

SUMMER 2024

VOLUME 19 ISSUE 2

# *FULFILLED!* *Magazine*

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

**The Day of the Lord -  
What is it?**





## FULFILLED COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

Come see us on Facebook!

[www.facebook.com/FCGAD70](http://www.facebook.com/FCGAD70)

Visit FCG's website at:  
[www.fulfilledcgc.com](http://www.fulfilledcgc.com)

All past issues of *Fulfilled!* Magazine are posted on our site.

Beginning with the 2020 Fall issue:

- individual articles are posted
- each article has a comment box
- each article has a printable pdf version



<https://fundraise.samaritanspurse.org/team/295437>

Use the above URL to go directly to “The Preterist Community” team giving portal. Thanks to your generous support, over \$13,000 has been donated in the name of preterism!

Samaritan's Purse is a nondenominational evangelical Christian organization providing spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world.



**Calling All Full-Preterists:** If you, like so many out there, are looking for others of similar eschatology, this is for you. To decide if you would like to take part in a program of networking full-preterists in the US and Canada together in specific locales, please take a moment to read about the database Tony Denton is compiling! Just visit this web site or email him:

[tedenton64@gmail.com](mailto:tedenton64@gmail.com)

[facebook.com/tedenton64](https://facebook.com/tedenton64)

[ASiteForTheLord.com](http://ASiteForTheLord.com)

[Please note that the Preterist Registry is NOT affiliated with FCG. Please direct all inquiries and correspondence to Tony Denton.]

## 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 - *Pete and Rachel Wrue*

The Day of the Lord

## 10. Objection Overruled! - *Don K. Preston*

Responding further to Keith Mathison on Acts 1:9-11

## 14. Perspectives - *Daniel E. Harden*

"Quickly, Quickly"

## 18. Parting Thoughts - *TJ Smith*

Pilate's "What is Truth?"

## Reader Beware!

The views expressed in these pages are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of FCG or other contributors. FCG does not tell readers what to believe; rather, FCG provides readers with resources intended to aid in discovering biblical foundations informing what they believe. FCG strives to give readers something worthwhile to think about—we avoid telling them what to think. Please understand that we cannot vet every contributor's various doctrinal positions or read every advertised book. We rely on you, the reader, to be a Berean: prayerfully discuss and examine all positions presented according to Scripture to establish any truth or application as you work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

**General Editor**  
Brian L. Martin

**Copy Editor**  
Kayla F. Martin

**Design & Layout**  
Kayla F. Martin

**Published by**  
*FULFILLED*  
*COMMUNICATIONS*  
*GROUP*

**Subscriptions**  
We offer subscriptions free of charge, subsisting solely on donations from those who share a vision to share preterism.

**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  
3784 Camanche Pkwy N.  
Ione, CA 95640-9614

**How to contact us:**  
FCG  
3784 Camanche Pkwy N.  
Ione, CA 95640-9614  
admin@fulfilledcg.com

(530) FCG-AD70 [324-2370]  
Please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible.

www.FulfilledCG.com  
www.FulfilledMagazine.com

## Editor's Note...

**I'M EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE** that Adam Maarschalk will be transitioning to editor of *Fulfilled!* Magazine. This will free me up to give more time to other FCG-related duties (magazine layout, website updates, etc.). I will still be directly involved in the magazine production, just not the article soliciting and editing process.

Adam currently is a freelance editor by trade and has previously taught English as a second language. He also maintains a preterist website with his scriptural studies and speaks at preterist conferences. Readers of *Fulfilled!* Magazine will also recognize him from several of his articles that have appeared in recent issues. All that experience, along with Adam's connections in the preterist community, make him an excellent choice for editor of the magazine.

Adam has been involved with FCG for over two years, first as a team member, when he started posting on FCG's Facebook page, and, most recently, as a member of our board of directors. His talents and experience are a natural fit for the editor's role. Please join me in welcoming Adam as editor of *Fulfilled!* Magazine.

In the previous issue, TJ Smith shared an interview with Pete and Rachael Wrue, who have authored two books (see ad on page 9). After that issue, Pete, Rachael, and I had a very pleasant phone conversation, and I invited them to write an article for the magazine (see page 6). I have also read both of their books and heartily recommend them. The large print and colorful graphics invite the reader to explore their pages—a far cry from an intimidating theological tome! To be fair, some of us don't mind those theological tomes, but we all know individuals who, by their own admission, don't enjoy reading as much as others do. The Wrue's book *The Return of Christ: Why are we still waiting?* may be just the ticket for those reluctant readers whom you've been trying to get to read about preterism.

Also in this issue, Don Preston shares some additional thoughts regarding Keith Mathison's take on Acts 1:9-11. New to *Fulfilled!* Magazine is Daniel Harden, though he is certainly not new to the preterist community. Dan's article "Quickly, Quickly," which first appeared on the *Burros of Berea* website, explores the meaning of the New Testament term often translated as "quickly," as when Jesus stated, "*Behold, I am coming quickly*," (or, as some translations have it, "*soon*"). TJ Smith wraps up this issue by delving into Pilate's question to Jesus, "*What is truth?*"

Blessings,

*Brian*



**Incoming Editor  
Adam Maarschalk**



# Mailbag...



“  
I look forward  
to each and every  
issue.”

Thanks for all of your hard work along with your staff.

[We just increased our staff by 50%! The staff now consists of me, my wife, and Adam Maarschalk - Brian.]



Just a short note to let you know that I appreciate all your efforts that you are doing towards letting the truths of preterism be known.



Please renew my subscription to *Fulfilled!* Magazine. Thank you for all you do. We learn from the many teachers you bring to the magazine. We know all their names!



Thank you for your excellent publication. I look forward to each and every issue.

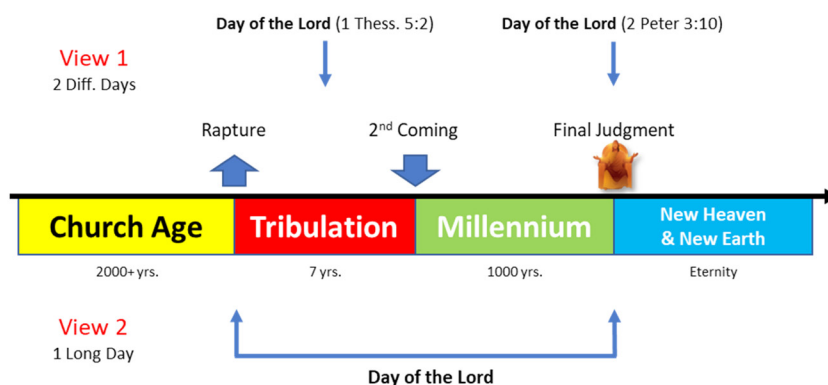


I wanted to let you know that I received last week the 2024 Spring issue of *Fulfilled!* Magazine. Thank you so much! I am already looking forward to the Summer issue.



**WHAT IS THE DAY** of the Lord? Depending on who you ask, you will get different answers. For example, J. Vernon McGee believed the day of the Lord is an extended period of time that includes the seven-year tribulation and the one thousand years of the millennial kingdom.<sup>1</sup> Tim LaHaye and Ed Hindson believe the day of the Lord has different meanings in the New Testament; in 1 Thessalonians 5 it refers to the seven-year tribulation, and in 2 Peter 3 it refers to the destruction of the present universe (after the millennium).<sup>2</sup> John MacArthur believes the day of the Lord will occur in two phases, but he seems to be saying the first phase is the judgment at the end of the seven-year tribulation (2nd Coming), and the second phase is the judgment at the end of the millennium.<sup>3</sup>

There is a lot of confusion among our dispensational friends regarding this term (and its use in verses such as 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 2 Thessalonians 2:2, and 2 Peter 3:10). They basically have two main views or schools of thought: 1) that the day of the Lord has two different meanings in the New Testament (broken up into the judgment of the tribulation and the judgment at the end of the millennium), or 2) the day of the Lord is one really long day that lasts for 1,007 years. The chart below shows the two different views:



Because dispensationalists believe Christ returns at the beginning of the millennium, and 2 Peter 3 describes the day of the Lord as the *passing of heaven and earth* (which doesn't happen until the END of the millennium), they insist 2 Peter 3 is *not* describing the second coming. However, the context of the passage is clearly the Second Coming (vv. 3-4), thus placing Christ's return at the *end* of the millennium, not the beginning. Their premillennial view of the return of Christ forces them to treat 1 Thessalonians 5:2 and 2 Peter 3:10 differently, even though *both* verses use the phrase "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night":

*For you yourselves know perfectly that **the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.*** (1 Thess 5:2)

*But the day of **the Lord will come as a thief in the night**, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.* (2 Pet 3:10)

To further complicate matters, many dispensationalists also believe the day of the **Lord**, the day of **Christ**, and the day of **God**, all refer to different days or events. They generally believe the day of Christ is the **rapture**, the day of the Lord is the **7-year tribulation period**, and the day of God refers to the **eternal state** following the millennium. For example, in his commentary, John MacArthur gives examples of Scriptures that refer to the day of the Lord vs. the day of Christ. He lists 2 Thessalonians 2:2 as a day of the **Lord** verse, but Philippians 1:10 as a day of **Christ** verse. J. Vernon McGee also states in

## The Day of the Lord

### Pete & Rachael Wrue

Pete and Rachael Wrue have been avid students of Eschatology for over 10 years and have written two books on the topic:

- *The Return of Christ: Why are we still waiting*
- *End Times Explained: Understanding the Different Views.*

info@endtimes-explained.com  
www.endtimes-explained.com

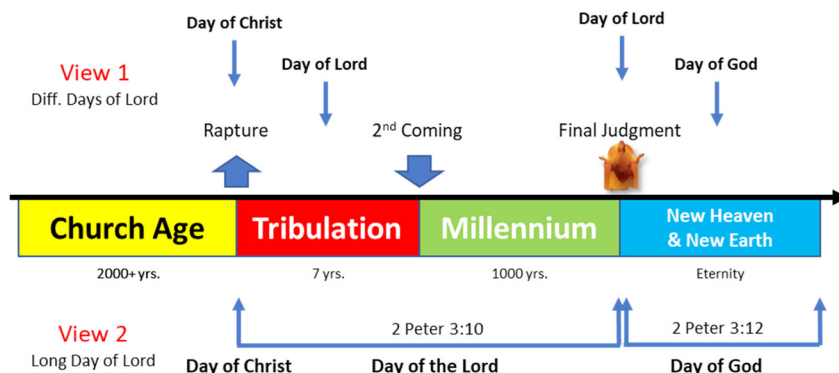


his commentary that 2 Thessalonians 2:2 should be translated as day of the **Lord** rather than the day of **Christ**. While some versions do translate 2 Thessalonians 2:2 as “*day of the Lord*,” this verse and Philippians 1:10 *both* use the same Greek word *Christos*. It’s absurd to insist that these verses are talking about two different “days”:

*not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the **day of Christ** [Christos] had come.* (2 Thess 2:2)

*that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the **day of Christ** [Christos].* (Phil 1:10)

Many dispensational teachers also differentiate between the day of the **Lord** in 2 Peter 3:10 and the day of **God** in 2 Peter 3:12. There are two possible charts for this, depending on whether they see the day of the Lord as two separate days or one long day. See below:



Even though these are two different Greek words in 2 Peter 3 (*Kurios* and *Theos*), it is very clear from the passage that these words are being used interchangeably:

*“But **the day of the Lord** [Kurios] will come as a thief in the night, in which the **heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt** with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of **the day of God** [Theos], because of which the **heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt** with fervent heat?”* (2 Pet 3:10-12)

No wonder our dispensational friends are so confused about eschatology. Thankfully, it is not that complicated. The day of the Lord, the day of God, the day of Christ, the day of judgment, etc., are ALL referring to same thing in the New Testament.

So, what is it? The **Day of the Lord** is a judgment of God on a nation or people group. IT IS NOT ABOUT THE END OF THE WORLD. And if it was a world-ending event, how could the Thessalonians have possibly thought that they were already in the day of the Lord (2 Thess 2:2)? This phrase is used several times in the Old Testament and applies to judgments that have occurred throughout history. One example is Isaiah 13, which describes the judgment of Babylon:

*Behold, **the day of the LORD** comes,  
Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger,*

...continued on page 8

*To lay the land desolate;  
And He will destroy its sinners from it.  
For the stars of heaven and their constellations  
Will not give their light;  
The sun will be darkened in its going forth,  
And the moon will not cause its light to shine.  
(Isa 13:9-10)*

Another example is the judgment of Edom in Isaiah 34:

*All the host of heaven shall be dissolved,  
And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll;  
All their host shall fall down  
As the leaf falls from the vine,  
And as fruit falling from a fig tree. (Isa 34:4)*

Both of these are describing past “days of the Lord,” so this language is not literal because the earth is still here; the stars have not literally fallen, and heaven has not literally rolled up as a scroll. This is Jewish apocalyptic literature describing the fall of earthly powers or governments. This is

the same language used in the New Testament to describe the Day of the Lord / Second Coming of Christ (Matt 24:29; 2 Pet 3:10-12):

*Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be*

*darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. (Matt 24:29)*

So, when was this supposed to occur? According to Matthew 24:34, it was supposed to occur in “this generation” (the first-century generation to whom Jesus was speaking). When the Holy Spirit was poured out in Acts 2, Peter said that was a sign of the soon coming Day of the Lord (Acts 2:16-21; see also Joel 2:28-32). Jesus also said that John the Baptist was Elijah who would be sent *before* the great day of the Lord (see also Mal 4:5-6):

*For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come. (Matt 11:13-14)*

*But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands. Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist. (Matt 17:12-13)*

The writer of Hebrews stated that the day of the Lord was *approaching* (Hebrews 10:25). Pastors often use this verse

to convince people of the importance of attending weekly church services. But that is not the context here. The context is the day of the Lord and the gathering of Israel that would take place on that day. When Paul wrote “*not to forsake the assembling of ourselves*,” he was referring to a specific gathering that was soon to take place. The Greek word for “*assembling*” is the same Greek word in 2 Thessalonians 2:1 (*concerning the coming of the Lord and our **gathering** to Him*). The Old Testament frequently speaks of Israel being gathered in the last days. (See Jer 4:5-6; Isa 11:12, 49:5-7, 56:6-8; Ezek 39:17).

So, when did this day of the Lord gathering occur? It occurred in AD 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. The judgment spoken of in the New Testament was for Israel (the unbelievers who rejected Christ). In Matthew 24 Jesus said that the Jewish Temple would be destroyed (v.3) before that generation passed away (v.34). This happened 40 years later; the length of a biblical generation (Num 32:12; Heb 3:8-10).

So, how could it be a *gathering* of Israel if it was also a *judgment* of Israel? The **gathering** was of spiritual Israel, the true **believers** in Christ into His kingdom (Eph 2:11-3:6). The **judgment** was specifically for the **unbelieving** Jews. We need to remember that the day of the Lord is two-fold. Peter and Paul both spoke of this day as being a day of *judgment for unbelievers* and a day of *redemption for believers*. Paul said sudden destruction would come upon *unbelievers* (1 Thess 5:3), but that day would not overtake *believers* (v.5). Peter said it would be a day of judgment for *ungodly men* (2 Pet 3:7), and yet it was a day *believers* were looking forward to (v.12). How did the destruction of Jerusalem provide redemption for Christ followers? Because it ended the Old Covenant sacrificial system that Christ died to replace. And it ended the Jewish persecution of Christians and allowed Christianity to break free from Judaism.

On a final note, we would like to point out for our dispensational friends that Peter said he was looking for a New Heaven and New Earth (2 Peter 3:13), NOT A PRETRIB RAPTURE OR A MILLENNIAL KINGDOM. The new heaven and earth is symbolic of the new covenant in Christ. Peter said the new heaven and earth is where righteousness dwells. Righteousness is found in Christ (2 Cor 5:21), and Paul described the *new covenant* as a ministry of righteousness (2 Cor 3:9).

We realize that most of our audience is not dispensational, but perhaps we have provided some talking points for our preterist friends. For more information, check out our books: *The Return of Christ: Why are we still waiting?* and *End Times Explained: Understanding the Different views*. Blessings! Pete and Rachael Wrue. ✝

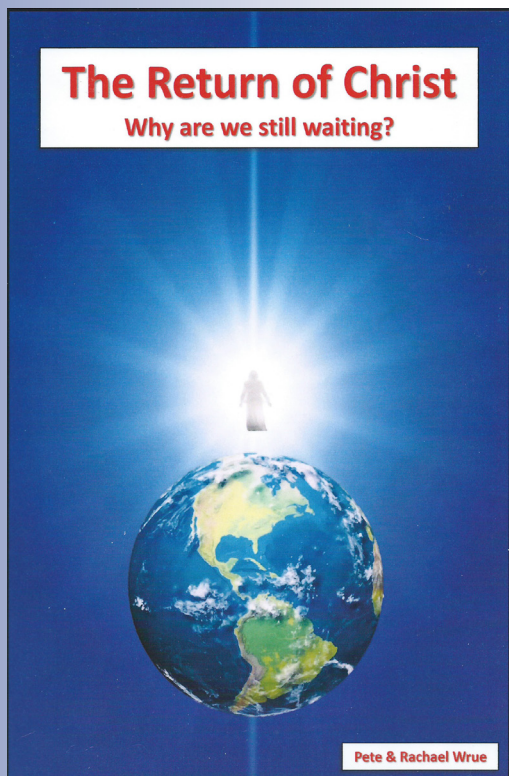
## The Day of the Lord

Pete and Rachael Wrue

... continued from page 7

1. Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee, 1 Corinthians through Revelation, Vol. 5, pg. 400, 748, 749
2. The Popular Bible Prophecy Commentary, pg. 449, 492
3. The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, pg. 143; 2 Peter & Jude, pg. 121



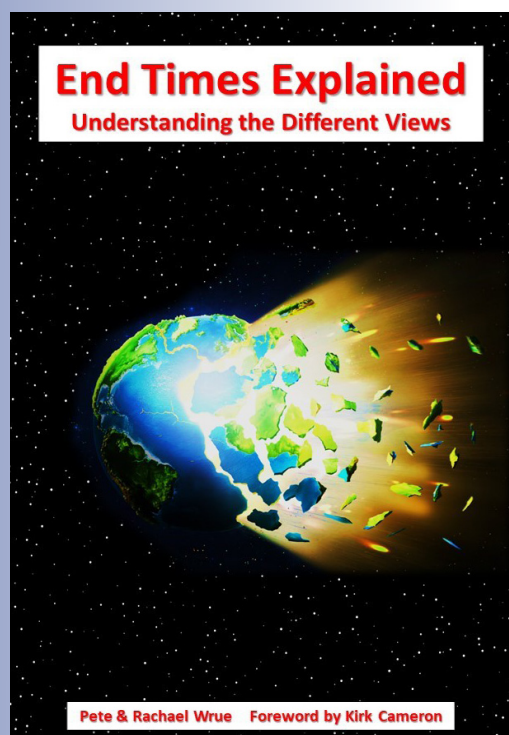


Have you ever wondered why it is taking so long for Jesus to come back? If so, you are not alone.

Written in an easy-to-read format with large print and many visuals, this book examines the biblical doctrine of the second coming of Christ. Whether you are a beginner or an expert on the topic, it's easy to understand!

For 2,000 years Christians have been eagerly anticipating the return of Christ. So, the question remains, why are we still waiting?

The answer may surprise you!



Are you confused and overwhelmed about the end times? What is eschatology? What is Postmillennialism? What is Amillennialism? What is the mark of the beast? Tribulation? The Rapture? And WHY are there so many different views?

In a clear and concise way, this book will explain the many different views and why people hold them.

This book will help you understand the end times like never before!

Foreword by Kirk Cameron

Place your order at: [www.endtimes-explained.com](http://www.endtimes-explained.com)

For more information contact Pete and Rachael at: [info@endtimes-explained.com](mailto:info@endtimes-explained.com)

[NOTE: These books are not available from FCG.]

## The Absent Master Parables and Christ's Return

**I**N MY PREVIOUS INSTALLMENTS I asked the reader to consider the incredible Christological significance of Acts 1, and how that theme is greatly overlooked by so many commentators. Keith Mathison wrote a lengthy article positing Acts 1 as a yet future, end of time event. Yet, his article ignored the Christological aspect of the Ascension and how it has a bearing on the proper view of Acts 1, from the angle that Christ would come “in like manner.”

In this installment—and there is so much more that could be said—I want to focus on yet another relevant issue related to the Ascension—and the promised Parousia—that is commonly overlooked in the literature, namely, that Acts 1 is the depiction, undeniably so, of the departure of the Nobleman to go to a far country and there receive the kingdom as depicted in Luke 19:11ff:

*Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Do business till I come.’ But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’ “And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’ “Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’ “And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.’*

... Acts 1 is the depiction, undeniably so, of the departure of the Nobleman to go to a far country and there receive the kingdom as depicted in Luke 19:1ff ...

*(But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’) ‘For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.’” (NKJV throughout)*

What we find here is the depiction of The Absent Master and his return in judgment. This is an amazingly common theme of Jesus’ parabolic teaching and is, in important ways, paradigmatic for understanding Jesus’ eschatology. It is interesting to me that so few commentators make the connection between Luke and Acts 1. But notice the direct parallels.

- Both Luke 19 and Acts 1 depict Jesus going away to the far country.
- Both have Him going away to receive the kingdom.
- Both have Jesus bestowing gifts / responsibilities to His citizens.
- Both have some of His servants rejecting His rule and reign (See Acts 13:31ff / Rom 10 / 1 Thess 2:14-16, etc.).
  - Both have the Master returning in judgment of the rebellious citizens. (No one that I am aware of would deny that the promise of Christ’s return in Acts 1 would be the judgment).

The parallels here are precise and cannot be ignored. It is widely, all but universally, agreed that Luke 19 is based on the historical situation that had transpired in Israel. When Herod the Great died (who had himself traveled

to Rome to receive the kingdom), his grandson, Archelaus, went to Rome to implore the emperor to bestow on him his grandfather’s dominion and territory. However, the Jews, who had suffered tremendous hardship and cruelty under Herod, fearful (with good reason) that things would not improve under Archelaus, sent an embassy to Rome, imploring the emperor (Augustus) to not put Archelaus in charge. Augustus bequeathed only half of Herod’s territory to Archelaus and reduced his authority from king to that of an “ethnarch.”

Jesus’ parable would have resonated effectively with His audience and dispelled the idea that with His arrival in Jerusalem the messianic Kingdom would be established immediately.

The application of Luke 19 to Acts 1:9-11 should be clear. Jesus ascended to sit at the right hand of the Father, to rule



Don K. Preston

Don is president of  
Preterist Research Insitutum

dkpret@cableone.net  
www.eschatology.org  
www.bibleprophecy.com



in the midst of His enemies, but He would return, as King of kings and Lord of lords, to judge the rebellious and wicked nation that had cried out, “We have no king but Caesar!” (John 19:15). And given the perfect parallels between Luke 19 and Acts 1, this is strong proof that the coming of Christ “in like manner” of Acts 1 was to be His return in the judgment of Jerusalem in AD 70.

But Luke 19 is only one of *four* “absent / returning” master parables found in the synoptics (Matt 21:33f [paralleled in Mark 12:1-12], Matt 25:14-30, Mark 13:34, and Luke 19). Not only is Luke 19 related to the other “Absent Master” parables, I suggest that this parabolic motif underlies the New Testament doctrine of Christ’s ascension to the Father, his “going away to prepare a place,” “he ascended in glory,” and similar motifs. This suggests then that the return of the Absent Master is the key to all the passages that speak of Christ’s return.

The other parables of the Absent Master need to be examined.

#### Matthew 25:14f:

*For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. “So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ “Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’ “But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew*

*that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. ‘For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.*

One can hardly fail to see the parallels between this parable and that in Luke 19. Commentators have long recognized that while there are some minor variations, there are no substantive differences that would force the idea that they are speaking of two different things.

G. R. Beasley Murray said: “There can be little doubt that in these two parables we have two versions of a single parable.”<sup>1</sup> I believe he is correct and if that is true, it should impact our overall understanding of eschatology.

Thus . . .

**If it is true that Matthew 25:14f and Luke 19:11f are parallel parables, and,**

**If it is true that Luke 19:11 is about the coming of Christ in judgment of Old Covenant Jerusalem / Israel, then,**

**It must be true that Matthew 25:14f is about the coming of Christ in judgment of Old Covenant Jerusalem / Israel.**

It is of more than passing interest that some futurist commentators seek to use Matthew 25:14f to prove that the time of Christ’s “Second Coming” was unknown and unknowable.

Kenneth Gentry offers this on Matthew’s parable:

“His return has not been imminent since the ascension”; “The New Testament teaches, however, that the Lord’s glorious, bodily return will be in the *distant* and *unknowable* future. It has not been *imminent* and will not be *datable*. Theologically ‘distinctive to [Postmillennialism] is the denial of the imminent physical return’ of Christ.”— “Jesus clearly taught: ‘While the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept (Matt 25:5). For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. . . . After a long time, the Lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them (Matt 25:14, 19). There is no expectation here of an any-moment return—there is quite the opposite.”<sup>2</sup>

What is so ironic about Gentry’s comments is that he is quite vocal in his rejection of dispensationalism because they reject the objective imminence of the New Testament

...continued on page 12



language of “at hand,” “quickly,” “shortly,” etc. He is insistent that those time statements communicated objective temporal imminence. What the reader of Scripture will note is that the New Testament states repeatedly that the time of the judgment of the “living and the dead,” which is nothing other than the resurrection, had arrived—2,000 years ago (1 Pet 4:5-17). Thus, Gentry’s claim that the New Testament does not speak of the imminent eschatological consummation is false.

We must realize that the “far journey” and the “long time” absence of the Master in Matthew 25 is delimited

## Objection Overruled!

Don K. Preston

... continued from page 11

to the lifetime—the generation—of those to whom he gave the gifts. There is not a hint that the Master’s return would be delayed for millennia! As a matter of fact, Jesus actually condemned those who

argued and believed that the Absent Master had delayed his coming.

In Matthew 24:44-48, Jesus told another parable that contains the motif of the absent Master / Lord:

*Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards . . .*

The parallels between this “parable” and the Absent Master parable in 25:14f are too clear to be denied. Notice then that in this parenthesis by Jesus, He warned them of thinking that His coming would be delayed interminably. He condemned the idea of thinking of an extended, prolonged delay that might give rise to laxity and immorality. Ironically, the very message of so many futurists today who say Christ has delayed His coming is the very message Jesus told about the wicked servants who said “*The Master delays his coming*.” (Clearly most futurists live lives of dedication to the Lord, to the best of their ability and knowledge. They do not take the delay as an excuse for rebellion and antinomianism. I am not suggesting that. However, their message of the delay of Christ’s coming is nonetheless what Christ condemned).

**Mark 12:1-11 / Luke 21:33f:**

*Then He began to speak to them in parables: “A man planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a place for the wine vat and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. Now at vintage time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that he might receive some of the fruit of the vineyard from the vinedressers. And they took him and beat him and sent him away empty handed. Again he sent them another servant, and at him they threw stones, wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully treated. And again he sent another, and him they killed; and many others, beating some and killing*

*some. Therefore still having one son, his beloved, he also sent him to them last, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But those vinedressers said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ So they took him and killed him and cast him out of the vineyard. “Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vinedressers, and give the vineyard to others.*

While there are some elements found in this parable, and the other parables as well, that are different from Luke 19, there are *no substantive differences* that would force us to conclude that the parables speak of radically different times or events.<sup>3</sup> Notice the direct parallels:

- In these parables we have the Absent Master. In Matthew 21, 25, and Luke 19 the Master goes on a “*long journey*,” “*to a far country*.”
- We have the bestowal of authority / gifts / responsibilities to the servants.
- We have the abuse of those privileges and the gifts given and the rejection of the authority of the Master. In each of the parables there is the motif of the “dishonoring” of the Master which demanded that the Master take judgmental actions to re-establish his glory.
- We have the rejection of the authority of the Master. This is manifested in Matthew 21 by the abuse and persecution of the Master’s servants—his representatives. To reject the servants sent by the Master was to reject him. It was a huge dishonor.<sup>4</sup> Walvoord and Zuck—citing J. D. Grassmick—took note of this:

The rejection of the owner’s son was really a rejection of the owner who would come with governmental authority and kill the murderous tenants and give the vineyard to others. Likewise the Jewish leaders’ rejection of John the Baptist and of Jesus, God’s final Messenger, was a rejection of God Himself. This would inevitably bring His judgment on Israel and would transfer their privileges to others temporarily (cf. Rom. 11:25, 31).<sup>5</sup>

So, once again,

- In Matthew 21, 25, Mark 12, and Luke 19 we find the Master leaving to go on a long journey.
- In all the parables the Absent Master returns. Notice that in Matthew 21:40 the Absent Master would “*come*” (*elthe*, a cognate of *erchomai*, a word commonly used of Jesus’ Parousia; cf. 2 Thess 1).
- In the parables the returning Master judges and destroys the rebels who rejected his authority.

Of course, in both Luke 19 and the parallels of Matthew 21 / Mark 12, the object of the return of the Master, his return in judgment of the rebels, was the coming of Christ in judgment of Israel<sup>6</sup>—the Vineyard of the Lord (cf. Isa 5) of Matthew 21 and Mark 12. Matthew 21 makes it indisputably obvious that it was the leadership of Jerusalem, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Scribes, and the lawyers who controlled the people, i.e. the Vineyard, that Jesus had in mind. And make no mistake, *that is precisely how those leaders understood Jesus’ parable*:

*And they sought to lay hands on Him, but feared the multitude, for they knew He had spoken the parable against them. So they left Him and went away (Mark 12:12).*

Thus, just like in Luke 19, where the rebels who said, “*We will not have this man to rule over us*” were judged and destroyed at the return of the Master, so in Mark 12 we find the identical motifs, the same context, the same prediction. The coming of the Lord in view is absolutely not some imaginary “end of time” literal, physical coming of Jesus out of heaven riding on a cumulus cloud. It was Him acting as King of kings and Lord of lords, coming “in the glory of the Father” to judge Old Covenant Jerusalem / Judea / Israel.

**Mark 13:32-36:** This text is particularly significant in the discussion of the Departing / Absent Master motif:

*But of that day and hour no one knows,<sup>7</sup> not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is. It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch. Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning—lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. (Mark 13:32-36).*

In this version of the Olivet Discourse, what should grab our attention is that Mark (and Luke) make it clear that the disciples did not ask about the “end of the world.” They asked about when the Temple was to be destroyed and the sign of that event. This suggests then that the language of Matthew 24:3, since it is directly parallel to Mark and Luke, was not about what so many commentators claim. In other words, since the disciples in Mark and Luke’s versions did not ask about the end of the age or Christ’s coming, and yet, the language of both of those accounts is virtually identical to Matthew’s account, this means that the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple was perceived to be the end of the age and the coming of the Lord by Matthew. If in fact Matthew was including a discussion of a far distant coming of Christ at the end of time, should he not have distinguished that event from the near events that Jesus was predicting?

The point here is the issue of the Absent Master. Is this “going away into a far country” the same going away of John 14: “*I go*

*to prepare a place for you*”? We can be certain that this going away is the departure of the Nobleman who was going away to receive a kingdom. That is Christ’s departure to the Father who would send the Spirit in John 16. That going away for the sending of the Spirit is inextricably linked to the establishment of the kingdom in Acts 1, and, I suggest, it is directly related to the giving of the talents in both Matthew 25:14f and Luke 19.

Is this “going away” not what is referenced in Ephesians 4:8, “*when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts to men*”? Is it Christ’s entrance into the Most Holy Place of Hebrews 9:24-26? Is this departure into the far country—heaven—what is referenced in Acts 3:19f: “*Whom the heaven must receive until the restoration of all things*”? If these texts speak of a different departure, a different purpose, a different time, where is the indication of that?

The parables we have examined are not all of the “Absent Master” texts in the New Testament. In truth, all of the New Testament prophecies of Christ’s coming / return are passages based on His departure to receive the kingdom. We should also point out that in the New Testament, Psalm 110 is quoted some 33 times. That Psalm is about the ascended Lord sitting at the right hand of the Sovereign, as He receives the kingdom, and waits to return to judge His enemies and establish His reign among the faithful. This is the very thing depicted in each of the “Absent Master” parables.

I suggest that unless one can prove that the Absent Master / Returning Master parables depicted a different departure, and a radically different return from that in Acts 1, and a totally different judgment from that in the parables, that this proves that no matter what our concept of “in like manner” might be, it must conform to the context, the framework, the purpose, and the time of the return of the Absent Master found in the parables. And that coming, that return, was in AD 70 when Jesus, having received the kingdom, came as King of kings and Lord of lords, in judgment of the nation that had rejected him.

Thus, Mathison’s appeal to Acts 1 as a refutation of the truth of preterism fails: Objection Overruled! †

1. G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, Paternoster, 1986), 215.
2. Kenneth Gentry, Jr., *He Shall Have Dominion* (Tyler, Tx.; Institute for Christian Economics, 1992), 331-332.
3. I find it interesting, and a bit perplexing, that in a survey of several commentaries, I did not find *even one* that directly conflated Mark 12 with Luke 19. It may well be that I simply did not find any that did, however, I consulted a good number of critical commentaries in my Logos program as well as several in my print library.
4. The idea of “representative” authority was powerful in the ANE (Ancient Near East). Several times Jesus told His disciples that if anyone rejected them, they were rejecting Him, and who ever accepted them, accepted Him. See John 13:20 especially.
5. J. D. Grassmick, In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures, Mark, Vol. 2*, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 161. It is to be noted that Grassmick, a dispensationalist, claims that the rejection and judgment was to be temporary, when nothing in any of the parables supports that claim.
6. Very specifically, the judgment caused by the rulers of the people.
7. Of course, it is widely argued that since Jesus said no one “*but the Father*” knows the day or the hour of His coming that this somehow mitigates all of the “*at hand*,” “*shortly come to pass*,” “*in a very, very little while*” language of the New Testament. The problem with that assertion is that Jesus spoke those words *prior to the sending of the Spirit*, from the Father, which was for the express purpose of revealing “*things to come*” (John 16:7f). It is anachronistic therefore, to apply Jesus’ words in Mark 13 to the statements made after the sending of the Spirit. For instance, Revelation 1:1-3 makes it clear that the Father, *who knew the day and hour*, was informing the Son, and the Son the churches, that “*the time is at hand*” and “*these things must shortly come to pass*.” What was formerly unknown even to Jesus, was now being revealed.



Revelation 1:1-3 (LEB) – *The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his slaves the things which must take place in a short time [ ἐν τάχει (en tachei)], and communicated it by sending it through his angel to his slave John, who testified about the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, all that he saw. Blessed is the one who reads aloud and blessed are those who hear the words of the prophecy and observe the things written in it, because the time is near [ἐγγύς (engus)]!*

**T**HERE ARE ANY NUMBER of words in Greek used in the New Testament that serve as adverbs or related forms to such adverbs. Adverbs, as defined in our English grammar, serve as modifiers to verbs, and thereby clarify the action in terms of how, when, where, in what manner, or to what extent—to name a few. Where this becomes a bit tricky is that some adverbs can function in more than one way, depending on the verb they modify and the context of its usage.

One such adverb is *quickly*. If somebody tells you to “come quickly”, are they telling you to come as *soon* as you can, or are they telling you to come *in a speedy manner*? In truth, the distinction between the two is a bit blurry.

The words we see in Greek in the New Testament function in much the same way. When it comes to *quickly*, we have to decide if the intent of the author is in determining *how* or *when* something is to occur, and even if there is a sufficient distinction between the two.

Many modern Christians feel that the book of Revelation is either not completely fulfilled or not fulfilled at all. For them, the use of *quickly* (*en tachei*) in the opening verse of Revelation causes a problem. The word *tachei* is a form of the Greek word *τάχος* (*tachos*). The rendering of ‘*quickly*’ as a *time* descriptor indicates that the “*things which must take place*” were to happen shortly after John wrote the book of Revelation. Notice above that even the Lexham English Bible (LEB) renders *en tachei* as “in a short time”. Furthermore, this *quickness* of the occurrence of the events taking place is reiterated in Revelation 22:6, again using *en tachei*, which strongly indicates a bookend of sorts—that is, that all the revealed “*things which must take place*” would be included.

In an effort to dance around this nuance, some well-known theologians have taken the stance that *en tachei* refers to *how* these things take place (rapidly), rather than *when* they take place (promptly, soon).

### When or How?

But can the idea of time really be excluded from this adverb? Here are brief explanations from three famous theologians who attempt to do just that, relying on using the *how* method of interpreting the adverb used in Rev. 1:1.

John F. Walvoord:

That which Daniel declared would occur “in the latter days” is here described as “shortly” (Gr., *en tachei*), that is, “quickly or suddenly coming to pass,” indicating rapidity of execution after the beginning takes place. The idea is not that the event may occur soon, but that when it does, it will be sudden (cf. Luke 18:8; Acts 12:7; 22:18; 25:4; Rom. 16:20).<sup>1</sup>

Charles C Ryrie:

The words translated “shortly” (*en tachei*) mean that when the time for judgment comes there will be no delay in its

execution (see Luke 18:8 and other occurrences of this phrase in Acts 12:7; 22:18; 25:4; Rom. 16:20; Rev. 22:6–7). The time of the fulfillment may seem distant, but, when it starts, the events will transpire rapidly.<sup>2</sup>

Lange:

Ebrard correctly interprets it as referring to the rapidity of the course of the events prophesied.<sup>3</sup>

But is this really the case? Is this really a viable or logical way to handle *en tachei*? Or is it merely a soft shoe shuffle and dance around a problem without really solving the issue?

There are a number of Greek words used in the New Testament which are closely related to *tachei*. For example, John also uses one such related word, *tachu* (τάχυ), at various times in Revelation to describe the coming of Christ (see Rev 2:16; 3:11; 11:14; 22:7, 12, 20). These two words, *tachos* and *tachu*, are distinctly related. The first is found in both Revelation 1:1 and 22:6, with the form *en tachei*, which is best translated as “in quickness”, while *tachu* is best translated simply as “quickly”. As such, both words should be approached similarly, with a determination on whether they refer to *method* (how) or *timing* (when). And just as with *en tachei*, with the word *tachu* it is not unusual to see biblical interpretations favor the *method* rather than the *timing* of the action of the verb. Even HELPS Word Studies adds a similar note, indicating that this word “does not mean ‘immediately’ or necessarily ‘in a very short time’ but rather ‘without any delay.’”<sup>4</sup>

Yet a thorough investigation of the use of the Greek word *tachu* throughout the entirety of the New Testament indicates that it is not possible to segregate the *method* of the action in an effort to distinguish it from the *timing* of the action. For example, in John 11:29, when Martha told her sister Mary that Christ wanted to see her, did Mary rise up and go quickly with regard to *how* (when she did rise, she did so quickly) or did she do so with regard to *when* (she went to Christ as soon as possible)? The answer is that both were true. But it should also be self-evident that the timing of Mary’s actions was of more importance than the method. Certainly, the idea of time cannot be dismissed—Mary rushed to Christ’s side immediately and in a very short time, as well as without any delay.

Indeed, wherever *tachu* is used, it is always to denote something that needs to be done immediately, not just something that needs to be done in a hurried manner once it has begun. This is generally not an issue. But when it comes to eschatology, many find this a problem. The **only** time theologians try to segregate the *method* (hurriedly) from the *timing* (soon) of the action modified by *tachu*, in such a way as to actually exclude the timing altogether, is when it refers to the eschatological coming of Christ.

The same holds true for *en tachei*, which literally means “in quickness.” For example, in Acts 12:7, it was of utmost

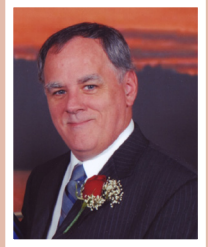


## “Quickly, Quickly”

### Daniel E. Harden

Daniel has studied preterism for over 40 years and is the author of *Gathered Into the Kingdom* and *The Resurrection of the Dead*.

danieleharden@hotmail.com



importance that Paul not delay in order to escape his prison cell, and as such the *timing* was every bit as important as the *method*—if not more so. In Acts 22:18, it was again imperative for Paul to leave Jerusalem *as soon as possible*. There is no indication that Paul could stay as long as he wanted to, but that when he did decide to go, he had to go really, really fast. In fact, where method was concerned, it was more important for Paul to go discretely. Stealth requires caution. It certainly takes longer to leave a place stealthily than it does to leave it at a dead run.

In addition, the same phrase is used in 1 Timothy 3:14: “*I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you in a short time [en tachei].*” Paul was totally concerned with timing, not method. He wasn’t telling Timothy that he hoped to run to him fast, but that he hoped to come to him soon. Most commentaries agree on this.

### “I am coming quickly”

Christ did not equivocate. Indeed, in the book of Revelation alone, it was stated no less than six times that Christ would come “*quickly*.” The quotes by Walvoord, Ryrie, and Lange indicate that this means that once it was time for Christ to return, He would not delay. Yet it is highly unlikely that the common first-century saints in the seven churches of Asia Minor would have followed that line of thought when reading what John wrote.

Others have added to this argument, repeating the words of 1 Thessalonians 5:2, which states that the Lord would come “*like a thief in the night*.” Yet once again this line of reasoning is curious, not being well thought out. When a thief comes, he does so with as much stealth and deliberation as possible. He doesn’t approach “quickly” but deliberately, so as not to alert the owners. The whole point of Paul’s words was to tell the Thessalonians to be diligent and not be caught off guard. Those who weren’t watching for Him were about to be taken by surprise.

### The events that are to come “quickly”

In the odd interpretation given by Walvoord, Ryrie, Lange, and others, we are told that the events would unfold rapidly, rather than soon, and that this would culminate in the coming of the Lord. Yet what are those events? In the Olivet Discourse, the events include:

- False Messiahs
- Wars and rumors of wars. Nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom
- Famines
- Earthquakes
- Persecution
- Betrayal
- False prophets
- Lawlessness
- Turning from the faith
- Gospel spread to the earth

All of these are mentioned in Matthew 24:4-8 as precursors to the end.

When John said “*the things which must occur quickly*,” he then wrote down messages to the seven churches (chapters 2-3) followed by the visions of what was to occur (chapters 4-22). And every single item from the Olivet Discourse can be found in the pages of Revelation. In fact, there are even more events listed, such as:

- The beasts and the mark of the beast
- Fire
- Fouled rivers
- Two witnesses

Some of these events didn’t happen in a rapid manner at all. For example, the two witnesses prophesied for three and a half years, after which they were killed in the streets. Yet these events were nonetheless part of the “*things that would happen quickly*.” And these aren’t the only events that were included. They would be followed by:

- Judgment
- The coming of Christ
- The Resurrection of the Dead
- The removal of the Old Kingdom in favor of the New Kingdom

This brings up a very interesting point. Every single one of those events was included within the bookends of the visions in Revelation, yet the events didn’t all happen suddenly, rapidly, hurriedly, or hastily. They would all occur within the period of time leading up to and including the “end.” But the inclusion of all these events took time, and wouldn’t all occur in a single day, or even within a single year, which is the clear implication of relying on the *method* of ‘quickly’ rather than the *timing*.

### Say again?

Others have recognized this issue, seeing that there is a problem with the explanation that points to a reliance on the *method* with the exclusion of *time*, yet maintain an unwillingness to see the bookends of the book of Revelation as having been entirely completed shortly after John wrote the book. Consequently, the desire to escape the bookends in Revelation results in some rather bizarre double-talk as a matter of rationalization. For example:

“... *quickly* means that the event is approaching rapidly without implying any limitation upon the time frame in which it must occur. Therefore, verse 1 is saying only that God is causing the fulfillment of these prophecies to approach *quickly*. Regardless of how long it takes, we are not to construe the apparently long delay as idleness on God’s part.”<sup>5</sup>

The sad thing is that this line of reasoning is accepted as being logical, when it is anything but. How can the events be “approaching rapidly” for 2000 years?

...continued on page 16

There is a call in the book of Revelation, as well as throughout the New Testament, to be diligent and watchful. Paul warns the Thessalonians not to be caught unaware. This indicates not just a remote possibility, but a certainty that something was about to happen *in their time*. The call for diligence not only implies, but actually demands an impending action.

### Yet another failed attempt—the dancing continues

Another modern writer, Stephen Whitsett, tries a similar explanation to mollify Christ's claims that He is "*coming quickly*" in Revelation:

#### "Quickly, Quickly"

Daniel E. Harden

... continued from page 15

While the word is translated "quickly" into English, it does an injustice to the whole nuance of the word. This phrase being used "I am coming quickly" should never be translated "soon", as in every other place it

is used it means quickly. What is being communicated is that His coming will be quick, in the blink of an eye, he is not being delayed or held up by anything, and his coming is sure to happen at the right time.

Again, "I quickly ran to the store" – "I am quickly coming," is not a reference to time but speaks to how his coming is to happen. I.e. his coming will happen fast, at the right time, and he is not being delayed.

Which implies that all the events with in the Revelation which include past, present, and future statements reveal a nuance of being fulfilled over time as concerning certain parts of prophecy lead to the culmination of his return. What has happened in the past is that the Kingdom of God had come, Christ was now ruling on the throne in heaven, and he will come again.<sup>6</sup>

This is quite a lot of dancing just to get around the clear implication of the words being used. Whitsett's explanation is highly inadequate. It convolutes common everyday language usage. For example, he uses the phrase "I quickly ran to the store" as an illustration, but that just serves to highlight his short-sightedness. Such a phrase is always used in proximity to something. One never says "Four years ago, I quickly ran to the store." Even less does one use it in the future tense—"Next year, I will quickly run to the store." It is always used in proximity to the cause: "My wife was in the middle of cooking an important dinner, but was missing a key ingredient, so I quickly ran to the store." And what is the implication? Not that the speaker drove 100 miles an hour to get to the store (method), but that the speaker left for the store as soon as it was discovered that an ingredient was missing (timing). Even in the illustration Whitsett gives, the nuance of *when* is more important than the nuance of *how*. In fact, if somebody calls and tells you to "come quickly!", the importance of your response isn't *how* you come, but that you come immediately, arriving as soon as possible. There are definitely times, for example, where one can arrive at a destination in less time by taking slower backroads, than by detouring out of the way to take the interstate. Using the interstate might be a faster *method*, but using the backroads results in arriving sooner. And when asked to "come quickly!", arriving as soon as possible is the goal, regardless of what method is employed. Timing trumps method.

The same holds true for every case in the New Testament where either *tachos* or *tachu* is used. It is entirely invalid to

attempt to focus on the *method* to the exclusion of the *timing* of the action. With the Greek words used in the New Testament, there is always a focus on *timing*, regardless of whether or not there is any intent on method.

### Getting to the "Hart" of the matter

One New Testament interpreter who endeavors to interpret each Greek word into English as closely as possible to the original intent while maintaining the original nuance of the Greek words employed is David Bentley Hart. Here's how he renders the passages in Revelation:

Rev 1:1 – *A revelation from Jesus the Anointed, which God gave him, to show his slaves what things must occur extremely soon, and he signified this by sending it out through his angel to his slave John . . .*

Rev 2:16 – *Therefore change your hearts; and, if not, I am coming to you quickly, and will wage war on them with the sword in my mouth.*

Rev 3:11 – *"I am coming very quickly; hold fast to what you have so that no one take your chaplet."*

Rev 11:14 – *The second woe has passed—look: The third woe comes quickly.*

Rev 22:6-7 *And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true, and the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel to show his slaves things that must occur shortly." "And look: I am coming quickly. How blissful the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."*

Rev 22:12 – *"Look: I am coming quickly, and with me is the recompense I have to render to each, according to what his work is."*

Rev 22:20 – *The one who attests these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen, come, Lord Jesus.*

The implication is clear—the nuance of these prophecies and of the words *tachos* and *tachu* includes the idea of timing. Hart interprets them as "extremely soon", "very quickly", "shortly", etc. Certainly, John's exhortation in the last verse is totally lost if he is simply referring to a far-future, eventual coming of the Lord. "Come, Lord Jesus."

In fact, there are a number of Greek words used in the New Testament that have the same root, *tach-* (or *tax-*), and this root, even according to HELPS Word Studies, carries the nuance of "promptly, without unjustified time-lapse". These related words all carry the same idea of immediacy, inherited directly from the root:

τάχα (tacha) – promptly (adverb)  
ταχέως (tacheós) – swiftly, at once (adverb)  
ταχινός (tachinos) – swift, imminent (adjective)  
τάχιον (tachion) – more swiftly (adverb)  
τάχιστα (tachista) – most swiftly (adverb)  
τάχος (tachos) – speedily, immediately (adverb)  
ταχύ (tachu) – promptly, without delay (adverb)  
ταχύς (tachus) – quick (adjective)

### A "taxing problem" for Dispensationalism

While dispensationalists would like you to believe that there is a distinction that can be applied between *when* (time) and *how* (method) for these words, such is not the case. It is impossible to extract the time while leaving only the method. Even the *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* by Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich & Danker recognizes this issue, as even with the word *tachus*, it is "not always possible to make a distinction" between the method (speed of the event) and the timing of the event.

Gary DeMar recognizes the fallacy of the distinction that

dispensationalism makes. In *Prophecy Wars*, DeMar calls the method that the Dispensationalists use nothing more than “Exegetical Gerrymandering of the Time Texts”. In *Last Days Madness*, DeMar tackles the equivocating methods taken by dispensationalists who state that “imminency” is nothing more than merely “certainly” with no regard to time. He lists a wide-ranging number of New Testament verses, including the ones already alluded to in this article, to show that the dispensationalist explanation is inadequate.

There is nothing in the above texts that would support this definition. . . . The biblical writers are straightforward in their claim that the events described were to happen “soon” who first read the prophecies. No other interpretation is possible if the words are taken in their “plain, primary, ordinary, usual, or normal sense. If the biblical authors had wanted to be tentative in the way they described future events, they would have equivocated in the words expressing probability.<sup>7</sup>

Later, when addressing dispensationalism in particular, he stresses this point:

Those who believe in a pre-tribulational rapture teach that Jesus’ coming has always been “soon,” that is, He could come at any moment. This is nonsense. “Soon” means “near in time,” before the generation of the apostles who were with Jesus passed away (Matthew 24:34). Sound Bible interpretations cannot maintain that “near” can mean “any moment” when nearly two thousand years have passed. (Ibid., pp 194-195)

Elsewhere, DeMar does a study where he checks the various words that John uses for “soon,” “near,” and “quickly” in the book of Revelation to see how John also uses them in his Gospel. What DeMar finds is that John is consistent:

Doing something quickly (ταχὺ) in the above passages does not allow for an extended period of time. The action that was done quickly happened in a short period of time. Quickly does not mean that when a person decides to do something—whether in a short or long period of time—that it will be done fast when a person decides to do something. If an employee says, “I’ll do what you ask soon,” and then waits three months, he or she has not done the assigned task. When the employer inquires, “You said you would do it soon. Why hasn’t it been done?” The employee answers: “Soon means that when I act, it will be done quickly. The time in between the assignment and the job does not figure into the meaning of ‘soon’ and ‘quickly.’ When I eventually do the job, I will do it fast.”<sup>8</sup>

He goes on later in the same manuscript to show how silly such reasoning is. Furthermore, he states:

Every time the Greek words translated “soon” or “quickly” are used in the New Testament they always mean that the coming event or time is to happen within a proximate period of time.<sup>9</sup>

He is absolutely correct.

### Crushing blows

Those who have attempted to show otherwise run into issues. Another such attempt is made by Dr. Alan Kurschner, who disagrees with DeMar. His reasoning? He appeals to the

“pragmatic use of language.”<sup>10</sup> The problem is that the pragmatic or practical use of such words as “soon,” “near,” and “quickly” works against him. The New Testament was written to the common man of the day, and the “pragmatic use of language” would be to take the words in their everyday meaning, rather than to try to insert some esoteric, undecipherable meaning into these common words. The “pragmatics of apocalyptic parenesis” that Kurschner relies on are a mirage, and would serve to give the original audience false hope. In fact, this method of interpretation is something that is generally only associated with biblical prophecy, and as such is nothing short of a side-step rationalization. Kurschner goes on to appeal to Romans 16:20:

*The God of peace will soon (en tachei) crush Satan under your feet.*

Kurschner says “last time I checked, that did not happen in Paul’s day; in fact, after two thousand years, it still has not happened.” This begs the question—just how did he check this? How did he verify that it hadn’t happened? Did he have a personal interview with Satan?

One of the problems is that Kurschner pulls this verse out of context in an effort to try to support this faulty reasoning. But Romans 16:20 is part of the exhortations at the end of the letter to the Romans. There is no indication whatsoever in this entire section that anything is to be taken in any other way than as an immediate comfort to the Roman saints. And if the author, under inspiration, states that Satan would soon be crushed under the feet of the Roman saints, then that settles it, even if we can’t see clearly from our vantage point just how that was accomplished or what it entailed.

The book of Revelation is bookended with the remarks that “all these things” would happen quickly (Rev 1:1; 22:6)—using the exact same words (*en tachei*) as in Romans 16:20. And the events delineated within these bookends include the fall of Satan (Rev 20:10).

When it comes right down to it, the rendering of such words as merely “the pragmatics of apocalyptic parenesis” is nothing more than illusory rationalization, an attempt to dance around the clear, simple language in its everyday usage.

### Keeping it simple

When we read the New Testament as a collection of simple letters, written to the common people in the first century, and try to understand them just as written simply, without resorting to some esoteric manipulation or convoluted tap dance, the meaning is clear. The message of the New Testament was—and still is—the Gospel given to the common man. Keep it simple—it was intended to be understood, even by those new saints who could not yet handle anything of substance (1 Cor 3:2; Heb 5:13; 1 Pet 2:1-2). If you employ this method with an open mind and an open heart, your eyes will be opened—quickly!

The element of *time* in these words cannot be discarded in favor of a simple reference to the *method* of the action. Such methodology is invalid and should be quickly rejected. No matter what those who try to manipulate the common language of Scripture say, the adverbs used in Revelation 1:1-3 simply do not work that way. *Quickly* always retains the nuance of time. ✚

1. <https://walvoord.com/article/259>

2. *Everyman’s Bible Commentary*, Revelation (1996), Revelation 1:1

3. *Lange Commentary*, Revelation 1:1

4. (HELPS Word Studies; Strong’s Greek 5035; <https://biblehub.com/greek/5035.htm>)

5. <https://revelationlogic.com/articles/what-does-soon-mean/>

6. Stephen Whitsett, *The Cold Case Against Preterism*

7. Gary DeMar, *Last Days Madness*, pgs 30-31

8. Gary DeMar, *Brock Hollett’s Attempt to Debunk Preterism* (unpublished manuscript)

9. Ibid.

10. <https://www.alankurschner.com/2014/03/08/preterisms-literalistic-interpretation-of-jesus-is-coming-soon-en-tachei/>



**D**ID ANY OF YOU ever have to ride the school bus? I did. And the coolest place to sit was always in the last row. The front seat was designated for that geeky boy with horned-rimmed glasses, a pocket protector, and a tartan plaid patterned satchel. That kid would never sit on the back row. That privilege was reserved for the older boys, and 2nd graders did not challenge that birthright. But here you are, on the last page of *Fulfilled!* Magazine. In the back with TJ. It feels pretty cool back here, doesn't it?

Don't forget about the yearly conferences happening this year. Get plugged in and try your best to attend one, even if only by streaming online.

In the previous issue I had a nice interview with Pete and Rachael Wrue, (and I hope you picked up copy of either of their books), so I am going to tie this article to the one before the Wrue interview, where Pilate gets his answer from Yeshua about: "What is Truth?"

If you like the article, you can purchase Volume 6 of my series "Understanding the Bible for Average Christians" at [www.tjsmithministries.com](http://www.tjsmithministries.com). This month's installment is a chapter in that book.

I was curious if Jesus ever answered Pilate's question from John 18:38 "What is truth?" and if Yeshua did not answer, why? I used to think one reason Jesus did not answer Pilate was to fulfill this verse:

*"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth."* (Isaiah 53:7, ESV)

However, Jesus did not remain silent while He was with Pilate. Here is the entire conversation between the two:

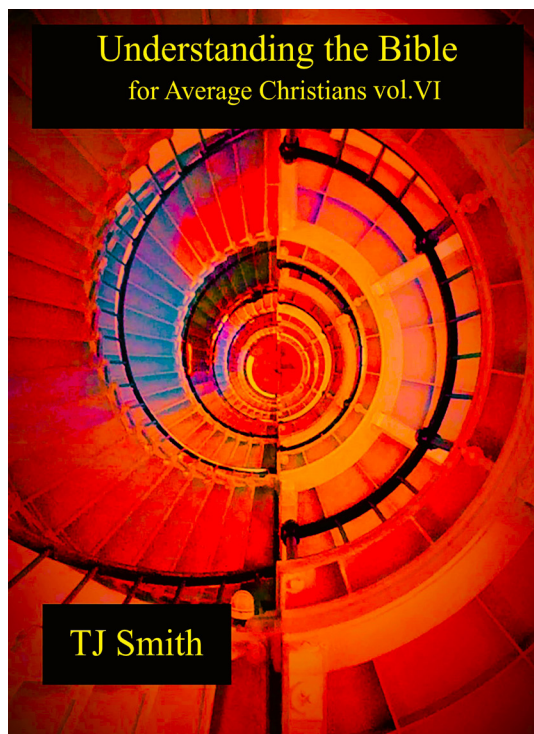
28 "Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. 29 So Pilate went outside to them and said,

'What accusation do you bring against this man?' 30 They answered him, 'If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you.'

31 Pilate said to them, 'Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.' The Jews said to him, 'It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.' 32 This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die. 33 So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

34 Jesus answered, 'Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?' 35 Pilate answered, 'Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?' 36

Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.' 37 Then Pilate said to him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to



## Pilate's "What is Truth?"

T. J. Smith

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

tjsmithmusic@yahoo.com  
www.tjsmithministries.com



*bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.*<sup>38</sup> Pilate said to him, 'What is truth?' After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, 'I find no guilt in him.'" (John 18:28-38 ESV; underline added)

Because He was like a silent lamb going to slaughter, He would offer no more revelations of His deity. The Savior said everything He needed to say. But did Jesus' conversation with Pilate conflict with Isaiah 53:7? Not at all. Isaiah described the Jews as the ones leading Jesus to the slaughter, not Pilate. The Jewish leadership were the "shearers," not Pilate. Context is king!

*"Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you."* (James 5:4-6; underline added)

It was the Jews who would be destroyed, not the Romans: ". . . without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God." (Phil 1:28; underline added)

We also read this in Acts 4:10: ". . . then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed." (Underline added)

Jesus remained silent in front of His accusers, the Jews. But did Pilate ever understand what Truth was?

Here is some background on Passover lambs that explain Pilate's statement to the crowd after speaking with Jesus.

"Jewish law required four days for the chief priests to inspect the Passover Lamb (Exodus 12:3-6). On Nisan 10, four days before the Passover on Nisan 14, the High Priest selected the Passover Lamb for the

nation of Israel. During the next four days, the lamb was thoroughly inspected for blemishes and defects—anything that would disqualify it from being an acceptable sacrifice for the sins of the nation. At the end of this inspection period—assuming a positive outcome—the High Priest would publicly declare, "Behold the Lamb. I find no fault in him."<sup>1</sup>

This four-day inspection of the Passover lamb confirms that the crucifixion of Jesus occurred on Wednesday, Nisan 13 (during "the twilight" of Nisan 14).

According to Avi Ben Mordechai, Yeshua entered the Temple on *Palm Sunday* (Nisan 10). Then, during the next four days (till Wednesday of the crucifixion week in AD 30), Jesus was interrogated ("inspected") on four separate occasions by the Chief Priests and rulers of the Temple (Mark 11-12:34).

His interrogators could find no fault (i.e., no blemish or defect) in Him. "And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions" (Mark 12:34). Secular authorities also examined Him, all coming to the same conclusion: "*I find no fault in Him.*" (Italics in original.)

Pilate spoke the Truth in his next words: "*I find no fault in Him.*" Though the Savior called Himself the "Truth" in John 14:6, Pilate was not there, so we can cut him some slack for not knowing that. Yeshua was the perfect sacrifice and according to tradition, Pilate and Claudia eventually heard the Shepherd's voice and repented and followed Christ.

You might want to go back and read the article on Pilate to refresh yourself with his life [2023 Winter issue].

Side Note: As believers in Yeshua and His fulfilled work, we are facing continual battles on social media, at church, and work. It's coming from fake media, bad theology, any and all forms of twisting Scripture to somehow "spoon text" whatever one is trying to prove. Especially with the "END TIMES." Let's stay focused on the love we are to be sharing, the pure faith of Yahweh and our confidence that Yeshua is King. ✝

1. Jesus' Death and Resurrection – The Passover Lamb | Truth in Scripture

## In This Issue:

### Perspectives

*The Day of the Lord*

### Objection Overruled!

*Responding further to  
Mathison on Acts 1:9-11*

### Perspectives

*"Quickly, Quickly"*

### Parting Thoughts

*Pilate's "What is Truth?"*

Fulfilled Communications Group  
3784 Camanche Pkwy N.  
Ione, CA 95640-9614

## 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!*