

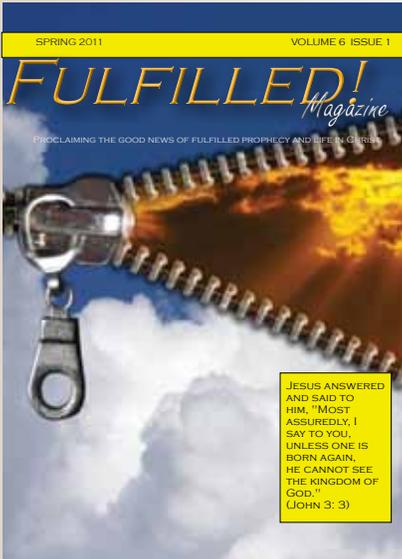
SPRING 2011

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 1

# FULFILLED! *Magazine*

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF FULFILLED PROPHECY AND LIFE IN CHRIST

JESUS ANSWERED  
AND SAID TO  
HIM, "MOST  
ASSUREDLY, I  
SAY TO YOU,  
UNLESS ONE IS  
BORN AGAIN,  
HE CANNOT SEE  
THE KINGDOM OF  
GOD."  
(JOHN 3: 3 NKJV)



**ON THE COVER:**

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:1-3NKJV)

Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:20-21 NKJV)

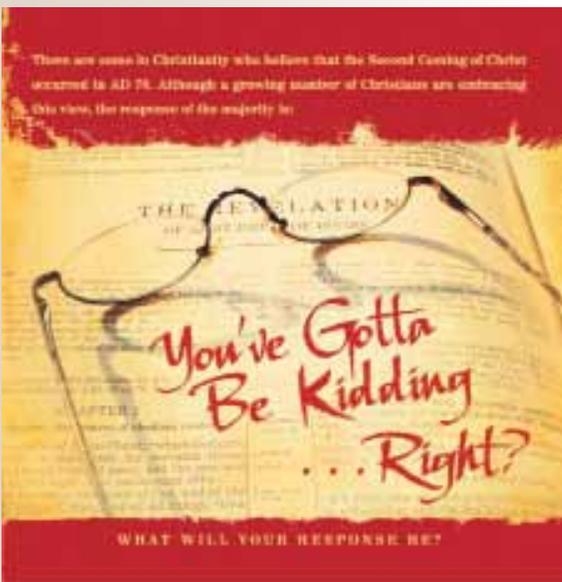


**Are you interested in seeing Preterist DVD's aired on TV stations in your area?**

Are you interested in helping to make Preterist video available to those in your area, or doing minor video editing? If so, contact Dave Warren for more details:

Phone: (808) 250-2870  
(Dave lives in Hawaii, so please keep the time difference in mind)

Email: [dr.lahainadave@gmail.com](mailto:dr.lahainadave@gmail.com)



Follow host Brian L. Martin as he attempts to correct his Preterist coworker, only to end up being convinced of the scriptural support for Preterism. This ninety minute video walks the viewer through the biblical concepts of audience relevance, apocalyptic language, cloud-comings, and more. Preliminary viewings have left Preterists clamoring for copies to hand out, and Futurists stunned at the biblical support for Preterism. Priced for easy distribution, order several copies!

Prices include S&H to the US (Canadian prices in parentheses). All prices are in US dollars.

- Single copy: \$5 (Canada \$6)
- 5 copies: \$20 (Canada \$22)
- 10 copies: \$35 (Canada \$40)
- 25 copies: \$60 (Canada \$72)
- 45 copies: \$100 (Canada \$125)

Note: currently only available in NTSC (North America) format

Order online with PayPal at: [www.FulfilledCG.com](http://www.FulfilledCG.com) or write us at:

FCG  
1620 Sequoia St.  
Napa, CA 94558-2320



**4.** Editor's Note  
What type of articles would you like to see in *Fulfilled!* Magazine?

---

**5.** Preterism 101  
Exploring the basics of Preterism.

---

**6.** Perspectives  
Reading the Bible through new covenant eyes.

---

**8.** Objection Overruled!  
A response to Robert Kramer's claim that Revelation's time statements don't require a Preterist view of eschatology.

---

**10.** Creation to Consummation  
Futurists claim that there were no false christs in the first century, therefore Matthew 24:24 cannot have been fulfilled in the first century.

---

**13.** Word Studies  
The Greek word *engizo* (near)

study



**General Editor**  
Brian L. Martin

**Copy Editors**  
Mike Beidler  
Kayla F. Martin

**Design & Layout**  
David Dornian

**Published by**  
*Fulfilled*  
*Communications*  
*Group*

**Subscriptions**  
We offer subscriptions free of charge. Donations to help with production costs are welcomed.

**Contributions**  
*Fulfilled Communications Group* is a 501 (c) (3) religious nonprofit corporation, and all donations are fully tax-deductible. Please make any contributions payable to:

FCG  
1620 Sequoia St.  
Napa, CA 94558

**How to contact us**  
***Fulfilled!* Magazine**  
1620 Sequoia St.  
Napa, CA 94558  
fcg.brian@yahoo.com  
(775) 278-1948

Please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible.

[www.FulfilledCG.com](http://www.FulfilledCG.com)  
[www.FulfilledMagazine.com](http://www.FulfilledMagazine.com)

The views expressed here are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors or other contributors.

## Editor's Note...

This issue is no doubt arriving in your mailbox a bit later than anticipated due to a very busy work schedule. Having to work a weekend can really put me behind with my other projects like the magazine.

As we begin our sixth year of publishing we are considering expanding our page count from sixteen to twenty pages. This will provide a little “breathing room” for our current columns (which we more frequently seem to have to fit using a shoehorn) as well as provide the opportunity to expand our content.

We began *Fulfilled!* Magazine with two primary goals in mind: to provide an informative publication which engenders a sense of community for existing Preterists, and to provide “bite-sized” Preterist articles for those investigating the view. The challenge in meeting these goals is that the magazine needs to address two divergent demographics—seasoned Preterists and novices. Thus, some articles may be over the head of some readers, while other articles are too basic. Nevertheless, because we haven't the time or resources to produce two separate publications, we continue to address each demographic and hope to provide a little something for everyone in each issue.

Because we have received a fairly constant stream of new sign-ups since the release of our video *You've Gotta Be Kidding... Right?*, we are assuming that many of our recent sign-ups are fairly new to Preterism. Therefore, in this issue you will find a new column, *Preterism 101*, in which I plan to cover the basics of Preterism.

Missing from this issue is *Gleanings from the Past*, which is slated to return in the next issue. However, we want to hear from you—what type of articles would you like to see in *Fulfilled!* Magazine? You may write us or email your input using the contact information provided in the sidebar on page three. Also, if you have a topic you would like to see addressed in the *Perspectives* column, or an objection for Don Preston to overrule, let me know!

Dave Warren is steadfastly building the *Preterist Vision* team, which is continuing to expand the number of Public Access stations around the

country airing Preterist videos. The last count I received was thirty-five cities, with a viewer base of 10-12 million. *Ten Million*—can you imagine how many people might be introduced to Preterism? Dave is always looking for additional participants in *Preterist Vision*, and can especially use video editors. Each station usually has a special requirement for the submitted videos—some require specific time lengths, some require several seconds of black video before and/or after the video, etc. If you have video editing skills, or are interested in helping *Preterist Vision* in any capacity, please contact Dave (see the *Preterist Vision* ad on the inside front cover).

On the topic of sharing Preterism, Glenn Hill has written a book titled *Christianity's Great Dilemma*, in which he lays out the dilemma he faced in reconciling the timing and nature passages of Christ's Second Coming, and his eventual embracing of Preterism. See page 15 for more details on how to order this excellent introduction to Preterism.

FCG is in the initial phases of preparing our next video production—*A Preterist Response to John MacArthur*. MacArthur has laid some serious charges against Full-Preterism (which he calls Hyper-Preterism) and, we feel, has not accurately represented the Preterist view. Because of MacArthur's wide following it is easy for many Christians to simply accept his dismissal of Preterism without affording it a proper examination. On the flip side, we hope that MacArthur's followers will have their interest piqued to see what the Preterists are saying, and will be presented with a more complete and accurate view of Preterism. As of yet we do not know how long the video will be, but plan on having several 20-30 minute segments. We would appreciate your prayers as we move through the planning stages of this project.

Lastly, but certainly not least, we thank you for your continued financial support and encouraging letters and emails.

Blessings,

*Brian*

... we want to hear from you—what type of articles would you like to see in *Fulfilled!* Magazine?

# Preterism 101

## Living in the Last Days—Four Major Views

by Brian L. Martin

There is no shortage of Bible prophecy pundits ensuring us that we are living in the biblical “last days.” We’ve been told that we are the “terminal generation,” and that we are “counting down to Armageddon.” If Harold Camping is correct, this will be the last issue of *Fulfilled!* Magazine because Christ is returning May 21st of this year. (Actually, if Camping is correct I suppose that I’m not even a true Christian, and will therefore miss the rapture. Thus, we may be able squeeze out a couple more issues before the world is plunged into utter chaos during the Great Tribulation.) It is interesting that every generation since Christ prophesied His return has believed that *they* would be the generation to witness that return. (For a revealing study of this fact, see Gumerlock’s *The Day and the Hour*.)

Throughout church history there have been four major interpretive views of the book of Revelation, and hence eschatology (eschatology is the branch of theology concerned with the study of last things). These four views are *Futurism*, *Historicism*, *Preterism*, and *Idealism*. *Futurism*, as the name implies, holds that most, if not all, of the Bible’s “end-times” prophecies are yet to be fulfilled. *Historicism* sees the fulfillments as having started in the New Testament era, continuing on throughout the Church age until the Second Coming of Christ. *Preterism*, from the Latin word for past, sees the fulfillments as having taken place in our past. *Idealism* views the prophecies as timeless promises of hope, applicable to all generations. According to *Idealism*, the prophecies do not have specific one-time fulfillments in history, but rather multiple fulfillments to many ages as God delivers His people and judges His enemies throughout history.

The reason for these widely disparate views lies in the timing and nature of the prophecies addressing the last days and the Second Coming of Christ. (The reader may be surprised to learn that the term “Second Coming” is not found

in the Bible. However, because that term is widely used and has a generally accepted definition in Christianity, I will use that term rather than replacing it with another term, which would only be awkward and tend toward confusion.) The New Testament describes the timing of Christ’s Second Coming with terms like *soon*, *near*, *at hand*, *this generation*, etc. At face value, this would seem to indicate a Preterist view of eschatology. But the Second Coming is also described with seemingly world-wide cataclysmic events—the sun being darkened, the moon turning to blood, earthquakes, pestilence, wars—as well as Christ’s return being witnessed by *every eye*. Obviously, these events have not yet occurred, which indicates a Futurist view of eschatology.

*Idealism* avoids this sticky issue by claiming that there are no specific fulfillments to these prophecies, but that they are always being fulfilled by God’s interaction with humanity. Thus, God’s deliverance and judgment are always *soon*, *near*, and *at hand*, and every eye does see (perceive) Him in some sense. While God has certainly been involved in human history through the ages, and will continue to do so, I believe that the eschatological prophecies are too specific to be interpreted in an ethereal manner and applied to all people of all ages. The crucifixion and resurrection of Christ have ongoing (idealistic) application to people throughout history, yet the crucifixion and resurrection were specifically prophesied events which had specific fulfillments.

*Historicism* stretches the fulfillments of the end-time prophecies across the entire Church age. Thus, those events which were fulfilled in the first century were indeed *soon*, *near*, and *at hand* for the original audience. The prophesied world-wide cataclysmic events are viewed as various wars, famines, etc., throughout history, and in the future every eye will see the Second Coming of Christ. In this manner, Historicism is able to honor both the timing statements

(*soon*, *near*, *at hand*) and the nature of the Second Coming (cataclysmic events, every eye shall see Him). Furthermore, the New Testament clearly states that the first-century saints were living in the last days:

*But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:*

*“And it shall come to pass in the **last days**, says God . . . .”* (Acts 2:16-17 NKJV)

*God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these **last days** spoken to us by His Son . . . .* (Heb 1:1-2 NKJV)

*Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the **last days**.* (James 5:3 NKJV)

One of the weaknesses of Historicism is that its proponents cannot agree on which prophecy to assign to which historical event. This becomes further compounded by the fact that as time marches on more historical events occur, yet there is only a fixed number of Revelation’s seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments to which historical events can be assigned. From a biblical perspective, the Historicist view is further weakened by the phrase “this generation.” Jesus told His disciples that ALL these things would be witnessed by *this generation*. Regardless which generation Jesus had in mind, it seems highly unlikely He meant the term *this generation* to be stretched over two thousand years (and counting!). (In future articles we shall explore why interpreting *this generation* as *this race*, or *this type of people*, is not supported by the text.)

Most Futurists rightly limit the fulfillment of the end-time prophecies to a single generation—typically within a seven-year period known as the

*...continued on page 15*

*“When one considers the principle of audience relevance, it seems that much of the New Testament does not apply to Christians today. What part of the Bible does apply to us?”*

## New Covenant Eyes

by Alan Bondar

One of the reasons I adopted the concept of reading the Bible through New Covenant eyes is because I wanted to help people read the Bible in a way that avoids the need to ask this question. I talk a lot about allowing truth to break down our most beloved presuppositions. We all have them—but most of us are only willing to go so far and no further.

Full Preterists recognize audience relevance when it comes to time texts, but we frequently forget that audience relevance goes beyond time texts. It is difficult to come to grips with the fact that “we” doesn’t mean “us” today. Many of us, today, continue to maintain a presupposition that states: “The Bible must talk about us somewhere.” It is reasoned that surely God would have written *something* about us. It frightens us to think He may not have. So we often sacrifice reading the Bible with audience relevance in mind in order to figure out what the text says about us.

By doing this, we are essentially failing to recognize that the Bible is a book that has a start and a *finish*. Instead, we continue to seek ongoing fulfillment (and by this I do not mean the ongoing *effects* of fulfillment). But here is where the difference between exegesis and eisegesis becomes crucial. Exegesis seeks the inherent meaning of the text within the setting in which it was written. It first seeks to understand what it meant *regardless of what it means to me*. Only then does one draw upon anything that is applicable to the setting in which we live.

Eisegesis, on the other hand, convolutes what the text meant originally with what the text means to me currently. In this scenario, as we approach a text, we immediately read ourselves into the mind of the writers, bringing with us our *a priori* notions of prophetic fulfillment. We infix ourselves into a time where even the prophets could not fully comprehend the glory of what we have today. Rather than reading the Scriptures through New Covenant eyes, we are reading the New Covenant through Old Covenant eyes, thinking that this will somehow help us to grasp the glory of the New Covenant when even the prophets couldn’t comprehend it.

The bottom line is that the Bible, from start to finish, is a book containing the historical events of real people. And while the Bible is different from all other books, in that God is the Author, His word still communicates a true story that is intended to have a beginning and an end. However, it is precisely because God is the Author of the Bible that the Bible carries an authoritative weight beyond all other books. Thus, when we read the Bible, we inherently recognize that what God wrote about is of utmost importance. Therefore, we must not only desire to understand *what* the Bible teaches, but also what the Bible *teaches*. In other words, we should

want to know what God intended to communicate and not what we want Him to have communicated.

So my first answer to the question, “What part of the Bible does apply to us?” is that we must drop the presupposition that the Bible *must* talk about us. Perhaps I can demonstrate this with another question: If you became convinced that the Bible had absolutely no relevance for us today, would you still want to study the Word of God?

For me, the answer to this question became the relevance that mattered. Why? Because my desire to understand the Word of God is rooted in my desire to know God. And isn’t that the ultimate point of life? When I read the Scriptures, I see knowing God as the central theme—knowing God is the relevance. And with this perspective, we can journey into my second answer to our question.

The Scriptures are not about us—they are about God. Therefore, the whole Bible was written for our joy and well-being, so in that sense, it *all* applies to us. What I mean by this is that “God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him” (John Piper). To put it another way, our greatest satisfaction in life comes from knowing God. And the only reason we want to know God is grace. The Bible doesn’t drive us to the Bible—God’s grace does. God’s grace also makes us believe that the Bible is His Word. We don’t seek to find errors in order to destroy the name of God. We persist in seeking the resolution to anything that doesn’t add up. Why do we this? Because we already believe the Bible is God’s Word before the Scriptures even claim to be so. We who persist in understanding the Scriptures do so because we have an innate desire to know God—our hearts are not satisfied unless we do.

So if joy comes from knowing God, how do we know God? By knowing how He interacted with His people. Now this takes us to my third answer to our question, which flows from the first two answers.

I’ve heard a lot of great sermons on David and Goliath, Samson, Abraham, Israel in Egypt, Israel in the Wilderness, and so on and so forth. In fact, Richard Pratt, Jr., wrote an excellent book called *He Gave Us Stories*, in which he demonstrates some great ways to apply many of the Old Testament stories that were neither written to us nor about us. Yet, Pratt goes wrong in the book in the same way that many of us do. For some reason, most of us are able to apply the Old Testament stories without needing some direct relevance for our day, but when it comes to the New Testament, we just can’t come to grips with interpreting and applying it the same way. If we can learn a lesson from the story of David and Goliath without literally being David or Goliath, why can’t



we learn a lesson from how Timothy was to respond to evildoers in the last days without literally being in the last days?

Even Futurists know how to apply the Old Testament stories in principal form, without having to apply every detail. Take, for example, Noah and the ark. Do we build arks today? No, but we can learn from Noah and apply those principles. Consider David and Goliath. Are we slaying literal giants? No, but we glean principles. Should we handle the New Testament any differently? No. Are we living in the last days? No, just as we are not building arks or slaying giants. But should we apply the principles of dealing with people in a manner similar to those who were living in the last days? Yes!

Is the Bible the only book from which we can learn principles like this? No. We can do this with any book. However, just because something is written in the Bible doesn't mean we should emulate it. Judas is the perfect example. Reading the Bible is like any other book. But for some reason, because it's God's Word, we feel that *we* have to be infixed in the stories or else they have no relevance for us.

The problem with Pratt's work is that he interprets many of the stories as still seeking fulfillment in the future, rather than seeing fulfillment in the past. But the fact of the matter is, God not only gave us stories, He gave us *a* story. So the overarching story of Scripture *is* the application for us today. It is ultimately a story about God and His faithfulness to Israel. God reveals Himself to us through interacting with humanity. So while it may appear that the focal point is Israel, as it turns out, the focal point is God. And this is what I fear has been lost in Full Preterism.

We have been so consumed with finding out *what* applies to us that we have forgotten that it is God Himself that applies to us. You see, even when we find ways to learn from the stories

in the Bible, we must never forget that in every story, God is the reason. Why should we be like David? Because God was most glorified in David when David was most satisfied in God. Why should we be like Timothy? Because God was most glorified in Timothy when Timothy was most satisfied in God. Why shouldn't we be like the Judaizers? Because they were not satisfied with all that God is for us in Jesus.

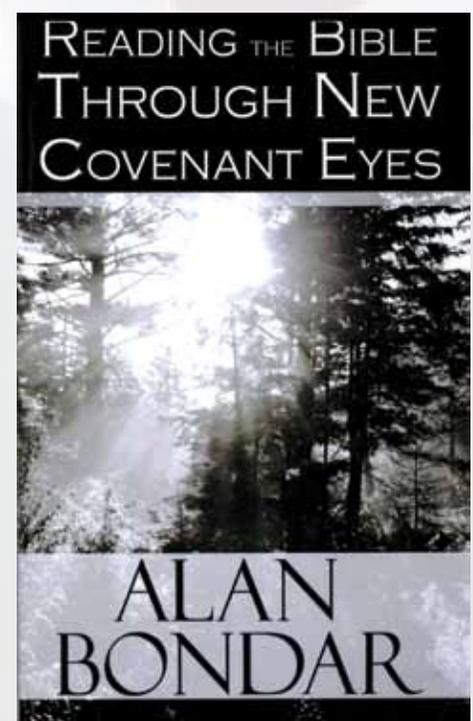
I suggest to you that the goal of the New Covenant is not to find out more about us, but to find out more about God. And this is the source of true wisdom. The immaturity of the Old Covenant necessitated a list of "do's" and "don'ts." The maturity of the New Covenant, on the other hand, grants us wisdom according to a full revelation of God. We are no longer living in a time of progressive revelation. We have the full account of God in the Scriptures. So maybe, just maybe, the best way to understand the New Covenant in which we live is to spend less time figuring *it* out and more time understanding God since, after all, knowing God face-to-face is the glory of the New Covenant. This is the meaning of reading the Bible through New Covenant eyes.

I suppose the real crux of the issue comes down to answering *why* we want to understand how things played out and what it all means for us today. If we just want to know so that we can have answers, we may be missing out on the glory of the New Covenant. I propose to you that discovering the answers cannot be the end goal. If we are not motivated by a desire to know God better through the discovery of those answers, we will find nothing but heartache in the end. Why? Because answers in and of themselves do not satisfy. Only God does. And that is why so many of us find ourselves discouraged, bitter, irritated, frustrated, and in hostility towards one another. What ends up mattering most to us is whether or not our view is correct,

rather than whether our brother or sister in Christ desires to know God. Could it be that we have become so consumed with knowing what awaits us, or what else there is for us, that we have become blind? Consider how desperately the Old Testament saints sought to stand before the face of God. And yet, here we are, face-to-face with God, and we're more concerned with what else is in it for us. Really? Is there more than God? What else could we possibly want? Perhaps we're not satisfied because we're looking for love in all the wrong places.

What I'm saying is that the application of Scripture is God. He is the hero of the story. When we read novels and watch movies, the story revolves around the hero. You come to find that the more you know about the hero, the more *you* feel what *he* feels. You don't have to be in the story to despise those who oppose the hero. You're drawn into the story by knowing his character. We don't have to be in the situations

...continued on page 14



# Objection Overruled!

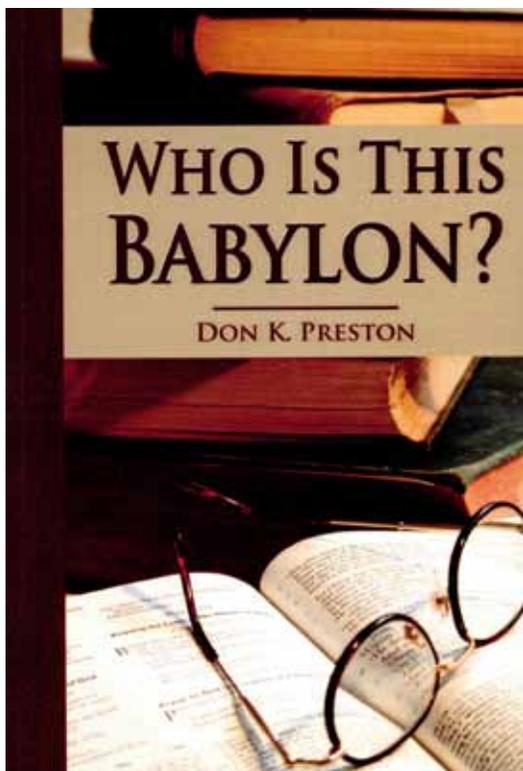
## Objection Regarding Revelation's Time Statements

by Don Preston

Robert Kramer produces a journal entitled "Second Thoughts." Mr. Kramer and I have corresponded in the past, and, I have interacted with some of his claims on my website.<sup>1</sup> His take on eschatological matters are often thoughtful, and well presented. In issue 85, Kramer sought to counter the true Preterist claims about Revelation and its imminent fulfillment. Here is his objection:

"Preterists take very literally the time statements of Rev 1:1, 3 and believe they pertain to the whole of the Revelation; everything in it will have taken place soon after the Revelation was written including the return of Christ. They fail to understand or give credence to the fact that a third, equally significant, time statement is given in Rev 4:1. The time statements of Rev 1:1, 3 pertain to chapters 1-3 and the seven named churches listed there. All that related to these churches did soon take place. But John was invited to heaven to receive further revelation of "what must take place after these things" which must and did shortly take place. These additional revelations include a millennial reign of Christ and other events that cover significantly long periods of time both before and after the coming of Christ and His thousand year reign on the earth."

I have been asked to respond to Mr. Kramer's objection



to the Preterist view of the time statements in Revelation and am glad to do so, for Mr. Kramer's objections are untenable. Note that Mr. Kramer has admitted that the time statements of the imminence of the events in chapters 1-3 are to be understood literally,

meaning fulfillment was truly near. This has tremendous implications for eschatology as a whole.

If the time statements in Revelation 1:1, 3 are to be taken literally, and indicate genuine nearness of fulfillment, this demands that the time statements in the remainder of the New Testament are to be taken literally. Time statements which refer to Christ's coming, the judgment, and resurrection as near must mean that the fulfillments of those events were also near. You cannot affirm that, "*These things must shortly come to pass*" and "*the time is at hand*" in Revelation mean fulfillment was near, and then turn around and say that when the other New Testament writers said the parousia was at hand, their statements of imminence do not actually mean near.

So, if you admit that the events of Revelation 1-3 were in fact *near*, and to be fulfilled *soon*, this means that the Second Coming of Christ was objectively near. Have you noticed how many times in Revelation 2-3 Jesus said that His coming was near, and He was coming quickly? The following passages demonstrate that the coming of the Lord occurred in the first century.

- Revelation 2:5—"Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else<sup>2</sup> I will come to you quickly and remove your lamp stand from its place—unless you repent."
- Revelation 2:16—"Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth."
- Revelation 2:25—"But hold fast what you have until I come."
- Revelation 3:11—"Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown."

Mr. Kramer alleges that Revelation 4:1 contains a time statement that allows us to dichotomize chapters 2-3 from the rest of Revelation. However, where does Revelation 4:1 indicate that a protracted period of time, so far spanning two millennia, must be involved? There is no suggestion of such a "delay." All that Revelation 4:1 says is, "After these things, I looked and behold a door standing open in heaven . . ."

### The Imminence of the Fulfillment of Revelation is Confirmed by the Proper Identification of "Babylon"<sup>3</sup>

Without controversy, the judgment of Babylon is the fundamental theme of Revelation. She is judged at the coming of the Lord (Rev 18-19) because in her was found, "all the blood shed on the earth" (Rev 18:20, 24). Indisputably, whoever one identifies as Revelation's Babylon, that entity/



Don Preston

Don is president of  
Preterist Research Institute  
email: [dkpret@cableone.net](mailto:dkpret@cableone.net)  
website: [www.eschatology.org](http://www.eschatology.org)

city must, either in the past or in the future, fulfill the deeds Revelation ascribes to Babylon. What is significant, as we respond to Mr. Kramer, is that he believes that Babylon in Revelation is indeed Jerusalem. However, he projects the fulfillment of Revelation into our future. This presents insurmountable problems for Mr. Kramer, as we shall see. So, what deeds does Revelation ascribe to Babylon? *Babylon had slain the prophets* (Rev 16:6). In the New Testament, when the term “prophets” or “the prophets” is used without a contextual qualifier, *Old Testament prophets are invariably in sight*. These terms refer to the prophets who lived before Christ came. What is the significance of this? It means that you cannot identify any city other than Jerusalem as Revelation’s Babylon. Neither Rome, the Catholic Church, nor Babylon in Iraq, ever killed Old Covenant prophets. Literal Old Testament Babylon tried very hard, but even the fiery furnace and lions could not accomplish her murderous intent. The bottom line is that if the city that one identifies as Babylon did not kill the Old Covenant prophets, that city cannot be Revelation’s Babylon.

### **Babylon of Revelation is Where the Lord was Slain**

Revelation 11 informs us that Babylon, the “great city,”<sup>4</sup> was “spiritually called Sodom and Egypt.” We are then given an interpretive comment—Babylon was “where also the Lord was slain.” Biblically, the only city that is ever metaphorically designated as Sodom is Jerusalem (cf. Isa 1; Ezek 16, 23). In Deuteronomy 32, YHVH said that in Israel’s last days she would become Sodom (Deut 32:32). The interpretive comment of Revelation 11:8 should be definitive for commentators.<sup>5</sup> Jesus was

slain in first-century Jerusalem.

### **Babylon of Revelation Had, or Was, Killing the Apostles and Prophets of Jesus**

Revelation 18:20-24 called on the apostles and prophets of Jesus to rejoice at the impending judgment of Babylon for her guilt of persecuting them. Jesus Himself identifies the city guilty of these crimes. In Luke 11:49f He proclaimed to first-century Old Covenant Jerusalem: “*I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they will kill and persecute, that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation.*”

Could there be a more definitive statement than this? Jesus said that all the blood of all the martyrs, all the way back to creation would be brought on Old Covenant Jerusalem. What interpretive rule allows us to divorce Jesus’ statement from John’s Apocalypse? Where does Revelation delineate between the apostles and prophets of Jesus slain by Babylon, and Jesus’ apostles and prophets slain by first-century Jerusalem?

Where is the evidence that forces us to identify the apostles and prophets in Revelation as apostles and prophets who would be slain *four hundred years—or 2000—after Jerusalem killed Jesus’ apostles and prophets?*

Does Jesus have living apostles (an eyewitness to His resurrection; Acts 1:21f, 1 Cor 15:8f) and prophets today?<sup>6</sup> Were there apostles and prophets of Jesus alive in the days of the fall of Rome? Did the Catholic Church or literal Babylon in modern Iraq kill the

apostles and prophets of Jesus?

Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 2:15f, weighs in on this discussion when he refers to Jerusalem and the Jews as the city guilty of killing the apostles and prophets of Jesus (1 Thess 2:14-16). No other city bore that guilt. Consider then:

- Jesus pointed the divine finger at Jerusalem for killing the Old Covenant prophets (and she would kill Him), and His apostles and prophets. He said that she would fill up the measure of her sin, by killing His apostles and prophets, and be judged in the first century (Matt 23:29-38).
- Paul likewise pointed the finger directly at Jerusalem as the city guilty of killing the prophets. She had now killed Jesus, and was killing Jesus’ apostles and prophets. In doing so, she was filling the measure of her sin, and judgment was about to fall (1 Thess 2:14-16).
- John said Babylon had killed the prophets. Babylon was also where the Lord was slain. She was guilty of killing Jesus’ apostles and prophets. Her cup of sin was now full (Rev 17:6f), and judgment was “at hand” and coming “quickly.”

John says not one thing different from Jesus and Paul. Babylon was Jerusalem. Furthermore, *Mr. Kramer admits that Babylon of Revelation was/is Jerusalem*. Well, if that is true, and her judgment for doing what Revelation describes is still in the future, this presents the following situation.

When John wrote Revelation, Babylon/Jerusalem had *already* committed the bloody crimes mentioned above. Jesus said that all of the blood—of the Old Covenant

...continued on page 12

# Creation to Consummation

## False Christs . . . Will Arise (Matt 24:24) *All These Things Came to Pass (Part 6)*

by Ed Stevens

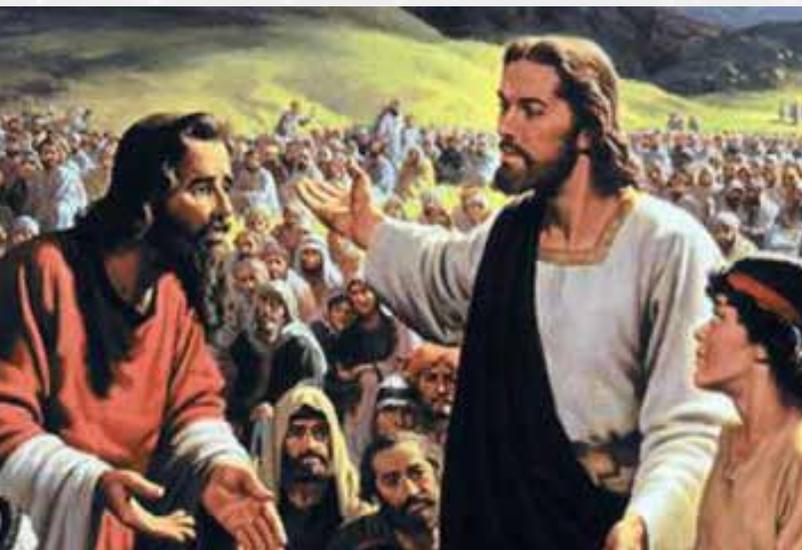
“For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ [Messiah],’ and will mislead many.” (Matt 24:5 NASB95)

“For false Christs [Messiahs] and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.” (Matt 24:24 NASB95)

[Note: In this article the first reference for Josephus’ quotes refer to Thackeray’s translation, the second reference to Whiston’s translation.]

**T**homas Ice, in his chapter titled “The Olivet Discourse” (*End Times Controversy*, 168-170), claims that there were absolutely no messianic pretenders—not even one—in the years leading up to the Jewish Revolt and destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Therefore, Ice claims Christ’s prediction of false messiahs was not fulfilled in the first century, but instead points to the prophecy’s fulfillment in our future:

The emphasis in Matthew 24:5 is upon “many.” Not just a single person will come claiming to be the Messiah, but a whole host of individuals will make this claim. That’s one of the reasons we know this passage is not referring to the time leading up to the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem. A. H. M’Neile says, “No such definite claim to Messiahship is known till that of Barkokba in the reign of Hadrian.” (*Controversy*, 168)



The Hebrew word *messiah* (Gk. *christ*) simply means anointed one. Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed in Israel. When Jesus used the word *christ* (*messiahs*) here in Matthew 24, He was referring to anointed kings or rulers (like King David). Anyone who has studied the activities of David before he was anointed King of Israel knows how David had his own band of soldiers gathered around him. That is the same pattern which the messianic pretenders

of the first century followed, and their intentions were the same—to establish themselves as King of the Jews.

Gary DeMar, Francis Gumerlock, Ken Gentry, and many other Christian scholars and commentary writers have produced the names of “many” individuals who were messianic pretenders in the first century, including **Theudas** (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 20:97-98 [20.5.1]), **Judas the Galilean** (Acts 5:36-37; Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 2.56 [2.4.1]; *Antiquities*, 17:271-272 [17.10.5]), **Simon Magus** (Acts 8:9-10), **the Egyptian** (Acts 21:38; *Wars*, 2:261-263 [2.13.5]; *Antiquities*, 20:169-172 [20.8.6]; Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.21.1-3), and others (*Wars*, 2:258-260 [2.13.4]; *Antiquities*, 20:167-168 [20.8.6]). Philip Schaff mentions “the Egyptian” as an example of false messiahs (or christs):

. . . the party spirit among the Jews themselves, and their hatred of their heathen oppressors, rose to the most insolent political and religious fanaticism, and was continually inflamed by **false prophets and Messiahs**, one of whom [the Egyptian], for example, according to Josephus, drew after him thirty thousand men. Thus came to pass what our Lord had predicted: “There shall arise **false Christs**, and false prophets, and shall lead many astray.” . . . They kept up the **Messianic expectations** of the people and hailed every step towards destruction as a step towards deliverance. (Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* in 8 volumes; vol. 1, section 38—“The Jewish War and the Destruction of Jerusalem AD 70”).

There were four major Zealot leaders during the revolt (*Manahem*, *Eleazar b. Ananias*, *Simon b. Giora*, and *John of Gischala*) about whom Josephus wrote much. These four especially were very desirous of gaining the supreme control of government over the Jews. They fought each other in order to secure their own individual supremacy. They were most definitely the very kind of false messiahs, messianic pretenders, and deceivers of the people which Jesus described and predicted.

*Manahem* rose up during the same time period as *Eleazar b. Ananias* (AD 66) and attempted to establish himself as king, but *Eleazar* had him killed (*Wars*, 2:433-447). According to *Sepher Yosippon* (chap. 59), *Eleazar* was the one who blew the shofar (ram’s horn trumpet) at the attack of *Florus* in AD 66 and rallied the Zealots around himself. It is obvious that this young rebel priest had messianic pretensions, especially

## Studies in Redemptive History

Edward E. Stevens

Ed is President of the  
International Preterist  
Association

email: preterist1@aol.com

website: www.preterist.org



when he had Manahem killed so that he could retain control of the Zealot forces in Jerusalem and in the Temple. Both Simon and John later challenged Eleazar and eventually dislodged him from his Temple stronghold. Josephus makes it very clear that all of their intentions were to grasp the reins of power over the Jewish people. Read this sampling of what Josephus wrote about these events in *Wars of the Jews* and judge for yourself whether the predictions of Jesus were fulfilled (bold emphasis mine):

**2:433** (2.17.8) In the meantime one **Manahem**, the son of Judas, that was called the Galilean (who was a very cunning sophister, and had formerly reproached the Jews under Cyrenius, that after God they were subject to the Romans) took some of the men of note with him, and retired to Masada, **2:434** (2.17.8) where he broke open king Herod's armory, and gave arms not only to his own people, but to other robbers also. These he made use of for a guard, and **returned in the state of a king to Jerusalem**; he became the **leader of the sedition**, and gave orders for continuing the siege . . . .

**2:442** (2.17.9) Now the overthrow of the places of strength, and the death of the high priest Ananias, so puffed up **Manahem**, that he became barbarously cruel; and, as **he thought he had no antagonists to dispute the management of affairs with him, he was no better than an insupportable tyrant**;

**2:443** (2.17.9) but **Eleazar** and his party, when words had passed between them, how it was not proper when they revolted from the Romans, out of the desire of liberty, to betray that liberty to any of their own people, and **to bear a lord**, who, though he should be guilty of no violence, was yet meaner than themselves; as also, that, in case they were obliged to **set someone over their public affairs**,

it was fitter they should give that privilege to anyone rather than to him, they made an assault upon him in the temple;

**2:444** (2.17.9) for he [**Manahem**] went up thither to **worship in a pompous manner, and adorned with royal garments**, and had his followers with him in their armor.

**2:445** (2.17.9) But **Eleazar** and his party fell violently upon him, as did also the rest of the people, and taking up stones to attack him withal, they threw them at the sophister, and thought that if he were once ruined, the entire sedition would fall to the ground.

**2:446** (2.17.9) Now **Manahem** and his party made resistance for a while; but when they perceived that the whole multitude were falling upon them, they fled which way every one was able; those that were caught were slain, and those that hid themselves were searched for.

**2:447** (2.17.9) A few there were of them who privately escaped to Masada, among whom was Eleazar, the son of Jarius, who was of kin to Manahem, and **acted the part of a tyrant** at Masada afterward.

**2:652** (2.22.2) But as for the Acrabbene toparchy, **Simon, the son of Gioras**, got a great number of those that were **fond of innovations** together, and betook himself to ravage the country; nor did he only harass the rich men's houses, but tormented their bodies, and appeared openly and beforehand to **affect tyranny in his government**.

**4:503** (4.9.3) And now there arose another war at Jerusalem. There was a son of Giora, one **Simon**, by birth of Gerasa, a young man, not so cunning

indeed as **John [of Gischala]**, who had already **seized upon the city**,

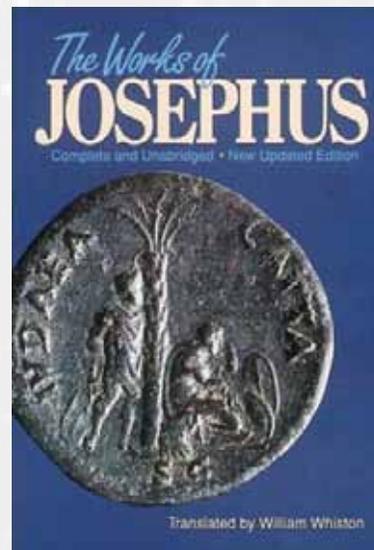
**4:508** (4.9.3) but he [**Simon**], **affecting to tyrannize**, and being **fond of greatness**, when he had heard of the death of Ananus, left them, and went into the mountainous part of the country. **So he proclaimed liberty** to those in slavery, and a reward to those already free, and got together a set of wicked men from all quarters.

**4:509** (4.9.4) And as he had now a **strong body of men about him**, he overran the villages that lay in the mountainous country, and when there were still more and more that

came to him, he ventured to go down into the lower parts of the country,

**4:510** (4.9.4) and since he was now become formidable to the cities, many of the men of power were **corrupted by him**; so that his army was no longer composed of slaves and robbers, but a great many of the populace were **obedient to him as their king**.

Notice the phrases we boldfaced in the Josephus quotes above. They speak of Manahem and Simon functioning as kings, lording it over the people, and tyrannizing them. All four of these tyrants (Manahem, Eleazar, Simon, and John) viewed themselves as messianic leaders who wanted to save the Jewish people from Roman oppression. That is exactly what Jesus was talking about when he mentioned "false christs (or messiahs)." We have to wonder whether Tommy Ice and pre-trib Dispensationalists might be reading Josephus with filtered glasses. How can they miss statements like these?



# All Nations

by Don Preston

...continued from page 9

prophets, His own death, and that of His apostles and prophets—was to be avenged in *His generation* (Matt 23). Paul likewise said that Jerusalem was about to be judged, for the very crimes listed by John in Revelation.

If Mr. Kramer admits that Matthew 23 was fulfilled in AD 70, as the text demands, then he must prove that Revelation is talking about *another time* when all the blood—of the Old Covenant prophets, Jesus, and Jesus’ apostles and prophets—will be avenged. Was the AD 70 judgment of all of the blood of all the righteous, including the blood of the Old Covenant prophets, Jesus, and Jesus’ apostles and prophets, not sufficient? How many times does the blood of all the righteous have to be avenged?

Will God once again judge Jerusalem for the crimes listed in Revelation—crimes for which He judged her in AD 70? Make no mistake; the judgment of Babylon in Revelation is emphatically for the crimes listed against her, *the crimes avenged in AD 70*. You cannot divorce the judgment of Babylon in Revelation from those *already judged crimes*.

Thus, unless Mr. Kramer (or anyone else) can prove that Jerusalem will one day be judged and destroyed *again* for

killing the Old Covenant prophets, Jesus, and Jesus’ apostles and prophets, then the AD 70 judgment of Jerusalem *was* the judgment of Babylon. So, as just noted, one of two things is true:

A. Jerusalem has already committed the crimes mentioned in Revelation. This agrees with the statements of Jesus and Paul. If Jerusalem was Babylon, as Kramer admits, then clearly she has already committed the crimes listed in Revelation, and judgment for those crimes was at hand in the first century. Kramer’s objection fails on this premise.

B. Jerusalem will one day do what Revelation describes, i.e. killing the Old Testament prophets and the apostles and prophets of Jesus. However, because there are no living Old Testament prophets (nor will there ever be), Jerusalem cannot kill them in our future. This also applies to the apostles and prophets of Jesus—there are no living apostles or prophets of Jesus today. Kramer’s objection is falsified on this premise as well.

The facts are clear:

- Jerusalem/Babylon was to be judged *for the crimes listed in Revelation*
- Jerusalem *was* judged for those very crimes in AD 70
- Jerusalem will not be judged again for committing those crimes
- Those crimes *cannot be duplicated* in our future
- Thus, the judgment of Babylon that was proclaimed as near

and coming soon, was the first-century judgment of Old Covenant Jerusalem

One of the worst—but most common—“arguments” against this view is this: “Well, this can’t be true because Revelation was written after AD 70.” This is a presuppositional argument that ignores the internal evidence of Revelation, and relies on the tenuous evidence of eccentric historians. See my *Who Is This Babylon* book for a refutation of the late date.

Mr. Kramer is right to identify Revelation’s Babylon as Jerusalem. However, there is no justification for positing a future judgment of Jerusalem unrelated to the past crimes that Revelation describes. *The judgment of Babylon was to be brought on her for the crimes listed, not for some future, unidentified crimes*. But Jerusalem was judged for those crimes *in the first century*. She will not be judged for those crimes again. She will never repeat those bloody sins, for those crimes are not repeatable.

All of this evidence allows us to honor the theme of the avenging of the martyr’s blood at the end of Israel’s covenant age (Deut 32:43; Matt 23). It likewise allows us to honor the time statements that are found from the beginning to the end of Revelation. Christ’s Second Coming, in judgment of Babylon, occurred in the same timeframe as His coming to Revelation’s seven churches—He was “coming quickly.” This evidence falsifies Mr. Kramer’s objection.

## ENDNOTES

1. Some time back I wrote a five-part response to some of Mr. Kramer’s objections to Preterism. That series is available on my website: [www.eschatology.org](http://www.eschatology.org).
2. Some argue that Christ’s coming in Revelation 2-3 was conditional, because it says “repent or else I will come quickly.” However, this is not the case. Notice in 3:11, Jesus unequivocally said his parousia was near. The “conditionality” was *the nature of the coming*, i.e. whether blessing or cursing.
3. See my *Who Is This Babylon*, for one of the most extensive discussions of the identity of Babylon. The book is available from [www.bibleprophecy.com](http://www.bibleprophecy.com), or Amazon. This book effectively refutes the traditional identification of Babylon as Rome or the Roman Catholic Church, and establishes the proper identity as Jerusalem.
4. Dispensationalists say that “the great city” of Revelation 11:8 is not Babylon of chapters 17f, but Jerusalem after all. This is untenable as I demonstrate in my *Who Is This Babylon* book.
5. To say that attempts to negate this interpretive comment are disingenuous would be an understatement. Commentators who insist on a late date and future fulfillment of Revelation are forced to deny what Revelation 11 teaches.
6. The term “apostle” can simply mean “one sent” and not designate one of the Twelve. However, when we find the term “apostles and prophets” in the New Testament, it normally refers to Jesus’ special chosen Twelve and specially empowered first-century prophets. Thus, the burden of proof lies on those who would alter the normal application of the term to the specially chosen Twelve.



Parker is an independent biblical scholar with an M.A. in Theological Studies  
Email: ParkerVoll@yahoo.com

## The Greek word “engizo”

by Parker Voll

*Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is **at hand**.” (Matt 3:1-2, NASB95)*

*From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is **at hand**.” (Matt 4:17, NASB95)*

*Then He began to denounce the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you . . . .” (Matt 11:20-22, NASB95)*

Where are Chorazin and Bethsaida now? Actually, no one knows *exactly* where Bethsaida was even located. Ruins of a city called Chorazin have been discovered, but it is merely an excavation site now.<sup>1</sup> Exactly how the destruction of these cities might have taken place is, in the big picture, less relevant than the idea that this sequence of verses in Matthew is related to the underlying structure of the entire Gospel narrative. This structure is quite simple: the “kingdom of heaven” was going to be arriving in a historically short period of time, and people needed to start living accordingly so that when it arrived they would be prepared to enter into the kingdom. Against this backdrop the Sermon on the Mount can be seen as Jesus’ delivery of a new law code that frames God’s expectations for the subjects of His coming kingdom. Also obvious in Matthew’s Gospel is the idea that the arrival of this kingdom was to be attended with a severe judgment upon an existing power structure that God intended to tear down so that His kingdom could be established and flourish. While the above sequence is only one way of demonstrating this, Matthew contains several parables that indicate this same sequence (e.g., Matt 13:24-30 with 36-43, Matt 13:47-50).

The focus of our discussion is the idea that the arrival of this kingdom, with its attendant judgment, was consistently indicated to be *at hand*, *near*, and within *this generation*. The word we want to focus on here is the Greek word that is translated in the first two passages above as *at hand* (*engizō*). While some translations render this as *at hand*,

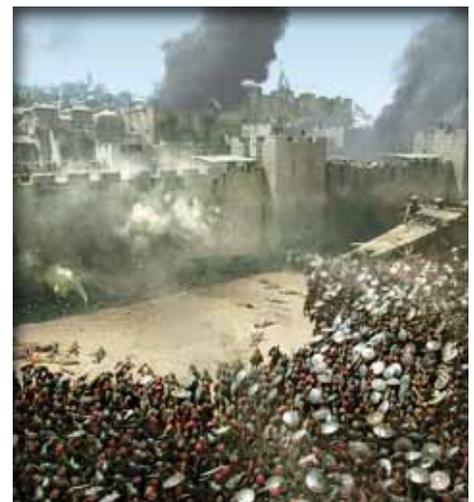
in my opinion *near* is a better rendering; but the best rendering is by Young, who translates this passage “Reform, for come nigh hath the reign of the heavens.” And this is exactly the idea of this verb<sup>2</sup>—it is an indication of someone approaching the locality of a place and essentially arriving at its boundary or precipice. For example, see the usage of *engizō* in the following passages where the verb is used transitively: Matt 21:1, 21:34, and 26:45. In each case, we see that something has arrived at a point of significance so that a new activity is imminent.

A verse that is pertinent from a Preterist’s perspective is Luke 21:20, “*But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is **near**.*” Again, we see that this word is used with its common meaning, that is, *near* is simply indicating that the arrival of an army around Jerusalem would be a signal that her desolation would soon follow. And we have solid historical evidence that this did indeed happen during the short years leading up to the breach of the city walls in AD 70, when Jerusalem was ransacked and the temple was destroyed. Closely following this verse is another statement using the same verb: “*But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is **drawing near***” (Luke 21:28). Is it too much of a stretch to conclude that we can link the event of the destruction of Jerusalem to the event of the saints’ redemption? I think not. In fact, the evidence is so strong that it is up to the Futurist to explain why *near* should mean

something different than it typically means elsewhere in the New Testament.<sup>3</sup>

And this is the point, is it not? God created us to exist in a world that is bounded by space and time, and He said that this was a good thing. As space-time creatures, we possess words in our languages that allow us to orient ourselves within our realm. We could perhaps consider these words to be “spatio-temporal directives.” These are the words that position us in our space-time realm so that we can sensibly communicate to one another within our humble abode. As Preterists, we really need to start pressing the issue that the meaning of these simple words cannot be twisted. I contend that, when these simple terms are reinterpreted and assigned definitions that only theological specialists can discern, language ceases to be a communication tool

*...continued on page 14*



## The Greek Column by Parker Voll

...continued from page 13

and loses its power to explain anything. This is a dangerous boundary to cross. Christian apologists face this when confronting Jehovah's Witnesses, who try to twist the most straightforward sentences of Scripture to make them say anything *except* that Jesus is an eternal, Divine Person. However, if both the apologist and the Jehovah's

Witness ignore straightforward timing passages to establish a future Second Coming, what right does the Christian have to rely on straightforward meanings when defending the divinity of Christ?<sup>4</sup> Perhaps we can gain some insight from the atheist philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche regarding the power of language. He once said, in a seeming moment of frustration, that "I am afraid we are not rid of God because we still have faith in grammar."<sup>5</sup> What he realized was that there is a certain logical necessity in language that inescapably transcends the tricky games people can play (which is what he was attempting). We

are "bound" by words. For me, accepting the consistent witness regarding imminent prophetic fulfillment is a matter of walking out my commitment to the inspiration and authority of the Bible. That is a simple *starting point*—"the easy part." The difficult (yet fun) part is working out the timeline, doing the historical research, re-thinking theological norms, and thinking about the pastoral (or ethical) implications of accepting a Preterist perspective. Of course, there will be tens of thousands of years for theologians to work such things out, so I am not going to *worry* about it; I'll just *enjoy* it!

### ENDNOTES

1. Bethsaida was a fishing village, possibly located somewhere on the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee, but even this is disputed. It seems there was a third-century synagogue built on the Chorazin site (which implies that it was built long after Jesus spoke these words), which was subsequently destroyed in the fourth century. However, an unpublished report stated there was an even earlier synagogue found near this same site. Thus, it is somewhat speculative to talk about what may or may not have happened at this site before the third century, and any attempt to find a consistent story from scholars regarding the location and fate of these two cities is a very frustrating endeavor! See <http://www.bibleplaces.com/bethsaida.htm> or <http://www.bibleplaces.com/chorazin.htm>

2. To get a bit technical, the form of the verb used here is *engiken*, a perfect active indicative form. But it is also used intransitively so that it is simply describing the status of the kingdom as opposed to indicating where it is actually moving toward. This would cause any hearer to think to themselves that "this kingdom has come near to me," which is exactly the point. This demonstrates the genius of Jesus and John's use of language to make a big impact with few words.

3. Other important end-time texts that utilize *engizō* are Rom 13:12, Heb 10:25, James 4:8 and 5:8, and 1 Pet 4:7.

4. Of course, one of the Jehovah's Witnesses central tenets concerns the future millennial kingdom—a system with an uncanny resemblance to early Dispensational teaching. Could it be that C.T. Russell learned his basic reasoning techniques regarding biblical interpretation by simply paying attention to the Christian teaching he was hearing regarding the Second Coming? Indeed, his early influence by the Millerites is well-documented (see the wikipedia article about him).

5. Nietzsche's frustrations were with theologians who constantly based their reasoning on the logic of the texts of Scripture. His great project was to transform humanity by moving us to what he called a "Dionysian" context for truth-discovery. (Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, Walter Kaufmann, ed., The Portable Nietzsche, Penguin, 1982, p. 483.)

## New Covenant Eyes by Alan Bondar

...continued from page 7

that the hero is in order to be drawn to him. You experience *emotionally* what he experiences *literally*. And all this through a story that doesn't involve us.

God, of course, infinitely transcends a fictional hero. God isn't a fictional character—He is literally in our lives. He never makes mistakes. He's never trapped or coerced. He never struggles with ethical decisions. And we are the actual recipients of the end result of the story.

We have an emotional connection to God not simply because of the story, but because He has come to us and revealed to us that the story is true. Thus, the same God of the story speaks to us directly in

that He tells us who He is through the story. So we are not waiting for God to reveal or accomplish more of the story; we are reading the story because He has fully revealed Himself to us. Perhaps the greatest thing about the New Covenant is not that more awaits us but that all is given to us. What did Paul say would happen when Christ handed over the Kingdom to His Father? God would be *all in all* (1 Cor 15:28).

It would appear, then, that the goal of the whole story is that God would be all in all. If we have arrived at the *teleos*, the *goal* of the story, then all prophecy has been fulfilled. If it hasn't, then God is not yet all in all. But if He is, then the application of Scripture is not to discover more to come, but to understand the all in all of God.

I propose, then, that the question, "What part of the Bible does apply to us?" really isn't the question we need to answer. The actual, underlying question

being asked is, "Where does the Bible speak about us?" Thus, we come full circle to my first answer to the question: We need not look into the Scriptures to find something about us. Rather, we need to look into the Scriptures to grasp the all in all, namely, God Himself. He is the *teleos*. The *teleos* is not the future of humanity, or planet Earth, or the universe, or what's in it for me, unless what's in it for me is God.

Can we be content with a Bible that was written with one ultimate purpose in mind: To reveal God to be all in all? If so, then *everything* in Scripture applies. It would do no good for me to say, "This verse applies and this verse doesn't." In the end, it isn't about *which* verses apply—it is about *how* they apply. That, my friends, requires the wisdom and maturity that comes from reading the Bible through New Covenant eyes.

## Preterist 101

by Brian Martin

...continued from page 5

tribulation. Because Futurism holds to a more-or-less literal interpretation of the nature of Christ's return (world-wide cataclysmic events, every eye shall see Him), and those fulfillments have not been witnessed, they look for a future fulfillment. However, this creates difficulties with the timing statements (*soon, near, at hand*), which were written nearly two thousand years ago. One of the ways Futurism handles these time statements is by claiming that collectively they do not indicate the *nearness* of Christ's return, but rather the *certainty* of His return. The Second Coming is firmly set in prophetic stone and will certainly come to pass. Don Preston demonstrates the fallacy of this position by asking the question, "Does this mean that when something is prophesied as being *not* near, it is merely not *certain*?"

*I see Him, but not now;*

*I behold Him, but not near;*

*A Star shall come out of Jacob;*

*A Scepter shall rise out of Israel . . . .*  
(Num 24:17 NKJV)

Even if we were to allow the "certain" interpretation, there are some passages

which simply cannot be forced into that paradigm:

*For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. 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. (Matt 16:27-28 NKJV)*

At face value this passage clearly places the Second Coming within the lifetime of at least some of the disciples present when Christ spoke these words. However, a prior commitment to a "literal" understanding of Revelation's world-wide cataclysmic events precludes Christ from having returned during the first century. Therefore, some other fulfillment must be found; typically the transfiguration is offered.

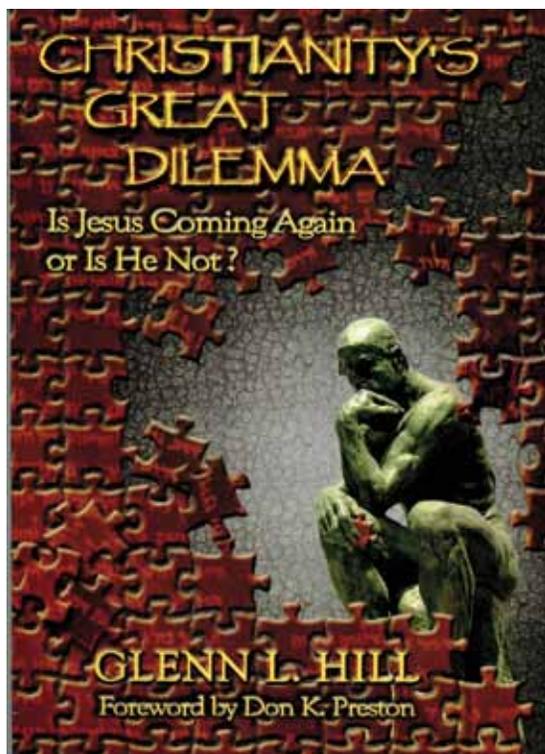
Another device often employed by Futurism is that of double fulfillment. Because the first-century fulfillments to Jesus and John's prophecies are too obvious to ignore, Futurism claims that those fulfillments were merely types, foreshadows, or partial fulfillments of what is yet to come. John MacArthur writes:

Furthermore, some of Jesus' words in the Olivet Discourse, like other prophetic passages in Scripture, appear to contain a kind of eschatological double entendre in which a prophecy

at first glance appears to be fulfilled or partially fulfilled by one event, but a closer look reveals that an even greater or more precise fulfillment lies further off in the future. (*The Second Coming*, 79)

The question may be rightly asked, "If there were first-century fulfillments, why must we look for additional fulfillments?" In the case of Futurism, a prior commitment to a literal interpretation of world-wide cataclysmic events necessitates a future fulfillment. Another problem with the double fulfillment/typological fulfillment scenario is that Paul wrote that his generation was not the *type* of a future generation, but the *antitype* (fulfillment) of previous Old Testament generations (1 Cor 10)! With all due respect to the many learned and scholarly Futurists, none of them are inspired—Paul was. Therefore, I must favor the New Testament generation as being the antitype of previous generations, not the type of a future generation.

While a first-century fulfillment of Christ's prophesied Second Coming certainly fits with the timing statements (*soon, near, at hand*), how does Preterism address the world-wide cataclysmic events and every eye shall see Him? We shall address these issues in future articles.



I heartily recommend Christianity's Great Dilemma to your attention. It is a clear, strong case for God's truth.

*Arthur Melanson*

Christianity's Great Dilemma is a yeoman's work and well worth a large readership. *Samuel G. Dawson*

Glenn invites the reader to share his journey in resolving Christianity's Great Dilemma. I encourage you to accept his invitation. *Brian L. Martin*

I highly recommend Glenn Hill's book to anyone that is willing to think, willing to re-think, willing to confront Christianity's Great Dilemma. You will be thrilled at the answers offered in this book. *Don K. Preston*

Contact Glenn Hill to order your copy of *Christianity's Great Dilemma* (\$12 plus \$3.31 S&H):

215 Melton Road  
Rocky Mount, NC 27801

Email: [glh@embarqmail.com](mailto:glh@embarqmail.com)  
Home phone: 252-442-7087  
Cell phone: 252-567-1654

## In This Issue:

Reading the  
Bible through  
New Covenant Eyes

False Christ's

Revelation's Time  
Statements

Preterism 101

Fulfilled Communications Group  
1620 Sequoia St.  
Napa, CA 94558-2320

## 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**  
Preterism  
Preterism

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