

Jason Bradfield on Luke 21:22

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Responding to the Critics: Jason Bradfield on Luke 21:22 Bradfield's "Reason" for Abandoning the Truth of Covenant Eschatology

Luke 21:22: “*These be the days of vengeance in which all things are written must be fulfilled.*”

JUST RECENTLY, THE ACERBIC Jason Bradfield, former preterist, gave his answer to a question posed to him by two individuals. The question was why he (Jason) had abandoned the full preterist paradigm.

Bradfield answered the question by making some serious charges, false charges, against preterists. (This is typical of Bradfield). He argues that what Jesus meant was that all prophecies of the fall of Jerusalem, and all of the attendant “particulars” would be fulfilled in AD 70.

He offers us this:

There are two immediate reasons why the hyperpreterist interpretation of defining the “particulars” of Lk 21.22 as referring to every single prophecy fails:

1. The immediate context of Lk 21.22 is clearly speaking of judgment on Israel. Therefore, the “particulars” in question are “all” of that which attends the judgment of Israel . . . nothing more. **In other words, “all things that are written” about Israel’s judgment is what will be “fulfilled.”** (My emphasis, DKP)

Bradfield also charges preterists with abusing the word “all”:

It is assumed, however, that the word “all” there means “everything without exception.” That’s not the meaning of the word “all.” “All” means “the sum total of a group of particulars.”

No doubt, Jesus said, “all things that are written . . .” But we must ask, “all things written about WHAT?” What particulars are in view?

Full preterists would have us believe that “all things that are written” refers to the

whole of Scripture! Now, is such an interpretation possible on literary grounds alone? Sure. It's possible. The word "all" can include the "particulars" of every single prophecy. But the context defines for us what "particulars" are in mind.

There are a couple of reasons why the full preterist interpretation of defining the "particulars" of Lk 21.22 as referring to every single prophecy fails:

1. The immediate context of Lk 21.22 is clearly speaking of judgment on Israel. Therefore, the "particulars" in question are "all" of that which attends the judgment of Israel . . . nothing more. In other words, "all things written" about Israel's judgment will be "fulfilled."

(Bradfield's second reason is just another misrepresentation of the facts, and would expand the scope of this article. For my full response to his second "reason" go to my website and [read my four-part series on Bradfield's claim](#)).

Of course, any honest and knowledgeable person who knows anything about what preterists actually teach, knows perfectly well that preterists fully understand that "all" is often delimited by the context, and does not always mean "all" in the comprehensive manner. Thus, Bradfield's "broad-brush fallacy" accusation is a blatant mischaracterization of preterists.

For brevity, I will focus only on Bradfield's claim that what Jesus meant in Luke 21:22 was that all things written concerning the fall of Jerusalem, along with all of the attendant "particulars" associated with that event, would be fulfilled in AD 70.

In a nutshell, here is Bradfield's argument:

Major premise: "All things written" would be fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Minor premise: But the "all things written" to be fulfilled refers only to all prophecies concerning the fall of Jerusalem, and all "particulars" surrounding that judgment (Bradfield).

Conclusion: Therefore, all things written concerning the fall of Jerusalem—and all "particulars" surrounding that judgment—would be (were) fulfilled in AD 70.

Note carefully: *I fully agree that what Jesus had in mind in Luke 21:22 is that all things concerning the judgment of Jerusalem, and all of the particulars associated with that judgment, were to be fulfilled in AD 70! But in acceding to this point, Bradfield has unwittingly surrendered his futurist eschatology.*

It is more than obvious to me that while Bradfield accuses preterists of being naive and superficial students of the Word, his own argument betrays a woeful lack of critical and exegetical study and skill. Why do I say that?

In my upcoming book, *These Be The Days of Vengeance in Which All Things Written Must Be Fulfilled*, I demonstrate that in both the Hebrew Old Testament and the New Covenant, the time of the judgment of Old Covenant Judah / Jerusalem was to be the time of the fulfillment of every major eschatological tenet! This undeniable connection—clearly something Bradfield knows nothing about—is a huge oversight among Bible commentators, which I will illustrate. But first, let me present my argument that I will proceed to vindicate:

Major Premise: All prophecies of the Fall of Jerusalem and the attendant particulars were fulfilled in the AD Destruction of Jerusalem (Jason Bradfield).

Minor Premise: But every eschatological tenet, e.g., the coming of the Lord, the judgment, the resurrection, the New Creation, is inseparably tied to the AD 70 judgment and destruction of Jerusalem.

Conclusion: Therefore, every eschatological tenet, e.g., the coming of the Lord, the judgment, the resurrection, the New Creation, was fulfilled in the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem.

[SideBar: It is worth noting that anti-preterist Kenneth Gentry has argued that what Jesus meant in Luke 21:22 is that *all* Old Testament prophecy would be fulfilled in AD 70—and yes, he does mean “all.” This admission totally destroys his futurist eschatology. See [my written response to his claim](#) on my website. In sum, to admit that all OT prophecy was to be finally fulfilled in AD 70 is to admit that Christ’s coming, the Judgment, the Resurrection, and the New Creation are all fulfilled! That is the full preterist view.]

I fully concur with Bradfield and Gentry that in Luke 21:22 Jesus had in mind all prophecies—particularly all Old Covenant prophecies—of the fall of Jerusalem and all attendant “particulars.”

But, there is one indisputable fact that Bradfield, and virtually all commentators, overlook—every eschatological tenet, the Lord’s coming, the Judgment, the kingdom, the resurrection, the New Creation, *is inseparably tied to the time of the judgment of Old Covenant Israel*.

This singular, irrefutable fact changes the entire field of the study of biblical eschatology, yet is seemingly unrecognized in the literature.

This changes everything!

I want to examine just two key Old Testament eschatological prophecies. We will establish that these texts are indeed messianic and eschatological prophecies, and we will show that they foretold the AD 70 judgment on Jerusalem. Of necessity, this discussion will be brief. In the aforementioned upcoming book, I go into detailed exegesis of many additional texts, all of which establish my point from just above.

Isaiah 24-27: The Little Apocalypse

These chapters in Isaiah are called *The Little Apocalypse*, or “Isaiah’s Apocalypse” by the scholars. This is seldom, if ever, denied. These chapters are so called because The New Testament writers (and Jesus) constantly allude to and cite them in their prophecies of the coming Day of the Lord, the Judgment, and the Resurrection. Isaiah 25 and 26, for instance, are one of Paul’s source prophecies for his discourse on the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15. (e.g., <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/little-apocalypse>).

Here are some “Bullet points” of what these chapters foretold:

- Destruction of “heaven and earth” (24:1-5, 19f).
- The establishment of the everlasting kingdom via the judgment (24:21f).
- The messianic “Resurrection” Banquet, established “in that day” on “Zion.”
- The Resurrection “in that day” of the establishment of the messianic Banquet (25:8).
- The Salvation of Israel “in that day” (25: 9-10).
- Once again, the resurrection in 26:19f. (Note that this resurrection is linked directly to the Great Tribulation in v. 16-18).
- The Lord’s coming out of heaven (v. 21).
- That coming would be to vindicate the shed blood of the martyrs.
- The destruction of Leviathan, i.e., the Great Serpent, the Devil.
- This victory would come in the day of God’s salvation of His “vineyard” i.e., Israel (v. 2f).
- Once again, the taking away of Israel’s sin (in “that day,” v. 9f).
- The Gathering of the “dead” from the four winds, at the sounding of the Great Trumpet (27:13).

As one can see, these chapters are saturated with Messianic and eschatological tenets. How do these chapters prove that Luke 21:22 anticipated the final, eschatological climax at the time of the judgment of Jerusalem?

Remember that Bradfield argues, as does Gentry, that what Jesus had in mind in Luke 21:22 is all prophecies pertaining to the judgment of Jerusalem and all their attendant “particulars.” With that in mind, let’s take a look at the attendant particulars that are tied to these eschatological tenets. We will take the elements above in their order.

It is important to take careful note that the Little Apocalypse is a unified discourse, tied together with the term “in that day.” That term ties all of the tenets listed above together as a united whole. Before proceeding, ask yourself the question, are the tenets listed above eschatological tenets? Who would deny that the coming of the Lord to rule in His kingdom, to destroy death, to establish the messianic Banquet, the Resurrection, the destruction of Leviathan / Satan, are in fact major tenets of the final consummation?

With that in mind, take note of Isaiah 27:9-13:

Therefore by this the iniquity of Jacob will be covered; And this is all the fruit of taking away his sin: When he makes all the stones of the altar Like chalkstones that are beaten to dust, Wooden images and incense altars shall not stand. Yet the fortified city will be desolate, The habitation forsaken and left like a wilderness; There the calf will feed, and there it will lie down And consume its branches. When its boughs are withered, they will be broken off; The women come and set them on fire. For it is a people of no understanding; Therefore He who made them will not have mercy on them, And He who formed them will show them no favor. And it shall come to pass in that day That the Lord will thresh, From the channel of the River to the Brook of Egypt; And you will be gathered one by one, . . . So it shall be in that day: The great trumpet will be blown; They will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, And they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, And shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

This text explicitly posits all of the eschatological “particulars” at the very time of the destruction of Jerusalem: “*WHEN he makes all the stones of the altar like chalkstones that are beaten to dust, wooden images and incense altars shall not stand. Yet the fortified city will be desolate.*”

The reason for this predicted judgment is a citation from the Song of Moses (Deut 32) which foretold Israel’s last days / last end (Deut 32:28): “*For it is a people of no understanding; Therefore He who made them will not have mercy on them, And He who formed them will show them no favor.*” (Keep in mind that Paul directly cites Isaiah 27 in his prophecy of the salvation of “all Israel” at the coming of the Lord in Romans 11:25-27. Thus, the eschatological content of Isaiah 27 is firmly established. Since Paul is citing from that context which so emphatically posits that salvation at the time of the judgment on Jerusalem, that demands that Paul was anticipating that judgment as well. See my book, *Elijah Has Come: A Solution to Romans 11:25-27* for further discussion).

We thus have an extended prophecy of the eschatological consummation, utilized by both Jesus and the New Testament writers, that explicitly and undeniably posits the fulfillment of all of those “particulars” at the time of the judgment of Jerusalem—“*When He makes all the stones of the altar Like chalkstones that are beaten to dust, Wooden images and incense altars shall not stand. Yet the fortified city will be desolate, The habitation forsaken and left like a wilderness*”!

Isaiah 65

For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem. (Is 65:17-19a)

In a survey of the commentaries in my Logos Bible Study program I did not find even one commentator who denied that this prophecy was the source of Peter's prediction of the coming New Creation. The same can be said of Revelation 21.

So, here we find the paradigmatic prophecy of the New Creation. What is so astounding is how all the commentators I've examined literally ignore the antecedent to the "for" that begins verse 17. That word "for" flows from the discussion of the previous verses; it is built on it. In other words, the promised New Creation would flow from what is described in the previous discussion. And what is that?

Therefore I will number you for the sword, And you shall all bow down to the slaughter; Because, when I called, you did not answer; When I spoke, you did not hear, But did evil before My eyes, And chose that in which I do not delight." Therefore thus says the Lord God: "Behold, My servants shall eat, But you shall be hungry; Behold, My servants shall drink, But you shall be thirsty; Behold, My servants shall rejoice, But you shall be ashamed; Behold, My servants shall sing for joy of heart, But you shall cry for sorrow of heart, And wail for grief of spirit. You shall leave your name as a curse to My chosen; For the Lord God will slay you, And call His servants by another name; So that he who blesses himself in the earth Shall bless himself in the God of truth; And he who swears in the earth Shall swear by the God of truth; Because the former troubles are forgotten, And because they are hidden from My eyes. (Isaiah 65:12-16)

Here we find the prediction of the destruction of the corporate body of Israel. In vv. 8f we find the prediction of the salvation of the remnant, which doctrine comprised such a vital part of Paul's message (Rom 8-11). Thus, Isaiah 65 foretold the salvation of the remnant *and the destruction of the corporate body of Israel*. That destruction then leads to, "*for behold, I create a New Heavens and New Earth*"! This is the promise of the destruction of one "world" and the creation of another world, with a New People, a New Name, in a New Heaven and New Earth and a New Jerusalem!

We thus have two facts presented: The judgment and destruction of the Old Creation, which included the Old Jerusalem, and the creation of a New Creation. (The promise of the New Jerusalem implies the destruction of the Old Jerusalem).

Notice again all of the (eschatological) "particulars" flowing out of the promise of that coming destruction:

- **A New People.**
- **A New Name**
- **The Salvation of the remnant**
- **New Heaven and Earth**
- **New Jerusalem**

To suggest that these are not eschatological tenets would be specious at best. We thus have, in this foundational, eschatological passage, a direct, inseparable connection between the judgment on Jerusalem and Israel, and crucial eschatological “particulars.”

Some (by far the minority and oft times critical scholars who reject inspiration) have argued that Isaiah was not, after all, predicting the eschatological consummation. Rather, he was predicting the judgment of Israel at the hands of the Babylonians and the ensuing return of Israel to the land. There are insurmountable problems with this view.

First, a New People was not created at the time of the Chaldean destruction.

Second, a New Name was not given to the remnant that returned. (The motif of the creation of a New People with a New Name is also found in Psalms 102 and Isaiah 49 & 62 and the New Testament cites these prophecies in their predictions of the last days consummation. E.g., Ps 102 / Heb 1; Is 49 / 2 Cor 6:1f; Is 62 / Matt 16:27f).

Third, a New Creation was not created during the return from Babylon. And there is something critical to note here. In the prediction of the coming of the New Creation, the Lord said, “*the former shall not be remembered*” (v. 17). The word “remembered” is from the Hebrew word *Zakar*, which is a word with incredible covenantal significance.

Commenting on the use of the word “remember” in Revelation (but with application also to its Hebraic roots), Jason Meyer writes, “‘Remember’ is a common term associated with covenants. It does not mean that God forgets and needs a reminder. The verb could be idiomatically rendered ‘to act in order to fulfill the covenantal oath or obligations’.” Jason Meyer, *The End of the Law, NAC Studies in Bible and Theology*, (Nashville, TN; B&H Academic, 2009), 245, n. 41). Note how, in Isaiah 65: 11 the Lord accused Israel: “*But you are those who forsake the Lord, Who forget My holy mountain,*” which means she was not obeying the covenant mandates for worshiping on Zion.

What this means is that in Isaiah 65, when the Lord said the former creation would no longer be *remembered*, it means that the Old Creation had a covenantal relationship with the Lord, but, when the New Creation came, that Old Covenant relationship would cease. This logically demands that we identify the Old Creation with Old Covenant Israel and her covenant “world” and not as the material, physical “heaven and earth.” It demands that the New Creation is *a New Covenant heaven and earth!* This is the very expression of “Covenant Eschatology.” Thus, just like Isaiah 24-25 foretold the destruction of the Old Covenant world of Israel, this chapter does the same. There is perfect harmony here.

Fourth, although the physical city of Jerusalem was rebuilt after the return from Babylon, we know the New Heaven and Earth cannot be referent to physical realities, and therefore should see the New Jerusalem likewise as a non-physical reality.

In fact, when we come to the subject of the New Jerusalem as found in the New Testament, we

are informed that it is a heavenly, not earthly reality Jerusalem. Galatians 4:22f (where the Old earthly Jerusalem was on the verge of being “cast out); Hebrews 12:21f; Hebrews 13:14; Revelation 21, etc., all powerfully attest to this truth. Furthermore, we are told that the earthly Jerusalem was no “abiding city,” but the eternal Heavenly Jerusalem / Zion was “about to come.” It was “at hand” and coming “soon,” “shortly,” and “quickly” in Revelation. Where do you suppose the New Testament writers got their concept of a New Jerusalem? Well, among many other texts, Isaiah 65 (not to mention chapter 66) was undeniably a foundational prophecy of that coming spiritual city.

So, once again, as a reminder, Isaiah 65 unequivocally foretold the destruction of Old Covenant Israel and Jerusalem. That was not a prophecy of the Chaldean destruction. Flowing directly out of that judgment and destruction is the New Creation, a New People, with a New Name. These elements are undeniably eschatological, and, to reiterate, they are inseparably tied to the judgment of Jerusalem and Israel.

Here is what this means:

Unless one can divorce those eschatological tenets from the predicted judgment of Jerusalem, it is undeniable that these eschatological “particulars” would be fulfilled at that judgment.

Unless one can prove definitively that Isaiah 65 was not a prediction of the AD 70 judgment, it means that all of those particulars were fulfilled in that judgment. Isaiah 65 is explicit: “*you will all bow down the slaughter.*”

If one posits the fulfillment of Isaiah 65 at a supposed “end of time,” that demands that Israel—Old Covenant Israel—will remain as God’s chosen, covenantal people until the end of time, because it is only at the destruction of the former covenantal creation that the New Creation arrives. Simply stated, Old Covenant Israel had to be destroyed to bring in the New Heavens and Earth.

It is universally admitted that *the resurrection brings in the New Creation*. Thus, since Isaiah 65 undeniably posits the New Creation at the time of the destruction of Old Covenant Israel, this means that the foundationally important doctrine of the resurrection was to be fulfilled at the time of the destruction of Old Covenant Israel.

So, let’s close with this summary:

Major premise: All prophecies of the Fall of Jerusalem and the attendant particulars were fulfilled in the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem (Jason Bradfield / Kenneth Gentry).

Minor premise: But, every eschatological particular, e.g. the coming of the Lord, the judgment, the salvation of Israel, (the remnant), the resurrection, the New Creation, is inseparably tied to the AD 70 judgment and destruction of Jerusalem (Isaiah 24-27 / Isaiah 65).

Conclusion: Therefore, every eschatological particular, e.g.—the coming of the Lord, the judgment, the salvation of Israel (the remnant), the resurrection, the New Creation—was fulfilled in the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem.

So, when Jason Bradfield, or Kenneth Gentry, or anyone else tries to escape the force and power of Luke 21:22, by claiming, as these men do, that all Jesus had in mind was **All prophecies of the Fall of Jerusalem and the attendant particulars** (Bradfield), or, “all Old Testament prophecy” (Gentry), *they have unwittingly admitted that full preterism is true*, since every eschatological “particular” is undeniably tied inseparably to the AD 70 judgment of Jerusalem. That covenantal judgment truly was, “*the days of vengeance when all things written must be (was) fulfilled.*”

Thus, the Objection is Overruled! ✝