

PREMILLENNIALISM

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PREMILLENNIALISM—BACKGROUND

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The doctrine of Premillennialism has become extremely prominent in our modern times.

1. Most of the religious groups of our day hold to some form of the doctrine.
2. Its prominence is accounted for in the main due to its sensational nature. Worldly-minded people, who are prone to accept the doctrines spoon-fed them by their leaders, who are more interested in things which appeal to their emotions than to their intellect, are apt to take hold of such exciting ideas as premillennialism. Simple Biblical truth is not as important to such people as their sensational doctrines.
3. Unfortunately, among religious leaders, there is all too often found a desire for prominence and wealth. People can be more easily led by their emotions than by their intellect. The leaders have well-equipped themselves with the skill to manipulate the emotions of the audience, which results in a much larger following that could be had by the simple presentation of the gospel truths.

B. Given the sensational nature of the subject of Premillennialism, it is easy to see why it is popular.

1. Shallow-thinking, worldly-minded people are more interested in sensational and emotional issues more than in the plain truth of the Bible. Their sincerity is unquestioned.
2. Those who are spiritually-minded [i.e., those who want to know what God actually says so that they can do what he wants] are willing to delve into the truth with open minds, and study with the diligent effort that is required. They are interested in truth; they are not bound up in sensationalism.

II. WE HAVE BEEN HEARING SOME STRANGE THINGS IN RECENT YEARS.

A. The war with Iraq in 1990-91 led to much speculation.

1. "Iraq is the Gate to Armageddon" (Title of article in "Pulpit Helps," Nov., 1990). The article, written by Moody Adams, went on to say that the Bible warned us against Iraq in the Book of Revelation!
 - a. He cited Revelation 16:12: "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." Somehow, according to Adams, the present mid-east war is fulfilling this passage. He asserts that an army of 200 million troops will move across the dry river bed and meet another great army at Megiddo in the battle of Armageddon in a little valley in northern Israel. He says the plain is only 14 x 20 miles (1,478,400 square feet). This would give the space of less than 1 square foot for each of the 200 million invading soldiers (not counting the opposing force). His claim is pure speculation, and is nonsensical!
 - b. He cited Revelation 9:14-15: "...Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men." Mr. Adams thinks that this supports his theory, but again, he offers no evidence that this speaks of modern-day Iraq and that one-third of humanity will be wiped out as a result of the fighting that is going on over there today. What happens to his theory when Iraq is defeated?
 - c. He cited Revelation 18:21: "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." Adams claims that Hussein is rebuilding ancient Babylon, and that Iraq is really Babylon. But the Bible says that Babylon was to be destroyed in ancient times and would rise no more. Whoever tries to rebuild Babylon will fail, just as Mr. Adams' theory will fail. "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from

generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there" (Isa. 13:19-20).

2. "You know, I turn back to your ancient prophets in the Old Testament and the signs for telling [fore-telling?] Armageddon, and I find myself considering if we're the generation that is going to see that come about. I don't know if you've noted any of those prophecies lately, but believe me, they certainly describe the times we're going through" (Ronald Reagan, 1983; "Florida Today," People Section, January 8, 1988). This was the lead-in to an article that followed which included several references to what certain men have predicted in recent years:
 - a. Herman Stalvey, leader of The First Church of The Last Chance in Vero Beach said in 1980 that some events would occur in 1988 which would lead to the Second Coming of Christ. He cited Matthew 24:32-34, and claimed that "this generation" had reference our current generation. He died in a hospital in 1985.
 - b. James Monroe, coordinator of the Joy Outreach Ministry in Melbourne, said in 1982 that the "beast" of Revelation 13 was at that time serving in the White House. He claimed that the letters of Ronald Wilson Reagan match the mystical number of 666 (Rev. 13:18)! Mr. Monroe was beaten to death with a concrete birdbath in his own home in 1982.
 - c. In 1985, Lyndon LaRouche appeared on Merritt Island to announce the USSR was going to launch a "thermonuclear Pearl Harbor" against the United States in 1988. At the time this article appeared, LaRouche was on trial for running a credit-card scam.
 - d. Barney George, a retired water system engineer from Kennedy Space Center, told the writer of the article that "the end of the world is near." Again, 1988 was the year of emphasis in George's speculations. He cited Isaiah 10:24-26, Daniel 11:20-21, and Revelation 11:3-4 as offering evidence of his conclusions. But only a mind that is full of speculation would find anything in these passages to support his view. "Desire is the mother of the doctrine."
 - 1) Isaiah 10:24-26: "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt. For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction. And the LORD of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb: and *as* his rod *was* upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt."
 - 2) Daniel 11:20-21: "Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes *in* the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle. And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries."
 - 3) Revelation 11:3-4: "And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth."
- B. The year 1988 has come and gone, and none of the things predicted have appeared.
1. This makes the men quoted false prophets: "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. 18:20-22).
 2. Richard DeHaan made some speculative assertions in a booklet entitled, "The Middle East: Watch It!" published in 1985. He cites Ezekiel 38:14-16 and says that the "Gog" of the passage is a reference to Russia and her allies, who would invade Israel when she was dwelling peacefully in Palestine.
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DeHaan thinks that this invasion is now imminent, but that before it occurs, Christ will return to "rapture" the saints from earth. He boldly proclaims that Ezekiel 38 and 39 are still future to 1985, but that the events portrayed in those chapters were about ready to take place at any given moment! More than 5 years have passed since he presented this information, and the USSR has shown no indication of attacking tiny Israel. There are several things terribly inconsistent with DeHaan's interpretation.

- a. The invading army would be riding upon horses (38:15). It has been many years since any army used horses in any number. If the invasion is literally from the north, against literal Israel, and a literal battle would ensue, then the means of transport and the weapons named are also literal. But Russian soldiers do not ride on horses.
- b. Ezekiel 39:8-10 predicts that God would defeat the invading army [Russia and her allies, according to DeHaan], and that their weapons, the shields, bucklers, bows, arrows, handstaves, and spears, would be burned. It would take seven years for all of these weapons to be burned because they would be so numerous, and Israel would have no need to cut down any trees for fire because of the great number of weapons. Again, if the other parts of the prophecy must be taken literally, the part about the weapons must be also taken as literal bows, arrows, spears, etc. "Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord GOD; this *is* the day whereof I have spoken. And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years: So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down *any* out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezek. 39:8-10).
- c. Only a small portion of the Jewish people reside in Palestine. Since they became a separate nation in 1948, only a relatively few of them have lived there. And during the many years since, they have not lived peacefully!

C. Perhaps the most prominent advocate of the millennialism in our time has been Hal Lindsay.

1. His books include, *The Late Great Planet Earth* and *There's A New World Coming* (a pseudo-commentary on Revelation). He asserts that the seven churches of Asia represent seven stages of church history. The seventh church (Laodicea), he says, pictures the time frame from the year 1900 to the time of the "tribulation." He is on record as predicting that the Lord would return within one generation of the time Israel obtained a homeland in Palestine in 1948. Since a generation is about 40 years [and since biblical events often occurred in 40-year cycles] Lindsay thought 1988 would mark the time of the "rapture" and other end-time events as envisioned by the millennial speculators (TLGPE, p.54).
2. Since the beginning of the turmoil in the Persian Gulf (August, 1990), and now the war with Iraq, his books are selling very fast. [We will be investigating several of his views in these studies]. Iraq was soundly defeated on the battlefield by America and her allies. The ground war was remarkably short!

III. THE MILLENNIAL DOCTRINE HAS A WIDE APPEAL AMONG MANY RELIGIONISTS.

A. To get a broad view of the religious systems involved, look at some major groups.

1. The Jehovah's Witness movement has their own view of future events. They think that Christ will renovate the earth and establish it as a universal Garden of Eden for all of the faithful Jehovah-Witness members. The wicked dead will not be resurrected; the wicked who are alive at the Lord's return will be annihilated. The 144,00 of Revelation 14 will be in heaven. This is a false system.
2. Herbert Armstrong invented a view which has some similarities to the Jehovah Witness ideas (man has no soul; no hell) and other millennial views, but there are marked differences. He thought that the 10 "lost" tribes of Israel are the English and American people. This is a false system.

3. The Adventist denomination has certain peculiar views, but they also agree with some of the Jehovah Witnesses and Armstrong notions about the human soul and hell. This is a false system.
 4. Postmillennialism teaches that Christ will return after the kingdom has been established. Prior to his coming, the advocates of this view see a period of time in the which human society reaches a high plane of morality and spirituality which is made possible by the gradual spread of the kingdom. When a certain level of spirituality is reached, Christ will return.
 - a. This view is manifestly false since the Bible says: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13).
 - b. The Lord raised an unanswered question: "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find [*the*] faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8).
 - c. Mankind is not going to become better and better, but worse and worse.
 5. Premillennialism teaches that Christ will return before the establishment of the kingdom, which is seen to be an earthly government, with the Lord personally on his throne in Jerusalem, reigning for a literal 1000 years. There are many variations among those who hold this view. This is a false system.
 6. Amillennialism "teaches that there will be a parallel and contemporaneous development of good and evil—God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom—in this world, which will continue until the second coming of Christ. At the second coming of Christ the resurrection and judgment will take place, followed by the eternal order of things - the absolute, perfect Kingdom of God, in which there will be no sin, suffering nor death" (quoted by Lorraine Boettner, *The Millennium*, The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia, p.109).
 - a. "Amillennialism" is a negative word. The letter "A" indicates the negative in Greek. The word means that its advocates are neither post- nor pre-millennial.
 - b. This view holds the millennium to cover the time between the ascension of Christ to his Second Coming. The only reference to the 1000-year reign is in Revelation 20, which is interpreted figuratively. When Christ returns, this will signal the end of the "millennium," and will result in the resurrection of the dead, the changing of the living, the Judgment, and eternity.
 7. Dispensationalism is a more recent theory, and teaches that human history has gone through several stages. This is a false system.
- B. A closer look at dispensationalism.
1. It lists seven stages of human history:
 - a. Innocence: from the Garden of Eden to the fall.
 - b. Conscience: from the fall to the flood.
 - c. Government: from the flood to the promise given to Abraham.
 - d. Promise: from the promise given to Abraham to the giving of the Law.
 - e. Law: from the giving of the Law to the sacrifice of Christ.
 - f. Grace: from the sacrifice of Christ to his return.
 - g. The Kingdom: from his return for the 1000-year reign to the end of time.
 2. Dispensationalists say the 7 churches of Asia (Rev. 1-3) represent seven stages of church history in which the conditions of the 7 churches depicted the condition of the church during subsequent times. These are mere assertions—no proof exists for the conclusions these errorists have reached.
 - a. Ephesus: Duty Without Love: 33-100 A.D. (Rev. 2:1-7).
 - b. Smyrna: Poor and Persecuted, but rich: 100-312 A.D. (Rev. 2:8-11).
 - c. Pergamos: Compromise with the World-System: 312-590 A.D. (Rev 2:12-17).
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- d. Thyatira: The Great Counterfeit: 590-1517. (Rev. 2:18-29).
 - e. Sardis: Dead Orthodoxy: 1517-1750. (Rev. 3:1-6).
 - f. Philadelphia: Revival and Evangelism: 1750-1900. (Rev. 3:7-13).
 - g. Laodicea: Compromise and Apostasy: 1900-Tribulation. (Rev. 3:14-22).
3. It has similarities with premillennialism but there are distinctions between them. We will be studying the major tenets of premillennialism and dispensationalism in this study, lumping them into one category. Each of the major features of these doctrinal systems will be stated from the proper sources, and tested in the light of Bible truth.

IV. TO UNDERSTAND THE DOCTRINE, THEIR BASIC TENETS MUST BE SEEN.

A. The basic features of the premillennial view are these:

1. The kingdom of God is not now in existence.
 - a. They think that Christ came to establish an earthly kingdom, reigning on David's throne in Jerusalem for a thousand years, but when the Jews rejected him, he was forced to set up the church instead of the kingdom.
 - b. Premillennialism teaches that Christ will set up the kingdom after his Second Coming.
2. Just before Christ comes, there will be a time of great apostasy and wickedness.
3. Our present generation is the "last days" prior to the coming of Christ; his coming is said to be imminent.
4. When Christ returns, only the righteous dead will be raised. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thess. 4:13-18). [But this passage is only considering the righteous; the righteous dead will be raised and the righteous living will be instantly changed into their spiritual bodies. John 5:28-29 affirms that all the dead will be resurrected at the same hour, thus destroying this feature of the human doctrine under examination].
5. The righteous who are still living at the Lord's return will be secretly caught up out of the earth to meet the Lord in the air. This operation they call *The Rapture*. [But the word *rapture* is not in the Bible; neither is the doctrine!].
6. The saints who have met the Lord in the air will be with him there for seven years, during which time the *Great Tribulation* will be taking place on earth.
 - a. The Dispensationalists take this view; the premillennialists think the saints remain on earth during the tribulation. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. 24:21-22).
 - b. During this tribulation, the Jewish nation will be gathered back to Palestine, and the whole nation will be converted to Christ. They misapply Romans 11:26: "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. 11:26). Paul's point here is that all of the Israelites who will be saved will be saved in the same manner in which the Gentiles are saved—through gospel obedience. These errorists also clam that the temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem and animal sacrifices will be resumed.

7. During the "great tribulation" on earth, the Russians will invade the land of Israel. (Ezek. 38:14-16). The Lord will fight against this great army and defeat it (38:22-23).
 - a. After the "rapture of the church" (and before the Russian invasion) a man will arise in the Western world who will make a 7-year treaty with Israel. This treaty will cause the Jews to "relax their guard, paving the way for the Russian invasion and the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38 and 39" (DeHaan, pp.11f). Half-way through the treaty, this man (called the prince; the Antichrist), will break his treaty with Israel. Frightful persecution will be brought upon all those who refuse to worship him as God. DeHaan says that these events appear to closely coincide with the invasion and defeat of the Russian army.
 - b. Antichrist will pitch his tents on the slopes of the Mount of Olives and seek to destroy the 144,000 of Revelation 14:1-5. With great armies backing him in his war against the Jews, he will try to overcome the Almighty and frustrate his purposes (cf. Rev. 16:13,14,16). (DeHaan, pp.12f). In the valley of Megiddo, the great battle of Armageddon will be fought between the Lord and these armies (Zech. 14:3,9; Rev. 19:20). Antichrist will be destroyed in this battle.
 8. Having defeated his enemies, Christ will then establish his kingdom in Jerusalem, and he and his saints will reign there for 1000 years. Over whom will they reign? Will their rule be gladly received or will obedience be forced?
 - a. Daniel 9:24-27 says the time of the establishment of the kingdom would be 70 weeks (490 prophetic days, which is counted as 490 years), from the point in the text. According to the millennialists everything went fine with the prophetic time-clock until, at the threshold of the 70th week, the Jews rejected Jesus and his kingdom. Suddenly, he did something he had not planned: he postponed the kingdom and announced his plans to establish the church instead.
 - b. This means, according to the theory, that the Old Testament prophecies concerning the kingdom have not yet been fulfilled. Daniel 2:31-35, 44 foretold that the kingdom would be established during the 4th world power after the Babylonian Empire. History (and the New Testament) shows that this 4th world power was the great Roman Empire. Millennialists believe, therefore, since the kingdom was postponed, the Roman Empire must be resurrected toward the end of the "church age" in order for the Lord to fulfill his prophecies. Not only that, but the temple must be rebuilt in Jerusalem and animal sacrifices must be resumed.
 9. During the millennium, Satan will be bound. He will be loosed for a short time at the close of the 1000-year reign. Wickedness will have a short-lived triumph while Satan is loosed, but Christ will put down this rebellion in what DeHaan calls "the last war of human history" (p.14). All of this is based on a literal (but inconsistent) interpretation of Revelation 20. The scenario is given as follows: Satan will find those who obeyed the Lord in the millennium only because their obedience was coerced. "Eager to rebel, and deceived by Satan, they will try to overcome Christ and His people by attacking the saints and the holy city. In this final rebellion, however, they will meet with sudden and supernatural destruction" (p.14).
 - a. DeHaan says the Gog and Magog of Revelation 20 are not the same as those of Ezekiel 38 and 39. He states that the war of Ezekiel 38, 39 and the war of Revelation 20 will be 1000 years apart, one before and the other after the millennium.
 - b. This final rebellion, according to DeHaan (p.15), "demonstrates again the hopeless corruption of the old Adamic nature" (i.e., *total heredity depravity*).
 - c. Somewhere in this "timetable," the wicked dead will be raised in an operation called the second resurrection. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection" (Rev. 20:5).
 10. The "Great White Throne Judgment" will take place: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.
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And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).

11. The "new heaven and new earth" will be the new home of the redeemed. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God" (Rev. 21:1-3).

B. DeHaan lists the following as depicting the major events of *God's prophetic program*:

1. The Rapture of the Church.
 2. The Revelation of Antichrist.
 3. The Great Tribulation.
 4. The Battle of Armageddon.
 5. The Glorious Return of Christ.
 6. The Binding of Satan.
 7. The Millennial Kingdom.
 8. Satan's Final Rebellion.
 9. The Last Judgment.
 10. The New Heaven and the New Earth.
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THE FALSE DOCTRINE OF "THE RAPTURE"

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The doctrine of "The Rapture" is a major element in the Premillennial system.

1. The *rapture* is the theory that Christ will return to the earth and "catch up" all the faithful Christians from the earth; this operation is said to be secret, unseen, and silent. These saints (including those who lived in past times and those living when he returns) will be with the Lord in the air for seven years.
2. During these 7 years, a great tribulation will be taking place upon earth. At the end of the seven years, having defeated Antichrist in the battle of Armageddon, Christ will return with his saints, and set up the millennium kingdom upon earth.
3. The theory says that the next item on the Lord's end-time agenda is the rapture, which they perceive as "imminent."

B. The false doctrine of the Rapture has engendered some strange notions.

1. To understand clearly what millennialists means by the *rapture*, consider these scenes which were imagined by Hal Lindsay (*TLGPE*, P.136):
 - a. "There I was, driving down the freeway and all of a sudden the place went crazy...cars going in all directions...and not one of them had a driver. I mean it was wild! I think we've got an invasion from outer space!"
 - b. "It was the last quarter of the championship game and the other side was ahead. Our boys had the ball. We made a touchdown and tied it up. The crowd went crazy. Only one minute to go and they fumbled—our quarterback recovered—he was about a yard from the goal when— zap—no more quarterback—completely gone, just like that!"
 - c. "It was puzzling—very puzzling. I was teaching my course in the Philosophy of Religion when all of a sudden three of my students vanished. They simply vanished! They were quite argumentative—always trying to prove their point from the Bible. No great loss to the class. However, I do find this disappearance very difficult to explain."
2. Bumper stickers announce the theory: "In case of the Rapture, this car will be vacated." "Will I see you in the Rapture?" A movie ("The Rapture") was produced a few years ago which presented cases such as those described by Lindsay (above). It has the U.S. President disappearing; Billy Graham could not be found; a long-haired singer on the Tonight show vanished in the middle of his song. (Robert Taylor, "What About The Rapture?"). A more recent movie, "Left Behind," teaches this same sensational theory—it also is without scriptural authority.
3. Wayne Jackson traced the rapture idea to the early 1800s. He quotes from a book published in 1861 which attributes the doctrine to a "revelation" received by a certain Scottish girl named Margaret Macdonald, who (according to the claim), received a vision suggesting the rapture theory. Thus, the doctrine has its roots in subjectivity rather than in Scripture! The word *rapture* is not found in accurate translations of the Bible; it is from man, not from the Scriptures!

II. DISCUSSION.

A. The rapture requires a second and a third coming of Christ.

1. According to the theory, Christ will come to raise the righteous dead and change the righteous living, taking them up to meet him in the air where they will be with him for seven years. At the end of the seven years, he will return to earth with the saints to establish his earthly kingdom. The Second Coming will be for his saints and the Third Coming will be with his saints.
2. They think that this is only one coming, but with two stages separated by seven years! How could two separate actions, seven years apart, be logically claimed to be different stages of the same coming

of Christ? Each *stage* has different purposes, takes place at different times, and are called by separate names.

3. Actually, it would require a Fourth Coming for Jude 14-15 says that Christ will come to execute judgment against the wicked; but millennial doctrine says the wicked will not be raised until the end of the 1000-year reign. Their doctrine needs three more literal comings of Christ to fit their system. "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14-15).

B. The Bible teaches that Christ will come **for** his saints and **with** his saints.

1. How do we explain the biblical statements about Christ coming for his saints (cf. 1 Thess. 4:13-17) and his coming with his saints (1 Thess. 3:13)? When he returns (1 Thess. 4:13ff), it will be for the purpose of raising the dead and changing the living; but only the physical remains of the dead saints will be on earth; the immortal spirits of the dead saints will have been with Christ in eternity; it is these spirits that will accompany him at his Second Coming.
2. They argue that the coming of Christ for the rapture is represented in Scripture by the Greek word *parousia* ("coming" or "presence"); his return to set up the kingdom seven years later is represented by the Greek word *epiphaneia* ("appearing" or "manifestation"). They think Christ will be "present" but unseen in the *parousia* but will be visible to all in the *epiphaneia*. This *sounds* pretty good, but the words are used interchangeably by the inspired writers.
 - a. 2 Thessalonians 2:8: "And then shall that Wicked by revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness (*epiphaneia*) of his coming (*parousia*). The return of Christ is described as both his coming and manifestation.
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 3:13: "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming (*parousia*) of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." This statement is wrong according to the argument: when he comes (*parousia*) it is for his saints, not with his saints; Paul used the wrong word! But Paul was right; the Lord will be manifested when he comes; all shall see him and hear him:
 - 1) Matthew 24:26-27: "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."
 - 2) Acts 1:9-11: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."
 - 3) 1 Thessalonians 4:16: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."
 - 4) Revelation 1:7: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."
3. These passages show conclusively that the two terms are used interchangeably in the inspired Record; no distinction is made between their use in discussing the Lord's second coming. Therefore, the argument (based on a distinction) falls!
4. The Bible speaks only of two literal comings of Christ: (1) when he came for his personal ministry in Israel; and (2) when he returns at the end of time (Acts 1:9-11; Heb. 9:26-28). There will be no third or fourth coming!

- a. Acts 1:9-11: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."
 - b. Hebrews 9:26-28: "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."
- C. According to the theory, following the rapture, no faithful Christian is left upon the earth.
1. During the 7-year tribulation and the 1000-year earthly kingdom, the Jewish system will again be in effect (according to millennialists); the "church age" will end at the rapture. "If so much as one passage can be pointed out which teaches that believers are to remain on the earth until the Epiphany, the whole argument for a secret Rapture is dissolved, and the dispensational system falls with it" (Loraine Boettner, *The Millennium*, p.165). Mr. Boettner listed these passages which do that very thing.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 1:7: "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - b. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10: "Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."
 - c. 1 Timothy 6:13-14: "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; That thou keep *this* commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - d. 2 Timothy 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - e. Titus 2:13: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."
 - f. 1 Peter 4:13: "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."
 - g. 1 Peter 5:4: "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."
 2. But the Bible teaches that the return of Christ will also be the end of time.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 1:7-8: "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - b. The day of Christ is said to be the end (not the beginning of some other phase) of earthly affairs. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great

noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" (2 Peter 3:10-12).

3. The return of Christ will signal the time of Judgment, not the beginning of another system of earthly religion.
 - a. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." The day of Christ will be unannounced (as a thief, there will be no outward signs of his arrival); it will be at a time when both saints and sinners live upon the earth. Sudden destruction will befall the wicked on that day; those who are righteous will be rewarded (vs. 10) on that same day.
 - b. Matthew 16:27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Men (whether good or evil) will be rewarded when he returns. There is no dual coming, no dual resurrections; no rapture; no tribulation. This time the millennialists call the rapture is shown to be the time of judgment upon all.
 - 1) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 2) Acts 23:6: "But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men *and* brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."
 - 3) Acts 24:14: "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets."
4. When the Lord returns, it will be for the purpose of giving rest to the righteous and punishment to the disobedient. Paul again combines the blessing of the saints and the punishment of the wicked in one statement and has both taking place at the same time. There will be no secret rapture. "Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 Thess. 1:6-10).
5. The parables of the tares and the dragnet show that the wicked and the righteous will both remain in the earth until the full end of the world.
 - a. The final separation would in "the end of this world."
 - 1) Matthew 13:24-30: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root

up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

- 2) Matthew 13:36-43: "Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."
- b. The separation of the evil and good will be at the end: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:47-50).
6. The false doctrine of the Rapture contradicts the "last day" passages:
 - a. John 6:39-40: "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."
 - b. John 6:44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."
 - c. John 6:54: "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."
 - d. John 11:24: "Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."
 - e. John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."
7. We will ever be with the Lord in heaven at his coming.
 - a. John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also."
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 4:18: "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

III. CONCLUSION.

A. The Lord's Second Coming was not imminent in the first century.

1. We know this to be true because he did not come!
 2. John 21:18-19: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me." The Lord told Peter that he would live to be an old man and would die a martyr's death—so the second coming
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would not be during his long life. In the context, the Lord implied that John would live to be an old man, thus the second coming would not be during his lifetime (John 21:20-23).

3. Acts 22:21: "And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." Paul was later called to the apostleship, and was sent to the wide-spread Gentiles, to preach the gospel to them. The Lord's plan for Paul precluded his imminent return, for the work this apostle was to do would require many years.
 4. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by our gathering together unto him*, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." Paul clearly affirmed that Christ would not come until some time after the Great Apostasy occurred. Since this "falling away" would require many years to reach fulfillment, we can know that the Lord's return was not imminent during that ancient time.
- B. We cannot say that his second coming is imminent now—we simply do not know that it is!
1. Mark 13:32-37: "But of that day and *that hour knoweth no man*, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. *For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey*, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."
 2. His coming is described as the sudden and unexpected arrival of a thief—no warning will be issued by the burglar and no signs in nature or human events can indicate the near approach of Christ.
 - a. 2 Peter 3:10: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."
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THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Premillennialism teaches that the kingdom of God has not yet been established.

1. This is the basic premise of premillennialism. Its view is that Christ came to set up an earthly kingdom but was forced to change his plans when the Jews rejected him. That this is false is seen by John 6:15: "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." At the height of his popularity among the Jews, many of them tried to take him by force and make him king. The Lord turned them down! This shows that he never intended to set up a material kingdom.
2. He later told Pilate that his kingdom was not of this world: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36).

B. The denial of the present existence of the kingdom is at the heart of premillennialism.

1. Their view requires them to interpret every passage regarding the kingdom to make them fit into their scheme of final things.
2. If it can be shown from the Scriptures that the kingdom has come and is presently in existence, the entire premillennial house of cards comes crashing down!

II. DISCUSSION.

A. We need to survey the Bible's teachings about the kingdom, beginning in the Old Testament.

1. Daniel 2:44—600 B.C.
 - a. Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which is related in Daniel 2:1ff. He was sorely troubled by this dream, but the details of it had slipped from his mind when he awoke. His advisors (the magicians, sorcerers, et al) could not help him. But Daniel stated he would be able to give the interpretation of the dream (2:14-16, 19).
 - c. Daniel revealed the dream and gave the interpretation of it (Daniel 2:27-44). The great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream represented four kingdoms, with Babylon being depicted by its head of gold. After Babylon, another kingdom would arise, represented by the breast and arms; a third kingdom would follow it, being pictured by the belly and thighs; and finally, the fourth kingdom would arise, depicted by the legs and feet. During the time of this fourth kingdom, God would set up his everlasting kingdom.
 - d. The first kingdom was the Babylonian Empire which ended in 539 B.C. The kingdom of the Medes and Persians (Dan. 5) overthrew Babylon; their empire lasted from 539-330 B.C. The Grecian Empire replaced the Medes and Persians; this empire lasted from 330-63 B.C. when they were overthrown by the legions of Rome. The Roman Empire lasted from 63 B.C. to 476 A.D.
 - e. If God was true to his word, he would establish his kingdom during the time of the Roman Empire. Premillennialism says he failed! What does God's word say?
2. Between 30-33 A.D., the kingdom was said to be "at hand."
 - a. Passages:
 - 1) Matthew 3:2: "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 2) Luke 3:1-3: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of

Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

- b. Notice that Luke's account above identifies some of the Roman officials who were in power at the time. Why is this stressed? It is obviously for the purpose of connecting the events promised with the prophecy of Daniel 2:44 which said the kingdom of God would come during the days when the Roman kings were on the throne. God's spokesman, John the Baptizer, said the kingdom was at hand.
- c. Christ said the kingdom was at hand: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17).
- d. The twelve disciples taught that the kingdom was at hand: "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 10:5-7).
- e. The seventy disciples were sent with the same message: "And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you" (Luke 10:9).
- f. The kingdom was spoken of as still future in these passages:
 - 1) Matthew 6:10: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven."
 - 2) Mark 15:43: "Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus."
 - 3) Luke 19:11: "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear."
 - 4) Luke 22:18: "For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come."
 - 5) Luke 23:42-43: "And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
 - 6) Acts 1:6: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"

B. The Lord spoke of the time, circumstances, and place when the kingdom would be established.

1. "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9:1). It would come with power; it would come during the lifetime of some of those who were standing nearby when the Lord gave the statement. We have these three alternatives:
 - a. The Lord was wrong when he said it could come while those men were living;
 - b. Or, some of those men are still living;
 - c. Or the kingdom was established just as the Lord said.
2. "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:47-49). The kingdom was to come into being with power (Mark 9:1); the apostles were to receive this power; this power was to be revealed at Jerusalem. If we can learn when the power came upon the apostles, we will have learned when the kingdom came with power!

- a. The power was to come on the apostles when the Holy Spirit came. "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:5-8).
 - b. The Holy Spirit gave the power to the apostles on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2. Therefore, it was on this day that the kingdom came! "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4).
- C. Since God is always true to his word, the kingdom has come.
1. It was to be set up after Christ ascended back to the Father.
 - a. Psalms 24:7: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."
 - b. Daniel 7:13-14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed."
 - c. Acts 1:9-11: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."
 2. The kingdom is spoken of as being in existence after Acts 2.
 - a. In 96 A.D., John said he was in the kingdom. "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9).
 - b. In 63 A.D., Paul and the Hebrews had received the kingdom: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:28-29).
 - c. In 60 A.D., Paul and the Colossians were in the kingdom: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:13).
- D. The New Birth is the means by which we enter the kingdom.
1. If the kingdom is not here, the New Birth is not operative.
 - a. John 3:5: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
 - b. 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 2. Those who have been delivered from the power of darkness have also been translated into the kingdom where redemption (forgiveness of sins) is given. "Who hath delivered us from the power of
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darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13-14).

E. The Lord's Supper is to be eaten in the kingdom.

1. If there is no kingdom, we have no authority to eat the Supper.

a. Matthew 26:6-29: "Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat *at meat*. But when his disciples saw *it*, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose *is* this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood *it*, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her. Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him. Now the first *day* of the *feast of unleavened bread* the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

b. Mark 14:22-25: "And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

c. Luke 22:29-30: "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

F. When the Lord returns, it will not be to set up his kingdom, but to take the kingdom to heaven!

1. Acts 14:22: "Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

2. 1 Corinthians 15:24: "Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

3. 2 Peter 1:5-11: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you,

and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

III. CONCLUSION.

A. The nature of the kingdom was never intended to be material, but spiritual.

1. It could be seen when it came only by observing the events which accompanied its arrival.
 - a. Luke 17:20-21: "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."
 - b. Luke 24:49: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."
 - c. John 18:36: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."
 - d. Acts 1:5,8: "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence....But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - e. Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
 - f. Acts 2:33: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."
 - g. Romans 14:17: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."
2. The New Testament Scriptures affirm that the kingdom is a spiritual entity and has come—therefore, it is a serious and fatal blunder to deny that fact and to look for the future establishment of a material kingdom on earth!

B. The kingdom and the church are identical.

1. Matthew 16:18-19: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." What the Lord called his church in one verse, he called the kingdom in the next—the terms “church” and “kingdom” are used interchangeably, thus are the same institution.
 2. The difference in the designations is simply for the purpose of emphasizing different aspects of the Lord's people.
 - a. *Church* shows our relationship to the world (we have been "called out" of it).
 - b. *Kingdom* shows the type of government by which the Lord governs us (a Theocracy): Christ reigns over us as King.
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SIGNS POINTING TO THE LORD'S RETURN?

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Premillennialism claims there are definite signs presaging the Lord's return.

1. Statements made in Matthew 24 are taken out of context and are made to teach things which the Lord never intended.
2. The "wars and rumours of wars" (vs. 6), and the famines, pestilences, and earthquakes (vs. 7) are said to point to the Second Coming of Christ.
3. The false prophets, the wickedness, and the absence of love on the part of many (vv. 11-12) are applied to the time just before the Second Coming.

B. "This generation" of Matthew 24:34 is said to be our present generation!

1. This conclusion is reached by these assumptions:
 - a. Israel would achieve nationhood again before the coming of Christ.
 - b. Since part of the Jewish race were granted a homeland in Palestine in 1948, and since a generation is said to be 40 years, premillennialists say that within one generation of the time the Jews were recognized as a nation (1948), the Lord would come back to earth.
2. Hence, 1988 for several years was a key year in millennial thinking.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. What is the clear meaning of Matthew 24?

1. First, the Lord was asked three questions by the apostles, questions which grew out of Christ's pronouncement in the opening verses of the chapter: "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matt. 24:1-2).
2. The Lord said, regarding the buildings of the temple, that the time was coming when not one of those massive stones would be left atop another.
 - a. The apostles wanted to know when "these things" would occur?
 - b. What would be the sign of his coming back?
 - c. And what would be the sign of the end of the world?
3. The first question pertained to the destruction of the temple, which the Lord answered in Matthew 24:4-35.
4. The second and third questions are answered in Matthew 24:35—25:46.

B. Answering their first question, the Lord gave several signs.

1. Their full attention was riveted to his words when he spoke about the destruction of the temple. The massive stones and the size of the temple complex seemed to belie the possibility of its destruction.
2. He gave the general signs of the presence of false teachers, wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, persecutions, apostatizing of some of the saints, general lawlessness in the world, and the gospel being preached far and wide. Secular history and the divine record show that all of these were present in the intervening time between when the Lord spoke these things and the overthrow of Jerusalem and destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. (Matt. 24:4-14).
3. He gave the specific sign of "the abomination of desolation" which had been foretold by Daniel (Matt. 24:15-22; Dan. 9:24-27). Parallel accounts of this are given in Mark 13:14-23 and Luke 21:20-24. Luke identifies the "abomination that maketh desolate" as the great army that would surround

Jerusalem. During this time there would be great tribulation. The coming of the Roman army in 70 A.D. fits all the requirements of the Lord's remarks.

- a. Daniel 9:24-27: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."
 - b. Matthew 24:15-22: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."
 - c. Mark 13:14-23: "But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains: And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take any thing out of his house: And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here *is* Christ; or, lo, *he is* there; believe *him* not: For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things."
 - d. Luke 21:20-24: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."
4. In connection with the appearance of the "abomination of desolation," the saints were to flee from Jerusalem when they saw this army approaching, lest they be caught in the siege. They were to pray that their flight from the city be not on the Sabbath day (when the gates were shut), or in the winter (which would greatly increase their sufferings in fleeing). He pronounced a woe on those who were with child and to those having little babies. He is not describing some end-time event but something
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that would occur in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

- a. Having warned of the coming of false prophets in Matthew 24:23-28, he gave some highly figurative descriptions of the great fall of Jerusalem and the entire Jewish system in verses 29-31.
- b. In verse 27, he stated that his coming would be visible just as lightning can be easily seen, so they were told to disregard the claims of the false prophets that Jesus was in the desert or elsewhere.
- c. In verse 34 he stated that "this generation" would live to see the events he had described in the preceding verses (4-33), with the obvious exception of verse 27. He assured them that they could rely on what he said, for his word "shall not pass away" (verse 35).

C. Christ answered their second two question under one heading.

1. They asked regarding the coming of Christ and the end of the world; he responded to these two question at the same time, for they are to take place at the same time—when the Lord returns he will destroy the world.
2. He states that no signs would be given to indicate the approach of this final disaster. There will be no indication in nature pointing to the end. There is nothing in the Scriptures to identify when the end will come. Only the Father knew when the Second Coming of Christ would be; the angels did not know and the Son did not know: "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is" (Mark 13:32-33). But premillennialists say they have discovered when!
 - a. Jesus had perfect knowledge and understanding of all of the Old Testament, and he did not know when the end would be. It follows, therefore, that the Old Testament does not reveal the time.
 - b. Jesus had perfect knowledge and understanding of all that was to be in the New Testament, and yet he did not know when he could come again. Therefore, the New Testament does not reveal the time.
 - c. His plain statement is that "ye know not when the time is" (Mark 13:33). He said that as the people of Noah's generation had been warned of the impending flood, no sign was given them of its approach: "they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away" (Matt. 24:38-39).
3. Other passages show that his coming will be as a thief in the night comes: he does not make an appointment! He does not send a letter or make a phone call to his intended victim. The Lord has only announced that he will return; he has not told us when it will be; he has not given us any means of pinpointing that time.
 - a. Matthew 24:22-24: "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect."
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober."
 - c. 2 Peter 3:10: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

D. Premillennialism asserts that the signs of Matthew 24:3-14 apply to the time just before he returns.

1. Those who assert that the earthquakes, wars, etc., which we hear about today, are signs of the imminent return of Christ are grossly misled!
2. Many have tried to figure the time of the Second Coming by such *evidence*! Every such attempt was wrong.
 - a. William Miller decided that Christ was coming back between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844. In 1833 some unusual events took place: there was a great meteoric shower that lit up the sky for six hours one night; there were violent earthquakes in India, Mexico, England, and the West Indies. These "signs" were used by Miller to bolster his claim that the Second Coming would be on the date he set. Many people believed him. But Christ did not come! He did some refiguring and decided he had made a slight error: the real date was to be October 22, 1844. Seven hundred other preachers helped him spread the message; many believed it; fear and panic, and enthusiasm and excitement increased; many committed suicide; 100s of Millerites marched through the streets, going from house to house, pleading for people to repent; people gave away or destroyed their property; store-owners threw open their doors, allowing the public to take the merchandise; farmers forsook their crops. The day came; the weather was dark and gloomy, with heavy rainclouds. His followers dressed in white robes; many gathered on hilltops to hasten their sight of the Lord; many gathered in cemeteries where they expected to see the dead rise. Great fires were built to light the sky as night came. At midnight, shouts of joy arose from unbelievers and sobs of sorrow came from the disappointed Millerites. Jesus did not come! They had been deceived by a deceived man! (See V.E. Howard, *35 Years: Are You Listening*, pp.521-524).
 - b. The false teachers of the Watchtower Witnesses predicted that Christ would come in 1914; in more recent times, they predicted the end would be in 1975. All of the dates they have set have proved wrong!

III. CONCLUSION.

A. Anyone who tries to predict the second coming of Christ is doomed to failure.

1. If the Lord did not know, while possessing perfect and full knowledge of the Scriptures, it is certain that no one can learn from the Bible when that time will be—the Scriptures do not tell us.
2. Premillennialists and dispensationalists said the Second Coming would be during the 40-year generation beginning in 1948, with 1988 being the focal point. These men have made millions on these sensational matters, deceiving many people.
 - a. Matthew 7:15-20: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
 - b. 2 Timothy 3:13: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."
 - c. 2 Peter 2:1-9: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth *person*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into

ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

B. We must oppose their false teachings.

1. To keep from being misled by these errorists.
 2. To keep the unsuspecting from being deceived.
 3. We must not use those songs which promote the false doctrines of the millennialists!
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THE ANTI-CHRIST AND THE TRIBULATION

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The coming of Antichrist and the Tribulation occur next in the millennial scheme.

1. At the beginning of the tribulation period, the theory has Israel being established in Palestine again and the Roman Empire resurrected.
2. The Russians will invade Palestine from the north, but will be defeated by Christ's miraculous power.
3. The theory has the temple being rebuilt in Jerusalem, and all the old rites and ceremonies again being practiced.
4. After the rapture but before the Russian invasion a man will arise in the Western world who will make a 7-year treaty with Israel. This treaty will cause the Jews to "relax their guard, paving the way for the Russian invasion and the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38 and 39" (DeHaan, pp.11f).
5. Half-way through the treaty, this prince (the Antichrist), will break the pact, and initiate a horrible persecution on all those who refuse to reverence him as God. The antichrist is thought to be identical to the "man of sin" of 2 Thessalonians 2.
 - a. Antichrist will set up camp on Mount Olivet during his attempts to destroy the 144,000 faithful Jews (cf. Rev. 14:1-5). With his great armies he will try to defeat God's plans (cf. Rev. 16:13,14,16; DeHaan, pp.12f).
 - b. The greatest battle of all time will be fought at Megiddo, the Battle of Armageddon, between Christ and Antichrist. (cf. Zech. 14:3,9; Rev. 19:20). Antichrist will be destroyed.

B. DeHaan offers some information about the Antichrist.

1. "The Bible gives him a number of names. In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul referred to him as the man of sin, the son of perdition, and the lawless one. John spoke of him as Antichrist and the beast. He is the king mentioned in Daniel 11:36. So remember, after the church, the body of Christ, has been removed from the earth to meet the Lord in the air, and before the outpouring of God's wrath, Antichrist will be revealed. He will present himself as the enemy of God and of His Son...(2 Thessalonians 2:8-10)" (pp.26f).
2. There is no evidence that shows the "man of sin" of 2 Thessalonians is identical to antichrist. This person is shown by Paul to have a distinctive religious appearance and claim, and that he would be manifested in connection to the great apostasy Paul predicted. The man of sin is most likely the Roman papacy.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. The Bible's information about the antichrist is found in only four verses.

1. The millennial speculations regarding the antichrist are so extensive it may surprise some to learn that the term is used only five times in the Scriptures; all of these are in four verses in the writings of John
 - a. 1 John 2:18: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."
 - b. 1 John 2:22: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."
 - c. 1 John 4:3: "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."
 - d. 2 John 7: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

2. Premillennial writers shy away from discussing these verses—and for good reason: the information given by John does not fit their theory!
 - a. The Bible does not picture the *antichrist* as some diabolical dictator of the late 20th century. In fact, John states that "even now are there many antichrists" (1 John 2:18). Instead of one Antichrist, John shows that there were many of them, and they were operating openly during his time.
 - b. John describes the antichrists as being those who deny that Jesus is the Christ (1 John 2:22). Further, "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist..." (1 John 4:3). He identified the antichrist as those deceivers who "confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 John 7).
 - c. John was not seeing a political leader in our time when he spoke of antichrists.

B. The truth about antichrist.

1. Wayne Jackson showed that *antichrist* is a general word which John used to describe the spirit of unbelief and rebellion that revealed itself in times past and is in evidence now ("Bible Light," July-August, 1988, p.3):
 - a. Atheism is antichrist for it denies the existence of the Father and the deity of his Son.
 - 1) Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."
 - 2) 1 John 2:22: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."
 - b. The Docetist, of the late 1st century, were antichrists in that they denied that Jesus actually became flesh. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 John 4:2-3).
 - c. The ancient Gnostics were antichrists (as are their modern counterparts, the Watchtower Witnesses) in repudiating the deity of the Lord Jesus.
 - 1) John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."
 - 2) John 20:28: "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God."
 - d. The old Saballian sects, together with the so-called "oneness" groups of today, are antichrist for they refuse to distinguish between "the Father and the Son" (1 John 2:22) as separate Persons within the Godhead.
2. Those who have usurped the prerogatives of deity by claiming to **be** God, or his **personal representative**, are likewise antichrist. Such characters as "Father Divine," Jim Jones of the Peoples' Temple, and the Roman papacy fall into this category.
3. In the final analysis, **any person** who deliberately rejects the authority of the Son of God, thus suggesting, as in the parable of the pounds, "...We will not have this man [Christ] reign over us" (Luke 19:14), is of the spirit of the antichrist.

C. The Millennialism view of the Tribulation.

1. The tribulation in millennial thinking is a seven-year period of time in which antichrist brings terrible persecution upon the earth.
2. Seven years is determined in the following manner (Hal Lindsey, *There's A New World Coming*, pp.100-111): It is developed from Daniel 9:24-27. Daniel mentioned a period of 70 weeks, which are

interpreted to represent 490 years (1 day = 1 year; 1 week = 7 years: 7 x 70 = 490 years). The beginning of this 490-year span of time is said to have been when the Persian king permitted the Jews to return to Palestine (445 B.C.). From that time to the very time when Jesus was crucified was 483 years. It is claimed that God then stopped the "time-clock," keeping in reserve the remaining seven years until the beginning of the tribulation period.

3. Millennialists claim that the span of time from the death of Christ to the start of the tribulation (which immediately follows the rapture) has been assigned to the Jews and Gentiles who obey the gospel (i.e., the "church age").
4. Revelation 4 is said to be a prophetic description of the rapture, with John being used to represent the entire body of saved individuals. Revelation 6 is said to be a prophetic picture of the troubles to come on mankind during the tribulation. Revelation 7 is said to be descriptive of how God will use 144,000 Jews to evangelize the world during the seven years of tribulation.
 - a. In Revelation 6, the vision of the white horse is said to represent the Antichrist. The red horse vision supposedly represents a period of three and one-half years of "pseudo-peace" (prior to Antichrist breaking his treaty with Israel).
 - b. The black horse vision is said to represent a period of economic catastrophe.
 - c. Finally, the pale horse vision represents a time of "death on a massive scale."

D. Biblical truth about the tribulation.

1. The primary passage employed to advance the tribulation theory is Matthew 24:15-22: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." An examination of this text shows that the destruction of Jerusalem (which occurred in A.D. 70 by the Roman army) is under consideration by the Lord in his remarks, not some "end-time" event. An examination of the passage gives us the following information.
2. Verse 15: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)." The abomination of desolation is described in such vivid detail that it would be clearly recognized when it appeared: the approach of the Roman army: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:20-24). The information which follows would be useful only if the saints quickly recognized the specific sign the Lord had just given, coupled with the general signs of the previous verses. All these signs would have been seen before "the end" (24:6,13,14) that is being predicted. The Lord has now given the disciples a means of identifying ahead of time the "great tribulation" of verse 21, so they could escape Jerusalem. This sign (vs 15) is not a universal sign, but one which could only be locally observable. If reference is to the second coming, there would be no need for the flight commanded.

3. Verse 16: "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains." This command never applied to anyone who did not live in Judea; it was limited to a particular place, people, situation, and time. The Christians in and around Jerusalem were to flee to the mountains since there they would find greater safety from the invading Roman army. Millennialists ignore these verses when discussing their theory. The statements of verses 16-20 simply will not fit into the millennial theory! At the Lord's return, the saints will rise to meet him in the air (1 Thess. 4:16-17). There will be no need, no time, and no way for anyone to flee to the mountains at **that end**. The mountains had many caves in which to take shelter, and passing through the mountains, escape to other regions could be effected. The instructions of these verses do not fit the so-called "second stage" of the Second Coming, for that will be the time when the Lord return to establish an earthly kingdom (according to millennial theory). There would be no need for flight; it would be a time of triumph for the saints, not terror.
 4. Verse 17: "Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house." The houses of Palestine were so-constructed that one could walk on the roofs, and even from roof to roof. The roof was a place where one could take advantage of the evening breezes during the summer, and have the sun's warmth during the colder times. If one was on the roof when the Roman army appeared, he was not to take the time to enter his house to get clothing or provisions; he would not have sufficient time. He could escape from the city by walking from roof to roof, at least for a distance, thus avoiding the jammed streets and turmoil below. He must trust the Lord for the necessities of life as the journey was made. Modern houses are not constructed as in that day; the situation does not fit our time.
 5. Verse 18: "Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes." Those addressed are the Lord's people. If the "rapture" theory were true, they would not need to go back to their houses for clothes, and there would be no reason for them to flee. They would suddenly be whisked away from the earth to meet the Lord in the air. If this is the end of time, there would be no need to flee for there would be no place to go (2 Pet. 3:10). This passage is describing a local event, directly affecting only those who lived in Judea when the Roman army approached to lay siege to the city. There is no such thing as the "rapture" taught in the Scriptures! Farmers of that time would take to the fields only such clothing as were necessary. If the Romans came while they were working their crops, they were to quickly leave the area, trusting God to provide for their necessities, for they would not have time to go home and make proper preparations.
 6. Verses 19-20: "And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day." They were to pray that the day of their flight be on a weekday and in a time of good weather. The flight would be hard on those who had small children and women who were pregnant.
 - a. If they had to flee during winter time, even greater hardships would be met—travel would be difficult in cold and rain.
 - b. If it were on the Sabbath, they would have trouble getting out of the city since the gates of the city were closed on those occasions. The Jews could even be expected to offer hindrance to their escape since they still enforced the rules limiting travel on the Sabbath. This detail shows that the time period involved was when the Sabbath would have been a problem for the Christians. But Sabbath-keeping was officially removed when Jesus died on the cross (Col. 2:14-17; Rom. 7:1-7). Today, even those who claim to observe the Sabbath do not enforce it on others and even they do not observe the limitations which were followed by the ancient Jews. A Sabbath day's journey was only about a half mile. Thus, this detail removes the event described from our day and places it squarely in the first century. Compare: "And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and *some* of my servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day" (Neh. 13:19).
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- c. At least part of their prayers was answered, for the city fell during the summer (September). The siege began when many Jews were attending the feasts.
 - d. We are told that all the Christians escaped from Jerusalem, fleeing to Pella, which was about 100 miles away. When the Romans temporarily withdrew, the rest of the saints were able to escape. The Romans returned, laid siege to the city from April to about September, when the city fell. The Lord had promised in Luke 21:18 that the saints would be preserved, provided they followed his directions: "But there shall not an hair of your head perish."
7. Verse 21: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." "For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be" (Mark 13:19). "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:23-24). Notice that the time when this great tribulation was to occur is the same as when the abomination of desolation came and when the saints were to flee from Judea and Jerusalem. We know that this great tribulation is not something that is to occur at the end of time because of the information preceding this verse and by the limiting statement of verse 34. There is no reason for taking the statement of verse 21 as a figure of speech. Jesus said plainly that the suffering of that time would be unparalleled in history. It had greater suffering than that which was experienced during Noah's flood (those people died quickly, in a relatively painless way); it was greater than when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (their death was not preceded with any long period of agony); it was greater than the suffering felt by those who died in either of the Atomic explosions in Japan (for those mostly died instantly). In fact, when the record of Josephus is consulted, we have much reason to understand it literally. He reports that:
- a. 1,100,000 Jews died at Jerusalem during the siege and fighting, and another 97,000 were captured and placed in slavery. How foolish the Jewish bravado of Matthew 27:25: "His blood be on up, and on our children."
 - b. Women ate their own babies, men broke into houses and took food from the mouths of children, and neighbor robbed neighbor for the food they had.
 - c. Rich Jews swallowed their gold, and deserted to the Romans, hoping to get away with some of their wealth. When the soldiers discovered the scheme, they began killing those who surrendered, ripping open their bodies in search of coins. Thousands died in this fashion, two thousand in only one night.
 - d. Many were beaten and tortured by the Roman soldiers; thousands were crucified in various bodily positions—as jests. This was done until all of the wood had been used as crosses, and even places to erect crosses were filled!
 - e. By actual count, 115,880 bodies were carried through one gate in three months; there were 600,000 in all thus disposed of. When the bodies could no longer be thrown outside the city, they were stored in large houses within the city.
 - f. Thousands of the captives were later forced to fight beasts and each other in arenas; this for the enjoyment of spectators.
 - g. Jerusalem was overthrown and the temple was utterly destroyed—Matthew 14:2 was literally fulfilled. When the Romans broke into the city, Josephus said, "...They slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burned the houses and all the people who had fled into them; and when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine, then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they had not the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met,
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whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, inasmuch that many things which were burning were extinguished by the blood" (Wars, Book VI, chap. 8,5; chap. 9,3). He also reports that the city fell to the Romans on the same day that it had fallen to Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C.

8. "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (vs. 22). God mercifully shortened the tribulation. "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4:15-19).
 - a. "History records that Titus determined to reduce Jerusalem by famine, a long and destructive mode of conquest, and for this purpose he surrounded it with a wall and ditch. After completing his preparation for this attack on the city, he received news from Rome which urged him to hasten to Rome. He changed his plan and pressed the city by assault, that he might return to Rome, where his presence was greatly needed; hence, 'those days had been shortened.' The overruling providence of God shortened these days 'for the elect's sake.' 'The elect' has reference to the Christians who were among the Jews at that time. This elect group were to be preserved in order that the gospel might be handed down to future ages" (H. Leo Boles, *Commentary on Matthew*, pp.466f).
 - b. Titus, the Roman general, acknowledged that the speedy overthrow of Jerusalem was to be attributed to the power of God: "We have certainly had God for our assistant in this war and it was no other than God who ejected the Jews out of these fortifications, for what could the hands of men, or any machines, do toward overthrowing these towers?" (Quoted by Kik, p.120).
 - c. "As it is Jewish flesh alone whose sufferings are the subject of discourse, this passage means that but for the shortening of those days no Jewish flesh would be saved; and it follows that the elect, for whose sake those days were to be shortened were the elect Jews, or Jewish Christians. The Romans made no distinction between believing and unbelieving Jews, but slaughtered all alike. The only safety for Christian Jews, then, was in flight, and even this might not have saved them but for the providence by which those days were 'shortened'" (J.W. McGarvey, *Commentary on Matthew and Mark*, p.208).

E. The word *tribulation* is found 25 times in the Bible.

1. Four of these are in the Old Testament and 21 are in the New Testament. In none of these instances is the word used in connection with a seven-year period of intense suffering toward the end of time.
 - a. The word is used in Deuteronomy 4:30, Judges 10:14, and 1 Samuel 10:19 to describe sufferings Israel would face or had faced in ancient times. In 1 Samuel 26:24 it is used in reference to David's sufferings.
 - b. The word is used in Matthew 13:21, John 16:33, Acts 14:22, Romans 5:3, 8:35, 12:12, 2 Corinthians 1:4, 7:4, Ephesians 3:13, 1 Thessalonians 3:4, and 2 Thessalonians 1:4 concerning Christian sufferings.
 - c. In Romans 2:9, 2 Thessalonians 1:6, and Revelation 2:22 it describes the fate of the wicked.
 - d. In Revelation 1:9, 2:9, 2:10, and 7:14 it describes earthly troubles of saints on earth.
 - e. It also occurs 3 times in Matthew 24:21, 29, and Mark 13:24 (cf. vs. 19) where it describes the suffering in connection with the overthrow of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.
2. Four passages are used by millennialists in support of their tribulation theory: Matthew 24:21; Mark

13:24 (19); Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1. The first two are parallel, and refer to 1st century events, as we have already seen. The second two refer to what Old Testament Israel suffered in ancient days. None speaks of *The Tribulation* of the millennialists.

- a. Jeremiah 30:7: "Alas! for that day *is* great, so that none *is* like it: it *is* even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."
 - b. Daniel 12:1: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."
 - c. Matthew 24:21: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."
 - d. Mark 13:19,24: "For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be....But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light."
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REVELATION 20:1-10—LITERAL OR FIGURATIVE?

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Are these items discussed in Revelation 20:1-10 literal or figurative?

1. The first verse of the book reveals that its contents are largely figurative. The Lord "signified" the information to John. Our English word *signified* comes from the word *sign* coupled with *ified*: "sign-ified."
2. The Greek word is *semaino* ["signified—Rev. 1:1], which means "to give a sign; to indicate by a sign." The word means that Revelation is a book of signs and symbols, and that everything should not be understood as literal. To see the meaning of the word, look at how it is used in other verses:
 - a. John 12:32-33: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, **signifying** what death he should die." He indicated by his words that he would be crucified, but he did not say so in plain words.
 - b. John 18:31-32: "Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, **signifying** what death he should die." The Jews executed criminals by stoning; the Romans crucified them; Jesus would be executed by crucifixion.
 - c. John 21:18-19: "...When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, **signifying** by what death he should glorify God..." The Lord **signified** to Peter that he would be martyred.

B. The Book of Revelation is full of symbolic language.

1. While the letters to the seven congregations in Asia contain straight-forward instructions, the book is full of symbols.
2. The book is therefore full of symbolic language: locusts; horses and horsemen; dragon; beasts; frogs; horns, etc., which are not to be taken as literal language—a mistake that is prominent in the theories of the millennialists.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. The general beliefs of millennialists are necessary to our study of Revelation 20.

1. The following are points generally believed by millennialists:
 - a. They think Christ will come first in what they call "The Rapture." At this time the righteous dead will be resurrected and the living saints will be changed from mortal into immortal bodies; all of these will meet the Lord in the air where they will remain in his keeping for 7 years. This is a perverted view of 1 Thessalonians 4.
 - b. They think the marriage feast of the Lamb (Rev. 19) will then occur during which time the "Great Tribulation" will occur on earth. This "great tribulation" is a "great perversion" of Matthew 24:21.
 - c. After the wedding feast, millennialists think Christ will return to earth with the resurrected and changed saints to establish an earthly kingdom, that Christ will sit on the literal throne of David, and reign for 1000 years from Jerusalem. This 1000-year reign is called "The Millennium." They think this will come 7 years after the "Rapture." This is a perverted interpretation of Revelation 20.
 - d. Some think that all the Jews will be converted and returned to Palestine during the tribulation period. This is a perverted interpretation of Romans 11:26.

- e. Old Testament worship will be restored during the millennium and life on earth will be one of perfection in which the lamb and lion will dwell in peace. The devil will be bound during this reign so that he cannot interfere. This is a gross perversion of many Bible truths.
 - f. Toward the end of the millennium, Satan will be loosed for a short while during which time he will gather all those on earth who are forced to serve Christ contrary to their will. This contradicts the notion that Satan is bound: if he was bound (they think he will be bound utterly), how could anyone be tempted to try to serve Christ hypocritically? This is a misguided view of Revelation 20.
 - g. Satan will lead a strong insurrection against Christ, but will be defeated. The millennium will end following the battle; the wicked dead will be raised and be brought before the "Great White Throne" for judgment. This contradicts the Bible passages which show that both the righteous and wicked dead will be raised on the same occasion (John 5:28-29).
2. Several resurrections are called for by the theory: one for the righteous at the rapture; another for those who become believers between the rapture and the millennium; another for those who are converted and die during the millennium; and another for the wicked at the end of the millennium. Depending on the brand of millennialists, there are said to be four or more resurrections, and from two to seven judgments. The Bible teaches that there will be one resurrection (Acts 24:15; John 5:28-29) and one Judgment (Heb. 9:27; Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Cor. 5:10):
- a. Matthew 25:31-46: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - b. John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - c. Acts 24:15: "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."
 - d. 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
 - e. Hebrews 9:27: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."
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B. Revelation 20 is the passage upon which all of the millennial theories rest.

1. But none of the Bible writers (including John who wrote Revelation) mentions anything at all about a 1000-year reign of Christ on earth.
 - a. The theorists take the 1000 years of the chapter as literal, but it can be shown that it is a symbolic number. To the premillennialist, everything in the Bible must be filtered through the demands of the theory, a theory that rests on a very shaky foundation.
 - b. The last several chapters of Revelation place an emphasis on Christ's triumph over his enemies. The three enemies of Christ and his church are Satan, the two beasts and the harlot. The harlot (also called "Babylon"—representative of Rome) is defeated in Revelation 18; the beast and the false prophet (Rome and paganism) are defeated in Revelation 19; and Satan is defeated in Revelation 20.
2. Revelation 20:1-3: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."
 - a. Some writers say the angel of this passage is Christ; but he does not appear anywhere else in the book as an angel. In Revelation, the angels are servants of Christ. He is presented as the Lamb of God and the King of kings. This angel's identity is not of primary importance; what he does is the point of emphasis. He had the key to the bottomless pit (abyss) and a great chain with which to bind Satan. He laid hold on the devil, bound him a thousand years (with the chain), cast him into the bottomless pit, shut him up, and set a seal upon the abyss. (This angel may be the same angel of Revelation 9:1-3).
 - b. The key to the abyss is not literal, but symbolizes authority and power to do the job at hand. The "keys of the kingdom" given the apostles (Matt. 16:19; 18:18; 19:28; Acts 2) represented the authority and power for them to receive, deliver, confirm, and record, the gospel. These keys were figurative; the key to the abyss is figurative because no literal key could lock or unlock a spiritual "prison."
 - 1) Matthew 16:18-19: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
 - 2) Matthew 18:18: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
 - 3) Matthew 19:28: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."
 - 4) Acts 2 details the first use of these "keys" (when Jews and proselytes were converted) and in Acts 10 (where the first Gentiles were converted).
3. The bottomless pit (abyss) is not literal for no such thing could exist as a pit without a bottom. The ASV translates the word as "abyss."
 - a. This was the place the demons in the swine dreaded (Luke 8:31) but which was their appointed place (2 Pet. 2:4). Between his death and resurrection, Christ was in the abyss (Rom. 10:7; the KJV has "deep," the ASV has "abyss"). Abyss (bottomless pit) is a reference to "hades." Luke 16:19-31—the historical report of the fates of a wicked rich man and godly Lazarus.
 - 1) Luke 8:31: "And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep."

- 2) Romans 10:7: "Or, Who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead."
- 3) 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."
- b. The abyss was sealed in order to place a limit on the devil, not for the purpose of punishment; the punishment would come later in verse 10. The tomb of Jesus was sealed to prevent anyone from entering and taking the body (Matt. 27:66). The sealing up of Satan in the abyss was symbolic of the limitations placed on him: "that he should deceive the nations no more." The sealing and binding was to be for a thousand years.
- c. The great chain was not a literal chain, for Satan, a spirit being, cannot be bound with a physical chain. The chain is no more literal than are the key and the pit (this "pit" is the hadean realm, not a hole in the ground).
4. Satan is identified by four terms which give a vivid description of his nature.
 - a. He is called the devil, a word which means "accuser" or "slanderer."
 - b. He is called Satan, a term which means "adversary."
 - c. He is called that old serpent, which identifies him with the tempter of Eve (Gen. 3:1-6; 2 Cor. 11:3).
 - d. He is called the dragon, which illustrates his strength and ferocity. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (I Pet. 5:8-9).
5. The thousand years is used symbolically as are many other numbers in Revelation. It represents a complete but undetermined length of time; a full period of time. Satan will be restricted for the full amount of time determined by God. The number "thousand" is used in this very sense many times in the Bible.
 - a. Deuteronomy 7:9: "Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations." This does not mean that God will be true and merciful to the obedient only for a literal 1000 generations, but rather for all the time and for every such generation.
 - b. Job 9:3: "If he [man] will contend with him [God], he cannot answer him one of a thousand." This does not mean that on the 1001st attempt that man can answer God. "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness" (Job. 33:23).
 - c. Psalm 50:10: "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." This does not mean that God owns only the cattle on a literal 1000 hills, but that he owns them all wherever they may be.
 - d. Psalm 90:4: "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." "Thousand" is used to represent the lack of effect the passing of time has on God. God does not change though a thousand years (or many thousands of years) pass. Peter shows in 2 Peter 3:8-9 that God's promises are not affected by the passing of a thousand years (or any other number of years).
 - e. Ecclesiastes 6:1-6: "There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it *is* common among men: A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this *is* vanity, and it *is* an evil disease. If a man beget an hundred *children*, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also *that* he have no burial; I say, *that* an untimely birth *is* better than he. For he cometh in with vanity, and

departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness. Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known *any thing*: this hath more rest than the other. Yea, though he live a thousand years twice *told*, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?"

- f. Ecclesiastes 7:28: "Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found."
- g. Revelation 5:11: "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands."

C. The binding of Satan.

1. Satan is to be bound for a thousand years; that is, he is to be restricted for a long and undetermined period of time, a time span the length of which only God knows. During this period of time God will limit the activities of Satan, but this binding does not necessarily mean that he will be utterly helpless.
 - a. Jesus was bound, yet he could still walk and talk (John 18:12-13). The same Greek word is used to describe the binding of Jesus and Satan.
 - b. This word is used literally in Acts 22:5, and figuratively in Romans 7:2 and 1 Corinthians 7:39, 7:27 to describe the binding of husband and wife together in marriage. We limit a dog's movement by tying it up, but he still can bark and move to the extent the rope permits. The Devil is bound today but he still has power to act.
 - c. Passages:
 - 1) John 18:12-13: "Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year."
 - 2) Acts 22:5: "As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished."
 - 3) Romans 7:2: "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 7:27: "Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife."
 - 5) 1 Corinthians 7:39: "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord."
2. When the Lord came, and for some years afterward, Satan had power to overcome his victims by sending evil spirits (demons) to take control of them. The victim had little or no choice (Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43). Miraculous powers were necessary to cast out these demons. When the miraculous work of the first century was completed, the demons were all cast out.
 - a. Since then, Satan has not had the power to overwhelm a man against the man's will. In this sense, he is "bound" today.
 - 1) Matthew 12:29: "Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house." Mark 3:27: "No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house."
 - 2) Mark 9:14-29: "And when he came to *his* disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to *him* saluted him. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him:

and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."

- 3) Luke 9:37-43: "And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him. And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child. And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him. And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not. And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither. And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare *him*. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father. And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples."
 - 4) Luke 10:17-18: "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."
 - 5) John 12:31: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."
 - 6) Ephesians 4:8: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Colossians 2:15: "*And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."
 - 7) Hebrews 2:14-15: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."
 - 8) 1 John 3:8: "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."
 - 9) Revelation 1:18: "I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."
3. During the first century and until the Roman Empire began to be weakened, paganism reigned supreme in the world. Pagans worshipped idols of all sorts; this was the pre-eminent religion and was followed by nearly everyone on earth. With the great success of the gospel, paganism declined and was rejected by many. Satan had controlled the nations through false religion for a long time.
- a. He used his power over the nations (which he exercised through the perversions of paganism and

- sin) to bring severe persecution against God's people. The back of paganism was broken when the Empire fell. Thus, Satan is "bound" also in the sense that he no longer controls the nations to the extent of being able to bring their full power against the church in persecutions as he once did.
- b. Since the gospel was given, mankind has been given the option of receiving the actual forgiveness of sin. The Mosaic Law could not provide this cleansing; human systems cannot give it. But since Christ died for us, he can offer this genuine blessing. When we obey the gospel and continue to walk in its light, we have continual cleansing (1 John 1:7). In this sense, Satan no longer has control over us; he is "bound."
 - 1) Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
 - 2) 1 Peter 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
 - 3) 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - 4) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."
 4. He has power over us personally today only to the extent we allow. We have the power to resist the devil and cause him to flee from us: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (Jas. 4:7; cf. 1 Pet. 5:8-9). His power today lies in his trickery and deceit (2 Cor. 11:3,13-15; Eph. 6:11). Picture a man-eating tiger on the loose. If you are inside a strong building you are safe; you endanger your life by leaving the house.
 - a. 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15: "For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."
 - c. Ephesians 5:11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*."
 5. Satan is to be loosed for a little season at some future time after his being bound. His confinement to the abyss (the Tartarus of Hades—2 Pet. 2:4; Luke 16:19-31) is not final. He is to be loosed for a short time, we know not when. Homer Hailey gave this summary of some significant events in Revelation:
 - a. The holy city was to be trodden under foot 42 months (11:2).
 - b. The 2 witnesses were to prophesy under persecution 1260 days (11:3).
 - c. The radiant woman was to be protected in the wilderness 1260 days (12:6,14).
 - d. The beast with authority to persecute and blaspheme would do his unholy work for 42 months (13:5; cf. Dan. 7:25).
 - e. This period of time [42 months and 1260 days are equal] was the same for each of the above events, and was interpreted to be the period of Roman persecution. In two previous visions God told the saints under the altar that they should rest for a little time until other saints were martyred,
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and after his casting down, Satan would know he had but a short time (12:12).

- f. The time period (3 and one half years, the little time of the martyrs, and the devil's short time) are the same and are now fulfilled. The Roman persecution as it backed paganism is at an end; the devil is cast into the abyss, no longer to deceive the nations as once he did; the saints' death for the Word of God is avenged and vindicated as they now sit upon thrones, reigning with Christ (verses 4-6). This leads to the conclusion that the thousand years symbolizes the period of victory beginning with Constantine, when Roman persecution ended, and continuing until some time before the Lord's return when Satan will be loosed from his present restraint. (Homer Hailey, *Commentary on Revelation*, p.392).

D. Revelation 20:4-6.

1. Revelation 20:4-6: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." The picture John gives us here is one of victory for the martyrs. It would offer much consolation and encouragement to the beleaguered saints to whom the book was initially intended.
2. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (vs. 4). John saw thrones and those who sat thereon; the ones on the thrones were those who had been beheaded for the Lord's cause; they had not received the mark of the beast and had not worshipped the beast.
3. Judgment was given unto them. The reference is probably to the vindication and vengeance which came as a result of the confinement of the devil. In Revelation 18:20, judgment was meted out against the harlot, which vindicated the saints. In chapter 19, this was also true with reference to the beast and false prophet.
4. To those who wish to take this passage as literal, some problems arise: only those who had been beheaded sat on the thrones. And if the 1000 years is literal, then the "reigning" and "living" are also literal. "They lived AND reigned with Christ a thousand years." Taken literally, when the thousand years are over, they will cease to reign AND cease TO LIVE! What proves too much, proves nothing.
 - a. Notice that John did not see bodies on the throne—he saw souls. (The ASV indicates that two groups were on the thrones: those which had been beheaded and those who had not worshipped the beast; the KJV indicates only one group).
 - b. These were reigning WITH Christ. The passage does not tell where the reigning occurred. It does not say that the reign is a literal, earthly reign. We are not included in this passage. However, all faithful Christians "reign in life" by Christ (Rom. 5:17). But John is seeing a vision which shows the martyred/persecuted saints of that age in a victorious scene; this was to give them hope. Since they were victorious, so shall all faithful saints triumph. Those who overcome (remain faithful even unto death, Rev. 2:10) will be given the privilege by Christ to "sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21).

III. CONCLUSION.

A. In summary:

1. The 1,000 years are not to be taken as literal. The only reason so many people think of it as literal is because they have set their affections on things below, not on heaven.

2. The battle of verses 7-10 is not literal. Gog and Magog represent evil forces which oppose the Lord and his people.
 - a. 2 Corinthians 10:4-5: "For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."
 - b. Ephesians 6:10-17: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."
 - B. Essential parts of the millennial theory are absent from Revelation 20.
 1. Nothing is said in the passage about the Second Coming of Christ.
 2. No bodily resurrection is mentioned.
 3. The reign of Christ on earth is not named.
 4. The literal throne of David is unnamed.
 5. You and I are not named: "They" lived and reigned with Christ.
 6. The passage does not place Christ on earth.
 7. Jerusalem and Palestine are not mentioned.
 - C. What could an earthly kingdom give us that we do not now have?
 1. Passages:
 - a. Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ."
 - b. Ephesians 5:23-27: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
 - c. Philippians 3:20-21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."
 - d. Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
 2. God is our Father, and Christ is our Savior—and our prophet, priest and king.
 3. We have forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life.
 4. We belong to his church, the bride of Christ, and will be taken home to glory.
 5. We have citizenship in Christ's spiritual kingdom, with all its blessings.
 6. We have security against our most deadly enemies: Satan, death, and hell.
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7. Our real citizenship is in heaven.

D. What we need is to be ready when the Lord returns.

1. Matthew 24:42: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."
2. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

THE SEVENTY WEEKS OF DANIEL

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9:24-27.

1. Daniel 9:24-27: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."
2. The prophecy is sorely abused by millennialists, its fulfillment being twisted to fit their preconceived ideas.

B. A study of the passage and its New Testament fulfillment will set forth the truth and expose these errors.

1. The passage also beautifully sets forth the reality of Old Testament prophecy.
2. It is essential to a proper understanding of the passage:
 - a. To see the historical background of the prophecy.
 - b. To see the purpose of Christ's mission to earth.
 - c. To see the significance of the numbers given in the prophecy.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. The historical background includes the following information.

1. Israel had fallen away from God, and had been promised a 70-year banishment from their beloved land as punishment.
 - a. Jeremiah 25:11-12: "And this whole land shall be a desolation, *and* an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations."
 - b. Jeremiah 29:10: "For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place."
 2. Their deportation to Babylonia was in three parts:
 - a. Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C., at which time part of Israel was deported (2 Kings 24:1; Dan. 1:1-6).
 - b. In 597 B.C., another group was carried away (2 Kings 24:10; Ezek. 1:2).
 - c. Then in 586 B.C., the final deportation was made (2 Kings 25:8).
 3. Their return was also in three parts.
 - a. Zerubbabel led the first company back to Jerusalem in 536 B.C. (Ezra 2:1-2).
 - b. Ezra brought the second group in 457 B.C. (Ezra 7:6-8).
 - c. Nehemiah was the leader of the third company in 444 B.C. (Neh. 2).
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4. *Seventy* years was established for a purpose—to make up for the many Sabbatical years Israel had ignored:
 - a. Leviticus 25:1-7: "And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: *for* it is a year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, And for thy cattle, and for the beast that *are* in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat."
 - b. 2 Chronicles 36:21: "To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: *for* as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years."
 - c. Compare: "And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year" (Ezek. 4:6, ASV).
 5. They were to suffer the rigors of captivity in Babylonia:
 - a. 2 Chronicles 36:21: "To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: *for* as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years."
 - b. Deuteronomy 30:1-3: "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call *them* to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee."
 6. At the time of the text [Daniel 9], the end of their captivity was in sight.
 - a. Daniel 9:1-2: "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."
 - b. Zechariah 1:12: "Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?"
 - c. Zechariah 7:5: "Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh *month*, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, *even* to me?"
- B. Belshazzar hosted a notable feast that is important to our study.
1. Belshazzar was king (co-regent with his father, Nabonidus) in Babylon. In 538 B.C. he made a great feast in which the vessels of the Jewish temple were used in the drunken revelries; this was the wicked king's method of gloating over the God of Israel.
 2. The miraculous scene of the handwriting on the wall occurred, which terrified the king. "Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.
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Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which *was* in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which *was* at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. *And* the king spake, and said to the wise *men* of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and show me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then came in all the king's wise *men*: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished" (Dan. 5:1-9).

3. The widow of Nebuchadnezzar told Belshazzar about Daniel (Dan. 5:10-12). Daniel spoke before the king, reminding the king that his grandfather had been lifted up in pride and was deposed (5:13-20); he accused Belshazzar of pride (5:22-23), and gave the interpretation of the writing on the wall (5:23-29). Daniel 5:30-31 reports the overthrow of Belshazzar that very night at the hand of Darius the Mede. According to secular history, Darius was able to conquer mighty Babylon by diverting the river which flowed underneath the walls of the city; his army entered by means of the riverbed. The new regime exalted Daniel to the second position in the land, next to the king.

C. Daniel calculated the times, deducing that the end of the captivity was approaching.

1. This was about the year 538 B.C.
 - a. Daniel 9:1-2: "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."
 - b. Zechariah 1:12: "Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?"
 - c. Zechariah 7:5: "Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh *month*, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, *even* to me?"
2. Daniel prayed to God, confessing his own sins and those of the nation (9:3ff), and asked that God return Israel to their land. At the time, there was no outward indications that any return was in the offing, or even possible.
 - a. But God was not unaware of what needed to be done. Darius died in 536 B.C., and was replaced as king by his nephew, Cyrus.
 - b. Cyrus has been predicted by Isaiah, about 165 years before these events.
 - 1) Ezra 1:1-4: "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. Who *is there* among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he *is* the God,)

which *is* in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that *is* in Jerusalem."

- 2) Isaiah 44:28: "That saith of Cyrus, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid."
- 3) Isaiah 45:1-7: "Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call *thee* by thy name, *am* the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else, *there is* no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none beside me. I *am* the LORD, and *there is* none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*."

c. God stirred up Cyrus to bring about the restoration of Israel and the rebuilding of Jerusalem (2 Chron. 36:22-23). The likely means God used in stirring Cyrus up was by having someone show him in Isaiah's writings what had been said about him in prophecy.

3. In direct response to Daniel's prayers, Gabriel was sent to speak to Daniel: "Yea, whiles I *was* speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show *thee*; for thou *art* greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision" (9:21-23). The archangel revealed to Daniel some information that unfolded the future of Israel (9:24-27).

D. The seventy weeks.

1. The events foretold had application to Daniel's people, i.e., the Jews, and to his holy city (Jerusalem). "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy" (Dan. 9:24). This period of time was "determined" [decreed—ASV]. God had *determined* for this to be, thus it was certain.
 - a. There would be no significance if a literal 70 weeks (490 days) is meant. In view of the fact that Daniel had been praying in regards to the 70 years of captivity, it appears that a period of years is meant. Virtually all Bible expositors view this period of 70 weeks as 490 years (7 X 70 = 490). This conclusion is verified by the fact that the time factor between the two events cited were almost exactly 490 years apart.
 - b. From the time the commandment to restore Jerusalem was given to the coming of the Messiah, the time factor would be 69 weeks (which translates to 483 years). Two divisions of these 69 weeks are given: seven weeks (49 years) and 63 weeks (434 years). The first period matches with the time necessary for the restoration of the city to be accomplished following the initial order.
 - c. The return from Babylonian captivity was accomplished in three stages.
 - 1) The initial return was under Zerubbabel in 536 B.C.
 - 2) The second return was under Ezra in 457 B.C.

- 3) The third return was under Nehemiah in 444 B.C.
2. If we reckon the time when the order was given for Jerusalem to be rebuilt on the occasion of Ezra's return, the 490 years would end at 33 A.D. Based on this same beginning point, the 483 years (69 weeks) would be over in 26 A.D. The coming of the Messiah would be at the end of 69 weeks, with the extra week following week number 69.
 3. In the midst of the 70th week (a 7-year span of time), the Messiah would cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease (vs. 27). Thus, after 483 years the Messiah would come (that is, he would begin his ministry); after half of the seven year span was over, he would cancel out the sacrifices. This he did when he died on the cross: "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace" (Eph. 2:15); "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:14). He was "cut off" (vs. 26) and ended the sacrifices at the same time.
 - a. This would place his death in 30 A.D. (which is 486.5 years after the order to Ezra in 457 B.C. (483 years + 3.5 years of the final 7 year period = 486.5). Wayne Jackson states that "the commonly accepted date of Jesus' death as 33 A.D. incorporates the 3 year error of the Dionysian calendar" ("Christian Courier," Vol. XV, No. 6, p.22).
 - b. This would put the end of the 490 years at a date (3.5 years after Christ's death) which could allow enough time for the conversion of Saul of Tarsus and the first Gentiles, Cornelius and his family.
 - c. Some scholars measure the time from Nehemiah's commission (445 B.C.) and "round off" the extra years, saying that the ancient method of counting years was indefinite since they counted a part of a year as a whole year. But this places the end of 490 years at 45 A.D.
- E. Daniel 9:24 shows that the following items were included in God's plans for the events being described.
1. Daniel 9:24: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."
 2. **To finish (*restrain, margin*) the transgression, to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity.** The purpose of Christ's mission was to this very end: namely, to take care of the problem of sin.
 - a. Matthew 1:21: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."
 - b. Matthew 20:28: "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."
 - c. Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
 - d. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."
 - e. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21: "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he
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- hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."
- f. Galatians 1:4: "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father."
 - g. Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."
 - h. Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
 - i. Colossians 1:20: "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven."
 - j. 1 Peter 1:18-23: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - k. 1 Peter 2:24: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."
 - l. Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.,"
 - m. Hebrews 9:26-28: "...Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself....So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."
 - n. Christ established a system by which actual forgiveness of sins is possible; and as long as a saved person continues to walk in the light of the gospel, he enjoys the continual cleansing of sins by the blood of Christ. Walking in the light includes repentance whenever sin is committed, keeping one's unspotted from the world, and doing those things taught in the gospel (1 John 1:7-10; Jas. 1:27; Tit. 2:11-12; Heb. 5:8-9). Under the Law of Moses, a remembrance of sin was made each year (Heb. 10:1-4).
3. **To bring in everlasting righteousness.** Jesus did all that was required of him by his Heavenly Father (he fulfilled all righteousness (Matt. 3:15; Ps. 119:172). He made provision by which the world could be convicted of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8). His gospel is God's plan by which men can be made righteous (Rom. 1:16-17; cf. Rom. 3:21-26).
 4. **To seal up the vision and prophecy.** Christ fulfilled all the prophecies in the Old Testament concerning himself (Luke 24:25-27,44). He did not come to destroy the Law of Moses, but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17-18). Another aspect of this same point is that visions and prophecies would no longer be given to men after Christ completed his great work (that is, after the apostles and other inspired people of the first century had accomplished their part of the process). When the message of the gospel had been committed (by inspiration) to written form, visions and prophecies ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-13; Eph. 4:8,11-13; Jude 3; Jas. 1:25).
 5. **To anoint the most Holy.** The millennial theory applies this to the rebuilding of the Jewish temple
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at the Lord's return. The grammar of the statement is not exact: the form can be neuter or masculine gender. Since *Messiah* (Christ) means "the anointed One," it follows that he is the one receiving the anointing mentioned here. All of the affairs being consummated in the verse took place at the Lord's first coming. Christ received God's official consecration and authority when he accomplished his great work. He is prophet (Acts 3:22-23), priest (Heb. 3:1), and king (Matt. 21:5). Old Testament men filling these roles were consecrated to these offices; likewise, Christ.

- a. Isaiah 61:1: "The spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are* bound."
- b. Daniel 7:13-14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed."
- c. Hebrews 12:1-2: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

F. Daniel 9:25 breaks down the time factors we have already considered.

1. Daniel 9:25: "Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."
2. The passage shows that the rebuilding of Jerusalem would be accompanied with difficulties.
 - a. The enemies of the Jews caused them many troubles, both in the work of Ezra and that of Nehemiah (Ezra 4; Neh. 1:3; 2:17-20; 4:1-23; 6:1-9). Doing God's work is seldom accomplished without the opposition of unbelievers.
 - b. Dispensational theology tries to place almost 2000 years between the 69th and the 70th week. There was historical continuity between the first 7-week period and the 62-week period which followed, and there was historical continuity between the 69th and 70th weeks as well. Using the day-year system of Daniel 9, there were only 70 weeks of the great time-span described; since the crucifixion of Christ, there have been almost 280 "weeks." "How in the name of common sense can we still be waiting for the 70th?" (Jackson, *ibid.*, p.24).

G. Daniel 9:26 shows what would occur after the 69 weeks had transpired.

1. Daniel 9:26: "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."
2. Messiah would be cut off, and the people of "the prince" would come and destroy the city (Jerusalem) and the sanctuary (the temple) with a flood.
 - a. The events described would occur after the 62 weeks (plus the preceding 7 weeks). The Messiah would be *cut off*. This is tantamount to saying that he would be slain in some unspecified manner. The Hebrew word is used in reference to the death penalty in Leviticus 7:20; it is used in Psalm 37:9 in reference to the fate of the ungodly. In the present case, it speaks of the death of the Messiah.
 - b. The cutting off of the Messiah will not be for himself. Another rendering of this phrase is, "and shall have nothing" (ASV). The KJV suggests that his death was not for his own benefit; that is,

- he was guiltless of any wrongdoing, or that he did not derive blessings from his death.
- c. The ASV resembles a thought in Isaiah 53:8, that his death would leave him without any apparent progeny or inheritance: his efforts would appear to be fruitless.
 - 1) This was the attitude of the disciples in Luke 24:21: "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done."
 - 2) The Messiah is clearly Jesus Christ. The Jews rejected him (Jn. 19:15); God withdrew from him (Mt. 27:46); the twelve had left him (Mt. 26:56).
 3. The "people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." The city is Jerusalem; the sanctuary is the temple. The people who would destroy Jerusalem are not the Jews. The prince is not Christ for he will have been put to death prior to the destruction of the city; and neither the Jews nor the Christians would destroy Jerusalem. It is not likely that some heathen nation would be classified as people belonging to Christ.
 - a. Since Jesus connected the "abomination of desolation" which Daniel introduced (Matt. 24:15; Dan. 9:26; 11:31), it follows that the prince and his people are the Roman general and his army.
 - b. The destruction by which the city and temple would be made desolate is described as a "flood." In plainer words, Daniel says it will be a war, the desolations of which are *determined*. The end result is "irrevocably determined by God" (Keil).
 - c. The destruction of the city and the sanctuary would occur after the 69th week, but not during the 70th week. The perceptive Jew could know that after the death of the Messiah, the destruction foretold would surely take place.
- H. Daniel 9:27 furnishes additional information.
1. Daniel 9:27: "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."
 2. A covenant will be confirmed with many for one week. The general subject of this whole passage is the Messiah. It is not the prince (of verse 26) for it is not the prince who destroys the city, but the people which pertain to him; and it is not "they" who will confirm the covenant, but "he." Christ is the only logical person for the subject of this verse.
 3. The millennial theory holds that the covenant is the so-called 7-year "treaty" which Antichrist will make with Israel, but will break at the midpoint of its term. That is a mere assumption without any justifying evidence. There is no mention of Antichrist in the passage. In fact, as our study has earlier shown, "antichrist" is a term used in the Bible in reference to false teachers, not to some political figure. There were many antichrists in John's day. "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (1 John 2:18).
 4. What covenant is meant and who is to confirm it? As indicated above, the Messiah is the subject of these remarks; it is he, therefore, who confirms the covenant. The covenant could be nothing other than the New Testament (the New Covenant). The ASV stresses the firmness of the covenant: "He shall make a firm covenant with many."
 - a. Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - b. Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - c. 1 Peter 1:24-25: "For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass
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withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

- d. Revelation 14:6: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."
5. "But this question naturally arises: if Christ was cut off in 'the midst' of that final week, why does the text state that the Lord would make a covenant with many for 'one week'? In other words, what is the significance of the full seventy weeks? Possibly the termination of that full final week extends down to the time of the conversion of Paul, at which point the gospel accelerated predominately among the Gentiles. Paul's conversion is generally dated 3 to 4 years after the death of Christ (*Zondervan's Encyclopedia*, I, 822)" (Wayne Jackson, "Christian Courier," Vol. XV, No. 7, p.25).
 - a. The Messiah would cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease in the midst of the 70th week. The subject of the verb ("shall cause") is still the Messiah. By his sacrificial death, Christ put the Old Testament system of sacrifices out of date. Animal sacrifices could never solve the sin problem.
 - 1) Hebrews 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
 - 2) Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
 - 3) 1 Peter 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
 - 4) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."
 - b. The terms *sacrifice* and *oblation* represent the bloody and non-bloody offerings of the Law of Moses. Thus, the entire system was fulfilled by Christ and replaced by his new and better program. The Law has been removed and will never be restored. That would be like going back to the horse and buggy after changing to the automobile.
 - 1) Galatians 3:24-25: "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."
 - 2) Ephesians 2:14-15: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace."
 - 3) Colossians 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
 - c. Some would object to this conclusion by arguing that when Christ died, the sacrifices continued at the temple until it was destroyed in 70 A.D. by the Romans. But the whole Mosaic system was dismantled and became null and void at the death of Christ. Unbelieving Jews continued to practice the voided procedures of the Law for about 40 years. But officially, from God's view,

it was no longer in effect.

- 1) Hebrews 7:11: "If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?"
 - 2) Hebrews 8:13: "In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away."
 - 3) Hebrews 9:15-17: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."
 - 4) Hebrews 9:25-26: "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."
 - 5) Hebrews 10:8-9: "Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."
- d. At the death of Christ, the veil (between the holy and most holy places) in the temple was rent, signifying that the Old was no longer in vogue. "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent" (Matt. 27:50-51).
6. The abomination that would bring the full desolation *was determined*. The ASV renders this part of the verse in these words: "And upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, *and that determined*, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate."
- a. Josephus provides some remarkable details of the fulfillment of Daniel's prediction: "In the very same manner Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them. All these things did this man leave in writing, as God had showed them to him, insomuch that such as read his prophecies, and see how they have been fulfilled, would wonder at the honor wherewith God honored Daniel; and may thence discover how the Epicureans are in an error, who cast Providence out of human life, and do not believe that God takes care of the affairs of the world, nor that the universe is governed and continued in being by that blessed and immortal nature, but say that the world is carried along of its own accord, without a ruler and a curator; which, were it destitute of a guide to conduct it, as they imagine, it would be like ships without pilots, which we see drowned by the winds, or like chariots without drivers, which are overturned; so would the world be dashed to pieces by its being carried without a Providence, and so perish, and come to nought. So that, by the forementioned predictions of Daniel, those men seem to me very much to err from the truth, who determine that God exercises no providence over human affairs; for if that were the case, that the world went on by mechanical necessity, we should not see that all things would come to pass according to his prophecy. Now as to myself, I have so described these matters as I have found them and read them; but if any one is inclined to another opinion about them, let him enjoy his different sentiments without any blame from me." (*Ant.*, X,XI,7, p.227).
 - b. When the Romans burned the temple, they "brought their ensigns to the temple, and set them over against its eastern gate; and there they did offer sacrifices to them..." (*Wars*, VI, VI,1, p.583). This was an abomination (1 Kg. 11:5; 2 Kg. 23:13; Dan. 11:31; 12:11) and was connected with the
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desolation of the city and temple.

- 1) 1 Kings 11:5: "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites."
 - 2) 2 Kings 23:13: "And the high places that *were* before Jerusalem, which *were* on the right hand of the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile."
 - 3) Daniel 11:31: "And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily *sacrifice*, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate."
 - 4) Daniel 12:11: "And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days."
 - 5) Josephus' full statement: "And now the Romans, upon the flight of the seditious into the city, and upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings round about it, brought their ensigns to the temple and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them, and there did they make Titus emperor with the greatest acclamations of joy. And now all the soldiers had such vast quantities of the spoils which they had gotten by plunder, that in Syria a pound weight of gold was sold for half its former value. But as for those priests that kept themselves still upon the wall of the holy house, there was a boy that, out of the thirst he was in, desired some of the Roman guards to give him their right hands as a security for his life, and confessed he was very thirsty. These guards commiserated his age, and the distress he was in, and gave him their right hands accordingly. So he came down himself, and drank some water, and filled the vessel he had with him when he came to them with water, and then went off, and fled away to his own friends; nor could any of those guards overtake him; but still they reproached him for his perfidiousness. To which he made this answer: "I have not broken the agreement; for the security I had given me was not in order to my staying with you, but only in order to my coming down safely, and taking up some water; both which things I have performed, and thereupon think myself to have been faithful to my engagement." Hereupon those whom the child had imposed upon admired at his cunning, and that on account of his age. On the fifth day afterward, the priests that were pined with the famine came down, and when they were brought to Titus by the guards, they begged for their lives; but he replied, that the time of pardon was over as to them, and that this very holy house, on whose account only they could justly hope to be preserved, was destroyed; and that it was agreeable to their office that priests should perish with the house itself to which they belonged. So he ordered them to be put to death."
- c. "One may wonder how the destruction of Jerusalem can be a part of the prophecy of Daniel's 70 weeks, since that event occurred 40 years after the death of Christ. It must be noted, however, that Daniel does not affirm that the actual desolation of the city would occur within the 70 weeks. Rather, the text suggests that Jerusalem's fate would be determined within that span (26b; 27b). When the Jews reached the epitome of their rebellion and crucified their own Messiah, the decree or determination was made that they be destroyed. By killing Christ, they had filled up the measure of wickedness characteristic of their rebellious ancestors (cf. Mt. 23:32). And Jesus indicated that accumulative rebellion would be required of 'this generation' (Lk. 11:50,51). And so, this marked the 'full end' of Judaism, both religiously and politically, from the divine vantage point" (Wayne Jackson, *ibid.*, p.27).
- 1) Matthew 22:7: "But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies,

and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city."

- 2) Matthew 23:37-38: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

I. Israel is not God's Special People Today.

1. Various millennial views assert that Israel remains God's special people even in the Christian Age. Following are some of the contentions made in support of this view:
 - a. It is claimed that "the promises to Abraham and his seed were given *unconditionally* and *eternally*; they did not depend upon Abraham's faith or obedience for their fulfillment (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:7-8; 16:6-8)" (David Levy, "Israel My Glory," Vol. 48, No. 3, p.27). Thus, the millennial view teaches that Israel has a perpetual title to Palestine. We will let the Bible decide this matter.
 - b. The same millennial writer asserts, "...Nowhere in the Bible is it said that Israel has forfeited her right to enjoy the promises given in the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants" (ibid.).
 - c. Again, "What an exciting day in which to be living as we witness God beginning to fulfill His promises to Israel! He is breaking the chains of Israel's captivity as Jews are being gathered from worldwide dispersion, as predicted centuries ago by the prophets of Israel (Dt. 30:3-5; Isa. 11:11-12; Ezek. 36:24; 37:4-14)" (ibid., p.27).
2. Millennialists believe all the Jews will be gathered back to Palestine, the temple will be rebuilt, and the Old Testament system of religion will be reinstated. To support this view, Amos 9:11 is cited. But Acts 15:14-20 shows that the prophecy is fulfilled in the church.
 - a. They assert that the land promises issued to Abraham have never been realized, that these will be fulfilled in the so-called "Millennial Reign" of Christ.
 - b. It is claimed that only the two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) returned from Babylonian Captivity, and that the ten northern tribes remain scattered throughout the world today. Some of them think that the Anglo-Saxons are part of the ten "lost tribes." We shall see from the Scriptures that a remnant of all the tribes were restored to Palestine in ancient days.
3. During the *millennium*, theorists assert that Palestine will become unusually productive, citing Amos 9:13 (but Num. 13:23). Spiritual Israel would be fertile. "And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and *they brought* of the pomegranates, and of the figs" (Num. 13:23).
4. Many brethren have the notion that somehow Israel remains in special standing with God. It is true that God promised that they would retain their identity as Jews down through the ages (Jer. 30:11), but that is a far cry from saying they are still God's special people. Romans 11:26 is also interpreted to teach that all of Israel will be saved. We will examine the verse and its context to see what Paul actually taught.
5. Some far-reaching promises were made to Abraham.
 - a. Passages:
 - 1) Genesis 12:1-7: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram *was* seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go

into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land. And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him."

- 2) Genesis 22:15-18: "And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
 - 3) Genesis 26:1-5: "And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."
 - 4) Genesis 28:13-15: "And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of."
 - 5) Genesis 49:8-12: "Judah, thou *art he* whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand *shall be* in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah *is* a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes *shall be* red with wine, and his teeth white with milk."
- b. This included a promise of a land which the descendants of Abraham would possess. The only part of Palestine Abraham owned was a cemetery which he purchased.
 - c. The promise included God's intention of making the descendants of Abraham to be as numerous as the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore.
 - d. The blessings of the Messiah were included in the great promise: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice" (Gen. 22:18). Paul showed in Galatians three that this promise found its fulfillment in the blessings of the gospel of Christ.
 - 1) Galatians 3:8-9: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."
 - 2) Galatians 3:14-16: "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man
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- disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."
- 3) Galatians 3:18-19: "For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."
 - 4) Galatians 3:26-29: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
6. Concerning the land promise, did Israel ever possess all this territory promised to them? Millennialists deny that they did. What does the Bible say?
- a. They took possession of the land initially under Joshua: "And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; and the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass" (Josh. 21:43-45).
 - 1) Joshua 23:14-16: "And, behold, this day *I am* going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, *and* not one thing hath failed thereof. Therefore it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you."
 - 2) Nehemiah 9:7-8: "Thou *art* the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give *it*, *I say*, to his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou *art* righteous:"
 - b. Through the years, they lost parts of the land to strong adversaries. Later verses show that the territory was recovered.
 - 1) Genesis 15:18: "In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."
 - 2) 2 Samuel 8:3: "David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates."
 - 3) 1 Kings 4:21: "And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life."
 - 4) 2 Chronicles 9:26: "And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt."
 - c. Their keeping the land was conditioned on their obedience to God.
 - 1) Joshua 23:15-16: "Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you,
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which the Lord your God promised you; so shall the Lord bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from all this good land which the Lord your God hath given you. When ye have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you."

- 2) Deuteronomy 28:21: "The LORD shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it."
 - d. For ancient Israel to be restored to the land, they had to "return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul" (Deut. 30:1-3).
 - e. Christ made it plain in John 4:23-24 that there is no earthly "holy ground" any longer. Being acceptable to God does not depend on being in the right physical location, but is rather determined by individual faith, obedience, and devotion. God does not dwell in temples made with hands (Acts 7:48-50; 17:24,27-28; Jn. 14:6).
7. Concerning the nation itself, God promised that their number would be great, comparable to the sands of the seashore and stars of the sky, and that they would be his chosen people (Gen. 22:15-18). They were his special people for a period of time, but it was never in God's plans to keep Israel as his special people to the end of the world.
- a. Genesis 22:15-18: "And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
 - b. There is no spiritual profit today by being a fleshly descendant of Abraham. John rebuked the Jews who placed significance in their kinship to that great man:
 - 1) Matthew 3:9-10: "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."
 - 2) Galatians 5:6: "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
 - c. He warned the Jews about the wrath which was to come upon them (Matt. 3:7); this wrath was poured out upon them in 70 A.D., and is parallel to the axe laid against the root of the tree. If a stump is left, there is the chance the tree will sprout out again, but when the axe is applied to the root, there is no such hope.
 - d. Christ used the barren fig tree near Jerusalem as a fitting illustration of the emptiness of Israel (Matt. 21:19). He stated in verse 43 (on the same day) that, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you [Israel], and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Fleshly Israel would be replaced in God's approval by "spiritual Israel," the church.
 - 1) Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God."
 - 2) Galatians 6:16: "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."
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- 3) 1 Peter 2:9: "But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.
- e. Matthew 22:1-8: "And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*. But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy."
 - 1) In this parable, the son of the king represents Christ; those who rejected the invitation to attend the marriage feast represent the Jews. The king (God) would send his armies (the Roman legions) against them as punishment.
 - 2) In Matthew 23:38, Jesus plainly announced to Israel that "your house is left unto you desolate," meaning that the temple and the whole house of Israel was renounced and cursed by the God of Abraham.
- f. God's chosen people today are those who are in Christ. This spiritual nation includes both Jew and Gentile (Eph. 2:11-22).
 - 1) Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 5:17-21: "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."
 - 3) Galatians 3:26-29: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 - 4) Colossians 2:11-12: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."
 - 5) Titus 2:11-14: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."
 - 6) 1 Peter 2:5-10: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained

in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

- g. God rejected Old Testament Israel because of their unfaithfulness (Rom. 11:21-22). The hope of Israel today is not a national restoration, but is in Christ, for only in him is there any hope for any person.
- 1) Romans 11:21-22: "For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."
 - 2) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - 3) Acts 26:6-7: "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which *promise* our twelve tribes, instantly serving *God* day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews."
 - 4) Acts 28:20: "For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see *you*, and to speak with *you*: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain."
 - 5) Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
8. Millennialism claims that the Old Testament prophecies predicting the restoration of Israel to Palestine have not been fulfilled. Deuteronomy 30:3-5, Isaiah 11:11-12, Ezekiel 36:24, and 37:4-14 are among those they think are still future from our time. They admit that some from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin returned, but deny that the 10 northern tribes came back.
- a. The Northern Kingdom, called "Israel" and consisting of 10 tribes, was conquered by Assyria, and many of the inhabitants were carried into that heathen land as slaves (721 B.C.). The Assyrian Empire was later overcome by the Babylonian Empire, which also conquered the Southern Kingdom (Judah, consisting of two tribes) in 606 B.C. Thus, all of the Israelites were in captivity to the Babylonians. Later, when the Babylonians were conquered by the Medo-Persian Empire, all of the Jewish people were under the dominion of this new world power.
 - b. Thus, when Cyrus began allowing the Jews to return to their own land in 536 B.C., elements of all of the twelve tribes were among those who returned. Ezra 1:2-3 shows that the prophecies of Jeremiah (Jer. 25:11-13; 2 Chron. 36:22), which foretold the return of Israel to Palestine were, fulfilled. All of the Jews through out his empire were included in the proclamation (Ezra 1:4).
 - 1) 2 Chronicles 36:22: "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD *spoken* by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying."
 - 2) Ezra 1:2-4: "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. Who *is there* among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he *is* the

God,) which *is* in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that *is* in Jerusalem."

- 3) Jeremiah 25:11-13: "And this whole land shall be a desolation, *and* an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, *even* all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations."
- c. Biblical history reveals that men of all of the tribes returned to the land. Ezra 6:16-17 shows that after coming back to the land, sacrifices were offered at the restored temple for the 12 tribes of Israel. Why were 12 he-goats offered if only 2 tribes had returned? Ezekiel 47:13-14 predicted that 12 he-goats would be offered when the return was effected; Ezra 6:16-17 shows that the prophecy was fulfilled. See also Ezra 8:35.
- 1) Ezra 6:16-17: "And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy, And offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel."
 - 2) Ezekiel 47:13-14: "Thus saith the Lord GOD; This *shall be* the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph *shall have two* portions. And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another: *concerning* the which I lifted up mine hand to give it unto your fathers: and this land shall fall unto you for inheritance."
 - 3) Ezra 8:35: "*Also* the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, offered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel, twelve bullocks for all Israel, ninety and six rams, seventy and seven lambs, twelve he goats *for* a sin offering: all *this was* a burnt offering unto the LORD."
- d. When the tribes returned to the land, they occupied the places assigned to them in the original division.
- 1) Leviticus 25:13-18: "In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession. And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest *ought* of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another: According to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, *and* according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee: According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it: for *according* to the number *of the years* of the fruits doth he sell unto thee. Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I *am* the LORD your God. Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety."
 - 2) Ezra 2:70: "So the priests, and the Levites, and *some* of the people, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities."
 - 3) Jeremiah 12:14-15: "Thus saith the LORD against all mine evil neighbours, that touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit; Behold, I will pluck them out of their land, and pluck out the house of Judah from among them. And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return, and have compassion on them, and will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land."
 - 4) Ezekiel 47:13: "Thus saith the Lord GOD; This *shall be* the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph *shall have two* portions."
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- e. Ezekiel 37:1-14 predicted the return of Israel from captivity under the figure of a valley full of dry bones being resurrected to life. Verse 11 says plainly that the whole house of Israel (the ten northern tribes, the two southern tribes, and the Levites) is included. The prophecy would not have been accurate without some from each of the tribes being included in the restoration.
 - f. Ezekiel 37:15-23 predicted the restoration of the 12 tribes under the figure of the 2 sticks; one stick represented Judah and the other stick represented Israel. As the two sticks were joined together, so the 10 northern tribes and the 2 southern tribes would be joined together again. This happened in 536 B.C. "In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers" (Jer. 3:18).
 - g. Jeremiah 31:31-36 predicted that God would make a new covenant with the house of Judah and with the house of Israel (all of the tribes are included). This new covenant is the New Testament, hence all of the tribes were in evidence in the land when the gospel was given. "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that 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 bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, *and* the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts *is* his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, *then* the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever" (Jer. 31:31-36).
 - h. In the first century, those Jews who were of the tribe of Judah knew their lineage (Heb. 7:14; Mt. 1:1-17); those of the tribe of Benjamin knew it (Ph. 3:5); Levites were identifiable as such (Acts 4:36); and Luke 1:36 says that Anna was of the tribe of Aser (Ashur).
 - i. Those Old Testament prophecies which promised that the Israelites would be brought back to Palestine have been fulfilled, as the above information indicates.
- J. What is the meaning of Paul's statement in Romans 11:26?
- 1. Romans 11:26: "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Millennialism says that this verse supports their contention that all (or nearly all) of the Israelites will be saved after the Second Coming of Christ. That this is an erroneous conclusion is seen from the following considerations:
 - a. Notice that the verse does not merely say, "all Israel shall be saved," but "so all Israel shall be saved." The word "so" is an adverb of manner, thus Paul is saying, "After this manner shall all Israel be saved." But after what manner?
 - b. The inspired apostle showed in Romans 1:16-17 that the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation; he affirms that this salvation applies both to the Jew and to the Gentile. Romans 2:11 states that there is no respect of persons with God.
 - 1) Paul taught in Romans 1:18—3:23 that all men, Jew and Gentile alike, are guilty of sin, and in that condition, stand under the condemnation of God (6:23).
 - 2) It is only by means of saving faith in the gospel that salvation can be obtained, either by Jew or by Gentile (Rom. 1:5; 16:26).
 - c. Paul reveals in Romans 10:12-18 and 6:1-18 that men are saved from their sins when they obey
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the gospel, from the heart. The apostle prayed in 10:1-3 for his fellow-Israelites, that they might be saved; they had tried to establish their own righteousness and had not submitted themselves to the plan by which God makes men to be righteous.

- d. He says in Romans 11:21 that the natural branches (the Jews) were broken off because of their unbelief, and the Gentiles (the unnatural branches) had been grafted in (11:17-20). Paul warns the Gentile Christians against pride lest "thou also" be cut off (11:22). He shows that if the Jews will give up their unbelief (thus, if they will believe and obey the gospel), they will be grafted into the Lord's tree (11:23-24). "Grafted in" is a figure of speech which pictures "obeying the gospel."
 - e. Every Israelite would be saved if each one personally obeyed the gospel. It is only by this method that anyone (Jew or Gentile) can be saved (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-38). It is only when an individual accepts [by faith and obedience] the Deliverer who has come out of Jacob (through the lineage of Judah) that salvation can be obtained.
2. Paul does not say that "all Israel shall be saved." He says, "And so all Israel shall be saved." Only a remnant of Israel returned to Palestine; only a remnant of Israel obeyed the gospel; only a remnant of the Gentiles obeyed the gospel; only a remnant of mankind will go to heaven. In the Christian Age, only those who obey the gospel are made citizens in Christ's kingdom (Col. 1:13-14); and only those who live faithful Christian lives will enter heaven (Rev. 2:10; Mt. 10:22).
- K. What is the meaning of the phrase, "the fulness of the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:25; Luke 21:24)?
1. Passages:
 - a. Luke 21:24: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."
 - b. Romans 11:25: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."
 2. Millennialism says that the first reference is to what they term "the church age," that period of time in which the church does its work in the world, preparatory to the establishment of the millennium kingdom. Since the Jews rejected Christ, they assert that the Lord established the church instead of the kingdom, and that the Gentiles are those who are the primary members of the church. When the millennium begins, all the Jews will be converted (according to their view).
 - a. Regarding Luke 21:24, millennialism teaches that Jerusalem will be trodden under the foot of the Gentiles until near the end of the "church age," when Israel will be gathered back into their land.
 - b. They lay great stress to the word "until" in these verses, claiming that it implies some other earthly activities will take place subsequent to the "times of the Gentiles." In regards to Luke 21:24, they teach that the Jews will take over Jerusalem again; and in regards to Romans 11:25, they say the time for Israel's salvation will follow the fulness of the Gentiles.
 - 1) The word "until" (Greek, *achri*) does not necessarily have a temporary thrust. It is a baseless assumption that something is always implied which follows the point being specified.
 - 2) The same word is used in other passages which obviously carry no implied event following the primary point. Jesus told the saints in Thyatira, "But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come." The Lord did not mean that they could cease being faithful after he came!
 3. Ephesians 3:1-11 discusses the great plan which God kept secret from the world through many ages, but which was revealed by the apostles and prophets of Christ. This *mystery* was, "That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (3:5). Unbelief on the part of Israel would be the occasion for the gospel to be preached to the Gentiles (see Acts 28:28). T. Pierce Brown gave this paraphrase of Romans 11:25-26: "God had

hidden in many prophetic references that a part of Israel would be hardened and would reject Christ, and that he would therefore turn and offer salvation to the Gentiles so that they too could be 'filled with all the fulness of God' and be fellow-heirs and fellow partakers of the promise of the gospel. When the Gentiles accepted the gospel and obeyed it, their fulness had come in. And this is the exact way that all Israel that is saved will be saved" ("Firm Foundation," March, 1989, p.5).

4. The "times of the Gentiles" and the "fulness of the Gentiles" are used to express a parallel to the "times of the Israelites." "For fifteen centuries the Hebrews had been Jehovah's special people—a era which might be appropriately termed "the times of the Jews." With their rejection of the Messiah, however, that reign (cf. Mt. 21:43) had ended. It was superseded by "the times of the Gentiles" or the Christian Age" (Wayne Jackson, "Christian Courier," Vol. XX, No. 6, p.22).

III. CONCLUSION.

A. If the millennial view of the Israel is correct, there are some awful consequences.

1. Jesus would be denied the right to serve as our High Priest. Only certain men of the tribe of Levi could be priests, but Jesus came from Judah:
 - a. Hebrews 7:14: "For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."
 - b. Hebrews 8:4: "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:"
2. It would mean a reversion to an inferior law.
 - a. Acts 15:10: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" The "yoke" Peter meant was the Law of Moses.
 - b. Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
3. It would require giving up the "perfect law of liberty" (Jas. 1:25).
4. It would be an assault on the impartiality and benevolence of God (Ps. 145:9; Acts 10:34-35). The Jews had a special standing with him, but such was essential in order for the proper background and preparation to be laid for the gospel system. God overlooked certain foolish things of men during that era (Acts 17:30-31).

B. The religion of modern Jews is not the religion of the Mosaic Law.

1. At best, it is a perverted form of Judaism. But even the pure Law of Moses could not save—how much less a perverted version of it!
 - a. Matthew 15:9: "But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men."
 - b. Acts 13:38-39: "Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
2. Jews now in Palestine depend on political and military power to retain their foothold in the land. Their religion is neither true Judaism nor Christianity. "Most of them hold to a modified and liberalized Judaism, and some are atheists. Very few accept Jesus Christ as the true Messiah or look for God literally to fulfill Old Testament scriptures sometime in the future" (Tom Holland, *Premillennialism, True or False?*, Wendell Winkler, Editor, p.86).

3. "Judaism died as a religious movement at Calvary and the political corpse was buried forever at the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70" (Robert Taylor, Jr.). God's people today are those who love and obey and reverence his Son, Christ Jesus!

WILL THE OLD TESTAMENT TEMPLE BE REBUILT?

I. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH REGARDING THE RESTORATION OF THE TEMPLE?

A. It is incumbent on us to turn to God's Word if we are to discern the truth on this matter.

1. Two prominent passages that relate to the subject:
 - a. Acts 26:6-7: "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which *promise* our twelve tribes, instantly serving *God* day and night, hope to come. **For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.**"
 - b. Acts 28:16-20: "And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him. And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men *and* brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. Who, when they had examined me, would have let *me* go, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against *it*, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see *you*, and to speak with *you*: **because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.**"
2. In these two passages, Paul states that he was presently imprisoned because he preached about the hope of Israel. It was on account of the fact that he preached the truth on the hope of Israel that the Jewish religious authorities pressed the Roman governor to execute the apostle. It is most obvious that what Paul preached was not to the liking of the Jewish religious leaders. Their idea of Israel's hope was in direct conflict with what the inspired apostle affirmed.
 - a. If Paul had preached what the Jews wanted to hear on this subject, he would not have been in his present trouble. If he had preached what they wanted to hear on this matter, they would see him as a compatriot.
 - b. But what Paul preached about Israel's hope was not what national Israel wanted. They were looking for an earthly Messiah who would take the reins of government, throw off the Roman yoke, and subdue the other nations around them. Their greatest hope was to regain the power and prestige and grandeur that prevailed under the reigns of David and Solomon.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 8:3: "David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates."
 - 2) 1 Kings 4:20-21: "Judah and Israel *were* many, as the sand which *is* by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry. And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life."
 - 3) 2 Chronicles 9:26: "And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt."

B. Millennialists today are preaching the same doctrine the Jews wanted during the time of Paul.

1. It is abundantly clear, therefore, that they are not preaching the same doctrine Paul preached. What the millennialists teach is what the Jews of the first century wanted and expected. Both the Jews and the millennialists are wrong.
2. Before the temple could be restored, national Israel would have to be restored, with all of its Old Testament features intact. Without those features, it would not be *Israel*.

II. IN ORDER FOR THE TEMPLE TO BE RESTORED, THERE ARE CERTAIN OTHER ITEMS

THAT MUST ALSO BE RESTORED.**A. The Temple was a significant part of the Mosaic System.**

1. Without the temple (or tabernacle), the nation of Israel could not be what God intended it to be.
2. For the Old Testament nation of Israel to be restored, the entire Old Testament system of religion would have to be revived.
3. But in order for it to function as God designed it, the nation would also have to have the civil laws resurrected and enforced. From the time of Saul to the final Babylonian assault against Jerusalem, the nation operated as a kingdom.

B. For Old Testament temple to be restored, the Israelite kingdom would have to come back.

1. No one among the millennialists are much interested in having the nation of Israel restored as it was during the time of the judges or as it was after the Babylonian Captivity. But the kingdom of Israel, as it was under David and Solomon, has a great deal of interest in but the modern Jews and the millennial theorists. Will the Old Testament kingdom be restored? We will allow the Scriptures to answer.
2. First, remember that there was no king in Israel until the nation rebelled against God. God gave them a king, but it was not his will that they have a king; he allowed them to obtain their demanded king as a means of showing them their folly and bringing upon them the just punishment for their rebellion against God's rule over them.
 - a. 1 Samuel 8:4-9: "Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them."
 - b. Hosea 13:9-11: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me *is* thine help. I will be thy king: where *is any other* that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took *him* away in my wrath." God had warned them centuries earlier (through Moses) that the time would come when they would demand a king; he gave them ample warning to avoid that grievous error (Deut. 17:14-20).
3. It was never God's plan for them to have a king. The theory of the millennialists is built on the same foundation that ancient Israel used in making a demand for an earthly king. An earthly king was never a part of God's promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3). It is contrary to both common sense and the Scriptures to assert that God will restore the earthly kingdom of Israel which he opposed being established in the first place!
4. Also, God foretold and promised that not a single descendant of Jehoniah [also known as Coniah and Jehoiachin] would ever *have a prosperous reign*: "*Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah*" (Jer. 22:28-30). Jesus is a descendant of Jehoniah [*aka* Coniah, Jehoiachin]—Matthew 1:11-16.

- a. Holman's PC Bible Dictionary says of Jehoiachin: "In 2 Kings 24:6, the son and successor of Jehoiakim as king of Judah. He was eighteen years old when he came to the throne late in 598 B.C., and he reigned for three months in Jerusalem before being taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon....Jehoiachin evidently was a throne name taken at the time of accession to the kingship. Jehoiachin's original name seems to have been Jeconiah or Coniah. He retained the title 'king of Judah' even in Exile...."
 - b. His uncle Zedekiah was the last king to reign over the Jews, but he was not of the lineage of Jehoniah; Zedekiah was a vassal king, appointed to the throne by his master, the king of Babylon (2 Kings 24:17-20).
 - c. Since God is always true to his word and cannot lie (Heb. 6:18), it is impossible for any descendant of Jehoniah to ever rule on earth with God's approval and blessing. Therefore, Jesus Christ cannot and will not ever rule on earth! Hence, the earthly kingdom of Israel will never be restored; and since that kingdom is forever gone from the earth, the temple worship it had at its core will never be restored.
- C. For the Old Testament nation of Israel to be restored, the Old Testament Law of Moses must be revived.
1. If the Mosaic Law were to be restored, it would have to be given a position as God's exclusive law. That is the stature it had when it was in effect. No nation can have two conflicting laws in effect at the same time; neither can God.
 2. Millennialists, as is true with sectarians generally, fail to make the proper distinction between the Mosaic Law and the Gospel of Christ. They want to restore the inferior and displace the superior. In effect, they want to exalt Moses to a superior position and relegate Christ to a lesser role. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). To understand the Bible, we must rightly divide its truth. The Book of Hebrews and other New Testament passages, demonstrate the vast superiority of the Gospel of Christ to the Law of Moses:
 3. God foretold and promised to replace the Law of Moses: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that 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 bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:31-34).
 - a. One of the purposes served by Christ's first advent was to replace the Law of Moses with the Gospel of Christ.
 - 1) Matthew 5:17-18: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." "For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).
 - 2) Hebrews 8:6-13 "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith 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 when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away."

- 3) Hebrews 10:5-10: "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. **He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.** By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*."
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 3:6-18: "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which *glory* was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation *be* glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away *was* glorious, much more that which remaineth *is* glorious. Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, *which* put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord."
 - b. In view of the undeniable fact that the gospel of Christ has replaced the inferior law of Moses, it is inconceivable that God would ever restore Moses' law. The following chart illustrates the great distinctions that exist between the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ:
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CONTRASTS BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

OLD COVENANT	NEW COVENANT
First: Heb. 10:9	Second: Heb. 10:9
One Nation: Deut. 5:2-3	All Nations: Matt. 28:19
Dedicated by Animal Blood: Heb. 9:19	Dedicated by Christ's Blood: Heb. 9:15-16
Moses the Mediator: Ex. 20:19	Christ the Mediator: Heb. 12:24
Faulty: Heb. 8:7	Better; Perfect: Heb. 8:6; Jas. 1:25
Shadow: Heb. 9:24; 10:1	Reality: Heb. 10:1; 8:1-2
Blood of Animals: Heb. 9:19-20; 10:4	Blood of Christ: Heb. 9:12
Carnal Ordinances: Heb. 9:10	Spiritual Sacrifices: 1 Pet. 2:5
Purify Flesh: Heb. 9:13	Purify Soul: 1 Pet. 1:22; 3:21; Heb. 10:22
Natural Birth: Gen. 17:1ff	Spiritual Birth: John 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:22-23
Infants Included: Gen. 17:1ff	Responsible Persons: Mark 16:15-16
Temporal Rewards: Ps. 105:10-11	Eternal Rewards: 1 Pet. 1:4
Glorious: 2 Cor. 3:9-10	Exceeding in Glory: 2 Cor. 3:10-11
Yearly Atoning Sacrifice: Heb. 10:1ff	One Sacrifice: Heb. 9:26-28
Bondwoman: Gal. 4:30-31	Free Woman: Heb. 4:30-31
High Priests Had Sins: Heb. 7:28	High Priest Perfect: Heb. 7:27
Ministration of Death: 2 Cor. 3:9	Ministration of Righteousness: 2 Cor. 3:9
Priests Without Oath: Heb. 7:21	With Oath: Heb. 7:21
Priests by Carnal Commandment: Heb. 7:16	Priest by Endless Life: Heb. 7:16
Priests from Tribe of Levi: Heb. 7:11	High Priest from Judah: Heb. 7:14
Priests Died: Heb. 7:23	High Priest Eternal: Heb. 7:24
Sins Remembered: Heb. 10:1-4	Sins Removed: Heb. 10:1-4; 8:12
Written in Stone: 2 Cor. 3	Written in Heart: Heb. 8:10
Servitude: Rom. 8:15	Sonship: Rom. 8:15
Letter: 2 Cor. 3:6	Spirit: 2 Cor. 3:6
Not remove Sins: Heb. 10:11; Acts 13:38-39	Saved to Uttermost: Heb. 7:25; 8:12
Passed Away: 2 Cor. 3:11	Remains: 2 Cor. 3:11; Jude 3

- D. For the temple to be restored, all the features that pertained to the temple must be restored.
1. For the Old Testament nation of Israel to be restored, the Old Testament temple must be rebuilt at Jerusalem, inclusive of the high priest, the priesthood, animal sacrifices, feast days, and all the other ceremonies and rites associated with it during the Mosaic Age.
 2. Christ is to serve as priest at the same time he serves as king. "And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name *is* The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zech. 6:12-13).
 3. If the millennial theory is right, and Christ will sit on a literal throne as king over the earthly kingdom at Jerusalem, to fulfill the prophecy that he would serve as high priest simultaneously, he will be a priest on earth.
 - a. But the Bible states clearly that he cannot be a priest on earth: "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law" (Heb. 8:4). He is from the wrong tribe to be a priest; the tribe of Judah was to be the source of the kings (Gen. 49:10) and the tribe of Levi was to furnish all the priests.
 - b. Hebrews 7:9-19: "And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him. If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God."
 - c. Hebrews 9:6-15: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service *of God*. But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might

receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

4. The bloody sacrifices offered under the Mosaic Law were from animals, which the gospel shows to be ineffectual in removing guilt of sin (Heb. 9:22; 10:1-4). Only the blood of Christ has the efficacy to take away guilt: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things...But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:18-19).
- E. For the temple to be restored, the land of Canaan must be parceled out to the Israelites.
1. Before the temple could be restored, the Old Testament nation of Israel would have to be restored; but before the nation of Israel could be restored, the land of Canaan would have to be parceled out to the Israelites according to the Old Testament plan.
 2. "It would mean a re-allotment of the various estates and inheritances given to Israel in the conquest and settlement of the land under Joshua. It would mean to restore the borders of what was once 'the Lord's land,' mentioned in Gen. 12:7, when the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, 'Unto thee will I give all this land'; and later in Gen. 13:15 when he said, 'For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it'; and again in Gen. 15:18 where God told Abram that the whole sweep of the land would be 'from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates'; that vast stretch of land in which in Gen. 17:8 God told Abram that he was a stranger, all the land of Canaan; that he would give it to 'thy seed after thee'; which Moses said in Ex. 6:4-8 was 'the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers;' and the land which Joshua said in Josh. 21:43-45 that God gave them when they entered Canaan, 'all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers,' which he said they possessed, in which they dwelt, 'according to all that he sware unto their fathers,' of which 'there failed not ought' of anything because 'all came to pass'"(Wallace, pp.109f).
 3. The millennialists assert that ancient Israel never received possession of the land God had promised them. But this claim clearly denies the plain declarations of the Scriptures:
 - a. Joshua 21:43: "And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein."
 - b. Joshua 23:14: "And, behold, this day I *am* going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof." This was stated as an accomplished fact about fourteen hundred years before the coming of Christ.
 - c. Nehemiah 9:7-8: "Thou *art* the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give *it*, *I say*, to his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou *art* righteous." This was stated as an accomplished fact about five hundred years before the coming of Christ. Israel had possessed the land for hundreds of years before losing it after the Babylonian invasion; here, during the time of Nehemiah, they had been restored to that land.
 4. The promise of the land of Canaan was conditioned on their faithfulness. The warnings issued to them showed that they would forfeit their claim to the land if they rebelled against God.
 - a. Deuteronomy 8:19-20: "And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God."
 - b. Joshua 23:13-16: "Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out *any of* these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your

sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. And, behold, this day I *am* going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, *and* not one thing hath failed thereof. Therefore it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you."

- c. See also Deuteronomy 29-30 and Jeremiah 18-19.
5. Since the giving of the New Covenant, there is no "holy land" where one may worship God more acceptably than some other place.
 - a. John 4:23-24: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
 - b. Acts 7:48-50: "Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven *is* my throne, and earth *is* my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what *is* the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?"
 - c. Acts 17:24-28: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things....That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."
- F. In order to the restoration of the temple, the tribal identities of the Israelites would have to be restored.
 1. For the Old Testament nation of Israel to be restored, the tribal identities of the Israelites must be re-established and proved.
 2. The Messiah was to spring from the kingly tribe of Judah, through the family of David, which was the very tribe of which Jesus was a member.
 - a. Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*."
 - b. Hebrews 7:14: "For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."
 - c. Acts 2:29-30: "Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne."
 3. After the Roman invasion of Palestine in 70 A.D., the city of Jerusalem was destroyed, the temple was utterly devastated, and the vast genealogical tables were forevermore obliterated. So complete was the destruction of these genealogical records, that no Jew today has any way to determine his tribal identity. The surviving Jews from the various tribes have been so mingled that it would be impossible for any pure lineage ever to be established again, even by miraculous act. The destruction of the tables of genealogy shows that God did not intend ever to restore an earthly kingdom.
 4. The significance of this is devastating to the millennial theory. There is no way for tribal identities

to be determined so as to parcel out the land; and there is no way for the Messiah to prove his tribal identity. The millennialist might argue that the Messiah could supernaturally re-create the genealogical records, but he did not depend on miraculous action to prove that he was of the tribe of Judah during his first advent; there was no need, since the records were there to be checked.

5. The physical relationship to Abraham has absolutely no bearing on anyone's standing with God anymore.
 - a. Matthew 3:9: "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."
 - b. Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God."
 - c. Galatians 3:28-29: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

III. CONCLUSION.

- A. The very things which Jesus nailed to his cross must be restored, if the millennial theory is true.
 1. This would nullify the very purposes for which he came.
 2. Why then did he die? It is certain that he died for entirely good purposes, including the aim of replacing the Mosaic system with a completely different and better system, the New Covenant.
 - a. Matthew 5:17-18: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."
 - b. Ephesians 2:14-15: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace."
 - c. Colossians 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
 - d. Galatians 2:21: "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."
 - e. Hebrews 10:9: "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."
- B. We may be sure that the temple will not be restored as the millennialists claim.

Max King's A.D. 70 Theory

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Through the centuries, many have tried to uncover what God has hidden from man's view.

1. He stated expressly in the Bible that we cannot learn beforehand the time of the Savior's Second Coming, but many have claimed they had discovered the key to that hidden information. Time has always proved them wrong!
2. But some have also asserted that Christ has come back already!
 - a. "And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (2 Tim. 2:17-18). Hymaneus and Philetus taught prior to 70 A.D. that the resurrection had taken place (thus, because the resurrection and the Second Coming of Christ are concurrent, the Lord's return was already a fact of history). They were wrong!
 - b. In 1971, Max King (a young preacher in Ohio) publicized a doctrine, that has since spread to many places, which claims Christ returned in 70 A.D., that the resurrection took place, and that the world ended then.

B. Although this doctrine is not part of the Premillennial theory, it is related to it.

1. It seems fitting that a study of this false doctrine be included in our far-ranging investigation of millennialism.
2. Due to the influence this doctrine has had on many congregations, this information is presented with the hope it might shed some light on the subject.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. The A.D. 70 theory is set forth in a book entitled, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, published in 1971.

1. The title is taken from Revelation 19:10: "And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."
2. This theory interprets *spirit of prophecy* to mean "the nature of prophecy is spiritual, never literal." Instead of looking for a literal fulfillment of prophecy, the alleges that we should expect a spiritual (figurative) fulfillment.
 - a. If a person is allowed to define terms as he chooses, there is no logical stopping place for his error. If a person is allowed to define biblical words and ideas according to his own whims and notions, he will develop a religious system which is bounded only by his own imagination.
 - b. What Max says about interpreting prophecy in particular, he also applies to the interpretation of the Bible in general. In his view, prophecies were not meant to be fulfilled literally; they only have some figurative ("spiritual") fulfillment; and Mr. King thinks he has the only key!
3. Beginning with this basic assumption, he asserts that the several great events which the Bible places at the end of time have already occurred and were never intended to be understood as literal happenings. His faulty premise has led him to these gross misunderstandings: (See "The Restorer," May/June, 1989):
 - a. The doctrine maintains that the Second Coming of Christ was not literal; his return was representative; it took place in A.D. 70 when the Roman legions destroyed Jerusalem. Christ will not return to earth any more.
 - b. Heaven and earth passed away in A.D. 70. He interprets these end of time events as now being

- over; and that they merely referred to the passing away of Judaism.
- c. He says that the end of the world has occurred; that this Bible doctrine simply meant the end of Judaism.
 - d. The doctrine claims that the new heavens and new earth came into being at the same time (A.D. 70), and only means that Christianity fully began at that time.
 - e. The resurrection of the dead, with Christ descending with a shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, happened then; but it was not a literal, or visible, or audible event; he says this was simply the exaltation of Christianity over Judaism.
 - f. A.D. 70 was also the occasion of the Judgment Day when Christ rendered to every person according to his works.
 - g. The eternal kingdom was established in A.D. 70.
 - h. The dead in Christ who were raised were Jews who were then joined with the living Christians to ever be with Christ since 70 A.D.
 - i. "All prophecy was fulfilled by A.D. 70 so that now whatever lies in the future is part of the secret things that belong only to God."
4. According to the theory, it is a system of realized eschatology and that there is no FUTURE second coming of Christ from our viewpoint of time:
 - a. There will be no bodily resurrections from the grave; no Judgment Day, etc. (if the theory is true).
 - b. Passages such as John 5:28-29, Acts 17:31, John 12:48, John 6:39, 40, 44, 54, and 2 Timothy 4:8 are all in the past (if the theory were true).
 5. It is a system that mostly ignores the Pentecost Day of Acts 2 and forces far too much emphasis on 70 A.D. Burying the political and civil corpse of Judaism is shown to be far more important (in the theory) than the establishment of the church. But the real hub of the Bible is Acts 2.
 - a. There were prophetic warning given in the New Testament regarding the destruction of Jerusalem (Mt. 24; Mk. 13; Lk. 21, and in a few references in the epistles), but those were for the purpose of warning lest the saints be caught unawares or allow their faith to be overcome. The burden of biblical teaching is not on the events of A.D. 70.
 - b. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden, God did not begin to point toward the overthrow of a city which had not even been built, but toward the great events of Calvary (where the Savior died) and to Pentecost (when his saving gospel was first published).
 - c. The wall of partition was not taken away when Jerusalem fell, but when Christ died on the cross, and was revealed in Acts 2:39.
 - d. The establishment of the church (kingdom) was not at A.D. 70, but in Acts 2.
 - e. The Great Commission was not begun in 70 A.D., but in Jerusalem in 33 A.D.
 - f. Those who obeyed the gospel between Acts 2 and A.D. 70 enjoyed the full benefits of the kingdom. Those who entered it afterwards did not have any greater advantage than those who lived before them in the church.
 - g. Other than removing one of the strongest enemies the church had, the church was the same before and after A.D. 70. Its nature and its blessings did not change.
 - h. Persecution of the saints did not end with the fall of Jerusalem. The Romans were even harsher in their opposition to the church than the Jews had been.
 6. It is obvious that the Pentecost Day of Acts Two marked the greatest turning point in man's relationship toward God since Adam and Eve fell into sin (Gen. 3).
 - a. This Pentecost Day was the grand climax of thousands of years of preparation: including the call
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of Abraham, the work of Old Testament prophets, the mission of John the Baptizer, the ministry of Jesus (together with his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension). Without the events on Pentecost, all of these things would have been for nought. The greatest meal is useless unless it is served.

- b. The church, which is the body of Christ, had its glorious beginning on this day.
- c. It was on this great occasion that the first individuals were born again.
- d. It was on this grand day that the keys of the eternal kingdom were used for the very first time. No apostle was present in Jerusalem when Judaism fell.
- e. Precious souls can be saved from sin whether or not they know anything about the events of A.D. 70, but no one can be saved without knowing the truths that were first presented in Acts 2.
- f. The Old and New Testament prophecies of the kingdom (the Lord's church, the house of God) pointed forward in time to the Pentecost Day of Acts 2; the kingdom references in the epistles and Acts point backward in time to the Pentecost Day of Acts 2. This is the grand turning point of Bible history.

B. What is wrong with the theory of Max King?

1. It is built entirely upon the flimsy assumption that prophecy is to be understood to only have a figurative fulfillment. Based on this false premise, it is claimed that the Second Coming of Christ, the Judgment, the Resurrection of the dead, etc., are figurative. These assumptions and conclusions are not supported by the Bible.
2. It magnifies the fall of the city of an unbelieving people who had been given every opportunity to believe in Christ, but who rejected him even in the face of overwhelming proof.
 - a. Matthew 23:37: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!"
 - b. John 1:11-12: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name."
 - c. Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - d. Acts 13:44-46: "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."
3. It destroys the truths of the Second Coming of Christ, the resurrection, the changing of the living, and the Judgment. It is a system of denials!
 - a. If our resurrection is figurative, then so was Christ's.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 15:16: "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:20-23: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."
 - b. If Christ's resurrection was figurative, then so was his ascension: "And when he had spoken these

things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:9-11).

- c. If his Second Coming was figurative, it undermines the Lord's Supper: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26).
 - d. The beginning point of the system is a misunderstanding of the phrase, *the spirit of prophecy* (Rev. 19:10). The term does not mean the nature of prophecy (i.e., that it is spiritual in nature), but denotes the source of prophecy. The angel identified Christ as the author: "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit (the heart) of prophecy." It relates to the statement of Revelation 1:2: "Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw."
 - 1) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - 2) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
4. It destroys motivation:
- a. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
 - c. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal."
 - d. 2 Corinthians 5:1-11: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made

manifest in your consciences."

- e. 2 Peter 3:10-14: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

III. CONCLUSION.

A. Why do people want to torment the religious scene with faulty opinions?

1. Perhaps it is out of pride: "Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18).
2. Perhaps it is out of ignorance: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them" (Isa. 8:20).
3. Perhaps it is out of indifference to truth: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isa. 5:20).
4. Perhaps it is out of rebellion: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13).
5. Perhaps it is because of a lack of love for the truth: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 2:10-12).

B. We must have a desire to learn every truth in the Bible.

1. We must have a revulsion to any departure from the truth.
2. Psalms 119:97: "O how love I thy law! *it is* my meditation all the day."
3. Psalms 119:104-105: "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
4. 2 Timothy 2:15: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

A Study of Scriptures Perverted by Millennialism

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. No person can sustain a religious doctrine without appealing to the Scriptures.

1. It is the Scriptures from which all spiritual truth comes, since the Bible is the only message from God to man.
2. No one who propounds a religious tenet, practice, or system can speak or write long without finding himself in opposition to the Scriptures.
3. Every false teacher must deal with the Scriptures if he is to have any semblance of correctness. But if his doctrine is false, he will have to pervert or ignore the Word of God.

B. Millennialists have perverted many precious passages from God's Word.

1. The idea in Bible study is to interpret every passage so that there is no conflict between any of the verses. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).
2. It is to the Bible that every spiritual, moral, and religious question must be tested.
 - a. Isaiah 8:20: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them."
 - b. 2 Timothy 3:15-17: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
3. Since millennialists and other false teachers misinterpret and abuse many Scriptures, it is a significant part of this series of studies to examine some of these passages to see what these verses teach.

II. AN EXAMINATION OF SCRIPTURES PERVERTED BY MILLENNIALISM.

A. Isaiah 2:1-5; Micah 4:1-4.

1. Passages:
 - a. Isaiah 2:1-5: "The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD."
 - b. Micah 4:1-4: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, *that* the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man

under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make *them* afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken *it*."

2. "It shall come to pass in the last days."
 - a. This is a reference to some period of time in the future from the day of these prophets, an era to come later in human history. Millennialists assert that this has not been fulfilled, that it will occur when the Lord returns.
 - b. But Jesus alluded to this passage in Luke 24:44-48 and applied the time for its fulfillment as beginning when the apostles started their great work of preaching the gospel to every nation.
 - 1) Luke 24:44-48: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things."
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 3) Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - c. In Acts two, Peter clearly identified "the last days" as the Christian Age: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2:16-17). The *last days* of Joel 2 and the *last days* of Isaiah 2 are identical. Joel 2:28-29 predicted that the outpouring of miraculous gifts would be done "in the last days." Peter stated that those days were then present.
 - d. The message of God through Christ was delivered "in the last days" (Heb. 1:1-2). Although Jesus lived during the Mosaic Age and died at the very end of it, his teachings were first fully broadcast at the beginning of the Christian Age. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1-2).
 - e. The last days began on Pentecost Day and will end at the return of Christ. God has never postponed a "time" prophecy, that is, when he gave a prediction that was to take place within a certain time frame, it was fulfilled as promised.
 - f. Other passages identify the Christian Age as the last days.
 - 1) 1 Timothy 4:1-3: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 3:1-8: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of

pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

- 3) 1 John 2:18: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."
3. "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains."
 - a. The church began in Jerusalem, a city situated in the mountains of Moriah. The word "mountain" has reference to a government or kingdom. As a mountain is the most predominant feature of a local landscape, so God's house and authority would "be exalted above the hills" (above other institutions and authorities).
 - b. We do not have to wonder about the identity of this "house of the Lord" for the New Testament gives us an inspired interpretation:
 - 1) 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." The house of God is the "church of the Living God."
 - 2) Ephesians 2:20-22: "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."
 - 3) Hebrews 3:6: "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."
 - 4) 1 Peter 2:5-9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
4. "All nations shall flow unto it" (Mic. 4:2).
 - a. In the Patriarchal Age, emphasis was placed on the family; in the Mosaic Age, a special nation was the central emphasis; but in the Christian Age, all nations (Jew and Gentile) are included in God's arrangement. This is an arrangement that began on Pentecost day (Acts 2); it applies to individuals.
 - b. Jews from all nations were present in Jerusalem when the church began (Acts 2:5ff). Three thousand of these Jews obeyed the gospel on that occasion. Peter said in verse 39 that the message he preached was intended for all people.
 - c. In the Great Commission, people of all nations were to be given the opportunity to enter the church.
 - 1) Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall

- be damned."
- 3) Acts 8:4-5: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them."
 - 4) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 5) Colossians 1:23: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;"
- d. There is no national or racial barrier in the gospel.
5. "He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths."
 - a. Teaching is the basis of Christianity. Teaching is designed to reveal and promote obedience, not to satisfy idle curiosity.
 - b. John 6:44-45: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."
 - c. Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."
 - d. Acts 8:4: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."
 - e. Romans 15:18-19: "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ."
 - f. 2 Timothy 2:2: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."
 6. "Out of Zion (Jerusalem) shall go forth the Law (the word of the Lord)."
 - a. Christ alluded to this part of the prophecy, and applied it to the spread of his gospel (Luke 24:44-48). He said it was written—where was it written? In Isaiah 2 and Micah 4. This is not a prophecy intended for the end of time, but for now, during the Christian Age!
 - 1) Luke 24:44-48: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things."
 - 2) Hebrews 12:22-28: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only,

but also heaven. And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."

7. "They shall beat their swords into plowshares...neither shall they learn war any more."
 - a. Millennialists let their imaginations run wild, and say this is literally to be fulfilled in the millennium in which they presume there will be no conflict. However, as we have seen in this study, they also claim that there will be a final rebellion toward the end of the millennium! If this verse is literal, how can there be any conflict whatsoever?
 - b. The truth is, the pronoun "they" is a reference to those in the church, who have been taught the way of the Lord and walk therein faithfully. They will be peaceable toward each other because they are ruled by the Prince of Peace and follow the gospel of peace.
 - 1) Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."
 - 2) Acts 10:36: "The word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all)."
 - 3) Romans 10:15: "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"
 - c. Under Judaism, there was a cleavage between Jew and Gentile, but under the law of Christ, that enmity is removed.
 - 1) Ephesians 2:15: "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace."
 - 2) Colossians 2:14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."
 - d. The peace that prevails between the members of the body of Christ, and between all these members and the God of heaven—this is the peaceful condition envisioned by Isaiah as the destruction of weapons of war (Eph. 2:11 ff). "The beating of the swords into plowshares and the spears into pruninghooks and learning war no more are high figures of speech to denote that the enmity and separation between the Jews and the Gentiles would be removed by the new covenant, and in the church the two nations would become one new nation under the new law" (Foy E. Wallace, Jr., *God's Prophetic Word*, p.490).
 - e. Ephesians 2:11-18: "Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

B. Isaiah 11:1-12.

1. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth" (Isa. 11:1-12).
2. Verse 1 is cited by Paul in Acts 13:22-24 where he applies it to the first coming of Christ. The fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy is to be found in Christianity. "And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the *son* of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. Of this man's seed hath God according to *his* promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel" (Acts 13:22-24).
3. Paul again quotes from this prophecy of Isaiah in Romans 15:8-12, and says that it spoke of the time when Gentiles would trust in Christ. Do the Gentiles have trust in Christ today? If not, then no Gentiles are saved today! If Gentiles do have trust in Christ today, then Isaiah 11 pointed to the Christian Age, not to the end of time. "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his* mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust" (Rom. 15:8-12).
4. The change Isaiah described in verses 6-8 is a change in men, not a change of the nature of animals. It is inconceivable that lions could survive on a diet of straw! When men take the precepts of the gospel into their hearts and incorporate them in their lives, a great change is effected in the way they think, talk, and behave. Their wild passions are brought under control. This thought is parallel to that of Isaiah 2:4: "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."
5. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in my holy mountain." God's holy mountain is his kingdom, the church. "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole

earth....And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:35,44). Faithful citizens in his kingdom are as harmless as doves. They do good to all men, and never repay evil with evil. The gospel is able to turn hate into love, anger into kindness, and pride to humility. Where its influence has been exerted, evil things such as oppression and slavery are lessened, if not destroyed.

6. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." The first generation of Christians were able to take the gospel to every civilized part of the earth (Rom. 10:15-18; Col. 1:6, 23). The great portion of the world of our time has some degree of knowledge about the God of heaven, his Son, and his Word. For every one we have taught and baptized, there are probably 50-100 who were taught but did not obey the gospel. The knowledge of God was disseminated, although in many cases without the proper reception.
 - a. Romans 10:15-18: "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."
 - b. Colossians 1:6: "Which is come unto you, as *it is* in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the day ye heard *of it*, and knew the grace of God in truth."
 - c. Colossians 1:23: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister."

C. Jeremiah 31:31-34.

1. "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that 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 bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:31-34).
2. Millennialism thinks that this describes the millennium. But this passage is quoted in Hebrews 8 and 10, where it is shown that it had reference to the New Covenant. Thus, here is yet another of the Old Testament prophecies which have their fulfillment in the Christian Age, not in the supposed "millennium."
3. God writes his law on our hearts today in the sense that it is through the process of teaching and learning that we are guided in doing his will. There will be no need for telling other members of his kingdom about God, for they all must have come to know about him before they entered into it.
 - a. Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."
 - b. Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - c. John 6:44-45: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God.

Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

- d. John 14:6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
- e. Acts 2:36-47: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
- f. Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."

D. Ezekiel 36:21-32.

1. Notice verses 21-24: "But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not *this* for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I *am* the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land."
 - a. God rightly had a very high regard for his holy name. Because of this, he would bring Israel back into the land of promise. The restoration was not due to any goodness on their part, but is due to the true greatness of the Almighty.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 9:6: "Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou *art* a stiffnecked people."
 - 2) Isaiah 48:11: "For mine own sake, *even* for mine own sake, will I do *it*: for how should *my name* be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another."
 - b. The heathen had seen God's people removed from their land by an enemy who did not believe in the God of Israel. Consequently, their perception of Jehovah was that he was weaker than the gods of the heathen nations which conquered Jerusalem. By causing the heathen nations to release the Jews, God would demonstrate to the world that he is the Lord! The release of a captive people to return to their native land was virtually unknown. Usually, such a people lost their identity by being absorbed by the nation in which they were enslaved. Where are the Philistines, the Amorites, the Edomites, *et al*?
 - c. This passage is misapplied by millennialists to the gathering of Israel back to Palestine at the

Lord's return. The facts of the case do not warrant such a conclusion.

2. "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God" (Ezek. 26:24-28).
 - a. This passage is also applied by millennialists to the gathering of Israel back to Palestine at the Lord's return. The facts of the case do not warrant such a conclusion.
 - b. Notice that Israel would be brought from among the heathen and brought home again, but it would be during a time when they were guilty of idolatry (verses 24-25). It is an established fact of history that following their exile in Babylon, they did not give themselves over to idols again. They were cured of idolatry more than twenty-five hundred years ago!
 - c. The passage sets forth the means by which they would be purified from their sins: God would "sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." The reference here is to the Mosaic ceremony of Numbers 19:17-19: "And for an unclean *person* they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel: And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip *it* in the water, and sprinkle *it* upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave: And the clean *person* shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day: and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at even."
3. Notice verses 25-32: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that *were* not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I *this*, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel."
 - a. When God brought his people back into the land again, he would sprinkle them with clean water, to make them ceremonially clean. This was the application of the water of purification. This *clean* water was produced by taking a red heifer, which had no blemish and which had never borne a yoke, outside the camp; the heifer was there slain.
 - b. Numbers 19:4-6,9,17-18: "And Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger, and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times: And *one* shall burn the heifer in his sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn: And the priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast *it* into the midst of the burning of the heifer.....And a man *that is* clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay *them* up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children

of Israel for a water of separation: it *is* a purification for sin....And for an unclean *person* they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel: And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip *it* in the water, and sprinkle *it* upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave."

- c. The water of purification was applied to those Israelites who became ceremonially unclean, *e.g.*, by touching a dead body. There is no reference to the action of baptism in this sprinkling. These passages have nothing to do with the action of baptism. The water was a concoction made from running water and the ashes of a burned heifer. This sprinkling has no relationship to the New Testament system; it was strictly a feature of the Mosaic Law.
 - d. In the process of bringing the Israelites back to their own land, God would cause their stony heart to be replaced by a new heart. There is no feeling in a stone, but there is in living flesh. They would have a heart that was sensitive. Their harsh experiences, together with the instructions given to them by the prophets, would have the effect of changing their disposition of heart. Those who were willing to return to Canaan would be a different kind of person from those who were taken into exile. They would be willing to heed the teachings of God's Holy Spirit-inspired spokesmen.
 - e. Each individual is responsible for the condition of his own heart. The Bible does not teach the sectarian error that God sends the Holy Spirit into alien sinners supernaturally to cleanse their hearts.
 - 1) Proverbs 4:23: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 6:17-18: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."
 - f. God would bless their efforts when they returned to the land; they would have fruitful harvests; he would give them grain to eat, and would prevent famines from descending upon the land again. These promises were, of course, conditional; they must remain faithful or else God would be forced to punish them once more. When they returned and began to enjoy the fruits of the land, they would look back to their sinful conduct of the past, and be ashamed. The thoughtful and faithful ones would resolve never again to enter that kind of lifestyle.
 - g. Once more, God affirms that he would do these good things for his people, not primarily for their sakes, but in behalf of his own integrity and greatness. It is essential that God maintain his status in the eyes of men as the supreme being. Otherwise, men will not fear him.
 - 1) Psalms 89:7: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him."
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 5:1-2: "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* thing before God: for God *is* in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."
 - 3) Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil."
4. Some scholars think that 36:26-28 may have a Messianic application, but the preceding verses clearly refer to Israel's return from Babylon. None of this passage has any reference to some end-of-time event as envisioned by millennialism.
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E. Ezekiel 37:1-14: The Valley of Dry Bones.

1. Verses 1-3: "The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which *was* full of bones, And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, *there were* very many in the open valley; and, lo, *they were* very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest."
 - a. The events portrayed in the first section of the chapter were in visionary form. The prophet states that he was "in the spirit of the Lord" during the proceedings. This was the situation with John when he was given the great visions of Revelation: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet" (Rev. 1:10).
 - b. In the vision, God placed Ezekiel in the midst of a valley; the valley was full of dry bones. The bones covered the floor of the valley. The prophet describes them as being very dry, signifying that they were utterly devoid of life. They were in a hopeless state. Verse 11 shows that the bones are used in the vision to represent the whole house of Israel, thus their present status was utterly hopeless, as far as human power was concerned. All of the tribes had been captured and exiled by the enemy, and were even now held in hard bondage in foreign lands.
 - c. The prophet is asked whether these bones could ever live again. Ezekiel responds by saying, "Thou knowest." He is aware that if those bones could ever be brought to life once more, it would have to be by the power of the Almighty. Therefore, he stated, "Thou knowest."
 2. Verses 4-6: "Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD."
 - a. Ezekiel is now told to speak a message to the bones, announcing God's intention to return flesh to them, and a covering of skin, and place breath within them. They would then know that the Lord is God. Since the bones represented the house of Israel (vs. 11), the resurrection relates to their return to Canaan and being established as an independent nation again.
 - b. The purpose of the vision was to provide hope for the exiled and enslaved Israelites. No power on earth could free them; God's power and providence would be necessary. He had promised that he would return them to the land.
 - 1) Jeremiah 29:10: "For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place."
 - 2) Jeremiah 50:4-8: "In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, *saying*, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant *that* shall not be forgotten. My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away *on* the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace. All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers. Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks."
 - c. The vision depicted God's actions to resurrect Israel as a nation, which would entail their return to occupy their own homeland, in keeping with the promises God had earlier given them.
 3. Verses 7-10: "So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and
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behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but *there was* no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.”

- a. Ezekiel uttered the prophecy as he was told. As he expressed the prophecy, there was a sudden noise and a shaking, as the bones in the vision came together, in the proper order, to form human skeletons. This must have thrilled the prophet! The bones had been scattered, with those of each individual not being at the same place. Verse 10 shows that those whose bones were in the valley had been slain; their death had not been natural, but violent and painful. As he beheld this awesome sight, he saw the sinews and flesh come upon the skeletons, and skin to cover each individual. But at this point, there was no breath of life in them.
- b. The prophet was directed to speak to the wind, for it to come from all directions and breathe upon these bodies which had been slain, but now had been reformed. "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). As God put the breath of life into the body of Adam, so he now caused it to enter each of these lifeless bodies.
- c. The individuals in the vision were given life by God's miraculous power, and they stood upon their feet. They had their full strength returned to them, and their number was exceedingly great. They represented a vast, powerful army. This scene, although visionary, must have had a powerful impact on Ezekiel. In reading this story, we are reminded of the great resurrection scheduled for the end of time. All who are in the graves (*i.e.*, who have died) will hear the call and will rise from the dead. They will be given bodies, which will be changed into immortal, spiritual entities, perfectly adapted to their eternal destiny.
 - 1) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 2) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."
 - 3) Revelation 20:13: "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 15:42-44: "So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."
 - 5) 1 Corinthians 15:51-53: "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality."
- d. It is difficult for a worldly-minded person to understand how God could resurrect disintegrated bodies. His miraculous power can accomplish anything he wills to do, despite our inability to comprehend the action. He was able to create the bodies occupied by Adam and Eve, demonstrat-

ing his awesome power. We do not perceive how God is able to place the germ of life in a grain of corn, enabling that small kernel to produce a large plant, which bears ears which are filled with other kernels identical to the original. God has promised to raise the dead; the fact of the resurrection is therefore a foregone conclusion! The physical body is the only part of our being that dies and needs to be raised (Jas. 2:26).

4. Verses 11-12: "Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel."
 - a. We are not left in doubt as to the meaning of the vision. We are told plainly here that the bones are the "whole house of Israel." This does not mean, of course, that the bones literally **are** the house of Israel, but that they represent Israel. One who can see this truth, can also see that the bread and fruit of the vine represent the body and blood of Christ, and are not the literal body and blood of the Lord.
 - 1) Christ gave the interpretation of the Parable of the Soils and the Parable of the Tares (Matt. 13; Mark 4; Luke 8). The meaning of these parables is clear, and furnishes the method by which the other parables may be properly deciphered
 - 2) Peter gave the meaning of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit which the apostles received on the Pentecost Day of Acts Two: "But **this is that** which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16).
 - 3) Since the key to the interpretation of our present text is given, there should be no failure to discern correctly the meaning of the passage. God is speaking of the return of Israel from their exile, depicting the transaction as a national resurrection.
 - b. Premillennial proponents interpret this passage, which speaks of the return of Israel to Palestine from their Babylonian captivity, as a literal migration of Jews back into Palestine at the beginning of the "thousand-year reign of Christ" at Jerusalem. The theory is without any Biblical support, and is in fact, a repudiation of clear scriptural evidence. At the time this prophecy was given, Israel was in bondage in Babylon, without any hope of returning to their homeland. There was no more life to their nation than there would be in a valley-full of dry bones (Ezek. 37:11). The passage gives a graphic picture of their national resurrection and restoration to Canaan (verses 12-14). The prophecy was fulfilled beginning in 536 B.C. when Cyrus permitted the first contingent of Jews to return home.
 - c. God promises that he will open their "graves," and cause them to come forth from their national lifelessness; he would bring them again into their homeland, and establish them as a nation again, giving them a fresh start.
5. Verses 13-14: "And ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken *it*, and performed *it*, saith the LORD."
 - a. The result of their restoration to their land would be the knowledge that God is the Lord. He had predicted the event, and when he fulfilled it, they could know clearly that he truly is the Lord.
 - b. As there were three deportations from Palestine, so there would be three separate groups to return:

EVENT	DATE	LEADER
DEPORTATION	606 B.C.	
DEPORTATION	597 B.C.	
DEPORTATION	586 B.C.	
RETURN	536 B.C.	ZERUBBABEL
RETURN	457 B.C.	EZRA
RETURN	444 B.C.	NEHEMIAH

F. Ezekiel 37:15-28: Israel and Judah to be Re-united.

1. Verses 15-19: "The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and *for* all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou *meanest* by these? Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which *is* in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, *even* with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand."

 - a. This passage tells about the prophet being directed to take two sticks, one for Judah and one for Joseph (Ephraim, or the northern kingdom). He was told to join them together so that they would become one stick in his hand. The northern kingdom (Israel) went into Assyrian captivity in 721 B.C., and lost their identity as a nation. The southern kingdom (Judah) began going into Babylonian captivity in 606 B.C.
 - b. In anticipation of the return of a remnant of the whole nation, God gave this picture of hope for Israel. This had reference to the return of 536 B.C., not to a fictitious gathering of all the Jews to Palestine at the Lord's return.
 - c. Jamieson tries to apply the prophecy to the unity under the Messiah, but the context will not allow it. The very point of the passage is to show the Israelites that the national division of former days would be destroyed when they returned to Palestine. They would no longer be two distinct kingdoms, but one; God would be their only king, just as he had always intended.
 - d. 1 Samuel 8:4-9: "Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them."
 - e. In verses 24-28, the prophecy reaches forward to the time of the Messiah, but to this point, the

reference has application to the return of the Israelites from captivity, and their service to God in keeping with the Mosaic Law (cf. 36:25-38).

2. Verses 20-23: “And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.”
 - a. The division of the nation following the death of Solomon was occasioned by the foolish policies of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon. God endeavored to work with both segments of the Israelite people, but eventually both kingdoms plunged into sin and rebellion so deeply that it was necessary for God to punish them. Now, it was his plan to unite the remnant of both groups into one nation, establishing them as one political and religious entity, in the land of promise.
 - b. God promised to gather the people of Israel from the various places where they had been forced to serve their overlords; he would gather the people of the northern ten tribes and join them with the people of the southern two tribes; they would be brought back home.
 - c. The harsh punishment of war with the heathen invaders, together with the bondage under which they had served their conquerors, would separate them fully from the practice of idolatry. They will have learned their lesson well! Cleansing them, he will bring them back home; they would be his people and he would be their God.
3. Verses 24-28: “And David my servant *shall be* king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, *even* they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David *shall be* their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.”
 - a. It is a frequent feature of Old Testament prophecies that the spokesman will address matters of a local and more immediate fulfillment, and in the same general context, to leap forward to describe events of a far distant time. This is the case in the present text. In the preceding verses, Ezekiel had spoken of God’s intention to obtain the release of Israel from captivity and to return them to their native soil. On their return, they would serve God according to his Old Testament Law. With that as the background, the prophet here darts forward in time to the occasion when the Messiah will have come, and describes the conditions that will pertain under his reign.
 - b. Using similar language with which he described Israel’s situation on their return to Palestine, God speaks of the relationship of the servants of the Messiah. The Messiah is spoken of as *David* in four verses in Ezekiel:
 - 1) Ezekiel 34:23-24: "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, *even* my servant **David**; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant **David** a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken *it*."
 - 2) Ezekiel 37:24-25: "And **David** my servant *shall be* king over them; and they all shall have one

shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, *even* they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant **David** *shall be* their prince for ever."

- c. Only one man in Old Testament history was named David. He was, of course, the son of Jesse, who slew Goliath, and became Israel's best-loved king. He wanted to construct a temple for the Lord, but because he was a man of war, he was not given that privilege. His son Solomon was to be given that honor (2 Kings 1-11). However, a prophecy was given to David, showing that another one of his offspring would one day build a house, a more wonderful *temple* than any earthly edifice:
 - 1) 2 Samuel 7:12-14: "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men."
 - 2) Hebrews 1:8: "But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom."
 - 3) Acts 2:29-36: "Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
 - 4) Luke 1:30-33: "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."
 - 5) Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."
 - 6) Hebrews 12:28: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."
- d. The people of the time period indicated (the gospel age) would have only one shepherd. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd" (John 10:16). The one fold is the church (kingdom); the one shepherd is Christ; the other sheep are the Gentiles.
- e. The *covenant of peace* is the gospel, which establishes peace between the followers of the Messiah and God, and between each other and with other men.
 - 1) Ephesians 2:13-17: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down

the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh."

- 2) Romans 10:15: "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"
 - 3) Romans 12:18: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."
 - 4) Philippians 4:7: "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."
- f. The covenant of peace would be an *everlasting covenant*.
- 1) Hebrews 13:20: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the **everlasting covenant**."
 - 2) Revelation 14:6: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the **everlasting gospel** to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."
4. This passage tells about the prophet being directed to take two sticks, one for Judah and one for Joseph (Ephraim, or the northern kingdom). He was told to join them together so that they would become one stick in his hand. The northern kingdom (Israel) went into Assyrian captivity in 721 B.C., and lost their identity as a nation. The southern kingdom (Judah) went into Babylonian captivity in 606 B.C. In anticipation of the return of a remnant of the whole nation, God gave this picture of hope for Israel. This had reference to the return of 536 B.C., not to a fictitious gathering of all the Jews to Palestine at the Lord's return.

G. Ezekiel 38-39.

1. Students of the Bible have discussed and argued for centuries over the identity of "Prince Gog" who was ruler over the lands of Magog, Meshech, and Tubal. The name is used symbolically to represent some specific or figurative enemy of the people of God. The passage must be interpreted symbolically or it will make no logical sense—39:9-10, 12-15. [Even the millennialists recognize this, for none of them will insist that Russia (see introduction) will invade Israel using bows and arrows].
 - a. Ezekiel 39:9-10: "And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years: So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down *any* out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord GOD."
 - b. Ezekiel 39:12-15: "And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury *them*; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD. And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. And the passengers *that* pass through the land, when *any* seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamongog."
 - c. Gog is used to represent some Gentile invader of Israel following their return from Babylonian captivity. Rulers who might fit the historic picture would include Alexander the Great, the Scythians (who inhabited the regions north and northeast of the Caspian and Black Seas), and

- Antiochus of Syria. Apocryphal books (cf. 1 Mach. 3:41) tell about Antiochus' outrages against Israel during the period of time between the Old and New Testament eras. Gog could be used symbolically to represent some spiritual enemy of Israel or Christianity, without any particular individual being intended. This is the view taken by Blackwood, who views the passage as apocalyptic, the type of literature in which the book of Revelation is given. (*Ezekiel*, pp.226f).
- d. In Ezekiel 37, Israel is prophetically described as being resurrected from their Babylonian grave and brought again into the land of promise. In 38:1-8, the great army of Gog is assembled, preparatory to invading Israel. Gomer, Meshech, and Tubal were sons of Japheth (Gen. 10:1-2). Togarmah was a son of Gomer (Gen. 10:3). Ethiopia (called "Cush") and Libya (Phut, according to some) came from Ham (Gen. 10:6-7). Persia (modern Iran) was located to the north of the Persian Gulf. All of these were in the army of Gog.
 - e. The attack against peaceful Israel is pictured in 38:10-16. God said to Gog, "I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes" (vs. 16).
 - f. In 38:17-23, God smites these evil invaders, and thus was he made "known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord" (vs. 23).
 - g. God would defeat Gog's mighty army upon the mountains of Israel (39:1-8). Their bodies would be food for the ravenous birds and beasts.
2. Ezekiel 39:9-16: "And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years: So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down *any* out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord GOD. And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the *noses* of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call *it* The valley of Hamongog. And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury *them*; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD. And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. And the passengers *that* pass through the land, when *any* seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamongog. And also the name of the city *shall be* Hamonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land." The weapons collected from the invaders would furnish Israel enough fuel to last seven years; their bones would fill a valley, and seven months would be required to dispose of them.
 - a. These descriptions make it impossible to understand them literally. A fantastic number of corpses would be involved if all of Israel was employed for seven months in their burial. This is obviously a symbolic description of the overthrow of some enemy or enemies of God's people.
 - b. The application may be to fleshly Israel prior to Christ, or to the Church (or both). If this was intended to apply to fleshly Israel, the fulfillment was most likely in the assaults of Antiochus. If the reference is to the Christian Age, the struggles of the church against its enemies is depicted, with a final victory being assured for God's people.
 - c. It is certain that these chapters do not address some fancied *Russian invasion of Palestine in the latter part of our present century!* These chapters have been abused by many down through the years, with applications being made to the American Civil War, to World War I, to Germany, etc. Some speculators have also applied the *3 frog-like spirits* of Revelation 16:13 to Tojo, Mussolini,

and Hitler!

3. Ezekiel 39:17-24: "And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, *even* a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord GOD. And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I *am* the LORD their God from that day and forward. And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions have I done unto them, and hid my face from them."
 - a. The birds and beasts are to come and devour the flesh and drink the blood of the fallen enemy. God would be exalted among the heathen, and Israel would know that God is "the Lord their God from that day and forward" (39:21-22).
 - b. The birds and beasts are to come and devour the flesh and drink the blood of the fallen enemy. God would be exalted among the heathen, and Israel would know that God is "the Lord their God from that day and forward" (39:21-22).
 - c. The application may be to fleshly Israel prior to Christ, or to the church (or both). If this was intended to apply to fleshly Israel, the fulfillment was most likely in the assaults of Antiochus IV. If the reference is to the Christian Age, the struggles of the church against its enemies is depicted, with a final victory being assured for God's people.
 - d. "The meaning of the apocalypse is expressed cryptically. The essential words in the explanation are 'glory,' 'judgment,' and 'hand.' As the 'nations' survey the grim results of God's 'judgment,' they will recognize that the 'hand,' which can smite with such devastating fury, is the 'hand' that can encourage and guide and strengthen. Thus they will learn to see God's 'glory' through his dealings with Israel. Is there, perhaps, a touch of irony in the following sentence? Ezekiel intimates that finally Israel will recognize God is the Lord, but only after he has smashed the invasion. Israel is the agent through whom the 'nations' will learn who is the true God. In the end, even the agent of truth will become convinced" (Blackwood, p.233).
 - e. "The heathen nations will know that Israel went into captivity because of their sins and iniquities. God allowed them to 'fall by the sword' because they had turned their back on God and would not obey him. Since they were unclean and had transgressed God's law, he hid his face from them, allowing them to go into captivity. God will now bring Israel out of captivity and restore them in Canaan" (West, MSOP, p.328).
 - f. "This promise reverts...to the prophet's own time, to which Ezekiel had already gone back by mentioning the carrying away of Israel in vers. 23 and 24. The restoration of the captives of Jacob commences with the liberation of Israel from the Babylonian exile..." (Keil, Vol. 2, p.178).
 - g. "The concluding section [39:23-29] bears little logical connection with the preceding apocalypse. It is rather a summary of Ezekiel's message to the exiles. The point of view is not that of the far distant future, but that of Babylon where Hebrews are dreaming, hopelessly about the restoration" (Blackwood, p.233).
4. Ezekiel 39:25-29: "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob,

and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made *them* afraid. When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; Then shall they know that I *am* the LORD their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD."

- a. "God's disciplinary actions and future blessings, which are promised, are to vindicate His holy name before Israel and the nations, and to usher in the day when He would pour out his spirit upon them" (Jackie Stearsman, *Ezekiel Study Notes*, p.25).
- b. "The clause in the English version is connected with the immediately preceding words, thus: After that they have borne in full the punishment of all their trespasses, whereby they have ungratefully trespassed against me, when they formerly dwelt safely in the land, and none made them afraid. Their peaceful establishment in Canaan, through my gift, will be hereafter remembered by them as heightening the guilt of their trespasses; so that they shall be ashamed of themselves, and I will then bring again (*i.e.*, reverse) their captivity (v.25). But I prefer to translate the whole verse, ' Then (when I have brought again their captivity (v.25), they shall bear their shame (*i.e.*, they shall know the enormity of their sin, and shall be ashamed), and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they shall dwell in their land, and none shall make them afraid'" (JFB, p.355).
- c. "Ezekiel emphasizes again that the exile was not a failure on God's part, but a disclosure of his essential nature, righteousness. Again Ezekiel stresses that the punishment demanded by righteousness is not God's final work; for he will have mercy upon Israel. Again he stresses that this mercy is not earned by Israel's good works, but that it proceeds from the nature of God himself" (Blackwood, p.233).
- d. "God will not hide his face from them anymore but will pour out his spirit upon them. God had already promised to pour out his Spirit (Ezek. 36:27; 37:14). Joel made this prediction (Joel 2:28), which was later taken up by Zachariah (Zech. 12:10) and was fulfilled in Acts 2 on Pentecost (Acts 2:16ff)" (West, MSOP, p.329).

H. Daniel 12:1-2.

1. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:1-2).
2. Millennialists assign this passage to "the great tribulation." "But it will be observed that in this 'time of trouble' both the righteous and the wicked are raised. The millennial theory requires that the righteous be raised first, then the thousand years, and after the millennium the resurrection of the wicked, hence the resurrection of the wicked would not occur until a thousand years after the 'tribulation'" (Wallace, *God's Prophetic Word*, p.519). Brother Wallace added that if the millennialists find a passage in the Bible or the Almanac that refers to wrath or trouble or battle, they jump to the tribulation and Armageddon!
3. Brother Wallace gives the following interpretation of this passage: "The reference is to the vindication of the Jewish cause by the guardian of Israel from the time of trouble. Such a time in the history of Israel is mentioned in Macc. 1:10 and 1:20,22,39, and in the history of Josephus. This period was

described as the worst time of trouble since Israel was a nation *to that time*. The description is that of the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes, after Old Testament prophecy was closed and during the period between the testaments. The deliverance that was promised to 'every one that shall be written in the book' refers to the fortunes of the Jews who outlived the Antiochus period of persecution, which is doubtless the sense in which the resurrection is used in verse 2. Some should 'awake' from this period of persecution to the everlasting life offered in the gospel, and others to the shame and contempt that accompanied the defeat of the evil cause of Antiochus. The resurrection here compares figuratively with the resurrections mentioned by Isaiah (26:13-19) and Ezekiel (37:1-14) in reference to deliverance from the Babylonian persecution and captivity" (ibid., pp.519f).

I. Amos 9:11-15.

1. "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God" (Amos 9:11-15).
2. "To this point the prophet has painted an exceedingly dark picture, as of a world enshrouded in a cloud of blackness and of hopelessness, with scarcely a ray of light breaking through. But as is characteristic of the prophets who prophesied of Israel and Judah to give hope in the midst of disaster, so also the Book of Amos contains a ray of hope as it closes with an optimistic promise of future glory" (Homer Hailey, *A Commentary on the Minor Prophets*, p.125).
3. The tabernacle of David is his tent or house (his family; royal line). His royal lineage had fallen into ruin from the time of Coniah (Jechoniah) when this king was removed from his throne and carried to Babylon with the Jewish nation. Jeremiah 22:24-30 predicted that Coniah (a descendant of David) would never have a descendant sitting on the throne of Judah: "...For no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (Jer. 22:30). Jesus is of the lineage of Coniah (Matt. 1:11-12). But no descendant of Coniah would ever sit on an earthly throne ruling in Judah. It follows that since Jesus is King, his throne is not (and can never be) upon the earth.
4. During the time in which the tabernacle of David was in ruins, "in that day," God would "build it as in the days of old." Millennialism teaches that this will occur in the millennium, but James showed that it was fulfilled in the church of Christ: "And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men *and* brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things" (Acts 15:13-17).
 - a. There were certain Jewish Christians who wanted to hold on to the Law of Moses, and thought that the new Gentile converts should be circumcised (15:1-5). The apostles convened a council, which their inspiration entitled them to do, and guided them infallibly to the proper conclusions (Acts 15:6).
 - b. Peter reminded them of the conversion of the first Gentiles, which was done by the authority of God (15:7-11; cf. 11:18).

- c. Paul and Barnabas reported how that God had wrought miracles among the Gentiles by them (15:12).
 - d. James (not John's brother) gave a speech in which he quoted from Amos 9:11-15, and applied the prophecy to the conversion of the Gentiles. "In this speech James shows that God, who knows from eternity what his own works would be, had foretold, through the prophet, the work which he was then performing through the labors of Peter, Barnabas, and Paul. He had said that he would rebuild the tabernacle of David, in order that the residue of men, who had not known the Lord before, 'even all the Gentiles, upon whom his name is called,' should seek after the Lord; and now, he had, through these apostles, selected from among the Gentiles 'a people for his name'" (McGarvey, *Commentary on Acts*, p.185).
 - e. God had promised to King David, "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever" (2 Sam. 7:16; cf. Ps. 89:3-4).
 - 1) From outward appearances, this promise had failed, for there had been no king on David's throne since the reign of Coniah (586 B.C.). Amos was active about 750 B.C., hence he predicted not only the restoration of David's "tabernacle," he also indirectly predicted its fall into ruin.
 - 2) But God had not forgotten his promises. When Jesus was born, the angel told Mary: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).
 - 3) The promise to David (2 Sam. 7:12-16) "is seen to refer neither to a continuous line of Jewish kings, descended from David, nor to a reconstruction of the Jewish Church, but to the perpetual reign of Jesus, the 'seed of David according to the flesh' [Rom. 1:3]" (McGarvey, p.186).
 - f. When Jesus took his throne in heaven, and began his reign over his spiritual kingdom, the tabernacle of David was restored. By the labors of the Peter, Barnabas, and Paul, the remainder of Amos' prophecy was being fulfilled, as the Gentiles learned the gospel and became citizens in Christ's kingdom (Col. 1:13-14; John 3:5).
 - g. "If the tabernacle of David mentioned here has not been established, the Gentiles cannot seek after God" (Wallace, p.528). James declared that Amos' prophecy was fulfilled in the church, so the millennial view is a base twisting of God's Word.
- J. 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Acts 2:29-33.
- 1. Passages:
 - a. 2 Samuel 7:12-16: "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever."
 - b. Acts 2:29-33: "Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted,
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and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

2. It seems that Solomon is the son of David to which this prophecy points. Solomon reigned over Israel after David died, he did build a house (the great temple), and God did establish his throne.
 - a. But verse 14 speaks of David's son as God's Son, thus indicating the prophecy reaches far beyond Solomon's time and stature: "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?" (Heb. 1:5).
 - b. The *house* over which the Son would rule is the church:
 - 1) Acts 2:30: "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne."
 - 2) Acts 2:47: "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
 - 3) Ephesians 1:20-23: "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
 - 4) Colossians 1:13-18: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence."
 - 5) 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
 3. Millennialism teaches that Jesus will return for the rapture of the church, in the which the dead saints (including David) will be resurrected and the living saints changed, and both will meet the Lord in the air. Seven years of tribulation will take place on earth, then Christ will return to set up his kingdom and reign on David's throne on earth for 1000 years. This scenario has Jesus on David's throne after the resurrection of the dead saints, but Peter shows in Acts 2:29-33 that he will be on the throne of David **while David sleeps**, hence **before the resurrection**.
 4. Peter said that Christ was on the throne (Acts 2:31-33) at the time he spoke, thus the prophecy of 2 Samuel 7:12-16 is fulfilled in the church or kingdom of Christ! The millennial theory is false to the core!
- K. Isaiah 65:17-25.
1. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever *in that* which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred
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years old; but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they *are* the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust *shall be* the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD" (Isa. 65:17-25).

2. "It is argued that in the millennium a man a hundred years old will be a mere infant in age, merely beginning his life here on earth. But verse 17 refers to 'the new heavens and a new earth' and the millennialists have conceded that 'the new heavens and the new earth' come after the millennium, and is the eternal state, or heaven. So they lose their own argument" (Wallace, *God's Prophetic Word*, p.500).
3. But what is the meaning of the passage? It is obvious that no span of time on earth is envisioned in which a man a hundred years old is a mere baby. The passage should not be taken as literal. Verse 25 is parallel to Isaiah 11:7-8, which is in reference to the peaceful conditions in the Lord's kingdom (the church). Hence, this passage is Messianic; its fulfillment is figurative, in the church. "And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den" (Isa. 11:7-8).
4. The nature of the new Jerusalem, the church, is altogether different from the old Jerusalem (Israel). A radical change is effected in the work of Christ. A peaceful disposition reigns in the church in stark contrast with the disposition characteristic of old Israel.
5. It is but a high metaphor and has a spiritual application to the state of spiritual Israel, the church, in the gospel dispensation" (Wallace, *ibid.*).

L. Zechariah 14.

1. Zechariah 14:1-5: "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, *and there shall be* a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee *to* the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, *and* all the saints with thee."
- a. "The refining and purging introduced by the prophet, in which the larger portion were cut off (13:8-9), is continued under the general picture of Jerusalem's assault" (Hailey, p.394). This chapter deals with the literal destruction of the actual city of Jerusalem. Similar figures and descriptions are given in Isaiah 13 predicting the overthrow of the wicked city of Babylon. The prophetic picture given here of Jerusalem's destruction has to do with the 70 A.D. invasion of the Roman Army. What Zechariah depicts is not something that was in the past (B.C. 586); it has nothing to do with the second coming of Christ, for then the entire universe (including the earth) will be utterly destroyed (2 Pet. 3:10-11).

- b. Verses 1-5 undoubtedly is a prediction to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. The descriptions fit the picture given by Jesus in Matthew 24 of its fall. The Roman legions were comprised of men from all the conquered nations. The writings of Josephus and Pliny agree with what the Bible predicted about the fall of Jerusalem to the Romans. None of the things listed here could take place at the end of time when the Lord returns. There will be no time for the houses to be rifled and the women ravished. In an instant, all the dead will be raised and all the living will be changed (John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:50-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Pet. 3:8-12; Matt. 24:36ff). Some scholars view this passage as a prediction of the assaults made against spiritual Jerusalem by its enemies (Hailey, *A Commentary on the Minor Prophets*, p.395). If application is made to the assault against spiritual Jerusalem, how are the women ravished (raped)? Would male Christians suffer no affliction?
- c. Zechariah's description of events in this verse accurately depicts what happened when the Roman Army besieged and conquered Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Great atrocities were wrought by the Roman soldiers against the citizens of Jerusalem. Josephus, the uninspired Jewish historian who was present at the siege and fall of the city, gave a close description of the tragic end of the city and nation. A large portion of the population was taken captive, some being enslaved to work in Egyptian mines, and many others were taken to Rome as slaves. The following details of the tribulation associated with Jerusalem's fall is given by Josephus:
- 1) 1,100,000 Jews died at Jerusalem during the siege and fighting, and another 97,000 were captured and placed in slavery. How foolish the Jewish bravado of Matthew 27:25: "His blood be on us, and on our children."
 - 2) Women ate their own babies, men broke into houses and stole food from children's mouths, and neighbor robbed neighbor for the food they had.
 - 3) Rich Jews swallowed gold, deserted to the Romans, hoping to get away with some of their wealth. When the soldiers discovered the scheme, they began killing those who surrendered, ripping open their bodies in search of the coins. Thousands died in this fashion, two thousand in only one night.
 - 4) Many were beaten and tortured by the Roman soldiers; thousands were crucified in various bodily positions as jests. This was done until all of the wood had been used as crosses, and even places to erect crosses were filled!
 - 5) By actual count, 115,880 bodies were carried through one gate in three months; there were 600,000 in all thus disposed of. When the bodies could no longer be thrown outside the city, they were stored in large houses within the city.
 - 6) Thousands of the captives were later forced to fight beasts and each other in arenas; this for the enjoyment of spectators.
 - 7) Jerusalem was overthrown and the temple was utterly destroyed; Matthew 14:2 was literally fulfilled. When the Romans broke into the city, Josephus said, "...They slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burned the houses and all the people who had fled into them; and when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine, then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they had not the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, insomuch that many things which were burning were extinguished by the blood" (*Wars*, Book VI, chap. 8,5; chap. 9,3). He also reports that the city fell to the Romans on the same day that it had fallen to Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C.
- d. The "residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city" (14:2). This is a reference to the fact

- that not all of the Jews would be slain or captured in the great battle of A.D. 70. One likely interpretation of this expression is to apply it to those Christians who were present at Jerusalem at the approach of the Roman Army; guided by the warning the Lord had given in Matthew 24, they were able to flee from the city and escape the horrible fate that befell their unbelieving countrymen. Christians comprised only a remnant of the nation of Israel. Another possible meaning is that not all the Jews would be slain or captured; a remnant would be preserved. This would be in keeping with God's promise not to make a full end of their race (Jer. 30:11).
- e. When God used some alien nation to bring punishment upon Israel, he always was able to punish the "punishers." So verse three shows this would be true of the Romans. Their great empire fell after many years of turmoil. An individual or a nation reaps what it sows (Gal. 6:7-8). Assyria subdued and humiliated ancient nations, and after God had used those wicked people to bring punishment upon idolatrous Israel, he brought about their own punishment. As God had used Assyria, Babylon, and other ancient nations as his means of penalizing his rebellious people, and then punished those he used for that purpose, so he would bring the Roman legions against Jerusalem, and after their harsh work was done, God would wreak havoc upon the Romans. Because of Rome's wickedness, manifested in a host of avenues, God would destroy her, giving his spiritual kingdom the opportunity to grow and spread. The truth of verse three would be fulfilled over a period of several centuries.
 - f. Connected with this punishment of the Romans is the Roman persecution which they poured forth upon God's people, the church. God had promised in Daniel 2:44 that he would set up his kingdom during the days of the Roman kings, and that his kingdom would eventually subdue Rome.
2. The sensationalists of our day try to make this passage a prediction of a literal event to take place in connection with their millennial timetable. It is significant that the inspired prophet made a reference to the *mount of Olives*. On that very mount, the Lord delivered to the apostles his discourse regarding the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem, and of the end of the world (Matt. 24).
- a. In keeping with the immediate context of Zechariah 14, the fulfillment must be sought in connection with the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple which occupied the primary emphasis in the Lord's discourse in Matthew 24.
 - b. The Mount of Olives would be cleft from the east and the west, dividing the mountain to the north and south. Christ was on this very mount when he gave the disciples the discourse depicting the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. 24:1ff). The Roman general stood on this same mount when Jerusalem was under siege. "The formations of the battle lines, entrenchments and redoubts, the circumvallations of the Romans, all enter into the graphic description and portrayal of the prophet that the mount should 'cleave in the midst'..." (Wallace, *ibid.*, p.247).
 - c. Verse 5: "And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." Again, this is not a reference to the second coming of Christ; at that time, there be no time or opportunity for anyone to flee. One moment those then on the earth will be in peace and safety; the next instant they will be in eternity, and the world will be in flames! (2 Pet. 3:10-11; 1 Cor. 15:50-54; Matt. 24:36-42).
 - 1) This verse sheds light on the thought in verse two about the residue of the people not being cut off from the city. These references certainly fit the successful flight of the Christians from Jerusalem when the Roman Army came. Historical records show that the siege was suddenly lifted for a short time, permitting those saints still in the city to flee. Records also show that no Christian perished during the fall of Jerusalem.
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- 2) The great earthquake that occurred during King Uzziah's reign is elicited as an example of fleeing from tragedy. This disaster is mentioned in the Scriptures only in Amos 1 and here. Our information is very limited, therefore. Josephus recorded an uninspired description of it, and said it was divinely-sent as punishment for Uzziah's evil deeds (2 Chron. 26:16-18). See Book IX, Ch. X.
 - 3) "And Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee." In connection with his prophecy concerning Jerusalem's demise in 70 A.D., Christ spoke of his coming and about the work of certain angels in gathering the elect (Matt. 24:29-31). Some scholars apply the Lord's words to events that will be accomplished at the second coming. But there is much evidence to conclude that he figuratively referred to a representative coming which was done when Jerusalem was destroyed. The figures employed are used extensively in the Old Testament to portray the overthrow of ancient cities and nations. The saints (*holy ones* - ASV) could be taken as angels. [At his second coming, he will be accompanied by the holy angels (Matt. 25:31; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; cf. Jude 14)].
3. Zechariah 14:6-11: "And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the light shall not be clear, *nor* dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, *that* at evening time it shall be light. And it shall be in that day, *that* living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one. All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and *from* the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. And *men* shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited."
 - a. Verses 6-7: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark. But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." Understanding this passage to fit the previous verses in the context of the chapter, we should expect the prophet to be describing events in connection with Jerusalem's fall in 70 A.D. In the figure used by Zechariah, the light would not be normal; the day would be partially light and partially dark, and it would be dark at evening. Isaiah figuratively described the fall of Babylon as the removal of the light giving heavenly bodies: "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine" (Isa. 13:10).
 - b. Christ portrayed the fall of Jerusalem in similar language: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken" (Matt. 24:29). The removal of these heavenly bodies is a symbolic depiction of the removal of various civil and religious figures.
 - c. Perhaps the realization of the prophecy is to be found in the fall of Jerusalem and in the subsequent spread of Christianity. Verse eight indeed does describe this latter element. *Light* is used often in the Scriptures to depict righteousness, knowledge, and godliness; *darkness* is often used to portray sin, ignorance and evil in general. In connection with the demise of Judaism, there was a measure of understanding on the part of the Jews. They thought they were serving the will of God; their persecution of the church was done in part because they believed it was God's will for them to oppose this *innovation* (cf. John 16:2). That time could be described, therefore, as part light and part night.
 - d. During the Christian age, there will be a continuation of light and night. This is due to the fact that many will not learn, or refuse to accept, the gospel. And there are always many who follow
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- their own brand of Christianity (a perverted version) instead of the truth (Gal. 1:6-9; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 1 John 4:1; 2 Peter 2).
- e. At evening, when the day is over, there will be light. There are at least two good views of this thought. At the end of the gospel age, which will be reached at the end of time when the Lord returns, only the light will remain; all error and wickedness will be shown for what they are, and will be destroyed: there will be no night in heaven (see Rev. 21:25; 22:5). With the fall of Jerusalem, the gospel would no longer encounter organized persecution and opposition from the Jewish state; Judaism would be no more; the Lord's people could pursue the task of proclaiming of the gospel. The Gentiles would oppose their work, but the unbelieving world would not have the Jewish state confusing the issue, claiming to be the true followers of the True God, and undermining the efforts of the church by claiming these Christians were only perverters of the true way. Jeremiah 31:31-35.
4. Verse 8: "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be." In the day contemplated by the prophet, living waters would issue forth from the city of Jerusalem. If we can identify what the living waters are, we will have found the key to unlocking the prophecy.
 - a. God describes himself as the fountain of living waters (Jer. 2:13; 17:13). God is the source of all spiritual and material blessings (Eph. 1:3; Jas. 1:17). The life-giving word of God brings salvation (Psa. 19:1-14; Heb. 4:12; Jas. 1:21). Christ describes himself as the fountain from which flows living water (John 4:10,11; cf. 14:6; Heb. 9:15).
 - b. Many prophecies of the Old Testament pointed to the coming of the Messiah and his new covenant: See Isaiah 2:1-4; Jeremiah 31:31-35. Christ spoke of his soul-saving and life-giving gospel in John 4:10-11. God is the ultimate Author of this message (John 12:48-50; 17:8). When Zechariah spoke of the living waters going forth from Jerusalem, spreading eastward toward the Dead Sea and westward toward the Mediterranean Sea, he was figuratively describing the spread of the gospel. The gospel went forth from Jerusalem (Luke 24:47-49; Acts 1:5-8; 2:1ff; 8:1-12).
 - c. It was then that the gospel was spread to its farthest extent. The Lord himself described this rapid expansion of his kingdom: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14; cf. Matt. 13:31-33). During the first century, by the time Paul wrote the Colossians (about 62 A.D.), the gospel had been preached throughout the Roman Empire (Col. 1:6,23). But with the end of Jewish opposition, the believers were able to proceed unhindered from that quarter with the great work of preaching the gospel to the whole creation.
 5. Verse 9: "And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one." The reign of the Lord will extend to all the earth, over all of mankind. The rule of this verse grows out of the spread of the gospel described in the preceding verses. If there is a king, there must be a kingdom. Is the prophet seeing a millennial reign of Christ on the earth? If so, the prophecy has not yet been fulfilled. If we can show that the kingdom of Daniel 2:44 has been established, we will have proved that this passage has been fulfilled.
 - a. Daniel 2 predicted the establishment of God's kingdom during the reign of the kings of the Roman Empire; since the empire of Rome ceased to be by 476 A.D., the kingdom has been set up or God was untrue to his promises. Is anything too hard for God? Genesis 18:14; Jeremiah 32:17,27.
 - b. Eighty-four preachers affirmed that the establishment of the kingdom was *at hand* (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Luke 10:9). God was behind this message. Was that promise fulfilled or did God err? Daniel prophesied that the kingdom would be established during the days of the Roman kings (Dan. 2). John the Baptizer came preaching the coming of the kingdom (Matt. 3:1-2); Luke
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- reports the names of the Roman rulers in connection with this announcement (Luke 3:1-6). If the kingdom of Daniel 2:44 is not meant, why did the inspired writings of Luke give these details?
- c. The Lord did not postpone the establishment of the kingdom because the Jews did not want him to reign over them. The fact is, a great company of Jews sought to forcibly place Jesus on the throne (John 6:15). He rejected their misguided efforts, showing that his kingdom was not an earthly monarchy.
 - d. The Lord promised that his kingdom would come with the power he promised to send to the apostles (Luke 24:49; Mark 9:1; Acts 1:5,8). That power was to be given to them when the Holy Spirit came upon them (Acts 1:8). Since the Holy Spirit came upon them on the Pentecost day of Acts 2 (see verses 1-4), then the kingdom came into existence on that same occasion. Christ promised that there were some living at that time on the earth who would not die until they saw the kingdom come with power (Mark 9:1). If that kingdom has not come, since Christ is ever true to his word, there are some mighty old people still living on earth!
 - e. Both Paul and John the apostle affirmed that they were in the kingdom (Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:9). Since these men wrote by inspiration, their claims were true; and if their claims to be in the kingdom are true, then the kingdom has been set up!
 - f. As we have already seen from the writings of the prophet Zechariah, Christ was to rule on his throne as king and priest (6:13). He is serving as our great high priest today, during the Christian Age (Heb. 7). His work as priest is done as he operates to bring about the forgiveness of sin (this was akin to the work of Levitical high priests). Since he is serving as High Priest today, he is serving as King today. Since he is serving as King, his kingdom exists (cf. Col. 1:13-14; Heb. 12:28-29).
 - g. The scope of his rule is universal. There is no place in all the universe where his authority does not extend. He plainly stated that only a fraction of mankind would serve him (Luke 13:24; Matt. 7:13-14; cf. 1 Kings 19:18). In the Judgment, however, every knee will bow to him (Rom. 14:10-12; Phil. 2:10-11). In that day (i.e., during the period of time in which the Lord reigns as king), there will be only one Lord, and his name will be one. He does not permit us to divide our loyalty between him and someone else (Matt. 6:24). He requires unity among all of those who follow him (John 17:20-21; Matt. 12:30). There will not be many lords to follow; only one. While the Godhead is comprised of three distinct personalities, they are fundamentally one; they are perfectly united in all that they say and do (John 17:20-22; 1:1-3; cf. John 10:30; 3 John 7).
6. Verse 10: "All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses." The ASV gives this rendition: "All the land shall be made like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and she shall be lifted up, and shall dwell in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel unto the king's winepresses."
- a. "The Arabah was the Jordan valley, a valley of varying widths which extended from the north of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqabah. 'From Geba to Rimmon' would include the limits of Judah from Geba (I Kings 15:22), six miles north of Jerusalem, to Rimmon, which seems to have been the southern boundary, near the wilderness (Josh. 15:32; 19:7). From having been beaten down as in the past, Jerusalem would be lifted up, occupying her rightful position" (Hailey, pp.397f).
 - b. Hailey describes Benjamin's gate as in the north wall, and was the exit from the city those would take who were going into the land of Benjamin. The first gate and the corner gate may have been at the northeast and northwest corners of the city's walls; the tower of Hananel and the king's winepresses may have been in the northeast and southeast areas of the city walls (Hailey).
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- c. In keeping with the context of the verse, Zechariah describes the peaceful nature of the Lord's Monarchy. Within the body of Christ (the church or kingdom), peace and unity prevail (Eph. 2). Although the tempests of opposition from the wicked and the normal difficulties of life may assail her, those who are in the Lord are protected by the arm of their King and Savior (Heb. 13:5-6; 1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Pet. 2:9; Matt. 6:19-34). Other Old Testament prophets likewise described the peaceful nature of the Lord's church in figures of speech. Isaiah 2:2-4 depicted it as a situation in which there would be no war. Micah 4:1-4 uses similar terms, and speaks of God's people dwelling safely under their vines.
7. Verse 11: "And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited." The peaceful portrayal of the Lord's spiritual kingdom is continued in this verse. Their situation will not be like that of ancient Israel, who lived under the threat of invasion by heathen hordes. Christ tempered this peaceful depiction somewhat when he warned that when we obeyed the truth and sought to teach it to others, there would be many, some even in our own family, who would oppose our efforts.
- a. But despite this opposition which might even develop into persecution, faithful Christians can live with a peace that men of the world cannot understand (Phil. 4:6-7). How can a worldly-minded man understand how a Christian can face the cruelest death without terror? How can such a person comprehend how one saint will offer to die in another's place? How can such a one fathom the joy a Christian has as he faces death?
- b. In this passage, figurative descriptions are given which are fulfilled in the spiritual kingdom. Today, his reign is universal; and there is only one Lord (Eph. 4:5). In spiritual Jerusalem there is no drought or danger; the Lord gives us every spiritual blessing, and cares for us.
8. Zechariah 14:12-21: "And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. 1And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague. And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, *that* whoso will not come up of *all* the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that *have* no *rain*; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts."
- a. "Verses 12 to 21 present the grand finale of the vision in the concourse of the redeemed...formed into a procession moving in mighty surge to the universal Jerusalem of all nations, the new Jerusalem—to worship the King. Under the blessings of the administration of the gospel, the evening shades of Judaism, described in verses 6 and 7, would turn into the sun-bright morning of Christianity. In this new Jerusalem no foreigner could find habitation. The refusal of ack-

nowledgement of the King would be a barrier to his blessings—'upon them there shall be no rain'—verse 17. No spiritual alien could enter its portals and have residence, for 'there shall be no more the Canaanite'—verse 21. And the vision of Zechariah ends with the sublime description of the glorious dispensation of the gospel in which there is *one tabernacle, one name, one worship and one people*" (Wallace, p.544).

- b. Verse 12: "And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth." Graphic figures of speech are used by the prophet to emphasize the awfulness of the destiny that awaits those who oppose the will of God. That these are figures must be admitted, for no such literal disintegration of human bodies has taken place in mankind's historical past and at the return of Christ all who are alive will be suddenly changed into spiritual bodies and the dead will be raised up (1 Cor. 15:50-58; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Acts 24:15; John 5:28-29).
- c. Verse 13: "And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour." Those who oppose Jerusalem (God's spiritual Israel, the church—Gal. 6:16; Rom. 2:28-29) will be smitten with a great plague which will consume them while they stand on their feet; their eyes will be consumed in their sockets; their tongues shall be consumed away in their mouths. The New Testament describes the eternal punishment of hell as being in a lake of fire and brimstone, outer darkness, and a place that resounds with the awful wails and gnashing of teeth of its denizens. What is stated here is directed against those who oppose the Lord's cause during the Christian Age. They might receive a partial punishment even in this life, but the primary punishment of all the wicked will be in eternity.
 - 1) In the time frame described by the prophet, God will cause his enemies to fight among themselves. As there is little honor or trust among thieves, likewise there is little mutual concern among the other wicked. If a man will rob or kill an honest man, he is not likely to have any qualms in doing so against a fellow criminal. When a society or nation turns against God, resolving to follow their own way and repudiate God's will, they can only plunge increasingly deeper into degradation and rebellion, until they finally destroy themselves.
 - 2) Coffman asserts that humanity will become horribly depraved as the end of time nears. "This verse describes what the 'plague' of verse 12 actually is. It is the ultimate appearance of the kind of society that inevitably results when God's will is almost totally rejected on earth....God will finally permit this rebellious humanity gone berserk against the will of God, and steering a collision course with disaster, to discover just what serving the devil actually means" (Coffman, p.215). He understands Revelation 16 and 18 to be descriptive of this time. Whether the time factor of our text has the time just prior to the second coming of Christ in mind is debatable, but the fact is clear that the depraved condition of rebellious mankind is being described by the prophet. If brother Coffman is correct, would this case of rebellion constitute a "sign" of the coming of Christ? If it does, we must reject it, for the Lord said there would be no sign presaging the Second Advent (Matt. 24:36ff).
- d. Verse 14: "And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance." He is not saying that Judah will fight *against* Jerusalem, but *at* Jerusalem. In other words, the people of Judah (God's people) will defend the cause they uphold. The prophecy sees God's people (Christians) as being united in their opposition to the forces which oppose them. Christ's kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36), thus it does not participate in carnal warfare. Our weapons are mighty, even though they are not carnal (2 Cor. 10:4-5). We fight the good fight of faith as we serve Christ

wholeheartedly, living in harmony with the precepts of the gospel and earnestly contending for the faith (1 Tim. 6:12; Eph. 6:10-18; Jude 3).

- 1) The result of the great spiritual battle will be the enrichment of God's people at the expense of the unbelievers. "The glory of the nations' wealth will be at the disposal of Jerusalem and her children" (Hailey, p.399). This should not be taken as a literal statement; if it were, we would be encouraged to fight to take possession of the property of our enemies. When the dust settled following the great struggle between the heathen Roman Empire and the kingdom of Christ, during which time the church was severely persecuted, the pagan empire lay in ruins and the church was triumphant. In this way, Zechariah's prophecy may have been fulfilled.
 - 2) In the parable of the talents, the faithful man ultimately received the talent of the unfaithful man (Matt. 25:28-29). Perhaps the best interpretation of our text is to understand it to refer to the final reward of the faithful, who will possess the glories in heaven that could have been also enjoyed by those who were unfaithful. Coffman and others think this verse speaks of a battle that takes place between fleshly Israel and spiritual Israel, with the latter being victorious. This idea grows out of the rendering of the preposition *at* as *against*. However, the KJV and the ASV wording fits the theme of the passage better.
- e. Verse 15: "And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague."
- 1) "Here is a strong rhetorical description of the victory of Jehovah's church and the defeat of all that would unite to fight against her. All the enemies of God's camp will go down in defeat" (Hailey, p.399).
 - 2) The prophet extends the struggle to show that the plague would affect the beasts of the enemy. When the enemy met ultimate defeat, all that pertained to him would be affected. The lesson of the verse is one giving hope to the faithful of God and a promise of utter devastation to those who oppose them.
9. Verses 16-21: "And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, *that* whoso will not come up of *all* the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, *that have no rain*; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts."
- a. Verse 16: The prophet envisions the time when the great struggle was over, that a remnant of the nations (Gentiles) would go to Jerusalem to worship. "This can only mean that under the Messiah the converted Gentiles will be one with the converted Jews, and that both will worship the Lord according to his prescribed service" (Hailey, p.399).
- 1) The Jews had three great feasts. The feast of **tabernacles** (a time of rejoicing and thanksgiving). They celebrated their successful exit from the forty years of wandering in the wilderness. During this festival, they dwelled in tents or arbors, which would remind them of the great rigors that first generation of the nation endured in the wilderness; this would naturally engender gratitude in their hearts for having passed into a much better circumstance.

The feast of the **Passover** was held to remind them of the tenth plague God brought upon the Egyptians. The feast of **Pentecost** is also called "the feast of weeks" because it was kept seven weeks after the Passover. In this feast, the Jews offered the firstfruits of their wheat harvest (Lev. 23:15-16; Deut. 16:9-10; cf. Num. 28:26-31). The feast of tabernacles "followed in the wake of the annual atonement, at which time all dwelt in booths in memory of Jehovah's deliverance from bondage and of his care for the people (Lev. 23:39-44). The use here of this festival indicates the rejoicing and thanksgiving of the combined remnants" (Hailey, p.399).

- 2) It is a foolish conclusion to say that this prophecy will have a literal fulfillment during the so-called millennial reign of Christ. This would require the re-establishment of old fleshly Israel, with its temple and carnal ordinances. God took these away, and they will never see the light of day again! Hebrews 8:1-13; 10:1ff; Ephesians 2:14-15; Colossians 2:14. This would mean that men would have to make three trips to Jerusalem annually to observe these feasts. This false interpretation denies the plain affirmations of the New Testament that the eternal kingdom of God has been established (Dan. 2:44; Matt. 3:1-2; Luke 3:1-3; Matt. 4:17; 10:7; Luke 10:9; Rev. 1:9; Col. 1:13-14; Heb. 12:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5,8; 2:1-4,47; Matt. 16:18-19). "The Jewish wanderings were 'on the way to the promised land.' The Christian's wanderings are 'on the way to heaven.' What is said here must be applied totally to that 'Jerusalem which is above,' i.e., the church of Jesus Christ. The language is metaphorical and simply means that all nations of the earth shall yield a harvest of souls unto Jehovah, and that these shall accept Jesus Christ and dutifully observe the teachings and ordinances applicable under his supreme authority" (Coffman, p.217).
- b. Verse 17: "And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain."
 - 1) Again, the language is figurative. Those who worship God in this final age of time do not need to journey to literal Jerusalem before their worship is accepted. One of the fundamental truths of the gospel age is that God is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth (John 4:24), and that the physical location is unimportant. (John 4:21-24).
 - 2) A prophetic curse is pronounced upon those who will not worship the King: they will receive no rain. The worship is spiritual; the blessing is spiritual; the curse is spiritual. *Rain* is a figurative reference to the spiritual blessings which God gives to those who are in Christ (Eph. 1:3). God sends his rain and sunshine upon those who are evil as well as upon those who are good (cf. Matt. 5:44; Acts 14:17; 1 Tim. 4:10). But only those who obey the gospel and are translated into Christ's kingdom (his church or body) receive the spiritual blessings of pardon, etc. (Eph. 1:3,7; Col. 1:13-14; Gal. 3:27).
 - c. Verse 18: "And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles."
 - 1) This enlarges upon the statement of verse seventeen. *Egypt* is used in the Scriptures as a synonym for the spiritual bondage to sin. As Israel was held in bondage to the Egyptians prior to the deliverance God effected through Moses, so accountable men and women are held in bondage to sin until their deliverance is effected by Christ (John 8:34; 2 Pet. 2:19; John 8:32; 17:17).
 - 2) If those who are under the bondage of Egypt (i.e., who live in sin) do not come up to spiritual Jerusalem to worship, they will partake of the plague earlier described in this chapter. They will not have the spiritual blessings offered by the King; but they will receive the heavy punishment intended for the disobedient. The price of redemption has been paid (Matt. 26:28;

- Heb. 2:9); the invitation is daily extended to all those who need the benefits the King offers (Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 11:28-30; Rev. 22:17; cf. Col. 1:23). It is strange indeed why the lost will not hear and heed the simple truths of the gospel! (1 Tim. 2:4-5; 2 Pet. 3:9).
- d. Verse 19: "This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles."
- 1) "Jehovah had promised that he would provide a highway out of Egypt and that she would be a third with Israel and Assyria; all would stand as equals before him (Isa. 19:23-25). If Egypt refused to go up there would be no rain upon it; instead, Jehovah would smite her with the plague pronounced upon the nations that reject his offer and go not up to the feasts" (Hailey, pp.399f)
 - 2) Men are lost without the gospel (Rom. 3:23; 6:23; 1:16-17). The fate of unbelievers will be the same that it would have been if Christ had not come (John 3:14-18). He did not come into the world to condemn sinful man; sinful man had already placed himself under condemnation by his rebellion against God (Rom. 3:1-23; 1 John 3:4; 5:17).
 - 3) This prophetic statement strongly affirms the lost condition of those who are yet under the bondage of *Egypt*, and who do not *keep the feast of tabernacles*. Those who are not in Christ (i.e., not members of his church) are lost and will receive the punishment their sins deserve.
 - 4) "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:8-9).
- e. Verse 20: "In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar."
- 1) Compare: "And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; and upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord" (Ex. 28:36-38).
 - 2) "In that day everything that pertains to the kingdom of God will be holy to him. The war horses will have been cut off from Jerusalem (9:10); therefore, the figure here is that instead of these being for war, they will be holy to the Lord, consecrated to a nobler service" (Hailey, p.400). The Mosaic Law established a distinction between things holy and things unholy. Some distinctions were arbitrary, in that God placed the limitations to teach the Israelites a lesson of taking him at his word. There was nothing inherently evil with eating pork. The gospel has removed such distinctions. God has expanded and altered certain distinctions.
 - 3) The extravagant clothing of the Levitical priesthood has given way to the godly garments of the Christian character (cf. 1 Pet. 3:1-6; Gal. 3:27). The Israelite temple was the only proper place where the services of the priests could be conducted, but under Christ the place is unimportant (John 4:21-24).
 - 4) Whereas Aaron and his successors wore gorgeous robes, and had the literal words of this passage inscribed on the golden plate, but other items would be consecrated in the gospel system. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:27-29).
- f. Verse 21: "Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts:

and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and see the therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts."

- 1) "All distinctions between instruments and ministries of service would be abolished. Nor would there be a Canaanite, one who is unclean and thereby devoted to destruction, found in the house of Jehovah" (Hailey, p.400).
- 2) The Canaanites practiced all manner of vile and sinful ways, especially in their religious activities. No such corrupt person would be found in the Lord's spiritual house.
 - a) Isaiah 2:1-4: "The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."
 - b) 2 Corinthians 6:14-18: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."
 - c) 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
- 3) The Lord adds no unsaved (unclean) person to his church.
 - a) Acts 2:36-47: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost....And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.... Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."
 - c) Ephesians 5:23-27: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of

the church; and he is the saviour of the body....Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

- d) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."

III. CONCLUSION.

A. The errors of False teachers cannot be reconciled with the Truth of God.

1. A message is a message of truth only if it is in full harmony with the truth.
2. A message of error is a message of error precisely because it is out of harmony with the truth.

B. The Word of God is always consistent with itself.

1. This is so, because it is Truth (John 8:32; 17:17).
 2. When all the facts revealed in the Bible are brought together and carefully analyzed, the sum of the information obtained is Truth. "The sum of thy word is truth; And every one of thy righteous ordinances *endureth* for ever" (Ps. 119:160, ASV).
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THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

I. THE FACT OF THE LORD'S RETURN IS SET FORTH PLAINLY IN THE SCRIPTURES.

A. The Savior himself declared it.

1. Matthew 24:36-44: "But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."
2. John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also."
3. Matthew 15:1-13.

B. The inspired apostle Paul affirmed it.

1. Colossians 3:4 "When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."
2. 1 Thessalonians 2:19: "For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"
3. 1 Thessalonians 3:13: "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."
4. 1 Thessalonians 4:16: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."
5. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."
6. 1 Thessalonians 5:23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

C. Peter and John, also inspired apostles, spoke of the Lord's return.

1. Peter wrote: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pet. 3:10-14).

2. John wrote:

- a. 1 John 2:18: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."
- b. Revelation 1:7: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."
- c. Revelation 22:7,12,20: "Behold, I come quickly: blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book....And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be....He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

D. The angels declared it.

1. Acts 1:9-11: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."
2. The divine stamp of inspiration attests to the accuracy and truthfulness of their promise.

II. THE **MANNER** OF HIS RETURN IS SET FORTH IN THE SCRIPTURES.A. He shall come as he went: It will be visible to all; it will be with clouds.

1. Acts 1:9-11: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."
2. Revelation 1:7: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

B. His coming will be audible.

1. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 The. 4:16).
2. It will be accompanied with a shout, a term used in the sense of a general shouting commands to his army.
3. It will be accompanied with the voice of the Archangel.
4. It will be accompanied with the trumpet of God: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15:52).
5. No one will need to be told that the Lord has returned! This spoils the theory that his coming would be secretive, known only to a few.
 - a. Matthew 24:27: "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."
 - b. Revelation 1:7: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

C. His coming will be sudden and unexpected.

1. Matthew 24:44,50: "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh....The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of."

2. Luke 21:34-36: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and *so* that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."
3. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."

D. His coming will be quickly accomplished.

1. Revelation 22:7: "Behold, I come quickly: blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."
2. Revelation 22:12: "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."
3. Revelation 22:20: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

E. He shall come in glory.

1. Matthew 16:27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."
2. Matthew 25:31: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."

III. THE **TIME** OF CHRIST'S COMING IS UNKNOWN.

A. No man knows when that time will be.

1. Matthew 24:36-44: "But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."
2. Mark 13:32: "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

B. The angels of heaven do not know.

1. "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32).
2. Matthew 24:36-37: "But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

C. Only God knows the time.

1. While Christ was on earth, he did not know, and may not know even now: "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32).
2. God knows the time: "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is" (Mark 13:32-33).

D. The Bible does not give any clue as to the time of the Lord's second coming.

1. The Old Testament does not give any clue as to the time of his second coming. Christ knew the Old Testament Scriptures perfectly, and he did not know the time of the coming. Thus the Old Testament does not give that information!
2. Christ also knew the New Testament Scriptures perfectly; since he did not know the time of his coming, the New Testament does not provide that information!

IV. THE **EFFECTS** OF HIS COMING ARE SET FORTH IN THE SCRIPTURES.

A. The resurrection of the dead will occur.

1. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 The. 4:16).
2. "The dead in Christ shall rise first" does not teach that there will be two separate and distinct resurrections, one for the righteous dead and later one for the disobedient; this passage simply is not considering the wicked.
3. Other passages show that at the Lord's coming the righteous and wicked dead will all be raised at the same time.
 - a. John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - b. Acts 24:15: "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

B. The living will all be changed instantly.

1. "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:51-53).
2. The context here shows that physical bodies cannot enter heaven (vs. 50); and that these earthly bodies must all be changed into spiritual, incorruptible, and everlasting bodies. Without such bodies the righteous could not enjoy the blessings of heaven and the wicked could not suffer proper punishment for their evil lives.
3. The faithful saints alive on the earth at the coming of Christ will be caught up along with the resurrected saints to meet the Lord in the air: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 The. 4:16-17).
4. In the Bible picture of the second coming, there is no indication that Christ will set foot upon earth again. This is disastrous for the premillennial view.

C. The end of the universe, the earth, and all physical affairs and things will then occur.

1. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away

with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness" (2 Pet. 3:10-11). The present physical order was never intended to remain for all eternity.

2. God implied so in Genesis 8:22: "While the earth remaineth...." The plain implication is that the time is coming when the earth will not remain.
3. Psalm 102:24-28 declared it: "I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days; thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same and thy years shall have no end. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee." Compare: "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail" (Heb. 1:10-12).
4. Matthew 24:35 announced the temporary status of the universe: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."
5. I John 2:17: "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

D. The Judgment will be held.

1. All people who have ever lived upon earth will be gathered before the judgment throne of Christ.
 - a. Matthew 25:31-32: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
 - c. Hebrews 9:27: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."
2. The Bible teaches that each individual will know from the instant he dies what his eternal destiny will be (Luke 16:19-31). Both the rich man and Lazarus knew by virtue of their present state immediately after death the kind of eternal destiny they would have.
3. Therefore, the purpose of the Judgment is not to determine guilt or innocence, but to formally pass the sentence, either of eternal reward or of eternal punishment: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats....And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:31,32,46).
4. The standard by which the proper sentence is determined will be the Word of the Lord. Those who lived during the Patriarchal Age will be judged by the spoken will of God; those who lived under the Law of Moses are to be measured by that Law; those who lived on earth from the cross to the 2nd coming will be judged by the New Testament. Oh, how important the Bible will be to people then! The lost can only lament over their squandered opportunities; but the redeemed can glory in their faithful obedience!
 - a. John 12:48: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

- b. Revelation 20:12: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."
5. The eternal destinies will be formerly assigned: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).

V. THE **ATTITUDE** OF THE SAINTS TOWARD HIS COMING IS SET FORTH IN THE SCRIPTURES.

A. We should watch and pray.

1. The Lord stated the necessity of watchfulness (cf. Matt. 15:1-13).
 - a. Matthew 24:42-43: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up."
 - b. Luke 12:37: "Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."
2. He showed the importance of prayerfulness.
 - a. Mark 13:33: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is."
 - b. Luke 21:36: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

B. We should always be ready.

1. Our Redeemer showed us the importance of this also: "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite *his* fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 24:44-51).
2. We will have no excuse if we are caught unprepared.
 - a. Matthew 22:11-14: "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few *are* chosen."
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober."

C. We should work diligently.

1. Each is given a talent (s) which he should use faithfully (Matt. 25:14-30).
2. If we fail to use our talents and opportunities, we will be cast forth from his presence as was the

wicked and slothful servant of Matthew 25:14ff.

D. We should be charitable and benevolent.

1. As we have opportunity and ability, we ought to feed the hungry, visit the sick and other unfortunates, give water and clothing to those in need (Matt. 25:31ff).
2. To refuse to do this is to lose our souls!

E. We should be in a state of expectancy.

1. Our desire ought to be for the Lord's return.
 - a. Titus 2:13: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."
 - b. 2 Peter 3:12: "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"
 - c. Revelation 22:20: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."
2. The eternal reward awaits those who "love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8).

F. We should be steadfast in living for Christ.

1. The Bible calls on us to be patient (steadfast) in all things.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
 - b. James 5:7-8: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."
2. We ought to put forth every effort to remain faithful in Christ: "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 Jn. 2:28).

G. We should live holy lives.

1. Ample reason for so doing is given in 2 Peter 3:11,14: "*Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness.... Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."
2. Without holiness we will not see God in peace.
 - a. Matthew 5:8: "Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God."
 - b. Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

H. We should have achieved full spiritual maturity.

1. Colossians 1:28-29: "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily."
2. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
3. 1 Peter 2:1-2: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all

evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

4. 2 Peter 3:18: "But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen."
 5. Spiritual growth is called sanctification: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Th. 5:23).
- I. We should find comfort in this hope of his return.
1. His coming will bring us forth from the grave in the resurrection, or if we are still alive on earth at that time, we will be instantly changed into our glorified, eternal bodies.
 2. Christ's return will bring eternal blessings for the redeemed, including a grand reunion with our saved and beloved ones who went before: "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. 12:23).

SOME CONSEQUENCES OF MILLENNIALISM

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The Bible anticipated all of the religious errors ever to be taught by the foolishness of men.

1. God saw fit to put into the Bible certain truths and other information which would not only present his plan for mankind, but which also exposed the follies of false doctrine.
2. Among the false doctrines the Bible foresaw are these:
 - a. The prominent Catholic errors were anticipated by the Bible, and exposed as error, before the doctrines or practices came into being. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth" (1 Tim. 4:1-3).
 - 1) The worship of Mary began in 788 A.D., but was anticipated and exposed by the Bible ahead of time:
 - a) Luke 8:20-21: "And it was told him *by certain* which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it."
 - b) Luke 11:27-28: "And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it."
 - 2) The bank of good works ("supererogation") was developed centuries after the giving of the Bible, but God's word repudiated such an idea in Luke 17:10: "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."
 - 3) The doctrine of purgatory originated in the mind of men, but was repudiated by the inspired word, by means of the story of the wicked rich man and the beggar Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).
 - 4) The mediatorship of Mary or some other human came centuries after the close of the Bible, but inspiration exposed it as error before it developed: "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).
 - 5) Forced celibacy and forbidding the eating of meats was decried by the inspired writers beforehand (1 Tim. 4:1-3).
 - b. All denominational division, which is practiced and defended by many today, was foreknown and condemned by the Bible (Acts 20:28-31; 1 Cor. 1:10-13; John 17:20-21).
 - c. Salvation by faith alone was anticipated and condemned by the inspired writers of the Bible: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:24-26).
 - d. The Bible anticipated and denied the claim of men that they had received special revelations from heaven separate and distinct from the inspired revelation of the Bible: (John 16:13; 2 Pet. 1:3; Gal. 1:6-10; Rev. 22:18-19).
 - e. God's word exposed as false the notions that later developed concerning the kingdom of God, that

it was still future (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Luke 10:9; Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:9).

3. No mere men or group of men, regardless of their education and intelligence, could have anticipated the development of these errors centuries before they sprang into being. The Bible anticipated and answered these errors. The only explanation for this is to give the Bible credit for being produced by the infinite power and foreknowledge of God, which was revealed to the selected writers.
 4. God anticipated the millennial theories and exposed them before they were invented.
- B. A doctrine can be seen to be false if its consequences are evil.
1. We will examine premillennialism under this light.
 2. If the various features of this system can be shown to be in violation of God's word, in specific and clear ways, then we can know it is a false system.
 3. Our Lord stated that false teachers may be identified by their fruit—their teachings (Matt. 7:15-20).

II. DISCUSSION.

- A. If the millennial theory is true, then the crucifixion of Christ was not in God's original plan.
1. The theory alleges that if God's original plan had met with Jewish approval, Jesus would have established an earthly kingdom, and would not have been required to go to the cross.
 2. If it can be shown that God intended for his Son to die for the sins of the world, millennialism will have been exposed as human error.
 - a. Revelation 13:8 speaks of the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." It appears definite from this passage that God intended, from the beginning of the world, for Christ to be slain.
 - b. All of the Old Testament animal sacrifices prefigured the ultimate sacrifice—the sacrifice of the Lamb of God (Christ). Each of these Old Testament sacrifices would have been meaningless without the sacrifice of God's Son.
 - c. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Heb. 9:22). But the blood of animals cannot take away sin (Heb. 10:1-4). Only the blood of Christ has the power to remove the guilt of sin (1 Pet. 1:18-19; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 10:16-19; Matt. 26:28; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:13-14). If Christ had not died, there would be no available means for the salvation of our souls! God intended to offer salvation to men.
 3. Isaiah 53 predicted the death of Christ. The Jews were unable to identify the "man of sorrows" of this passage. Their conception of the Messiah precluded believing it was he. The man of Ethiopia, a Jew by religion, if not also by race, did not understand Isaiah 53. He asked Philip the evangelist, "I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" (Acts 8:28-34). Philip "began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35).
 - a. Philip taught the Ethiopian that Isaiah 53 was in reference to Jesus Christ! Isaiah did his work more than 700 years before the coming of Christ. He showed that Christ would die for the sins of the world.
 - b. Since Isaiah showed beforehand that Christ was to die, his crucifixion was not an unintended, unexpected, and spontaneous event!
 4. Jesus himself taught that he came into the world to die (John 3:14-17; 8:28; 12:32-33; Luke 19:10; cf. 1 Tim. 1:15). How did he save sinners? By means of the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17). What is the gospel? It is that God-given message containing facts to be believed, commands to be obeyed, promises to be enjoyed, and warnings to be heeded. Its basic facts are: the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Thus, sinners are saved by the gospel. The heart of the gospel are the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; Christ came into the world to save sinners by the gospel; therefore, Christ came into the world to die on the cross, to be buried, and to rise from the

dead on the third day.

- a. Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
 - b. John 3:14-17: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."
 - c. John 8:28: "Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."
 - d. John 12:32-33: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."
 - e. 1 Timothy 1:15: "This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."
5. The death of Jesus was mandated from the beginning of the world. Beginning in Genesis 3:15, God gave to man a long series of promises that ultimately would be fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ. His death lay at the heart of God's eternal plan. It was planned for and prophesied of for hundreds and even thousands of years before his coming. But if the millennial theory is correct, Christ's death was a mere accident, unplanned and unintended. But the theory is false!
6. Millennialism denies that the gospel is the culmination of God's purpose and plan. If the millennial assertions are correct, God intended to establish an earthly kingdom, and have Christ sitting on David's throne and ruling the world from Jerusalem. The gospel, according to the theory, was not in the original plan, but when the Jews rejected Jesus as king, the gospel system was given in lieu of the kingdom.
- a. But the gospel was promised beforehand by the prophets, therefore was not a last-minute substitution. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God. (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures)" (Rom. 1:1-2).
 - b. God knew that Christ would die and the gospel system would be inaugurated—he knew it because he had planned it that way!
- B. If millennialism is true, the Great Commission is nullified.
1. Matthew 28:18-20 states that all authority is given unto Christ, and based on that truth, he commands his people to teach all nations.
 - a. There are only three branches of authority: legislative, executive, and judicial. Our government is divided into these three branches: congress (legislative); the President (executive); and the Supreme Court (judicial). Christ possesses all the legislative, executive, and judicial authority in his kingdom—this he taught in:
 - 1) Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."
 - 2) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - 3) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
 - b. Millennialism denies that Christ is reigning as King now, thus denying him this authority. In their view, he is merely the "crown prince."
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2. Jesus commanded that his followers teach all nations, including Jew and Gentile, black and white, rich and poor, and the educated and the uneducated. Mark 16:15-16 says the gospel is to be preached to "every creature." Millennialism believes that the nations here mentioned are the Gentile nations only, and thus they teach the gospel (their version of it) only to Gentiles. In their view, the gospel is intended for the Gentiles, and this age is the "time of the Gentiles."
3. The Bible says that the gospel is for both Jews and Gentiles.
 - a. Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - b. Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
 - c. Romans 1:18: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness."
 - d. Romans 3:9-23: "What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps *is* under their lips: Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet *are* swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery *are* in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

C. If millennialism is true, God is made to be false to his promises.

1. Mark 1:14-15: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." But millennialism claims that the kingdom was postponed. Christ said the time for the kingdom had come and the kingdom was at hand. God had promised the kingdom in the Old Testament prophets, and now was promising it through the preaching of both John and Jesus. If the kingdom did not then come, it makes God false to his promise.
2. Think about the multitudes who flocked to hear and accept the preaching of John and Jesus. The people of Jerusalem, Judea, and the regions round about Jordan believed their message; they were baptized, believing that the kingdom was at hand. But millennialists say that after these honest, sincere souls obeyed, they did not get the kingdom. They make God false to his promise. They say that because all the Jews did not accept Christ, God withdrew his offer of the kingdom. The multitudes believed the Lord and acted in good faith, but the millennialists would have God canceling his promise!
3. The integrity of God and the reliability of Jesus were involved in the promise of the kingdom. Suppose a man offers work to a group of men and stipulates the conditions and the wages. Suppose that half of these men accept the offer, meet all the conditions and do the work. But because all of the group did not accept his offer, the man cancels the contract and refuses to pay those who did the work. We would not likely ever believe that man again. His integrity would be compromised. The

millennialists would have us believe that because some of the Jews rejected God's deal, that God did not fulfill the promise to those who did accept it. Millennialism makes false prophets out of the Old Testament prophets from Moses to Malachi; it makes false teachers out of Jesus and John; and it makes God false to his promise, and his integrity suspect.

4. If God did not know the kingdom was going to be postponed, it denies his omniscience. If God did know it, yet had it announced anyway, it destroys his integrity. And if God could not be trusted in one matter, how could we trust him in any other matter? Because of these and other consequences, the theory of millennialism is false and ought to be rejected. God is dependable. He never intended to establish an earthly, worldly kingdom. He intended and planned from the beginning for Christ to die on the cross, and purchase his church. He purposed beforehand that the gospel was to be published to every person.
 5. If millennialism is true, the church is of little importance. Their view is that God gave the church as a last-minute substitution, an inferior replacement for the promised kingdom. Again in their view, if the kingdom had been established, there would have been no need for the church.
 - a. This position requires, of course, that the church and the kingdom be viewed as two completely different and distinct institutions. But the Bible makes no such distinction.
 - 1) In Matthew 16:18, Jesus promised to build his church. In verse 19, still speaking of the church, the Lord called this institution "the kingdom of heaven." Jesus did not make any distinction between the church and the kingdom.
 - 2) Jesus promised to partake of the loaf and the fruit of the vine with his disciples in the kingdom (Matt. 26:29). His disciples partook of this communion in the church (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:21-30). It follows, therefore, that the church and the kingdom are identical, or else we have no authority to partake of the Lord's Supper today!
 - b. The church is the kingdom; the kingdom is the church. The church (the kingdom) was in God's mind from the beginning, as Ephesians 3:1-11 plainly teaches. Verse 10 states that "by the church the manifold wisdom of God" is made manifest. If you want to see God's wisdom, look at the church. The church displays the wisdom of God, "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (verse 11). But millennialism makes the church out to be the merest accident. Such an idea borders on blasphemy!
 - c. Acts 20:28 declares that Christ purchased the church with his own blood. No one would accuse him of making a "bad bargain." The item bought is generally worth the purchase price. Since the blood of Christ is precious (1 Pet. 1:18-19), then the church must also be precious! Ephesians 5:25 further affirms that Christ "gave himself" for the church.
- D. If millennialism is true, we are not living in the "last days" as the Bible affirms.
1. Thus, it denies plain Bible statements! The "last days" according to the millennial view are the days when Christ comes and reigns on earth.
 - a. Peter quoted Joel 2 in his sermon in Acts 2, saying, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass in the last days..." (Acts 2:16-17). Peter told those people that those things which were then happening were taking place in the last days. The last days were in progress nearly 2,000 years ago! That was nearly 20 centuries in the past from our day, yet he called this time period "the last days." The last days, then, is a reference to the last dispensation (or Age) of time. This Age began when the Lord died and will continue until he returns.
 - b. Hebrews 1:1-2 states that God has spoken to us by his Son "in these last days." The term "last days" is the Christian Age, the time in which you and I and all people are amenable to the words of God given through his Son, Christ Jesus.
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2. If there were to be another period of time following the Christian Age, our age, then the New Testament was wrong in saying these are the last days. But the New Testament is not wrong; these are the last days. Millennialism, with its theory about the fictitious 1000-year reign of Christ on earth following this age, is false to the core; it is misleading and deceiving millions of precious souls. This is just another of the many pernicious consequences of the man-made doctrine of millennialism.
- E. Premillennialism, if true, would demote Christ from his throne in heaven.
1. It would tear him away from his celestial throne and install him on a puny throne on earth. The earth is spoken of in the Scriptures as the Lord's footstool. Christ is now reigning on his heavenly throne, a fact denied by millennialism, but still taught by the Bible.
 2. The following passages establish the important fact that Christ is now, today, seated on the throne, reigning over his kingdom.
 - a. Hebrews 1:3: "Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Christ "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" after he purged our sins, i.e., after he had sacrificed himself on the cross, was buried, resurrected to life, and ascended to Glory.
 - b. Hebrews 1:8: "But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom." God the Father spoke this to Christ his Son. The inspired writer penned these words to show that Christ was even then occupying his throne and wielding the scepter of his kingdom!
 - c. Revelation 3:21: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Speaking to John on the Isle of Patmos affirmed that he had taken his seat on the throne, hence was reigning in his kingdom.
 - d. Zechariah 6:13: "Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." This prophecy showed that Christ was to be a king and priest at the same time, as he sat on his throne. His priestly duties pertain to his work of saving sinners; his kingly duties pertain to his rule over those who are saved. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13-14). If he is not reigning as king now, then he is not serving as priest now! The two works are contemporary to each other, and both are done while he sits on his throne. Both are being done today.
 - e. Hebrews 1:13: "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" It was the Father who invited him to sit on his right hand, until he made his enemies his footstool. Christ is now on his throne, and will reign there until his last enemy (death) is finally subdued (1 Cor. 15:25-26). He shall reign until the resurrection which is to take place on the last day. There is not enough room in God's scheme of things for any 1000-year reign on earth. And contrary to millennialism, Christ is now on his throne, ruling his kingdom, thus the promise of the kingdom has been fulfilled.
 - f. Daniel 7:13-14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed."
- F. If premillennialism is true, salvation is denied to Gentile people.
1. Inasmuch as the advocates of the theory are virtually all Gentiles, their theory denies salvation to
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themselves—a most curious and damaging consequence! That this consequence appertains is seen by applying their own interpretation of Acts 15:13-17: "And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men *and* brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."

- a. Here the Holy Spirit affirms the right of the Gentiles to the blessings of God which are given through the gospel. A question had arisen in the church among the Jewish saints regarding the new Gentile converts: should they be required to be circumcised? Peter showed the brethren that God had guided him in being the first to preach to the Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas showed that God had wrought many miracles by them before the Gentiles. These reports established the fact that God had vouchsafed the gospel to the Gentiles.
- b. James quoted from Amos 9, and showed from that prophecy that God would rebuild "the tabernacle of David" so "that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles." His use of the passage shows that its fulfillment was being accomplished by their preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. Therefore, the rebuilding of David's tabernacle which Amos had predicted had been accomplished.
- c. The "residue of men" mentioned in the passage refers to the Gentiles, those who were not included in God's fellowship under the Mosaic Law. The word that is fatal to the millennial scheme. They tell us that David's tabernacle will not be restored until the millennium. But Acts 15 quotes God as saying through Amos that he would build again the tabernacle of David ("David's house," his royal line) and set it up that the Gentiles might seek after the Lord. If the tabernacle of David has not been rebuilt, *then the Gentiles cannot now seek after the Lord!* But people of all nations and races are proper subjects of the gospel.
 - 1) Matthew 28:19-20: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen."
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 3) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 4) 1 Timothy 2:4-5: "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
 - 5) Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."
2. Premillennialism denies that Amos 9:11-15 (and Acts 15:16-17) has been fulfilled; in their view, this will not be done until the 1000-year earthly reign. Thus, they deny salvation to the Gentiles—and to themselves!

G. If premillennialism is true, than Christ failed in his mission to earth.

1. "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To

redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:3-5). Did Christ succeed or fail in his great mission?

2. Just prior to his crucifixion Jesus prayed a lengthy prayer, part of which was this: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4). He had accomplished everything God had expected of him. At the moment of his death he could say, "It is finished" (John 19:30). What was finished? His great mission.
3. Men say that Christ did not complete his mission, that he failed to establish his kingdom. But Jesus said he had succeeded. Which are we to believe?
4. The Lord did exactly what he came to do; he did all that he came to accomplish. He failed in nothing. Because he successfully finished his Father's work, he was given the privilege of sitting on God's right hand, to rule his kingdom until the end of time, when he will deliver up the kingdom into the hands of the Father
 - a. Hebrews 12:1-2: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:24-25: "Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."
 - c. Revelation 3:21: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

III. CONCLUSION.

A. The Parable of the Pounds illustrates the successful mission of Christ.

1. Luke 19:11-27: "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me."
2. Christ came to earth for the purpose of saving the lost.

- a. Passages:
 - 1) Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."
 - 3) Galatians 4:4-5: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."
 - 4) 1 Timothy 1:15: "This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."
 - b. In accomplishing this great mission, he established the kingdom, which he also called the church. The kingdom was always intended to be spiritual in nature. Those Jews who thought it was to be a literal, earthly kingdom were just as mistaken about that as are their modern-day counterparts who look for a worldly kingdom to be established by Christ on earth.
3. The parable of the pounds shows that Christ was to return to heaven, at which time he would receive the kingdom. At some future, unspecified date, he would return.
 - a. The nobleman is Christ.
 - b. The journey into a far country is Christ's returning to heaven.
 - c. The kingdom he received is his spiritual kingdom, the church.
 - d. The people who rejected him are the unbelieving Jews.
 - 1) Luke 19:14: "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us."
 - 2) John 19:15: "But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar."
 - 3) John 19:21: "Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews."
 - e. The ten servants are followers of Christ.
 - f. The command to the servants to properly use the pounds given them is his command for them to be faithful.
 - g. The ten pounds represents the duties and opportunities he gives his servants.
 - h. The one who gained ten pounds is a faithful Christian; the one who gained five pounds is a faithful Christian of less ability and opportunity; the servant who was given one pound, which he did not use, is an unfaithful Christian.
 - i. The ten cities and five cities represent rewards in heaven, perhaps corresponding to the individual's fitness for, and ability to enjoy, the blessing given.
 - j. The loss of the one pound by the unfaithful servant represents punishment.
 - k. The slaying of the enemies represents the punishment of those who reject him.
 - l. The absence of the nobleman is the time between Christ's ascension and Second Coming.
 - m. The return of the nobleman is the Second Coming of Christ.
 4. "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return" (Luke
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- 19:12).
- a. Acts 1:9-11 reports the ascension of Christ back to heaven. The view presented is from the standpoint of the apostles who were still on earth. "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:9-11).
 - b. Psalm 24:7-10 gives a prophetic picture of the Lord's arrival at the gates of Glory. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who *is* this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he *is* the King of glory" (Ps. 24:7-10).
 - c. Daniel 7:13-14 records a prophetic vision describing the Lord's entrance into heaven after his ascension. It plainly states that it was then that he received his kingdom: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13-14).
 - d. Our Lord returned to heaven at his ascension; he was given the kingdom; it came into being on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2 (as shown earlier in this study).
5. At the Lord's second coming.
- a. He will raise all the dead.
 - 1) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 2) 1 Thessalonians 4:17: "Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."
 - b. He will change those who are alive on earth instantly into immortal bodies.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 15:51-53: "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality."
 - 2) Philippians 3:20-21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."
 - 3) 1 Thessalonians 4:17: "Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."
 - 4) 1 John 3:1-3: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."
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- c. The righteous will meet the Lord in the air: "Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17).
- d. All who have ever lived on earth will be assembled before his Judgment Seat (Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12; Rev. 20:11-15) at which time the eternal destinies of all mankind will be assigned officially.
 - 1) Matthew 25:31-46: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - 2) Romans 14:10-12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
 - 4) Revelation 20:11-15: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

B. The Second Coming will end all earthly affairs, not begin a new earthly episode.

1. 2 Peter 3:10-13: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and

the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

- a. "New heavens and new earth" is a figurative description of the eternal realm of heaven. The passage plainly declares that the earth and all things associated with it will be utterly destroyed at the Lord's coming. There is no room in the apostle's statement to permit a reconstructed earth.
 - b. The reward of the righteous is in heaven. Christ went into heaven to prepare a place for his people there—to make it possible for us to be with him where he is.
 - 1) Matthew 5:12: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - 2) Luke 6:23: "Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward *is* great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets."
 - 3) John 14:1-4: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."
 - 4) Philippians 3:20-21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."
 - c. The word *new* which Peter used is from *kainos*, which means new in quality, not necessarily new in age. The idea in the word is that the place described had not been used. The Greek word *neos* means new in respect to age. The tomb in which the Lord's body was buried is called "*kainos*," meaning that it had never been used (Matt. 27:60). The statement does not tell us that it had been freshly hewn out. Had this been the meaning of "new," the Holy Spirit would have used "*neos*."
 - d. Peter uses the expression to depict the fresh, unused place to which the redeemed will be taken in eternity. We ought not think of this old sin-scarred, corrupted earth with its uncounted memories, to be the eternal home of our immortal spirits. Another earth, or this old earth renewed, would be no improvement on the original. But the place of eternal glory is heaven, constructed and prepared for those who are holy, who have faithfully endured, and who love God with all their hearts, minds, souls and strength, and their neighbor as themselves. We will have no use for this old physical earth.
2. 1 Corinthians 15:23-28: "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."
- C. We must reject and denounce the theories of men which deny the truth of God's Word.
1. The salvation of our souls depends on our believing and obeying the truth.
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- a. John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
 - b. John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
 - c. Ephesians 5:11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*."
 - d. 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
2. We must seek to teach those in error "the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:26).
 3. God "hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13-14).
 4. Hebrews 12:28-29: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire."
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