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# FULFILLED! *Magazine*

EXPLORING AND PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF FULFILLED PROPHECY AND LIFE IN CHRIST

**The Texts of Time**





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## 4. Editor's Note

## 5. Mailbag

Catch some of the letters to the editor and comments on articles and features from the readers

## 6. Perspectives - Robert E. Cruickshank, Jr.

The Texts of Time

## 10. Perspectives - Adam Maarschalk

Jeremiah's Prophecy of a New Covenant to the House of Israel

## 13. Heal Our Hearts, Heal Our Land - Brian L. Martin

Nehemiah's Prayer

## 14. Objection Overruled! - Don K. Preston

Keith Mathison on Acts 1:9-11—Part 2

## 16. Parting Thoughts - TJ Smith

Interview with Pete & Rachael Wrue

## Reader Beware!

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## Editor's Note...

**WE WILL BE WELL** into the New Year by the time you read this. The days are growing longer, and Daylight Savings Time may have already taken place when you receive this issue—yay! I like the extra daylight in the evening. Can it really be 2024? That seems like the setting for a futuristic space saga, yet here it is! I remember Y2K, and here we are almost a quarter century later.

Ed Stevens is still on his hiatus for health reasons. The latest update he sent to those on his mailing list reported positive news and good progress. Please keep Ed and Beth in your prayers.

In this issue we have two “Perspectives” articles, one by Robert Cruickshank, Jr., addressing the never-ending stream of failed predictions for Christ’s return, and one by Adam Maarschalk detailing Jeremiah’s prophecy of a New Covenant for Israel.

Don Preston concludes his response to Keith Mathison’s article on Acts 1:9-11 about Christ’s ascension, and TJ Smith provides an interview with authors Pete and Rachel Wrue about their latest book, *End Times Explained: Understanding the Different Views*.

Nehemiah’s prayer is the focus of this issue’s “Heal Our World” installment. The need for healing in our world is becoming more and more evident. The turmoil in our world seems to be growing by the day, with multiple countries “saber rattling” and others forming alliances to strengthen their prospects for surviving potential active military action. And let’s not forget the tensions in our own country (for those readers who live in the USA). Regardless of who wins the 2024 Presidential election, the “other side” will surely have at the least a very vocal minority who will be angry at the outcome. May God pour out a spirit of peace upon our nation and our world. Our world is surely in need of His grace: “. . . but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more . . . (Rom 5:20).

The donations to “The Preterist Community” giving portal at Samaritan’s Purse have topped \$12,000! “The Preterist Community” team is one of the top giving teams listed on Samaritan’s Purse’s website. Not only does the team’s name expose others to the term “preterist,” perhaps leading to further investigation and Bible study, it also lets those who are familiar with preterism know that preterists care about more than debating the time texts. Many thanks to those who have contributed via this portal.

Thanks also to our faithful core of readers who support FCG financially—you make this magazine possible—and for those who send encouraging letters and emails. Please keep us in your prayers as we endeavor to serve the Kingdom in a Christ-honoring way.

Blessings,

*Brian*





# Mailbag...



Please keep us on the distribution list for your magazine. The articles are interesting and thought provoking—appreciate your hard work at putting all this information together and helping to spread God's word and the truth of Yeshua's return!



When I became a Christian following along with the other sheep, and believing everything the Church Leaders taught just didn't feel right to me. So I studied on my own which led me straight to Preterist teachings. Never looked back. Through my studies I learned about *Fulfilled*, just now getting around to subscribing. Thank you very much for all you do for "Biblical Truth."



I have so enjoyed reading the many articles and opinions of the authors and look forward to getting your newest magazine at your earliest convenience. Thank you and all of God's best for you in the New Year.



I would like to renew / continue my subscription to Fulfilled magazine. Thank you for the good content. I especially enjoyed T J Smith's article on Zionism. It's devastating effect on the church and our country has been undeniable to those who are willing to see it. But a wrong view of modern Israel and misinterpretation of a few key scriptures seem to be ingrained so deep it may take generations to undo.



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the authors ...





**I**F SOMETHING HAS WITHSTOOD the test of time, it has lasting value and there is an element of certainty to it. With regard to the predictions of the prophecy pundits, one thing is surely certain: none of them have ever been right. Ever. Their prophecies have not stood the test of time.

From Hal Lindsey to John Hagee, the success of their forecasts isn't even a maybe. To date, all pop-prophecy predictions have a 100% failure rate. There are no exceptions. The experts in the field have no fruit to yield. Perhaps the prophecy experts aren't withstanding the test of time because they're not understanding the texts of time? In other words, they don't have a clue as to the very Bible passages they thought they knew.

### The Crumbling Pillars of the Prophecy Thrillers

Craig C. White, the purveyor of the website [hightimetowake.com](http://hightimetowake.com),<sup>1</sup> is a good example of a prophecy “expert”—whose predictions have been left in the dirt. In his book, *Our Salvation is Nearer!: 4 pillars for understanding near time Bible prophecy*, White informs the reader:

“This book is filled with reports about the prophetic world events that signify the last days of the Church age. These events are happening now. The day of the Resurrection and Rapture of Church age believers in Jesus Christ is rapidly approaching. The countdown to the Rapture shouldn't be measured in years and years but the day of resurrection and the gathering together to meet Jesus Christ in the air should now be expected in months to perhaps a couple of years.”<sup>2</sup>

That book was written in 2016. It's almost 2024—8 years later. White's book was specifically about “near time” prophecies in the Bible. According to White, the Dispensational air show would be a go within a “couple of years” at most. Time's up, and his predictive skills are toast.

Technically speaking, the word “couple” means *two*.<sup>3</sup> This would make White a false prophet by the year 2018. But let's not be too hard on him. According to Dictionary.com, the word is “often used casually to mean much the same thing as a few, which commonly means around two, three, or four.”<sup>4</sup> So, does this get White off the hook? Let's look: 2016 + 4 (the largest number a “couple” might possibly mean) = 2020. Nope, he's still a false prophet. Luckily for White and his

crew, these aren't the times of the Old Testament Jews (Deut 18:20).

### Getting in Line with “The Time”

But why should a false prophet care about the meaning of a word like “couple,” or a Bible verse that might get him into trouble? The prophecy pundits seem to have no regard at all for the meaning of words or the context of Scripture. For instance, White's book opens with this verse:

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation **nearer** than when we believed” (Rom 13:11)

Under the citation of Romans 13:11, White begins the book with these words and calls our attention to the importance of knowing “the time”:

“The apostle Paul assumes that we know the time, or that we understand the season. If we do understand the season then we must stir from our spiritual sleep and become alert. We must be prepared for our salvation. In this verse salvation is not our spiritual rebirth but salvation is our physical resurrection, and gathering together to meet Jesus Christ. In this way we will escape the wrath that is to come upon the earth.”<sup>5</sup>

The problem is that Paul was speaking to people living almost 2000 years ago. White says that “Paul assumes that we know the time,” but “we” are not the people to whom Paul was writing. Having said that, however, it would indeed be helpful if we knew “the time” that Paul had in mind. To do

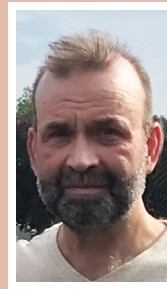




### The Texts of Time

**Robert E. Cruickshank, Jr.**

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that, we need to pay attention to the *words* that Paul was using.

#### Words Mean Things

*Near* is a word, and as the Rush Limbaugh Undeniable Truth of Life dictates: *words mean things*.<sup>6</sup> With that said, the word *near* means “nigh, close, or at hand.” In other words, the salvation of which Paul spoke was “nigh, close, or at hand” to him and his readers—almost 2000 years ago. Those people died a very long time ago. If that salvation still hasn’t arrived, it wasn’t “near” to the Roman believers in any sense of the word.

And this isn’t the only time-sensitive statement that Paul makes in Romans. In the very next verse, he says, “*The night is almost gone, and the day is near*” (Rom 13:12). Again, Paul uses the word “near.” Paul uses the same word in Philippians 2:30 when speaking of Epaphroditus who “*nearly died for the work of Christ*.” This doesn’t mean that death was a possibility for him 2000 years in the future. Epaphroditus was “risking his

life,” says Paul, and death was an immediate threat—a clear and present danger.

In Romans 16:20, Paul speaks of a clear and present danger to Satan, and he uses another word that means something: “*The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet*.” This is another text of time. The word *soon* means “quickly, hastily, speedily, immediately.”<sup>7</sup> Whatever Paul and the Romans were

anticipating, it was *near* and *soon* to them in their own time. Was Paul right or wrong, and why is it taking so long?

#### Do the Texts Pass the Inerrancy Test?

Commenting on these passages in Romans, along with Paul’s advice for believers to remain single because “the time has been shortened” (1 Cor 7:29), Christopher M. Hays writes:

“... had the Roman Christians known that they would not witness Satan’s overthrow before they all died, Paul’s promise would have proven a cold comfort ... “In brief, Paul’s exhortations in 1 Cor 7:29–31 and Rom 13:11–12, 16:20 invoke and indeed logically depend upon his assumption that Christ will return within the lifetimes of at least some of his contemporaries. But, to be frank, the terminology of soon, quickly, and near seems today to be impossible to reconcile with the fact that two thousand years have elapsed ... ‘Soon’ it was not.”<sup>8</sup>

Hays goes on to point out that “Paul was not the only New Testament author to be premature in promises of the world’s end; the book of Revelation seems to have been similarly embarrassed.”<sup>9</sup> Indeed, John used the same words as Paul, i.e., “soon” and “near,” when he penned the letters now known as the book of Revelation. John told the seven first-century churches of Asia minor that the events of his prophecy “must soon take place” (Rev 1:1) and that “the time is near” (Rev 1:3). In the spirit of C.S. Lewis,<sup>10</sup> Hays considers this to be *embarrassing* because he thinks John “promises of the world’s end” rather than promising Jerusalem’s end in AD 70.

When we understand these prophecies in their own context, however, there’s no reason for embarrassment. The time texts pass the inerrancy test. Everything came to pass just as Jesus and the Apostles had forecast. But the prophecy pundits need the prophecies to be about our world today; otherwise, they wouldn’t even be able to give their books away! There’s no money in that, so they run from the facts.

In an effort to keep doomsday up next, they redefine the time texts. With that said, it’s time to put their redefinition of time to the linguistic test. Believers should not be embarrassed by their Bible, but they should be embarrassed by the way in which the prophecy experts twist it to their own survival.

...continued on page 8



## Appropriateness of Time vs. Shortness of Time

According to *Revelation Logic—A Commentary on Revelation*,<sup>11</sup> “. . . the primary notion of ‘time’ conveyed by this word isn’t ‘elapsed time’ (as in relation to a clock or calendar), but rather it is “*appropriate time*” . . . This wording emphasizes the *appropriateness* of the time rather than the shortness of time. The time for these things to happen was appropriate when John wrote Revelation, and it is just as appropriate today.”<sup>12</sup>

To untoss this word salad, the author here is attempting to pit *appropriateness* of time over and against *shortness* of time. In other words, the time for these things to happen is always appropriate, but the time wasn’t really shortened when the

### The Texts of Time

Robert E. Cruickshank

. . . continued from page 7

authors of the Bible wrote it.

But Paul himself says, “*the time has been shortened*” (1 Cor 7:29a). As such, he advocates singleness and celibacy (1 Cor 7:25-28). He says, “*those who have wives should be as those who have none*” (1 Cor 7:29b). Not only is it incongruent to contrast the New Testament’s nearness of time with appropriateness of time, but one must wonder why the pundits aren’t advocating celibacy for believers nowadays. After all, these passages are “just as appropriate today,” according to them. Paul’s understanding of *near* seems clear, and if the end is still near today, believers should be living a whole different way.

## Temporal Nearness vs. Spatial Nearness

Another attempt to deal with the New Testament nearness of the Lord’s coming is to say that the word “near”<sup>13</sup> is *spatial* in nature rather than *temporal*. In other words, *near* is not really a time word at all. Examples are given, such as Luke 19:11 which says that Jesus was “*near to Jerusalem*,” and John 3:23 which says that John “*was baptizing at Aenon near Salim*.” When applied to the prophetic passages, the argument boils down to the idea that the prophesied events are always “spatially near”—or always imminent and ready to appear.

Supposedly, the end times show is on the slate, but the apocalyptic horsemen can’t get their horses out of the gate. They are spatially near the starting line, but temporally lagging behind. This is similar to the explanation before, only it makes your head hurt even more.

Fortunately, responding to this convolution is less difficult than trying to follow it in the first place. Of course, the word can be used in spatial terms, but this doesn’t negate the fact that it can also be used in temporal terms. In Mark 13:28, “*summer is near*,” and in John 6:4 “*the Passover was near*.” This is no different than how we use the word “near” today. For example, “I’m near the store to

buy presents because Christmas is near.” In this sentence, the first “near” is spatial and the second “near” is temporal. One nuance of the word doesn’t exclude the other, and the context determines its connotation in each case. As Ken Gentry writes:

“The various samples of *eggus* in the New Testament all agree: some relating spatial, others temporal nearness (Mt 24:32, 33; 26:18; 13:28, 29; Lk 19:11; 21:30, 31) . . . Perhaps the most interesting proof of the meaning of these terms is the various competing, innovative, counter-intuitive attempts to get around their obvious significance! Indeed, if these terms do not express temporal nearness, what terms could John have used to do so?”<sup>14</sup>

## It Was the Time to Hear That Was Near

Gentry’s characterization of these approaches as “innovative” is fitting, as each new attempt gets increasingly more imaginative than the previous. A particularly inventive way to get around John’s use of the word “near” in Revelation 1:3 is the argument that it was not the events of the prophecy itself to which John was referring. Rather, it was the time to read the prophecy and hear its words that was “near.” As one writer puts it, “The place in time is now, or here right now to read the words, to hear the message and to keep what is in it. This does not imply ‘soon’ is the time these events are going to happen . . .”<sup>15</sup>

According to this approach, John is writing to seven first-century churches, and he’s telling them to hurry up and read about these things that have nothing whatsoever to do with them or their current situation. So, you have to ask: what would even be the point of reading it in the first place? Why would it be so urgent and so necessary that they immediately know about things that aren’t even going to happen for another 2,000 years or more? More to the point, why would they even care?

For most people reading words like “soon” and “near,” the meaning is obvious and clear. And the bizarre attempts to explain away what is plain as day are eccentric and strange—almost like a carnival. In fact, one writer goes so far as to say that we should “think of a carnival” when we read the New Testament’s time statements!

## The Carnival Approach

By far, the most creative approach comes from a writer who concedes that Revelation 1:3 and 22:10 “are like bookends enclosing the whole prophecy of Revelation. The fulfillment of everything, not just a part, is near.”<sup>16</sup> While this is certainly true, it puts the screws to his view. “The assertion of nearness,” he says, “might seem to be in tension with the arguments in favor of futurism.”<sup>17</sup> He considers the problem to be “so vexing that it deserves separate attention.”<sup>18</sup> His solution? “Think of a carnival.”<sup>19</sup> He writes:

“People using a sledgehammer try to propel a weight up to hit the bell at the top. The rising of the weight is like the rising of . . . persecution and antichrist activity.



The weight gets near to the top, that is, near to the Second Coming. It may rise and fall several times before someone finally succeeds in ringing the bell. Likewise, there may be many crises before the end, and each is nearer to the Second Coming.”<sup>20</sup>

While this is clever and ingenious, it's doubtful that John's original readers would have thought of a "carnival" when he told them the time is "near." More to the point, this just isn't how this word is used. When John said that "the Passover was near" (John 2:13), he obviously didn't mean every generation gets nearer and nearer to the Passover as time goes on. He meant that the Passover was right around the corner. In like manner, Christ's coming was right around the corner.

The efforts to evade this by parsing appropriate time with shortened time, temporal nearness with spatial nearness, time to hear versus the events being near, and a carnival goer swinging a sledgehammer, make little sense and amount to nonsense.

### The Consequence of the Nonsense

The bottom line is that the time texts mean what they say, and these texts have nothing to do with us today. There is no inevitable tribulation or world dictator on the horizon threatening our future. This is not to say that such threats might not come, but it is to say that those possible horrors would have nothing to do with Bible prophecy. Ironically, they would have everything to do with believers continuing to misunderstand Bible prophecy.

Rather than being the salt and light that God has called us to be in this world and working for cultural change in every area of life, Dispensationalism conditions Christians to think that the cultural decline is an irreversible sign. And the leaders of the movement parade themselves as in touch with the divine.

Case in point: in a recent video, popular prophecy pundit, Pastor Mark Driscoll, pauses in the middle of his sermon and goes into a seemingly trance-induced state. He closes his eyes as if he is suddenly receiving a psychic premonition or a word from the Lord, and then he opens them with a crazed look on his face. With a shout, he declares: "The world looks. I just feel inclined to say this. IT'S GETTING WORSE! HE'S GETTING CLOSER!!"<sup>21</sup> The audience eats it up. This is what they came for, and Driscoll just keeps giving them more.

And this is why we fail. If "getting worse" = "He's getting closer," why work to try and make things better? For the purveyors of pop-prophecy, the "world events" that "are happening now" signify "the last days," as Craig C. White says in his book. For White, Driscoll, and all those who follow them, bad news is good news!

As White joyfully tells his readers, the "day of the Resurrection and Rapture" is "rapidly approaching" and the "countdown to the Rapture" has begun. As with all the failed and false prophets who've gone before, their predictions will fall flat on the floor. In the meantime, time will march on, and future generations will continue to suffer the consequences of our complacency until we get this right. The prophetic soothsayers won't stand the test of time because they don't understand the texts of time. ✝

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1. <https://hightimetoawake.com/>
  2. White, Craig C.. Our Salvation is Nearer!: 4 pillars for understanding near time Bible prophecy (High Time to Awake Book 13) . High Time to Awake. Kindle Edition.
  3. <https://www.dictionary.com/e/few-vs-couple-vs-several/>
  4. Ibid.
  5. White, Ibid.
  6. <https://www.rushlimbaugh.com/daily/2021/04/21/undeniable-truth-of-life-words-mean-things/>
  7. The word in the Greek is τᾶχος (tachos).
  8. Ibid. Christopher M. Hays, When the Son of Man Didn't Come: A Constructive Proposal on the Delay of the Parousia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2016), p. 35.
  9. Ibid.
  10. <https://merecslewis.blogspot.com/2014/01/the-most-embarrassing-verse-in-bible.html>
  11. <https://revelationlogic.com/>
  12. <https://revelationlogic.com/articles/what-does-soon-mean/>
  13. GK: ἐγγύς <engus> and its cognates
  14. <https://postmillennialworldview.com/2022/10/18/the-key-key-to-revelation/>
  15. Whitsett M.Div. Th.M., Rev. Stephen. The Cold Case Against Full Preterism: AKA Realized Eschatology (p. 55). Kindle Edition.
  16. <https://frame-poythress.org/ebooks/the-returning-king/>
  17. Ibid.
  18. Ibid.
  19. Ibid.
  20. Ibid.
  21. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yTDWFBcHb8> ; 1:03:52 – 1:04:04.

# Perspectives

## Jeremiah's Prophecy of a

**JEREMIAH, A PROPHET OF** Judah before and during the Babylonian exile (586 – 538 BC), delivered a key promise to the house of Israel and the house of Judah, a promise of coming days when God would establish a new covenant:

*“Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more” (Jeremiah 31:31-34).*

In this promise of a new covenant, we see the following elements:

**Participants in this covenant:** [1] God [2] the house of Israel, and the house of Judah. [The houses of Israel and Judah were separated soon after Solomon's death around 975 BC. The Assyrians captured Israel (the northern kingdom) in 722 BC, and Babylon would defeat Judah and Jerusalem in 586 BC.]

**Nature of this covenant:** Not according to the covenant made at Mount Sinai, which was broken by the house of Israel

**Features of this covenant:** [1] God's laws in their hearts and minds [2] The house of Israel is God's people, and He is their God [3] Everyone in the house of Israel will know the Lord, from the least to the greatest [4] God will forgive their sins and remember them no more.

Has Jeremiah's prophecy come true? Has a new covenant been established with the house of Israel? Some insist that the answer to these questions is “no”:

[1] “This covenant must follow the return of Christ at the second advent... This covenant will be realized in the millennial age... the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 must and can be fulfilled only by the nation Israel and not by the Church” (Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 1958).

[2] “...the new covenant is with Israel and the fulfillment [will be] in the millennial kingdom after the second coming of Christ... the new covenant as revealed in the Old Testament concerns Israel and requires fulfillment in the millennium kingdom” (John F. Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom*, 1959).

[3] “The Church, then, is not under the new covenant...it is Israel which is God's covenant people” (Harry Ironside, *Notes on the Prophecy of and Lamentations of Jeremiah*, 1906).

Those who believe this way apparently insist that we identify “the house of Israel,” even now, as national Israel. This assumption acts as a powerful filter against the idea that the new covenant has already been established:

- It matters not that Jesus explicitly said His blood was to be poured out in order to give birth to the new covenant, “made with many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matthew 26:28), the very purpose for which Jeremiah said it was designed.
- It matters not that Paul said he and his co-workers in the gospel were “ministers of the new covenant,” which he likened to “the ministry of the Spirit” and “the ministry of righteousness.” Paul's ministry excelled the “ministry of death, written and engraved on stones” and **ready to pass away** (2 Cor 3:5-11).
- It matters not that Paul gave an “analogy of two covenants,” one represented by Mount Sinai (the birthplace of the old covenant), a woman in bondage, and earthly Jerusalem, which was **about to be cast out**; and the other covenant representing the “Jerusalem above,” which is free and “the mother of us all” (Gal 4:21-31).
- It matters not that the author of Hebrews states that Jesus “has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of **a better covenant, which was established on better promises**” (Hebrews 8:6).





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- It matters not that the author of Hebrews immediately goes on to quote from Jeremiah's prophecy and explicitly states (Heb 8:6-13) that this New Covenant had been established in his own time (i.e. the first century AD), even as the first covenant had been made obsolete and was **ready to vanish away**.
- It matters not that Hebrews 12:22-24 says that the church had already *"come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem . . . to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel."*



- It matters not that "the New Testament" is named as such due to its unveiling of God's new covenant.

One of the many cures for this hangup can be found in Paul's epistle to the Ephesians. Notice the vocabulary that Paul uses in the following passage (Eph 2:11-22):

*Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants*

*of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in His flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that He might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In Him*

*you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.*

There are plenty of gems worth unpacking in this beautiful passage, but I've highlighted two sections to examine (verses 12 and 19-21), as well as three phrases which I believe relate to Jeremiah's prophecy:

- *"the commonwealth of Israel"*
- *"the household of God"*
- *"a dwelling place for God"*

#### The Commonwealth of Israel

In verse 11 Paul specifically addresses Gentile believers, i.e. non-Jewish followers of Christ. He reminds them (verse 12) that, just as they were previously separated from Christ, they were also previously *"alienated from the commonwealth of Israel."* By speaking this way, Paul indicates that now that the Gentile believers are "in Christ" they now also belong to the commonwealth of Israel. This expression, *"commonwealth of Israel,"* appears to mirror the expression, *"the house of Israel,"* used in Jeremiah 31 and throughout the Old Testament. The Strong's Concordance entry for the Greek word translated as *"commonwealth"* (#4174) is defined as "citizenship; a community."

Paul also reminds these Gentile believers that they were once *"strangers to the covenants of promise."* Again, by speaking this way, Paul indicates they are now recipients of *"the covenants of promise"* made to Israel. Paul made a similar point in his epistle to the Galatians, when he declared that all the promises were made to Abraham and his offspring, i.e. Christ alone (Gal 3:16). He then added that those who belong to Christ—regardless of ethnicity, gender, or status (Gal 3:28)—are heirs of those promises (Gal 3:29). We, as followers of Jesus, have received *"the covenants of promise"* because they were made to Jesus, who is true Israel.

#### The Household of God

In verse 19, Paul refers to the Church as *"the household of God,"* very similar to the way he calls the Church *"the household of faith"* in Galatians 6:10. Again, it seems these titles are parallel to the title, *"the house of Israel,"* used since the days of Moses. The following is a sample of texts where this title occurs (notice the progression toward unfaithfulness and a state of being lost):

...continued on page 12

*“And **the house of Israel** called its name Manna. And it was like white coriander seed, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey” (Exod 16:31).*

*“For the cloud of the Lord was above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all **the house of Israel**, throughout all their journeys” (Exod 40:38).*

*“So the Lord gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it . . . Not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to **the house of Israel**. All came to pass” (Josh 21:43-45).*

## New Covenant

Adam Maarschalk

. . . continued from page 11

*“For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is **the house of Israel**, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help” (Isa 5:7).*

*“I have seen a horrible thing in **the house of Israel**: There is the harlotry of Ephraim; Israel is defiled” (Hosea 6:10).*

*“But go rather to the lost sheep of **the house of Israel**” (Matt 10:6).*

*“But He answered and said, ‘I was not sent except to the lost sheep of **the house of***

***Israel**’” (Matt 15:24).*

*“Therefore let all **the house of Israel** know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36).*

In Ephesians 2:20-22, Paul goes on to define “the household of God” as “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,” with Jesus as the cornerstone. Everyone, joined together, “grows into a holy temple in the Lord.” This is significant. **Jeremiah prophesied that a new covenant would be made with the house of Israel.** Here we see that the household of God, in Jesus, was built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Recall that Paul said he and his co-workers were “ministers of the new covenant” (2 Cor 3:5). Since Paul was a minister of the new covenant, this was also true of Peter, John, James, and the other apostles. **The household of God, with Jesus as the cornerstone, has been built on the foundation of apostles who were ministers of the new covenant. This is nothing less than Jeremiah’s prophecy unveiled as a reality in the first century.**

### A Dwelling Place for God

Paul says something else very profound to the believers in Ephesus: “In Him you also are being built together into **a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.**” Paul’s words very clearly echo a common and central theme in the Old Testament, where God repeatedly stated that He had chosen Israel, Jerusalem, and the temple as His dwelling place. Consider the following sample of texts:

*“You will bring them in and plant them In the mountain of Your inheritance, In the place, O Lord, which You have made **for Your own dwelling**, the sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established” (Exod 15:17).*

*“But you shall seek the place where the Lord your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name **for His dwelling place**; and there you shall go” (Deut 12:5).*

*“In Jerusalem also is His tabernacle, and **His dwelling place** in Zion” (Psalm 76:2).*

*“For the Lord has chosen Zion; He has desired it for **His dwelling place**” (Psalm 132:13).*

At the same time, God’s dwelling place was in heaven (e.g., 1 Kings 8:30, 39, 43, 49).

By the time John wrote the book of Revelation in the first century, we see a tragic picture of what had become of His former dwelling place, through John’s description of “Babylon the great.” Also known as “the great city” (see Rev 14:8 and 17:18) and “the harlot” (see Rev 17:1-6), “Babylon the great” was first identified in Revelation 11:8 as “the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.” This is a clear reference to Jerusalem, the place of Jesus’ crucifixion. As we saw in the section above, Hosea called Israel a harlot in his day as well (Hosea 6:10). John invokes the names of two of Israel’s oldest enemies, Sodom and Egypt, and uses them to describe first century Jerusalem. Now, instead of being God’s dwelling place, a terrible thing had happened. Observe what God said had happened to His former dwelling place:

*“And [the angel] cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become **a dwelling place of demons**, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!” (Rev 18:2; see our study on Revelation 18:1)*



Had God lost His earthly dwelling place then? Not at all. He dwells with (and in) those who belong to His Son:

*“Then I, John, saw **the holy city, New Jerusalem**, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, **the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them**, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God’” (Rev 21:2-3; see part 1<sup>2</sup> and part 2<sup>3</sup> of our study on Rev 21).*

In her last days before judgment, Jerusalem was given over to demons, but since the time of Christ, God dwells in “the holy city, New Jerusalem.” We, the church, are that city: “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden” (Matt 5:14). Is this promise from Revelation 21 awaiting future fulfillment? The author of Hebrews didn’t believe so when he told his first century audience that they had already “come to Mount Zion **and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem . . . to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling . . .**” (Heb 12:22-24). The apostle Paul also didn’t believe so when he quoted Exodus 29:45, Leviticus 26:11, and Ezekiel 37:27 as a present reality for the Church in his own day:

*“For **you are the temple of the living God**. As God has said: ‘**I will dwell in them** and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people’” (2 Cor 6:16).*

Here, and also in Revelation 21, we see one of the features of Jeremiah’s prophecy of a new covenant for the house of Israel: “I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Jer 31:33). Consider also this description of the church by Peter:

*“Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up **a spiritual house**, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:4-5).*

The conclusion is simple. Jeremiah laid out certain things that would be true of the house of Israel when God made a new covenant with that house. Paul, John, and Peter said these things were true of the church, the bride of Christ, in their day. Therefore, the church is the house of Israel, and God has made His new covenant with us. Let us rejoice in this truth, and not allow anyone to try to steal this birthright from the people of God who are in Christ. ✚

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1. <https://adammaarschalk.com/2010/01/18/revelation-18/>
  2. <https://adammaarschalk.com/2010/04/19/revelation-chapter-21-part-1-verses-1-4/>
  3. <https://adammaarschalk.com/2010/04/27/revelation-chapter-21-part-2-verses-5-27/>

## *Heal Our Hearts, Heal Our Land, Heal Our World*

*by Brian L. Martin*

I believe that the following prayer of Nehemiah can be easily adapted as our prayer of confession before God of the sins of the Church and supplication for His mercy during times of political upheaval.

*“O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Even I and my father’s house have sinned. We have acted very corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules that you commanded your servant Moses. Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples, but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place that I have chosen, to make my name dwell there.’ They are your servants and your people, whom you have redeemed by your great power and by your strong hand. O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.” (Neh 1:5–11. ESV)*

This is the conclusion of a two-part response to Keith Mathison's article on Acts 1:9-11. In our previous article we demonstrated that Mathison's connection of Acts 1:9-11 with Daniel 7:13-14 further corroborates Jesus' coming declared by the angels in Acts 1 as being fulfilled in the days of Daniel's fourth empire, i.e., Rome. We also explored the connections between the themes of the Second Exodus, the outpouring of the Spirit, and God's witnesses in Isaiah and Acts. We then began examining from New Testament passages that what the disciples were witnessing to was Christ's deity. That is where we will pick up in this article, repeating the last few paragraphs for context.

**T**AKE A LOOK AT 1 Timothy 1:17: "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."

There is a great deal of controversy about who Paul was calling, "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever." Was he speaking of the Father or the Son?<sup>1</sup> Perhaps such questions are out of order.

**Is Jesus not King?**

**Is Jesus not eternal?**

**Is Jesus not immortal?**

**Is Jesus not wise?**

**Is Jesus not worthy of honor and glory for ever and ever?**

Objection is immediately raised by those who insist on an end of time physical return of Christ as a man riding on a cloud, that Paul could not refer to Jesus as "invisible." But this objection assumes a great deal and, I suggest, ignores the proper answers to the questions above. If Paul was in fact speaking of Jesus in this text, then he was indeed affirming that he is invisible. We have to keep in mind Jesus' own words in John 5:22-23:

*For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him [My emphasis].*

Notice carefully that Jesus said the Father had given all judgment authority to Him, that he would judge as He had seen the Father judge, and that the reason and purpose of that was so that "all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father." This is a stunningly powerful, Christological claim. As we have seen, it echoes the statements from the Tanakh in which the Father sovereignly acted in judgment, "so that they may know that I am God." Thus, Jesus was affirming that His judgment actions were to cause men to recognize and honor Him just as they honor the Father, in recognition that He is God. And when we look closer at what Paul says later in this epistle, we find confirmation:

*He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. (1 Tim 6:15-16)*

Note that the apostle says: "He [Jesus, DKP] will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate . . ." Once again, there is a lot of controversy about this. Was Paul saying that at His *epiphany*, Jesus would reveal the Father as the one true God, the King of kings? Or was He saying, as do Matthew 16:27-28 & 24:30, that His parousia would reveal that HE is truly God? (Paul is not affirming that Jesus is the Father, or that the Father is Jesus. He was affirming, in essence that just as Jesus prayed: "And now, Father, glorify me with the glory that I had with you before the foundation of the world" (John 17:5<sup>2</sup> ). Jesus' parousia would reveal that He

was now fully One with the Father (1 Cor 15:28). As we will see below, it was the Lord Jesus who was to be revealed as King of kings and Lord of lords. Jesus was not to return to manifest that the Father is Lord, but that HE is King of kings!

**Titus 2:12-13:**

*Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly,*

*righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.*

In the Greek, "the great God and savior" are both governed by the same article. According to the Granville Sharp Rule of grammar<sup>3</sup> this means that, "they therefore refer to the same person." In other words, Paul was affirming, very powerfully, that at His *epiphany*, Jesus would be revealed as God. Unfortunately, some translations somewhat mute this point.

The majority of translations render this to have Paul say they were looking for the "glorious appearing of our Great God and Savior Jesus Christ."<sup>4</sup> This means Paul was identifying Jesus as "the great God"<sup>5</sup> who was to be manifested at the parousia. So, as the "great God" who was to "appear," as He

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.



### Keith Mathison on Acts 1:9-11 - Part 2

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Himself said, “in the glory of the Father” (Matt 16:27) and be manifested as God through the events of the judgment on Jerusalem (Matt 24:30), are we to seriously suppose that Paul—or the angel in Acts 1—had in mind Jesus reappearing as a man, in the body that was “made a little lower than the angels”? How would such an appearing manifest him as “the Great God”? Jesus was very clear that it was His coming in judgment as the Father had come many times that was the manifestation of His Deity, not His physical body.

To put this another way, when attention is focused on the “tissue issue” of the physical body of Jesus in the term “in like manner” this is a diversion to the key point: Jesus enthroned in the heavens. The promise of His return was the promise that He would “come” as the Father had come, to judge as the Father had judged, to be revealed as King of kings and Lord of lords. The nature of the body of Jesus is not the focus, just as the nature of the “form of God” was never the focus in the many Days of the Lord in the Tanakh. The revelation of Jesus as God is the focus.

#### Revelation 1:12-16

*Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands 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 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.*

A great deal could be said of this passage but since I want to look at Revelation 19, I will forego a lengthy discussion of this text.

John’s vision of Christ certainly raises questions about the nature of “in like manner” of Acts 1, since John is seeing the vision of Christ on the Day of the Lord (1:10).<sup>6</sup> It is clear that he is seeing Jesus as “one like the Son of Man,” a direct echo of Daniel 7:13f. Is the description of Jesus given by John a description of Jesus in his “body of flesh and blood,” fitting the traditional claims about Acts 1, or is the description radically different from that? Was he seeing Jesus manifested as God, or as man? The identity that Jesus Himself gave is definitive: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

These terms are taken directly from the Tanakh and the self-descriptions of the Father (Isaiah 43-46). Again, Jesus is not claiming to be the Father, but *to be one with the Father*).

#### Revelation 19:11-16

*Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.***

Remember, Paul said in his epistle to Timothy (a text normally assigned to the “end of time”) that at His epiphany, Jesus would show who is King of kings and Lord of lords. Here, in Revelation, it is Jesus being manifested as King of kings! And that Revelation / epiphany is at the judgment of Babylon, the city “where the Lord was crucified” (Rev 11:8).

Revelation 19 is an expanded look at Revelation 1:12-16. This passage elucidates Matthew 16:27f / Matthew 24:30 / 1 Timothy 6. It is Christ coming in judgment, manifested as the “first and the last,” “the pantokrator” (the Almighty of chapter 1), the Alpha and Omega, i.e., “the beginning and the end”—the King of kings! It is safe to say that this vision of Christ’s return bears no visual similarity to Mathison’s proposed meaning of “in like manner.”

All of the evidence adduced above proves that Christ’s parousia was not to manifest Him again as a biological man. His Incarnation proved that “God became flesh and dwelt among men.” It proved that He truly was God in the flesh. His parousia on the other hand, was to reveal Him, not as a man, but as God. This understanding, it seems to me, forces us to re-examine the presuppositions underlying “in like manner” as proposed by Mathison and the traditional church.

Let me pose what I think is a severe problem for the traditional view of “in like manner.” Jesus’ post-resurrection, pre-Ascension body was not his immortal, incorruptible, transformed and glorified body (i.e. it was patently not identical to his Transfiguration vision or that in Revelation

...continued on page 16

1 & 19). This is, of course, controversial, but I think demonstrably true.<sup>8</sup> Jesus ate and drank, (he was hungry!), He still possessed His cross wounds, He challenged Thomas to touch Him to prove that He was not a spirit, etc., all of which support my claim. With this in mind, then, do the proponents of the “*in like manner*” term, meaning in the same body as you see him going, accept the idea that Jesus must come back in a mortal, untransformed physical body? No, they do not. Yet they insist that “*in like manner*” demands in the same body that you have seen taken from you. Thus,

## Objection Overruled!

Don K. Preston

... continued from page 15

for the traditional view to be sustained it must be proven beyond any doubt that Jesus' post-resurrection, pre-Ascension body was in fact His transformed, immortal, incorruptible body, but for that, there is no evidence.

To buttress what I have presented, let me focus now on an aspect of Acts 1 that some preterists have noticed (e.g., Ed Stevens<sup>9</sup>) that Mathison mentions but rejects, and that is, Luke tell us, “a cloud received him out of their sight.” This a theologically charged observation that no Jew of the time would have missed.

To those immersed in a literalistic paradigm and hermeneutic, the term “cloud” demands, well, a literal cumulus cloud. (I am not denying that there were literal clouds in Acts 1). But such an approach overlooks how incredibly significant the concept of coming on the clouds was to the ancient Jewish mind set. There were several concepts linked with riding on the clouds:

### Psalm 18:9-12

*He bowed the heavens also, and came down With darkness under His feet. And He rode upon a cherub, and flew; He flew upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness His secret place; His canopy around Him was dark waters And thick clouds of the skies. From the brightness before Him, His thick clouds passed with hailstones and coals of fire.*

### Psalm 68:1-4

*Let God arise, Let His enemies be scattered; Let those also who hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, So drive them away; As wax melts before the fire, So let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad; Let them rejoice before God; Yes, let them rejoice exceedingly. Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Extol Him who rides on the clouds, By His name YAH, And rejoice before Him.*

### Psalm 104:1-4

*Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, You are very great: You are clothed with honor and majesty, Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain. He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters, Who makes the clouds His chariot, Who walks on the wings of the wind, Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire.*

### Daniel 7:13-14

*I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.*

So, *God rode on the clouds*. In these passages, the Lord's riding on the clouds not only conveyed the idea of His majesty and Deity, but *His coming in judgment*. That is, of course, one of the constituent elements of his coming “*in like manner*,” is it not? Does anyone deny that the “*in like manner*” coming promise of Acts 1 is linked with his judgement of the “living and the dead”? As Kenneth Gentry notes:

In the Old Testament, clouds are frequently employed as symbols of divine wrath and judgment. Often God is seen as surrounded with foreboding clouds which express His unapproachable holiness and righteousness. Thus, God is poetically portrayed in certain judgment scenes as coming in the clouds to wreak historical vengeance upon His enemies.<sup>10</sup>

One has the right to ask, since the standard, normal use of “*coming on the clouds*” was never a reference to a literal, visible, descent of God out of heaven on literal clouds, but rather an “*exhibition*” of His Deity, how is it justified to claim that when we come to the New Testament, and specifically in Acts 1, we must think of literal clouds, a visible coming of the Lord for Him to be manifested as a man? Take a look at some key New Testament prophecies of Christ coming on the clouds:

### Matthew 24:30 / Luke 21:27

*They shall see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*

Mathison and the majority of partial preterists agree that these texts do not speak of a literal coming of Christ on cumulus clouds. Rather, it is admitted that the visual events of the fall of Jerusalem would prove that Christ was enthroned in the heavens, acting with the judgment prerogative vested in Him by the Father—to prove that He is worthy of praise just as the Father is worthy.<sup>11</sup>

### Matthew 26:64

*Jesus said to him, 'It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.'*

Generally speaking, partial preterists, including Mathison, (2009, 382) do not see here a prediction of a future physical end of time coming of Christ.

### 1 Thessalonians 4:17

*Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

Notice the emphatic, three-fold use of the term *Lord* in Paul's prediction as he discussed the Lord's coming in the clouds. In the Tanakh, “*Lord*” (Heb. *adon*) was the most common word to describe YHVH. Thus, once again, the



cloud coming is associated with the Deity of Christ, not His physical body. Needless to say, this has profound implications since the vast majority of commentators believe that Acts 1 and 1 Thessalonians 4 speak of the same parousia of Christ. (Mathison posits Matthew 24:29-31 as referent to AD 70. He fails to note that every constituent element of the discourse is found in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, which Mathison claims is an “end of time” event! Thus, we have two texts, using the same language, the same constituent elements, containing the same temporal context, yet Mathison applies them to two radically different times and events).

#### Revelation 1:7-8

*Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.*

As he does with Matthew 24 / Matthew 26, Mathison posits Revelation 1:7-8 as a prediction of Christ’s coming in AD 70.

#### Revelation 14:14-16

*Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, “Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” So, He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.*

Strangely, after positing the coming of Christ on the clouds in Revelation 1:7 as AD 70, Mathison then claims that the coming of the Lord on the clouds in chapter 19—in the judgment of Babylon—is referent to His coming in the judgment of Rome (2009, 680). This is a radical change from his earlier position when he said: “Chapter 14 [of Revelation, DKP] is a vision of the fall of Jerusalem, referred to as ‘Babylon the great’ (14:8). As we will see in chapter 17-18, the evidence that ‘Babylon’ is a symbolic description of Jerusalem is compelling.”<sup>12</sup>

I have shown that when we consider the prophetic background and source of Acts 1, along with the Christological significance of the cloud coming of Christ there is strong reason for rejecting the traditional understanding of “*in like manner*.” No ancient Jew would read of Christ ascending in the clouds and simply think, “Were those cumulus or cirrus clouds?” And they assuredly would not think of a physical man coming back on those clouds.

The theological significance of the ascension on the clouds, coupled with the promise that He would come “*in like manner*,” demands that we see that promise in the context of what the cloud ascension was communicating. While Mathison and others focus on “this same Jesus” as referent to the Incarnate body of Jesus, the true focus should be on the meaning of that cloud ascension, that declared: “Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords.” He will come again “*in the glory of the Father*,” judging as the Father had judged many times. That means that the woodenly literalistic approach to “*in like manner*” as posited by Mathison and all futurists, is completely misplaced. Thus, Mathison’s objection is Overruled! ✚

1. See William Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 46, Pastoral Epistles*, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 2000), 60.
2. This text needs fleshing out, but space forbids expansion. In essence, prior to His Incarnation, Jesus was “face to face” on an equality with the Father (John 1:1-3). He was “in the form of God” and did not think that equality a “thing to be grasped” (Philippians 2:5ff). But He laid off, divested, Himself of that “form of God” to become a man, “a little lower than the angels.” It was that former glory that He was praying to be restored to in John 17.
3. See William Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary, Pastoral Epistles, Vol. #46* (Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 2000), 426, for an explanation of the Granville Sharp rule.
4. Some translations render it as *waiting for the appearing of the glory of our Great God* (my emphasis). But this is dismissive of the Granville Sharp rule.
5. See also Romans 9:5 where Paul said, “*according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen*” (cf. John 1:14).
6. Some, including early church writers, took John’s reference to “Lord’s Day” as a reference to Sunday. I think this is untenable, and believe that John was saying that through the Spirit he was taken to witness the Lord’s coming. I think Revelation 19 confirms that view.
7. Compare also Matthew 17 and the Transfiguration vision, which was a vision of Christ’s parousia according to 2 Peter 1:16ff. Jesus’ Incarnate body was radically transformed and he was manifested in his divine glory. That Transfiguration vision of the parousia, just like Revelation 1 & 19, powerfully challenges the traditional view of “*in like manner*” espoused by Mathison. Space forbids expansion of this incredible topic and its implications for Acts 1. See my book, *Like Father Like Son, On Clouds of Glory* for a fuller discussion.
8. See my book, *Like Father Like Son, On Clouds of Glory*, for a discussion of this subject. The book is available from my websites, Amazon, Kindle, and other retailers.
9. Stevens suggests, with good merit, it seems to me, that Acts 1 is a vision of Christ as High Priest fulfilling the typological praxis of Yom Kippur. In this scenario, the cloud represented the “Shekinah” glory cloud of the Day of Atonement. I am not overtly rejecting that view, but believe it needs to be conflated with more of an emphasis on the Deity of Christ suggested by the cloud ascension.
10. Kenneth Gentry, *He Shall Have Dominion*, (Tyler, Tx.; Institute for Christian Economics, 1992), 273ff.
11. See my Youtube Video #828 on the Olivet Discourse, entitled *The Sign of the Son—Enthroned* for a fuller discussion of this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDjqaozOcbQ>
12. Keith Mathison, *Postmillennialism: An Eschatology of Hope* (Phillipsburg, New Jersey; P & R Publishing, 1999), 152.

## An interview with Pete & Rachael Wrue, authors of *Endtimes Explained: Understanding the Different Views*

**I CALLED PETE AND RACHAEL** Wrue last week (WHAT?!?! A REAL PHONE CALL WITH REAL VOICES?!) Yes, I went “Old School” and actually heard their voices. I think I’ll do that more often. Kinda nice. I have been seeing their name and book promotions on Facebook, and something seemed familiar. I checked my sales record and yep, they had bought a copy of *The Last Semite* back in the summer. Well, (chuckle) anyone who has that type of taste and intelligence to purchase my book (shameless plug—sorry) must have something brilliant to convey in their own writings! I wanted to share their responses in this issue. Next issue I will share how Pilate got his answer to “What Is Truth?”

**TJ:** Pete and Rachael, thanks to both of you for taking time to answer questions about your latest book. First, tell the readers about yourselves.

**Pete:** Well, I’m a musician, my main instrument is drums (I also play bass, piano and guitar) and work as a purchaser and supervisor. Rachael is disabled and stays at home. She has Cystic Fibrosis and other painful and debilitating conditions including Palmar Fasciitis and Pudendal Neuralgia. We have been married for 10 years, and live in Rochester, NY.

**TJ:** When and how did you both conclude preterism was the most accurate way to interpret prophecy? Were there certain books that opened you up to this? And who are some of the teachers you each enjoy learning from? Did you both arrive at this together or did one of you follow the other down that path?

**Rachael:** I led the way on our eschatological journey, when I started to question the pre-trib rapture teaching and became post-trib shortly before we were married. Within

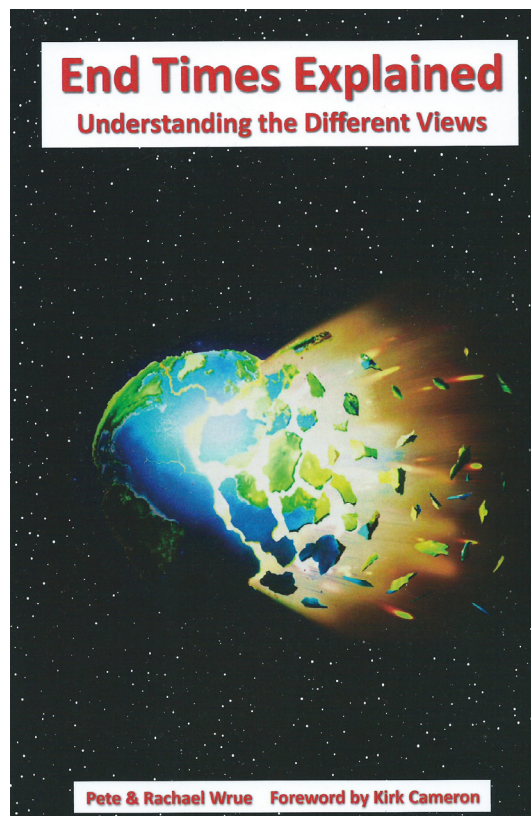
a couple of years, I studied the millennium further and became amillennial. I learned about preterism through amillennialism, as many amillennialists are partial preterists. I wrestled with Matthew 24 for a while, and in 2018 discovered the debate between Steve Gregg and Don Preston, and through Brian Martin’s video “You’ve Gotta Be Kidding, Right?” I later read *Matthew 24 Fulfilled* by John Bray and *Behind the Veil of Moses*, also by Brian Martin. I was then convinced and became a full preterist by the end of 2018.

**Pete:** It took me longer. I was with her every step until she came to full preterism. In early 2019 we drove out to Pennsylvania and met with Ed and Beth Stevens, and they helped me get through 2 Peter 3 and gave us resources to further help us understand the view. After this I was still struggling a bit and started to read *When Shall These Things Be?* by Keith Mathison, but when I read *House Divided* by Mike Sullivan, Ed Hassertt, and David Green, I found answers to my questions. I saw the “arguments” against preterism and found that they actually proved the preterist view. It was later that year when I adopted full preterism. There are many teachers we enjoy learning from including David Curtis, Ed Stevens, Gary DeMar, Bob Cruickshank Jr., Mike Sullivan, and

Don Preston to name a few.

**TJ:** Kirk Cameron wrote your foreword. So naturally, I want to know the backstory. Is he partial preterist, full preterist, just a friend doing a favor, brother-in-law?

**Pete:** I met Kirk in 2005 when he spoke at my Church. I was on the worship team and met him in the prayer room before service. Then in 2022 we were reacquainted through a mutual friend. We can’t speak for him as to what he believes today,





## Interview with Pete & Rachael Wrue

T. J. Smith

TJ Smith writes an ever growing series of books on Interpreting the Bible, and contributed commentary to the *Fulfilled Covenant Bible*.

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but we can tell you he is not a dispensational premillennialist. Kirk is incredibly smart and loves to study the Word, and after further study came to a different conclusion than what he was originally taught. So, we know he has left behind "Left Behind." In early 2023, we told him about our new book, and he agreed to write the foreword for us.

**TJ:** Do the two of you have plans to write more, produce a podcast or video ministry? What are you serving up next on the ministry menu?

**Pete:** I would like to write a third book that shows all the errors of dispensationalism and end that view once and for all. We would also like to put out some short videos in the future and have them on our website.

**TJ:** What is your church background? Do you still attend a local body and, if so, are they open/tolerant of your views?

**Pete:** I was raised Catholic and eventually became a Creaster (attending church on Christmas and Easter). Later, some friends shared the gospel, and I accepted Christ in 2001. Rachael was not brought up with any specific religion and became a Christian later in life. We still attend the Assembly of God church that I began going to after I first got saved. Most do not agree with our position (including our Pastor) and will not engage with us on eschatology. But we have reached a few friends locally who have read our book and have become preterists.

**TJ:** If you could wave a magic wand within the preterist community, what would you get rid of, and what would you bestow? Along with that, what do you think is the best method for preterists sharing the complete victory of Yeshua among futurist believers?

**Pete:** We both feel that preterists should not divide on certain topics (Hell, Resurrection, etc.) and that we should unite on our common ground, that all prophecy has been fulfilled in Christ, and that He did everything He came to do. We should all come together to dispel the myth of dispensationalism and

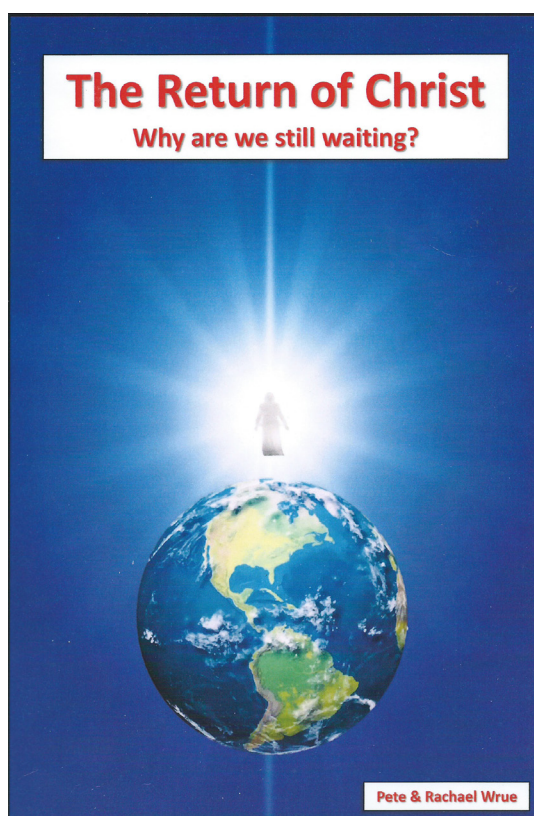
get our fellow Christians out of that deceptive system. We personally feel the best method for sharing preterism with futurists is our first book *The Return of Christ: Why are we still waiting?* We developed the book based on our experience of sharing the view. The book was written in the order that we would present the view, for example, we would start with the problem, then ask are we living in the last days, and then move on to time statements, audience relevance, etc.

**TJ:** How can readers support your ministry?

**Pete:** You can visit our website: <https://www.endtimes-explained.com/> to purchase our books (free shipping), or on Amazon.

**TJ:** Thanks for sharing your journey. Blessings to both of you! Any last comment?

**Pete:** Our first book is a great tool to share full preterism. Our latest book shows all the end times views which can educate futurists. We are trying to educate others on the different positions, allowing them to make an informed decision. This book includes full preterism and gives it a fair representation whereas other books do not, and we address preterist interpretations that were not in our first book (millennium, Man of Sin, etc.). We also wanted to show the history of church doctrines and bridge the gap between the different positions. ✚



## In This Issue:

### Perspectives

*The Texts of Time*

### Perspectives

*Jeremiah's Prophecy of a New Covenant*

### Objection Overruled!

*Mathison on Acts 1:9-11 - pt 2*

### Heal Our Hearts

*Nehemiah's Prayer*

### Parting Thoughts

*Interview with Pete & Rachael Wrue*

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## 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

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