

Charismatic Preterism

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This article appeared in the 2022 Summer issue of *Fulfilled!* Magazine

THE PAROUSIA TOOK PLACE in AD 70 when Jesus came through the Roman armies and judged apostate Israel and saved true Israel. The Mosaic Covenant came to an end and the New and Better Covenant was fully in effect by AD 70. Some may assert that the New Covenant was in effect in ca. AD 30, and that also is correct, for it was. An analogy for the time period from AD 30 to AD 70 would be a relay race runner handing off a baton from one old (Covenant) runner to the new (Covenant) runner. However, until the temple was destroyed in AD 70, this transition was a bit hazy for some. The end times generation was a generation of mercy towards repentance. Judgment had been declared in the Parable of the Tenants (Matt 21:33-46), as well as elsewhere, but not executed. There was still time to leave the Old Covenant and embrace the New.

Joel prophesied that the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon the last-days generation (Joel 2). We see the fulfillment in Acts 2 (and beginning even earlier with Mary, Elizabeth, John the Baptist, and Zechariah; Luke 1), when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon and into the believers at Pentecost. We also see subsequent outpourings throughout the book of Acts. Most Preterists believe that the Holy Spirit ceased being poured out after AD 70. We believe otherwise and offer three scriptural reasons as support. In addition, two common Cessationist misconceptions will be rebuffed.

1. The New Covenant is a perpetual Covenant

The New Covenant has no end. Since the Holy Spirit was given in conjunction with the New Covenant, we should expect the gifts of the Spirit to continue operating for the duration of the New Covenant, even though the Old Covenant ended in AD 70. The New and Better Covenant continued after AD 70 and so did the Holy Spirit and the activity thereof (Hebrews 8:6). The Holy Spirit did not become a spectator in Heaven after AD 70. The Holy Spirit is alive and active today as is His continuing full New Covenant ministry.

2. The use of “till” or “until” does not necessitate cessation

We present three scriptural examples of continuations beyond an end point.

*“For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lord’s death **till He come.**” (1 Cor 11:26)*

If Jesus did come in judgment during the lifetime of those first-century believers, are we to stop taking communion? Does His coming in the clouds of judgment put an end to communion?

To interpret Scripture with Scripture, let us examine where else these two Greek words are used together. Four chapters away, in 1 Corinthians 15:25, we see the same English word “till” used for the same two Greek words “*achre*” and “*hos*.” These same two Greek words are in the same order. “*For He must reign **till** He hath put all enemies under His feet.*” (1 Cor 15:25) Does this usage of “till” convey termination? Did Jesus stop reigning after all enemies were put under His feet? Answer, no! For example, we might say to someone, “work on this till I get back.” Termination of work is not required, as one may continue working after the individual comes back. Another example is, “They walked over the hill, till we could see them no longer.” Their walking is definitely not terminated, the activity continues.

“*and, lo, I am with you always, even **unto** the end of the age. Amen.*” (Matt 28:20)

A different Greek word is used here, nevertheless, the same idiomatic usage is in play. [2193-*Heos*-continuance, until, of time and place, even until, unto, as far as, how long, till, hither, up, to a while.] Again, termination is highly improbable here. Is Jesus not going to be with His disciples after the end of the age? Surely He is, thus the activity of being with them always is not terminated. This same word is used in Matthew 26:29:

“*I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, **until** I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.*”

We know that termination of drinking wine did not take place:

“*And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and **drink** at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*” (Luke 22:29–30, KJV 1900)

Therefore, we can safely conclude the termination of communion did not occur in AD 70. It is still in effect today.

A final illustration would be my daughter’s athletic activities. She was one of the few girls on the Anthem Panthers flag football team (ages 11-14). I was her coach for four seasons, winning the Championship three times. I was with my daughter each season. After she exceeded the age limit, we formed a new interest; axe throwing. I was still with her. After axe throwing, we got into bicycle riding. I was still with her. Even though the activity changed over time, the loving relationship remained over time. We have a continuing New Covenant relationship with the Holy Spirit and His outpouring after AD 70, for generations thereafter, today and tomorrow.

3. The generational pattern of Scripture

Our final evidence for the continuing outpouring of the Holy Spirit will be the generational pattern or model found throughout Scripture. A prime example is the book of Judges. God was faithful to Israel.

Generation after generation turned away from Him and His commandments, yet when they repented, He sent a judge to deliver them. Likewise, the Holy Spirit was poured out during the first New Covenant generation from about AD 30 to 70. It is consistent with Scripture for God to continue to be with the next generation, and the next, and so on (Deut 7:9, Ps 105:8, and Eph 4:13).

Did tongues cease after the 40-year transition period ca. AD 70 as Cessationists assert, citing 1 Corinthians 13:8? This forty-year period in history is spiritually significant and is a key generational model or pattern, for during it the old covenant was phased out and replaced by the new covenant, the “new thing” predicted by Isaiah (Is 43:19). This new thing was the move of God that ushered in the New Covenant age and established the Kingdom of God. Jesus and the New Covenant, and all the components contained within the New Covenant, were Isaiah’s “new thing.” The gifts of the Spirit are some of the tools God uses to build His assembly, and without Him nothing can be built (Matt 16:18). The first-century assembly was the foundational generation model for subsequent generations. Granted, God laid the foundation in the first century, but every subsequent generation contains individuals (living stones, 1 Peter 2:5) which must be added to that glorious assembly. If we limit the “new things” foretold by Isaiah and claim that they are no longer available, then we have only the blueprint with limited tools with which to build. In 1 Corinthians 14:26 the saints are told to bring the tools (gifts) when they gather, and to let all things be for edification (building up). In chapter 12 of Corinthians, we see nine manifestations of the Spirit. First, manifestations for *revelation*: word of knowledge, word of wisdom, and discerning of spirits. Second, we see manifestations of *speaking*: prophecy, tongues, and interpretation of tongues. Third, we see manifestations of *power*: healings, miracles, and the gift of faith. The believers can, when in submission to the Spirit, be used in these areas of revelation, speaking, and power to build up one another. We all agree that the flesh profits nothing and only the Spirit gives life. Moving in the gifts is evidence of something heavenly manifesting on earth, and as we open ourselves to these spiritual gifts, we will become better equipped in the perpetual purpose of God in building His assembly in every generation.

All the prophets, from Samuel onward, foretold the time of first-century Israel (Acts 3:24). The first century was the fullness of time, the appointed time (Gal 4:4) to bring to a climax all the prophecies and all that was predicted by the prophets. Once we grasp this principle demonstrated in the first century, God can reveal more of His ways to us. This generational model shows us that God starts with the empowering of the Spirit in seed form and grows His followers to fullness and full maturity to the end of the Old Covenant age. It is essential that we don’t assume God retired in AD 70. During Christ’s earthly ministry He planted His Kingdom (Matt 13:1-9 & 18-23) and it continues to grow into maturity in each subsequent generation. This same kingdom is the stone that smashed the fourth kingdom in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision (Dan 2:37-45) and then became a mountain that grew and filled the entire earth.

The main difference now is that there are no last days or end of time. Today we live in a perpetual age that never ends.

Ezra and Nehemiah give us a pattern of God's purpose in every generation. This pattern was further realized in the first century. There are three stages to this pattern in Ezra and Nehemiah: 1) The altar, 2) The house (temple), and 3) The holy city. The altar is the place of consecration and dedication and symbolizes our taking up the cross and following the Lord. Then there is the building of the spiritual house, which is eventually revealed as the heavenly Jerusalem, the expression of God in Christ on the earth in every locality. Every generation starts with childhood and moves through adolescence to full maturity. Throughout Christian history God is working toward a mature assembly and a mature harvest. The flesh and natural part of man hinders spiritual growth, and we see this throughout history. Unless each generation of the Lord learns to live and walk according to the spirit, that generation remains immature and brings less fruit to maturity. Those who dwell in the spirit tend to produce more fruit.

It is essential that the reader understand that fruit in the Scripture is defined in different ways. Of course, there is the fruit of the Spirit, as well as fruit representing souls that are saved, as expressed in John 15. The great commission in John is "*go and bear fruit*, (15:16), compared to Matthew, Mark, and Luke as "*go and preach the gospel and make disciples of all nations*." There are other aspects of fruit but, because of space, I will refrain from going further. We must think of maturity not only on an individual basis, but growing together corporately into a mature man, the fullness of the stature of Christ (Eph 4:13). The gifts of the Spirit, the gifts of grace and the ascension gifts of Christ build the corporate assembly in a fully mature expression of God on this earth. This is why Paul exhorted the Corinthians to pursue spirituality (1 Cor 14:1). The gifts of the Spirit are essential to bring every generation to maturity and move from the "in part" stage to the "fullness" stage. Believing that the gifts have ceased causes the assembly to remain in an "in part" stage, stunted in the growth of life that is essential to inherit the Kingdom and take dominion. The ministry gifts, manifestations of the Spirit, and motivational gifts are all for equipping and building the temple so it can emerge into the heavenly Jerusalem. Cessationists have a blueprint but are in denial of all the tools needed to fully build what is stated in the Word. Tongues is the only gift in Scripture that says it builds up the individual, and once built up the believer can then better build up others. This does not mean a person cannot be built up unless they speak in tongues. They are members of the body of Christ and can be built up by others that are gifted and in turn build others up because they are equipped by those with the gifts to build. For example, someone who does not speak in tongues can be equipped by someone that has a teaching gift, and then become equipped with revelation. Equipped with that revelation, the one who does not speak in tongues ministers that revelation they received from the gifted teacher to build up other believers. Cessationists assert that there are no active gifts today, yet it is difficult to intentionally reject that some teachers today do in fact have the gift of teaching. The believers will

always need solid teachers in every generation. While Cessationists assert that tongues ceased after AD 70, perhaps a better translation of the word ceased is in fact paused. Strong's Number: G3973 Greek Base Word: παύω

A second Cessationist misconception involves 1 Corinthians 13:9-13. At first glance it may appear to provide some support for that viewpoint:

Out of the part we are knowing, and out of the part we are prophesying. And while maturity is coming, then that which is out of the part will be put away. When I was a child I spoke randomly, I had the mindset of a child, I put things together as a child: but when I had become a man, I put away the immaturity. For the present we are seeing through a mirror, a riddle; but at that time face to face: presently I am beginning to know just as I am fully known. And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (TKB).

Jesus had twelve apostles, but sometimes only three accompanied Him (Luke 8:49-50; 9:28-36). They were emphasized. That does not mean the other nine apostles would no longer be active in the future. Scripture clearly contradicts that fallacious assertion, and history clarifies that many of the other apostles were used throughout the world declaring the gospel. Likewise, emphasizing the big three (faith, hope, love) does not preclude other gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit from future activity. Love is a fruit, not a gift (Gal 5:22-23). Are all fruits of the Holy Spirit except love void after AD 70? Moreover, the Bible does not list hope as either a fruit or a gift of the Holy Spirit. During World War II Churchill, Stalin, and Roosevelt were called the big three. They had the strength to remain against Hitler. The Australians, Canadians, Free French, Free Poles, New Zealanders, Partisans, and others also fought against Nazi Germany, even though they were not included in the big three. To paraphrase 1 Corinthians 13:9-13 then: Old Covenant immaturity was being put away during AD 30-70 as believers came into New Covenant maturity, similarly to the relationship Moses had with Yahweh as in Numbers 12:8 and Deuteronomy 34:10.

In closing, the three major Scriptural arguments in favor of the Holy Spirit continuing to outpour after AD 70 include:

The perpetual nature of the New and Better Covenant continuing past AD 70, which includes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit

Three biblical examples of continuance after an apparent end point

The generational model or pattern demonstrated throughout the entirety of Scripture.

Two Cessationist misconceptions were addressed and rebuffed. Additional minor thoughts include that the Holy Spirit came upon some of the Old Testament Prophets even before AD 30. That does not contradict Acts chapter 2 and Joel chapter 2, which claim that the Spirit's outpouring was for the last days.

To be consistent, if we don't negate the active ministry of the Holy Spirit prior to the last days, neither should we eliminate it post-AD 70. Moreover, since the fruit of the Holy Spirit is in effect today, shouldn't the gifts of the Holy Spirit also be in effect? Luke 11:11-13 reads: *"Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"* ✝