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FULFILLED!

Magazine

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF FULFILLED PROPHECY AND LIFE IN CHRIST



AND THEY LIVED
AND REIGNED WITH
CHRIST FOR A
THOUSAND YEARS.
BUT THE REST OF
THE DEAD DID NOT
LIVE AGAIN UNTIL
THE THOUSAND
YEARS WERE
FINISHED.
(REV 20:4-6KJV)



The Millennium

ON THE COVER: 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.

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.

(Rev 20: 1-6 KJV) †



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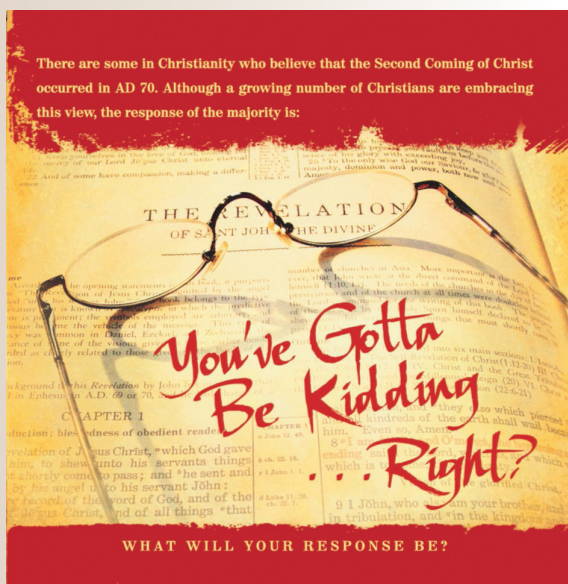
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(Dave lives in Hawaii, so please keep the time difference in mind)

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- 4. Editor's Note**
In this issue we are taking a break from our normal assortment of articles and columns to take a special look at the millennium.

- 5. Mailbag**
Catch some of the letters to the editor and comments on articles and features from the readers.

- 6. Bimillennialism**
Among Full Preterists, there are two basic interpretative models of Revelation chapter 20. The view represented by my friend Don Preston was first advanced by Max King. This view says that Revelation's millennium (singular) refers to the "transition period" between the cross and Second Coming.

- 8. The Forty-Year Millennium**
Some falsely claim that Jesus and the saints did not truly reign during the forty-year period. Paul, commenting on Christ's status during that forty-year period, wrote, "He must reign until His enemies are put under His feet."

- 11. Is This the Millennium?**
Postmillennialists readily admit that many New Testament predictions were fulfilled in the first century. Unfortunately, their position excludes significant eschatological events. They believe that we are now living during the "thousand years" commonly referred to as the Millennium.

- 12. The Beginning of the Millennium**
The English term Millennium is a modified Latin word meaning "one thousand years." When discussing "the Millennium," Christians are referring to the "thousand years" mentioned in Revelation 20, specifically verses 2-4 and 6-7. The subject matter of this difficult chapter includes: the binding of "the adversary" during the first century (vv. 2-3, 7) that inaugurates the thousand years; the "reign of the resurrected Christ with His resurrected saints."



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Editor's Note...

In this issue we are taking a break from our normal assortment of articles and columns to take a special look at the millennium. The millennium, which is only mentioned in one chapter of the Bible (Rev 20), is an enigmatic subject fraught with multitudinous interpretations and speculation. Even within Preterism there is not a consensus of interpretation regarding the millennium. To further complicate the issue, the very definitions of the terms *Preterist* and *Full-Preterist* become embroiled in the fray.

The term *Preterist* comes from the Latin *praeter*, which simply means *past*. Thus, in the arena of eschatology, a Preterist is one who holds to a past fulfillment of Bible prophecy. That seems straightforward and simple enough, until one asks the question, “How much Bible prophecy is past?” As Michael Fenemore points out in his article, there are those who are still expecting the Parousia (Second Coming) of Christ, and yet want to be labeled as Preterists. Why do they lay claim to this label? Because they believe that most of the eschatological events described in Matthew 24 and the book of Revelation were indeed fulfilled in the past. This sets them apart from those who are still expecting all of those events in our future (Futurists) and those who believe that those events have been, and are being, fulfilled throughout the Church Age (Historicists).

Generally speaking, as more and more Christians have embraced a past Parousia of Christ, the lines of demarcation have been defined by the terms *Full-Preterism* and *Partial-Preterism*, with Partial-Preterists being those who believe that the Parousia of Christ is yet future.

However (bringing the subject back to the millennium), there are those within Preterism who believe that the Parousia (Second Coming) is a past event, yet cannot see the millennium—at least in its entirety—as a past event. Even Preterist “heavyweights” Milton S. Terry and J. Stuart Russell, whose writings are standard fare amongst “Full-Preterists,” could not place the millennium in the past. This means that the resurrection at the end of the millennium—whatever that is—is also still in our future. Therefore, in the strictest sense, I suppose one could not label them as Full-Preterists. I will leave that debate for others to haggle over.

As one can see, the topic of the millennium is complex even within Preterism. One of the standard Full-

Preterist views is that the millennium represents the forty-year period of the New Testament last-days generation. This view is presented by Don K. Preston. Another closely related view is that of bi-millennialism which, as its name implies, posits two millennial periods, which largely overlap one another. This view has been developed chiefly by Kurt Simmons, and he provides a brief introduction in this issue. The reader can find more detailed presentations on Kurt’s web site and in his Revelation commentary *Consummation of the Ages*. Lastly, because many Preterists are, like Terry and Russell, uncomfortable relegating the entirety of the millennium to our past, Lloyd Dale presents the view that the millennium began, rather than concluded, in the first century.

In addition to these three differing Preterist views (all three authors affirm that the Parousia occurred in the first century) of the millennium, Michael Fenemore offers an article illustrating the inconsistencies of Postmillennialism. This article is adapted in part from the newly released book by Michael Fenemore and Kurt Simmons, *The Twilight of Postmillennialism*, which is available from Amazon.com.

While it is doubtful that the undecided will have all of their millennial questions answered in this issue, we hope the reader is provided with much food for thought and is encouraged to study further.

On another note, I would like to thank Dave Warren for his creative and untiring efforts in developing Preterist Vision. Dave and his growing team of associates are continuing to add to a growing number of local television stations which are broadcasting Preterist videos—including FCG’s *You’ve Gotta Be Kidding . . . Right?* Videos are currently being aired (or plans are underway) in Hawaii, Washington, Texas, Mississippi, North Carolina, and New York. If you are interested in joining the team see Dave’s contact information on page 2.

As always, we are grateful for the continuing support of our readers. This is especially true in these trying economic times. We are looking forward to beginning our 6th year of publishing with the next issue. †

Blessings,

Brian

The term *Preterist* comes from the Latin *praeter*, which simply means *past*. Thus, in the arena of eschatology, a Preterist is one who holds to a past fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

Mailbag...

Saved at age 20 . . . Ordained to the Ministry on my 21st birthday as a Southern Baptist Pastor . . . now, 50 years later and retired, I discovered Preterism . . . wonderful to discover truth, but somewhat frustrating also to realize I could have done more to help others if I had come to see these truths sooner . . . still, I am pressing on to learn more in this arena and do what I can where I am now.

Thanks for sharing the video—really an outstanding presentation!!!

William, Alabama

Thank you guys for putting time into this magazine for the benefit of others. My husband has recently been fired from his full-time youth pastor position, we are excommunicated from our church, and have been labeled heretics because of our end times beliefs. This magazine has uplifted me by knowing that the view we hold eschatologically and the hermeneutics we use to interpret Scriptures are held and used by more Christians than I thought.

Breann, Texas

Thank you very much for the magazine. I also have the DVD. Very compelling stuff. Your conclusion was very compelling. . . The part about believing full preterism and still having questions. I totally agree! The remaining questions on the futurist side are way more difficult to answer.

Mark, AZ

I pray this letter finds you all doing well. I would like to start by thanking you for putting together such and informative, straight-forward, and always pertinent magazine. I always read over them a number of times and then save them for future reference. I also enjoy how your articles always provide information on different aspects of a preterist viewpoint to think about, explore, and research.

Mike, OH

No better name could you have given to your magazine. Look forward to your magazine. It is fulfilling. Look forward to every issue. You are a blessing. You are in our prayers.

Ronald, NC



No better name
could you have given
to your magazine.
Look forward to
your magazine. It is
fulfilling. Look forward
to every issue.

FOOTNOTES :

...FOOTNOTES FROM PAGE 14

¹ "Since, then, there are two regenerations... one after the faith, which even now come about through baptism; the other after the flesh, which is to come about in its exemption from decay and death...so there are two resurrections: one, the first, of the soul, which now is, and which prevents us from coming into the second death; the other, the second, which is not now, but is to be at the end of the world." Augustine, *City of God*, XX, vi; Loeb ed.

² "Who are these souls? They are the millennial

saints, the believers in Christ from the cross to the end of the old aeon of salvation-history. They are the 'pre-end-of-the-age' saints who came to life in advance of the end of history (the Jewish age). They came to life through death and resurrection 'with Christ'...They attained unto fullness of resurrection life 'with Christ' (by dying and rising with Him) in advance of the end of the age." Max R. King, *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ* (1987, Warren, OH), 248, 249.

³ John Wesley, *Commentary on Revelation*, in loc.

⁴ Max R. King, *Spirit of Prophecy* (1971, Warren OH), p. 353; cf. *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*, p. 225, 246.

⁵ Augustine, *City of God*, XX, xiii; Loeb ed. King even states "These two *one thousand year terms...*" *Spirit of Prophecy*, p. 347.

⁶ F.W. Farrar, *The Early Days of Christianity* (1891, Columbian Publishing Co, NY), p. 13; cf. *The Life and Work of St. Paul*, Excursus XIX, (1879, Cassell and Co. ed), p. 726.

⁷ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* VI, xlii, 5; Loeb ed.

⁸ Virgil, *Aeneid*, lines 735-51; C. Day Lewis ed; cf. Plato, *Republic*, X, 614

⁹ Voltaire, *The Works of Voltaire*, Vol. III, sec. 1 (1764, Philosophical Dictionary, Part I)

FOOTNOTES :

...FOOTNOTES FROM PAGE 15

¹ See my book *Who Is This Babylon?* for a fuller discussion of the forty year millennial period. Available from www.amazon.com, www.eschatology.org, www.bibleprophecy.com.

² Some claim that Ephesians 2 is not parallel with Revelation 20 because in Revelation Satan is bound, while in Ephesians 2, Satan is "the ruler of this world." This is a false contrast. Did Jesus not bind Satan in Matthew 12? Yet Jesus still called him "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31f). Likewise, while Paul spoke of

Satan as the "god of this world", he nonetheless said the Ephesians had been enthroned with Christ, and he affirmed that the man of sin, Satan's instrument, was bound when he wrote Thessalonians. There is no disjunction between Ephesians and Revelation.

³ See my book *In Flaming Fire*, (Ardmore, OK, JaDon Management, 2005), www.amazon.com.

⁴ I use the term "until AD 70" as a generic referent. Clearly, in Revelation 20 the Millennium ends with the release of Satan, his immediate defeat, and the resurrection.

⁵ I believe Revelation was written prior to 1 Peter. Thus, while John *anticipated* the release of Satan, Peter speaks of Satan as the active enemy.

⁶ John made *no distinction* between imminent and non-imminent events in Revelation. Any interpretation that posits a "far off" fulfillment flies in the face of the imminence of the *entire vision*. John did not say only *part*, or *some* of the vision was at hand.

⁷ I am currently working on a book about the feast days of Israel as they relate to eschatology. Israel's festal calendar is the "Rosetta Stone of Eschatology," to use a term coined by a friend, Doug Wilkinson.

⁸ Paul Kurtz, *Sacrificial Worship of the Old Testament*, (Grand Rapids, Baker, 1980).

⁹ See my discussion of this in the Preston-Simmons written debate, www.eschatology.org.

Bimillennialism

Bimillennialism—

A Contemporary-Historical Analysis of Revelation's Millennia

by Kurt Simmons, Esq.

Among Full Preterists, there are two basic interpretative models of Revelation chapter 20. The view represented by my friend Don Preston was first advanced by Max King. This view says that Revelation's *millennium* (singular) refers to the "transition period" between the cross and Second Coming. King thus coined the phrase *transmillennial* and obtained a trademark for it from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. It continues to be the private property of King's ministry to this day.

King's view is simply a version of Augustine's Postmillennialism, which teaches that the millennium represents a symbolic period beginning with Christ's earthly ministry, and lasting until the world's end sometime in the future. According to Augustine, the gospel of Christ binds the dragon, and the martyrs and confessors represent those who have been regenerated by obedience to the gospel.¹ King's model differs from Augustine's only in that it foreshortens the long ages and futurism of Postmillennialism, squeezing them into a forty-year period terminating with the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70.

The single greatest obstacle the Augustine/King view presents to this writer's mind is that the symbolism is incongruous with the interpretation, which requires that those beheaded for the testimony of Christ represent individuals who have experienced baptismal regeneration and, thus, "died with Christ."² Can we really believe that beheading represents regeneration? For that matter, if the dragon was bound at the beginning of Christ's earthly ministry, when and how did the martyrs die? John says they died for their testimony of Christ (Rev 20:4), which means they died sometime *after* Christ's earthly ministry. How does this square with the idea that the dragon was bound beginning with Christ's ministry? Doesn't the fact the saints have suffered martyrdom require that the dragon must have first been loosed? Can someone bound in prison kill innocent victims who are free at large? If not, doesn't this mean that the 1000-year binding of the dragon ends *before* the 1000-year reign of the martyrs begins? We think so, and therefore have settled upon an entirely different view, which we call *bimillennialism*.

Two Millennial Periods

As long as the dragon remained bound in prison, he could not bring about the persecution of the saints; therefore, the 1000-year binding of the dragon necessarily ended before the 1000-year reign of the martyrs began. If the one ends before the other begins, they obviously cannot be the same period; therefore, there must be two millennial periods contemplated by the text. This view is certainly not new: Joseph Bengel, Thomas Brightman, A. E. Koch, Jim Millay, Daniel Steele,

and Anglican Reformer John Wesley, among others, see two millennial periods in the text rather than the traditional one:

It must be observed, that two distinct thousand years are mentioned throughout this whole passage. Each is mentioned thrice; the thousand wherein Satan is bound, verses 2, 3, 7; the thousand wherein the saints shall reign, verses 4-6. The former end before the end of the world; the latter reach to the general resurrection. So that the beginning and end of the former thousand is before the beginning and end of the latter.³

Indeed, most explanations produce two millennial periods if we but take the time to analyze them closely. For example, King's model says that the binding of the dragon began with Christ's ministry (Matt 12:29), attained fullness at the cross, and ended when the Jewish war with Rome broke out.⁴ Thus, this 1000-year period runs from AD 30-67. However, the reign of the saints, King says, begins with their participation in Christ's resurrection by baptism starting at Pentecost, and ends at the general resurrection. Thus, this 1000-year period runs from AD 33-70. These time periods do not match! If they do not begin and end at the same point, then it is axiomatic that they do not describe the same 1000 years! In fact, Augustine, the so-called father of Postmillennialism, also admitted that the thousand-year periods do not match and therefore cannot describe the same era:

This last persecution by Antichrist will last for three years and six months, as we have already said, and as is stated both in the Apocalypse and by the prophet Daniel. Though this time is brief, it is rightly debated whether it belongs to the thousand years during which it is said that the devil is bound and the saints reign with Christ, or whether this short span is to be added to those years and is over and above them. For if we say that it belongs to the thousand years, then it will be found that the reign of the saints with Christ extends not for the same length of time as the binding of the devil, but for a longer time . . . How, then does Scripture include in the same limit of a thousand years both the binding of the devil and the reign of the saints, if the binding of the devil is to cease three years and six months before the reign of a thousand years of the saints with Christ?⁵

Notice that Augustine admits that the binding of the dragon and reign of the saints cannot be enclosed within the same 1000-year period, and that they extend "not for the same length of time." As with King's model, the time periods do not match! If they do not match, they cannot be the same. No matter which way we cut it, two millennial periods emerge from the text.

Revelation's Millennia

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Kurt Simmons

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of the Bimillennial Preterist
Association

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Meaning of the Symbolism

Having established two millennial periods, we come to the question of what the symbolism means. Let us begin with the observation that both the dragon and the saints/martyrs are physically dead. The saints have been beheaded for their testimony of Christ (20:4) and the dragon—together with its alter ego, the beast—has received a mortal wound to its head (13:3, 12) and has descended to the place of the dead. If both have experienced physical death, then both are in Hades. The dragon, being wicked, is in the place assigned for the damned; the saints, being justified, are in the place assigned for the saved. John describes the dragon as being bound with a great chain (20:1). Peter uses this identical imagery to describe the “angels” that sinned (probably the unfaithful “sons of God” who apostatized by marrying the daughters of unbelieving men; see Gen 6:2) and were cast down to Hades (Tartarus), where they were held in chains until the judgment:

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell (Gk. Tartarus), and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment . . . (2 Pet 2:4)

Since 2 Peter is the true source of John's imagery, not Matthew 12:29, John is telling the reader that the beast—and, by extension, the dragon—suffered death by the mortal wound it received and was bound symbolically in Tartarus (the bottomless pit) for 1000 years. The martyrs likewise have suffered death and entered into a 1000-year rest pending the general Hadean resurrection. John describes this same group of martyrs in chapter 14: “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them” (Rev 14:13; cf. vv. 9-12). We know that the martyrs died in the persecution under the beast, but when did the dragon and beast die?

Death and Resurrection of the Dragon and Beast

John tells us that the beast received a mortal wound to one of its heads, but that its wound healed, and thus the beast arose to persecute the church again (Rev 13:3, 14). John also writes that the beast ascends from the bottomless pit to make war with the saints (Rev 11:7; 17:8, 14). Thus, the healing of the wound marks the point at which it revives and ascends from the place of the dead to persecute the Church. However, if persecution marks the life of the beast, then what is the death of the beast but the cessation of persecution? When did the beast receive the mortal wound? There are only two persecutions in Revelation: a persecution mentioned in chapter 12, which took place several decades before John composed Revelation, and another persecution in chapter 13, which was about to break out at the time John wrote. The persecution in chapter 12 followed closely upon the ascension of the “Man-child” (Christ) and thus may be identified as the great persecution (AD 34-38) under Caiaphas, Pilate, and Saul (Paul), the beginning of which was marked by the martyrdom of Stephen. When this persecution collapsed, the dragon and beast went down to death in defeat (symbolically to Tartarus); in the mid-century persecution by Nero, they ascend again as described in chapter 13. Thus, the dragon (and beast) was bound during the period from the collapse of the Jewish persecution of the early Church until its persecution under Nero. This is the period during which Claudius was upon the throne, enforcing the *religio licita*, which extended legal protection to the national religions of the peoples of the Roman Empire. Christianity was deemed a sect of Judaism, and since Judaism was protected, so was Christianity. Claudius even banished the Jews from Rome for disturbing the *Pax Romana* by their incessant riots and tumults against the Roman Christians (Acts 18:2; Suetonius, *Claudius* XXV, 4). This

protection reached even to the first ten years of Nero's rule, when he was a youth under the guardianship and tutelage of Seneca and Burrus. But with the burning of Rome, the Christians were made a scapegoat for the emperor's crimes and the first imperial persecution broke out (AD 64-68). Revelation was written on the threshold of this persecution. John thus describes the beast, writing, “it was and is not and is *about to* ascend out of the bottomless pit” (Rev 17:8). The release of the dragon in Revelation 20:7 is the point when the persecution under Nero breaks out.

This interpretation is consistent with what we read elsewhere in the New Testament. The Thessalonians were in fear that the eschatological gathering into the kingdom by martyrdom was at hand (2 Thess 2:1), but Paul assured them that someone and something was restraining the fanatical hatred of the Jews (the “mystery of iniquity”) and Roman power (vv. 6, 7). This restraint thus answers to the binding of Revelation 20:1-3 and represents the political stability obtained during the reign of Claudius, but which was almost spent by the close of Acts, shortly before Paul fell as a martyr to Nero's wrath. Thus, the late Canon of Westminster, F.W. Farrar could write:

St. Paul, when he wrote from Corinth to the Thessalonians, had indeed seen in the fabric of Roman polity, and in Claudius, its reigning representative, the “check” and the “checker” which must be removed before the coming of the Lord.⁶

Whence the 1000 Years?

This accounts for Revelation's imagery based upon the historical situation existing at the time it was written. What about the symbolism of the 1000 years; how do we explain it? In a letter mentioned by Eusebius, Dionysius of Alexandria alludes to Revelation 20:4, writing, “...the divine martyrs themselves

...continued on page 14

The Forty-Year Millennium

The Forty-Year Millennium

by Don Preston

Our purpose is to demonstrate two things: 1) the Millennium of Revelation 20 began with the ministry/passion/resurrection of Christ, and; 2) the Millennium terminated forty years later at the resurrection and termination of the Old Covenant age in AD 70.¹

The Elements of the Millennium are the Elements of the Forty Years from Jesus' Ministry to AD 70

The axiom that if A=C and B=C, then A=B, can be applied to the Millennium. Here is what we mean: if the Millennium (A) is described by events (C) which also describe first-century events (B), then the Millennium took place during the first century (A=B). Revelation describes the Millennium as containing certain elements, such as:

- The *initial* vindication/resurrection of the martyrs with Christ.
- The binding of Satan.
- The rule of the saints with Christ: "I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge."
- The saints as a priesthood.
- The loosing of Satan.
- The destruction of Satan and the resurrection of "the rest of the dead" at the end of the Millennium.

According to Hebrews 11:39-40, the living and the dead would receive their blessings *at the same time*. Thus, if the martyrs of Revelation received thrones, priesthood, and authority, then the living saints should receive those very things *at the same time, and this is precisely what we find*. Note the harmony with the living during the forty-year period:

- The living saints were *resurrected*, awaiting the consummation of the resurrection at the last hour (John 5:24-28; 6:44). Notice Jesus stated "the hour is coming and *now is*" and again "the hour is coming." John later wrote: "It is the last hour" (1 John 2:18). The resurrection scenario of Revelation is as that found in John 5. The fact that 1 John says the consummative "last hour" was upon them proves that *the end of the Millennium was near*.
- The martyrs *sat on thrones* and were given *authority to judge* (Rev 20:4). The martyrs were told that they would only have to wait a little while before their full victory was achieved. However, their living brethren first had to suffer to fill the measure of suffering (Rev 6:9-11).
- The living and the dead had been enthroned with Christ "in the heavenlies" (Eph 2:1-6).²
- The living had been given the authority to judge (Matt 19:28; 1 Cor 6; 2 Cor 2:15-16). In Matthew 19:28, Jesus told the apostles that they would sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. This judgment would

take place *through the message they preached* (Matt 16:19; cf. 2 Cor 2:15f).

- The living saints had to experience the suffering already experienced by the martyrs.
- The living would only have to suffer for a little while (Rev 6:9-11; 1 Peter 1:4f).

Some falsely claim that Jesus and the saints did not truly reign during the forty-year period. Paul, commenting on Christ's status during that forty-year period, wrote, "He must reign until His enemies are put under His feet" (1 Cor 15:24). Paul uses the *present infinitive*, which means Christ was currently reigning, and *would continue to reign until his enemies were put under Him. The time of His rule is the time of the putting down of His enemies*. If He was not ruling before AD 70 then He was not putting down His enemies before AD 70; yet 1 Corinthians 15:24, Colossians 2:14f, Hebrews 10:13, etc., all speak of how Christ had *begun* to put all enemies under Him. He was *ruling in the midst of those enemies, awaiting the consummation of His conquering work*.

William Bell astutely notes that if Christ did not begin to rule until AD 70, then the putting down of His enemies, and ruling in the midst of His enemies, did not begin until AD 70. Yet Paul wrote "He must reign *until His enemies are put under Him*." His reign and the putting down of His enemies are synchronous events. The Psalmist wrote, "Rule thou, *in the midst of your enemies*" (Psalm 110:2). The "ruling until the enemies were put under Him" and the "ruling in the midst of His enemies" are parallel statements. Paul makes it indisputably clear that Christ had begun the work of putting His enemies under Him: "He has put all things under Him, but we do not yet see all things put under Him" (1 Cor 15:27; cf. Col 2:14f).

The time of the *end* (1 Cor 15:24) is when Messiah *finalized His triumph over His enemies—not* the time when he would *begin* to put down His enemies. Revelation depicts that final victory, "when the thousand years are finished" (20:7). So, in Revelation, the beginning of the Millennium is the beginning of Messiah's conquering work. The Millennium reign is the *consolidation of Messiah's rule*. The *end of the Millennium* is when that work was perfected.

John says the martyrs were *priests* who *reigned* with Christ *for the Millennium*. In this they share an organic unity with Christ. Zechariah foretold that in the Messianic Temple, Messiah would be *both priest and king on His throne* (6:13).

Elements of the Forty Years

eschatology.org

View Don's new website at: www.bibleprophecy.com

Hebrews 8:1-3 tells us that Jesus was serving as High Priest over the True Tabernacle, as He sat at “the right hand of the throne of majesty”—exactly where the Psalmist said he would *rule* in the midst of His enemies (Psalm 110:1-2).

In Revelation 20, just as their Lord sat on the throne as king and priest, so also the saints sat on thrones and served as priests. This was not only true of the dead. The living saints were priests as well (Heb 13:15, 1 Peter 2:4; Rev 1:5).

Satan was bound for the Millennium. Here too we find common ground with the ministry of Jesus and the forty years between His ascension and coming (ca. AD 30-70). When Jesus cast a demon out of a man, the disciples marveled. Jesus said that this was not possible unless the strong man was being bound (Matt 12:29). After Jesus sent His disciples out on the “limited commission,” they returned incredulous at their success. Jesus told them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” (Luke 10:18; cf. Rev 12).

Note the similarities between 2 Thessalonians 1-2 and Revelation:

- Suffering and martyrdom: in the first century (2 Thess 1; 2:7f); in the Millennium (Rev 20:1-4; cf. Rev 6:9-11; 12:12).
- The binding of the enemy of God: in the first century, “You know what is restraining him . . . The one who *now restrains him* will do so until he is taken out of the way” (2 Thess 2:6-7); in the Millennium Satan is bound (Rev 20:1-4).
- The release (revealing) of the man of sin in the first century (2 Thess 2:8); the releasing of Satan after the Millennium (Rev 20).
- The destruction of the enemy at the end: in the first century (2 Thess 2:8); at the end of the Millennium (Rev 20:10).

Christ’s Parousia, which would be the vindication of the suffering

Thessalonians and the destruction of the persecuting enemy, was to occur *in the lifetime of the Thessalonians* (2 Thessalonians 1:4-10).³ The Lord’s coming in judgment of the man of sin would be the final vindication of the martyrs in Revelation 20. Therefore:

- The destruction of the man of sin is the conquering of Satan at the end of the Millennium.
- The destruction of the man of sin of 2 Thessalonians 2 is the Parousia of 2 Thessalonians 1.

The coming of the Lord in 2 Thessalonians 1 was to be in the lifetime of the Thessalonians, when the Lord would give them relief from the persecution they were then experiencing. Therefore:

- the destruction of the man of sin, *at the end of the Millennium*, would occur in the lifetime of the Thessalonians.

Notice also that while Paul wrote that the last enemy, death, would be put down at Christ’s Parousia (1 Cor 15:19-25), John wrote that death would be destroyed *at the end of the Millennium* (Rev 20:10f). Therefore, Christ’s Parousia would be at the end of the Millennium. Thus, Jesus’ statement “Behold, I come quickly!” meant that the end of the Millennium was near when John wrote.

So we see that every constituent element John used to describe the Millennium is also applied to the period of time from the ministry of Christ until AD 70. These thematic and temporal parallels demonstrate that the Millennium extended from Jesus’ ministry until AD 70.⁴

When the Thousand Years Are Over

Another way to determine whether or not the forty-year period was the Millennium is to compare what was

to happen *at the end of the Millennium* with the language of imminence found in the New Testament. If the events in Revelation posited at the end of the Millennium were considered imminent in other books of the New Testament, this constitutes *prima facie* evidence that the end of the Millennium was near. At the end of the Millennium we see: Satan released; his making war with the saints; his final destruction. In the New Testament we see: Satan released (“The Devil walks around seeking whom he may devour” 1 Peter 5:8)⁵; his making war with the saints (the saints had to suffer “a little while” 1 Peter 1:4f; cf. Rev 12:10); the destruction of Satan (“the God of peace shall crush Satan under your feet shortly” Rom 16:20). Simply stated:

- The destruction of Satan would be at the end of the Millennium.
- The destruction of Satan was near when Paul wrote Romans.
- Therefore, the end of the Millennium was near when Paul wrote Romans.

The end of the Millennium is also the time of The Resurrection (i.e. “the rest of the dead,” who came to life *after the thousand years*; Rev 20:7-12), yet Peter wrote that Christ was “ready (Gk. *hetoimos*) to judge the living and the dead” in the first century (1 Peter 4:5). We also see the opening of the books to judge who would or would not enter the kingdom, while Jesus told His disciples that “there are some standing here that shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom” (Matt 16:27-28). Lastly, we see that Heaven and earth fled away, and the arrival of the New Creation in which God dwells with man—all things which “must shortly come to pass” (Rev 22:6, 10-12).⁶

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...continued on page 15

Is This the Millenium?

Is This the Millenium?

by Michael A. Fenemore

(Part of this article is adapted from *The Twilight of Postmillennialism*

by Michael A. Fenemore and Kurt M. Simmons.)

Postmillennialists readily admit that many New Testament predictions were fulfilled in the first century. Unfortunately, their position excludes significant eschatological events. They believe that we are now living during the “thousand years” commonly referred to as the *Millennium* and, because Revelation 20 places Satan’s punishment, the White Throne Judgment, the arrival of the new heaven and earth, and the return of Jesus Christ *after* the millennium, they conclude that all these events must be awaiting fulfillment. Nevertheless, they like to call themselves *Preterists*, often prefixing the label with “orthodox” (i.e., *Orthodox Preterists*) as a way to differentiate their view from Full Preterism, which they consider unorthodox and illegitimate.

The fact that Postmillennialists, who place so many eschatological events in the future, believe they hold exclusive rights to a term which means *past* seems incongruous. We may have assumed that Postmillennialists hold a view which differs from Full Preterism on only a few minor points; some may even have believed Postmillennialists to be some of our best eschatological friends and associates. However, this is clearly not the case. Most prominent Postmillennialists are vehemently opposed to the belief that *all* Bible prophecy has been fulfilled. Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., condemns Full Preterism as “heterodox”¹ with the full support of podcaster Dee Dee Warren, who routinely refers to it as a “damnable heresy.”² R. C. Sproul, Jr., considers Full Preterists to be Christ’s “enemies.”³ Some have stated plainly that they do not even consider Full Preterists to be Christians. However, peering beyond the inflammatory rhetoric, one begins

to wonder from whence their confidence comes. Upon minimal investigation, their Postmillennial paradigm is exposed as hopelessly inconsistent, and we soon notice its proponents resorting to pitiful argumentation to support it. They frequently argue themselves into traps of their own creation. For instance, consider the following contradiction in the teachings of Dr. Keith A. Mathison. In his book *Postmillennialism: An Eschatology of Hope*, he writes:

... postmillennialism teaches that the “thousand years” of Revelation 20 occurs prior to the Second Coming. . . .

An essential doctrine of postmillennialism is that prior to the Second Coming, the messianic kingdom will grow until it has filled the whole earth.⁴

If this is true, *surely* the apostle Paul would have believed it. Yet in another book, Mathison writes, “as far as Paul knew, Christ could have returned in his lifetime.”⁵ By Mathison’s own admission, Paul did not believe in Postmillennialism! Does this mean that Paul was also a heretic? Obviously, something is seriously wrong with a system that produces such a preposterous result.

Although Postmillennialism can be refuted in numerous ways, we will focus on a single linchpin theory. If we can remove this linchpin, the entire postmillennial structure will come crashing down.

Partial Fulfillment of Matthew 24

Postmillennialists agree that when Jesus spoke of the temple being destroyed, “wars and rumors of wars,” and “coming on the clouds of heaven,” he was referring to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. However, at some point in the Olivet Discourse, they need to halt; otherwise, in chapter 25, their Postmillennialism confronts the parable of the returning bridegroom and Christ’s teaching regarding the resurrection of the dead. For Postmillennialists, these particular events cannot have a past fulfillment. The commonly held position is that everything after Matthew 24:34 is unfulfilled. Postmillennialists further claim that when Jesus said that “this generation will not pass away until all these things take place,” He meant everything *before* verse 34. From there on, He catapulted His unwitting listeners thousands of years into the future! Yes, this partial-fulfillment interpretation may sound ridiculous to the reader, but for many it is a firmly held belief. To have any hope of changing minds in this regard, we must provide hard evidence that is embarrassingly easy to find.



The Millenium

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A comparison of Matthew 24 with Luke 17 reveals that Luke mixed some events from Matthew's fulfilled section with items from the alleged unfulfilled section. *This is a disaster for the proponents of partial fulfillment.* In the following presentation, Mathison's fulfilled portion of Matthew 24 is referred to as section A, and references are highlighted in **blue**. The supposedly unfulfilled portion after verse 34 is referred to as section B, and relevant items are highlighted in **gray**:

Matthew 24	v	17	housetop	section A
		27	lightning	
		28	eagles	
		37,	Noah	section B
		39		
		40,	one taken,	
		41	the other left	

Luke 17	v	24	lightning
		26,	Noah
		37	
		31	housetop
		35,	one taken, the other left
		36	
		37	eagles

As illustrated above, Luke interweaves items from both sections with complete disregard for Matthew's chronology. Evidently, Luke did not see Matthew's order as having any relevance whatsoever; and this is from the gospel writer who claimed that he had "investigated everything carefully from the beginning" and written it out "in consecutive order" (Luke 1:3 NASB). Luke seems oblivious to the concept that Jesus' Olivet Discourse contains two sections separated by millennia. Therefore, we have no

choice but to conclude that *all* the events were fulfilled during the same era. Otherwise, the two accounts would be contradictory. If *some* of the events were fulfilled, then *all* of them were.

Now let us consider the placement of "the coming (Gr. *παρουσία* [*parousia*]) of the Son of Man" throughout Matthew 24. In verse 3, the disciples asked, "what will be the sign of your [*parousia*]?" In verse 27, Jesus mentions "the [*parousia*] of the Son of Man" and associates it with "lightning." This is from section A, which partial-fulfillment proponents agree was fulfilled in the first century. Jesus then mentions "the [*parousia*] of the Son of Man" again when He refers to Noah; but this time it's located well into Matthew's section B (v. 37). This particular *parousia* remains supposedly unfulfilled:

Matthew 24	v	27	<i>parousia</i> associated with lightning
		37	<i>parousia</i> associated with Noah

It is inconceivable that Jesus would have been talking about two entirely different *parousias* separated by thousands of years within just a few sentences of each other. For those not yet convinced, this notion is exposed as an absolute impossibility when we consider Luke's version:

Luke 17	v	26,	Noah	from section B
		27		
		31	housetop	from section A
		37	eagles	from section A

If the *parousia* likened to Noah's flood is not fulfilled, why is it followed by fulfilled events? The only way to make sense of this is to accept the undeniable fact that Jesus was always referring to

a *single parousia*—His Second Coming. *All* is fulfilled, and we cannot possibly be living in the Millennium today.

Our presentation has provided solid proof that Matthew 24 cannot be divided and, on this basis alone, Postmillennialism must be rejected. However, there are many more fatal flaws inherent in this version of Futurism. Kurt M. Simmons and I expose many of these flaws in our recent book *The Twilight of Postmillennialism*. To learn more about it, visit Amazon.com. †

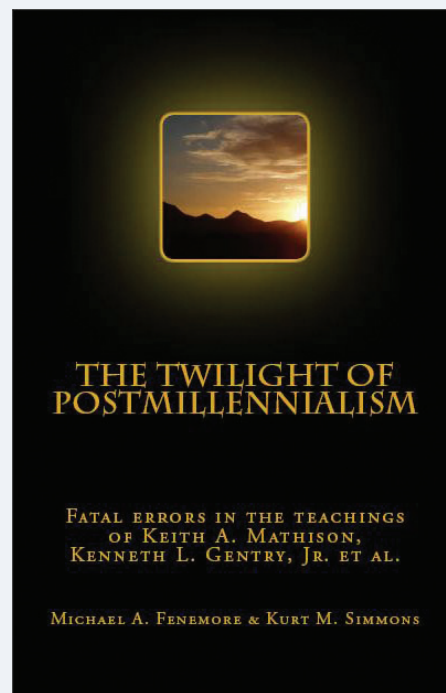
¹ Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *A Brief Theological Analysis of Hyper-Preterism* (<http://www.preteristsite.com/docs/gentrytheo.html>).

² <http://www.preteristpodcast.com/>

³ Keith A. Mathison, *When Shall These Things Be?* (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2004) x.

⁴ Mathison, *Postmillennialism: An Eschatology of Hope* (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 1999) 10, 191.

⁵ Mathison, *When Shall These Things Be?*, 194.



The Beginning of the Millennium

The Beginning of the Millennium

by Lloyd Dale

The English term *Millennium* is a modified Latin word meaning “one thousand years.” When discussing “the Millennium,” Christians are referring to the “thousand years” mentioned in Revelation 20, specifically verses 2-4 and 6-7. The subject matter of this difficult chapter includes: the binding of “the adversary” during the first century (vv. 2-3, 7) that inaugurates the thousand years; the “reign of the resurrected Christ with His resurrected saints” (i.e., “the first resurrection,” vv. 4d, 5b, and 6), which also occurs at the beginning of the thousand years; and “the resurrection of the rest of the dead,” which occurs after the thousand years have elapsed (vv. 5a, 11-15).

This article serves as an attempt to give a careful, hermeneutically sound, and exegetically correct commentary on the timing of the beginning of the thousand years. It is hoped that this study will clearly demonstrate that the “thousand years” actually began *shortly after* the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, and *not* at the ascension of Christ in ca. AD 30, nor at some time in our near future.

Although some Christians today believe the thousand years is a symbolic number, most modern Christians insist that this “thousand years” is a literal 1,000-year period—no more and no less. Furthermore, they believe that it is *yet to occur sometime in our future. We do not think so!* On the other hand, some Preterist Christians insist that the “thousand years” in events of Revelation 20 were fulfilled during the roughly 40-year period between the ascension of Jesus Christ in ca. AD 30 and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Thus, from their perspective, the symbolic “thousand years” become a literal 40 years that occurred in the middle years of the first century. *We do not think so!* In *Biblical Apocalypics* (1898), Preterist Dr. Milton Terry wrote:

The thousand years is to be understood as a symbolical number, denoting a long period. It is a round number, but stands for an indefinite period. . . . Its beginning dates from the great catastrophe of this book [Revelation], the fall of the mystic Babylon. It is the aeon (age) which opens with the going forth of the great Conqueror of 19:11-16, and continues until He shall have put all of His enemies under His feet (1 Cor 15:25). (p. 451)

James S. Russell, another nineteenth-century Preterist, likewise expressed in *The Parousia* (1878) his understanding of the thousand years as a “symbolic number” that represents a long, undetermined period of time which began shortly after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70:

Some interpreters . . . supposing that the thousand years . . . may represent a period of very short duration . . . but this method of interpretation appears to us so violent and unnatural that we cannot hesitate to reject it.” (p. 514)

We agree with Russell, Terry, and many other Preterists, that the thousand years—a symbolic number for a long period of time—began with the first resurrection¹ shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and continues forward from that time, to an as yet undetermined time in our future.

God gave the book of Revelation by His messenger Jesus Christ to the apostle John, who served as scribe (Rev 1:1). Received on the isle of Patmos (Rev 1:9) ca. AD 46², John wrote in an essentially apocalyptic style using rich metaphors—a symbolic revelation possessing literal meaning.

In this article, our focus will be when the thousand years of Revelation 20:4-6 began:

And I see thrones, and they sit upon them, and judgment is given unto them: and the living beheaded [i.e., killed] for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of the God, and who not worshipping the beast, neither his image, neither receiving mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they live [via resurrection] and reign with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead live [by resurrection] not again until the thousand years finishes. This resurrection is the first [the resurrection of v. 4 above]. Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. (Rev 20:4-6, brackets and emphasis mine)

Notice the sequence of events:

1. Christ, the first fruits, has been resurrected and has ascended as “High Priest”³ and “Prince.”⁴ However, He does not reign “until” the Parousia (Ps 110:1-2; Heb 10:12-13), i.e., the resurrection of the dead and the harpazo of the living who belong to Him (1 Cor 15:23c; 1 Thess 4:14-17).
2. The resurrection of the dead in Christ inaugurating their reign with Him for a “thousand years.”
3. The resurrection of the “rest of the dead” at the end of the thousand-year reign with the saints.

Paul uses this exact same sequence of resurrection events—each one in a specifically appointed order—in 1 Corinthians 15:22-24a to describe the resurrection of every man born of Adam. In Adam *all die* . . . in Christ *all shall be made alive*. But *each one in his own order*: (1) Christ the first fruits; (2) afterward those *who are* Christ’s at His Parousia; then after the expiration of the saint’s reign with Christ (3) the end . . . when He puts an end to all *other* rule and all *other* authority and *other* power.

Given the controversy surrounding the resurrection⁵ of Revelation 20:4, which plays a role in interpreting the thousand years in Revelation 20 properly, it seems to us that

the only way to resolve this conflict is to determine what the authors of the New Testament actually taught about the resurrection.

What did the Apostles teach about resurrection?

- Paul preached Jesus and the resurrection! (Acts 17:18)
- Paul said that the *prophets expected* that there "is about to be a resurrection, both of the just and the unjust,"⁶ indicating two phases of resurrection from the dead.

Here, Paul is not saying that he thought the resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the unjust would occur at the same time. He clearly stated that *the prophets expected* that there was about to be a resurrection, both of the just and the unjust. Thus, Paul⁷ and the Prophets agree with that which John states about the "first resurrection" and "the resurrection of the rest of the dead," that there are two phases of resurrection: the just during the Parousia of Jesus Christ and, much later, the unjust in the "resurrection of justice."⁸ Paul addresses the subject of resurrection in these words:

"For if we become united with Christ in the likeness of His death so also we shall be (united with Him) in the resurrection . . . for we believe that if we die with Christ we shall also live with Him (in the resurrection)." (Rom 6:5, 8)

Paul here identifies specifically the resurrection of the just to which he refers in 1 Corinthians 15:23c as the resurrection of "those of Christ in His Parousia."

- Paul taught that *he had not yet* (ca. 64 AD) attained the resurrection, but that he was certainly looking forward to "attaining unto the resurrection out from the dead ones" (Phil 3:11-13).
- Paul taught that as of ca. 66 AD *no resurrection had occurred*.⁹
- Peter taught that through the

resurrection of Jesus Christ out from among the dead, and according to His great mercy, YHWH God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, generates in us a living hope of our own resurrection into an incorruptible, undefiled, and non-fading *inheritance reserved in heaven* for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation which was ready to be revealed by resurrection in the last time, in the revelation (1 Pet 1:7, 13; Rom 2:5, 8:19; 1 Cor 1:7; Gal 1:12; 2 Thess 1:7; Rev 1:1), i.e., the Parousia of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 15:23c). It was in this first phase of resurrection that these first-century saints would "receive the end of their faith, even the salvation of their lives" (1 Pet 1:3-5, 7, 9).

What did Jesus teach about resurrection?

- Jesus taught without equivocation that there is no marriage in the resurrection (Matt 22:29-32; Mark 12:23-27; Luke 20:33-36). Clearly, people now living are regularly being given in marriage and being married. Therefore, all claims to the contrary notwithstanding, no person living on this planet is living in the resurrection.
- Jesus clearly taught that the Christian receives his reward/recompense in heaven (Matt 5:12; Luke 6:1, 14:14; cf. 1 Pet 3:11).
- Jesus taught that there is no death in the resurrection. People in the resurrection are equal with the angels and are the children of the resurrection (Luke 20:36). Because people on this planet regularly die, no one living on this planet is "in the resurrection," despite claims to the contrary.
- Jesus taught that the Father raises the dead, thus, He is not the God of the dead but of the living (John 5:21; Matt 22:32).
- Jesus taught that He is the resurrection and the life that comes

through resurrection, i.e., immortal, eternal life (John 11:25a).

- Jesus taught that "the one believing in Me, even though he may die, he shall live again," i.e., living again by the "resurrection from the dead."¹⁰ Compare Jesus' statement with Paul's, Peter's, and John's statements about the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor 15:21, 23, 51-53; 1 Thess 4:14-17). Paul, Peter, John, and Jesus are in complete agreement.

- Jesus taught that "whoever living and believing in Me by no means dies into the age," i.e., before the resurrection unto life on the "last day" (John 11:26, 24). Compare Jesus' statement with Paul's statement about the "change of the living" and their "*harpazo*" (1 Cor 15:51-53; 1 Thess 4:17). Obviously, Paul received his information from Jesus.

- Jesus taught a "resurrection of justice" (see endnote 8).

Let us now return to our passage in Revelation and examine a few other points. John wrote: "*And I saw thrones . . .*" What does the New Testament teach us about thrones? A short time after His transfiguration, Jesus told His apostles that when He sits in the throne of His glory in the regeneration . . . they shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.¹¹ Following their last Passover meal together before His crucifixion, Jesus told the apostles that He "appoint[ed] unto [them] a kingdom, as my father has appointed unto me that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and *sit on thrones judging* the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:29-30). Thus, we can now see that Matthew and Luke have informed us for whom these thrones in Revelation 20:4 were meant, who was sitting on them, and to whom judgment was given. The events described in Revelation 20:4 specifically fulfill the prophecy in Daniel 7:

...continued on page 14

Bimillennialism

by Kurt Simmons

...continued from page 7

among us, who now are assessors of Christ, and share the fellowship of His kingdom, and take part in His decisions and judge along with Him.”⁷ From this epistle we learn that the early church believed that the martyrs were alive in Paradise and in some form or manner reigned there with Christ. Greeks and Romans believed that the dead lived in Hades for 1000 years, after which they were restored to earthly life. In Virgil’s epic poem *Aeneid*, his lead character, Aeneas, a survivor of the Trojan war and legendary founder of Rome, descended to the netherworld, where his deceased father describes the 1000-year sojourn of the soul in Hades:

Yes, not even when the last flicker of life has left us, does evil, or the ills that the flesh is heir to, quite relinquish our souls; it must be that many a taint grows deeply, mysteriously grained in their being

from long contact with the body. Therefore the dead are disciplined in purgatory, and pay the penalty of old evil: some hang, stretched to the blast of vacuum winds; for others, the stain of sin is washed away in a vast whirlpool or cauterized with fire. Each of us finds in the next world his own level: a few of us are later released to wander at will through broad Elysium, the Happy Fields; until, in the fulness of time, the ages have purged that ingrown stain, and nothing is left but pure ethereal sentience and the spirit’s essential flame. All these souls, when they have finished their **thousand-year cycle**, God sends for, and they come in crowds to the river Lethe, so, you see, with memory washed out, they may revisit the earth above and begin to wish to be born again.⁸

Revelation was written to Asia Minor’s Greek- and Latin-speaking Gentiles who would almost certainly have associated Revelation 20’s millennium periods with Hades. Voltaire, the famous French skeptic, noted the connection of the passage with Greco-Roman notions of Hades:

kingdom. . . the court shall be seated, and they [the saints] shall take away¹² [the little horn’s] dominion to consume and destroy [the saints]. Then the kingdom and dominion . . . shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him. (Daniel 7:9-27)

The sequence of events in Daniel’s prophecy is similar to that found in Revelation and 1 Corinthians 15:

1. Christ (the Son of Man, the Most High) is resurrected and seated at the right hand of the Father (the Ancient of Days).
2. The saints are resurrected; the Son of Man is brought to the Ancient of Days; together the Son of Man and the saints are given the kingdom in which the saints reign with Christ.

To our knowledge, all Preterists agree that the Parousia of Jesus Christ occurred in AD 70. Thus, it should now be clear that the first resurrection of Revelation 20:4d, 5b, and 6 is the resurrection “in the Parousia of Jesus

The belief in this reign of a thousand years was long prevalent among the Christians. This period was also in great credit among the Gentiles. The souls of the Egyptians returned to their bodies at the end of a thousand years; and, according to Virgil, the souls in purgatory were exorcised for the same space of time—*et mille per annos*.⁹

If a learned skeptic recognized the connection between John’s imagery and ancient notions of Hades, it is difficult to imagine that contemporary Christians of Greek descent could fail to see it also. Indeed, the epistle of Dionysius of Alexandria quoted above stands as testimony that in fact they did.

Conclusion

Revelation’s two millennial periods describe the intermediate realm of Hades where the dragon went down in defeat upon the collapse of the persecution over Stephen, only to rise again in the form of Nero’s persecution, but where the saints and martyrs dwelt in happiness pending the general, Hadean resurrection. †

...FOOTNOTES PAGE 5

The Beginning of the Millennium

by Lloyd Dale

...continued from page 13

I watched until thrones were put in place . . . The court was seated . . . I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed. . . the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever. . . I was watching; and the little horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the

Christ” (1 Cor 15:23c), and therefore the beginning of the thousand years. We have demonstrated above that God, Jesus, Daniel, Paul, Peter, and John all concur that resurrection occurs in three stages. In summary, these three stages of resurrection are:

1. *The first stage*—the ca. AD 30 resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 15:1-23b).
2. *The second stage*—the resurrection of those who are Christ’s at His Parousia, which occurs at the beginning of the thousand years, i.e., ca. AD 70 (1 Cor 15:23c). This verse specifically identifies that this stage of resurrection occurs within the context of the “Parousia.” In Revelation 20:4, John describes the “parousia” without actually using that word¹³. In verse 4, John writes about thrones and those who are seated on those thrones. As we have noted above, Jesus, prior to the Revelation, told the disciples exactly who would be sitting on those thrones in the resurrection/regeneration. According to Jesus, He

...continued on page 15

The Forty-Year Millennium

by Don Preston

...continued from page 9

The Millennium and Israel's Festal Calendar

In Israel's festal calendar,⁷ the New Creation would come at the climax of the last three feast days—Trumpets (Rosh HaShanah, i.e. judgment), Atonement, and Harvest/Tabernacles. *Tabernacles is when God's presence would be restored to man through resurrection.*⁸

In Revelation 14:1-4 we see the first fruits of the harvest (cf. John 5:24f), which corresponds to the enthronement of the martyrs in Revelation 20:1-4. The martyrs were awaiting the harvest (Feast of Tabernacles), which would occur at the destruction of Babylon, the city guilty of killing the saints (14:6f). *This is the end of the Millennium* (Rev 20:10f). In Revelation 20-21, *at the end of The Millennial resurrection*, we hear the victory declaration: "The tabernacle of God is with man!" (Rev 21:3). *This is the fulfillment of Israel's festal calendar, the Feast of Tabernacles!*

It is commonly argued that the

"ceremonial aspects" of Torah ended at the cross, and that Israel ceased to be God's covenant people at the cross, while Old Testament prophecy remained valid to AD 70 (some Preterists), or still remains valid (Futurism). However, nothing was more "ceremonial" or *prophetic*, than Israel's *covenantal* feast days! The fact that Revelation 20-21 depict the fulfillment of Israel's last three feast days *at the end of the Millennium* proves that the "ceremonial" aspects of Torah remained valid when John wrote. Watch carefully:

- Israel's Feast Days (*and thus, Torah itself*) would remain valid *until what the Feast Days foreshadowed* was fulfilled (Matt 5:17-18; Col 2:14-16; Heb 9:6-10).
- Those feast days foreshadowed the resurrection—the hope of Israel—*at the end of the Millennium*.
- Therefore, Israel's Feast Days (*and thus, Torah itself*) would remain valid *until the end of the Millennium*.⁹

Clearly, the consummation of Israel's age and the end of Torah is inseparably tied to the end of the Millennium. We offer one final syllogism:

- The Resurrection was *the salvation hope of Israel* (Isa 25:8; Acts 26:6-8; Rom 11:25f).

- The Resurrection of Revelation 20:10f—*at the end of the Millennium*—was therefore the salvation hope of Israel.
- Daniel 12:2-7 posits the fulfillment of the resurrection/salvation hope of Israel in AD 70.
- Therefore, the end of the Millennium was in AD 70.

Biblically, there was no resurrection *apart from Israel's hope*. Thus, the resurrection of the "rest of the dead" at the end of the Millennium must be interpreted within that framework. In summary, we note that every element of the Millennium was present for the saints living during the 40 years between Jesus' ministry and AD 70, and that the end of the Millennium resurrection was the hope of Israel. If that resurrection has not happened, Torah remains valid and *Israel remains God's covenant people*. As we have seen, Daniel 12 falsifies this idea.

Although much more could be said, all of the evidence presented points irrefutably to the fact that the Millennium began in the ministry of Christ and extended for the forty years lasting till AD 70. †

...FOOTNOTES PAGE 5

...continued from page 14

and the twelve apostles would sit on thirteen thrones (Matt 19:28, 25:31; Luke 22:29-30; Rev 3:21). Therefore, this parousial resurrection phase is "the end of the Mosaic age" and the actual beginning of the new age of the new heaven and the new earth. 3. *The third stage*—the future resurrection of "the rest of the dead," i.e., the "resurrection of justice" that occurs after the conclusion of the thousand years. YHWH God, Jesus, Paul, and Peter, all agree with John's description of these two phases of resurrection—"the first resurrection" and "the resurrection of the rest of dead" in Revelation 20:5 and, more fully described, in 20:11-15. †

FOOTNOTES :

¹ First resurrection (*ezshan*): "they live again and reign with Christ" (Revelation 20:4d, 5b, 6).

² 2 Corinthians 12:1-5 (For a detailed analysis of this passage and related passages see the author's paper "John on Patmos.")

³ Hebrews 3:1: "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Jesus Christ." Hebrews 4:14: "We have a great High Priest who has passed into the heavens . . . Called of God (Yahweh) an High Priest . . ." Hebrews 7:26: ". . . an High Priest . . . holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens . . ."

⁴ "The Prince," Daniel 9:25-28; Acts 5:31; Revelation 1:5.

⁵ Revelation 20:4d: "*ezshan*" they live again and they reign with the Christ a thousand years.

⁶ Acts 24:15: see also Daniel 12:1b-2. Please note that Daniel specifically stated that, "at that time (i.e. at the time of the first resurrection of the just) your people (the followers of Christ, "every one that is found written in the book [of life]) shall be delivered" by the resurrection of the just into "everlasting life."

⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:20-24a: The resurrection of Jesus Christ; the resurrection of the just; and the resurrection of the unjust.

(For full documentation of these three phases of resurrection that Paul teachers contact the author of this article.)

⁸ John 5:29: Greek "*krisewv*" decision (subjectively or objectively, for or against); by extension, a tribunal; by implication, justice (especially, divine). See also Revelation 20:5a, 12-13: The rest of the dead live again and are judged . . . according to their works. This is the epitome, the very essence of Divine Justice.

⁹ 2 Timothy 2:18: Here Paul states that the teaching that the resurrection had already occurred had overthrown the faith of some. Thus, it is clear that at that time (ca. 66 AD) no resurrection out from among the dead, other than Christ's, had occurred.

¹⁰ John 11:25b: "from the dead" (Matt 17:9; Mark 12:25; Luke 20:35; John 21:4).

¹¹ Matthew 19:28: in this context "regeneration" is synonymous with "resurrection."

¹² Jesus' statement to the Jews in Matthew 21:43 (and perhaps Paul's statement in Romans 16:20) is a clear reference to this portion of Daniel's prophecies.

¹³ John also describes the Parousia, without using the word, in Revelation 11:15-19, 12:10-11, 19:1-9.



In This Issue:

*A Special
Look
at the
Millennium*

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Preterism...it's about time!

It's about the time Jesus told His disciples that He would return—this(His) generation!

It's about the time the New Testament authors told their readers Jesus would return—soon, near, at hand, shortly!

It's about time for a scriptural explanation other than delay!

It's about time for a "last days" view that doesn't conjure up gaps and parenthetical ages!

Preterism
Preterism
Preterism

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