

THE LAW OF MOSES AND THE A.D. 70 DOCTRINE

Tim Ayers



Tim Ayers is a native Texan, born in Austin. He and his wife, the former Rosemary Fullingim, are the parents of four boys. Ayers graduated from the University of Texas in Austin and from the Southwest School of Bible Studies in Austin, Texas. He has served as local evangelist for the Lord's church in Texas and Arkansas. Ayers has spoken on lectureships in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Singapore. He is presently a full time instructor at Southwest School of Bible Studies.

INTRODUCTION¹

Our Heavenly Father devoted plenty of space in His great Book, the Bible, to warn His people about false teachers and false doctrines. John warned: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 Jn. 4:1). Peter wrote:

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not (2 Pet. 2:1-3).

The apostle Paul commanded: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:17-18). These people make it their job to teach things contrary to what God has clearly said. Their false doctrines are so pernicious, fatal, and cause such spiritual harm that God calls them "doctrines of devils [demons, ASV]" (1 Tim. 4:1).

God, in His Word, teaches us that being religious is not the same as being righteous (cf. Acts 17:22-23). Some religious people seek to establish their own way of righteousness, as did the Jews (Rom. 10:1-3). Some twist or pervert the Gospel (Gal. 1:7), others wrest or distort the Scriptures (2 Pet. 3:16), in an attempt to make the Word of God fit their false ideas. They teach lies for truth (Isa. 5:20). Sadly, this type of teaching appeals to large numbers of people who love to hear lies (Isa. 30:10; 2 Tim. 4:3-4; Isa. 28:15). Some even fool themselves into thinking that they are serving God and doing His will while opposing His servants (cf. Jn. 16:2; Jer. 3:20; Mt. 23:37). False teachers ridicule “Thus saith the Lord” preaching. They prefer to teach their own thoughts rather than God’s (Isa. 65:2). They choose their own ways rather than submitting to God’s will (Isa. 66:3-4). They transgress God’s commandments because of man-made traditions and doctrines, which Jesus condemned (Mt. 15:3-9).

It should be obvious that it was important to God to warn us about false teachers. To neglect this subject is to overlook a crucial part of God’s Word. John said: “Little children, let no man deceive you” (1 Jn. 3:7). He would not write this if it were not possible to be deceived. Even the Son of God, Jesus Christ Himself, spent a large portion of the short time He was on this earth warning us of false teachers. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned His followers that false teachers are like “ravening wolves” (Mt. 7:15). By using the picture of wolves, Jesus was clearly showing the danger of false teachers. Paul spoke to the Ephesian elders of “grievous wolves” who would enter the church “not sparing the flock” (Acts 20:29). False teachers are dangerous because their message is error, not truth. Only truth saves (Jn. 8:32), only the Gospel of Christ is God’s power to save (Rom. 1:16); error never saved anyone!

Understanding the foregoing, the focus of the study to follow will be upon a particular doctrine that has been a thorn in the side of the Lord’s church for several decades. Some have called it “A.D. 70 Doctrine” because of its obsession with the events surrounding that date. Some used to call it “Max King Doctrine” because he was the major proponent of it from at least the early 1970s. It has also been called by other terms, such as “Realized Eschatology,” “Covenant Eschatology,” and “Transmillennialism.” We must understand that the theory we are speaking of is *not* the same as the idea some brethren have regarding when the book of Revelation was written (i.e., before

A.D. 70). Many faithful brethren have held that view over the years and still understood that there would be a future judgment and general resurrection of all the dead at the end of the world. That is not what we are looking at in this chapter. With that clarification, we turn our attention to a study of the false doctrine in question. It will be considered in the light of the inspired Word of God.

WHAT IS “REALIZED ESCHATOLOGY”?

Most people in the church and in the world have probably never heard the terms “eschatology” or “realized eschatology.” But, if you mention a phrase such as “end times” or “last days” then they might show signs of recognition. The word “realized” is intended to convey the idea of being already fulfilled, and the word “eschatology” comes from two Greek words meaning “study of last things,” or end time events. So, this doctrine teaches that those things that are usually considered to be “end time” events, i.e., things that will occur at the end of time, have already been fulfilled or have already happened. It should be obvious to most that this would entail a redefining of several terms, or at least reclassifying some things from a literal fulfillment to some sort of figurative fulfillment. In 1973, Max King, in his debate with Gus Nichols, affirmed:

The Holy Scriptures teach the second coming of Christ, including the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead, occurred with the fall of Judaism in 70 AD.²

Brother Curtis Cates listed the “basic doctrines of Kingism” as:

1. All Bible prophecy was fulfilled completely by A.D. 70
2. The kingdom came with power in A.D. 70
3. The Second Coming of Christ occurred in A.D. 70
4. The Judgment Day took place in A.D. 70
5. The dead were raised and death conquered in A.D. 70
6. The Law of Moses ended in A.D. 70
7. Satan’s rule ceased in A.D. 70
8. The world ended in A.D. 70
9. Heaven and Hell began in A.D. 70³

Brother Terry Varner wrote that the “two major points in the AD 70 theory” are “(1) the second coming of Christ occurred in AD 70, and

(2) the Law of Moses co-existed with the Law of Christ from Pentecost (AD 30) to the destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70).⁴ Before we deal with these points in light of the Scriptures, let us take a quick look at the history of this doctrinal system.

HISTORY

Interestingly, it seems that an idea similar to that of the A.D. 70 theory was manifest even in the first century. Paul wrote: “ But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some” (2 Tim. 2:16-18). Here we learn that some were teaching that the resurrection was past already. We may not understand all that this entailed, but Paul pointed out that this false idea was not just some innocuous opinion that brethren could disagree over and still be in fellowship. Rather, this was a doctrine that would overthrow or destroy the faith of those who believed it. He called it “profane and vain babblings” that “will increase unto more ungodliness.” He said that to believe the resurrection was already past was to be in error concerning the truth. The same could be said today of the A.D. 70 theory.

A seventeenth-century Spanish friar, named Luis De Alcazar, wrote a 900 page commentary on the book of Revelation. In that commentary, he espoused the preterist doctrine (“preterist” means past, thus the preterist believes that all prophecy has been fulfilled in the past). Alcazar was attempting to counteract the Protestant view that the Anti-Christ and man of sin in the New Testament was the pope of Roman Catholicism by contending that all prophecy was fulfilled during the first six centuries of Christianity.⁵ Then, in 1878, a Congregationalist minister, named James S. Russell, wrote a book titled *The Parousia* in which he also taught the preterist view of prophecy. The Greek word *parousia* means presence or coming. Russell’s book has become the standard for all preterists. Cates also mentioned a book by Dr. A. Wilford Hall, entitled *Universalism Against Itself*, written in 1883, which states:

The coming of Christ is fraught with incalculable interest to the Christian ... Universalism teaches that this important event took place at the destruction of Jerusalem, nearly 1800 years ago. This position is taken in order to avoid, if possible the admission of a future general judgment, which everywhere stands closely

connected with the second coming of Christ. If Universalists could succeed in making the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans the date of this second advent of the Savior, they could then, without fear of successful controversy, contend that the scattering of the Jewish nation, and the demolition of their metropolis and temple, was the scene of the general judgment so frequently referred to by Christ and his apostles.⁶

Here, we see that Universalism in the nineteenth century was teaching some of the same ideas espoused by those who are today advocating the A.D. 70 theory. C.H. Dodd, a British theologian in the early twentieth century, affirmed what he called “Realized Eschatology,” stating that the end-times prophecies were fulfilled in the personal ministry of Jesus.

As far as churches of Christ are concerned, this doctrine was first promoted by Max King and his father-in-law C.D. Beagle at a preachers meeting in Ohio in 1971. Later that year, King published his book *The Spirit of Prophecy*, claiming it was “a fresh new look at prophecy.”⁷ In 1987, King published a 784 page book entitled *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*. Following that, in 1990 he came out with his book, *Old Testament Israel and New Testament Salvation*. In August of 1990, King began publishing a monthly paper, called *The Living Presence*, which continued for 15 years. King’s theological system has developed into what he termed “Transmillennialism.” It appears to be a mixture of post-modern philosophy and denominational theology. In fact, as far back as March of 2000, brother Wayne Jackson wrote an article entitled “King & Company Go Transdenominational.”⁸ Thus, we can see that when one begins moving away from the truth, even on what may seem to be an insignificant matter, there is no telling how far he may go.

MAJOR FLAWS OF THE A.D. 70 THEORY

First, it must be noted that the A.D. 70 theory begins with a different way of interpreting prophecy. King said in his first book that the phrase “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy,” in Revelation 19:10, means that the nature of prophecy must be in harmony with the work of Christ which was and is spiritual. Therefore, King taught that all prophecy must be interpreted “spiritually,” which he contrasted with literal. This is a faulty interpretation. The phrase, “spirit of prophecy,” does not mean “nature of prophecy.” The angel’s statement to John in Revelation 19:10 does not refer to the application

of prophecy or the manner of fulfillment. It refers to the source of prophecy or the purpose behind it, as we might say the heart of all prophecy. The “testimony of Jesus” is the revelation of Jesus, the Word of God, and that is the inspiration of prophecy, what is in back of it. But King and his followers say that their idea mentioned above is the “key” to understanding prophecy. King wrote:

It is the belief of this author that the special method of interpretation is firmly established in the Bible, and this it is the basic and primary method of interpretation involved in end-time prophecy ... The spiritual method of interpretation prevails in regard to the establishment and development of spiritual Israel, and to her is given a large portion of Old Testament Prophecy.⁹

One of the basic rules of hermeneutics states: “All words are to be understood in their literal sense, unless the evident meaning of the context forbids,”¹⁰ but this is not the way the A.D. 70 theory approaches Scripture. King wrote that “the term ‘literal’ is being used ... as representative of that which is *material* in nature, and ‘spiritual’ is being used as denoting that which is *non-material*.”¹¹ But the work Jesus did was to elevate the spiritual over the carnal or worldly (cf. 1 Cor. 3:1ff). His work had nothing to do with emphasizing non-material over the material. Jesus was raised in a body of flesh and bones (Lk. 24:39); He could be seen or beheld by human eyes and touched by human hands (Acts 1:11; 1 Jn. 1:1ff). So this distinction between material and non-material is false.

One passage that A.D. 70 advocates use is Luke 21:22. There, Jesus said: “For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.” The context here has Jesus warning His disciples about the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus we are told that all prophecy was fulfilled when Jerusalem was destroyed. However, Jesus was referring to all those things written with regard to the destruction of Jerusalem and the ending of the Jewish Old Testament system, such as in the books of Daniel and Zechariah. Notice the prophecy of Daniel’s seventy weeks in Daniel 9. Daniel said: “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy” (Dan. 9:24). When did all these things occur? Did they occur on Pentecost in Acts 2, or did they have to wait unto A.D. 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem? The

A.D. 70 theory postpones the effects of the cross of Christ for 40 years! Peter, in Acts 2, told his hearers that they must “repent” and “be baptized” so that they could receive the “remission of sins” (v. 38). Did he mean that they would receive forgiveness a half a lifetime later? And, all the while they would still be under the Law of Moses, which was not fully taken away, according to the A.D. 70 theory, until Jerusalem was destroyed. This nullifies and contradicts Paul in at least the following two passages:

Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace (Eph. 2:15).

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross (Col. 2:14).

These two passages are speaking of the removal of the Law of Moses so that all mankind, Jew or Gentile, can be saved under the Law of Christ. Before we are through, we will have more to say on this point.

King wrote: “The center and heart of all prophecy is not Pentecost,” but rather “the fall of Jerusalem.”¹² This illustrates the extreme that the A.D. 70 theory proponents will go to in order to attempt to be consistent in their false doctrine. But let us not go to the other extreme and advocate that no Scripture at all refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of Judaism, because that would be just as wrong. Most of Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21 are speaking of the A.D. 70 attack of the Roman army against Judah and Jerusalem. Also, the writer of Hebrews referred to it when he said: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Heb. 10:25). “[T]he day approaching” mentioned in this verse cannot refer to the first day of the week, as that would be telling us to exhort more strongly on Saturday than on Tuesday. Actually, the verse is talking about the exhorting which is to take place in the assembly. The Hebrew Christians to whom this epistle was penned would be especially affected by the attack on Jerusalem; therefore, they needed to be encouraged to keep assembling with the church in order to not lose their faith in the face of all that would occur at Jerusalem.

Another major error of the A.D. 70 theory concerns the Second Coming of Jesus, which they tie to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. King wrote:

[A.D. 70] was the end of the world, the destruction of the temple, and the coming of Christ (Matt. 23:1-3). This was when heaven and earth passed away (Matt. 24:35; Rev. 20:11). This was when the greater and more perfect tabernacle was entered by all the redeemed.

There is no time period between the fall of Jerusalem and the second coming of Christ. They are synchronous events time-wise.

There is no scriptural basis for extending the second coming of Christ beyond the fall of Jerusalem.¹³

As brother Cates noted, given what the A.D. 70 theory teaches, “Thus, when Vespasian, the Roman emperor, dispatched his son Titus to destroy Jerusalem, he ushered in the return of Christ.”¹⁴ Who can believe it? Notice that in Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32, Jesus told His apostles that even He did not know the exact time of His Second Coming. However, He had just given several signs to indicate to the apostles when the destruction of Jerusalem would occur. How can these verses be harmonized given the A.D. 70 theory? Simply, they cannot. The last few verses of these chapters are referring to the final Second Coming of the Lord. The previous verses in these chapters *are* referring to the events of A.D. 70. Notice these Scriptures.

But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night (1 Thess. 5:1-2).

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up (2 Pet. 3:10).

Here the phrase used to describe the Lord’s coming is “as a thief in the night,” which indicates that His coming will be unexpected, unannounced and sudden. None of those terms fit with the description of the events of A.D. 70. Brother Wayne Jackson cogently remarks:

Here is the problem. In studying the New Testament material relative to the “coming” of Christ, preterists note that there are passages which seem to speak of the nearness of the Lord’s coming—from a first-century vantage point (cf. James 5:8); they observe that there are texts which indicate a “coming” in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (cf. Matthew 24:30); combining these, they conclude that the Savior’s “second coming” must have transpired in A.D. 70; and

furthermore, since the Scriptures are clear as to the fact that the resurrection of the dead, the judgment day, and the end of the world will all occur on the day the Lord returns, the advocates of realized eschatology are forced to “spiritualize” these several happenings, contending that all will take place at the same time. In this “interpretive” process, a whole host of biblical terms must be redefined in order to make them fit the scheme. And so, while preterists attempt to be consistent, it is nonetheless a sad reality that they are consistently wrong!

[W]as there a sense in which Christ “came” to folks at various times and places? Yes, and no serious student of the Bible denies this. Jesus “came” on the day of Pentecost via the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (see John 14:18). The coming was representative, not literal. The Lord warned the brethren in Ephesus that if they did not repent, he would “come” to them in judgment, and they would forfeit their identity as a faithful congregation (Revelation 2:5). In describing the horrible judgment to be inflicted upon rebellious Jerusalem, Jesus, employing imagery from the Old Testament, spoke of his “coming” in power and glory (Matthew 24:30). Again, this was a representative “coming” by means of the Roman forces (cf. Matthew 22:7). Verse thirty-four of Matthew 24 clearly indicates that this event was to occur before that first-century generation passed away. The Lord’s “second coming,” however, will be as visibly apparent as his ascension back into heaven was (Acts 1:11). Indeed, he will be “revealed” (2 Thessalonians 1:7), or “appear” to all (2 Timothy 4:1; Hebrews 9:28). It is a mistake of horrible proportions to confuse the symbolic “comings” of Christ with the “second” (cf. Hebrews 9:28) coming. And this is what the preterists do.¹⁵

Another mistake of the A.D. 70 theory is with regard to the end of the world. Their view is that the phrase, “end of the world,” refers to the end of Judaism, the Jewish world, which occurred in A.D. 70. King wrote:

It is the conviction of the author that the ending or the continuity of God’s material creationism is totally unrelated to God’s scheme of redemption. This is not a denial that “a world” was going to end at the second coming of Christ, for this was affirmed within the scriptures. Denial is made, however, that the world involved in redemption and destined to end at Christ’s return is the physical or material world. The author’s position is made clear in chapter three, where indisputable evidence is presented that identifies the world marked for removal as the

Jewish world, born of Abraham's fleshly seed and governed by the law of Moses.¹⁶

One problem with this idea is that, even though Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed so that no one can correctly obey the old Law of Moses in its entirety, the fact is that Judaism as a religious system did not die in A.D. 70. It continues even today with the orthodox Jewish community still following certain aspects of Old Testament teaching. Jesus said:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled (Mt. 5:17-18).

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away (Mt. 24:35).

King claims that in these passages the phrase, "[H]eaven and earth," refers to the ending of Judaism in A.D. 70. But, the first passage teaches that Christ fulfilled all of the old covenant with all the Messianic prophecies. The second verse means that none of the words of the Lord would fail to accomplish their purpose. There is no legitimate hermeneutical principle that would demand changing the meaning of "[H]eaven and earth" to refer to Judaism. Christ fulfilled the Law of Moses and nailed it to His cross (Col. 2:14). Thus, Paul told the Colossians, do not allow anyone to condemn you for not abiding by the regulations of the old law (v. 16). Why was this the case? Because those things from the old law were "a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (v. 17). As Cates asks: "Where is the scripture which says the old law was 'nailed' to the destroyed city of Jerusalem or that they had become dead to the law of Moses by the so called 'end of the world' of Judaism in A.D. 70? The very suggestion of such is ridiculous!"¹⁷

Concerning the receiving of remission of sins, the A.D. 70 theory teaches that the blood of Christ on the cross of Calvary did not accomplish redemption or provide for the remission of sins until the events of A.D. 70. Also, A.D. 70 adherents deny that the new birth or any of the passages on baptism apply to anyone living today. In answer to the question, "What is the new birth?" Larry Siegle wrote:

All Israel, on a community level, experienced the "new birth" or resurrection in A.D. 70 ... In the case of individuals, this process took place during the forty years of transition between the two

covenants, through dying and rising with Christ (Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 3:26, 27). The end result of the process of the “new birth” is that a person became a part of God’s “new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17). Today, the transformation is INSTANTANEOUS. When a person obeys the gospel of Christ he immediately receives the benefits of the accomplished work of Christ, and is ushered back into the abiding presence of God (Rev. 21, 22).¹⁸

Max King said that all Bible passages dealing with baptism “deal with the UNIQUE situation of the firstfruit (pre 70) Christians who participated in the change of the aeons through their dying and rising with Christ.”¹⁹ So, according to this doctrine, the new birth refers to the transition period between Pentecost and A.D. 70. Even though Jesus said we “must be born again” (Jn. 3:7), the A.D. 70 theory believers say, “Not so.” And notice that Siegle put the “new creation” of 2 Corinthians 5:17 after the events of A.D. 70, so that no one could be a “new creature” until after the destruction of Jerusalem. However, Paul wrote: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (v. 17). He did not say they had to wait several decades until they could be new creatures. In the next verse, he said that God had *already* reconciled them unto Himself by Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 5:18). The new creation was existing long before A.D. 70, according to the inspired apostle Paul. This novel interpretation of the baptism verses in the New Testament is probably one of the reasons the Kingites have moved completely out of the Lord’s church and into full-fledged interdenominationalism.

Concerning the resurrection, the A.D. 70 theory teaches that the Bible verses which speak of the resurrection are referring to the resurrection of Christianity from intense persecution upon the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. In other words, with Judaism gone the Christians are more free to practice their religion. Yet, this does not agree with the facts of history, which tell us that Christianity suffered tremendous persecution from the Romans after A.D. 70. Again, Jackson pointedly writes that the A.D. 70 theory believers

... deny the eventual resurrection of the human body—just as the Sadducees did twenty centuries ago (Acts 23:8). The entire fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians was written to counter this error: “How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead [ones–plural]?” (15:12). But those who subscribe to the notion of realized eschatology spiritualize the concept of the resurrection, alleging that such references are merely to the

emergence of the church from an era of anti-Christian persecution. In other words, it is the “resurrection” of a cause, not a resurrection of people. The theory is flawed in several particulars, but consider these two points: The Scriptures speak of the “resurrection” as involving both the good and the evil, the just and the unjust (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15). Where, in the preterist scheme of things, is the resurrection of the “evil”? Was the “cause” of evil to emerge at the same time as the “cause” of truth? As noted above, the resurrection contemplated in 1 Corinthians 15 has to do with the raising of “dead ones” (masculine, plural)—not an abstract “cause” (neuter, singular). Significantly, the bodily resurrection of Jesus is cited as a precursor to the general resurrection—in this very context (15:20,23). Christ charged that those who deny the resurrection of the body are ignorant of both the Scriptures and the power of God (Matthew 22:29).²⁰

The A.D. 70 adherents teach that the Law of Moses continued in effect as God’s law for the Jews until A.D. 70. They claim that the New Covenant of Christ co-existed with the Old Testament law during the forty-year period between the cross and the destruction of Jerusalem. When the events of A.D. 70 occurred, then the law was fulfilled and removed. Charles E. Geiser in debate with Terry Varner said that “the new covenant ‘existed’ (but was not established yet, see Hebrews 10:9) before the fall of Jerusalem, but that such implies that the Law of Moses was abolished prior to A.D. 70 does not follow logically.” In that debate, Geiser denied the proposition: “The Bible teaches that the Law of Moses was abolished before the destruction of Jerusalem as God’s acceptable law for the Jews.”²¹ King stated: “The Law was nailed to the cross, but not destroyed. It was taken ‘out of the way,’ but not taken away in the sense of existing any longer.”²² As noted above, this view of the Law of Moses contradicts the words of Paul in Ephesians 2:15 and Colossians 2:14. Jesus said: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil” (Mt. 5:17). He completed this mission and while on the cross, almost at the point of death, stated: “It is finished” (Jn. 19:30). As Paul wrote to the Ephesians, through the cross of Christ and His sacrifice on that cross, both Jew and Gentile are now reconciled to God (Eph. 2:16). Both Jew and Gentile now “have access by one Spirit unto the Father” (v. 18). The church is the “holy temple” (v. 21) possessing the “habitation of God through the Spirit” (v. 22), not the physical building that had been in Jerusalem since the restoration of Judah from Babylo-

nian captivity. The fact is, man cannot be amenable or accountable to two laws at the same time. As long as the Law of Moses was in effect for the Jews, they were responsible to keep it (Deut. 4:1-2). Making that very point to the Romans, Paul states:

Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God (Rom. 7:1-4).

Paul said that several years before the events of A.D. 70. Did Paul not know what he was talking about? Yes, he did! It is the A.D. 70 advocates who do not know what they are talking about!

Another consequence of this damnable doctrine is seen in considering the Lord's Supper. The night before Jesus was crucified, as He instituted the Lord's Supper with His disciples, He said: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Mt. 26:29). The A.D. 70 theory states that the kingdom was not established until after the events of A.D. 70. That would mean that the communion could not be observed until after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. However, in explaining about the Lord's Supper, Paul wrote: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26). Here, Paul is saying that Christians will partake of the Lord's Supper until Jesus comes again. Contradicting that, the A.D. 70 theory teaches that Jesus came in the events of A.D. 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem. Therefore, they could not take the communion before A.D. 70, but they could not take it after A.D. 70 either! What a crazy doctrine.

Notice that when the A.D. 70 theorizers teach that the kingdom was not established until A.D. 70, after the destruction of Jerusalem, they contradict what Peter taught on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Jesus came to this earth to set up the kingdom which had been prophesied in the Old Testament. Jesus said: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom

of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mk. 1:15). Just when was this kingdom actually established? Peter said: “Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that ... he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption” (Acts 2:30-31). Peter plainly says that Christ was sitting on the throne ruling over His kingdom and that it began at His resurrection.

The A.D. 70 theory implies that all of the things Paul mentioned to the Corinthians, i.e., in 1 Corinthians 15, have already occurred. In that chapter, Paul wrote:

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death (1 Cor. 15:22-26).

According to the A.D. 70 theory, all these things happened when Jerusalem was destroyed. But, we still have rule and authority on the earth. We still suffer death. And if the A.D. 70 theory is true, then Christ was to rule only until the events of A.D. 70. That would mean He is not reigning now! How absurd.

CONCLUSION

A.D. 70 advocates claim that their doctrine was the original belief and teaching of the early church, and they further claim that it was lost in the dark ages. If that is true, why do we not have writings from the second and third centuries that would reflect those ideas? We do not. George E. Jensen wrote:

When Was This View Lost?

If we were to grant, for argument sake, that Max King and others in agreement are interpreting the Bible correctly, then a valid question is: When was this view lost? The claim is being made that the inspired writers of the New Testament Books all gave emphasis to the final Jewish calamity. If this is so, then when did the saints go astray and begin believing such notions as that the Lord would literally return, and raise all the dead, and destroy this planet, and judge all men of all time, and then separate them into heaven and into hell? How ancient are these beliefs? To

answer these questions, we shall go as close to the first century as possible in search of quotes. A multitude of quotes can be found. These early statements will indicate whether men still looked to the future or to the past for Bible fulfillment. The following quotes are taken from *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*: “But be ready, for you do not know the hour in which our Lord comes. Didache (c.80-140, E)”;¹ “He speaks of the day of His appearing, when He will come and redeem us, each one according to his works. Second Clement ©. 150”;² “Believing in Him, we may be saved in His second glorious advent. Justin Martyr ©. 160, E)”;³ “All the prophets announced His two advents ... In the second one, He will come on the clouds, bringing on the day which burns as a furnace, Iranaeus ©. 180, E/W.” (Bercot 606). Brother Varner supplied a whole list of similar quotations and concluded by saying: “All of the above quotes ... clearly show that the early post-apostolic authors looked to a future judgment and judgment day of all mankind rather than a judgment occurring in the past as King advocates” (92). Can it be that those living so near the close of the first century, did not even know that all these crucial Bible doctrines were not to be taken literally?! The truth of the matter is, these quotes show clearly that key “end time” events had not yet occurred. And these men did not seek to change their interpretation of scripture because the Lord had not come right away.²³

We also ask, where is the controversy over this? Where do we find anyone discussing these issues or arguing or debating these matters in the second or third centuries or anytime afterward? We do not find it anywhere, because it never happened. It is truly sad to see how man can be so deceived by false doctrine. That is why we have so many warnings in the Scripture. Let us then be ever diligent to be “rightly dividing” or “handling aright” the Word of Truth, and “search the scriptures daily” so that we can be “approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed” (2 Tim. 2:15).

ENDNOTES

¹ All Scripture references are taken from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. All Greek definitions and some commentary remarks are from e-Sword Version 7.9.8 unless otherwise noted.

² Gus Nichols and Max R. King, *The Nichols-King Debate* (Warren, OH: Parkman Road Church of Christ, 1973), 1.

³ Curtis A. Cates. “Did the Destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 Constitute the Second Coming of Christ and the End of the World, and Have the Resurrection

and the Judgment Already Occurred?” *Studies in Matthew*, ed. Dub McClish (Denton, TX: Valid Publications Inc., 1995), 577.

⁴ Terry Varner, “The Max King Heresy Exposed,” *Living in Trust: A Study in the Bible Doctrine of Prayer*, Curtis A. Cates, ed. (Memphis School of Preaching, 1993), 513.

⁵ <http://www.cephasministry.com/preterism.html>
<http://dedication.www3.50megs.com/reformation2.html>

⁶ Cates, 578.

⁷ Terry Varner, *Studies in Biblical Eschatology* (Marietta, OH: Therefore Stand Publications, 1981), 34.

⁸ Wayne Jackson, “King & Company Go Transdenominational” <http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/166-king-company-go-transdenominational>

⁹ Max R. King, *Spirit of Prophecy* (Warren, OH: Warren Publishing Co., 1971), 1-2.

¹⁰ D.R. Dungan, *Hermeneutics* (Delight, AR: Gospel Light Publishing Co., n.d.), 184.

¹¹ King, 1.

¹² *Ibid.*, 33.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 68, 81, 105.

¹⁴ Cates, 583.

¹⁵ Wayne Jackson, “The Menace of Radical Preterism” <http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/91-the-menace-of-radical-preterism>

¹⁶ King, 181.

¹⁷ Cates, 596.

¹⁸ Larry Siegle, *The Covenant Messenger* January 1994: 4.

¹⁹ Max R. King, *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ* (Warren, OH: privately printed, 1987), 430.

²⁰ Jackson.

²¹ Varner-Geiser Debate, Proposition 2.

²² King, *Spirit of Prophecy*, 368.

²³ George E Jensen, “The AD 70 Doctrine,” <http://www.preterismeschatology.com/The%20AD%20%70Doctrine.htm>