



The Sword & The Plow

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Preston-Simmons Debate

Where was Sin Defeated? The Cross or AD 70?

First Affirmative

By Don K. Preston

It is an honor to discuss this important topic with my good friend Kurt Simmons. I know that this will be a friendly debate that all readers may profit from. It is likewise an important issue. Was the salvation process perfected and completed at the Cross, as Kurt affirms, or, was the Cross the initiation of a process that was not consummated until the AD 70 parousia? The latter is, in my view, patently the correct Biblical view, and I will seek to vindicate that claim.

Here is my proposition:

Resolved: The Bible teaches that the coming of Christ for salvation in Romans 11:25-27 occurred in AD 70 at the climax and termination of the Mosaic Covenant Age.

(Cont'd page two)

First Negative

By Kurt Simmons

*He that is first in his own cause seemeth just;
but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him out.
Proverbs 18:17*

Don is a wonderful brother and good friend. His work defending Preterism is unsurpassed. I am sure we will all learn a great deal from this exchange. I am thankful that we can have this sort discussion in a spirit of brotherly love and affection.

I should say at the outset, that Don offers quotes from my books to substantiate his case. But, these do not really help Don. As I informed Don when we entered this discussion, although at one time I shared many of his views, *I no longer do*. I repudiate all things Max King! It is because I have learned *better* (Cont'd page 13)

(Don's First Affirmative Cont'd from page 1)

Here is my proposition:

Resolved: The Bible teaches that the coming of Christ for salvation in Romans 11:25-27 occurred in AD 70 at the climax and termination of the Mosaic Covenant Age.

Affirm: Don K. Preston

Deny: Kurt Simmons

Let me state now what this debate is not about:

Kurt and I both agree that Christ's second coming occurred in AD 70.

Kurt and I both agree that the resurrection occurred in AD 70. We have differences in regard to the nature and framework of the resurrection— differences that will be noted as we proceed, but, we both affirm the reality of the resurrection in AD 70.

This debate is not in any way about whether the Cross of Christ is the ground and source for the salvation of mankind.

This debate is whether the salvation that is *dependent on the Cross was finished* at the Cross, or, whether the Cross was part of a complex of events. The Cross *initiated* the salvific process, the parousia (Christ's second coming), *finalized* that process.

The Prophetic Background of Romans 11 Proves That the Coming of the Lord Paul Anticipated Was the AD 70 Coming of Christ

When Paul spoke of the coming of the Lord for salvation to take away Israel's sin, he cites three OT prophecies: Isaiah 27:9f, Isaiah 59:20 and Jeremiah 31:29f. (Another text, Daniel 9:24f clearly lies behind Romans 11 as well. I will *try* to get to that in this debate). For the moment, we will focus on the two prophecies from Isaiah.

In an article responding to Kurt's assessment of Romans 11 I noted that the time of Israel's salvation according to Isaiah 27:9f would be when YHVH took away her sin, in the day that the altar was turned to chalkstone, God would forget the people He had created, and have no mercy on them. I further noted that according to the antecedent references to "in that day" that this would be when YHVH would come and avenge the blood of the martyrs. (See my articles at: www.eschatology.org.)

Here is the argument I made:

The coming of the Lord to take away Israel's sin would be the coming of the Lord foretold in Isaiah 27:9f.

The coming of the Lord in Isaiah 27:9f would be the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood (Isaiah 26:20f).

Therefore, the coming of the Lord of Romans 11:26 would be the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood.

My friend responded that "there have been many days of the Lord, and that to avenge innocent blood" (S-P, p. 2). He rightly notes that the Babylonian invasion was to avenge the martyrs' blood in the sixth century (2 Kings 24:1-4; Jeremiah 2-4:13). Simmons is correct in his *basic* thought. What he fails to honor is that Jesus said that all of the blood of all the righteous, *all the way back to creation*, would be avenged in his generation (Matthew 23:29-37). Jesus' statement includes the *comprehensive and consummative* avenging of the blood of the martyrs that were in measure "avenged" in the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions! So, while those judgments came as a result of Israel's bloodguilt, there is no question that in the mind of Jesus the bloodguilt of Jerusalem was not *fully* avenged in those judgments.

Please catch this: my friend admits in a footnote (S-P, July 2009, p. 2), “We do not disallow the possibility that there is a *plenior sensus* (*fuller meaning, DKP*), to Isaiah 26:21 that may look beyond its historical setting to Christ’s second coming.” Well, if this is true, then Paul *could*, after all, be citing Isaiah to speak of the AD 70 judgment, *could he not? If not, why not?* So, Kurt, *tell us plainly: Does (can) Isaiah 27:9 have a plenior sensus application to AD 70, or not? Yes or No?*

When I took note of my friend’s admission that Isaiah 26-27 could refer to AD 70, in his second response (Sept., 2009, S-P), Kurt then did a 180% reversal and denied that Isaiah 27 could refer to AD 70. Why? *Because that admission is fatal to his view of Romans 11. He said it referred to the Assyrian invasion of the eighth century BC!* But then, he changed *again* and claimed that Isaiah 27 speaks of “the basic promise to bring salvation, notwithstanding the unfaithfulness of the people” that Paul had in mind when he referenced Isaiah (S-P, Sept, 2009, 3). In other words, he says Isaiah 27 foretold the Cross. I want the reader to catch the full power of what Kurt has done.

The *actual text* of Isaiah 27:9 says: “By this then, will Jacob’s guilt be atoned for, and this will be the full fruitage of the removal of his sin, when He makes the altar stones to be like chalk stones crushed to pieces.” (NASV) Words could hardly be clearer.

But, here is what Kurt does:

He says Isaiah 27 cannot be AD 70 because Israel was not guilty of literal idolatry at that time.

However, Kurt says that Isaiah 27 does predict the Cross of Christ, although there was no literal idolatry at that time!

Patently, if Isaiah 27 cannot refer to AD 70 because Israel was not guilty of literal idolatry at that time, then *logically*, you cannot argue that Isaiah 27 foretold the Cross for the identical reason! My friend’s logic is self contradictory to say the very least.

On the one hand Kurt tells us that Isaiah 27 has nothing to do with AD 70, but it is a prediction of salvation at the Cross which Paul had in mind in Romans 11. But, this completely denies the actual content and wording of the text! This claim has *no textual or contextual corroboration whatsoever*. If so, Kurt must produce it.

How can Paul have the Cross in mind in Romans 11 when appealing to a text that is emphatically and specifically predictive of *salvation through judgment*: “By this then, will Jacob’s guilt be atoned for.... *when He makes the altar stones to be like chalk stones crushed to pieces*”? Kurt is asking us to ignore, no, to *deny*, the specific words of Isaiah and read into the text a topic unrelated to the prophetic words!

I am going to ask, no, I will *insist*, that my friend answer this question without evasion or obfuscation. This is a critical issue of hermeneutics. What is there *in the text* of Isaiah 26-27 that even suggests the Cross, *and not judgment*? What is your hermeneutic for ignoring the emphatic words of the text, and then for insisting that we read into the text something that is not there?

There is not one word in Isaiah 27 about the Cross. Isaiah 27 is a judgment coming of the Lord to avenge innocent blood. But, Jesus’ Cross *was not a judgment coming to avenge innocent blood.*

A word here about type and anti-type. I have *no problem* affirming that Isaiah 26-27 was a type of AD 70– as Kurt initially suggested. However, to suggest that the judgment of Isaiah was typological of a future event *excludes the Cross!* Types were foreshadowings of things *similar to themselves*. This is axiomatic. Thus, the invasion and judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood could well be typological of the last days judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood.

However, to suggest that Assyria’s judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood was typological of the Cross– which was in no way a judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood– is disjunctive and illogical. There is no

similarity, of any kind. There is no foreshadowing likeness. There is no type and anti-type. Thus, if the Assyrian invasion and judgment of Israel was typological, as Kurt initially admitted, then it was typological of the AD 70 judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood, and not the Cross.

Note that this coming of the Lord in Isaiah 26:20f / 27:9f is also *the time of the resurrection* (Isaiah 26:19– Will Kurt deny that Isaiah 26:19f is a resurrection text? It is the same resurrection as in Isaiah 25:8 *that is the source of Paul's resurrection hope!* If he admits that it is, this demands that the Day of the Lord of v. 20– and the salvation of Israel in 27:9f are all synchronous). So, here is my argument:

The coming of the Lord of Romans 11:26 is the coming of the Lord of Isaiah 26-27.

The coming of the Lord of Isaiah 26-27 is the coming of the Lord at the time of the resurrection (Isaiah 26:19-21).

The coming of the Lord at the time of the resurrection was in AD 70 (Kurt Simmons).

Therefore, the coming of the Lord in Romans 11:26f was the AD 70 coming of the Lord.

It will not do for Kurt to ignore this. This is a question of *hermeneutics*. How can Kurt insist that Isaiah 27 is the Cross and that Paul had the Cross in mind when he cited Isaiah, *a text that does not mention the Cross? So, again, Kurt, where in Isaiah 26-27 do you find the prediction of the Cross?* Kurt faces the same problem with Isaiah 59.

Isaiah 59

The prophecy of Isaiah 59 breaks itself down very naturally into three headings:

Accusation – YHVH accused Israel of shedding innocent blood, of violence and unrighteousness (v. 1-8).

Acknowledgment – Israel admitted her guilt, but, it is clear that there is no true repentance in the text (v. 9-15).

Action – The Lord saw Israel in her sinful condition and, “His own arm brought salvation for Him; and His own righteousness, it sustained Him for He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for His clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak. According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, Fury to His adversaries, Recompense to His enemies...”

So, just like Isaiah 27, this chapter is concerned with the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for her guilt in shedding innocent blood. Three times this sin is mentioned (v. 3, 6-7)! And yet, not a word about the Cross!

Notice that the Intercessor puts on the garments of a *Warrior*. He would clothe himself with the garments of *vengeance* to recompense his enemies. This is the coming of the Lord in verse 20: “The Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob” Verse 20 is not a different coming from that in verses 16-19! It is one and the same coming, the coming of Christ in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood.

So, here is the argument:

The coming of the Lord for the salvation of Israel in Romans 11:26-27 is the coming of the Lord predicted in Isaiah 59.

But, the coming of the Lord predicted in Isaiah 59 is the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood.

Therefore, the coming of the Lord in Romans 11:26-27 is the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood.

Isaiah 59 presents the identical hermeneutical challenge as Isaiah 26-27.

If Kurt claims that Isaiah 59 was not Messianic, then it assuredly does not predict the Cross.

If he admits that Isaiah 59 is Messianic, and predictive of the Cross, *he must produce the verse.*

If he claims that in spite of the fact that the Cross is not mentioned in Isaiah 59 that we must see it there, this is *eisegesis. That is imposing a theological presupposition on a text.* When we begin doing this, we can prove any position that we want!

Kurt's challenge is daunting: Explain why Paul cites two Old Testament prophecies of the coming of Christ in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood, when, according to Kurt, Paul was not concerned *in any way* with the fulfillment of prophecies of Christ's judgment coming. Why would Paul cite two prophecies that had nothing,

absolutely nothing, to do with his subject matter? Why didn't Paul cite one of the many OT prophecies of the Passion of Jesus available to him, if this was his topic?

Instead, Paul cited two major OT prophecies that foretold the coming of the Lord in judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood. For my friend to find Christ's Passion in Romans 11, *he must find it in Isaiah 26-27 or Isaiah 59. It is not there!* Kurt must therefore *import it into prophecies that do not mention it*, and then *assume* that Paul likewise *imported it in Romans 11!* What is the hermeneutical justification for this? Is this not, *prima facie*, *eisegesis* (reading *into* the text), and not *exegesis* (drawing *out* of the text *what is there*)? Our theology must flow from text, not presuppositions.

Remember one of the primary rules of hermeneutic: "A text cannot mean what it never meant!" So, if Isaiah 26-27 and 59 did not predict Christ's Passion then my friend cannot apply Isaiah's prophecies of the *judgment* to Jesus' *Passion without making those texts mean what they never meant!*

Both Isaiah 27 and Isaiah 59 are Messianic and Paul's citation of them in Romans 11 means that Paul had the judgment coming of Christ in mind in Romans 11. I will have more to say about the prophetic source of Romans 11 in my next affirmative.

Now, should Kurt once again admit that: "We do not disallow the possibility that there is a *plenior sensus* (*fuller meaning, DKP*), to Isaiah 26:21 (or Isaiah 59, DKP) that may look beyond its historical setting to Christ's second coming" this demands the AD 70 fulfillment.

When I presented these arguments in my initial article, Kurt responded: "The solution is quite simple: When did God provide the remedy for sin? At the fall of Jerusalem or at the Cross? The Deliverer came to Zion and brought forgiveness of sin when Jesus died on the Cross, not when Jerusalem was destroyed." So, Kurt *completely ignored the context and emphatic words of of Isaiah 27 and 59* and imposed his presuppositional theology onto those prophecies!

My friend Kurt engaged in a diversionary tactic in his attempt to negate my arguments on Isaiah's prophecies. Kurt stated an axiom denied by no one: i.e. The Cross is God's provision for sin. But, as I will prove, Kurt does not believe that the Cross, *as a stand alone event*, brought salvation. The Cross must be viewed as *a complex of inseparably related events*. Further, I will show that the benefits of the Cross were not applied until AD 70, and that *Kurt Simmons is on record as agreeing with this!*

Let me move now to prove that salvation was not completed at the Cross.

Let me say now that Kurt does not believe—cannot believe— what he will affirm. He will affirm that the coming of Christ for salvation occurred at the Cross, and that no other events were necessary to perfect that salvation. *That is patently false*. Here is why. Kurt believes, as I do, that *Jesus had to ascend to the Father and into the Most Holy Place*, there to "prepare a place for us" (Hebrews 9:24). *But, that event was forty days after the Cross!* Thus, Kurt's own position affirms that salvation was *not* completed at the Cross. A process was *begun*, but had to be *finished*, and *it was not finished at the Ascension!*

Kurt may respond that the amount of time is insignificant. *It is not*. Admitting that Christ had to enter the MHP— forty days after the Cross— is to admit that the Cross— as a stand alone event- did not complete salvation. It is to admit my position, that the obtaining of salvation was a process *begun at the Cross*, but perfected through a series of related events— including the parousia.

The question is: "Why did Jesus have to ascend and enter the MHP?" The significance of this cannot be overlooked, and Hebrews 9:6-10 holds the key.

Hebrews 9— Atonement and Entrance Into the Most Holy Place:

“These preparations having thus been made, the priests go continually into the outer tent, performing their ritual duties; but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood which he offers for himself and for the errors of the people. By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the sanctuary is not yet opened as long as the outer tent is still standing (which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various ablutions, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.” (RSV. See also the NASV).

The RSV and NASV, in contrast to other translations, properly render the present active indicatives of the text. Paul was undeniably speaking of the contemporary cultic practice in the temple. Note that Paul affirms that the entire cultic world “is a figure for the time now present.” That was *Paul’s present time*. He did not affirm that those typological practices and sacrifices had been nullified! This is *critical!*

Note that the Old Law, including the washings and sacrifices would stand imposed, “until the time of reformation.” Kurt says the time of reformation arrived at the Cross. This is a clear-cut violation of the present active indicatives of Hebrews 9, and Paul’s statement that those things were, *when he wrote* “a figure for the present time.” Kurt even admits that the good things to come symbolized by those sacrifices and practices did not come at the Cross, but were about to come: “The Hebrews writer calls Christ a High Priest of ‘good things to come’ (Hebrews 9:11; cf. 2:5; 6:5; 10:1). At the time of his writing, they were not yet come, but were very near” (*Consummation of the Ages*, 2003, 231). This *demand*s that the typological Atonement praxis of the Torah, were about to be fulfilled at Christ’s parousia. The Atonement was not yet perfected.

Paul says that as long as the Old Law– with its sacrifices and washings– stood imposed, there was no access to the Most Holy Place.

Now, the reader must catch the power of this: My good friend says the saints could not enter the MHP *until the end of the Mosaic age, in AD 70!* Here is what he says in *Consummation of the Ages*: “True to the ‘already-but-not-yet’ character of the transition period between the Cross and the coming of Christ, the ‘way into the holiest of all was not yet manifest, while the first tabernacle was yet standing’ (Hebrews 9:8). *The Christian’s access to the presence of God was forestalled pending passage of the Mosaic age*” (p. 231, My emphasis). This is precisely my position, but, destructive to Kurt’s.

To make it unmistakably clear that it was the *Mosaic Law* that had to pass in AD 70, (Not at the Cross), read my brother’s comments on Hebrews 9: “The writer of Hebrews says that the two compartments of the first tabernacle (temple) stood for two covenants: the first compartment, the Holy Place, for the Old Testament in which were offered gifts and sacrifices that could not make the worshiper soteriologically perfect; the second compartment, which he calls the Holiest of all, for the New Testament” (*Adumbrations*, 2009, 220).

Here is my argument, based on the text of Hebrews 9 and Kurt’s admissions:

The first compartment of the tabernacle (temple) represented the Mosaic Covenant.

As long as the first compartment (the Mosaic Covenant) stood imposed (binding) there was no access to the presence of God (the MHP).

The saints had no access to the MHP until the destruction of Jerusalem (Kurt Simmons).

Therefore, the first compartment (The Mosaic Covenant) of the tabernacle (temple) stood imposed until the destruction of Jerusalem. This is logically (and textually) irrefutable.

Let me confirm this with the following from Kurt’s own keyboard, as he comments on Revelation 15:8 and its relationship to Hebrews 9: “The way into heaven was not opened until God’s wrath upon Jerusalem is fulfilled. The way into the holiest was not yet manifested while the first tabernacle was yet standing (Hebrews 9:8)” (*Consummation of the Ages*, 2003, p. 292 (My emphasis, DKP). So, Revelation 15 and Hebrews 9:6-10 both speak of *the same time, and the same event-* entrance into the presence of God. Kurt himself makes these events

synchronous! But, this *demands* that *the Mosaic Law remained imposed until AD 70*. This is logically and textually inescapable.

On this argument alone, my affirmative proposition is demonstrated as true. But there is more.

Entrance into the MHP was dependent on *two things*: the removal of Torah and the completion of the Wrath of God. This is not an either / or situation, *it is both!* The NT writers never suggest that it was first the removal of Torah at the Cross, and then, 40 years later the fulfillment of God's wrath—after all, fulfillment of God's wrath was *fulfillment of Torah! The truth is that AD 70 was the judgment of that ineffective Mosaic Law, that could never take away sin!* It was the judgment of the ministration of death. It was the judgment of the law that was the strength of sin. As Kurt himself has well said: "Continuation of the Mosaic Law and temple ritual stood in very denial of Christ's sacrifice, priesthood, and Sonship; it is fitting that they were deemed the most glorious spoils of the war" (*Consummation*, 349). God judged that "first tabernacle" (*the Mosaic Covenant* per Kurt) that prevented man from entering His presence, and then and only then could man enter the presence of God.

We must ask Kurt to answer some very important questions.

- 1.) Since you will affirm that salvation was completed at the Cross, and since salvation is directly related to entrance into the MHP, why is it that man could not enter the MHP at the moment of the Cross? Please tell us specifically.
- 2.) If Torah— *which prevented access to the MHP*-- was removed at the Cross as you affirm, then why could not man enter the MHP from the time of the Cross? Paul is emphatic that it was *the abiding imposition of Torah that prevented access to the MHP!* Imposition of Torah— no access to the MHP. No Torah— Access to the MHP at the time of the reformation.

So, if Torah, which prevented access to the MHP, was abrogated at the Cross, (and if this is the coming of the Lord for salvation in Romans 11:25f), then man could enter the MHP from the time of the Cross. But remember that Kurt himself denies that man could enter the MHP until AD 70, due to the abiding standing of the "first tabernacle" i.e. the Mosaic Covenant!. This is a fatal, logical self contradiction.

You cannot on the one hand affirm that that which kept man from the MHP was removed at the Cross, and then claim that man still could not enter the MHP until AD 70! Do not forget that removal of Torah and completion of vengeance were *equal, synchronous conditions* for entrance into the MHP. Kurt cannot focus on the vengeance aspect and deny what Paul has to say about the continuing imposition of Torah *until man could enter the MHP at the parousia*.

Here is a related affirmative argument:

Kurt admits that entrance into the MHP was at the second coming in AD 70.

But the time of reformation is when man could enter the MHP.

Thus, the time of reformation did not arrive until the second coming AD 70.

This means that Torah remained imposed until AD 70, because Torah would stand "until the time of reformation" (Hebrews 9:10).

Remember that I noted that Kurt will agree that Christ had to enter into the MHP in order to fulfill the typological actions of the High Priest under Torah. *He does not believe that salvation was perfected while Jesus was on the Cross, before he entered the MHP!* Kurt's position on this demands that the "ceremonial commandments" of Torah were not completed at the Cross. Christ's entrance into the MHP fulfilled "ceremonial commandments" (typological actions) of Torah, thus, Torah remained as a type and shadow *at least until Christ entered into the MHP*.

This means that Kurt cannot argue that salvation was completed at the moment of the Cross.

The question is, how can Kurt deny *the absolute necessity of Christ's second coming* to fulfill those same typological actions of the High Priest?

Kurt wants to short circuit the Atonement process and have it completed while Jesus was on the Cross. But wait, no, he will insist that Jesus *had to enter the MHP forty days after the Cross!* But then he will deny that Christ had to “come again the second time, apart from sin, for salvation” to complete that atonement process! But wait, *no*, that is not correct, for Kurt says Christ had to come again (AD 70) for man to enter the MHP, i.e. *to bring salvation!*

In Hebrews 9 it is the “ceremonial commandments,” the sacrifices and cultic actions that Paul affirmed were types and shadows imposed until the time of reformation *when man could enter the MHP*. Paul said those things were, *when he wrote*, typological of the coming better things, the time of reformation. And remember that Kurt agrees that those “good things to come” symbolized by those sacrifices and cultic actions had not yet come: “The Hebrews writer calls Christ a High Priest of ‘good things to come’ (Hebrews 9:11; cf. 2:5; 6:5; 10:1). At the time of his writing, they were not yet come, but were very near” (*Consummation of the Ages*, 2003, 231). Thus, the ceremonial commandments had not been annulled at the Cross, and were still imposed when Paul wrote. Torah had not passed!

So on the one hand Kurt affirms that those ceremonial commandments- in fact the Torah itself!-- were fulfilled and abrogated at the Cross, but on the other hand, he affirms that the typological, ceremonial commandments had not been fulfilled, and were still unfulfilled and imposed!

But, note again, that the Hebrews author cites the typological actions of the High Priest and Jesus’ fulfillment of those actions. The HP would slay the sacrifice, and Christ had appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. The High Priest entered the MHP, and Christ had entered the MHP (Hebrews 9:24). And while the author does not specifically say the HP came out, Hebrews 9:28 says, “And to those who eagerly look for him he shall appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation. Now, take note of Hebrews 10:1: “*For*, the Law having a shadow of good things about to come...” Note the connective particle “*gar*” translated as “for” in 10:1.

This word ties 9:28 to 10:1, and explains *why* Christ had to appear the second time. He had to appear the second time “*for* the law, having a shadow of good things (about) to come.” *Christ’s second coming was to fulfill the typological, ceremonial commandments and practices of the law!* That “for” cannot be ignored, and proves that Christ’s second coming was the fulfillment of the typological commandments of Torah. The Day of Atonement is clearly the context. The “*for*” demands that Christ’s second appearing is the fulfillment of the Atonement typology. This cannot be ignored, and it means that the end of the Mosaic Covenant– and salvation and the Atonement-- did not come until Christ’s parousia in AD 70!

Note also that 10:1 says that the good things typified by “the law” (note again the *present indicatives* in 10:1, and note that Kurt acknowledges that Hebrews 10:1 spoke of the yet unfulfilled aspect of Torah), were “about to come.” For the Hebrews writer, the better things typified by the Atonement cultus– entrance into the MHP-- were “about to come (from *mello*).” (Note that Kurt agrees that *mello* means “about to be, about to come” (*Consummation*, p. 1). This is the salvation of 9:28. It is the time of reformation anticipated by the typological, ceremonial commandments. It had not yet arrived, but was “about to.”

So, Christ’s second appearing was to finalize the Atonement process. Kurt even agrees that the temple sacrifices were “a shadow of the substitutionary death and atoning blood of Christ” (Hebrews 9:12; 10:1-4) (*Consummation*, 231). This logically demands that the Atonement and thus *salvation was not completed at the Cross*. If it were, man could enter the MHP at the moment of the Cross!

To negate this argument Kurt must prove that while the *death* of Jesus was the fulfillment of the Atonement typology, and while his *entrance into the MHP* was the fulfillment of the Atonement typology, his reappearing was *unrelated* to the Atonement practices of the High Priest. Kurt cannot do this.

I have proven that entrance into the MHP– which could only come at the completion of the Atonement-- is inseparably related to the end of the Torah. This is what Hebrews 9 unequivocally affirms!

Stated simply, Hebrews 9 proves this:

Torah standing valid– no access to the MHP. This is irrefutable.

Torah removed— access to the MHP (the Atonement perfected). This is undeniable.

I have proven— and Kurt agrees— that entrance into the MHP did not take place until AD 70. This is *prima facie* validation of my proposition that *the full end of the Mosaic Covenant age was at Christ's parousia in AD 70*.

In two articles challenging my position on Romans 11 Kurt essentially surrendered his position. He said of Christ's betrothal / marriage, "We agree that the full benefit of Christ's atonement was *held in partial abeyance* until the consummation of the Lamb's marriage with the bride. The church was *betrothed* to Christ beginning at Pentecost, but did not enjoy the fullness of the New Testament intimacy until the consummation in AD 70" (Sword and Plow, Sept., 2009— hereafter *S-P*. His emphasis).

Now, clearly, a person *betrothed* is not "fully married" and simply awaiting the manifestation of that marriage. What is being held in "abeyance" is *the finalization of the marriage*. The betrothal is the *initiation* of a process, the marriage is the *consummation* of the process, just like the Cross and parousia.

If the body of Christ was *waiting for salvation* and "the fullness of New Testament intimacy" then those things were not yet completed. Paul himself said, ""He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). Had the work of salvation begun? Unequivocally! Was it perfected and finished? Clearly not. It was an on-going process when Paul wrote.

I am going to ask Kurt to *very specifically* define the fuller blessings, the "more intimate relationship," etc.. What is "*the full benefit of Christ's atonement*" that was being held in abeyance until AD 70? *According to Hebrews 9:28 it was salvation itself!* It was the very thing that Christ would come to bring as foretold in Romans 11! *It was in fact, the completion of the Atonement process, begun at the Cross. It was access to the presence of God!*

Note these excellent quotes from *Consummation of the Ages*, (p. 1): "It is a well established point of scripture that *the redemptive work of Christ was held in abeyance* until the consummation at Christ's return when faith would be made sight...the connection between God's redemptive and eschatological purpose is essential to a proper understanding of Revelation." (My emphasis, DKP). Commenting on Romans 8:15f and the redemption of creation, Kurt then says: "Paul is here talking about the coming spiritual justification and regeneration in Christ that Jew and Gentile would receive at the time of the consummation in AD 70" (*Consummation*, 2). So, salvation, redemption, justification and regeneration were all future and occurred in AD 70! ***But wait!***

In his announcement of this debate in his March issue of the S-P, my friend says: "The real issue is where does the Bible place redemption, atonement, and justification? At the cross or at the second coming? I affirm the former, Don the latter."

So, on the one hand, Kurt says justification and redemption and atonement (thus *salvation*) occurred at Christ's AD 70 parousia. On the other hand, he says those things occurred at the Cross.

Let me frame an argument focusing on "justification."

Justification comes through being made right with God, i.e. *through forgiveness of sin*.

But, "spiritual justification" (not mere deliverance from physical persecution, DKP) did not come until AD 70 "at the time of the consummation" (KS).

Therefore, forgiveness of sin did not arrive until AD 70 "at the time of the consummation." And let me build on that with a few more comments about entrance into the MHP.

Why could there be no access to the presence of God (the MHP) under Torah? The answer is simple: "the blood of bulls and goats can never take away sin" (Hebrews 10:3-4). Sin was the one thing separating man from God (see Isaiah 59:1-2). No forgiveness, no entrance into the MHP! This is an undeniable fact.

Paul said that the Mosaic Law could never offer forgiveness of sin (Acts 13:38f). It could not give life or righteousness (Galatians 3:20-21). Torah could not make the worshipper perfect in regard to the conscience (Hebrews 9:8-9; 10:1-4).

Now, Kurt says that forgiveness, justification and salvation were completed and fully available to the believer before AD 70. He claims that the fall of Jerusalem was "irrelevant in regard to salvation." Yet, he claims that man could

not enter the MHP as long as the first tabernacle (the Mosaic Covenant!) stood, and, *he says that man could not enter the MHP until AD 70!* Do you see the problem here? It is severe, and inescapable for my friend.

Here is my argument:

There could be no access to the presence of God while the first tabernacle (the Mosaic Covenant, KS) stood because that Mosaic Covenant could not provide forgiveness of sin.

The believers could not enter the MHP (the presence of God) until AD 70 (KS).

Therefore, there was no full bestowal of true forgiveness of sin until AD 70.

Now, note that *the promise* of forgiveness, justification and salvation was in fact given from Pentecost onward: “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit...” But, as my friend aptly states: “The Christian’s access to the presence of God was forestalled pending passage of the Mosaic age. Thus, the Hebrew (sic) writer calls Christ a High Priest of ‘good things to come.’ At the time of his writing, they were not yet come; but they were very near....During the interim, in token of God’s promise, the church was given miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost in earnest of the inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession (Ephesians 1:13-14). The church was the purchase of God; its redemption was tied to the fall of Jerusalem (Luke 21:28), not in terms of the expiation of sin, but from the persecution attending those days, and the consummation of the ages and culmination of God’s redemptive purpose in Christ” (*Consummation*, 231).

Very often, the NT writers spoke of forgiveness, salvation, redemption, etc. as present realities when in fact they were speaking *proleptically*. They had the guarantee of the imminent fulfillment of those things, the coming objective reality, so that they spoke of them as present realities, when in fact they were promises, *guaranteed* by the Spirit.

Lamentably, my friend tries to both affirm the truth and deny it at the same time! He says correctly that the good things to come typified by the Mosaic Law had not arrived when Hebrews was written, and as a result, they could not enter the MHP. Well, wasn’t entrance into the MHP one of those “good things to come,” and wasn’t that entrance inextricably tied to expiation for sin, to *spiritual salvation*?

Then, Kurt claims that the redemption purchased by Christ which they were awaiting *had nothing to do with expiation of sin* and salvation, but was *deliverance from persecution!* So, although they could still not enter the MHP— which was due to no bestowal of forgiveness— the redemption that Christ had purchased and was deliverance from physical persecution! *We are to believe that Jesus died to deliver them from physical persecution?* We are to believe that the Spirit was the guarantee of physical deliverance from persecution? This is patently false.

Furthermore, did the animal sacrifices and priestly functions typify physical deliverance from persecution? If so, we will demand proof of such a claim. My friend admits that the animal sacrifices and High Priestly actions were typical of coming “better things” that had not arrived before AD 70. Unless my friend can definitively prove that the animal sacrifices and that the High Priestly actions did not, in any way, typify spiritual atonement, spiritual salvation, spiritual realities, then he cannot affirm the completed reality of the spiritual blessings prior to the fulfillment of those typological sacrifices and practices.

In 2 Corinthians 3-6 Paul discourses on the then present fulfillment of Ezekiel 37 and the prophecy of the restoration of Israel under Messiah. He speaks of the transition from the Old Covenant glory to the New— which was the work of the Spirit in and through *his ministry* (2 Corinthians 3:16-4:1-2). That was *the miraculous ministry of the Spirit*. But watch this.

Not only was the Spirit the medium and power of Paul’s ministry of *covenant transformation*, Paul also said the Spirit was the guarantee (*arrabon*, the same word as in Ephesians 1:13f) of *the resurrection* (2 Corinthians 5:4-7): “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...!”

Now, I want the reader to contemplate this. The Spirit was the earnest (guarantee) of the coming, soon coming from Paul’s perspective, resurrection and being clothed with the “heavenly dwelling,” the New Covenant Tabernacle foretold by Ezekiel 37. Will my friend say that this resurrection life was merely physical? It is what they were very eagerly waiting for, and it is what the miraculous gifts of the Spirit guaranteed. This is the redemption of the purchased possession in Ephesians 1:13f, and has nothing to do with deliverance from physical tribulation. This is spiritual salvation that had not yet been delivered, not yet perfected, not yet realized.

Notice that the same Spirit that was miraculously empowering (and thus guaranteeing) Paul’s ministry of covenant transformation from *the ministration of death*, to *the ministration of life* (2 Corinthians 3:6f), was likewise empowering and guaranteeing the imminent realization of the resurrection. These were synchronous and related events. The process was not yet completed.

Notice also:

The resurrection was to be the salvation of Israel (Isaiah 25:6-9).

The salvation of Isaiah 25:6-9 is the salvation promised in Isaiah 27 / Romans 11:26f, the salvation to come at the Day of the Lord.

In Paul’s day, the Holy Spirit was the guarantee of that coming resurrection / salvation.

That resurrection, thus, *Israel’s salvation*, had not yet come when Paul wrote Romans 11.

Thus, the salvation of Israel in Romans 11:26f was yet future when Paul wrote. It did not come at the Cross.

I cannot fail to note an extreme irony here. Kurt is denying that the end of the Mosaic Covenant age arrived in AD 70. Yet, his book, *Consummation of the Ages*, is dedicated to proving that the end of the age *arrived in AD 70!* Here is one quote of several that could be given: “Christ tied the judgment to the end of the Mosaic age and the destruction of Jerusalem” (*Consummation*, 2003, p. 229). But, Kurt has signed a proposition to *deny* that the end of the Mosaic age occurred in AD 70!

To say the least, this is a *fatal* self contradiction. You cannot affirm on the one hand that the Mosaic Covenant age ended at the Cross, and then affirm that the end of that age did not arrive until AD 70!

Thus, Kurt cannot argue that Romans 11 posits salvation as completed at the Cross and that man fully possessed that salvation, for that would demand *that man could enter the MHP from the Cross onward*. Kurt himself denies this. Kurt Simmons has established my affirmative proposition for me!

Remember what Kurt says: “The way into heaven was not opened until God’s wrath upon Jerusalem is fulfilled. The way into the holiest was not yet manifested while the first tabernacle (*the Mosaic Covenant per Kurt*, DKP) was yet standing (Hebrews 9:8).” Given these statements, it makes one wonder how Kurt could then argue: “the destruction of Jerusalem was irrelevant in terms of man’s redemption and atonement” (From his announcement of our debate). Are we to believe that entrance into the MHP is *unrelated to redemption and Atonement?* Let me turn Kurt’s statement around in light of Hebrews 9:28:

The coming of Christ at the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 was “for salvation” (Hebrews 9:28- KS). He also says it would be when spiritual justification and redemption came.

But, “the destruction of Jerusalem was irrelevant in terms of man’s redemption and atonement” (KS).

Therefore, the coming of Christ at the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 “for salvation,” (as well as *spiritual justification and redemption*) “was irrelevant in terms of man’s redemption and atonement.”

How one can argue that Christ’s coming in AD 70 was for *salvation*, spiritual justification and redemption, and yet was “irrelevant for redemption” is, I must confess, a mystery to me, and many others, and I hope Kurt will clarify his beliefs on this.

Summary and Conclusion

I have proven from the prophetic context of Romans 11 that the coming of the Lord of Romans 11 was to be– and was– the AD 70 judgment of Israel for shedding innocent blood.

I have demonstrated, *prima facie*, that the end of the Mosaic Covenant age did not occur until Christ’s AD 70 coming. Hebrews 9 confirms this beyond dispute.

Kurt Simmons specifically states the truth of my affirmative in both of his books.

Will Kurt renounce what he has so eloquently written concerning the end of the Mosaic Covenant age: “Christ tied the judgment to the end of the Mosaic age and the destruction of Jerusalem” (*Consummation*, 2003, p. 229)? We shall see!

A final question for Kurt. I hope and ask that he answer in his first negative: If a law or covenant has been abrogated, are any of the provisions of that covenant, i.e. its mandates, its promises or penalties (positive or negative) still binding and valid (imposed)? Please answer specifically, clearly, without evasion.

We close with this. Kurt says: “The validity of the “corporate body view” is therefore fully at issueIt is at issue, because if salvation (justification/atonement) happened at the cross, then the “corporate body view” is erroneous...and must be rejected.” Antithetically of course, for me to prove that the Mosaic Covenant did not pass at the Cross and that the salvation purchased through the Cross was not perfected at the moment of the Cross, validates and proves the corporate body resurrection paradigm.

Scripture, logic and Kurt’s own words have fully established my proposition.

We very much look forward to our friend’s response.

For His Truth, and In His Grace,
Don K. Preston

(Kurt's First Negative, Cont'd from page 1)

that we are having this discussion at all. Here are the issues of this debate:

- To what *event* does scripture attach man's salvation, the death of Christ upon the cross, or his coming in wrath upon the Jews and Romans?
- Was the law *fulfilled* and the legal efficacy of the Old Testament *end* at the cross, or did it remain valid and binding until the second coming?
- Was remission of sins and fulness of grace *available* from and after the cross, at Pentecost when the gospel was first preached were sins remitted and washed away, or was salvation from sin postponed until Jerusalem fell?

Every Christian knows that the Bible places salvation at the cross. The cross was *the* defining event of salvation history that makes resurrection possible. Paul said, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. 6:14). Paul told the Colossians God had "*forgiven* you all trespasses;" Christ's blood had "*blotted out* the handwriting of ordinances that was against us;" Jesus "*took it* out of the way, *nailing* it to his cross, *triumphing* over principalities and powers in it" (Col. 2:14, 15). These are the very essentials of the gospel; everything of redemptive significance from sin happened at the cross. There are no more basic doctrines to the faith delivered "once for all" to the saints than these. The cross is bedrock Christian stuff.

Yet, Don finds himself on the *wrong end* of every one of these propositions. Don places salvation from sin at the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 rather than Calvary AD 33. Don denies that the law was fulfilled (satisfied) at the cross. He believes instead that the Old Testament was valid and binding until AD 70; he affirms that man continued under *bondage to sin* until Jerusalem fell, and that then, and not before, was man justified and restored to a full and perfect relationship with God. My study of Don's books and articles leads me to conclude that under his system man is not saved by the *addition of grace* at the cross, but by *removal of the law* at the fall of Jerusalem.

Consider: If the cross triumphed over the law, if Jesus paid the debt of sin in his death, the law could have no further power over Christians. A debt paid is extinguished forever. But if the cross did not *triumph* over the law at Calvary, if man had to wait until the law was *removed* to be justified from sin, then *nothing* happened at the cross.

Let us repeat that lest it be missed. *If the cross did not triumph over the law at Calvary, if man had to wait until the law was removed to be justified from sin, then nothing happened at the cross.* This is the long and short of Don's teaching: nothing happened at the cross.

Historical Background to this Discussion – Understanding Our Positions

It will be helpful to the reader to understand Don's and my respective positions if we pause briefly to survey the history of Preterism over the last 40 years and the different schools that have grown up. If you have read Don's books, you may have noticed that Don refers to his particular version of eschatology as "Covenant Eschatology." Covenant Eschatology is *not* Preterism. Preterism merely assumes a "*contemporary-historical*" interpretation of New Testament prophecy regarding Christ's second coming; it affirms that the second coming, including the general resurrection, occurred in the events culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Covenant Eschatology affirms all this and more.

Covenant Eschatology is the brain-child of Max King, a Church of Christ preacher who came to the front of the modern Preterist movement with the publication of his book "*The Spirit of Prophecy*" (1971. Warren, OH). The phrase "Covenant Eschatology" was coined by King's father-in-law, C.D. Beagle. Covenant Eschatology sees Biblical eschatology in terms of *covenantal transformation* from Moses to Christ. The two identifying features of

Covenant Eschatology are King's *spiritualized* view of the resurrection and the notion that the Old Testament was *valid* and the saints *under the debt of sin* until AD 70.

According to King, Judaism was a "power or system of death", and "became a 'body of death' by the old law."¹ For King, the "resurrection of the body or the church" applies to the raising up of the church "from the Jewish body...at the fall of Judaism."² "One must look to the Jewish system as the state and power of death to be destroyed by the reign of Christ."³ "Paul is conscious that death's defeat hinges upon sin's defeat, and that ***the defeat of sin is tied to the annulment of the old aeon of law***...For Paul, ***death is abolished when the state of sin and the law are abolished***."⁴ "When the 'ministration of death written in tables of stone' was finally destroyed, death was swallowed up in victory."⁵

Of course, this is all perfectly frivolous. The Gentile churches of Athens, Colosse, Thessalonica, Rome, and Ephesus in the "grave of Judaism?" "Raised from the Jewish body" at Jerusalem's fall? The sheer fantasy and nonsensical nature of the teaching aside, the sum and substance of King's spiritualized view, then, is that mankind was in bondage to sin by virtue of the Mosaic law, but was justified from sin by removal of the law at AD 70. Therefore, for King, "resurrection" equals "justification" and justification results from removal of the law. "***The defeat of sin is tied to the annulment of the old aeon of law...death is abolished when the state of sin and the law are abolished***."

The idea that the general resurrection was in AD 70 is perfectly sound. All Preterists are agreed in this. However, once the spiritualized view is adopted and resurrection is equated with justification, the cross is *displaced* by the second coming; justification is *moved* from Calvary to the fall of Jerusalem. However, Covenant Eschatology doesn't stop there; it does not merely change the *timing* by which justification accrued to the church. No, it goes much, much further, and actually changes the *means* of justification itself.

Covenant Eschatology affirms that it is *only by removal of the Old Law that justification is possible*. In other words, the very *substance* of our salvation becomes removal of the law, rather than the addition of grace. Paul said, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20). *Grace overcomes law!* Paul places grace at the cross; the idea that the law had to be removed is totally foreign to Paul's soteriology (theology of salvation). The grace inherent in Christ's cross *triumphs* over sin and the law. However, Covenant Eschatology says "where grace did abound, the law did much more abound." The cross does not triumph over law; bondage to sin *survives* the cross, and is only taken away in AD 70! Thus, the cross is totally negated and annulled. It has *no part* in salvation. If it does, Don should please tell us what that part is, for I confess I cannot find or understand it in his system.

Don, like many others, came under the early influence of King. King was at the front of Preterism in the 70's, 80's and 90's until his system of eschatology led him into Universalism. We believe that King's system is *inherently*

¹ . King, *The Spirit of Prophecy* (Warren, OH, 1971),145

² Ibid, p. 195

³ Ibid, p. 144

⁴ Max R. King, *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*, p. 644 (emphasis added).

⁵ Max R. King, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, p. 145

Universalistic, but that is not a matter we can take up here.⁶ Don has not followed King into Universalism, but otherwise embraces King's views. In fact, it was King who first (so far as I know) asserted that Rom. 11:25-27 referred to the second coming (which is Don's affirmative in this debate).⁷ Don is very explicit that "forgiveness of sin did not arrive until AD 70". Don is also very explicit that it is *only* by removal of the law that man is justified: "The destruction of the temple signaled that God's covenant with Israel was now fulfilled. He had kept his Word and, 'brought life and immortality to light through the gospel' (2 Timothy 19f). The 'law of life in Christ Jesus' (Romans 8:13), now stood triumphant over the law that was '*the strength of sin,*' (Romans 7:7f)⁸" (emphasis Don's). PLEASE NOTE: Don says the law had to be removed before sin was defeated! What Paul places at the cross, Don moves to AD 70! Here is another quote: "You cannot logically affirm the fulfillment of the resurrection in AD 70... and not affirm the end of whatever law it was that held the condemning power over man." Thus, according to Don, we are saved by the removal of law, not the addition of grace. The cross accomplished *nothing*, for it is not until AD 70 when the law is removed that sin is defeated. The cross has vanished from Don's soteriology.

Max King's Soteriology & Eschatology

Resurrection = Justification = Removal of Old Law (AD 70)

"death is abolished when the state of sin and the law are abolished"

WHERE IS THE CROSS?

This brief review should help the reader understand the origin of Don's and my differences and what is at stake. Reduced to its simplest form, it is a question of Covenant Eschatology versus Cross-based Soteriology. Did justification obtain at the cross, or at the fall of Jerusalem? *Did the cross fulfill the law and cancel the debt of sin, or did it not?* That is the question.

What Don Must Prove

Don has the affirmative, therefore the burden of proof is his. His proposition states,

"The Bible teaches that the coming of Christ for salvation in Romans 11:25-27 occurred in AD 70 at the climax and termination of the Mosaic Covenant Age." We have already seen that Rom. 11:27 involves salvation from sin. Hence, Don must prove:

⁶ Consider this syllogism: *All men were under the debt of sin by the law (where there is no law, there is no transgression Rom. 4:15; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God Rom. 3:23). No man could be justified from sin until the law was removed. But the law was removed for all men for all time in AD 70. Therefore, all men were justified from the law.* Notice that the cross and obedience of faith logically are not required under King's system for justification. Men are not saved by responding to the gospel one-by-one, but corporately by removal of the law, hence, Universalism.

⁷ *The Spirit of Prophecy*, pp.215; McGuiggan –King Debate (Warren, OH), pp. 250-253; 268.

⁸ Don K Preston, *Like Father, Like Son, On Clouds of Glory* (Ardmore OK, 2006), p. 109.

- 1) The coming referred to is the second, not first, advent of Christ.
- 2) The judgment and sentence associated with sin hung over the saints until AD 70; *viz.*, the cross did not cancel sin's debt.
- 3) AD 70 represented the *legal* climax and termination of the Mosaic Covenant age; *viz.*, the law, including circumcision, animal sacrifices, the priesthood, dietary restrictions, etc, was valid and binding until AD 70.
- 4) The judgment and sentence associated with sin were set aside in AD 70 by annulment of the law.

Don must prove *each* of these to carry his burden of proof. I need only negate *one* of these to prevent him from carrying his proposition. It is like a trial where the prosecution must prove *each element* of the crime, but the defense need only negate *one element* to win acquittal. Don therefore has the heavier, more onerous task. We would ask the reader to PLEASE NOTE that Don has not and cannot produce even ONE VERSE that states the saints were under the debt of sin until AD 70. NOT ONE. I can, and when it is my turn to be in the affirmative will, produce *dozens* of verses that expressly state that justification was a present possession of the saints, that they had forgiveness of sins and fulness of grace before AD 70. I will produce some in this negative. But Don has not and cannot produce EVEN ONE. His whole ability to keep men under the debt of sin until AD 70 is based upon argumentation from faulty assumptions to wrong conclusions. You know the type I mean. Jehovah's witnesses say "The Bible prohibits eating blood. People who are sick are fed intravenously. What is introduced into the body intravenously is therefore equivalent to eating. Blood transfusions are conducted intravenously. Therefore, blood transfusions are equivalent to eating blood and unlawful." Seems logical, right? But there is not one verse in the Bible that actually teaches against blood transfusions. The whole thing is built upon deductive reasoning. Don is a MASTER of deductive reasoning; his books are saturated with logical syllogisms. But virtually anything can be proved this way. "All crows are black. This bird is black. Therefore, this bird is a crow." Really? Are crows the *only* birds that are black? Might not this bird be a raven or some *other* species? What we need are not syllogisms, but VERSES! And Don has NONE. He cannot produce even one verse that says New Testament saints were under the debt of sin until AD 70. His whole ability to make you *think* the saints were under the debt of sin until AD 70 is based upon faulty argumentation. Don builds exegetical paradigms in the sky. But since Jehovah's Witnesses can prove by logic and argumentation that blood transfusions are unlawful, that you can't celebrate birthdays, you can't vote, and Christ isn't God, this sort of thing really proves NOTHING. Here is a box. Let Don put in it all the verses he can that expressly state the saints were under the debt of sin from and after the cross. At the end of this discussion the box will still be empty and Don will not have carried his proposition.

**Don's Box
Verses?**

I can produce PAGES OF VERSES that make salvation, justification, grace, and forgiveness of sin the *present possession* of the saints. Don cannot produce even one verse. What does that tell you about Don's system of eschatology? The most important, single topic in the WHOLE BIBLE and Don does not even have ONE VERSE. Startling isn't it? This is a wake up call for those that embrace the Corporate Body View!⁹ Your whole edifice is built upon a supposition that does not have a single verse to support its most basic supposition! Don't believe me? Just try and find one to put in the box!

I am sure Don would like me to take the bait and use up my allotted space following him down all sorts of rabbit trails, answering questions, and interacting with his affirmative. Why should I? He has not produced a single verse to substantiate the most important topic of this discussion, if not the whole Bible. Why should I involve myself in

⁹ "Corporate Body View" is a term describing King's notion that the church/mankind were "corporately" justified ("resurrected") by removal of the law in AD 70.

discussion about the proper exegesis of Isaiah 26, 27 and 59 and what light that may or may not throw on Rom. 11:25-27 if Don cannot produce even ONE VERSE to show the debt of sin still hung over the saints from and after the cross? I do not say this to embarrass or belittle Don. I am sure Don does not even realize that he doesn't have a single verse he can produce. I am hoping to save my brother from what I deem a dangerous system of theology, a system of theology that negates the cross, by now calling it to his attention. As the quotes Don produces from my earlier works show, I too was at least partly under similar misapprehensions at one time. But I have studied and have disabused myself of them, and I thank God I have seen my error. I pray God will grant that I may see and repent all my errors! Imagine the culpability of impugning the cross of Christ, even unintentionally! Don, for your own sake, take the challenge; bring forward your verses. And when you can't produce *even one*, awake as from a trance out of the system of teaching you have become enmeshed in; renounce Max King's Covenant Eschatology. Preterism is completely sound. But this? Never!

I have now used up just over five pages. I could stop here and not write another word. The burden of proof is Don's. He never has and never will produce even one verse stating that the saints were under the debt of sin by the law until AD 70. But, since I have the space, I will *gratuitously* continue on. Since, I only need to negate one of the points of Don's proposition, I will focus upon what matters most: 1) when justification accrued to the saints, and 2) when the Old Covenant was *legally* abrogated and nullified. We will deal with the last first.

Don's favorite proof text for extending the validity of the law until AD 70 is probably Matt. 5:17, 18. This is a favorite Preterist proof text, and it is horribly abused. So, let us begin here. Jesus said, "*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. 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.*" Three points need to be discussed: 1) the meaning of "heavens and earth" – metaphoric or parabolic? 2) Fulfillment of the law; and 3) Nullification of the law.

Heavens & Earth Normal Preterist misuse of this passage proceeds upon the assumption that Jesus uses "heavens and earth" in a mystical, metaphoric sense, a hidden double meaning where they are symbols for the Old Testament temple and system. Don does this all through his books. He argues that the Jews viewed the temple as "heaven and earth" and that Jesus is mystically referring to it here. Don believes that the "heavens and earth" of Matt. 24:35 mystically refer to the temple complex. He believes the "heavens and earth" of Heb. 12:26, 27 and II Pet. 3 are the Old Testament law and system, the "covenantal world of the Jews." This is wrong; it contradicts the established usage of the prophets whereby the "shaking" of the heavens and earth in times of national and world judgment had no covenantal significance whatever (Isa. 13:-13; 34:1-10; Ezek. 32:7, 8; Joel 3:16, 17; Hag. 2:6, 7, 21, 22). Don is aware that the prophets' use of the heavens and earth to describe times of judgment upon the world and various nations, and that they carry *no covenantal significance*. He cites them in his books. In fact, he cites N.T. Wright, who says that the prophets employ imagery of shaking the heavens and earth, not covenantally, but socio-politically and militarily.¹⁰ Indeed, Don makes identical statements himself.¹¹ There is not one single occasion in the whole Bible where the heavens and earth refer to the Old or New Testaments – not one. They are *always* socio-political, *never* covenantal.

More to the point, Jesus does not use "heaven and earth" in Matt. 5:18 metaphorically in any event. Rather, Jesus evokes the heavens and earth *parabolically*. He compares the word of God to the heavens and earth as things divinely permanent, immutable, and irremovable to show that, as the cosmos has been established by God's word

¹⁰ "*This language denotes socio-political and military catastrophe.*" N.T. Wright, *Jesus the Victory of God* (Minneapolis, Fortress, 1996), p. 361.

¹¹ "It is emotive language, hyperbolically expressing the catastrophic end to a social order, the end of a kingdom." Don K Preston, *Like Father, Like Son, On Clouds of Glory* (Ardmore OK, 2006), p. 33.

and cannot fail or be removed, so the promises and prophecies contained in the law and prophets cannot fail, but must surely be fulfilled. What Jesus is actually saying, then, is that it is *easier* for heaven and earth to pass than that a single dot or stroke of the law to pass without first being fulfilled. And, in fact, he says this very thing in Luke 16:17: "*And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.*" This parallel saying therefore controls our interpretation and precludes making more out of Matt. 5:18 than the Lord himself intended. A simple comparison of similar passages will prove that the permanence and immutability of the heavens and earth are evoked parabolically to show that it would be easier for them to fail than God's purpose and word to fail; there is nothing "covenantal" intended at all. (See Matt. 24:34; Lk. 16:17; Jer. 31:35, 36.)

Law Fulfilled This is the very heart of the matter. Don urges that Jesus has his *second coming* in view in Matt. 5:18 and that the law was therefore not fulfilled until that time; Don argues that the law was valid, binding and obligatory until AD 70. This is wrong. Jesus is speaking about his *earthly mission*, not second coming, telling the Jews why he was come. Matt. 5:17 establishes this fact beyond dispute: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill."

What coming is in view? The second? No! The first. When would Jesus fulfill the law? At his second coming? No! His first! He did not say, "I will come again and then fulfill," but "I AM COME TO FULFILL!" Jesus fulfilled the law at his *first coming*. There is simply no avoiding the obvious meaning of the text. From the Nativity to Calvary, Christ fulfilled the law. Over and over again we encounter the evangelists' testimony "now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled" (Matt. 1:22); "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken" (Matt. 2:17); "But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled" (Matt. 26:56). Matthew alone makes statements of this sort 13 times. (Matt. 1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:54, 56; 27:9, 35) Mark makes similar statements twice (Mk. 14:49; 15:28); Luke twice (4:21; 24:44); John eight times affirms "these things were done that the scripture should be fulfilled" (Jn. 12:38; 13:18; 15:25; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36, 37). Thus, *twenty-five* times in the gospels we are informed Jesus fulfilled the law and prophets. Acts adds to this four more (Acts 1:16; 3:18; 13:27, 29). Indeed, Jesus, before he died, cried out from the cross "It is finished!" (Jn. 19:30; cf. Matt. 27:50), showing that he had *completed* the work his Father gave him to do. Luke even states "And when they *had fulfilled* all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre" (Acts 13:29). And when all was fulfilled regarding Jesus' *life*, God fulfilled the remainder when he raised him from the *dead* (still first coming)!

"And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again" (Acts 13:32, 33).

GOD HATH FULFILLED! First coming, not second! The gospels abundantly prove that Jesus fulfilled the law and prophets in his first coming beginning with the Nativity. However, it is at the cross that the *debt of the law* was paid, terminating the Old Covenant. The end and object of the whole law was the cross of Christ. The temple, the ceremonies, the priesthood, and untold other incidentals and minutia of the Mosaic law all stood as one grand object lesson, one great prophetic type pointing to Christ and his all-sufficient sacrifice upon the cross. Jesus' death fulfilled the law of sin and death, which required blood sacrifice in atonement for sin. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17:11). The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins (Heb. 10:4). But the blood of Christ could and did. Jesus was the greater and more perfect sacrifice, which the priesthood, temple service, and animal sacrifices looked to.

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared for 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." Heb. 10:5-7)

Notice what the writer states, “When HE COMETH INTO THE WORLD.” What coming is this? Clearly, it is the first coming. “I COME TO DO THY WILL, O GOD.” What was God’s will? That Jesus fulfill the law, providing redemption. Fulfilling the law was a first coming event, not second. Any question is resolved by what the writer of Hebrews says next.

“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 which will we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:8-10).

Here is unequivocal evidence that the sacrifice of Christ fulfilled the law. The writer says “HE TAKETH AWAY THE FIRST, THAT HE MAY ESTABLISH THE SECOND.” What is the first? The Old Testament! When would the Old Testament be taken away? When the law of blood sacrifice was once for all fulfilled. What is the “second” Christ came to establish? The New Testament! God’s will that Christ satisfy the debt of sin becomes for us THE NEW TESTAMENT! We are SANTIFIED ONCE FOR ALL by the offering of the body of Jesus. The writer of Hebrews thus continues: “For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.” HATH PERFECTED FOREVER. When? At his second coming? No! His first coming. Don wants our perfection to be put off to AD 70; he wants to keep the debt of sin hanging over the saints until the second coming when they are “resurrected” (justified) by removal of the law. Don embraces a “cross-free” salvation; his eschatology demands it. You cannot place justification at the cross and have a spiritualized resurrection in AD 70! But the writer of Hebrews uses the perfect tense, saying the work was *already accomplished*. “HATH PERFECTED FOREVER.” Jesus has perfected us forever by the addition of grace, not removal of the law. Memorize that: WE ARE SAVED BY THE ADDITION OF GRACE, NOT REMOVAL OF LAW! GRACE TRIUMPHS OVER LAW! The second coming added *nothing* to the cross. It was a complete irrelevancy in terms of man’s redemption from sin. (If you doubt that, just go back and look at Don’s empty box!)

The writer of Hebrews said above that in Jesus’ death the first covenant was taken away and the second was established. He calls this second covenant a “will.” We have all heard of a “last will and testament.” When does a testator’s will attain legal authority and power? The Hebrew writer answers: “A TESTAMENT IS OF FORCE AFTER MEN ARE DEAD” (Heb. 9:17). This verse is dispositive of the issue when the gospel brought justification to man; it is conclusive of the issue when the New Testament came into force and effect: At Jesus’ death, not AD 70! This same lesson is set out in Rom. 7:1-4 (emphasis added):

Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? 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. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, YE ARE BECOME DEAD TO THE LAW BY THE BODY OF CHRIST; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

Paul here uses the law of marriage as an analogy for Israel and the Old Testament. The “woman” is Israel; her “husband” is the Lord; the law of the marriage union was the Old Testament (*cf.* Jer. 2:2; Ezek. 16:8). Paul says that the Mosaic law was binding upon Israel *while her husband lived*, and that she would be an adulteress if she married another while her first husband was alive. In Rev. 18:7, national Israel, under delusion that the Old Testament was still in force, boasts “I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.” But she was indeed a widow, for she had murdered her husband in the person of the Son of God, when she caused him to be crucified. Jesus’ death ended the law of Israel’s husband. Under Paul’s analogy, “marrying another” means entering into another covenant, here

obeying the gospel of Christ. However, Paul says there is no fear of adultery, because “YE ARE BECOME ARE DEAD TO THE LAW BY THE BODY OF CHRIST”! Could it be clearer? The Old Testament had dominion over Israel; its obligations were as indissoluble as the marriage bond; while it continued in force the debt of sin remained unpaid; man was not justified. But by the death of Jesus, that covenant had been annulled and the saints were justified and freed to marry another; they were loosed from the Old Testament that they might be married to Christ under the gospel. Paul thus says “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. 8:2).

Notice the verb tense: “HATH MADE ME FREE” – this is the perfect tense - “FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH.” The perfect tense shows completed action. The first century saints had been *freed from the law* of sin and death by marriage to Christ under the New Testament. AD 70 does not figure in the equation at all! No waiting until AD 70 to be acquitted from the debt of sin! It is true that the consummation of the marriage did not occur until the eschaton (Rev. 19:7). But the consummation was merely the time when husband and bride cohabited together and shared sexual intimacy. It is NOT the point at which the marriage contract became binding or of legal force and effect. The marriage contract was fully effective under Old Testament law from and after the betrothal. A woman found to have engaged in sexual relations with another man during the betrothal period was guilty of adultery and subject to the penalty of death (Deut. 22:23, 24. Matt. 1:28, 29). Paul said he had betrothed the church to Christ by the gospel (II Cor. 11:2). By Don’s argument, the bride was impure and defiled, stained with sin until AD 70 when Christ consummated the marriage with her. But Paul says “not so!” The gospel had washed and purified the bride from sin – justified her from the debt of the law – *during the betrothal period* that Christ “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” (Eph. 5:25-27).

Jesus justified the church from sin that he might present it to himself *at the consummation* not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. It could not be more plain or clear. AD 70 is simply nowhere in sight. Don’s argument makes the church an adulteress, for she has contracted marriage to another while the law of her first husband was still valid and binding; he has Jesus a polygamist with two wives at one time, Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church, and he has Jesus consummate the marriage before his wife is washed and made pure! (See I Cor. 6:11 for confirmation when the washing occurred.)

A last text and we shall conclude this part: “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14). NOT UNDER THE LAW. Clearly, the notion that the law was valid and the saints were under the power of sin until AD 70 cannot be sustained. There are just too many texts that directly contradict that proposition. What does this mean? It means that Max King’s Covenant Eschatology and spiritualized resurrection are false; worse than false, they are found to destroy the cross of Christ. It is a dangerous doctrine and must be *fully rejected*.

Nullification of the Law Don's reading of Matt. 5:18 has it that no part of the law or prophets would pass until all parts were fulfilled; if a single prophecy remained to be fulfilled, then the whole law was still valid, binding, and obligatory. To quote Don himself: “*There is no escape from this fact: If any Old Testament prophecies remain unfulfilled, then the Old Testament remains in force.*”¹² In other words, it all goes out at once, or not at all. But this is not what Jesus meant or even what he said. He did not say, “*verily I say unto you that no part of the law or prophets will pass until all parts of the law and prophets are fulfilled.*” How could he? Micah prophesied Jesus could be born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2). That prophecy was fulfilled and passed away. Isaiah prophesied Jesus would be born to a virgin (Isa. 7:14). That prophecy was fulfilled and passed away. There are hundreds of prophecies that came and went before AD 70. But by Don’s argument, there can be no progressive fulfillment of

¹² Don K. Preston, *Like Father, Like, Son, On Clouds of Glory* (JaDon Productions, Ardmore, 2006), pp. 190.

scripture, no progressive fulfillment of the law. All parts remain valid as long as even one part is unfulfilled. This simply makes no sense at all. What Jesus actually is saying in Matt. 5:18 is that “not the least part of the law will pass except it first be fulfilled.” The idea that *all* must be fulfilled before *any* of it passed away is a misreading of the text.

Don says the whole law goes out at once, or not at all. Until all the law was fulfilled, all was valid and binding. Thus, by Don’s own admission, if I can show that even *one law* was nullified, if I can show that the disciples were free to ignore even *one law*, then they were free to ignore the *whole law* (exclusive of the moral law, for it will never be nullified). Here there can be no doubt. The New Testament shows that long before AD 70 the disciples were loosed from the sacrificial law, the dietary laws, the laws prohibiting them to eat or keep company with Gentiles, and they were loosed from circumcision. Israel’s dietary laws, laws against marrying and keeping company with Gentiles, and law of circumcision served primarily to keep Israel *separate* from the nations around her. These laws were tied to the *land promises* and were inter-related. The laws of the temple also separated the Jews from the Gentiles, who were compelled to worship in the outer court. However, Paul says all these laws were abolished by 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 one new man, so making peace” (Eph. 2:14, 15).

The “middle wall of partition” refers to the wall in the temple that separated the court of the Jews from the court of the Gentiles. The temple and wall, of course, stood until AD 70. But Paul says that the *legal* separation represented by this wall was done away at the cross. This wall being legally abrogated and done away, the laws and ordinances related to it were abolished as well, including dietary restrictions (Acts 10:9-15; cf. Mk. 7:14-23; Rom. 14:14; I Tim. 4:3-5), laws against keeping company with Gentiles (Acts 10:28-48), the Sabbath and feast days (Col. 2:16); and circumcision (Gal. 5:2, 11). Notice the verb tense of the passage above, “HATH ABOLISHED IN HIS FLESH...THE LAW OF COMMANDMENTS.” This is the perfect tense, showing completed action. The laws Moses set in place to separate Jew and Gentile were abolished in Jesus’ flesh upon the cross. Thus, we find Peter and other disciples keeping company and table fellowship with Gentiles (Gal. 2:11, 12). But when certain false, Judaizing brethren came down from Jerusalem saying (like Don) that the law was still binding and valid, Peter withdrew table fellowship. But Paul rebuked Peter *to the face* for his duplicity to the truth of the gospel. The issue of circumcision also came up, and the Jerusalem Counsel decided that these laws were no longer binding (Gal. 2:1-10; Acts 15). Don agrees. Don says the land promises were tied to circumcision, but that Paul taught “circumcision was invalid” and that he “unequivocally condemned the religious practice of circumcision.” According to Don, “If God removed circumcision, the sign and seal of the Abrahamic land promise, then the Land Covenant was null and void.”¹³ Don says “When Paul wrote...circumcision no longer availed, God had abrogated that mandate.”¹⁴

Don says that *no law* would pass until all was fulfilled; he says no law would pass until all passed together; *all were valid until none were valid*. Yet here is unequivocal evidence that a *vast body* of laws integral to the temple service and daily life of the Jews was ABOLISHED IN JESUS’ FLESH. The law of the temple service imposed and enforced the rite of circumcision (Acts 21:28, 29). If circumcision was abrogated, then so was the temple service. Paul made no distinction between circumcision and the feast days and other observances of the Jews; his repudiation of circumcision applied equally to them all (Gal. 4:10; cf. Col. 2:16). The land covenant, the law of circumcision,

¹³ Don K. Preston, *Like Father, Like, Son, On Clouds of Glory* (JaDon Productions, Ardmore, 2006), pp. 134, 135.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 180.

the dietary laws, the feast days, the temple ritual, and laws against keeping company with Gentiles were swept away by the cross! Therefore, by Don's argument all was fulfilled and the law abolished before AD 70. Consider:

No law would pass until all was fulfilled; all were valid until none were valid.

But Jesus abolished and rendered invalid in his flesh (cross) the law of commandments contained in ordinances.

Therefore, in Jesus' flesh (cross/crucifixion) the law was fulfilled.

The Cross, The Time of Reformation, and the Age to Come

But if the law was fulfilled and was abrogated at the cross, what about verses like II Cor. 3:11, 13, 14 which states the Old Testament was still "being annulled" or Hebrews 8:13, which says "that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away?" What about verses that mention the "age to come?" What about Heb. 9:9 which mentions the "present time" during which sacrifices were still offered? Don't these teach that the law somehow remained? Did the two covenants *overlap*, so that *both were valid* at the same time? Rom. 7:1-4 teaches that the Old Testament terminated in Jesus' death that his people might enter a new marriage relationship under the New Testament. If the Old Testament was still binding, the saints would be guilty of adultery for entering a second marriage contract while the law of their first husband was still valid. Therefore, we may safely reject the view that the covenants were both legally valid at the same time. Any lawyer will tell you it is a legal impossibility to have two testaments in force at one time. The only way to have two valid wills, whose terms are conflicting, is for one to be deemed a codicil or amendment of the other. But Jesus was very clear that the gospel was not a piece of new cloth to be added to the tatters of the Old Testament (Mk. 2:21); the two covenants would not co-exist side-by-side or be valid at the same time. What then is the solution?

The answer lies in the distinction between the *legal efficacy* of the law and its *outward forms*. The Emancipation Proclamation ostensibly freeing the slaves was made Sept. 22, 1862. It became effective Jan. 1, 1863. Yet, it was not until April 9, 1865, that Lee surrendered and the war concluded. Thus, despite the legal proclamation freeing the slaves, the *institution* of slavery continued for at least two more years, if not longer. The outward forms continued even though their legal efficacy and validity was gone! The two covenants were similar.

Although Jesus abrogated the Old Testament at the cross, the outward forms of the law – the temple and ritual, the Jewish polity and nation – continued for almost 40 years. The Old Testament was like a tree whose root was severed and dead. The trunk and branches did not immediately wither and fall over, but decayed and waxed old over time, and were ready to vanish at the end of 40 years (Heb. 8:13). The writer of Hebrews shows that the Old Law was not valid when he says, "then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary" (Heb. 9:1). His use of the *past tense* to show its validity was gone. "The first covenant had," not the "first covenant has." The fact that the trunk of the Mosaic tree remained for a time did not mean its root was alive, no more did the fact that the temple and ritual continued to linger on mean that it was valid or approved of God. Just the opposite, God called the temple ritual an *abomination* because it stood as an implicit denial of Jesus' Sonship and atoning sacrifice.

"Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool, where is the house that ye build unto me?...He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a god's neck: he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations." Isa. 66:1-3

Stephen quoted this prophecy before the Sanhedrin in defense against the charge he blasphemed the temple (Acts 7:49, 50). Thus, from at least as early as Acts 7 (AD 34), the church recognized that Jesus' sacrifice on Calvary had

supplanted the temple service and that it was rejected by God. However, according to Don the ceremonial law was still valid and binding. How can something God abominated have been valid and binding?

Don says “One reason we must see the transition from the Old to the New as an on going process *empowered by the Cross but not consummated at the Cross* is because that transformation was a ‘last days’ work of the Spirit, and the work of the Spirit did not begin until after the Cross.”¹⁵ I would challenge Don again to please show us how the cross figures in his system, how it empowered anything at all. According to Don, the cross did not triumph over the law, it did not satisfy and annul the debt of sin, it did not justify the saints. No, Don makes all of these things happen at the second coming and then only by removal of the law at the fall of Jerusalem. The cross *does* nothing, *accomplishes* nothing, *is* nothing under King’s system. If we are wrong in this, we welcome correction and look forward to Don’s answer. But to return to the matter more immediately at hand, according to Don, the *transition period* equals the *transformation period* that began at the cross. But what is the time of transformation if not the “time of reformation” mentioned Heb. 9:10-11? In that passage, the writer states that the ceremonial law was imposed *until the time of reformation*. Don makes the time of reformation begin in AD 70. But as reformation and transformation mean the same thing, it is clear that the time of reformation began at the cross. The gifts of the Holy Ghost led the apostles into all truth for the specific purpose of affecting reform (Jn. 16:13). When the gifts ceased, the time of reformation was *over*, not begun. Don therefore has it backward; he makes the ceremonial law valid and the time of reformation begin where the gifts of the Holy Ghost end! But the ceremonial law pointed to Christ; they foreshadowed Jesus’ work on the cross. Therefore, they were fulfilled in AD 33, not AD 70. Consider:

The ceremonial law was imposed until the time of reformation.
The time of reformation was marked by the ministry of the Spirit
But the ministry of the Spirit began immediately following the cross. Therefore,
The ceremonial law was imposed only until the cross.

Don argues that the Atonement ritual was not fulfilled, the shadow and typology of the Old Law was still valid, and the law therefore binding and obligatory until AD 70. We deny this emphatically. Don assumes that Christ’s ascension equals the High Priest entering the Most Holy Place, thus postponing completion of the Atonement ritual until Christ emerged at his second coming. Don forgets that the High Priest entered the Most Holy Place *twice* (Lev. 16:14, 15). Yes, TWICE! There were *two sacrifices* in the atonement ritual: a bull and a goat; blood was carried in twice, *once for each sacrifice*. But Jesus died only *once*; he made a *once-for-all* sacrifice when he died on the Calvary. We believe that the typology of sprinkling the blood before the Mercy Seat was fulfilled when Jesus died. The Hebrew writer agrees, saying that Jesus opened the way into the Most Holy Place through his FLESH (Heb. 10:20). That is, in his death Jesus pierced the legal veil separating man from God. This is why the veil was “rent in twain” from top to bottom when Jesus died, showing that the way was *now open* and the atonement COMPLETE (Matt. 27:51). The Hebrew writer thus urges Christians to ENTER the presence of God within the Most Holy Place – before AD 70! (Heb. 10:19-22; *cf.* 6:19). In other words, the legal barrier separating men from God was totally removed in the cross, almost 40 years before AD 70. Isn’t that what Colossians says, that Jesus blotted out the debt of sin, took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross, triumphing over the law in it? (Col. 2:14, 15).

Don wants us to believe that Jesus stood sprinkling his blood for FORTY YEARS (seems long!). But the writer of Hebrews does not portray Jesus standing, offering his blood, but SITTING at God’s right hand waiting for his enemies to be put beneath his feet (Heb. 1:3; 2:8; 8:1; 10:11-14). Jesus being *seated* is set in opposition to the priests who *stood* daily ministering. His being seated is specifically cited as proof that the atonement was COMPLETE and man was PERFECTED. “*But this man, after he has offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right had of God...for by one sacrifice he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.*” In the verses that follow, the writer

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 212 (emphasis in original).

urges believers to ENTER where Don says they could not go – the Most Holy Place, the Presence of God! (Heb. 10:19-22). Regardless of what interpretation DON may want to place upon Heb. 9 to postpone atonement, God spoke decisively when he caused the veil symbolizing the debt of sin to be rent in twain at the cross. God deemed the Atonement ritual FULFILLED and the way into his presence OPENED in JESUS' DEATH.

Man could not enter the Most Holy Place until the atonement was complete and the law fulfilled;
But the veil was ripped in two in Jesus' death, and the Hebrew writer urged Christians (pre-AD 70) to enter the Most Holy Place through the blood of Christ. Therefore,
The atonement was complete and the law fulfilled in Jesus' atoning sacrifice!

Perhaps we can interact with some of Don's material in our next negative, assuming he can produce a verse (even one) expressly stating the saints remained under bondage to sin from and after the cross. Don has a *heavy* burden of proof to show that the cross did not cancel the debt of sin or triumph over the law. Let's see if Don can put any verses in that box.

Meanwhile, here are a couple questions for Don.

- 1) Did the cross cancel the debt of sin under the law?
- 2) Does the cross (grace) triumph over law, or did law have to be removed for man to be justified?

These are two very simple gospel questions that we may all use as a standard to measure Max King. If Don says, NO the cross did not triumph over the law or cancel the debt of sin he will have repudiated the cross of Christ (a dangerous deed I hope Don will not do!). If he says, YES, then Don will have repudiated Max King, Covenant Eschatology, and the Corporate Body View. Which will it be? Let us all labor with Don in prayer that he chooses aright.