right place, precisely as specified by the prophets Daniel, Isaiah, and Micah. The prophetic “last days” had their beginning with the events recorded in Acts 2. These days did not end prior to the specific events of Acts 2, as asserted by Max King (Nichols and King 46-47). The first dominion of Micah 4:8 also applies to the exact same kingdom as that of Acts 2, for it is just another descriptive term of that first group of souls added to the church by the Lord. So, just to be crystal clear, each of these terms—the church equals the body equals the kingdom equals the first dominion—are terms that simply refer to the exact same thing. This thing has not only fulfilled prophecy by its coming into existence, but it has also fulfilled prophecy by the timing of its coming into existence, which is labeled as the last days.

The word translated “world” needs to be addressed at this time. It can be translated to mean the literal earth as in Acts 17:24—“God that made the world and all things therein” (Thayer 356-57). Thayer continues his definition by saying the word can also refer to “the ungodly multitude; the whole mass of men alienated from God, and therefore hostile to the cause of Christ” and references James 1:27 (among other passages) that we are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. There are also references to a human fleshly desire for physical things that if permitted can lead us astray (1 John 2:15).

The King James translates another word from the original with the English word “world.” It is the Greek *aion*. Thayer says, “as the Jews distinguished the time before the Messiah, and the time after the advent of the Messiah,” and “the end, or rather consummation, of the age preceding Christ’s return, with which will be connected the resurrection of the dead, the last judgment, the demolition of this world, Matt 24:3” (19). The ASV in a footnote for *world* in Matthew 24:3 has this, “Or, the consummation of the age.” Robertson has the same in a footnote regarding *world* in Matthew 24:3 (184).

Yet a third word, *dispensation*, needs consideration. The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines it as, “A specific arrangement or system by which something is dispensed or administered” (407). Thayer

defines the word translated “dispensation” in 1 Corinthians 9:17, Ephesians 1:10, 3:2, and Colosians 1:25, as “the management, oversight, administration, of others’ property; the office of a manager or overseer, stewardship, and for stewardship: Lk. 16:2-4... as the management of a household or of household affairs” (440).

As we study our topic, it must be understood that *world* can refer to either the material creation or the ungodly multitude who inhabit the material creation. It also has reference to a period of time or an age in which people live. *Dispensation*, when coupled with Patriarchal, Mosaic, or Christian, refers to the system of law which God used to administer the affairs of mankind through these ages as he lived in this world.

The Patriarchal Dispensation refers to the time that began during the period in which Adam and Eve occupied Eden. The law they followed, as far as we can determine, was fairly limited. They were to multiply and have dominion over all creation (Gen. 1:28). Adam was to dress and keep the garden (2:15). The couple were to eat of every tree in the garden with the exception of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:16-17). They were also given instruction in animal sacrifice (Heb. 11:4).

The Mosaic Age began in Exodus 19 and 20 with the giving of the Law at Sinai (Deu. 5), and ended at the cross of Christ (Col. 2:14), having acted as a schoolmaster to bring the Jews to their Messiah (Gal. 3:23-29). The Patriarchal system was likewise done away in the cross of Christ (Acts 4:5-12; 17:30-31; Eph. 2:14-22; 1 John 1:6-10; 2 John 9-11).

Since both the Patriarchal age/system/world and that of the Mosaic or Jewish age/system/world have fulfilled their purpose and have been replaced by that of the Christian age/world in fulfillment of prophecy, then we are in the last days of prophecy.

When will the “consummation of the age” come about which the disciples asked Jesus (Mat. 24:3)? In Matthew 24:2 Jesus refers to a catastrophic event of such magnitude that the stones of the temple would be thrown down. The disciples naturally wanted

more details. Matthew's account adds, "and of the end of the world" (consummation of the age).

Something worth noting is that Jesus did not always answer the question He was asked but gave what was needed. Observe His response to Nicodemus in John 3:1-3. Nicodemus states what was commonly believed within his circle of acquaintances. Jesus responds with a discussion of the new birth to enter the kingdom of heaven. Having powers of discernment, it is reasonable to conclude Jesus responded as He did because He perceived it was what Nicodemus needed regardless of why he came (John 2:25; Jer. 17:9-10).

Whatever the case may be, it is certain beyond doubt that Jesus provided all the detail and more than what the disciples may have been seeking. In spite of claims, this passage (Mat. 24:1-25:46) can be divided logically, reasonably, and scripturally. The only place it can be divided and must be divided is at Matthew 24:36 (Nichols and King 6, 15, 17, 23, 25-26, 67, 107, 133).

Jesus discusses two completely different events in this section. When Jesus said, "all these things" (Mat. 24:6, 33), He referred to indicators which His discerning disciples would be able to use to know when the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple would be imminent so they might flee: deceivers (24:4-5), wars and war rumors (24:6-7), natural disasters (24:7; Acts 11:27-30), persecution (Mat. 24:9-10), false prophets (24:11; Acts 20:29-30), greater evil (Mat. 24:11-12), Gospel spreading (24:14, 31; Col. 1:23), Roman army surrounding the city (Mat. 24:15), tribulation (24:16-22), more false prophets (24:23-26), and then the fall of Jerusalem (24:29-30). Just as a sprouting fig tree signified summers nearness, just so the coming destruction would be signified by the "these things" listed by Jesus. What must have been truly disturbing to the disciples was His statement that they and their contemporaries would live through the prophesied destruction (24:34).

The event described in verses 36-51 is so fundamentally different from the one described previously that one must redefine words wholesale to fabricate a theology to explain this passage. The sea change is understood when we compare "this generation" from

verse 34 to the “that day and hour” of verse 36. The distinction is made even more apparent with the suddenness and lack of warning of this second event (24:36ff) to the details and drawn out time line of the previous event (24:1-35).

Verses 36-39 teach through the suddenness of the flood in Noah’s time and the mundane events of everyday life as described, that this event is completely distinct from that of Jerusalem’s destruction. These verses mirror the events described by Peter in 2 Peter 3:3-10 and by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10. Both apostles describe a cataclysmic and catastrophic event with neither preceded by any indications of coming doom and destruction. Jesus labels this terrible event as “the coming of the Son of man” (Mat. 24:37). Paul styles it as “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed” (2 The. 1:7). Peter calls it “the coming of the day of God” (2 Pet. 3:12). There will simply be no warning, quite unlike the previously described event. “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come” (Mat. 24:42). Those unprepared will face terrible consequences for their behavior (24:44-51).

In Matthew 25:1-30 Jesus provides two parables describing what the kingdom of heaven in its first dominion would be like prior to the Second Coming of the Lord. The Lord uses two events to compare kingdom citizens and their relative preparedness for His return and the beginning of the second dominion of the heavenly kingdom. The first picture is that of 10 virgins awaiting a bridegroom. Five of these women were prepared, and five were not; those unprepared were denied entrance into the feast to which they had an invitation (25:1-13). The second illustration is that of a householder leaving on a trip and turning over various amounts of money to each of three servants, expecting a greater return when he came back home. There is no indication of when He would return to call for an accounting. Nevertheless, when the Son of man does return, He will judge each soul according to that person’s actions while on earth (2 Cor. 5:10) with punishment and reward being meted out to each based on their actions (Mat. 25:14-30).

The lesson from these two parables is made in Matthew 24:36-39, that there will be no signs indicating when the coming of the Son of man in judgment will occur. Consequently, we ought to always be prepared for judgment based on our preparedness for that event and the establishment of that second dominion of the heavenly kingdom (2 Tim. 4:18).

The eternal heavenly kingdom inaugurated with the coronation of the Son of Man (Dan. 7:13-14; Acts 1:8-11; 2:29-36). The gates to that kingdom were opened on the day of Pentecost with the preaching of Peter and the eleven other apostles as we see in Acts 2. The three thousand who gladly received the Gospel were baptized for the remission of their sins (John 3:3, 5; Acts 2:38) and added to the church by the Lord (2:47; Col. 1:13-14). Thus the eternal kingdom's first dominion began.

As we have seen, the Second Coming of Christ will be sudden, without warning, in flaming fire, the elements melting with fervent heat, and all that is of a material nature will be completely destroyed and no longer in existence. It will be at this time that all of the dead shall come forth from the grave at the sound of His voice (John 5:28-29; 1 The. 4:16-17). Judgment will then take place (Mat. 25:31-46; John 6:29-40, 44, 54; 11:24; 12:48) with the majority of humanity sent into outer darkness and the remainder ushered into life eternal, which is that second dominion of that heavenly kingdom (1 The. 4:17; 2 Tim. 4:18).

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THE SECOND “COMING”

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How many books have been written on the Second Coming of Christ? Multiply that by a thousand or more, and the product would provide an estimation of how many chapters have been written on the subject. Most of what could be said has already been said, but unfortunately the positions set forth by so many authors contradict each other, and a great deal of confusion exists. This chapter will straighten everyone out. If only that were so! The vast majority of people have bought into the popular premillennial (*Left Behind*) view; a few hold to the Realized Eschatology (“it’s over; you missed it”) error, and a larger number abide by the teaching of the Scriptures (1 The. 4:13-17; 2 The. 1:6-10; 2 Pet. 3:10-13).

Although the truth concerning the Second Coming of Jesus may be discerned without great difficulty, some people may be sidetracked by the Bible’s use of *come* and *coming*. If that were all we had to go by, we might indeed be confused, but the passages cited above provide the overall picture; so we can determine to some degree what fits in with it and what does not. However, each time *coming* is used, the context must determine the meaning. Any attempt to make all such references have the same meaning is not only futile; it begins a journey whose only destination can be apostasy.

The main thrust of this chapter is to examine the occasions of the usages of the pertinent words and determine from the context

the meaning of each "coming." *Second coming* does not appear in the Scriptures although the concept, of course, does. We cannot, therefore, assume that each *coming* that is referred to is the second one, since various *comings* are described.

THE FIRST COMING

Talking about the Second Coming of Christ implies a first one occurred, and it would be difficult to imagine anyone disagreeing with that fact. The Old Testament prophesies numerous times of a coming Messiah, beginning with Genesis 3:15. The seed of woman would come and defeat the serpent (the devil). Later, God made a promise to Abraham that through his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed (22:18). Jacob prophesied that the scepter would not depart from Judah "until Shiloh comes" (49:10), which implies kingship. In Deuteronomy 18:15-19, Moses promised that God would raise up a prophet like him. God promised David that a king would come forth from his own body and that the throne of His kingdom would be established forever (2 Sam. 7:12-13; cf. Jer. 23:5-6). David himself wrote that this king would also be a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (Psa. 110:1-4). Jesus is the prophet, priest, and king whose coming was foretold throughout the Old Testament.

These are just a few predictions concerning the Christ to come; much more concerning Him was prophesied in the Psalms (especially 2, 16:8-11; 22; 69; 110; 118:22-26). Isaiah is replete with verses that declare information about Jesus and also mention His kingdom. Isaiah 2:2-4 begins these by describing more than 700 years in advance the establishment of the church, the house of the God of Jacob, in Jerusalem, from which the law (the new covenant of Christ) would go forth. The virgin birth of Jesus is foretold in Isaiah 7:14 (and the birthplace is identified in Micah 5:2), and the child born would be called "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). The next verse mentions that He would reign over the kingdom of David (cf. 11:1-2), but the Gentiles would see a great light also (9:1-2; 49:6).

Isaiah also prophesies about Jesus opening the eyes of the blind (35:5; 42:7) and proclaiming liberty to the captives (61:1). However, the most wondrous description of all is the death of Jesus in Isaiah 52:13-53:12. No one could have imagined the face of Jesus being more marred than any man—except by Divine inspiration. How thorough is the explanation of what it means to be a man of sorrows. Jesus would be wounded for our transgressions and allow Himself to be led as a sheep to the slaughter. His soul was “an offering for sin”; He “poured out His soul unto death.” All of these things Jesus accomplished in His first **coming**.

According to the New Testament, Jesus became the Mediator of the new covenant which was spoken of in Jeremiah 31:31-34 (Heb. 8:6-12). How atheists cannot see the beauty and unity that exists in the Scriptures is beyond comprehension! Jesus’ first coming was not unexpected; just about every aspect (if not all) of His life and death are mentioned beforehand. His purposes are likewise not omitted. As the New Testament unfolds, everything written in the Old makes sense. The reader of the Bible cannot say, “Jesus is King; I sure didn’t see that one coming.” His priesthood and new covenant are clearly delineated ahead of time, as has already been shown. No one ought to be surprised—not even about Jesus’ Deity (Psa. 45:7, 110:1).

As the Old Testament comes to a close, God promises to send His messenger to prepare the way for Him (Mal. 3:1). God describes that messenger as the Elijah to come (4:5), whom Jesus identifies as John the Immerser (Mat. 17:11-13). God promised: “I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me” (Mal. 3:1), which indicates the Deity of Jesus. The messenger (John) prepares the way for “the Messenger of the covenant.... Behold, He is coming” (3:1). More than four hundred years later, He Who fulfilled all these prophecies (and more) **came**.

No one needs to wonder if Jesus is actually the One who fulfilled all of these prophecies; the New Testament declares that He did. On many occasions, New Testament writers call attention to specific fulfillments, but one of those most noteworthy involves John.

Having been imprisoned, he sent two of his disciples to ask Jesus a question. Ironically, even though he was the messenger who prepared the way for the Lord, he asked, "Are you the Coming One, or do we look for another?" (Mat. 11:3). John and all of the Jews had been anticipating the Coming One. God even told John how Jesus could be identified, and John saw the Holy Spirit descending and remaining on Jesus (John 1:33). It may be that Jesus was not doing what John expected, which prompted the question. After Jesus provided him the evidence he needed to be reassured, He told him, "And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me" (Mat. 11:6).

Stephen also agreed that Jesus was the One for whom Israel awaited. In his last sermon, he stressed the point: "Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderer" (Acts 7:52). Paul, the former persecutor of Jesus of Nazareth, confirmed this truth as an apostle of the Lord. He wrote that Adam was "a type of Him who was to come" (Rom. 5:14). Peter affirmed that he and the other apostles were not just following cunningly devised fables when they made known to all "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:16).

All of these verses deal specifically with the Lord's **first** coming. When He was upon the earth, He spoke of coming again in various ways. He promised His disciples just prior to His death that He was going to prepare a place for them, which may refer to His death on the cross (John 14:2). However, He promised them: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also" (14:3). To what future coming does Jesus refer? There are many **comings** to sort through. Some of them relate to a seven-and-a-half week period that spans from His death to the Day of Pentecost.

THE CRUCIFIXION, THE ASCENSION, PENTECOST, THE KINGDOM, AND THE CHRISTIAN ERA

The Crucifixion

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law” (Gal. 4:4). God never predestined **everything** in the world to happen the way that it has (as per Calvinism), but He did pre-determine when Jesus would come into the world, as well as the purpose for which He came—to die for our sins. God chose the specific time and place for this ultimate sacrifice to occur. The place was Jerusalem—just outside the city walls at Calvary (or Golgotha). God chose the precise time, also. At various times in Jesus’ life, the Jews desired to kill Him, but God did not permit it. On one occasion, “they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come” (John 7:30).

Again, when Jesus stressed His Deity, the Jews desired to kill Him, but “no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come” (8:20). A little bit later they wanted to stone Him, but He went through the midst of them and lived until the appropriate time. Even in His home town of Nazareth, when Jesus declared that He had fulfilled Scripture that very day, they led Him to the brow of a hill, that they might cast Him down over the cliff (Luke 4:29), but He was only beginning—not ending—His work of preaching the Gospel and healing the sick. God had appointed only one hour for His death, and He continued His ministry until that hour had come.

The Ascension

After Jesus was crucified and buried, He was raised from the dead. We read in Luke 9:51 that “when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.” The word translated “received up” (Strong’s 354) appears only here in the New Testament, but it is derived from *analambano* (353), which is used of the Lord’s ascension. Mark uses the word to declare that Jesus was received up into heaven (Mark 16:19); Luke uses it to

refer to the ascension (Acts 1:2). The two men in white apparel used it at the very moment of the ascension (1:9-11). To be qualified to be the one who replaced Judas, one had to have been with the disciples from the baptism of John to the time of the resurrection and the ascension. As Paul later describes Jesus, the last phrase he uses is that He was **received up in glory** (1 Tim. 3:16).

John refers to the event by saying that “Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father” (John 13:1). Jesus informed His apostles that where He was going they could not come (13:33). In His prayer to the Father, Jesus mentions specifically, “I come to You, Holy Father” and then repeats those words two verses later (17:11, 13.) Jesus therefore **came** to do all the things that related to His public ministry, He **came** to be crucified for the sins of mankind, and He **came** back to Heaven, from where He had departed (13:3).

Pentecost

Jesus made several promises to come to His apostles in the last hours He spent with them before His death. Consider the following.

I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you (John 14:18).

If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love Him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him (14:23).

You have heard Me say to you, “I am going away and coming *back* to you” (14:28).

But when the Helper comes (15:26).

Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you (16:7).

And when He has come (16:8).

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you (Acts 1:8).

Although it may occasionally sound as though He might be referring to His rising from the dead, it seems more likely that He is promising to come to them by means of the Holy Spirit, who shares

His same nature and would continue working with them. When Jesus ascended into Heaven, He received the promise of the Holy Spirit—in other words, His kingdom (2:30, 33-35). Having done so, ten days later Jesus “poured out” what the multitude saw and heard (2:33), as Joel foretold (2:29-30).

The Kingdom

The coming of the kingdom occurred on Pentecost—despite what Realized Eschatology (RE) teaches. The kingdom had been prophesied in Isaiah and Daniel, and it was an important part of the message of both John the Immerser and Jesus. They both proclaimed, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mat. 3:2; 4:17). Matthew 12:28 makes it sound as though shortly thereafter the kingdom had already arrived: “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.” However, it had not because it is after this statement that both Matthew and Mark record Jesus as saying: “Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom” (Mat. 16:28; Mark 9:1). The kingdom was merely coming near. It was there in the sense of Jesus teaching the principles of the kingdom, which He attested to by casting out demons and performing miracles, but it would not come in actuality until the Day of Pentecost.

The kingdom of Heaven is the church. Jesus had already used the two interchangeably long before His death, burial, and resurrection (Mat. 16:18-19). That the church was intended by Isaiah and Daniel can be seen in the way they call attention to some of the spiritual aspects of it. That “all nations shall flow to it” implies the inclusion of both Jews and Gentiles (Isa. 2:2). The law went forth out of Zion (2:3); The Day of Pentecost occurred in Jerusalem, just as the prophet stated. Daniel says that the kingdom would not be left to other people and that it would never be destroyed. No physical kingdom ever has or ever would be described in such a manner; only the spiritual kingdom of Christ fits this prophecy. David was told that the One Who would come from his body would build a

house for God's name (the church), and His kingdom and throne would be established forever (2 Sam. 7:12-13, 16).

That church was established on Pentecost, and Peter used the keys of the kingdom to tell people how to enter in (Mat. 16:19). From this time on, those being saved were added to the church (Acts 2:47). The RE idea that the kingdom only partially came is ludicrous. Did all nations only sort of flow into it? Either the kingdom was established, or it was not. Did the law go out from Zion? Did the kingdom that would last forever get off to a shaky start for forty years? If it was so vulnerable at the beginning, how has it been since then? Jesus was given His kingdom and throne (Acts 2:33; Heb. 8:1); it is not as though His kingship is dubious or questionable. He either rules in the midst of His enemies (Psa. 110:2), or He does not rule.

The Age to Come

Several times New Testament writers compare the age under which the Law of Moses was valid with the time of the new covenant. Jesus offered that contrast concerning those who blasphemed His name. He would have no forgiveness in the current age (the Mosaic one) or the age to come (the Christian era) (Mat. 12:32). Paul says that the examples that occurred under the previous system "were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come" (1 Cor. 10:11). The New Testament of Jesus Christ lasts as long as this earth lasts. There is not "another testament of Jesus Christ," as the Mormons claim, nor can there ever be one. This king reigns over this kingdom as long as the earth lasts. Neither the king nor the covenant can be replaced. Why would it be, since it is perfect (Heb. 8:6-7)? The author of Hebrews says we are in the world to come (2:5; 6:5).

The New Testament also considers life on earth with the rewards of eternity. Peter asked what he and the others who left all to follow Jesus would receive as a reward. Jesus answered that they would receive much more in this life, "and in the age to come eternal life" (Luke 18:30; Mark 10:30). In this instance, it is not the time of the two covenants that are discussed; it is the time period of this life (in

either covenant) with the never-ending era of eternity. In Ephesians Jesus is seated at God's right hand, "far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come" (Eph. 1:21).

In other words we find different **ages** discussed in the New Testament: (1) the age of Moses, (2) the age of Christianity, and (3) the age of Heaven. What we see by the different contrasts is that the same terminology can be defined in different ways. The context must determine which age is being referenced.

COMING IN JUDGMENT

Personal Judgment

Judgment is pronounced upon various individuals. After Paul had preached the Gospel, he warned those in Antioch of Pisidia: "Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you" (Acts 13:40). To reject the Gospel is ultimately fatal (2 The. 1:7-9), but there are many other types of judgment.

National Judgment (Including Jerusalem)

Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel pronounced numerous woes upon unrepentant nations. God sent prophets to His own people as well. The downfalls of both Israel and Judah were both foretold time and again. Therefore, we cannot be surprised that the Bible mentions the significant event of the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Who can forget Jesus' personal lament of Matthew 23:37: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing!"? Yet, it was going to occur because of the hardheartedness of the people—mainly in that they rejected Jesus.

This judgment may be what Joel is alluding to in 2:28-32. Pentecost would occur "Before the great and the terrible day of the LORD" (2:31—KJV). The Jews (and eventually the Gentiles) would have the opportunity to call on the name of the Lord to be saved before that day arrived (2:32). Apocalyptic language similar to what Joel used is mentioned by Jesus (Mat. 24:29). Many scholars think that

Daniel prophesies of the AD 70 destruction (9:24-27), since he can scarcely be referring to the one that occurred in 586 BC, which was already over. Malachi may or may not be referring to AD 70 (3:5; 4:5).

In the New Testament several passages refer to the coming judgment on Jerusalem in AD 70. All the righteous blood shed on earth was going to **come** upon that generation (Mat. 23:35-37). This destruction is a coming of Jesus (24:3, 27, 30; Luke 21:27). Paul spoke of this future wrath which was coming upon the Jews to the uttermost (1 The. 2:16). Peter likewise spoke of this time, saying that, "the end of all things is at hand" (1 Pet. 4:7). Judgment was about to come (4:17-18).

Rome

Some brethren do not think that Revelation is about the destruction of the Roman Empire, but rather the fall of Jerusalem. With all due respect to Foy Wallace and others, the evidence seems to indicate otherwise. Many of the phrases could be talking about Jerusalem, Babylon, Rome, or any other nation that fits these descriptions. The use of language alone cannot be considered a valid argument in favor of Jerusalem. We read of the Lamb who is sitting on the throne that "His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (Rev. 6:16-17; cf. 11:18). This description could refer to any judgment.

Referencing Babylon narrows it down somewhat (14:7). It is true that any nation might be called a Babylon, but this is a great nation (which Israel was not in AD 70). Jesus warns that He is coming in judgment upon them (16:15). He says He is coming as a thief, which usually refers to the final judgment, but it cannot here because it is the beginning of the battle of Armageddon. In one hour judgment is coming upon her (18:10), but the merchants of the earth will mourn her loss because they profited from her. How many shipbuilders came to Zion (18:17)? How many Bible references are there to sailors wandering the streets of Jerusalem? Although the Jews raised up a persecution here and there when they had an opportunity, Rome is the one who had power and authority; historically, she persecuted the church, and many martyrs wanted

to know, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” (6:10).

The Church

Not only does God bring judgment upon nations, the Lord can **come** in judgment on His own followers. Jesus told Christians in Ephesus, “repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent” (2:5). The Lord also promised those in Pergamos that He would come quickly and fight against those who held the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (2:16). He promised to come upon the brethren in Sardis as a thief in the night if they did not repent (3:3). Jesus told the faithful in Thyatira to hold fast what they had “till I come” (2:25), but those who were guilty of sexual immorality He would make such an example out of that all the churches would know that He is the One Who “searches the minds and the hearts” (2:23).

To the brethren in Smyrna who were suffering persecution, Jesus promised no punishment. In fact, He reminded them of the crown of life that awaited them. The Lord promised His saints in Philadelphia that He would come quickly, also—and in judgment—but not upon them church. Instead He would judge those who were of the synagogue of Satan (3:9-11). Jesus did not promise to come to Laodicea either in judgment upon them or in their enemies: instead He said He was ready to vomit them out of His mouth. They needed serious repentance and reformation of life. He did volunteer to come to them and have fellowship with them if they would open the door when He knocked (3:19-20), which reminds us that the grace of God truly is amazing. We can make Jesus either sick to His stomach or willing to dine with us, depending on our humility and obedience.

THE FINAL JUDGMENT

As noted earlier, when physical judgments of nations are described, the terminology of what will happen to those nations bears certain resemblances to each other. Isaiah 19:1, for example, says,

"The burden against Egypt. Behold, the LORD rides on a swift cloud, And will come into Egypt." Does the Lord's coming on clouds in judgment sound familiar? We are assured that, when Jesus returns, He will be coming in the clouds, and judgment will take place, but there is a different emphasis in these passages. Many cataclysmic descriptions are similar to those mentioned in Matthew 24, also.

Passages that deal with the end of the world, however, are different, and they contain elements within them that cannot be interpreted as a limited judgment on a particular nation—say, Jerusalem in AD 70. We do not find two or three verses that we can explain away and fit into the AD 70 mold; we have more than two dozen, and there is no way to silence them. Below are those passages and comments concerning how they ought to be understood.

Matthew 3:7-12 has always been an important text—often because of the way it has been abused by Pentecostals. They look forward to that baptism of fire, but if they read the text, they would revise quickly that expectation. John the Immerser begins by asking the Pharisees and the Sadducees who had warned them to flee from the wrath to come (cf. Luke 3:7-17). Admittedly, this wrath might refer to the destruction of Jerusalem; the problem with that idea is twofold: (1) Most of those addressed would be dead by then and (2) The context has a different idea in mind. John goes on to say that the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Those trees that do not bear good fruit are cast into the fire. Likewise, the chaff from the threshing floor is burned with unquenchable fire. Hmm. Where do we hear about that fire? *Gehenna* refers to the eternal fire of hell. It should remind us of the Lake of Fire, where the devil, the beast, and the false prophet are (Rev. 20:10). That fire continually burns; thus people are forever in torment there. These are vivid images—not just poetic language for the destruction of Jerusalem.

Someday many from the east and west will be invited to a great fellowship opportunity—to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven. At the same time many Jews will be "cast out into the outer darkness," where there "will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mat. 8:11-12). This great darkness has

long been thought to be a characteristic of hell. Satan is the Prince of darkness and has devoted his existence to keeping people from coming to or remaining in the light. It is appropriate that he and his followers receive the darkness they always opted for.

Someday the angels are going to separate the wicked from the just; the wicked shall be cast in “the furnace of fire,” where they will spend a large amount of their time gnashing their teeth (13:49-50). Similarly, when the “Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory” (25:31). The purpose for this occasion is for judgment. Some will be told, “Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (25:41), which is also referred to as everlasting punishment (25:46).

It is clear—even from these few passages—that there is going to be a future Day of Judgment, in which all shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10) and that some will be rewarded, but many shall be cast into eternal fire. None of these can refer to the Fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 or any other time. But when will this judgment take place, according to the RE enthusiasts?

The Day of Judgment

“Uh, it already has happened.” Yes, they believe that the day in which we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ (5:10) has already occurred—in AD 70. Every Bible passage must be spiritualized to fit the philosophical system. This approach to the Scriptures is called *eisegesis*, which means that ideas are put into the text that are not there. Instead of reading the Scriptures to see what they say (*exegesis*), we formulate a theory (usually based on one or two misunderstood verses) and then make the rest of the Bible conform to it no matter how greatly verses must be contorted for that theory to have a chance of survival (2 Pet. 3:16).

No one can read Matthew without concluding that there will be at some future time a Day of Judgment, as the following verses clearly demonstrate.

But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you (Mat. 11:22)

And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you (11:23-24; cf. 10:15; Mark 6:11).

But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment (Mat. 12:36).

Two observations cannot be ignored, overlooked, or explained away. First, these are not the **days** of judgment; God does not have an individual day in which He judges us upon our death. There is but one day, and all who have ever lived on the face of the earth shall be present for it. Second, that day was not in AD 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem. Were Tyre, Sidon, Capernaum, Sodom, and Gomorrah judged then? Luke said Tyre and Sidon would also fare better than Chorazin and Bethsaida "in that day" or "at the judgment" (Luke 10:12-14). Can an RE adherent explain how all of these cities were judged when Jerusalem fell?

Besides Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul speaking of that Day of Judgment, so do John, Peter, and Jude. John records Jesus as saying that God had given Him the authority to execute judgment because He is the Son of Man, and then He relates a future time in which "all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:27-29). All of this happened in AD 70? Apparently the last trumpet sounded then, also (1 Cor. 15:52), although it is odd that no historian made mention of it.

John also wrote that Christians should be confident "and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (1 John 2:28) and that we should "have boldness in the day of judgment" (4:17). How many Christians were in Jerusalem when Jesus came there in judgment in AD 70? According to historians, none! They had left the city because of the signs Jesus gave in Matthew 24:1-35 of its impending doom. Since they were absent, when and how did Jesus judge His followers in their confidence and boldness rather than in shame?

Peter and Jude likewise declare a time of future judgment. The latter of these says that the angels who had not kept their proper domain (in other words, they had sinned) God had reserved “in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day” (Jude 6). Peter says that God did not spare “the angels who sinned,” but he reserved them for judgment (2 Pet. 2:4). They, along with those who perished in the Flood and those who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah, God reserved “for the day of judgment” (2:9). These angels and human beings were kept under punishment for what—to be dealt with in AD 70? Who can believe it? Why should angels and past sinners be tied to that one event instead of **the Day of Judgment** at the end of earth time? REs are trying to make a mountain out of a molehill. God had prophesied and destroyed physical nations for centuries. How can one more nation falling (and it had already been destroyed once before) be made equivalent to or made even greater than the Day of Judgment when all mankind shall be judged?

Peter answered a question that some brethren (apparently of an agnostic nature) were asking: “Where is the promise of His coming?” (3:4). The apostle of Jesus provides a comparison to an earlier **judgment**—that of the Flood. The world in Noah’s day perished, “being flooded with water” (3:6). “But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (3:7). The heavens and the earth (once destroyed by water) are now reserved for what? Fire! When will that occur? At the Day of Judgment! Does it only involve the perdition of ungodly men of Jerusalem? No, it is for all ungodly men, period. Peter goes on to describe that fire and how even the elements melt with fervent heat (2 Pet. 3:10-13). All of this occurred in AD 70?

Yet, those who believe in RE think that there is no such future time, and they seek to explain it all away. So then, the earth will continue to exist—until when—global warming takes over? Or do we wait for the sun to burn out? The Second Law of Thermodynamics says that the amount of usable energy is diminishing. The world is

winding down, although it will take a long time before it ultimately happens. This scientific law agrees with the Scriptures. God created the worlds, but this physical universe, the works of His hands, "will perish," although He remains. "*They will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed*" (Heb. 1:10-12). God will determined the end of this world, and it will be followed by the Day of Judgment.

One can only imagine what an RE songbook must be like.

"There's a great day past; it already happened;

There's no great day coming by and by.

It occurred in AD 70, in Jerusalem.

There's no great Judgment Day to come.

Other titles might include, "We can't Work Till Jesus Comes" (since He already came once and for all) and "When He **Came** in Glory By and By," since RE adherents teach He already came in His Judgment on Jerusalem. "How Great Thou Art" will have to be changed since the fourth verse contradicts RE; it teaches (correctly), "When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation, and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart." How difficult it must be for REs to sing songs we have all known for years.

Jesus Comes in Glory

At the end of this world Jesus shall come in judgment—but also in glory. Paul makes this truth clear in 2 Thessalonians 1. He is coming from heaven with His mighty angels (1:7), "in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:8). Notice that this includes more than the Jews who rejected Jesus in Jerusalem. These two categories of human beings shall be punished with everlasting destruction (1:9), "when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints" (1:10). Jesus Himself taught: "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory" (Mat. 25:31). This did not occur in AD 70.

Other Passages

A thorough analysis of all the passages dealing with the coming of the Lord would probably fill a book; so the comments on other verses will be brief. In Matthew 24:37 and 39 we read that the coming of the Son of Man will be as it was in the days of Noah; people were caught off guard (unlike they would be when Rome conquered Jerusalem). Jesus emphasized that we do not know what hour He is coming (24:42). If, as historians have observed, no Christians perished in Jerusalem because they heeded the warning signs Jesus had given in Matthew 24:1-35, then the coming dealt with in Matthew 24:36-51 cannot possibly refer to the destruction of Jerusalem because it comes upon all unawares.

Jesus healed a man possessed with many demons. They pleaded with Him to let them enter a herd of swine, which He did. Their first comments were, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?” (8:29). What time—the destruction of Jerusalem? No, of course they refer to the Day of Judgment.

After His resurrection Jesus had a conversation with Peter, in which the latter asked what would happen to John. Jesus answered, “If I will that he remain till I come, what *is that* to you? You follow Me” (John 21:22). Who would, without *help*, think Jesus meant until the destruction of Jerusalem? He obviously refers to the Second Coming rather than a coming in national judgment.

Luke records an interesting detail in Paul’s attempt to convert Felix. “Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come” (Acts 24:25). Paul did not say “your personal judgment to come,” but “**the** judgment to come”—the one in which all of us participate.

Paul told the Corinthians to

judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one’s praise will come from God (1 Cor. 4:5).

This certainly harmonizes with 2 Corinthians 5:10 and Romans 14:10-12. Are we to believe that the destruction of Jerusalem would be of great concern to those several hundred miles away on another continent? And what would that event have to do with personal thoughts and counsels of the heart? The revelation of Jesus and being confirmed to the end (1 Cor. 1:7-8) refer to the final coming. They were also to proclaim the Lord's death till He came (11:26). Came to Jerusalem? Christ's coming is associated with "the end," when the kingdom is delivered up to God (15:23-24).

Brethren in Thessalonica had "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven" (1 The. 1:9-10). They were waiting for Him to bring judgment on Jerusalem? Paul said these brethren would be his hope, his joy, and his crown of rejoicing "in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming" (2:19). One would think it would become embarrassing to try to force all of these passages to fit an obviously false theory. Paul references again "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints" (3:13) and then describes the Lord's noisy descent from heaven a few verses later. Those who belong to Jesus shall arise "in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air" (4:13-17). How does that fit into RE again? There is not enough poetic license in all of Shakespeare to explain this away. Paul mentions the Lord's coming one final time in this first epistle (5:23).

In addition to the description mentioned previously (2 The. 1:6-10), Paul talks about the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him," as well as the "day of Christ" occurring only after the man of sin had been revealed (2:1-3). The great apostasy had to occur first. Apparently, the mystery of lawlessness was already at work, but the man of sin must have risen quickly for Jesus to have destroyed him when He came in AD 70. What is the RE explanation for this man of sin who drew people away with "lying wonders"?

Paul affirms that Jesus "will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and his kingdom" (2 Tim. 4:1). That all happened in AD 70? Why would God choose to judge all of those both alive and

dead at that event? It is obvious that those who hold to the RE view have tried to make every passage dealing with the judgment after this life fit into a mold which it was never designed to fit. They have thrown in everything, including the kitchen sink to try to make it work, but there are just too many passages that mean what we have always thought they meant.

In Revelation 22:12, Jesus promises to come quickly. His reward is with Him, “to give to everyone according to his work” (22:12). Plenty of internal evidence and some external, historic evidence indicate that Revelation was written after AD 70, but the REs must reject all of that to sustain their ideology. One is reminded of the large child who could not get the square peg into a round hole until he grabbed a hammer and smacked it several times. Then, with the wood having been split off into chunks and debris everywhere, he proudly claimed, “See! Now it fits!”

John closes Revelation by responding to the Lord’s promise to come quickly by saying, “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (22:20). This is yet one more part of the New Testament that does not apply. We cannot join in John’s plea to the Lord because it already happened. Revelation, then, turns out to be a book written about the destruction of Jerusalem rather than the fourth of the world empires, which is destroyed just as Daniel foretold in interpreting the dream of Nebuchadnezzar all those years ago. Every coming in the New Testament relates to the destruction of Jerusalem, and absolutely nothing is said about the kingdom, which the God of Heaven would set up (that would never be destroyed). Not one word in Revelation deals with the spiritual kingdom breaking in pieces and consuming all those other kingdoms. This prophecy must remain totally ignored by the New Testament—if the RE adherents are correct.

Although the analogy is imperfect, what they do is somewhat like taking a 50-gallon barrel of liquid and pouring it into a gallon milk jug. With Scriptures sloshing everywhere upon the ground, they boast that their one gallon RE container is sufficient to explain all the Scriptures in the New Testament. Never mind a gathering of

God's people lying in a pool here or a judgment of the good and the evil in another pool there. They have the essence intact, they think.

The fact is that Jesus is going to return in the clouds with the angels and the saints. Those who are dead in Him shall be raised up; those who are alive and remain shall also ascend. The earth and all those who follow Satan shall be burned up. When He comes with clouds, "every eye will see Him, and they also who pierced Him" (Rev. 1:7). Everyone shall hear Him, also (1 The. 4:16). Even the high priest who condemned Jesus (and was dead by AD 70) will see Jesus "coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mark 14:62). Furthermore, Jesus, having prepared a place for us, "will come again and receive" us to Himself (John 14:3). We will be with Him forever. All will enter into judgment with Jesus and will be either granted a reward in Heaven or condemned to the Lake of Fire. The earth shall be no more, and all will forever be in those eternal places, whether good or evil. The New Testament leaves no doubt as to what shall happen to the false teachers and the false prophets (Rev. 20:10; cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-15).

WORK CITED

All Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version unless otherwise indicated.

THE BIBLE'S TEACHING OF SPIRIT AND SOUL REGARDING MAN

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“**W**hat is man?” David asked this question rhetorically in the eighth Psalm; however, many have sought to answer it literally in the millennia since then. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* defines *human being* as

a culture-bearing primate that is anatomically similar and related to the other great apes but is distinguished by a more highly developed brain and a resultant capacity for articulate speech and abstract reasoning. In addition, human beings display a marked erectness of body carriage that frees the hands for use as manipulative members. Some of these characteristics, however, are not entirely unique to humans.

Such a limited answer is what one might expect when one has limited resources with which to provide the answer to such a deep question. However, when one consults the wisdom of God, one sees that man is so much more than this.

1. Man is created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7).
2. Man is created distinct from and with preeminence over the animal kingdom (Gen. 1:26; 9:2-4; Psalms 8:5-8).
3. Man's life is to be highly valued, requiring the taking of one's life guilty of murder (Gen. 9:6; Exodus 21:12-14).

4. Man has an eternal destiny, as all mankind will someday rise from their graves to be delivered to their final abode (John 5:28-29; Mat. 25:31-32; Heb. 9:27; Rev. 20:12).
5. Man is created not only a physical being, but also a spiritual being, comprised of spirit and soul in addition to flesh and blood (Gen. 2:7; Zec. 12:1; 1 The. 5:23).

It is this last distinctive attribute of man on which our attention is fixed in the following pages. To better understand who we are and our intended relationship with our Creator, we will need an understanding of the human spirit and soul. Misunderstandings of the human spirit and soul allow many to fall prey to various false doctrines, including the false doctrinal system of Realized Eschatology. The authoritative source to consider on the subject of the human spirit and soul is the Bible, as it is the authoritative source on all subjects it addresses.

SPIRIT AND SOUL

To understand what the Bible teaches pertaining to man's spirit and soul, one is well served to examine the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words the Bible uses for *spirit* and *soul*.

Old Testament

Ruach

"The most basic meaning of *ruach* is variously defined as 'blowing,' 'air in motion,' and 'wind'" (Van Pelt, Kaiser, and Block 1073). A significant common characteristic of these three, especially to the Hebrew mind, is that they refer to something invisible but undeniably active. From this basic meaning it comes to refer to various invisible forces (Van Pelt, Kaiser, and Block 1073). In addition to "breath" and "wind," "**spirit**" is a general meaning of *ruach* found in the Old Testament (Brown, Driver, and Briggs 924-926; Kohler and Baumgartner). *Ruach* first appears in the Old Testament with reference to the Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2; cf. 6:3; Neh. 9:20, 30). It can refer to a human being's *spirit* in the sense of one's "disposition" or "intellectual frame of mind" (Kohler and Baumgartner) (1 Kin. 21:5; Psa. 32:2; Mal. 2:16). It can also refer to man's spiritual being,

his vital spirit, that dwells in the midst of his flesh (Brown, Driver, and Briggs 925; Wilson 411). A *ruach* is also said to dwell in each animal (Brown, Driver, and Briggs 925). A being from the spiritual world can be called a *ruach* (cf. Job 4:15).

Neshamah

This word occurs much less frequently, only 24 times in the Old Testament to *ruach*'s 394 appearances. It is not fundamentally different in meaning from *ruach*, having "movement of air" or "breath" as its basic meaning (Brown, Driver, and Briggs 675; Kohler and Baumgartner), but it is more specifically human. Delitzsch remarks, "If the O.T. language has a separate word to denote the self-conscious personal human spirit in contradistinction to the spirit of a beast, this word...is *neshamah*" (305). God is only said to have breathed into man's nostrils "the breath (*neshamah*) of life" (Gen. 2:7), and Solomon wrote exclusively of man, "The spirit [*neshamah*] of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly" (Pro. 20:27).

Nephesh

While the aforementioned Hebrew words are typically behind the English *spirit*, *nephesh* is the term behind the occurrences of "soul" in the English Old Testament. Its basic meaning is not far from *ruach* or *neshamah*, as it comes from a verb meaning "to breathe," and means "windpipe opened for breathing," "throat," or "neck" (Kohler and Baumgartner). From there it comes to mean, "that which breathes," and in turn "the soul, the inner being of man" (Brown, Driver, and Briggs 659). It also comes to mean "desire, breath, (breath of the) soul, life, self" (Kohler and Baumgartner). Some Old Testament usages of *nephesh* include "person," "personality," "life," and "soul as the centre and transmitter of feelings and perceptions" (Kohler and Baumgartner). A living "soul" (*nephesh*) is what man became after God breathed in man's nostrils the breath of life (Gen. 2:7). When the *nephesh* leaves a human body, it is self-evident that person dies (35:18).

New Testament

Pneuma

This is the word that typically translates the Hebrew *ruach*, so it should come as no surprise that it has the same basic meaning and very similar range of meaning. “The Greek root *pneu-*, from which [*pneuma*] is derived, denotes dynamic movement of the air” (Kamlah, Dunn, and Brown 689). *Pneumatic*, such as in “pneumatic drill,” a drill driven by compressed air, derives from *pneuma*; as does “pneumonia,” an affliction in which breathing is restricted. However, as with *ruach*, *pneuma* comes to mean more than “air,” “breath,” or “wind”:

As in earlier Jewish thought, *pneuma* denotes that power which man experiences as relating him to the spiritual realm, the realm of reality which lies beyond ordinary observation and human control (Kamlah, Dunn, and Brown 693).

Pneuma is the common term translated “spirit,” and can refer to, among other things, the Third Person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit (Mat. 1:18; 3:11; Acts 2:4), or a ghost (Luke 24:37-38) (Bauer 832-36). God Himself is said to be “*pneuma*” (John 4:24); that is, “an independent noncorporeal being, in contrast to a being that can be perceived by the physical senses” (Bauer 833). This same type of nature is said to comprise part of man (1 The. 5:23). As the Holy Spirit knows the things of God, so each human being’s spirit (*pneuma*) knows the things of that human being: “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?” (1 Cor. 2:11). The spirit (*pneuma*) is the man’s seat of discerning (Mark 2:8), decision-making (Acts 19:21), and emotion (John 11:33). The *pneuma* is “the rational part of man, the power of perceiving and grasping divine and eternal things, and upon which the Spirit of God exerts its influence” (Thayer). The *pneuma* gives life to the body (Luke 8:55). Correspondingly, when one’s *pneuma* leaves his body, that person is said to be dead (Jam. 2:26). The focal point of man’s *pneuma*, as with *ruach*, is that it is the part of man invisible to the human eye or direct observation.

Phantasma

Akin to the English *phantasm*, *phantasma* speaks of an “apparition” or “ghost” (Bauer). This word only occurs twice in the New Testament, both in passages speaking of the occasion on which Jesus’ disciples saw Him walking on the Sea of Galilee and “supposed it had been a spirit [*phantasma*]” (Mark 6:49; cf. Mat. 14:26). Of course, they supposed incorrectly; thus, Holy Writ nowhere affirms the truth of such *phantasmata*.

Psuche

“Soul” only occurs 39 times in the New Testament to the 261 instances of “spirit,” but this by no means renders the term insignificant. The Greek term behind *soul* is *psuche*, which may sound familiar to the native English speaker. From *psuche* (or *psyche*) come such English words as *psyche*, meaning, “the human soul” or “the human mind”; and *psychology*, the science dealing with the mind (*Webster’s* 601-602). Considering this, it is unsurprising that *psuche* can refer to the mind: “But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds [*psuchai*] evil affected against the brethren” (Acts 14:2). The “double-minded man” of James 1:8 and 4:8 is, more literally, a “two-souled [*di-psuche*] man.” As the mind is the seat of one’s feeling, emotion, and desire, so is the *psuche* (cf. Mat. 26:38; John 12:27; Rev. 18:14) (Bauer 1099). Most Christians think of the soul as “the seat and center of life that transcends the earthly,” to which indeed *psuche* can refer (Mat. 10:28; 1 Pet. 1:9) (Bauer 1099). As is said of the *nepesh* (Hebrew for “soul”) and *pneuma* (Greek for “spirit”), human life ends when one’s *psuche* leaves his body (Luke 12:20). However, *psuche* can also refer to the physical life—Jesus said that He came “to give my life [*psuche*] a ransom for many” (Mat. 20:28; Mark 10:45). Jesus was not for one moment insinuating that He was sacrificing His eternal soul, but rather His physical life. The *psuche* can truly be said to be “the center of both the earthly and the transcendent life” (Bauer 1099).

Distinguishing the Spirit from the Soul

It is clear that man has a spiritual nature in addition to his physical nature. The multitudinous Scriptural references to man's *spirit* and *soul* make this clear. What is not nearly so obvious is the difference between the spirit and soul. Death is defined as when the spirit leaves the body (Jam. 2:26); death is defined as when the soul leaves the body (Gen. 35:18). The spirit can refer to the invisible nature of man that continues after the body dies; so can the soul. "For the most part the words *pneuma* and *psuche* are used indiscriminately" (Thayer). Yet one can make a distinction between the two. Note the three-fold division of man presented by Paul:

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole **spirit** and **soul** and **body** be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 The. 5:23).

For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to **the dividing asunder of soul and spirit**, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12).

It may not be an easily made distinction, but one who looks to the Word of God can make the distinction.

Spirit (Hebrew *ruach* and Greek *pneuma*) refers to the invisible but active force within a person. Especially with *pneuma*, this is exclusive of the physical body.

However, *soul* is not necessarily exclusive of the human body. The Hebrew *nephesh* (soul) refers to the life force within a person. It often includes that whole person, including his body, as long as life is in him. "In fact, *nephesh* is so identified with the whole person that ironically it can denote a nonbreathing corpse!" (Fredericks 133). So it can, as found in Leviticus 21:11: "Neither shall he go in to any dead body [literally, "dead *nephesh*" or "dead soul"], nor defile himself for his father, or for his mother." Such a usage is rare, but it does stress that *soul* can include the physical body.

One reads of those who sought Moses', David's, Elijah's, and Jeremiah's *nephesh* (Exo. 4:19; 1 Sam. 20:1; 2 Sam. 16:11; 1 Kin. 19:10; Jer. 38:16). Technically, one could translate Exodus 4:19,

“And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy **soul** [*nephesh*].” However, the late Pharaoh and other Egyptian leaders were not seeking to possess Moses’ eternal spirit. They were seeking Moses’ physical **death**.

The cry, “Save Our Souls,” is commonly associated with the SOS distress signal. This is a cry and signal for times of physical distress, when people are asking for their physical lives to be saved. When Peter wrote that during the Flood “eight souls were saved by water” (1 Pet. 3:20), was he referring to spiritual salvation? No, he was primarily referring to the salvation of the physical lives of Noah’s family, when other than those on the ark “all flesh died that moved upon the earth...and every man” (Gen. 7:21).

It is important for Christians to understand that *soul* can have this broader sphere of meaning. As the late Guy N. Woods observed:

It is not unusual for shrewd materialists (among whom are Jehovah’s Witnesses, Adventists, and Christadelphians) to induce an uninformed person in these matters to affirm that “the soul never dies,” and then to produce numerous statements from the Old Testament that the soul does indeed die, the conclusion then being pressed that man is wholly mortal, his entire being subject to death (15).

This is what is known as the fallacy of equivocation, which occurs “when the conclusion of an argument depends on the fact that a word or phrase is used...in two different senses in the argument” (Hurley 155). Imagine someone getting you to agree that a *bat*, the object used to strike a ball, is either wood or aluminum. Could that person then force you to draw the conclusion that a *bat*, the furry winged animal, cannot be flesh and blood? Similarly, *soul* can have different meanings, and not all statements about the soul apply evenly to all meanings. It is true that the soul—the physical human being—will die. However, this does not prove that the soul, “the seat and center of life that transcends the earthly,” will die.

To summarize the above succinctly, the soul is roughly equivalent to life. The spirit in man that gives him life can also be called

his soul; thus, *spirit* and *soul* can be used synonymously. However, as the body is alive, the body is considered part of the soul as well. Contrariwise, the spirit of man is more specifically the immortal identity of man not subject to physical death.

THE SPIRIT AND SOUL—CAPABLE OF EVIL

In seeking to disavow that a bodily resurrection of the dead is yet to come, Realized Eschatologists (hereafter REs) have adopted false views of the spirit and soul, particularly in relation to the body and flesh. Many REs have bought into a Gnostic form of dualism, which says that flesh is inherently evil while spirit is incapable of evil. This is how Kurt Simmons comes to his conclusion that angels, being spiritual beings, are incapable of sin or of even being tempted to sin: “Angels cannot sin; the seed of all sin is the flesh (Rom. 7:18; Gal. 5:19-21; Jam. 1:14-15). Since angels are spirit and not flesh, they cannot be tempted with sin” (“Three Views”).

The perceptive Bible student would readily respond to this assertion by pointing out 2 Peter 2:4: “For if God spared not the **angels that sinned**, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.” This verse could not be any plainer in affirming that angels have sinned. However, in a classic case of the tail wagging the dog, Simmons explains away what this verse plainly teaches by claiming that *angels* in this verse actually means “messengers.”

Hence, the “angels” in this passage are best understood, not as supernatural beings, but men. Specifically, they are the “sons of God” (descendants [sic] of Seth), who married and made affinity with the daughters of unbelieving men (descendants of Cain) before the flood (Gen. 6:1-4). This is clear from Josephus, who first refers to the descendants of Seth, saying they obeyed God for seven generations, but then calls them “angels” and says they apostatized from God by marrying (unbelieving) women (“Three Views”).

In addition to the common meaning, “a transcendent power who carries out various missions or tasks,” the Greek *angelos* can mean “a human messenger serving as an envoy” in certain contexts (Bauer 8-9).

Nonetheless, Josephus is not the friendly witness for Simmons' case that Simmons makes him out to be. Yes, Josephus did refer to the "sons of God" of Genesis 6:1-2 as "angels" (Gr. *angeloi*, plural of *angelos*). However, in so doing, Josephus made the common mistake of assuming that they **were** angels—he was not affirming that they were the descendants of Seth. Josephus commented on this passage, "Some [people], born of angels who had consorted with women, resembled the audacious giants of Greek mythology" (1.73, p. 21 Maier trans.). Josephus did not view the "women" as necessarily descended from Cain, and he did not view the "angels" as human beings at all. As William Whiston notes in his edition of Josephus, "This notion, that the fallen angels were, in some sense the fathers of the old giants, was the constant opinion of antiquity" (32 n. a).

By claiming that the resurrection has already occurred, and by claiming that spirit is incapable of sin, REs also find themselves cornered into explaining away Satan. Satan is, of course, a spiritual being. He is also most capable of sin. Since the Bible affirms that Satan will enter destruction at the resurrection (Rev. 20:10), Don K. Preston claims, "Jesus has indeed cast Satan into hell and broken his power." Simmons allegedly "denies that there ever was a real personal devil in the first place," speaking of him merely as a "metaphor for 'Sin and Death'" (Turner).

Considering the above, it is most interesting that Simmons affirms in his "Preterist [RE] Statement of Faith":

We believe that the historical narratives of Genesis were intended to affirm the truth of the facts that they recite. We deny that the historical narratives of Genesis can be interpreted by the same principles as the poetic language and imagery of the prophets: God created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them in the space of six evenings and mornings (24 hour days); Adam and Eve were the first created human beings; all men trace their decent from the common biological parentage of Adam and Eve.

If one understands that Genesis 1-3 is literal, why would he then affirm that the serpent (Satan, Rev. 12:9) is figurative? Only a vain effort to justify a false doctrine would compel anyone to do such.

So if angels and Satan (being spiritual beings) can sin, it follows that man's spiritual being is capable of sin as well. As previously noted, the soul is the seat of desire, and one's desire is what leads each person to sin (Jam. 1:14-15). Paul by inspiration spoke of moral "filthiness" not only of the flesh, but also "of the spirit" (2 Cor. 7:1). While the body holds certain appetites conducive to sin, the spirit is involved in every sin as well.

CONCLUSION

God created man a "living soul." The physical life of man may pass away, but the spirit, and thus the soul in a different state, will continue into eternity. One can choose to be among the "spirits of just men made perfect" by the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Heb. 12:23), or among those whose souls will be destroyed in an agonizing eternal process (Mat. 10:28; cf. 25:46).

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mat. 16:26).

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THE JUDGMENT AND RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

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INTRODUCTION

*E*schatology derives from the Greek word, *eschatos*, meaning, “last.” It has to do with the Biblical doctrine of “last” or “end-of-time” things and embraces the return of Christ, the end of the world, the resurrection of the dead, and the day of judgment. Because some of the Biblical language dealing with eschatology is figurative, many have allowed speculation to supplant proper hermeneutics. This has resulted in much error being taught on the subject of final things. One such body of error is Realized Eschatology (hereafter abbreviated as RE) and is the theme of this lectureship. RE is also known as: Fulfilled Eschatology, Covenant Eschatology, and Transmillennialism.

RE argues that all Bible prophecy has been fulfilled and nothing prophetic remains to be fulfilled. This fallacious doctrine was championed in England during the mid to late 1800s by a Congregational preacher named James Stuart Russell (1816-1895). Russell authored a book in 1878 titled, *The Parousia*. In this book, Russell argued that the Biblical teaching of the Second Coming of Christ, the Judgment Day, etc., are not future events that will take place at

the end of the current dispensation. According to Russell, prophecies relating to these matters were fulfilled with Jerusalem's fall in AD 70. There is, therefore, no future "Second Coming" of Christ. Moreover, there will be no resurrection of the human body. Also, the final judgment and the end of the world have occurred already with the destruction of Jerusalem.

The four eschatological events that are supposed to have occurred in AD 70: (1) The Lord's Second Coming, (2) The resurrection of the dead, (3) The Day of Judgment, and (4) The end of the world. This lecture will refute the error of RE relating to the resurrection of the dead and the Day of Judgment.

BACKGROUND OF REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY

In 1970 Max King wrote a book titled, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, in which he advocated that the destruction of Jerusalem was the climax to all prophecy as well as God's promises and warnings. In this book King asserts:

Prophecy found its complete fulfillment in the second coming of Christ, and now may be regarded as closed and consummated (65).

The end of the Jewish world *was* the second coming of Christ (81).

There is no scriptural basis for extending the second coming of Christ beyond the fall of Judaism (105).

Out of the decay of Judaism arose the spiritual body of Christianity (200).

Notice that King equates the Second Coming of Christ with the destruction of Jerusalem and concludes that all prophecy was fulfilled at that time. This doctrine continues to be a threat today through the teaching of King's youngest son, Tim, and others who are now propagating this doctrine.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

The resurrection is a prominent theme throughout the Bible. The fact that there is more to our existence than this mortal life gives the Christian hope to endure hardship. It gives comfort to the bereaved, knowing that those who die in Christ have gone on to a better place. Also, the resurrection gives the righteous a sense of ultimate

justice, knowing that they will be avenged of the evil that was perpetrated upon them by the wicked whose punishment will be paid in full. Yet, RE denies all of this.

Summation of Their Teaching

In his book, King teaches that the references to the resurrection in the New Testament are dealing with a spiritual resurrection and not a resurrection of the body from the grave. The “body” in 1 Corinthians 15 refers to the church that was being “raised” out of Judaism into eternal life in AD 70.

In Judaism we have borne the image of the earthly, but in Christianity we shall bear the image of the heavenly (verse 48)... The author sincerely believes that the *general resurrection* belongs to the same time and event as given to the coming of Christ, the judgment, end of the world, and receiving of the eternal kingdom.... This text deals with spiritual, not physical death, which is fairly evident from the context. The “quickenings” power of God and Christ (John 5:19-23) has to do with spiritual regeneration (*Spirit of Prophecy* 200, 212, 219).

In an effort to justify this conclusion, King asserts that for the first forty years, the church was dead because it was being stifled, repressed, and restrained by the Old Law of Moses. This is due to their belief that the church ran concurrently with the Law of Moses until the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Supposedly, at that time, the body of the church was “resurrected” (in a spiritual sense) from the bondage of Judaism. Only then did the church receive its full glory and power. Thus, King teaches that all references to the resurrection have to do with the spiritual resurrection of Christianity.

Realized Eschatology Contradicts John 5:28-29

This error is easily refuted with very little effort. Regarding the resurrection, Jesus said:

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:28-29).

According to King's doctrine, this is a reference to the church under the persecuting dominion of Judaism.

However, Jesus is referring to "all" that are in the graves. Attention needs to be paid to "all" and "graves" both of which are plural. Now, if, as per King, this refers to the church, one must ask, "Is the church plural?" Was Judaism oppressing more than one church? The Scriptures demand the answer be, "**No!**" There is only one church and it consists of only one body (Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:13).

Furthermore, one must ask, "Was the church 'dead' for the first 40 years of its existence?" RE implies that Jesus established dead, lifeless bodies (the church) that needed to be resurrected from graves (tombs, plural) in AD 70. This doctrine further implies that Jesus: (1) died for and shed His blood to purchase and establish a dead religious system, (2) this religious system consisted of a plurality of bodies, (3) this plurality of bodies was placed in a plurality of graves, and (4) this plurality of bodies in a plurality of graves had to wait 40 years to be resurrected.

If you are not confused yet, just wait. Not only does King have multiple churches in multiple graves waiting 40 years to be resurrected, he also ends up with two classes of "all" those that will be resurrected from the "graves." Jesus said that some of those resurrected had done "good" and some had done "evil" (John 5:28-29). Jesus further stated, that each class of "all" those (individuals, plural) will get what they have coming to them.

Now with this in mind, were there "good" churches and "evil" churches in existence between AD 30 and AD 70? Were they all resurrected and each receive what they had coming to them? This is utter nonsense! This text cannot be explained in any way other than a general resurrection of "all those" dead ones (bodies) who have been buried in "graves" around the world since the beginning of time.

Realized Eschatology Contradicts 1 Corinthians 15.

It is foolish to suggest that the "body" in 1 Corinthians 15 refers to the church that was being "raised" out of Judaism into eternal life in AD 70. In making this assertion, King rips the Scriptures out of context and wrests them to his own destruction (2 Pet. 3:16). Con-

sider the following question, “Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?” (1 Cor. 15:12). Was Paul referring to a bodily resurrection, or a spiritual resurrection? Furthermore, Paul stated, “For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead” (15:21). Is this a physical death or a spiritual death? Was Christ’s resurrection a physical resurrection or a spiritual resurrection? The context demands that the resurrection under discussion is physical.

After this resurrection, “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power” (1 Cor. 15:24). King asserts that this verse has reference to the resurrection of the church in AD 70. This would imply that Jesus quit ruling in AD 70. Remember, He was to “put down all rule and all authority and power” at the resurrection. Furthermore, Jesus was to return the Kingdom back to God. Did that happen in AD 70? Who can accept this foolishness and still believe that Jesus is currently King of kings and Lord of lords?

Jesus told the Sadducees:

The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection (Luke 20:34-36).

Is this “resurrection” also the resurrection of the church out of Judaism? If so, are Christians now equal to angels? Why are they still marrying and being given in marriage? The most important question is, “Why are they still dying?” Realized Eschatology fails miserably to answer these and other similar questions. However, if this is a literally physical resurrection of the body from the grave in preparation for heaven, the problems disappear.

Paul said that some would ask, “How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” (1 Cor. 15:35). In answer, Paul

said, "But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body" (15:38). Is this talking about each church being raised with a different body? There is no Judaism-Christianity contrast taught in 1 Corinthians 15 or any other place in the Scriptures.

In his discussion of the resurrection, Paul said that

flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption...we shall all be changed...the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed...this mortal *must* put on immortality (15:50-53).

Flesh and blood, corruption, and incorruption cannot refer to Judaism/Christianity. Furthermore, who are the "we" (those who are alive and remain) who are to be changed? (15:52). Was there a dead Christianity in need of resurrection, and a living Christianity that needed to be "changed"?

One of the most egregious blunders of RE is to deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus. The bodily resurrection of Jesus is used as evidence for a future, general, bodily resurrection of all mankind. Jesus is said to be the "first fruits" of them that are asleep (15:20-23). The fact that Jesus' resurrection is the "first" implies a second. This gives hope and assurance to all the rest. "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (15:23). However, RE teaches that the resurrection that occurred in AD 70 was spiritual and implies that Jesus' resurrection was, also, spiritual. This denies that Jesus ever rose literally and bodily from the grave. Yet, the Scriptures plainly teach that Jesus walked, talked, and ate with the disciples (John 20:20-27).

Proponents of this doctrine make the same mistake as the Sadducees (cf. Acts 23:8). Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 15 to refute this error. "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (15:12). In his second book, *The Cross and The Parousia of Christ*, King spends 285 pages attempting to prove that the "body" to be raised from the dead (1 Cor. 15) is not the human body, and the resurrection is not a literal resurrection (381-666). He failed miserably. The resurrection will involve the good and the evil, the just and the unjust (cf. Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15). The

bodily resurrection of Jesus is cited as a precursor to the general resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20-23). Furthermore, those who deny the resurrection are ignorant of both the Scriptures and the power of God (Mat. 22:29).

THE JUDGMENT

According to *The Spirit Of Prophecy*, “This was the end of the world, the destruction of the temple, and the coming of Christ. (Matt. 24:1-3). This was when heaven and earth passed away (Matt. 24:35; Rev. 20:11)” (68). King fails to realize that the Bible uses *judgment* in more than one way. He falsely concludes that every judgment is limited to a local, political, or temporal judgment. Most would readily agree that the Bible uses *judgment* in this sense. Many examples can be given where God brought judgment upon cities, nations, and entire people as retribution for their wickedness. Some examples would include: (1) Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18-19), (2) Egypt (Exo. 12:12), (3) Moab (Jer. 48), (4) Edom (Oba. 1), and (5) Nineveh (Jon. 1-4).

However, one must recognize that *judgment* is often used in the sense of the final, universal judgment at the end of the world. Many Scriptures teach that there will be: (1) a universal judge, Jesus Christ (Acts. 17:30-31), (2) a universal gathering of all men and women who have lived since Adam and Eve (Mat. 25:31ff; Rev. 20:12-13), (3) an accounting before God for the things done in this life (Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10), and (4) a future reward for the righteous and punishment for the wicked (Mat. 25:46; John 5:28-29).

The Old Testament speaks a final and future judgment. The Psalmist said:

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.... And he shall judge the world in righteousness, He shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness (Psa. 1:5; 9:8).

Solomon understood that there would be a future judgment.

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these *things*

God will bring thee into judgment.... For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil (Ecc. 11:9; 12:14).

The New Testament also teaches a final and future judgment. Jesus said, “That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment” (Mat. 12:36). If this occurred in AD 70, what meaning does this verse have for those living today? Jesus’ words have meaning and relevance today only if they refer to a future, final, and universal judgment!

Chorazin and Bethsaida

Jesus worked many mighty miracles in Chorazin and Bethsaida, but they did not repent. In this regard, Jesus said:

Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you (Mat. 11:21-22).

If this “day of judgment” is limited to the time, place, and people of Jerusalem in AD 70, how could it possibly apply to the people of Tyre and Sidon who had been dead for centuries? The Lord plainly said it would be easier, i.e., more tolerable, for the people of Tyre and Sidon “at the day of judgment” than for those among whom He worked miracles. It is impossible that the judgment in this passage could be a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus was speaking of a last, final, universal, and future Judgment Day that is yet to come.

Paul on Mars’ Hill

When Paul spoke on Mars’ Hill in Athens he said:

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead (Acts 17:30-31).

It is absurd to think that “all men everywhere” in the entire world were in Jerusalem in AD 70. This is physically and historically im-

possible. The only correct conclusion is that there is a future, universal, Judgment Day coming! This will be in “a day,” not days or months or years.

The Judgment Seat of Christ

Paul warned:

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men (2 Cor. 5:10-11; cf. Rom. 14:10-12).

This passage speaks of a judgment seat upon which Jesus Christ will sit. At some future time, every person in the world will be gathered together and stand before the throne of Christ to be judged according to how he/she has lived. These and other similar verses have no meaning to those living today if all was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. There is no need to fear “the terror of the Lord” since there is no future judgment. Furthermore, it would be a waste of time to “persuade men” to obey the Gospel. This passage has meaning today, only if there is a future judgment.

The Last Enemy Death

In his great resurrection chapter, Paul stated that Jesus must reign until He had put all enemies under His feet. He then stated, “The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death” (1 Cor. 15:26). In a parallel passage, Paul said:

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:27-28).

Currently, men are appointed to die. But, after death has been destroyed, all men will be judged. Peter says, “God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment” (2 Pet. 2:4). Furthermore, Peter says that God holds the wicked “unto the day of judgment to be punished” (2:9). Were the angels and all of the wicked in the world brought to Jerusalem in AD 70 to be punished?

Absolutely not! All of the wicked (angels included) will be judged when the last enemy, death, is destroyed.

CONCLUSION

The false doctrine of RE provides no final and decisive solution to the sin problem humanity faces. It presents a world in which sin will forever continue. The Bible reveals that with the Lord's return the world and all the works of man will be destroyed. Peter spoke of a day when:

the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? (2 Pet. 3:7-12).

However, Peter assures the faithful that a new order will take the place of the old. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (3:13).

Christians should be comforted in their hope of the future return of Christ. Of that great and glorious day, Paul said, "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 The. 1:10). Also, "When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:4). The proponents of the AD 70 heresy deny that the Christian can look forward to such a time. Yet the overwhelming evidence from the Scriptures is that the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection of

the dead, and the judgment are all future events. Let us all humbly and patiently await the second coming of our Lord.

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BIBLE DOCTRINE OF HADES, HEAVEN, AND HELL

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Our topic for this study is "The Bible Doctrine of Hades, Heaven, and Hell," and matters related to them. The inspired apostle John wrote of the Judgment, Hades, and Hell, in the following passage:

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, *even* the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15—ASV).

HADES

Hades in the New Testament is the equivalent of *Sheol* in the Old Testament. In *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, James Orr wrote the following useful information on *Sheol*:

This word is often translated in the King James Version “grave” (e.g. Ge 37:35; 1 Sa 2:6; Job 7:9; 14:13; Ps 6:5; 49:14; Isa 14:11, etc.) or “hell” (e.g. De 32:22; Ps 9:17; 18:5; Isa 14:9; Am 9:2, etc.); in 3 places by “pit” (Nu 16:30,33; Job 17:16). It means really the unseen world, the state or abode of the dead, and is the equivalent of the Greek Hades, by which word it is translated in Septuagint.... Into Sheol, when life is ended, the dead are gathered in their tribes and families. Hence, the expression frequently occurring in the Pentateuch, “to be gathered to one’s people,” “to go to one’s fathers,” etc. (Ge 15:15; 25:8,17; 49:33; Nu 20:24,28; 31:2; De 32:50; 34:5). It is figured as an under-world (Isa 44:23; Eze 26:20, etc.), and is described by other terms, as “the pit” (Job 33:24; Ps 28:1; 30:3; Pr 1:12; Isa 38:18, etc.).

Sheol is found several times in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint, begun in 285 BC. This is the translation which Christ and the apostles used, from which most of the Old Testament quotations derive as quoted by New Testament writers. In sixty-one out of the sixty-five occurrences, they translated *Sheol* with the Greek *Hades*, a word which occurs eleven times in the text of the New Testament. Both *Sheol* and *Hades* refer to the place of disembodied spirits. The following lexicographers provide these definitions for the realm of *Hades*:

Liddell & Scott: “The Unseen.”

T. S. Green: “The invisible abode or mansion of the dead.”

W. J. Hickie: “The place of departed spirits.”

Robinson: “The abode of the dead.”

Sophocles: “The under-world—the world of departed spirits.”

Thayer: “The common receptacle of disembodied spirits” (Woods 265-66).

Hades (Greek ᾍδης) is to be contrasted with *Gehenna* (Greek γέεννα) although both are translated *hell* in the King James Version. *Hades* in the New Testament (*Sheol*, Old Testament) refers to the realm of the unseen. For instance, in brother Alexander Campbell’s translation of the New Testament, he renders Hades as “the unseen world” in Peter’s Pentecost sermon: “he, foreseeing this, spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that *his soul* should not be left in the unseen world, nor his flesh see corruption” (Acts 2:31, *Liv-*

ing Oracles; cf. 2:27). All departed spirits go into the unseen world (i.e., Hades, Sheol) upon death, and there they will remain until the Judgment Day. There are two aspects of Hades: Paradise, for the righteous, and the place of torments, *tartarus*, for the unrighteous.

The Lord makes reference to the Hadean realm in His historical account of the rich man and Lazarus. He speaks of Paradise when He says that the beggar died and was carried into Abraham's bosom. "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried" (Luke 16:22). No doubt, "Abraham's bosom" is a place of comfort, because Jesus said of Lazarus, "now he is comforted" (16:25).

"TORMENTS" (TARTARUS)

The rich man also died, but he went to the place of torments in Hades: "And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (16:23—ASV). There, he begged for relief: "And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame" (16:24—ASV). Abraham said to him "thou art tormented" (16:25). Moses refers to this place as the "lowest Sheol" (i.e., Hades): "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, And burneth unto the lowest Sheol, And devoureth the earth with its increase, And setteth on fire the foundations of the mountains" (Deu. 32:22—ASV; cf. Psa. 86:13).

Hades (Greek ᾗδης) is found eleven times in the Greek New Testament. In every instance, it is translated "hell" in the King James Version. (In the days of King James *hell* not only denoted the eternal lake of fire, but in everyday usage it referred to that which is unseen or covered up. For example, in the 1600s one might say: "He is helling his potatoes.") In the American Standard, *hades* is translated as "Hades" in all of the occurrences: Matthew 11:23, 16:18, Luke 10:15, 16:23, Acts 2:27, 31, Revelation 1:18, 6:8, 20:13-14.

Peter, speaking of the angels that sinned, states: "God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Pet.

2:4—ASV). Here, *hell* does not refer to *gehenna*, the eternal like of fire and the final abode of the wicked, but to the place where the wicked abide until the Judgment. Guy N. Woods states concerning Peter's words:

The word translated "hell" here, *tartarosas*, does not occur elsewhere in the Greek New Testament. The word is used in Greek mythology of the place of restraint and punishment for the souls of wicked men after death. It seems likely that Peter, writing in Greek, and to people who would be disposed to understand the words of the language in their ordinary signification, here used the word in its usual import, and that by it he intended to convey the idea that these wicked angels were thrust down to such an abode to await the judgment of the great day. Inasmuch as the nature of the place is the same as that which characterized the rich man in torment in Hades, separated by a great gulf from the righteous there (Luke 16:23-26), it is reasonable to assume that the places are the same, and that *tartarus* is that compartment in the Hadean realm where wicked spirits are reserved (kept in restraint) until the day of their final condemnation is at hand. The place is described as "pits of darkness," from the fact that darkness is the condition which there prevails. The word "pit," from the Greek *seiros*, denotes an underground opening or den (*Second Peter* 166).

Likewise, Jude spoke of hades, when he spoke of these same angels being reserved in everlasting chains under darkness until the judgment: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6).

PARADISE

In contrast to *Tartarus* (the place of torments) is the abode of the righteous within the Hadean realm known as *Paradise*. Jesus spoke of Paradise when He addressed the penitent thief who hung upon cross, beside Him: "Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Therefore, Jesus went into Paradise upon His death, and took this man with Him. Jesus remained there until He was resurrected on the third day (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3-4).

The apostle Peter's sermon on Pentecost gives further insight regarding Paradise and Hades, as he quotes David's prophecy of Jesus from the Psalms:

For David saith concerning him, I beheld the Lord always before my face; For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; Moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul unto Hades, Neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption. Thou madest known unto me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of gladness with thy countenance. Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set *one* upon his throne; he foreseeing *this* spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses (Acts 2:25-32—ASV; cf. Psa. 16:8-11).

Both Jesus and David went into the Hadean realm, as all do. Yet Jesus, in contrast with David, did not remain there long enough for His body to see corruption or decomposition, because God raised Him up! Paul spoke of this fact, as he declared the resurrection of Christ to the Jews in the synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia:

God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another *psalm*, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption (Acts 13:33-37).

Furthermore, there is a distinction between Paradise and Heaven. After His death, Jesus did not go to the Father, Who is in Heaven (cf. Mat. 6:9). We know this from a statement that He made to Mary after He arose from the dead on the first day of the week:

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend

unto my Father, and your Father; and *to* my God, and your God (John 20:17).

Jesus was in Paradise during this time, but not in Heaven. Hence, Paradise is not Heaven (Woods, *Questions & Answers* 267).

After pronouncing a blessing upon Peter for making the good confession, Jesus declared that He would build His church upon “this rock,” that is, the truth of His Deity which Peter had just confessed (cf. Mat. 16:16-18). The Son of God declared, “And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (16:18—ASV). Brother H. Leo Boles makes the following fine comment on this:

In the New Testament, Hades is the realm of the dead; here “Hades” is represented as a mighty city with gates representing its power. Jesus simply meant that though he would be crucified, buried, yet he would arise from the dead and build his church; the powers of death or the unseen world, or “the gates of Hades,” would not be able to hold him in the unseen realm and prevent his coming out and building his church. Not only would the church be established in spite of the powers of Hades, but the church would be continued in spite of these powers. The church will never fail, though generation after generation yields to the power of death, yet other generations will perpetuate the church, and it will continue until it has filled its mission on earth.

When the end comes, death and Hades will be done away: “And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, *even* the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:14—ASV; cf. 20:10-15). Brother John T. Hinds states the following regarding the cessation of death and Hades:

The language means that both death and Hades will cease to exist at the judgment. The abolishment of death will render it impossible to have dead bodies for tombs in either earth or sea. If there will be no bodies for the tombs, there will be no disembodied spirits for Hades. No longer needed, naturally they will cease to exist. Personified, as if human beings, their final end is represented as in the lake of fire, called the second death. This is a forceful way

of saying they are eternally banished, and the saved will no longer have reason to fear what does not exist.

Contrary to the doctrine of Realized Eschatology and as proof of its invalidity, when “the last day” arrives, the judgment and the resurrection of all mankind will take place (cf. John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 12:48; Mat. 7:21-23; Acts 17:31). In that day (the day of the Lord) when He returns in the clouds of the air, the universe and all physical elements will be destroyed, and all souls will stand before the judgment seat of Christ (cf. 2 Pet. 3:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12; Rev. 1:7; 1 The. 4:13-18). The eternal sentence of God will be pronounced upon each and every person, and eternity will begin. One will either be ordered to depart from the Lord and to enter into the eternal lake of fire, hell, or be welcomed into heaven with God for eternity (cf. Mat. 25:31-33, 34, 41, 46; 7:21-23).

HEAVEN

We have news for the AD 70 people: heaven is not and never will be on earth! Heaven is symbolized as a “new heaven and new earth,” in that it will be a completely different place of existence for the righteous (cf. Rev. 21:1). This old earth and its environs will be completely destroyed at the Second Coming of Christ (cf. 2 Pet. 3:10-12). This place called Heaven will be a “new” place for man. In connection with this truth, John records: “And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful” (Rev. 21:5). Obviously then, it is not this old earth that John was describing!

In commenting on the “new heaven” and “new earth” which John saw (Rev. 21:1), Hinds makes the following point: “That new heaven and earth will be a state, place, or condition ‘wherein dwelleth righteousness’ (2 Pet. 3:13).” Obviously, it cannot be this earth, because it is filled with wickedness. Yet, nothing sinful will enter into heaven. “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Rev. 21:27). The very nature of God demands this, in that, nothing contrary to His holy and righteous nature may abide in His presence (cf. Hab.

1:13; 1 John 1:5-6). The fact that He is wholly intolerant of evil is plainly expressed by the Psalmist: “Clouds and darkness *are* round about him: Righteousness and judgment *are* the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him, And burneth up his enemies round about” (Psa. 97:2-3). Hence, only those cleansed by the precious blood of Christ may enter into the Heavenly home, and this would include the faithful before the Christian age, whose sins the blood of Christ reached back and removed (cf. Acts 22:16; Rev. 1:5; Heb. 9:14; 1 John 1:7; Rom. 3:21-26; Heb. 9:15; John 1:29; 1 Pet. 1:19).

Given the earth with all its beauty, it cannot compare with Heaven. John uses highly symbolic language to help earthlings relate its beauty to beautiful things of this earth. The beauty and glory of Heaven we cannot fully comprehend. The beauty of this earth cannot be properly compared to this city of “pure gold,” with its walls of jasper, gates of pearl, and foundations of “all manner of precious stones” (cf. Rev. 21:18-21). What majestic light and glory will fill this magnificent city?

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof (21:22-23).

Heaven is the eternal abode of the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (cf. Mat. 28:19; 1 Pet. 3:22; Mat. 6:9; 1 The. 4:14-17; 1 Pet. 1:12). This will be the place where all the redeemed of the ages will go to live with their God:

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God (Rev. 21:3).

Furthermore, Heaven will be a place where sin, sorrow, pain, death, and tears will not exist. The former things of earth that saints have had to suffer will be no more in the home of the blessed (cf. Rev. 21:4, 27; 22:5). God will “make all things new,” and those who have overcome will “inherit all things” (cf. 21:5, 7). It will be place of perfect peace, joy, and closeness to God. It is represented in the

parable of the talents, when the master said to his faithful servants “thou good and faithful servant...enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Mat. 25:21, 23).

HELL

The contrast of Heaven is Hell, *Gehenna* (Greek γέεννα) in the Greek New Testament, which refers to the eternal abode of the wicked. Whereas all the sadness, pain, and sorrows of this life will be ended for those who enter Heaven, these things will be multiplied many times over for those who are cast into Hell! It is represented in the parable of the talents, when the lord of the servants said of the “wicked and slothful servant”: “cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (cf. 25:30, 25-30). Heaven and Hell will have only one thing in common; they will both be eternal or everlasting.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:...And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal (25:41, 46).

Obviously, Hell does not refer to the earth at all, because when the end comes, this earth will be destroyed and eternity will begin (cf. 2 Pet. 3:10-12). Although this earth has many troubles, they are nothing compared to the pain and sorrow that will be in the lake of fire. Jesus warns that man should be willing to pay any price to avoid this place:

And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched (Mark 9:43-48).

The lake of fire and brimstone (namely, Hell) is termed, “the second death,” because it will be the final abode of all who are separated from God in the lake of fire and brimstone (Rev. 21:8; Mat. 7:21-23). Those whose names are not found written in the Lamb’s book of life will be cast into the lake of fire, which amounts to the fact that they have all been disobedient to God (cf. Rev. 20:15; 21:27). Any who once belonged to God but have become unfaithful will have their names blotted out of the book of life, and thus, will be cast into the lake of fire (cf. 3:4-5). “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (20:15). All who end up in this terrible place will be tormented day and night for ever and ever along with the devil and his angels (cf. 14:9-11; 20:10; Mat. 25:41).

For this reason, Jesus declares that we ought to fear God rather than man because He is the one who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell: “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Mat. 10:28). Therefore, we should resolve to do as the apostles said: “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

In Paul’s epistle to the Lord’s church at Thessalonica, it is clear that one does not have to be a criminal or immoral to end up in the lake of fire, although these will certainly be there. Nevertheless, all one has to do to be lost in hell is simply nothing. He may simply neglect the Gospel and refuse to obey it, and he will be lost in the lake of fire:

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power (2 The. 1:7-9).

No doubt, many will be lost because of their refusal to do the will of God, and this will include many religious people and even some in the church of the Lord (cf. Mat. 7:21-23; 25:25-30, 41-46;

Jam. 4:17). All who reject the Word of Christ will be condemned in the last day. Jesus warned: “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48). Those who neglect the salvation which God offers through His only begotten Son will not escape! “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation” (Heb. 2:3)? Christ and His blood is man’s only deliverance from the wrath to come, and if he refuses that, there is no other way:

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him (Rom. 5:8-9).

CONCLUSION

God, through His Son, has provided the way for man to go to Paradise after this life and then enter Heaven after the Judgment. Yet, it is troubling that false teachers, such as those who declare that final things are already past, are distorting God’s plain doctrine of Hades, Heaven, and Hell. One does not have to dread death if he has prepared himself by living for Christ, but, like Paul, his desire will be to “depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” (Phi. 1:23). Let us strive with all of being to avoid the eternal lake of fire (Mark 9:43-48) and so live that we can say with Paul, “For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain” (Phi. 1:21). Then, if we live for Christ, we do not have to dread the judgment day, but be “Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God” (2 Pet. 3:12). Let us love and obey Christ (John 14:15) so we can look forward to being with Him and putting on that glorious body:

For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself (Phi. 3:20-21).

After all, He came that we might have eternal life! “For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).

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