

FULFILLED!

Magazine

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF FULFILLED PROPHECY AND LIFE IN CHRIST



*Christ's Ascension - is He coming
in like manner? p. 8*



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Editor's Update

For those of you who are wondering, "What happened to the Winter issue?," the simple answer is that there wasn't one. The more complex answer is that this is it, only we're calling it the Spring issue. After getting the Summer and Fall issues into mailboxes after Summer and Fall had officially ended, and not being successful at speeding up production any, it just seemed easier to call this the Spring 2007 issue. Hopefully it will arrive in your mailbox during the Spring of 2007, and we will be on track.

We have formed a nonprofit corporation called *Fulfilled Communications Group*, and are awaiting a ruling from the IRS regarding our tax-exempt status. What this means is that those who wish to support *FULFILLED! Magazine* financially may now make their checks payable to FCG (*Fulfilled Communications Group*) instead of to me personally. However, until we have a ruling from the IRS, contributions cannot be considered tax deductible. Should the IRS rule in our favor (please keep this in your prayers), the tax exemption is retroactive to the date on which it was applied for, so any gift received after January 9, 2007 would be recognized.

I want to express our gratitude to those of you who have sent in donations. With a growing readership of over 900, we will soon have to print more than our usual 1,000 copies. Also, subscription requests from overseas continue to trickle in, which take a heavy toll on postage. Additionally, I think that there is a real need to increase the magazine to 20 pages. It's becoming increasingly difficult for the contributing authors to limit the length of their articles, and we've already dropped the number of "Perspectives" respondents from 4 to 3. But enough about finances for now. I'll share more in the next issue, when we will hopefully have the IRS ruling.

For those of you who are artistically inclined, we'd like some ideas for a *Fulfilled Communications Group* logo. You can email digital logos to me or send hand-drawn ones

via standard mail. (Please note that by submitting any item you are relinquishing all rights to that item. Sorry for having to be so legalistic, just consider it your contribution to a worthwhile ministry.)

Besides the normal word-of-mouth advertising, links to www.fulfilledmagazine.com continue to be shared in emails and added to various Preterist web sites. We appreciate the support of other Preterists and Preterist ministries. We may not all agree on the various details of Preterism, but that doesn't mean that we have to divide over them. I like what John L. Bray said in a recent newsletter:

We occasionally publish articles by other authors. This does not mean I necessarily agree with everything they say, any more than they would agree with everything I have written. But there are some good men out there

who do write some good things, and we like to share with you what they are saying. I have even spoken at several churches which believe in "tongues" speaking, though I have never spoken in so-called "tongues" at any time in my life and do not believe the Bible teaches that the

practice ought to be done. But I have fellowship with some who do. I believe in eternal security, but have friends among those who do not. And I have many friends among both the partial and the full preterists, and the premillennialists too. I do try to share my shades of thinking with others, but I don't fall out with any just because they don't agree with me.

As always, we appreciate the wonderful emails, letters and phone calls with your words of encouragement. I do my best to respond to everyone who asks a question, but it always takes longer than I'd like. By the way, when we mail out extra magazines and book orders we send them at the Media Mail rate, which is the most economical. We feel that this is being good stewards of limited resources; however, Media Mail prohibits any kind of personal note. So please forgive us if deliveries seem too business-like and lack a personal touch.

God bless,



Mailbag



[I]t will be good to have, in the form of your magazine, something a little lighter and more accessible than the heavy books to introduce others to preterism. Also, it is nice to have something tangible that shows that the subject is not just some bizarre doctrine that a few people discuss on websites and write scholarly tomes about.

Tony, New Zealand

This is just to let you know that I got my first issue today and am very impressed. Fulfilled magazine should go out throughout the entire world. You have nailed it! The contributors are powerful and make an impact which is truly worthy of Fulfilled Magazine. I love it; you've done a fine job all around and any Full Preterist should be thrilled and supportive of it. I look forward to many more quality articles. The effort brings glory to Christ,

Dave, Michigan

Wow! All I can say is that this magazine is everything I hoped it would be. I recently received a terrible offer to subscribe to a futurist end times magazine which I had to pay for. They sent me a free sample magazine, and the contents were anything but good Christian exegesis; needless to say I didn't sub-

scribe! This magazine is completely free and is full of great exegesis and honest applications with a correct hermeneutical approach. The only thing I wish this magazine contained was special offers for preterist books or videos or training materials with coupons or something. I would even pay a subscription for a magazine such as this.

J and L, Missouri

[It is our hope to eventually include items such as these—*BLM*]

"Fulfilled" is wonderful! Someone signed us up to receive it. I assume it was our very good friend Jim . . . Also, Behind the Veil of Moses was one of the best preterist resources I've ever read. My copy is well-worn. I really like the way you do things. Your positive attitude and humility shine through in everything you do and that is very appealing to some of us preterists who are trying to find our place in this world. Thank you!

Susan, Oklahoma

[Thanks for the encouraging words. I am still finding my place as well, which is very effective at keeping one humble—*BLM*]

FULFILLED
MAGAZINE SHOULD
GO OUT
THROUGHOUT THE
ENTIRE WORLD. YOU
HAVE NAILED IT!

Oops, my bad!

In last issues' *Gleanings from the Parousia* article, the Greek word *Kosmos* in Matthew 13:38 was inadvertently replaced with *Koinos*. Many thanks to Richard, a Greek-savvy reader, for pointing that out.

In Kurt Simmons' article on *Baptism and The Lord's Supper* in the last issue, I changed the wording from "added to the church" to "received into the church." My apologies to Kurt who, though he stated it was no big deal, offered the following explanation of the difference:

Not a big deal, but "added" is the scriptural word from Acts 2:47. The Lord adds; men receive. The point in using "add" is to show that in baptism the Lord is adding men to the saved/church. The word "received" turns baptism into an initiation rite similar to Kiwanis or something where men receive others into their fellowship, rather than the sacrament I believe the Lord intended it. As we like to say, you can't join the Lord's church; he must add you! No big deal, just a heads up . . .

Also, we had an incorrect phone number for Kurt. The correct number is: (505) 236-6111. Again, my apologies Kurt, and thanks for being so gracious about it!

Gleanings from "The Parousia"

This ongoing series of articles is taken from *The Parousia: A Critical Inquiry into the New Testament Doctrine of Our Lord's Second Coming*, by J. Stuart Russell. Originally published in 1878, Russell used an older style of English and the King James Version of the Bible. We have taken the liberty, when it does no harm to the text, to update the English and use the New King James Version of the Bible. In 1999, *The Parousia* was reprinted with a foreword by R.C. Sproul, in which he stated:

"Few books have forced me to rethink ideas or challenged my assumptions as much as this one has."

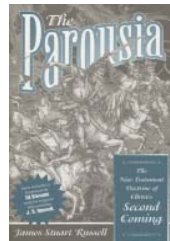
THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN (THE PAROUSIA) IN THE LIFETIME OF THE APOSTLES.

Matt. 10:23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

In this passage we find the earliest distinct mention of that great event which we shall find so frequently alluded to henceforth by our Lord and His apostles, namely, His coming again, or the Parousia. It may indeed be a question, as we shall presently see, whether this passage properly belongs to this portion of the gospel history. But waiving for the moment this question, let us inquire what *coming* is spoken of here. Can it mean, as Lange suggests, that Jesus was to follow so quickly on the heels of His messengers in their evangelistic circuit as to overtake them before it was completed? Or does it refer, as Stier and Alford think, to two different comings, separated from each other by thousands of years: the one comparatively near, the other indefinitely remote? Or shall we, with Michaelis and Meyer, accept the plain and obvious meaning which the words themselves suggest? The interpretation of Lange is surely inadmissible. Who can doubt that 'the coming of the Son of man' is here, what it is everywhere else—the formula by which the Parousia, the Second Coming of Christ, is expressed? This phrase has a definite and constant significance, as much as His crucifixion, or His resurrection, and admits of no other interpretation in this place. But may it not have a double reference: first, to the impending judgment of Jerusalem; and, second, to the final destruction of the world—the former being regarded as symbolic of the latter? Alford contends for the double meaning, and is severe upon those who hesitate to accept it. He tells us what He thinks Christ *meant*; but on the other hand we have to consider what He *said*. Are the advocates of a double sense sure that He meant more than He said? Look at His words. Can anything be more specific and definite as to persons, place, time, and circumstance, than this prediction of our Lord? It is to the *twelve* that He speaks; it is the cities of *Israel* which they are to evangelize; the subject is His own *speedy coming*; and the *time* so near, that before their work is complete His coming will take place. But if we are to be told that this is not the meaning, nor the half of it, and that it includes another coming, to other evangelists, in other ages, and in other lands—a coming which, after eighteen centuries, is still future, and perhaps remote—then the question arises: What

may not scripture mean? The grammatical sense of words no longer suffices for interpretation; scripture is a conundrum to be guessed—an oracle that utters ambiguous responses; and no man can be sure, without a special revelation, that he understands what he reads. We are disposed, therefore, to agree with Meyer, that this two-fold reference is 'nothing but a forced and unnatural evasion,' and the words simply mean what they say—that before the apostles completed their lifework of evangelizing the land of Israel, the coming of the Lord should take place.

This is the view of the passage which is taken by Dr. E. Robinson. 'By this language our Lord probably intended to intimate, that the apostles would not finish evangelizing the towns of Palestine, before He should come to destroy Jerusalem and scatter the nation.' So also Dr. A. B. Bruce. 'The coming alluded to is the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jewish nation; and the meaning is, that the apostles would barely have time, before the catastrophe came, to go over the land warning the people to save themselves from the doom of an untoward generation; so that they could not well afford to tarry in any locality after its inhabitants had heard and rejected the message.'



THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN CERTAIN AND SPEEDY.

Parable of the Importunate Widow.

Luke 18:1-8 Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'" Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" [in the land]?

The intensely practical and *present-day* character, if we may so call it, of our Lord's discourses, is a feature of His teaching which, though often overlooked, requires to be steadily kept in view. He spoke to His own people, and to His own

by J. Stuart Russell

times. He was God's messenger to *Israel*; and, while it is most true that His words are for all men and for all time, yet their primary and direct bearing was upon His own generation. For want of attention to this fact, many expositors have wholly missed the point of the parable before us. In their hands it becomes a vague and indefinite prediction of a vindication of the righteous, in some period more or less remote, but having no special relation to the people and time of our Lord Himself. Assuredly, whatever the parable may be to us or to future ages, it had a close and special bearing upon the disciples to whom it was originally spoken. The Lord was about to leave His disciples 'as sheep in the midst of wolves;' they were to be persecuted and afflicted, hated of all men for their Master's sake; and it might well be that their courage would fail them, and their hearts would faint. In this parable the Savior encourages them 'to pray always, and not lose heart,' by the example of what persevering prayer can do even with man. If the importunity of a poor widow could constrain an unprincipled judge to do her right, how much more would God, the righteous Judge, be moved by the prayers of His own children to redress their wrongs. Without allegorizing all the details of the parable, after the manner of some expositors, it is enough to mark its great moral. It is this. The persecuted children of God would be surely and *speedily* avenged. God will vindicate them, and that *speedily*. But when? The point of time is not left indefinite. It is 'when the Son of man comes.' The Parousia was to be the hour of redress and deliverance to the suffering people of God.

The reflection of our Lord in the close of the eighth verse deserves particular attention. 'Nevertheless when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?' We must

here revert to the facts already stated with respect to the ministry of John the Baptist. We have seen how dark and ominous the outlook was of the prophet who preached repentance to Israel. He was the precursor of 'the great and terrible day of the Lord;' he was the second Elijah sent to proclaim the coming of Him who would 'smite the land with a curse.' The reflection of our Lord suggests that He foresaw that the repentance which could alone avert the doom of the nation was not to be looked for. There would be no faith in God, in His promises, or in His threats. The day of His coming, therefore, would be the 'day of vengeance' (Luke 21:22).

Doddridge has well apprehended the scope of this parable, and paraphrases the opening verse as follows: 'Thus our Lord discoursed with His disciples of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; and for their encouragement under those hardships which they might in the meantime expect, from their unbelieving countrymen or others, He spake a parable, to them, which was intended to inculcate upon them this great truth, that how distressed soever their circumstances might be, they ought always to pray with faith and perseverance, and not to faint under their trials.'

The following is his paraphrase of verse 8: 'Yes I say unto you, He will certainly vindicate them; and when He once undertakes it, He will do it speedily too; and this generation of men shall see and feel it to their terror. Nevertheless, when the Son of man, having been put in possession of His glorious kingdom, comes to appear for this important purpose, will He find faith in the land?' ❧

ΙΤ'Σ ΑΛΛ ΓΡΕΕΚ ΤΟ ΜΕ!

melloo; to be about to do anything

1. the participle, *ho melloon*, absolutely: Rom 5:14
2. joined to an infinitive:
 - a. to be on the point of doing or suffering something: Acts 16:27
 - b. to intend, have in mind, think to: with an infinitive present, Matt 2:13
 - c. of those things which will come to pass (or which one will do or suffer) by fixed necessity or divine appointment
 - d. in general, of what is sure to happen: with an infinitive present, Matt 24:6
 - e. to be always on the point of doing without ever doing, i. e., to delay: Acts 22:16

(from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2000, 2003 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)
(Thayer's Lexicon—abridged)

Matt 16:27

For the Son of Man will (mello) come in the glory of His Father New King James Version

Matt 16:27

For, the Son of Man is about to (mello) come in the glory of his Father Young's Literal Translation

Compare these verses which also use *mello*: Matt 12:32; Luke 3:7; Acts 17: 31; Acts 24: 15; Rom 4:23-24; Rom 8:18; 2 Tim 4:1



Perspectives



Jim Gunter

I would like to speak briefly on how I understand this question as it relates to the last few generations. In doing so, I'm certain that I am not alone in these thoughts. So please bear with me as I set forth a few of the reasons for the Preterist view eluding the Church those years.

Not only did I become a Christian at perhaps a later age than most (age 31 in 1969), but not until 33 years later, in April of 2002, would my exposure to and acceptance of the Preterist view of eschatology come to pass. And, good folks, this was *not* because I didn't spend much time in study of our Father's Word. No, no, this was *in spite of* the fact that I had studied the scriptures daily, ever since my conversion—I even preached for about five years. I mention these things only to indicate that the reason for *my* missing the Preterist view of eschatology for those 33 years was something other than a lack of Bible study.

So then, just how could it be that for 33 years, this marvelous window of light eluded my notice? To me, beloved, coming to learn of this approach to the Spirit's revelatory work is much like one of those precious gems that lay in plain view right before my very eyes all

those years, yet going completely unnoticed, until one day, Bingo! So, how does this happen to so many of God's people? Well, I would like to briefly discuss what I believe are some of the reasons:

(1) Our spiritual journey parallels that of our parents, at least for a while, simply because we learn our spiritual values, beliefs, and practices from them. Consequently, many disciples, when exposed to something new to them, are reluctant to change their thinking because they feel that somehow they are betraying their parents.

(2) Brothers and sisters, Church Creeds (whether written or unwritten) exist, whether we like to believe it or not. These, I believe, are a major roadblock to why many disciples have missed, and continue to miss the "Preterist view." Some disciples are so fortunate in that the entire group of believers with whom they assemble subscribe to the Preterist view. This is truly a great blessing; however, very rarely is this the case. Some brethren from among those of my spiritual heritage honestly be-

See *Gunter* p. 14

Richard McPherson

The "church" in the first century understood completely when Jesus would return (Matt 24:34 et. al.). The problem is the "church" today. People (the church) don't study the scriptures (the Bible). They blatantly refuse to let God speak for Himself. People take one scripture text and build a whole theology around it without looking at the whole picture.¹ Consider the following verses:

2 Timothy 3:16

(ALT) All Scripture *[is]* God-breathed and *[is]* beneficial for teaching *[or, doctrine]*, for verification *[or, reproof]*, for correcting faults, for instruction in righteousness *[or, the behavior that God requires]*. . .

(YLT) . . . every Writing *is* God-breathed, and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for setting aright, for instruction that *is* in righteousness . . .

2 Timothy 2:15

(ALT) Be eager *[or, diligent]* to present yourself approved to God *[as]* a worker with no need to be ashamed, cutting straight *[fig., teaching accurately; or, interpreting correctly]* the word of truth.

(YLT) be diligent to present thyself approved to God—a workman irreproachable, rightly dividing the word of the truth;

We quote these all the time but the problem is this—do we really believe them? To me, the worst thing that ever happened to Christianity is when Rome legalized the movement. Since that point in time, man has turned Christianity into a government and a cause for war. Over time man has compromised the scriptures so they will blend with their beliefs and be politically correct.

Being a Preterist is not fun all the time.

*If the Preterist
rect, how ha
missed it for a*

Jerry Wayne Bernard, PhD

The scholar that espouses a realized eschatology is many times asked, "Did the church fathers believe that the Lord came a second time in the first century?" Certainly it is important to know what was in the minds and hearts of the church fathers. The question lingers for all good students of scripture to answer. In the years following the first century, were historians and theologians so consumed with division and heresy in the church that they were unable to properly define the Second Coming?

There are four points that must be considered as we look at the subject of realized eschatology in the years following the first century. We must discover, if possible, not only (1) what happened, but also (2) how events were understood by the early church fathers, (3) what bias the historians brought to their writings, and (4) the audience for whom the historians wrote.

The past is forever gone, but one can try to reconstruct part of it, depending upon the character of the available sources. Such a reconstruction must include a presentation of sources, their interpretation, and, as a last resort, hypotheses that may solve some problems and, in a logical way, fill the gaps in the source material. His-

tory is not an exact science, because one does not know all the facts.

This restoration of history reminds me of a process I experienced over forty years ago, as I watched an archaeologist struggle to restore a beautiful Mycenaean jar. Even with less than 30 percent of the shards available in both large and small pieces, much was learned about its form and decoration as the methodical restorer rearranged the pieces on the table like a jigsaw puzzle. As the decorative pattern on the pieces of the jar was recognized, progress was speeded up. When every recognizable piece was put into its proper place, modern clay was added in the spaces between the pieces and the vessel took shape before our eyes. This was not done in an hour or so. This process took several days, weeks and even months in most cases. Although the original beauty was not there, we could see what the shape and decoration might have looked like. The archaeologist said that the reconstruction does not reveal the deviations, mistakes or whether the jar was somewhat deformed in the hands of the original potter.

This is an example of how I view the process of the reconstruction of church his-

See *Bernard* p. 10

*st view is cor-
s the church
ll these years?*

against other people's beliefs, you are labeled as a troublemaker. In some cases, people have been disfellowshipped over this view. People are afraid to REALLY study the scriptures. Some causes for this fear are:

1. With Preterism, look at all the money we will lose.
2. Brother so-and-so, or my preacher (pastor), taught me that Preterism was wrong, and I believe him/her.
3. With Preterism, we have nothing to look forward to.
4. With Preterism, we don't have anyone to blame.
5. None of the early "church fathers" believed in Preterism, so it has to be wrong.

6. The Creeds that we live by say nothing about the Preterist view.

Do we remember what Peter said in Acts 5:29?

(ALT) But answering, Peter and the apostles said, "It is necessary to be obeying God rather than people!

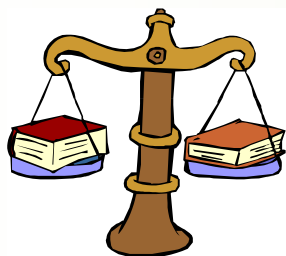
(YLT) And Peter and the apostles answering, said, 'To obey God it behoveth, rather than men . . .

On my web site I have a notice which says, "Don't take my word or any other person's, but study for yourself. Look at ALL the facts and the whole picture." However, today, and in years past, man has put his faith and devotion into what preachers (pastors), creeds, conventions and organizations say, instead of

See *McPherson* p. 15



Perspectives



What About *In Like Manner*?

Don K. Preston

Without any doubt, when you engage in serious discussions of the A.D. 70 Parousia of Christ, those in opposition will quickly appeal to Acts 1:9-11 as their “definitive proof” that Jesus did not return in A.D. 70. The argument goes something like this:

Fact: *Jesus left visibly in a physical body.* Fact: *The angel told the disciples Jesus would return “in like manner” as they had seen him go.* Conclusion: *Jesus must return visibly, in a physical body.*

In this brief article we hope to demonstrate some of the logical problems with this argument. Our main focus will be to examine Acts chapter 1 in light of other passages that the opponents of Covenant Eschatology also appeal to as descriptions of Christ’s Second Coming. Space prevents us from examining the Greek term translated as “in like manner” to show that it is most often used of a metaphoric likeness, and not a specific literal likeness.¹ Instead, we want to examine Jesus’ coming in light of the Transfiguration as well as Revelation, and compare it to this passage in Acts chapter 1. We hope to demonstrate that those who so vehemently insist that Christ is coming back exactly as he left, are, to say the very least, totally inconsistent.

Christ’s Transfiguration as a Vision of the Parousia

The Transfiguration is not only one of the most awe-inspiring scenes and events in all of the New Testament, it is also one of the most eschatologically significant events. Yet, as many scholars have noted, it is all but ignored in discussions of eschatology. When Peter sought to refute the scoffers who were denying the Parousia, he appealed to one event, the Transfiguration, as his personal eye-witness account of a vision of the Parousia (2 Peter 1:16-18). Based upon Peter’s appeal, here is my argument, using the conclusion above as the starting point:

Fact: *Jesus is to return in the physical body of His Incarnation, the body that ascended.* Fact: *The Transfiguration was a vision of the Parousia* (Matthew 17; 2 Peter 1:16-18). Conclusion: *the Transfiguration should be a vision of Jesus’ return as predicted in Acts chapter 1.* Yet, and this is incredibly important, Christ’s appearance at the Transfiguration *in no way* resembles His appearance at the Ascension!

At the ascension Jesus was in his ordinary, physical body, with no altered appearance.² He was, so far as the disciples could discern, the same as He had been from the very beginning. Yet, at the Transfiguration, the disciples could hardly even look at him because his appearance was so dramatically transformed (from the Greek word *metamorphe*). The appearance of Jesus on the Transfiguration mount, in no way, shape, form or fashion, even vaguely resembles his form in Acts chapter 1!

Consider this: The Transfiguration was a vision of Christ’s Parousia. Yet, what the disciples saw on that mountain in no

OBJECT OVERP

way resembles the traditional historical concept of the Parousia. We

are told that Christ’s epiphany will result in the destruction of material creation. Did the disciples see a vision of that on the Mount? No. The Parousia is supposedly when every physically dead person who has ever lived is revived, restored and raised. Did the disciples see that? No. The Second Coming is supposed to be at the end of the current Christian age. Is that what the disciples saw? No, on the contrary, they saw a vision of the end of the Law and the Prophets! They saw the end of the Mosaic age, not the end of the Christian age!

The Transfiguration was a vision of the Parousia of Christ foretold in Acts chapter 1. What the disciples saw refutes the traditional view of Acts chapter 1 and the Second Coming. It firmly defines the Parousia as the transformation from the Old Covenant glory of Moses and the Prophets, to the New Covenant glory of Messiah Jesus!

Take note of the Transfiguration and what it says to us about the timing of Christ’s coming as predicted in Acts chapter 1. The coming of Christ predicted in Acts 1:9-11 is the coming of Christ seen in the vision of the Transfiguration (2 Peter 1:16-18). But, the coming of Christ seen in the vision of the Transfiguration was a vision of the passing of the Old Covenant “Law and Prophets,” i.e., the passing of the Old Covenant age.

Therefore, the coming of Christ predicted in Acts 1:9-11 would occur at the time of the passing of the Old Covenant “Law and Prophets,” i.e., the time of the passing of the Old Covenant age.

The relationship and comparison between the Transfiguration and Acts 1 serves as a powerful refutation of the normal “He shall come in like manner” argument, for, when one compares the visible appearance of Jesus in the two events, there is virtually no “in like manner” appearance in them. That is a strong indication that we should look somewhere else for a description and definition of “in like manner.”

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and Acts 1

Naturally, any eschatological discussion of Acts chapter 1 must take into consideration 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, and the Thessalonian epistles as a whole. If the Parousia of Christ foretold in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 is the same coming of Christ foretold in Acts chapter 1, and there are very few futurists that would deny this, then there is a severe problem when we do the “in like manner” comparison.

1 Thessalonians 4 is said to be one of the noisiest verses in all the Bible! Jesus is said to descend on the clouds with the shout, the voice of the Archangel, and the blast of the Trump of God! All the dead who have ever lived are supposedly biologically resuscitated.

eschatol
PROPHECY I

REVELATION: FULFILLED!



annihilated, or, at the very least, totally purged with fire and renovated.

However, is there anything in the description of Acts chapter 1 that fits 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 when we press the “in like manner” argument? In Acts there is no shout of the Archangel. So far as the record is concerned the Archangel is not there. There certainly is no sound of the Shofar! There are only a handful of disciples that witness the ascension, and yet, we are told that “every eye shall see Him” when He comes again. Acts chapter 1 and 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 do not match in a “in like manner” literalistic application.

Consider 2 Thessalonians chapter 1. The description of Christ’s coming there is graphic and horrifying! Christ is said to descend in flaming fire with His angels, taking vengeance on the oppressors of the saints. (Lamentably, 99% of all exegetes ignore who was persecuting the saints at that time, and ignore the entire Biblical testimony about the time of the avenging of the blood of the martyrs as predicted by Jesus in Matthew 23)!³

Again, when one does a comparison between Acts chapter 1 and Thessalonians, the “in like manner” argument fails, and it fails badly. There is no “in like manner” comparison to be made!

Revelation and Acts 1

Likewise, in Revelation 1:13-16, Jesus appeared to John in his *post-ascension form*, and that description, that *apocalupsis* (revealing) of Jesus, *in no way* resembles the ascension appearance of Jesus. Yet, the vision of Jesus seen by John does compare very well with the Transfiguration!⁴

In the midst of the seven lamp stands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; his feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace and His voice as the sound of many waters; He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. (Revelation 1:13-16).

Notice that John saw, “One like the Son of Man.” The One he saw was so resplendently different than that One he had known, had seen, had touched (1 John 1:1-3), in His incarnate existence, that John could only say that the One he now saw was

like (ὅμοιον), the Son of Man. Most assuredly, what John saw on Patmos did not resemble “in like manner” the Jesus he saw ascending on the clouds in Acts chapter 1!

Consider the detailed description of Christ’s Parousia in Revelation chapter 19 as well. He is depicted as riding on a white horse out of

heaven. A sword proceeds out of his mouth. His eyes are like flames of fire. He has many crowns on his head. He wears a robe dipped in blood, and is followed by the armies of heaven. *What a scene!*

Yet, in Acts chapter 1, Jesus did not ascend on a white horse, with a sword protruding from his mouth, leading the army of heaven, did he? His eyes did not burn with fire, and so far as we know he was not wearing any crowns on his head. Where is the “in like manner” comparison here?

It is clear that this appearance of Jesus was not Jesus in the flesh. This was not Jesus in his *post-resurrection earthly form*. There is no physical, bodily likeness between this vision and what the disciples saw at the ascension. Thus, to press the “in like manner” of Acts 1:9-11 to identicalness is unjustified. Both the Transfiguration and John’s vision on Patmos reveal Jesus’ epiphany, and there was *nothing* of his earthly form revealed in either vision. In both of these visions we see Jesus revealed as *Deity*, not as a man.

Hebrews 9, the Atonement, and Acts 1

Finally, we should view Acts chapter 1 in the context of Hebrews chapter 9, and Jesus’ High Priestly function. In Acts chapter 1, Jesus was ascending in the “glory cloud” to enter the Most Holy Place “into the presence of God, to prepare a place” (Hebrews 9:24-28). He was to enter there “once” (*hapax*, once for all time, Hebrews 9:12), and his appearing “a second time” was to be “in the glory of the Father.” This coming of Christ, in the glory of the Father, means that he was to come in judgment in the same way as the Father had manifested Himself in the past, the way the Son had seen the Father manifest Himself (John 5:19-23), and that alone precludes a bodily, visible descent of Christ out of heaven.

It must be remembered also, that the writer of Hebrews affirmed—in no uncertain terms—that the second appearing, *the coming of Acts 1*, would occur “in a very, very little while” (Hebrews 9:28; 10:37). So, if one argues that the Parousia of Hebrews 9:28 is indeed the coming of Christ to consummate the atonement, then they must likewise concede that the inspired writer affirms in the most positive way, regardless of our concepts of the nature of the Parousia, that it was to occur in a very little while.

We have briefly compared the prediction of Acts chapter 1 with other key eschatological predictions of Christ’s “Second Coming.” We have seen that the description of Christ’s coming found in these other passages, when compared with Acts chapter 1, yields



See *In Like Manner* p. 15

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FULFILLED

Bernard (from p. 7)

tory. The church fathers could not see all the events and changes of the first century. The ideas of those who chronicled the first century history—humans with their own biases—escape us to a large extent.

Most scholars define the history of church tradition as the theological agreement of the first 500 to 1,000 years of Christian history. This common consent encompasses the church's universally agreed upon creeds, councils, fathers, worship, and spirituality. Some key teachings and figures include the Nicene Creed, the Chalcedonian Definition, the works of Athanasius, the Cappadocian fathers (Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa), the spiritual writings of monks like Anthony of Egypt, and certain biblical commentaries and pastoral works. However, little was settled in the realm of eschatology due to fear of being labeled a heretic.

If one insists on holding to the church authority of the first 500 years of teaching and practice, they will most likely be forced to change from their "saved-by-grace" persuasion to the medieval ideas of the Orthodox church.

When Martin Luther burned the books of Catholic canon law at Wittenberg's Elster Gate on December 10, 1520, he epitomized the Protestant distinctive. Whatever honor Protestants bestowed upon tradition, they now denied that its authority was coequal with scripture. Thus Luther wrote, "What else do I contend for but to bring everyone to an understanding of the difference between the divine scripture and human teaching or custom?" Calvin objected to the "tyranny of human tradition which was haughtily thrust upon us under the title of the church." The Reformers did not reject tradition as a help to wisdom, as a reading of Calvin, Luther, or Wesley easily shows. What they objected to was the elevation of tradition to the status of scripture. When we find the truth of the Parousia and eschatology in its finished work, we must take the scripture above tradition and past positions.

One can find Orthodox statements that ascribe a unique authority to scripture over tradition, but these are few and far between, and speak of tradition in a narrower than usual sense. Compliance with the church fathers categorically rejects the historic Protestant idea of *sola scriptura*. Church fathers affirm forms of tradition including: the first seven ecumenical councils, which were acknowledged as normative and, by some, even infallible writings, especially those of the first four centuries; later councils; the Liturgy; canon law; and icons.

Do we look to these foundations for a proof of the truth of the scripture? They are all in discord over most of the propositions put forth. If we say that scripture and tradition are equal and that both should be considered as divinely inspired, we are in trouble.

The principle of *sola scriptura* places scripture above tradition. However, the early church fathers maintained that tradition and scripture were complementary means of one organic whole through which the Spirit of God speaks.

In biblical interpretation, Reformers placed the scriptures above the church. They insisted that the Bible interprets itself

and, through the Holy Spirit, God instructs its readers in a direct and individual manner rather than binding their consciences to the supposedly reliable traditional teaching of the church fathers. This view elevates scripture above church tradition and actually encourages private interpretation for all students.

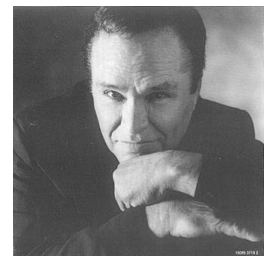
In the fourth century, Eusebius reports precisely this fact: "Of the disputed books, which are nevertheless familiar to the majority, there are extant the Epistle of James, as it is called; and that of Jude; and the second Epistle of Peter; and those that are called the Second and Third of John, whether they belong to the evangelist or to another of the same name" (III.25,3). It is not until A.D. 367, more than two hundred years after Marcion compiled his Bible, that Athanasius of Alexandria cites a complete list of canonical books (39th Festal Letter). Even decades later, works like the *Epistle of Barnabas* and the *Apocalypse of Peter* found their way into "official" orthodox Bibles, and the formal adoption of the canon by the Catholic church did not occur until the Second Council of Carthage in A.D. 419.

Clement, writing to the Corinthian church on behalf of the Roman church (1 Clement) late in the first century, quoted from Titus, 1 Corinthians, Hebrews (consistently attributed to Paul by ancient sources), and Philipians. In his seven authentic letters written *ca.* A.D. 107, Ignatius of Antioch quoted from Romans, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, and 1 Thessalonians. Polycarp (*ca.* A.D. 108) quoted from every Pauline letter except Colossians, Titus, and Philemon.

They had scripture, but human error led to a church that was only a vague semblance of the faith Christ initiated. However, God's will can be discerned by those willing to lay aside past tradition and return to God's word.

Ultimately, too much of the story of the church from the second century on is one of the all-too-familiar human struggles for power—the direct opposite of Christ's teachings. We need to be reminded time and again that Jesus' ministry was primarily to those who had been marginalized by the institutional religion of His time. From the moment of His birth, first announced not to kings, priests, scribes, elders and other religious leaders, but to anonymous shepherds, Christ Jesus represented something qualitatively fresh and full of life. It was "new wine." Too many who thought themselves key members of God's community forgot that then and still forget it today!

If the scriptures say, "*the time is short*" and "*this generation shall not pass before all is fulfilled*," should we look to see if others around us or in our past agree with it or not? My answer is *sola scriptura* and it is my opinion that it teaches a realized eschatology. The Lord has arrived. ✕



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The Lonely Places

by Brian L. Martin

As a result [of the leper spreading the news of his healing], Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere. Mark 1:45 NIV

We live in an era of “church growth” and “seeker-friendly” presentations of the Gospel, where the Gospel is packaged in slick presentations and made as palatable as possible, in order to attract as many as possible. But isn’t it interesting that, according to our opening verse, the people had to go to a lonely place in order to find Jesus. The NKJV says *deserted places*—doesn’t sound very friendly, does it?!

Now I’m not saying that our church services need to be dry and drab in order to be Biblical. There is nothing wrong with using the technologies of the day in the ministry (otherwise you wouldn’t be reading this). Nor is there anything inherently wrong in trying to identify with your audience in order to reach them. After all, Paul said he became all things to all men, that he might by all means win some. The difference is the “ends” for which these “means” are used. It seems that many of today’s “mega-churches” preach a gospel intended to make the crowds feel comfortable, so that they’ll keep coming back for more. Paul, on the other hand, used his adaptations in order to gain an open door for the Gospel—and perhaps no one preached a harder-hitting, more sin-rebuking, holy-living gospel than Paul. Just ask Peter.

If the point of the Gospel is crowds (I don’t have anything against large congregations), Jesus could have stayed in the towns, where the throngs were. After all, wouldn’t He have had more impact and reached more people that way? But the fact of the matter is that Jesus knew the hearts of the crowd:

Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.” John 6:26 NKJV

Had Jesus merely wanted crowds, He could have continued to feed them and enter-

tain them with miracles. The problem with this type of follower is that when anything is required of them, they quickly find someone or something else to follow. Further on in Jesus’ dialog in John chapter 6, after He claimed to be the true manna from heaven, and that anyone desiring eternal life must eat His flesh, we read the following:

Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?” . . . From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. John 6:60, 66 NKJV

The apostle Paul echoes this thought:

For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame — who set their mind on earthly things. Phil 3:18-19 NKJV

The fact of the matter is that it’s not the easy, comfortable path that leads to God, but the path that is so narrow that it is difficult to find:

Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. Matt 7:13-14 NKJV

There are few who find it, which implies that an individual must be actively searching for that path. And this brings us back to our opening verse and the fact that the point of the Gospel is not crowds—it is Jesus. Notice that the people had to leave the throngs of the towns and go to the lonely, deserted places in order to find Jesus. But let’s bring it down to a personal level. Are we more inclined to gravitate to the comfortable and self-gratifying forms of Christianity, or do we seek Jesus in the lonely places? If Jesus were to leave your congregation, would you know it? Would you be willing to leave your comfortable surroundings to find Him in the desert? Would I?

✠

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If the book of Revelation was written after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, it seems strange that John would be silent about these cataclysmic events. Granted this is an argument from silence, but the silence is deafening. Not only does Revelation not mention the temple’s destruction as a past event, it frequently refers to the temple as still standing. (R.C. Sproul, *The Last Days According to Jesus*, pp. 147-148)

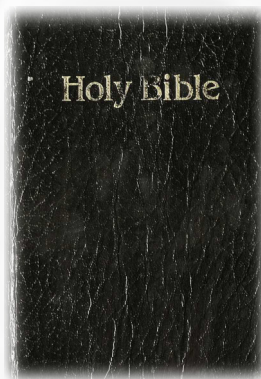


CREATION to COMING

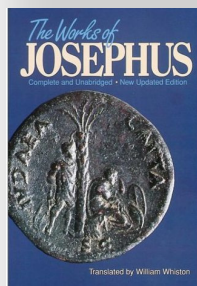
Studies in Redemption

Signs of the Approaching End Ed Stevens

I have had many requests over the years to put together a concise collection of the major statements in Josephus, Tacitus, Eusebius, and other historical sources, about the signs leading up to and during the final war of the Jewish Zealots against Rome. The following does not include statements from the Talmud or Yosippon. Those statements will be treated separately in future articles. These three statements from Josephus, Tacitus, and Eusebius, however, should secure the interest of all of us in doing more study on the history of Rome, Judaism and Christianity in the first century. There is so much useful information buried in Josephus about the implications of A.D. 70 for Christianity, that it would literally take many books to explore it all. We will be sharing little tidbits of that here in this column each time. But keep in mind that this is only the tip of the iceberg. In preparation for these studies, I would highly recommend that all of you (who do not already have these resources) get a copy of *Josephus Complete Works* and *Eusebius Ecclesiastical History*. Both of these books are available from the IPA website (www.preterist.org). You will want to have these handy in the future as we refer to various sections of those works in our column articles here.



Josephus Wars Book 6, Chapter 5, Sections 2 and 3



War 6:286 (6.5.2.286) Now, there was then a great number of false prophets suborned by the tyrants to impose upon the people, who denounced this to them, that they should wait for deliverance from God: and this was in order to keep them from deserting, and that they might be buoyed up above fear and care by such hopes.

War 6:288 (6.5.3.288) Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers, and such as belied God himself; while they did not attend, nor give credit, to the signs that were so evident and did so plainly foretell their future desolation; but, like men infatuated, without either eyes to see, or minds to consider, did not regard the denunciations that God made to them.

War 6:289 (6.5.3.289) Thus there was a star resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year.

War 6:290 (6.5.3.290) Thus also, before the Jews' rebellion, and before those commotions which preceded the war, when the people were come in great crowds to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month Xanthicus [Nisan], and at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day time; which light lasted for half an hour.

War 6:291 (6.5.3.291) This light seemed to be a good sign to the unskillful, but was so interpreted by the sacred scribes, as to portend those events that followed immediately upon it.

War 6:296 (6.5.3.296) So these publicly declared, that this signal foreshowed the desolation that was coming upon them. Besides these, a few days after that feast, on the twenty-first day of the month Artemisius [Jyar],

War 6:297 (6.5.3.297) a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared; I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not related by those that saw it,

War 6:298 (6.5.3.298) and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals; for, before sunseting, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen

War 6:299 (6.5.3.299) running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities. Moreover at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner [court of the] temple, as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a

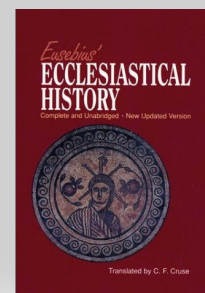
quaking, and heard a great noise,

War 6:300 (6.5.3.300) and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, "Let us remove hence."

Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 8, Sections 1-6

1 Taking, then, the work of this author [i.e., Josephus], read what he records in the sixth book of his History. His words are as follows: "Thus were the miserable people won over at this time by the impostors and false prophets; but they did not heed nor give credit to the visions and signs that foretold the approaching desolation. On the contrary, as if struck by lightning, and as if possessing neither eyes nor understanding, they slighted the proclamations of God.

2 At one time a star, in form like a sword, stood over the city, and a comet, which lasted for a whole year; and again before



CONSUMMATION

Exemptive History



the revolt and before the disturbances that led to the war, when the people were gathered for the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth of the month Xanthicus, at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone about the altar and the temple that it seemed to be bright day; and this continued for half an hour. This seemed to the unskillful a good sign, but was interpreted by the sacred scribes as portending those events which very soon took place.

3 And at the same feast a cow, led by the high priest to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple.

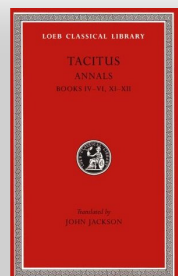
4 And the eastern gate of the inner temple, which was of bronze and very massive, and which at evening was closed with difficulty by twenty men, and rested upon iron-bound beams, and had bars sunk deep in the ground, was seen at the sixth hour of the night to open of itself.

5 And not many days after the feast, on the twenty-first of the month Artemisium, a certain marvelous vision was seen which passes belief. The prodigy might seem fabulous were it not related by those who saw it, and were not the calamities which followed deserving of such signs. For before the setting of the sun chariots and armed troops were seen throughout the whole region in mid-air, wheeling through the clouds and encircling the cities.

6 And at the feast which is called Pentecost, when the priests entered the temple at night, as was their custom, to perform the services, they said that at first they perceived a movement and a noise, and afterward a voice as of a great multitude, saying, 'Let us go hence.'

Tacitus, Histories, Book 5 Section 13 ("The Jews")

Prodigies had occurred, which this nation [i.e., the Jews], prone to superstition, but hating all religious rites, did not deem it lawful to expiate by offering and sacrifice. There had been seen hosts joining battle in the skies, the fiery gleam of arms, the temple illuminated by a sudden radiance from the clouds. The doors of the inner shrine were suddenly thrown open, and a voice of more than mortal tone was heard to cry that the Gods were departing. At the same instant there was a mighty stir as of departure. ⚡



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The Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus
by Wilhelm von Kaulbach



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Gunter (from p. 6)

lieve that they have no Church Creed. And let me say this to their credit: these are brethren whom I deeply love, and brethren who are honorable, well-intentioned, and who genuinely love our heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. However, when it comes to their claim that they have no “Church Creed,” I have come to understand differently. For example, if a Bible class teacher who has learned all these marvelous eschatological truths tried to expound these truths to his Bible class, he would be dealt with swiftly and harshly. This would happen because these truths are outside the parameters of what the church teaches and has accepted as their body of truth. This teacher’s thoughts and ideas would quickly be labeled as “heresy or false teaching” and just would not be tolerated. In addition to that, the teacher would probably also be instructed that unless he repents of this, i.e., unless he abandons these thoughts and ideas, and publicly states such, he would not only be precluded from teaching, but would also be considered to be outside the fellowship of the Church. Thus, whether or not a particular church calls their body of truth a “Creed,” there remains a standard by which we are judged.

So, I trust that you can see that many disciples have not been able to learn these marvelous truths because of the influence of “Church Creeds.” Yes, brethren are so afraid to think for themselves and to make up their own minds in such matters, because they fear the powers that be. Beloved, I believe that we should do as the apostle Paul instructed the disciples in the province of Galatia. He said very sternly, “*It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery*” (Gal. 5:1). A number of the disciples in the province of Galatia were Jews. After having been set free from the yoke of a “system of law” by the glorious gospel of grace through Christ, they were being harassed by the Judaizers to return to the very thing which had

held them in bondage, namely, “The Law.” Sadly enough, many disciples today are *not free*. This is so heartbreaking. They have not learned from these things that happened to the first century Jews. Like the Jews of old, many disciples seemingly desire to be under a system of “law” and consequently reject God’s marvelous *free gift*. It seems they feel the need to have a part in their salvation.

(3) The final reason I believe disciples have missed the Preterist view is the advent of The Scofield Study Bible, first published in 1909. Cyrus Scofield was an avid Zionist and a zealous promoter of the Dispensational Pre-millennialist view. Using the KJV Bible, Mr. Scofield devised his own method of promoting his teachings by inserting his copious notes and commentary alongside, and in many cases, directly into, the text of this Bible. Sadly enough, many disciples accepted his notes and commentary almost to an equal degree to which they did the inspired text. Incorporated into this Dispensational Pre-millennial view was Mr. Scofield’s belief of a future “rapture” of the saints; a teaching based on John Darby’s interpretation of 1 Thess. 4:13-18, which was introduced *ca.* 1830. Consequently, this view of a future “rapture,” incorporated into Mr. Scofield’s Bible, has garnered the support of many in Christendom, where such had not been the case before. Because of Scofield’s clever method, this teaching spread rapidly among disciples of the twentieth century, and now the twenty-first century, blinding many to the marvelous eschatological truths of the scriptures. May the Lord richly bless you with His grace and peace. ✕

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In Like Manner (from p. 9)

virtually no “in like manner” similarity. It behooves us therefore, to not focus on the physical appearance of the events of Acts chapter 1, but to focus instead on the spiritual significance of that event, and what it was in that regard, that the disciples “saw.” This is what “in like manner” must refer to.

I am personally convinced that the Transfiguration is one of the most eschatologically significant events in the entirety of the Biblical corpus, and yet, many scholars have noted that it is virtually ignored in eschatological studies. This is lamentable, for the Transfiguration defines the Parousia, and the description of the mountain event falsifies every modern description and definition of the Parousia! ❧

¹ I discuss the Transfiguration and its relationship to Acts chapter 1 extensively in my book *Like Father Like Son, On Clouds of Glory*. I have also delivered papers on the Transfiguration at several venues, and tapes of those presentations are available. These resources can be ordered from my website: www.eschatology.org

² I am cognizant that many believe that Jesus’ pre-ascension, post-resurrection body was in fact His immortal, transformed body. I reject that view as scripturally untenable. It seems to me that Jesus and scripture go out of their way to prove to us that the pre-ascension, post-resurrection body of Christ was the identical body, in every manner, that was laid in the tomb. I also discuss this extensively, and interact with some of the objections, in *Like Father Like Son, Coming on Clouds of Glory*.

³ See my book *In Flaming Fire*, for an in-depth analysis of 2 Thessalonians chapter 1. I demonstrate that Paul was predicting the soon coming judgment on Old Covenant Judah for her long bloody guilt of killing the saints, including those of Paul’s day. The book is available at: www.eschatology.org

⁴ Dorothy Lee, *Transfiguration*, New Century Theology, (New York, Continuum, 2004) 115+. Lee also believes that John’s gospel contains many echoes and allusions to the Transfiguration.

McPherson (from p. 7)

putting their trust in the One that really matters—GOD.

Yes, change is hard and it takes time. With the (Full) Preterist view, the scriptures fit like a glove. Everything just goes into place. Look at what R.C. Sproul says about the Preterist, “Obviously the Full Preterists have no desire to deviate from Scripture. They bear the burden in this controversy of showing that creedal orthodoxy has been wrong at crucial points of eschatological understanding” (*The Last Days According to Jesus*, pp.156-157). Look at the first part, “Obviously the Full Preterists have no desire to deviate from Scripture...” What is that saying about the other views of Preterism, like Partial Preterism and Hyper-Preterism?

Until people really believe that the scriptures are words from God Himself, and that He means what He says and He says what He means, people will doubt the timing passages in the New Testament. Until people put their faith in God instead of man and start studying for themselves, people will continue to misunderstand the Preterist view.

To answer the question is quite simple—the “church” missed the Second Coming just like the Jews missed the First Coming. They had eyes which did not see and ears that did not

hear. In my opinion, Jesus WILL NEVER come again. Why? Where will he come from? He’s already here!

As a side note, one reason that I see why the “church” (people) will continue to reject Preterism is this—they see all of the back-stabbing, name-calling and the nit-picking among Preterists. We have Full Preterism, Idealist Preterism, Literal Preterism, and Calvinist Preterism all claiming to be better than the other, dividing over issues like Heaven Now or Heaven Later, Literal Rapture or Spiritual Rapture, etc. The unity that we once had is quickly dissipating. We spend more time fighting amongst each other than we do helping people understand. ❧

¹ I touch on this in my article, What Kind Of God Do We Know? (available at www.preterism-eschatology.com)

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Some may say that one’s view of prophecy is unimportant; the only thing important is one’s personal relationship with Jesus. I agree that one’s relationship with Jesus is paramount, but how can one have sound Biblical views about Jesus and know what kind of a relationship he has with Him until he understands all He did when He came into the world and where He is right now? As stated earlier, “This is where eschatology and soteriology meet.” Preterism teaches an eschatology of victory—not one of postponement, delay and defeat. (Jimmy Henry, *The Glorious Return of Jesus Christ*, p. 18)

FULFILLED!

Magazine



Prophecy Quiz

Most of us at some time have come across a humorous, and sometimes humiliating, demonstration of how the mind works (or doesn't work), like the following:

Read the following statement only once and count how many F's it contains-

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.

Most of us will find three F's in the statement, and are surprised to learn that there are actually six F's. The reason we overlook the three F's in the three occurrences of the word "of" is because they sound like a "v" and therefore our minds don't register them as F's. We may have to actually look at each letter to "see" all six F's. Likewise, we often need to narrow our focus when studying God's Word to avoid reading right past something, or thinking that the text says something that it really doesn't. For example, take the following prophecy quiz to see how well you know your Bible.

- A. How many times does the term "Second Coming" occur in the New Testament?
- B. How many times does the term "Antichrist" occur in the book of Revelation?
- C. How many times does the term "Spiritual Israel" occur in the New Testament?

The answer to all of these questions is none! "Second" occurs only once in relation to Christ's return (Heb 9:28). "Antichrist" is found only in 1 & 2 John. Although the concept of "Spiritual Israel" can be found in Scripture, the term is never used.

Preterism . . . it's about time!

It's about the time Jesus told His disciples that He would return—*this (His) generation!*

It's about the time the New Testament authors told their readers Jesus would return—*soon, near, at hand, shortly!*

It's about time for a Scriptural explanation other than delay!

It's about time for a "last days" view that doesn't conjure up gaps and parenthetical ages!



Preterism . . . maybe it's about time you looked into it!