

The Resurrection of the Last Day

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In the Sep/Oct edition of FCGN, we began a study of the “AD 70” doctrine. At its very basic level, this doctrine teaches that Jesus returned in AD 70 at the destruction of Jerusalem and He is not coming back again. Part of this doctrine denies a future, physical, bodily resurrection. This article will examine that belief.

Those who hold the “AD 70” doctrine teach that the resurrection of First Corinthians 15 is not a future, bodily resurrection of individuals. Rather, they say that it is a spiritual, corporate resurrection of the kingdom of God from the shackles of Judaism when the temple was destroyed. I have done much reading and study of this doctrine and I can honestly say that there is no doctrine more convoluted than this! This article will allow the Scriptures to speak on a future, bodily resurrection.

Luke 20:35-36 - “But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.”

John 5:28-29 - “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

John 11:23-26 - “Jesus saith unto her, ‘Thy brother shall rise again.’ Martha saith unto him, ‘I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.’ Jesus said unto her, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?’”

1 Corinthians 15:50-52 - “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

Philippians 3:10-11 - “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.”

Philippians 3:20-21 - “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that

it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”

1 Thessalonians 4:15-16 - “For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.”

1 Peter 1:3-4 - “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.”

Many other passages could be supplied! What’s the point? The Bible teaches a physical, bodily resurrection that is assured to the Christian by the physical, bodily

resurrection of Jesus Himself! In studying what the Preterist position is, I have found that they cannot and will not stay within one passage that deals with the future, bodily resurrection. Jesus, Paul, Peter, and John taught a future, bodily

resurrection! When we allow them to speak, it is very clear. The “AD 70” advocates have too much to say. Here’s just one example - one advocate of the false doctrine filmed over 200 videos on First Corinthians 15 as he was attempting to explain away a future, bodily resurrection! Over 200 videos!! First, I would say he has too much time on his hands. Second, he said a lot more than Paul said!

Here’s one more plain passage: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” (1 Jn. 3:1-3). Our hope is the resurrection and it is based on His resurrection. Notice, “...we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is...”

This is not hard! I don’t have to write 200 articles to further a doctrine that I have built. It has often been said that the Bible is its own best interpreter. In terms of the doctrine of the future, bodily resurrection, that principle is clearly seen! Let Jesus speak. Let Paul speak. Let Peter speak. Let John speak.

“...the teaching of the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment are matters that matter!”

The doctrine of those advocating “Max Kingism/AD 70/Realized Eschatology/Covenant Eschatology” - or as I put it, “Realized Eschatology and its Many Aliases” - is novel, to the say the least. As one who teaches hermeneutics at both the undergraduate and graduate level, I have a highly technical term to describe this teaching: “KOOKY!” I debated Don Preston twice - in 2016 and 2017 - on Realized Eschatology (And its Many Aliases). For Preston’s doctrine to be true, one has to redefine words, phrases, and passages of Scripture. The approach he and his cohorts take is very much like that described in the book *Through the Looking Glass*, by Lewis Carroll. In it, Alice meets with Humpty Dumpty, who is sitting on the wall. They engage in conversation, which quickly goes nowhere; Humpty Dumpty is using words very differently from Alice. After she challenges him, he gruffly says, “When I choose a word, it means what I choose it to mean; nothing more or less.” That is the approach taken by AD 70 advocates - the “Humpty Dumpty Hermeneutic.” It was revealing that during the second night of our second debate, Don said that I misrepresented his position when I highlighted his redefinition of “the end of the age” (“world”) by inserting “the Jewish age” in every NT passage where it occurs, thus pointing out the absurdity of it. He had a big issue with that...but, wait! If he does not believe that the phrase refers to the Jewish age, then down goes his belief system. If it does not refer to the end of the world, though, then what DOES it refer to? Something else that Don and his disciples are working on?

Here are just a few passages that would have to be redefined, as per Realized Eschatology and its Many Aliases:

Matthew 5:14 - “Ye are the light of the *Jewish age*. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.”

John 3:16 - “For God so loved the *Jewish age*, that he gave his only begotten son; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Matthew 16:26 - “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole *Jewish age*, and lose his own soul?”

Romans 12:2 - “And be not conformed to this *Jewish age*: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

1 John 2:15-17 - “Love not the *Jewish age*, neither the things that are in the *Jewish age*. If any man love the *Jewish age*, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the *Jewish age*, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the *Jewish age*. And the *Jewish age* passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.” And on and on. One gets the picture; yet, there are even more grave consequences of those advocating this false teaching, utilizing the “Humpty

Dumpty Hermeneutic.”

In affirming that the texts dealing with the devil, or, Satan, in the Scriptures are actually speaking of the Jewish high priest and his henchmen, the advocates of this position are implying that - as far as the Scriptures are concerned - all real, objective moral evil ended in A.D. 70 with the end of the Jewish priesthood in the destruction of Jerusalem. They are also implying that no real, objective moral evil, as far as the Scriptures are concerned, existed prior to the establishment of the Jewish priesthood. Thus, they imply that the Scriptures only condemn the real, objective moral evil that existed under the Mosaic system. As that system no longer exists, it would then have to follow that Universalism is true and everyone is now saved, regardless of their behavior. Now, are the advocates of Realized Eschatology (and its Many Aliases) all in agreement that the references to the devil in the Scriptures actually refer to the Jewish high priest; and demons were his human henchmen?

In our first debate, I directly challenged Preston regarding universalism. I predicted that he would eventually end up at that position. He vigorously shook his head “no” while seated at his table when I said that, but it is now apparent that “the chickens have come home to roost.” Here is a summation of the digression of

“When I choose a word, it means what I choose it to mean; nothing more or less.”

this heresy. (1) First, a denial of the second coming being yet future and an applying of all texts pertaining to that coming instead to AD 70. (2) Next, the subsequent denial of the resurrection of the physically dead out of physical death. (3) The assertion that only “spiritual death” was the penalty for Adam’s transgression. (4) The assertion therefore that only a supposed “spiritual death” of Jesus could atone for sin. (5) The assertion further that Jesus was out of fellowship with the Father and the Holy Spirit due to His spiritual death until He was raised from the borrowed tomb. (6) The contention that Jesus’ physical death was therefore only a “sign” of the atonement and not the means of atonement itself. (7) The assertion then that the shedding of Jesus’ physical blood did not really atone for sins. (8) Thus, the conclusion that it had to be “spiritual blood” that actually atoned for sin, because the Bible does affirm a blood atonement. (9) From that comes the conclusion that all spirit beings have spirit blood that courses through them and animates their existence, so that (10) even God, they claim, has spirit blood or else could not exist. And now apparently (11) the claim that in them dwells all the fullness of the Godhead: in essence making them little “godlets.”

Who could believe this? As one remembers, Humpty Dumpty “had a great fall...all the king’s horses and all the king’s men could not put Humpty Dumpty together again.” The same holds true with the “Humpty Dumpty Hermeneutic” of Realized Eschatology (and its Many Aliases).

Among the many errors associated with what is known among us as the “A.D. 70 doctrine,” (a.k.a. Preterism or “the Max King doctrine”) concerns the establishment of the kingdom. Advocates of this error believe the eternal kingdom was not established until A.D. 70. Other events, such as the second coming of Jesus, the resurrection of the dead, and the Judgment, are also said to have taken place at that time. Other capable men will address the particular errors. My assignment is to determine if the kingdom was established in Acts 2 at Pentecost.

As we begin, we must note that while the ideas of the church and the kingdom are interchangeable, they are not **always** interchangeable. Sometimes the kingdom of God speaks of the church (Col. 1:13); at other times it speaks of heaven (Matt. 25:34). A great place to begin this study is the Old Testament and its numerous prophecies concerning the kingdom. Of these, I believe Daniel 7:13-14 is the most revealing in answering our title question. It reads: “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.” What makes this prophecy particularly helpful is that the persons, phrases, and pictures are fulfilled only with a Pentecost advent of the kingdom. Let us begin this study by identifying **the persons** in this prophecy.

The “Son of Man” is the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus used this self-identifying moniker more than eighty times (Jn. 12:23-36; Matt. 24:30). It is used of Jesus in his human form, a form glorified and retained after his ascension into heaven (Acts 7:56; Phil. 3:20-21).

“The Ancient of Days” is unique to Daniel 7 and no doubt refers to God himself (v. 9, 22). Thus, we see Jesus brought with the clouds of heaven into the very presence of the Father. Question: At what point in the New Testament did this take place? The answer is obvious - when Jesus ascended into heaven with the clouds as recorded in Acts 1:9: “Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.” This text goes on to say that Jesus would return in the same manner in which he left (v. 10-11).

Now that we have identified the persons in verse 13, let us move to **the procession** which immediately follows in verse 14. Immediately upon His ascension into heaven and escort into the presence of the Father, Jesus is given dominion, glory, and a kingdom. Jesus said this would be the case at the time of his ascension in

Matthew 28:18 when he said, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.” There is nothing in Daniel’s prophecy to indicate that some forty years would transpire between Jesus’ ascension and the reception of his kingdom, neither is there anything in the gospel accounts to indicate any such thing.

The first words of John the Baptizer were, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” (Matt. 3:2). These are also the first words of the Lord at the outset of his public ministry (Matt. 4:17). In his first recorded sermon, Jesus looked forward to the coming of the kingdom (Matt. 5:19-20; 6:10). He used “church” and “kingdom” interchangeably in Matthew 16:13-19. Even a condemned thief understood the imminence of the kingdom (Lk. 23:42). Shortly thereafter, following the events of Acts 2, the kingdom is spoken of in the present tense. What happened in Acts 2 that has direct bearing on this fact? The church was established! After Pentecost, but prior to A.D. 70, Paul assured the Colossians that both he and they had already been delivered “from the power of darkness and conveyed into the kingdom of the Son of His love” (1:13). Add to that the fact that the apostle John spoke of himself as a companion in the kingdom of Jesus Christ alongside

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those of the seven churches of Asia (Rev. 1:9). It is clear that the kingdom existed at the time of these two writings and, of necessity, A.D. 70 advocates must believe Revelation was written

prior to A.D. 70.

Finally, let us consider **the power** of Daniel’s prophesied kingdom. According to the text, its scope included “all peoples, nations, and languages.” This kingdom clearly refers to the church. The church is the only kingdom or institution to which all men must submit. The Mosaic Law did not apply to all men, but to Israel alone (Deut. 5:1-3; Eph. 2:11-12). In contrast, the church is the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23) and the kingdom in which men of every nation and language must be found should they desire to be saved at the Lord’s second coming (1 Cor. 15:23-24). The gospel is God’s call to all men everywhere to enter the kingdom (Mk. 16:15; Acts 8:12; 2 Thes. 2:14). If the kingdom was not established until A.D. 70 at the coming of Jesus as A.D. 70 advocates affirm, then why does Paul in First Corinthians 15:23-24 say that when Jesus returns He will deliver up the kingdom as opposed to establishing it?

There can be no doubt the church of Christ was established on the first Pentecost following the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. The kingdom prophecy of Daniel 7 was fulfilled in the ascension of Jesus and the events of Pentecost in Acts 2. Thus, the kingdom prophesied by Daniel and preached by John and Jesus was established in Acts 2 at Pentecost.

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The Churches of Christ

- Bible only (2 Pet. 1:3)
- Name of Christ (Rom. 16:16)
- Began in Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3; Acts 2:1-4)
- Established by Jesus (Matt. 16:18)
- Purchased with Jesus' blood (Acts 20:28)
- Married to Christ (Rom. 7:4)
- Established in the 1st century (Acts 2:47)
- Jesus the Head of the One Body (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4; 5:23)
- Added to the church by God (Acts 2:41, 47)

Salvation

- Saved by grace, though faith (Eph. 2:8-9)
- Not by faith alone (Jas. 2:14-26)
- Not by grace alone (Matt. 7:21)
- Belief and baptism (Mk. 16:16)
- Repentance and baptism (Acts 2:37-38)
- Belief, confession, and baptism (Acts 8:37-38)
- Hear, belief, baptism (Acts 18:8)
- Faith and baptism (Gal. 3:26-27)
- Baptism does save us (1 Pet. 3:21)

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