

Proofs Against Preterism

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Preterism is a view of Bible prophecy that employs a system of non-literal, "spiritualized" or allegoric Bible interpretation proposed by the heretics Origen and Tyconius in the 4th century A.D., later popularized by Augustine, to hold that most Bible prophecy, except possibly for the last two chapters of Revelation and associated passages, was fulfilled *before* the present church age. The position was more fully developed in the 16th century as a counter-reformation tool by the Vatican and its Jesuit order to refute the popular teaching that the Pope was the antichrist, and was later adopted by some of the Protestant churches that came out of Rome, including most Presbyterian, Methodist and "Campbellite" churches and others.

According to preterists the "great tribulation" prophesied by the Lord Jesus in his Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24), and further graphically detailed in Revelation chapters 6-19, was fulfilled in A.D. 70 and thereafter with the destruction of Jerusalem by Rome and the dispersion of the Jews from Palestine. Preterists deny that the thousand-year kingdom age prophesied in Revelation 20:1-6 will be literally fulfilled or that the Lord Jesus will ever reign literally and bodily on earth, and teach instead that His reign is spiritual only and is exercised through His (universal) Church. Some preterists believe that Christ will return *after* a kingdom age (hence the term *postmillennialism*) in which the Church will successfully evangelize the world, implement God's law in the earth and take political reign over the kingdoms of this earth in Christ's place; others deny any reality of a kingdom age on earth and teach that Christ's reign applies only in the hearts of His saints (*amillennialism*). Preterists generally believe that God has forever put Israel aside and has no further plan or purpose for national Israel.

The apostolic Premillennial position on the other hand correctly takes a more literal approach to the scriptures, and teaches that Christ will gloriously and bodily return to this earth after a future time of global upheaval and tribulation, *before* His kingdom age (hence, *premillennial*) to free creation from the Adamic curse, restore the planet to its Edenic state as originally created, and establish His glorious thousand-year Kingdom reign on this earth.

The inherent danger of the preterist system is that it has a blinding effect and causes its adherents to believe Bible prophecy is a "back-burner issue," to misinterpret current world conditions and to blindly ignore the way current events are unfolding in fulfillment of Bible prophecy, and how the global economy and governments of this world are being melded into one global satanic system soon to be ruled by "the man of sin" the Bible calls the antichrist. The following arguments are offered to disprove this false and dangerously misleading belief system:

I. The "Great Tribulation" of Christ's Olivet Discourse is yet to be fulfilled

Matthew 24:21-22

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

A. Contrary to preterist teaching, the Roman siege and destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 did **not** fulfill Jesus' description of a "great tribulation" never to be equaled before or since. It was not at all unparalleled in history, and was generally a replay of the previous destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC by the Babylonians, which was equally horrific and barbaric (2 Chr. 36:17-20, Lam. 4:10, 2:20).

Furthermore, in Matt 24:21 Jesus is quoting from **Daniel 12:1**, (see Matt. 24:15 & point 2 below) which shows that the "great tribulation" in view culminates in the deliverance of Israel (Jer. 30:7, **Zech. 12:7-10**, Rom. 11:25-27), not its destruction and dispersion as executed by Rome in AD 70. These prophecies of Israel's *deliverance* from what the Lord Jesus indicates is a world-wide tribulation have never **yet been fulfilled** and must be yet brought to pass:

Daniel 12:1-2,7,11

1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: **and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered**, every one that shall be found written in the book. 2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt...

7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that **it shall be for a time, times, and an half**; [cf. Dan. 7:25, Rev. 12:14] and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished...

11 And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the **abomination that maketh desolate** [see Dan. 11:31] set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

Zechariah 12:7-10

7 The LORD also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah. 8 In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. 9 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: **and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced**, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. [cf. Rev. 1:7]

Romans 11:25-26

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob

These passages speak for themselves and are completely contrary to the preterist view that the purpose for the glorious *parousia* or coming of Christ was to destroy Israel. At His glorious coming Israel will be delivered and restored, not decimated and forgotten.

B. The Key to *timing* of fulfillment of Matthew 24 is not the so-called "time text" of v. 34 as believed by preterists, but is instead **v. 15**: "*When ye therefore shall see the **abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, whoso readeth, let him understand.*"

Jesus said we must read and understand the book of Daniel. The "abomination of desolation" (Daniel 8:13, 9:27, **11:31, 12:11**) refers to the antichrist's desecration of the Temple (**2 Thes. 2:4**), which according clearly to **Daniel 12:1-2** (quoted in pt. 1 above), must be a last-days event connected with the *deliverance* of Israel and the **final resurrection(s) to judgment** (Rev. 20:4-5). Therefore these passages could not have been fulfilled in AD 70 and must be yet brought to pass. (Note: a Jewish Temple of some sort must therefore be rebuilt in Jerusalem, which will likely result from the 7-year covenant of Dan. 9:27, to be confirmed by the antichrist with "the many." This is also a major goal of the Luciferian secret societies connected with international Freemasonry as directed from behind the curtain by the Vatican. As acknowledged even by leading preterist proponent Gary DeMar, preparations for a new Temple in Jerusalem have been underway for some time).

Matthew 24:34 (preterists' "time text") therefore *cannot* refer to the generation Jesus was speaking to, but must instead refer to the generation that would be alive at the time "all these things" begin to come to pass (v. 33).

C. Matthew 24:31 - *And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

The word "angels" here does **not** refer to "messengers" (evangelists) going out into the world with the gospel as the Preterists must (and do) preposterously teach. The context of 24:31 & 25:31 shows these are the angels of heaven accompanying the Lord in final judgment of the world and gathering of the elect at the rapture of the Church, which this and other passages show occurs immediately **after** (not before!) the tribulation of those days (Matt. 13:39-41, 2 Thes. 1:7-2:3, 1 Cor. 15:52, Rev. 11:15-18 & 19-20:4). This element of Matt. 24 *alone* shows the events prophesied by the Lord Jesus could not have been fulfilled in AD 70.

D. Matthew 24:27,30 - *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be... ..And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

The Lord Jesus did not visibly and literally come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory in AD 70; therefore the preterists' *spiritualize* this text to assert that the Lord Jesus "came" *spiritually* in powerful judgment on Israel using the armies of Rome as his rod of iron. This is clearly one of the most abominable perversions of the scriptures imaginable. Preterists' attempts to spiritualize Bible texts such as this text that should rightly be interpreted literally always produce un-provable speculations that undermine the doctrinal authority of scripture and open the door to arbitrary interpretation. The scriptures must be interpreted literally unless it is clear from the context that figurative language is being used; that is not the case in Matthew 24. Luke's account of this discourse *does* include a warning of the events of AD 70 (Luke 21:20-24.a), which *foreshadowed* events in Israel during the coming great tribulation period, as did the abominable actions of Antiochus Epiphanes in 170 BC; but Luke also shows a distinction between AD 70 and the subsequent "times of the gentiles" (v. 24.b), followed by the literal return of the Lord in power and glory (v. 25-27). The literal interpretation of Christ's coming is demanded by several parallel passages on the subject (cf. Dan. 7:13, Zech. 12:10, Matt 26:64, Mark 13:26 & 14:62, 2 Pet. 3:3-10, & Rev. 1:7 "*Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.*")

II. Revelation Chapter 20 must be interpreted literally.

The Preterist interpretation of the entire book of Revelation rises and falls on the interpretation of **Revelation 20:1-4**. According to the preterists' spiritualized approach to interpreting the passage, the angel in v.1 is the Lord Jesus, the chain is the gospel, by which Satan is now bound (v.2) and hindered from deceiving the nations (?!). According to the preterists the "first resurrection" of Rev. 20:4 must be interpreted spiritually, not literally, as the **new birth of regeneration** every believer experiences upon conversion (Eph. 2:1-6). However this interpretation of Rev. 20 is *impossible* because:

A. The blatantly obvious contextual reason that the resurrection in v. 4 **cannot** be spiritual conversion of regeneration or the new birth, a reason which is completely and shamefully ignored by preterists, is that those that are raised to life had already been martyred for their faith (v. 4).

B. The word "*lived*" in v. 4 is the same Greek word ("*zao*," i.e. *came to life*) used in v. 5 of the second resurrection and in 2:8 of Christ's bodily resurrection. Nothing in the context indicates the resurrections in v. 4 & 5 are different in character, one spiritual & the other bodily. The context infers they are bodily resurrections, separated from each other by 1000 years.

C. Satan is still very much on the loose (1 Pet. 5:8, 2 Cor. 2:11, 4:3-4).

Conclusion: Revelation 20:4 describes the **bodily resurrection** (rapture) of the saints following the return of Christ to earth in Rev. 19 to destroy the antichrist and all those allied with him, in perfect harmony with Matt.

24:29-31, 13:24-43, 1 Cor. 15:51-52, 1 Thes. 4:14-17 & 2 Thes. 2:1. Therefore the events of Revelation 6-19 must be connected in time (as is the great tribulation of Daniel 12:1-2) with the resurrection of the saints at the end of the age, **not** with the events of AD 70. Furthermore, Revelation 20:1-6 must therefore be interpreted *literally*, including the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth (see 5:10).

III. Scores of prophecies of an earthly Kingdom Age are yet to be fulfilled.

The Preterists' position in denial of Christ's earthly reign is disproven by many as yet unfulfilled prophecies which must be brought to pass of an earthly kingdom (Jeremiah 23:1-8, Daniel 7:14,27, Job 19:25, Matthew 6:10, 5:5, 19:28, Acts 1:6-8, Rev. 5:10, 2:26-27), centered at Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:1-4, Micah 4:1-3, Isaiah 9:6-7, 24:23; 25-27; 32; 54; 66:7-24, Jer. 3:16-18, Psalm 2:6-12; 48, Matt. 5:35, Zech. ch. 1-2, 8:1-8), following the *second* regathering of Israel, after the gospel has gone forth to the Gentiles:

Isaiah 11:10-12

10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. 11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. 12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

The first regathering of Israel followed the Babylonian captivity. This *second* regathering of Israel from dispersion among the nations was never yet fulfilled and is clearly being fulfilled in our day. This regathering of Israel is in itself the most obvious sign that the stage is being set for the Lord's soon return to gloriously reign on this earth in fulfillment of these many wonderful prophecies of a coming glorious time when "*a king shall reign in righteousness*" on this earth, and when "*the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*"

Conclusion

The *Preterist* approach to Bible prophecy is a dangerously misleading belief system that produces a warped world view and an improper view of God's plan for Israel, and (as stated above) causes its adherents to blindly ignore the way current events are unfolding in fulfillment of Bible prophecy and how the global economy and civil governments of this world are being melded into one satanic system soon to be ruled by "the man of sin" the Bible calls the antichrist. Christians are commanded to withdraw from this beast system (Rev. 18:4), but preterists instead blindly pretend such a globally implemented system cannot exist or misinterpret its significance. Further, while the Bible says Christians are to "love His appearing" (1 Tim. 4:8), to long for His return and to eagerly "wait for His Son from heaven" (1 Thes. 1:10), many preterists instead scoff at the concept of literal return of the Christ in power and great glory, themselves fulfilling Peter's prophecy of scoffers in the last days (2 Peter 3:3). Nevertheless, as John said, "even so, come, Lord Jesus."