

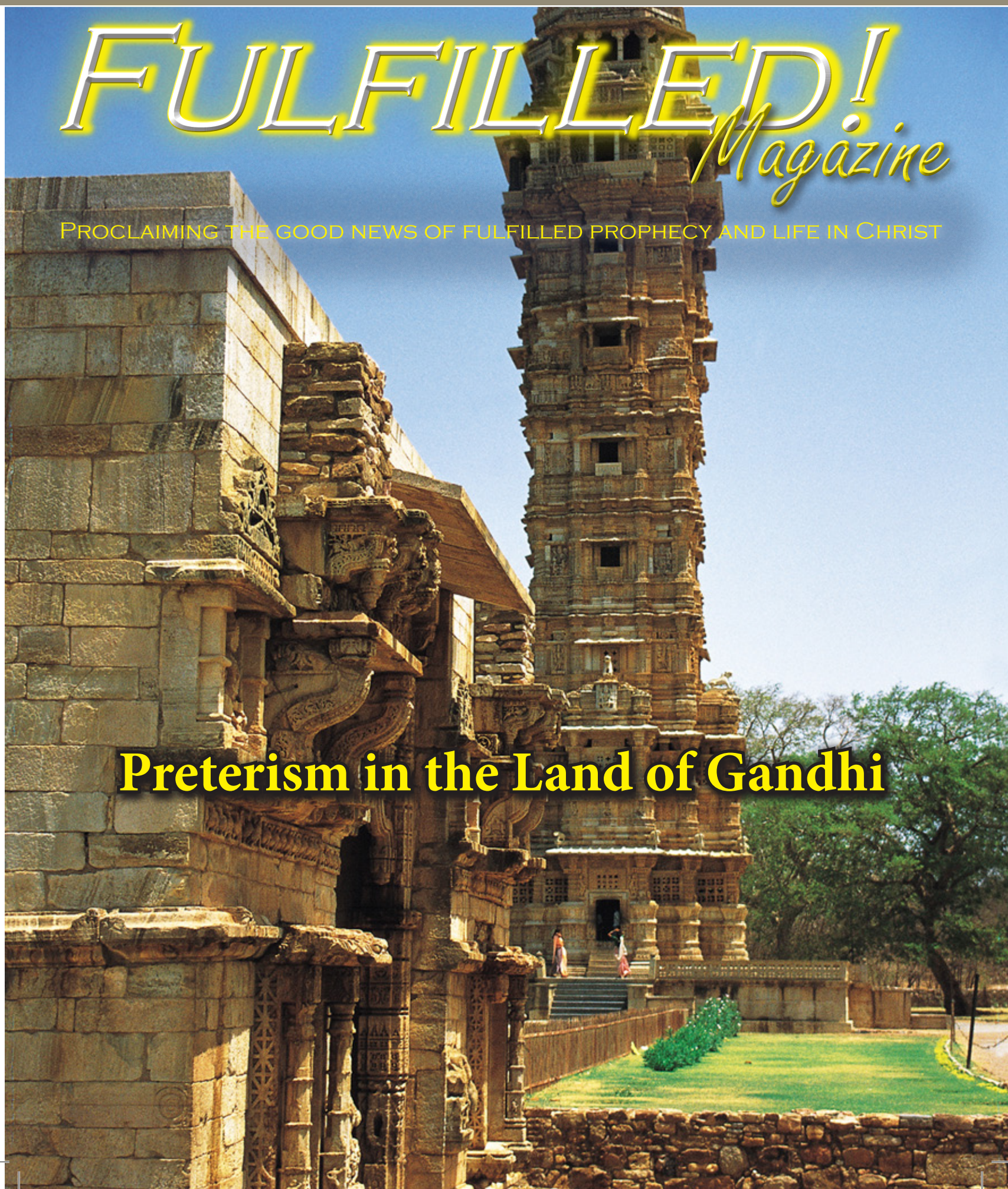
FALL 2015

VOLUME 10 ISSUE 2

# FULFILLED! *Magazine*

PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF FULFILLED PROPHECY AND LIFE IN CHRIST

**Preterism in the Land of Gandhi**







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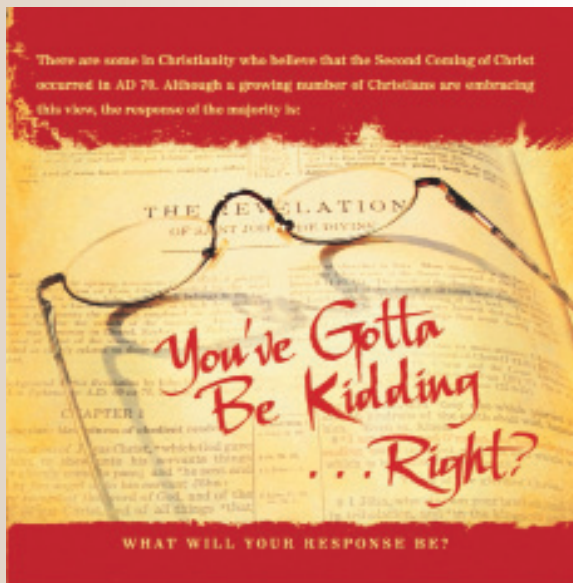
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## Editor's Note...

**I** FEAR THAT I am beginning to sound like the proverbial broken record as I once again lament my lack of time, which resulted in my inability to produce a summer issue this year, and the tardiness of this fall issue. I always hold out hope that things will return to normal, but it seems that this current pace of life has become the new “normal.” I simply have to trust that all is in God’s hands, and He will provide the time if it is truly needed. One of the side benefits of skipping an issue here and there has been the money saved on production costs. The “Great Recession” has taken its toll, and these unplanned for savings are helping to carry us through the tough times. Production costs have risen and contributions have understandably dropped during the economic crisis. Though we make very little profit on DVD sales, that too has dropped off due to market saturation. To date we have distributed nearly 6,000 copies!

I wasn’t the only one feeling the time pinch in this issue—Don Preston had to forego his “Objection Overruled!” column this time around due to his hectic schedule. Hopefully he will be able to resume in the winter issue—assuming, of course, that *I* have the time to produce a winter issue (I see no roadblocks at the present, and plan on being able to produce a winter issue).

This issue features a report from India, and the efforts to share preterism in that country. Jaemin Park, a pathology resident in Houston, Texas, visited Prabhu Das and other Christian ministries in India last year. Many readers may be acquainted with Prabhu through social media. Jaemin provides some background on preterism in India as well as updates on Prabhu’s ministry and the current state of preterism in India. Victor Suman, another Indian preterist minister, also provides some pictures from his “Covenant Creation” seminar.

In addition to India, we send magazines to readers in the following countries:

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You may not be able to travel to these countries, and you may feel that, even though you personally embrace preterism, you have a difficult time articulating it to others. By supporting FCG both prayerfully and financially, you become a “preterist missionary” by enabling us to send preterist re-

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“preterist missionary”  
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preterist resources  
around the world.



# Mailbag...

Many thanks to you for your publishing “Fulfilled.” I definitely value having the printed page and appreciate your continuing the printed version. I value each issue and really don’t have any suggestions for changes.

Ellen, TX

I appreciate FCG Magazine. New thoughts and lessons. Thanks to all of you.

Loren, MS

We look forward to every issue of the magazine and we pray that God will continue to give you the grace that will be sufficient for you as long as you desire to carry on with the hard work and the challenges that go with it. Keep up the good work and know that thousands are coming to know and understand what the expectations of the early Church were and why they expected them.

Garrett & Beverly, CA

Thank you for a wonderful magazine. We always look forward to getting the next issue.

Charles & Ruth, TX

Sending a little to help with the

preterist truth of the Scriptures. I believe it is necessary for salvation— if not, why believe the truth at all? Pastor Moore is absolutely wrong in saying it doesn’t. I believe he is a false teacher and says preterism is not necessary for salvation.

Joe, AR

[First Joe, thank you for your donation! Secondly, I think we all believe that preterist eschatology is the truth of scriptural eschatology. But your statement that preterism is necessary for salvation brings up the age old question, *how much of the truth must we understand to be saved?* Because we are not infused with all scriptural truth upon salvation, we are continually learning more truth of God’s Word as we study. I think of Apollos, who was eloquent, competent in the Scriptures, and taught accurately of Jesus. Yet Priscilla and Aquila explained the way of God more accurately to him. I know that I fall far short of grasping all biblical truth. Is my salvation in jeopardy because I am missing some truths? I’m trusting in God’s grace that it is not. While I certainly believe that preterism is truth, I don’t believe that all nonpreterists are unsaved. BLM]



I definitely value the printed page.

sources around the world. We do not charge for subscriptions to Fulfilled! Magazine, therefore, it is your financial support that allows us to continue mailing Fulfilled! Magazine to readers around the world. In addition to our basic production costs, we currently spend about \$400 per issue for our overseas mailings. We are grateful to those of you who, through your giving, allow us to continue this effort.

Blessings,

*Brian*



## Acts 1:9-11 Regarding the coming back of Jesus

by Roy Lee Scott

There are two scriptural texts that I feel are keys to a proper answer to the question of whether or not Jesus is coming back in our present day future: Acts 1:9-11 and Matthew 24:1-34. In this article I'd like to examine Acts 1:9-11.

*And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."* (Acts 1:9-11 ESV)

Regarding Acts 1:11, Keith Mathison states, "The Greek word translated 'will come' is *eleusetai*, which is the future indicative form of the verb *erchomai*." So let's begin by affirming that the translation "will come" is correct. There is little room for debate regarding the word "*eleusetai*" involving the future here. That being said, we must examine two important aspects of the context of this claimed future coming revelation: first, *who* is being told that a future coming is going to occur; and second, *what situation are they in* when they receive this revelation? That is, *what was the audience doing, and why, when they received this revelation?*

I believe this context is vitally important to understanding these verses. Without this contextual information, we simply have the revelation of a future coming being given to a group of people that could have been doing anything for any reason. But that is clearly not the case here, for we have a group of people doing something specific and for a specific reason. We have *people looking toward the sky above them after a person who is very close to them suddenly vanishes into a cloud*. This must have been very shocking to witness, thus it is no wonder that they would have been staring into the sky where Jesus had just vanished into a cloud. To those who witnessed the ascension, it was certainly a very dramatic and personal event, one which must have left a very powerful and personal impression upon their minds and eyes. This was an experience that they were *feeling very strongly and were intimately involved with personally*.

That moment of awe, which most certainly entailed some sadness, was at the forefront of their thoughts at the time. The ascension consumed them at the time. So what happens during this all consuming moment? Two men dressed in white speak to them. We do not know who they were, angels or otherwise, but suffice it to say that the disciples would

have surely perceived them to have been sent by God. And what do these two men in white say? They ask the people, who were consumed with staring into the sky where Jesus had vanished into a cloud, *why they were doing* what they were doing. The two men in white were addressing what the people were doing.

This concept of "addressing" is so very important here. The two men in white did not simply tell the people, "*This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.*" Rather, the two men in white started out by addressing what the people were doing at the time—staring into the sky where Jesus had vanished into a cloud. Why did the two men in white bother to address what the people were doing at the time? There is only one possible logical explanation as to why the two men in white addressed and dealt with what the people were doing. It is because what the two men in white were about to say dealt with them personally. What the two men in white were about to say dealt with the people that were staring into the sky. If the future coming that is spoken of by the two men in white referred to a future coming that is still future to us, and far beyond the lifespan of those to whom the words were addressed, (it has been around 2,000 years now since the men in white spoke), then that *future coming would not have the personal significance to those staring into the sky* to warrant the two men in white "addressing" their staring into the sky. I believe this becomes obvious once one looks at the facts honestly, and it simply cannot be denied or overlooked. *This future coming obviously was to take place within the lifespan of those present and to whom it was being spoken*. It's as if the two men in white said to the disciples:

"The connection that you have now in time with the events of Jesus leaving will be repeated with a return of Jesus, so you will no longer anguish from the feeling of loss from Jesus leaving, because just as you are now connected in time to the events of his leaving, you will also be connected in time to the events of His return, so there is no reason to stare into the sky as if Jesus was not going to return to you. The loss that you feel now due to Jesus' absence will be offset by a new *presence* of Jesus that is every bit as real to you as the painful reality of watching Jesus leave (if it was not real, we would have told you). Do not fear—the pain you now feel will be replaced with the opposite of loss, namely, the renewed presence of Jesus."



o was taken up from you into heaven, will  
ne way as you saw him go into heaven.

Roy Lee Scott

Roy considers himself an amateur philosopher and is an avid computer artist. He attended the historic *First Presbyterian Church* of downtown Pittsburgh under Dr. Robert J. Lamont. He received his BA from the University of Pittsburgh in 1980.

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In addition to the *timing* of Jesus' coming being important, one must also determine the *nature* of His coming. This is critical, since Scripture speaks of the "coming" of the Lord in a nonbodily, nonphysical form. Isaiah 64:3 states "When you did awesome things that we did not look for, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence." This judgment of God upon Israel is a past event, yet there is no evidence for a bodily, physical manifestation of God.

Acts 1:11 makes a proclamation and affirmation that summarizes the "manifestation and presentation" of Jesus during His earthly ministry and ascension. The words "This Jesus" represent the form of His "presence," which was bodily and physical, and the words "who was taken up from you into heaven" represent the "method" of His leaving the Earth, namely, in a cloud. Verse 11 thus sets up the perfect model and example for this future coming of Jesus to be in a *bodily physical form and coming out of a cloud*—if that is what the two men in white had in mind.

As noted previously, verse 11 uses the Greek word "eleusetai," which is translated "will come." Being supplied the words "will come," if one has in mind a coming that was to be in a *bodily physical form and coming out of a cloud*, it would be very easy, apparent, and logical to add the word "back" to the words "will come." This seems logical since we have an affirmation of Jesus' bodily physical form going into a cloud. The word "back" would act as a "bridge" to connect and link together the ascension and future coming, both of which are *in bodily physical form*, and using *a cloud* as a means of transportation. This would make Acts 1:11 claim that Jesus would "come back" in a manner that is a *reversal of the events of His leaving*, a "reverse play-back of the movie" so to speak.

However, the Greek word for "back" is not in the original text (it is incorrectly added in the NIV translation). Therefore, what is so easily and naturally *affirmed* by the word "back," is quickly *denied* by its absence in the original Greek text. Furthermore, it must be noted that the words "will come back" would not necessarily have to refer to both Jesus' bodily physical form and the way that form is manifested, namely, returning from in a cloud. It possibly could only refer to His bodily physical form, leaving open the way that form is manifested. However, the way that form would be manifested is *specifically and immediately referred to as involving a cloud*. Therefore, we have a deliberate and clear *denial of the most perfect opportunity possible of proclaiming and affirming a coming in bodily physical form*. This is because the potential of

a bodily, physical form coming back on a cloud is destroyed by the lack of the word "back" coming after "will come." We have a *perfect opportunity presented to the reader, and it is then not realized*, the result of which is a future coming that is *not* in a bodily physical form.

Additionally, it is the *mode* and *manner* that Jesus' physical body left—in a cloud—that is the focus and referent to His return in verse 11, *not* the bodily physical form itself. Therefore, the only reference to a return of Jesus' bodily, physical form is an inference from the word "back," which is not found in the original Greek.

Also important is the fact that v. 11 does not simply reference or speak directly of a cloud. Rather, the disciples are told that Jesus would come "in the same way" that He was seen leaving. The phrase "in the same way" is translated from the Greek "*hon tropon*." Both the KJV and ASV translate this more literally as "in like manner." If the two men in white had in mind a physical cloud in the sky above Earth, then *it would have been extremely enigmatic for them to refer to the "manner" of a cloud instead of simply referencing the cloud itself*, since there was an actual cloud present during Jesus' departure. One must keep in mind here an extremely important concept, namely, that a manner of something is not the same as that something.

There is only one logical reason why the two men in white did not speak directly of a physical "cloud" when describing the coming of Jesus—were they to reference a physical "cloud" in their explanation, it would *cause their listeners to immediately and inevitably think of a physical cloud in the sky from which Jesus was to come*. The two men in white, instead of directly referencing a physical cloud, must have spoken of the "manner" of a cloud to prevent this misunderstanding by the disciples. This speaking of a "manner" of a cloud acts as a "polarizer" to differentiate between the real and very obvious "physical" aspects of Jesus' ascension just witnessed, and the *nonphysical* aspects of His return. The subject matter of the Jesus' coming involved a cloud without it being an actual physical cloud in the sky above Earth.

After one properly concludes that the future coming being referred to here was to occur in the lifespan of those present, and that it is neither a bodily physical form nor from an actual physical cloud, it is fairly easy to figure out to what this future coming is referring. It is referring to a "coming on the clouds" judgment coming as often seen in the Old Testament. Jesus ascended into a cloud, and he was to return in a judgment cloud. Jesus did this during the years leading to and including the destruction of the temple in AD 70. †



# Perspectives

## Preterism in the land of Gandhi

by Jaemin Park

According to the 2001 census, Christianity, with approximately 24 million adherents, is India's 3rd largest religion, comprising 2.3% of the population. Tradition traces India's Christianity back to the time when the Apostle Thomas spread the gospel in the region now known as Kerala state in South India. In AD 52, Thomas traveled to the city called Muziris (modern-day Kodungallur), where he baptized several locals. This resulted in a thriving Christian community, now known as St. Thomas Christians. The Protestant mission began with William Carey, who, arriving in Calcutta in 1793, translated the Bible into Bengali, Sanskrit, and Marathi. Since that time Protestant ministries have spread throughout India. Among the early Protestant missions from the United States to India, John Christian Frederick Meyer, who studied Sanskrit and medicine in Baltimore, was the first Lutheran minister in the region of Andhra Pradesh, founding the Guntur mission in 1842. Since then, Guntur district in the state of Andhra Pradesh has been a major center for Protestant ministries in India. Some missionaries identify these regions as the "Bible-belt" of south India. Guntur is significant for Indian preterists because this is where preterism first spread to India from the United States.



Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India; A prominent center for protestantism.

### The arrival of Preterism

Preterism was introduced to India by Dr. Argie Bollinger from Australia, and Dr. Victor D. Thuraka, D.D., who was exposed to preterist views during his time as a missionary student in the Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver, CO, United States in 1972. After his studies, Dr. Thuraka moved back to Guntur, India, conducting ministries and introducing young Indians to preterism until his death in 2007. Dr. Victor Thuraka was very instrumental in establishing the Churches of Christ in India. Meanwhile, fledgling Protestant churches in India were not open to the preterist view of Scripture. Due to the hostile nature from these conservatives toward American preterists, Indian preterist preachers who relied on financial support from US churches faced even more difficulty carrying out their work. Dr. Thuraka was no exception, as his financial support and official recognition from Bear Valley Bible Institute were cut off towards the end of his life. During this time, preterism was widely known by its opponents to be the "70 A.D. Doctrine." Despite these unfavorable situations, men such as Dr. Thuraka and his friend, Argol F. Drollinger, of Australia, continued to spread the preterist view, leading some of their senior students to accept partial preterism. One of Dr. Thuraka's senior students, Prabhu K. Das, was instrumental in not only proclaiming the full preterist concepts openly and publicly, but he also popularized the term 'Preterism' in the Telugu tongue and initiated serious preterist scholarship activities in India. Argol F. Drollinger and Dr. Thuraka played a very crucial role in mentoring Prabhu K. Das and many others to be the future successors of the preterist movement in India.

By the time of Dr. Thuraka's death, India had hosted her first annual preterist meet in 2006, and continued meets through 2009. This was the first structured nationwide preterist conference in India. It was conducted by Prabhu K. Das, hosting the event in the presence of some Australian preterists, equipping the like-minded, along with 238 guests and the majority of the crowd consisting of young Christian preachers all over India. Besides the annual Indian preterist meetings, Prabhu K. Das has traveled extensively in the state of Andhra Pradesh as a visiting speaker, introducing many to the preterist view. I attended one such meeting in the city of Ponnur, 35 km away from Tenali, in which Prabhu K. Das presented a lecture series on the Parables of Jesus from a first-century historical context to a local congregation of approximately 20 people.

### Young preterist minister in Andhra Pradesh, India

Prabhu K. Das, who is a respected preterist preacher and leader in Andhra Pradesh state and entire India, hails from Tenali, India. He studied under the late Dr. Victor D. Thuraka D.D. He is an author of "Second Coming of Christ- Past? Present? Or Future?" (2012), "Melchizedek Order" (2013) making himself the first published

# A report from a recent trip to India

Jaemin Park is a pathology resident in Houston, Texas, and friend of Prabhu Das. Last year he visited Prabhu and several other Christian ministries in India, and brings this report.  
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Prabhu Das is a preterist minister in India.  
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preterist author in India. Prabhu K. Das has been active on Facebook preterist groups and online preterist forums outside of his own ministry work in his home state of Andhra Pradesh. In Tenali, a small town near Guntur district with a large Christian presence, there are many congregations in the surrounding area who would like to hear about the preterist message. Preterism is still very new to many in India and in a country with many different religions, the positive message of preterism is appealing to many. Prabhu has responded to these needs by dedicating the past ten years of his life to teaching. He has traveled extensively around his region to teach, support and pray with those who want to learn more about preterism. He has also engaged in scholarship in public lectures and seminars in preterist theology and eschatology, being one of the foremost Indian experts in preterism. Some major contributions that Prabhu has made to the Indian preterist movement in the past few years include introducing theological terms (as well as concepts) like 'Preterism,' 'Covenant Theology,' 'Covenant Creation,' 'Corporate Resurrection,' 'Millennialists,' and some other theological terms into Indian language, the Telugu tongue. Instead of directly borrowing English terms into his language, he reintroduced these terms in his mother tongue for the easy receptiveness and inducing the systematic approach of his fellow brethren.

Things haven't always been so green for Indian preterism, however. After 2009, there has not been a united nationwide preterist gathering in India due to financial difficulties as well as the fragmented nature of politics among Indian preterists. The past few years we have seen both an explosive growth of preterism as well as equally increasing oppositions and hurdles. Persecutions in forms of social alienation and ridicule from the non-preterist Christian community are reminiscent of those faced by preterist ministries in the United States. Indian preterists face the additional problems of an often hostile environment created by India's Hindu majority, and an indifferent regional and central government to the plights of impoverished Christians. The situation in Andhra Pradesh, the region that birthed many young Indian preterists, has deteriorated due primarily to two events: the victorious election of Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) into power in India, and the secession of Hyderabad, the state capital of Andhra Pradesh, and its surrounding regions into a new state called Telangana.

### Deteriorating situation for Indian preterists

Many young Indians welcomed this change, as BJP, and especially Modi, are seen as hopes of change. Modi is indeed an able and energetic leader, able to bring about change for a better India. However, the problem this poses for Indian Christians is that Modi's BJP party has links to many Hindu extremists. Congress Party, which lost much influence in the 2014 election, whether genuine or for political reasons, supported Indian Christians and minorities. With the decline of Congress Party, Indian Christians hesitantly look to BJP, who has yet shown enough governance to gain their trust. On the other hand, the history of BJP's relationship with Hindu extremists worries many Christians who fear looming persecution and possible violence. Indeed, there have been endeavors by some Hindu fanatic groups to eliminate Christianity from India. These days, Christians need to obtain permission from the Police Department to conduct public gospel meetings, and often receive threats for conducting prayer meetings, even those conducted at their homes. Distributing Christian and preterist literature has become more difficult with these restrictions and threats of violence.

Currently, some fanatical Hindu organizations are slandering Christianity as a borrowed

*continued on p. 10*



First national Indian Preterist Meet, 2006



# India

by Jaemin Park

... continued from p. 9

religion from the West. Very recently, Indian Hindu organizations called for “Ghar Wapsi” (home calling), a series of re-conversion exercises to convert tribal and low-caste Christians back into Hinduism by using financial and political incentives. We have to think seriously about the conditions that caused the advancement of the gospel in India. The Traditional Hindu concept of karma, and the belief that deeds from your previous life lead to a better afterlife, justify the disparity between rich and poor in traditional Indian society and permit the caste system to continue. This is not to say that the idea of charity is nonexistent in Hinduism. In fact, it is considered good deeds to help the poor by giving alms and providing financial support to those in need. However, this is done strictly as a help to the poor, those outside your community. The idea of assimilation of the poor and making them part of one’s community is foreign to Hinduism and runs contrary to the foundation of the caste system. Turning to the poor and making them one’s own brethren is a very Christian concept and explains why so many poor in India turn to Christianity. This also threatens the traditional social hierarchy and caste system, especially for those who adhere to conservative and reactionary segments of Indian society. As a result, fanatical Hindu organizations are increasingly reacting to Christianity in India by doing their own charity work for the poor. In this case, the poor are used as a political chip for their own advancement.

The recent split of the richer Telangana region and its capital Hyderabad from the old Andhra Pradesh state in 2014 meant more financial difficulties for the people living in that state from increased electricity, water bills, and possibly increased taxes on consumable goods. In a region that is already subject to a daily power outage from morning till evening, the diversion of resources to the richer Telangana is only going to make life more difficult for people from the rest of Andhra Pradesh, including preterist ministries. This financial toll at the state level trickles down to the individual level. To an average Indian preacher, who is a symbol for poverty, starvation, lack of shelter, and persecution, the new financial hardship of the state offers no encouragement for his future. This is why some Indian preterist ministers ask for our helping hand through social media, especially Facebook and Twitter. The major problem is that many of them are unable to meet the requirements of their ministry needs and even their daily lives. As with any non-denominational or independent minister, preterist ministers rely on their congregation for their living. Most of the people with whom brother Prabhu works are poor and daily laborers. They are only able to afford gifts of 100-150 rupees, which roughly amounts to \$3 or \$4 USD. This doesn’t even cover a one-way train ticket or motorbike fuel. Despite being an avid reader of preterist literature, Prabhu has difficulty obtaining books because of the sheer difference in book costs between India and the United States. Books in India generally cost from 50 INR to 300 INR, roughly \$1 to \$6 USD. Titles that

cost \$15 to \$30 USD are beyond the reach of many. Even if these books are available via Amazon, the shipping cost alone would be too much for these people to afford. Prabhu circumvents this situation by relying on a local printer shop to print PDF copies or ebooks. This, of course, has its limitations, and the quality of these printed books varies greatly. Books as we know in the United States are considered luxury for many in India. Prabhu K. Das and many young preterist ministers in India share the same financial difficulties over many things that we take for granted in the United States. Moreover, with the impending financial and political disruption of Andhra Pradesh state, it’s becoming increasingly difficult for preterist ministers to support their family while conducting a preterist ministry. Despite all these hardships, that are unimaginable to many of us here, Prabhu and other young preterist ministers in India simply carry on.

### Preterism in Modi’s India and beyond

Perhaps because of such sacrifice and dedication, preterism has thus far been a success in India. Its message of fulfilled hope is so powerful, liberating, and faithful that it attracts people from all walks of life—Christians, Muslims, and Hindus. One such example is a brother named Akbar, from a traditional Muslim family. He has been attending church for the past 5 years, and in 2012 he was introduced to preterism, which really challenged him to dig deep into the Scriptures. In his own words, he said about



preterism that “it really makes sense of biblical prophecies, moreover I’m able to effectively answer and put some thought provocative arguments for my brethren, who are home calling me.” Many of his relatives and Muslim friends consider him to be a disgrace to their community. But Akbar gives his thanks to God, for his faithful stand and devotion to Christ. He openly acknowledges brother Das, whose steadfast support has been instrumental in his new faith and conviction despite the ridicules and hardships imposed on him



**Prabhu Das with widows and leprosy victims.**

by his Muslim and even other Christian brethren. End-times doctrine is also a big part of Islamic faith, and the fatalism of fundamental Islam could be compared with certain brands of futurist eschatology of our Christian faith.

Over the years, many of the younger generation of different religion and caste backgrounds, such as brother Akbar, have been turning to God and embracing the Bible and preterist concepts more readily. But, the present leaders and ministers of the mainstream Christian church in India are not willing to neither accept nor even discuss preterism. The first and foremost hurdle for an Indian preterist is neither a Hindu extremist nor a Muslim, but a fellow Christian, who labels preterists and their teaching to be “heretical,” creating much havoc among the believers by shunning the new thinkers and closing the door for any intellectual exchange from all sides of ministry. With such an unfavorable environment and living situation at home, it is only natural that Indian preterists will first look to their brethren in the United States and other affluent countries for help. However, many of us in the United States and other countries put our priority on debating minor theological issues and church politics over helping the brethren who belong to the same school of thoughts and are in dire need. I believe that both the greatest strength and weakness of preterism is its hermeneutics. It is the deeper studying of the Word that brought us to preterism. However, the focus on hermeneutics and theology may have diverted our attention from more truly important things in Christian life. Preterists often find that they tend to be more inquisitive and delve into the study of theology more heavily than our non-preterist counterparts. However, the emphasis on the word and the academic activities has led us to forget things that are more important, helping those in need as the Good Samaritan did for the beaten traveler on the side of the road (Luke 10:29-37).

The Indian preterist ministries focus on balancing the hermeneutics and theology with the traditional Christian values of helping others in need. They daily reach hundreds of people through literature, local TV programs, seminars, public meetings and Bible schools, training younger generations in the Truth and developing prominent members as future leaders of the preterist ministry in India. Prabhu K. Das is dedicating his life to this cause. He has organized free books and stationary drives for orphans and Christmas gifts for widows and those stricken with leprosy. Despite his own hardships raising two children and supporting his wife and his parents who are in retirement, he constantly prays for the change in their situation—both social and financial matters—so that he, and other young preterist ministers like him who are working tirelessly in fulfilling their vision, may adequately provide for the needs of their families and the members of their congregations. Thankfully, the truth is prevailing and they are growing. What they are doing in India will impact and yield fruits for Indian Christians for generations to come. For all this, they need all our prayers and generous support. It’s high time to awake, unite, and bear fruits.





# Creation to Consummation

## Why Didn't the Rapture Cause a Permanent Rupture in the Existence of the Church on Earth?

by Ed Stevens

**M**OST FUTURISTS, AND EVEN many preterists, are unaware that Christianity experienced a “dark and obscure” period right after the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Prior to that, the Apostles were extremely active in missionary journeys and writing their epistles to the churches scattered over the Roman Empire. But all of that activity abruptly ceased when the Neronic persecution (AD 64-66) and the Jewish War (AD 66-70) broke onto the scene.

Christian historians are acutely aware of this *silent* and *dormant* period right after 70, and are baffled by it. Williston Walker stated that “the forty years from 70 to 110 remain one of the *obscurest* portions of church history.”<sup>1</sup> Wayne McCown described it as “an *obscure dark period* when [we are] not sure what was going on.”<sup>2</sup> Philip Schaff notes that “there is no other transition in history so radical and sudden, and yet *so silent and secret*. The stream of [Christian history] is for a short time *lost to our view*, and seems to run under ground.”<sup>3</sup>

Of the hundred-plus persons mentioned by name in the New Testament, not a single one of them ever surfaced after AD 70 to claim that the Parousia had just occurred. Church historians are unable to explain how and why “the original community . . . *disappeared* from history without a trace.”<sup>4</sup> They call it a “gap”<sup>5</sup> or a “break”<sup>6</sup>, which means the same thing as a *rupture*.

So there truly was a *rupture* in the existence of the church on earth right after the Neronic persecution and the Jewish-Roman war, but it was *not a permanent rupture*. This was because of the preaching of the gospel throughout the Roman world before the Neronic persecution (AD 64-66). Jesus alluded to this gospel proclamation in His parable of the sower (Matt 13:3-8, 18-23).

The Apostles planted the gospel seed far and wide, but *not all of it sprouted before AD 70*. Some of it *sprouted afterwards* and *restarted the church*. Schaff notes that “the soil of heathenism had been broken up, and the new seed planted by the hands of the Apostles gradually *took root*. . . the foundation was laid strong and deep by the Apostles themselves. *The seed scattered* by them from Jerusalem to Rome, and fertilized by their blood, *sprung up* as a bountiful harvest.”<sup>7</sup>

The church had to be restarted, but not from scratch. Not only had the gospel seed been planted all over the Roman Empire, but the Apostles put their written Gospels and Epistles into wide circulation before the Neronic persecution (AD 64-66). So it is easy to explain how the church was able to rise up again from that implanted gospel seed and the New

Testament writings that were now available to them.

What is not as easy to grasp, however, is why none of the pre-70 saints ever reappeared after AD 70 to claim that the eagerly awaited Parousia had just occurred. C. F. D. Moule complained that “it is hard to believe that a Judaistic type of Christianity . . . would not have . . . *made capital* out of this signal evidence that they, and not non-Christian Judaism, were the true Israel. But in fact our traditions are *silent*.”<sup>8</sup>

Rupert Furneaux asks: “How did Christianity record this event of epoch-making consequence to itself? The answer is by *silence, complete and absolute*. . . the fate of the original followers of Jesus went *unrecorded* in Christian literature until the fourth century.”<sup>9</sup>

Charles Hill reminds us that “an early Christian writer *who is even aware* of a hyper-preterist eschatology in the church [is] *yet to be found*.”<sup>10</sup> And Don Preston, who is not a literal rapture advocate, nevertheless admits that this silence about the Parousia and their ignorance of its occurrence afterwards is a problem for all preterists:

Stevens is correct to say that *we have no [patristic] authors* who point to AD 70 as the time of Christ's final coming, the judgment, and resurrection of the dead. *This silence is indeed perplexing* . . . for which we have *no easy answer*. . . how in the name of reason did they *fail to see that the Parousia had indeed occurred*? . . . Are we to suppose that the post 70 saints were *so ignorant that they could not see that connection*?<sup>11</sup>

*If they could not see the Parousia, resurrection, and judgment, then it is easy to see how they could miss the rapture also.*

So it is not just rapture preterists who “have some explaining to do”! All full preterists are under the same burden of proof to explain why not a single post-70 saint noticed the Parousia and claimed that it had occurred. *If they could miss the Parousia, resurrection, and judgment, then it is easy to see how they could miss the rapture also. And whatever explanation is offered for their ignorance of the Parousia works equally well to explain their ignorance of the rapture.*

Unfortunately, preterist critics of the literal rapture do not have a satisfactory explanation for this “perplexing silence.” The best they have come up with so far is to suggest that every single one of the pre-70 saints were either killed in the Neronic persecution or fell away into Judaistic or Hellenistic error before AD 70, so that not a single one of those living and remaining saints *understood* that the Parousia occurred. Do you see the problem with that?

Jesus stated that “*some of those standing there would not*

# Rapture Rupture

## Studies in Redemptive History

Edward E. Stevens

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taste death until they see the Son of Man coming with His angels” (Matt 16:27-28). Notice that Jesus said they would “see” Him at his Parousia. They would not miss it! Even if Parousia was only *seen* by “the eye of faith” (as some rapture critics mistakenly think), they still would have *known* that it occurred, because they “saw” it by faith.

Furthermore, Apostle Paul told the Corinthians that “we will not all sleep” (1 Cor 15:51-54), meaning that some of those saints would remain alive until Christ returned. Twice to the Thessalonians he mentioned “we who live and remain until the Parousia” (1 Thess 4:15, 17). Apostle John exhorted the living saints to remain faithful “so that when He **appears** we may have

*confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His Parousia”* (1 Jn 2:28), and that “*when He **appears** we will be like Him because we will see Him just as He is”* (1 Jn 3:2). Notice that those living and remaining saints would “see” Christ when He appeared, and

would be changed to be like Him. Do you catch the power of that?

To the faithful saints in Sardis, Jesus promised that “they will walk with Me in white” at His return (Rev 3:4). And to the living saints in Philadelphia who remained faithful until the Parousia, Jesus promised that He would keep them from the hour of testing (the great tribulation) that was about to come (Rev 3:10).

There is no ambiguity in these statements. It is clear that those elect saints who remained faithful to the end must have understood eschatology correctly, so that they could live and remain until the Parousia to see Him,

and draw near to Him, and experience all the things that had been promised. They were not expecting to be left around afterwards totally clueless about what had just happened!

Furthermore, Jesus said that the Great Tribulation (the Neronic persecution) would be cut short so that those *elect* would live and remain until the Parousia, at which time He would send forth His angels to gather them to Him (Matt 24:21-31). Those elect saints purified their lives in expectation of experiencing that angelic gathering.

Who were these *elect* ones? Evidently they were true faithful Christians “who demonstrated their true elect status by persevering to the end (Matt 24:13). God cut short the tribulation of those days so that they could remain alive until His return (Matt 24:22). Undoubtedly, one of the reasons they persevered to the end was because they understood eschatology correctly and held fast to their blessed hope (Titus 2:13), looking for their redemption which was drawing near (Luke 21:28).”<sup>12</sup>

As they faced the horrors of Nero’s persecution, those elect saints would have resonated with Paul’s promise that “*the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is about to be revealed to us*” (Rom 8:18). Was that glory revealed to them? Did they see it revealed, and experience it in any cognitive way? Or did they live through the Parousia without even knowing that it occurred, and without experiencing any of the things they were expecting?

Those saints literally staked their lives and their souls on those promises. They could not afford to misunderstand it and risk missing their Lord’s return and all of the benefits associated with it. They were longing for His return, “*waiting anxiously*” for it (Jude 21).

They had “*fixed their hope completely*” on it (1 Pet 1:13). They were intensely “*looking for these things*” (2 Pet 3:11-14). It was not a ho-hum issue for them. And if they saw Him return and cognitively experienced all those things that they were expecting to experience, then they would certainly have known that His Parousia occurred. It does not seem possible that they could have been unaware of it or silent about it afterwards. They should have been dancing in the streets and shouting from the rooftops, if they were still on earth—anything but silent!

Brian Martin nailed this point when he observed: “According to the author of *Hebrews*, these saints could ‘see’ the day approaching (Heb 10:25), which obviously meant that they understood eschatology correctly. Indeed, had not Jesus promised them that the Holy Spirit would ‘teach them the things to come’? Are we to believe that not one of those Holy Spirit-filled saints was able to maintain a correct understanding of eschatology in the face of Judaistic and/or Hellenistic error?”<sup>13</sup> That would mean that Christ was not able to keep any of His elect ones faithful and safe until His return. Perish the thought!

There is simply no way to get around the fact that those elect saints knew that the Parousia occurred. They *saw* the Son of Man coming with His angels, and *experienced it cognitively*. There was not a shred of doubt in their minds that it occurred. So if they were still around on earth after the Parousia, why were they so silent about what they had just seen and experienced?

Critics of the rapture have “no easy answer” for this “perplexing silence.” Their suggestion that every single pre-70 saint who was still alive on earth after the Parousia had been confused

*continued on p. 14*

ould miss the  
resurrection,  
ment, then it  
see how they  
s the rapture



# Rapture Rupture?

by Edward E. Stevens

... continued from p. 13

by Hellenistic error beforehand and thus failed to *understand* that Christ returned, is hopelessly at odds with both scripture and history. Charles Hill clearly points out the fallacy of such a claim:

In 1 Corinthians 13:12, Paul avers that the ignorance that he then experienced would be remedied *when the perfect would come*. His dim vision would then cease; he would then “*understand fully*, even as I have been fully understood.” Where then is the perfection of knowledge that Paul so earnestly expected? How paradoxical it is that *the very generation* which attained consummate *fullness of knowledge* when the perfect came, saw that knowledge *evaporate virtually overnight* [after AD 70]! . . . The irony is astounding. [This darkness of understanding] struck the church, according to hyper-preterism, concurrently with the church’s attainment of its *ultimate state of perfection*. It does not seem to me that one can have it both ways. If one wants to argue for a *radical nosedive* of the church as soon as the Apostles left the scene somewhere around A.D. 70, then I do not see how one can argue that it was precisely then that the church also attained the consummation of its hope, *its full measure of knowledge* and sanctification, [which was] its final state of conformity to the image of Christ.<sup>14</sup>

Do you grasp what Hill is saying? Claiming that “every single true Christian left alive at the Parousia was so confused that they failed to realize that the Parousia occurred” contradicts Paul’s prophecy about obtaining the fullness of understanding at the Parousia. Both situations cannot be true. Either those living saints reached the *perfection of their knowledge* at the Parousia, or Paul uttered a false prophecy. If they did receive perfection of understanding, how could they remain totally confused by Judaistic or Hellenistic thinking? And if they received that perfection of understanding at the Parousia, then they would have *understood* that the Parousia had indeed occurred. Yet there is nothing but *perplexing silence* coming from them after the Parousia. That is not what we would expect from them after receiving the perfection of their understanding.

So how do we explain their silence? Even though critics of the rapture have *no easy answer* for it, we rapture preterists do: The reason why no Christians spoke up immediately after AD 70 and claimed that the Parousia had just occurred is because they were gone. They were *silent* because they were *absent!* They could not say anything about the occurrence of the Parousia because they were no longer in the visible realm on earth. They were in heaven.

That fullness of knowledge (*the Perfect*) indeed arrived at the Parousia, but it obviously did not arrive on earth. It was the saints in the unseen realm who received that fullness of knowledge. Those living saints were *changed* from mortal to immortal and *taken* into the unseen realm where they experienced all the blessings that Jesus had promised, including that fullness of knowledge. Apart from a rapture, there is no convincing explanation for their silence about the occurrence of the Parousia and their experience of all those benefits that they were expecting.

If you would like more information about any of this, simply email me (preterist1@preterist.org) and request our FREE lesson outlines on the “Church Restart After 70.” They will be sent as email attachments in PDF format.

Whatever explanation is offered for their ignorance of the Parousia works equally well to explain their ignorance of the rapture.

1. Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, 3rd edition, pp. 39ff. emphasis added
2. Wayne McCown, Lecture at Northwestern Seminary, Rochester, NY, on Sept. 16, 2004. emphasis added
3. Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 2, electronic edition, n.p. emphasis added
4. Hans Conzelmann, *History of Primitive Christianity*, pp. 18, 111. emphasis added
5. John A. T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, p. 312
6. Hans Conzelmann, *History of Primitive Christianity*, p. 18
7. Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 2, electronic edition, n.p., emphasis added
8. C. F. D. Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament*, 1962, p. 123. emphasis added
9. Rupert Furneaux, *The Roman Siege of Jerusalem*, pp. 246-248. emphasis added
10. Charles Hill, chapter in *When Shall These Things Be?*, Keith Mathison, ed., pp. 105-9. emphasis added
11. Don Preston, *We Shall Meet Him in the Air*, pp. 286, 287, 291, 299; emphasis added
12. Brian Martin (ed. of *Fulfilled!* magazine), personal email to Ed Stevens dated Aug 13, 2015
13. Brian Martin (ed. of *Fulfilled!* magazine), personal email to Ed Stevens dated Aug 13, 2015
14. Charles Hill, chapter in *When Shall These Things Be?*, Keith Mathison, ed., pp. 106-9; brackets and emphasis added

## More from India

On January 10th, Victor Suman conducted the “THE FIRST INDIAN COVENANT CREATION 70 A.D CONFERENCE!” in his hometown of Bitragunta, Andhra Pradesh.

Victor may be reached at: [victorsuman1986@gmail.com](mailto:victorsuman1986@gmail.com)



*“GOD has given me the opportunity to conduct Covenant Creation conference first time in whole India. Nearly 70 people attended! They were amazed about Preterism! Because they never heard about Preterist Truth before!!! We are Planning to conduct Preterist conferences on every month second Saturday! Please keep our work in your Prayers! I would like to share this news with You!”*





## Avoiding the Spiritual Vasectomy

by Alan Bondar

*God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” (Gen 1:27-28)*

**S**OME INTERPRET THIS PASSAGE to be about the creation of Adam and his posterity. Others view it to be a prophecy of Christ and His posterity. Whichever view you take, this passage is ultimately fulfilled in Christ because even if you take the former view, Adam functions as a type of Christ. Christ must fulfill the blessing and mandates given to Adam and this passage, therefore, functions prophetically with either view.

That is why the biblical narrative ends with the marriage of Christ in the final chapters of Revelation. In order to be fruitful and multiply, Christ must have legitimate children through marriage. This means that the prophetic blessing and mandate of being fruitful and multiplying cannot begin until the marriage of Christ.

Futurism and hyper-preterism both give Christ a spiritual “vasectomy” and negate the whole point of the Bible’s grand ending—the marriage. In Hebrew culture, the greatest blessing upon a marriage is to produce offspring. Christ cannot fulfill the promise of producing His own children until after the marriage.

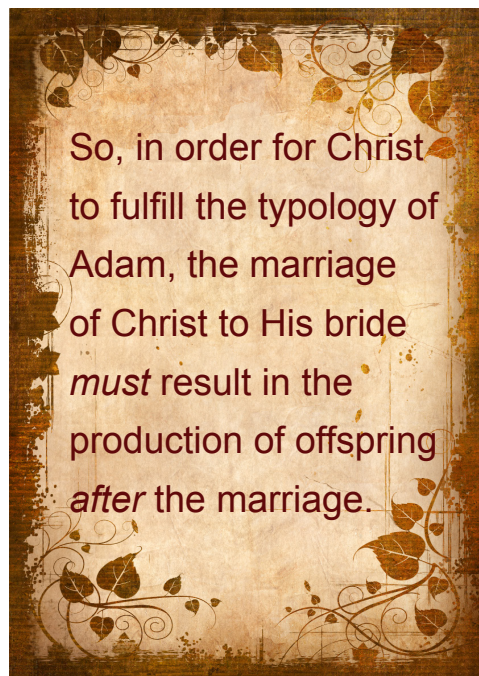
But didn’t Paul tell his first-century audience that they were children of God *before* the marriage of Christ? Yes he did. But that’s because they were God’s children by legal ownership. They were still waiting for the completion of their adoption as sons. Space does not permit me to delve into that topic in detail, but suffice it to say that the reason Christ must adopt them is because He did not produce those children. They are, in fact, children of the whore who were born into slavery like their mother (Gal 4).

So ultimately, the marriage of Christ must take place to complete the adoption. The Spirit was given as a down payment to guarantee the completion of the adoption. This means that the adoption was as good as done, but the adoption papers had to be signed for the process to be completed.

Romans 8 is about completing the adoption, which we know didn’t occur until the end of the Old Covenant via the destruction of Jerusalem. This is similar to being lost at sea and then someone shouts, “Land!” The cheering begins, “We’re saved!” You’re not actually saved until you’re on land, but you’re as good as saved. The Holy Spirit was the shout of “land.” Although the adoption was as good as complete with the Holy Spirit’s down payment, it was not yet complete.

The Old Covenant was a covenant of slavery under the law. The New Covenant is a covenant of freedom under the fulfilled law of Christ. Both covenants are linked to children. Under the Old Covenant, the children were slaves. Under the New Covenant, the children are free. What makes the children slaves or free in their respective covenants? How

they were born. There is a reason why Old Covenant children need redemption and adoption. They aren’t born according to promise, but according to the flesh (Gal 4). The reason you are a slave when you’re born according to the flesh is because you’re an illegitimate child that needs to be adopted. In other words, all of the children of Israel were born out of whoredom. None of them were born to God in wedlock. Although Israel was God’s wife (of betrothal) in the Old Covenant, she



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didn't have any children with Him. She had children with everyone else.

In a betrothal relationship, the wife and her children and everything else she has are owned by her husband by virtue of the betrothal covenant. The words in Hebrew and Greek that are often translated as *married woman* literally mean, *under-man woman*. Presupposition causes translators to translate it as *married woman* because the concept of betrothal is lost on us today. *Under-man woman* does not mean married, it means under-man woman (Romans 7 is a classic case of this mistranslation).

The whole reason for the adoption as sons is because the adoption into the freedom of being sons instead of slaves takes place at marriage, not betrothal. The Hebrew marriage date is set by the father (Gal 4), and God the Father's timetable does not have Christ married until Revelation 21.

The blessing and mandate to be fruitful and multiply of Genesis 1 is passed to Noah to Abraham to Isaac to Jacob. This is the ultimate blessing and mandate given to Christ. And Christ could not possibly fulfill that blessing and mandate until His marriage.

It is, in fact, the children of the New Covenant born through faith that are legitimate children of Christ. And we are brothers and sisters of the adopted children who also get full access into the freedom of the New Covenant.

So, in order for Christ to fulfill the typology of Adam, the marriage of

Christ to His bride *must* result in the production of offspring *after* the marriage. But strangely, there are two views that utterly ignore this:

### 1. Futurism

In futurism, Christ and the bride get married and everyone goes to heaven. So there are no children being produced. Christ receives a spiritual vasectomy. This defeats the whole point of the marriage.

### 2. Hyper-preterism

In hyper-preterism, everything ends in AD 70 to the degree that God has promised nothing in Scripture for us today. But if everything ended in AD 70, then we have a marriage at some point in history where Christ has also received a spiritual vasectomy.

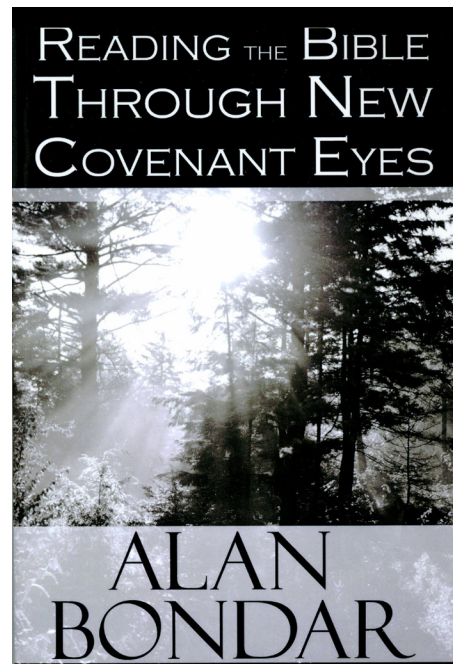
### Conclusion

Are we to believe that Christ just ignores this command and blessing and produces no offspring through His marriage? The marriage of Christ was not the end. It was the beginning of the eternal fulfillment of the promise made to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Once we understand that the Bible is our parent's photo album, we can begin to learn from their history on how to live. We see all the teaching about New Covenant life. That New Covenant life takes place once you are born through faith. Christ produces children of faith, not of flesh. It is a covenant of freedom.

Children are born to Christ and

His wife legitimately through faith. They are truly born from above. Our mission on earth is to proclaim the Gospel of God so that people might be born from above as children of Christ, who is our everlasting Father (Isaiah 9:6). ✝





# Passages

During a recent vacation, my wife and I visited “Passages,” a traveling history of the Bible exhibit. After engagements in several cities across the country, the exhibit is currently in its last engagement in Santa Clarita, CA, where my wife and I experienced it. Housed in a future Hobby Lobby building (the Hobby Lobby owner is the developer of the Passages exhibit), the 30,000 square foot exhibit contains ancient Bibles, replicas of ancient texts, scrolls, and numerous other biblically related artifacts. The displays are contained in various period sets ranging from caves to Jewish Ghettos of the Holocaust (some replete with animatronics) and walks the visitor through the history of the Bible from its earliest manuscripts, to its translation processes, and dissemination.

I recall standing before an animatronic of John Wycliffe behind prison bars. “John” would “come to life” every so many minutes and give a speech about translating the Bible into the common language of the people so that the Bible would be available to all, not just a select few. As I pondered the sacrifice of so many individuals to make the Bible available to the laity, some of them suffering martyrdom for the cause, I was struck by the thought that I didn’t even know how many versions of the Bible I owned. Not only printed copies, but electronic copies on my computer as well. In fact, as I stood before Wycliffe staring out through his prison bars, I had the entire Bible on the phone in my pocket. I was hit by a sobering thought: many individuals had suffered greatly, some ultimately, to make the Bible available to the common person—and yet here I stood with a greater availability to the Bible than these godly persons could have ever imagined, and yet so easily take it for granted.

[www.explorepassages.com](http://www.explorepassages.com)

Working replica of Gutenberg’s press.





## The Valley of Vision

Lord, high and holy, meek and lowly,

Thou hast brought me to the valley of vision,  
where I live in the depths but see thee in the heights;  
hemmed in by mountains of sin I behold thy glory.

Let me learn by paradox  
that the way down is the way up,  
that to be low is to be high,  
that the broken heart is the healed heart,  
that the contrite spirit is the rejoicing spirit,  
that the repenting soul is the victorious soul,  
that to have nothing is to possess all,  
that to bear the cross is to wear the crown,  
that to give is to receive,  
that the valley is the place of vision.

Lord, in the daytime stars can be seen from the  
deepest wells,  
and the deeper the wells the brighter thy stars shine;  
Let me find thy light in my darkness,  
thy life in my death,  
thy joy in my sorrow,  
thy grace in my sin,  
thy riches in my poverty  
thy glory in my valley.

from Valley of Vision, a collection of Puritan prayers.



## In This Issue:

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The Spiritual Vasectomy

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Ione, CA 95640-9614

## Preterism . . . *it's about time!*

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

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

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

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

**Preterism**  
Preterism  
Preterism

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