



# The Sword & The Plow

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## Four Errors Current Among Preterists

By

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Although the Preterist movement itself is moving in a healthy direction, some errors have found their way into the fabric of our beliefs. In this article we want to address what seem to me to be the most critical and prevalent errors facing Preterism today.

### **1. The Eschaton was Essentially Local; Christ's AD 70 Coming Was Only Against the Jews**

This is the most prevalent and persistent error I have observed in Preterism today. It is also the most natural to fall into and, probably, the easiest to get out of. It is the most natural to fall into because the destruction of Jerusalem and end of the Jewish economy occupy so large a portion of scripture, and so many prophetic "roads" intersect at the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70, that it is almost natural to think of the second coming exclusively in terms of the destruction of the Jewish nation.

Probably all of us began our movement into the Preterist camp because of passages like Matt. 10:23 and 24:34, which place Christ's coming in the disciples' generation in the form of judgment upon the Jews. Next, we may have noticed the connection between the Old Testament phrase "the latter days" and the destruction of Jerusalem. Perhaps we then recognized the poetic and hyperbolic nature of prophetic

language, or repeat occurrence of the "Day of the Lord" and his "presence" and "coming" in various instances of judgment in the Old Testament. About this same time, we may have noticed that the Greek term *aeonon*, translated "world" in Matt. 24:3 in the AV, can also be translated "age." We may then have noticed the context of the Olivet Discourse and its connection to Jesus' seven denunciations against the holy city in Matthew twenty-three. The same prediction in chapter twenty-three of the city's desolation within "that generation" we found repeated in chapter twenty-four. (Matt. 23:34-39; 24:3, 34) We looked in vain for any indication that more was in view than the fall of Jerusalem and end of the Jewish economy. These and a hundred other factors contributed to the impression that Christ's coming was an event of the past and that it was essentially "Jewish."

At this point, our conclusions probably began to drive our interpretation of scripture; consciously or unconsciously, we most likely began to interpret scripture to fit our new paradigm. This is natural and, to some extent, unavoidable. Our tendency as human beings to use deductive reasoning means that we move from major and minor premises to what seem to be their logical conclusions - "If this, then that." In most cases, the fact that our new paradigm was driving our interpretation of scripture was harmless: nothing untoward resulted and our conclusions were often very nearly correct anyway. In other cases,

the result was not so harmless. Believing that the eschaton was essentially Jewish may have caused us to interpret the “heavens and earth” of II Peter in terms pertaining exclusively to Palestine and the Mosaic law, but nothing evil resulted from this *per se*. However, some took the further step and, reasoning backward, concluded that if the heavens and earth of II Peter were local and covenantal, then so were Noah’s flood and the Genesis account of creation. We were surprised to learn that, in fact, the creation account was not what it claimed to be at all, but a veiled and mysterious account, completely unknown to Moses and the prophets, of God’s making a covenant with Adam; violation of that covenant was later avenged by a regional flood, destroying some unspecified seed line of purported covenant-breakers. All that language about the creation of the sun, moon, stars and living things in the period of six days was simply glossed over or dismissed to make room for the new hermeneutic. Likewise with the flood: language about the waters covering the mountains and every living thing dying was conveniently swept aside to make room for the new interpretation, the illegitimate offspring of a union between preterism and modernistic skepticism.

Such are the dangers of our paradigm driving our interpretation and the notion that the eschaton was essentially local. The good news, however, is that the error of a local eschaton is easily dispelled. A single passage is all that is necessary to fell this giant: Acts 17:30, 31:

*And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth **all men everywhere** to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge **the world** in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto **all men**, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

Let it be emphasized that Paul states that God was calling **all men everywhere** to repentance, because he was about to judge **the world**, and had given assurance to **all men**, by raising Jesus from the dead. Paul was in Athens when he made this appeal. Will any contend he has merely the fall of Jerusalem in mind? That “all men everywhere” can be compressed into the compass of Judea? That judgment of “the world” has only the Jews in view? I remember twenty-five years ago when I first became a

Preterist how this verse troubled and perplexed me. How could this verse ever be brought within the scope of an essentially Jewish eschaton? The answer, of course, is that it can’t. The obvious and irresistible conclusion is that the eschaton involved more than Judea and the Jews; all men would experience a time of universal wrath and temptation in which God would subdue Christ’s enemies and fashion the world anew. For corroboration of this, the reader need only consult Daniel, chapters two and seven, which depict the coming of Christ against the world system and civil power, without ever once mentioning the Jews. Clearly, no objective study of the scripture can sustain the notion of an eschaton that was essentially local and Jewish.

## **2. The “Heavens and Earth” destroyed at the Eschaton were the Old Covenant**

Another idea prevalent today, related to the idea of an essentially local eschaton, but which I deem equally mistaken, is the idea that the heavens and earth destroyed at Christ’s coming were the Old Covenant. There is no direct teaching in the New Testament setting forth this interpretation. We (myself included) arrived at it by process of deduction. Unfortunately, we reasoned from mistaken premises to a wrong conclusion. Heb. 12:26 says, “Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also the heaven.” The theme of the epistle to the Hebrews is the removal of the typical system of the temple service and the coming day of wrath upon the Jewish nation. Taken in context, the implication seemed irresistible that the heavens and earth in view referred to the system set in place by Moses. That more was involved than this never entered our mind. Other passages with less obvious connection and reference to the old law were then interpreted to fit the mold (*viz.*, II Pet. 3).

Against this view it should be noted that the heavens and earth destroyed in the flood consisted in the whole world of mankind. Peter plainly states that the world (*Grk. kosmos*) before the flood was destroyed by the deluge. The waters prevailed over the dry land; all the high mountains fifteen cubits upward were submerged, and everything that drew breath died. The notion that the world that was destroyed consisted in only a small race of people and area of land, leaving others to survive, is frivolous and cannot be taken

seriously.<sup>1</sup> The universal flood is the paradigm of the eschaton. The paradigm was then repeated in the world-wide destruction of the world by “fire” in the devastations wrought by the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians, who all but denuded the world of men. Isaiah described God’s world-wide judgment upon mankind by these nations, saying,

*Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof....therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. Isa. 24:1, 6*

Jeremiah described the world-wide judgments of this period similarly:

*I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce wrath. Jer. 4:23-26*

The bulk of Isaiah’s and Jeremiah’s prophecies were directed against Juda, naturally enough, but the catalogue of nations included in this period of divine wrath number in the dozens. Isaiah lists something like nineteen nations, reaching

from Ethiopia to Elam, in chapters 15-23, alone. After the captivity, the prophets spoke of yet another time of world-wide judgment that would obtain in the days of the Messiah. The prophet Haggai, quoted in the epistle to the Hebrews, states that the day of “shaking” would be upon all nations, not just the Jews:

*“For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. Hag. 2:6, 7*

Will anybody argue that this passage refers only to the fall of Jerusalem and the covenantal system of the Mosaic law? The prophecy was spoken in the context of the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple by the captivity returned out of Babylon. The temple that had been rebuilt was nothing in comparison with the temple of Solomon’s glory. Yet, God said a day would come when he would fill his temple with the riches of the Gentiles by the overthrow of their kingdoms and the glorification of his house (the church). The process by which he would glorify his house entailed judgment upon *all nations* and the overthrow of the existing worldly powers. Obviously, the Hebrew writer interpreted this to *include* the Jerusalem and the Jews who were persecuting the church, but it is *we*, not *he*, that limited it to the Jews and failed to see the larger context of the original prophecy.

The lesson here is we cannot understand the New Testament correctly before we have gained a thorough knowledge of the Old. This one passage from Haggai is sufficient to dispel the idea that the eschaton was local or essentially Jewish and that the heavens and earth were the Old Law. Rather, what Haggai was prophesying was the same thing as Daniel two: the overthrow of the world system marked by rebellion to the gospel and rule of Christ. The eschaton would topple governments, destroy nations, and reduce the world to rubble, from which the church would emerge victorious and go on to rule the nations with Christ, bending them to his word and will.

### 3. The new “Heavens and Earth” are the New Covenant

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<sup>1</sup> Regius Professor of Hebrew at the University of Oxford, Professor Barr is on record, saying, “Probably, so far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or Old Testament at any world-class university who does not believe that the writer(s) of Gen. 1-11 intended to convey to their readers the ideas that (a) creation took place in a series of six days which were the same as the days of 24 hours we now experience (b) the figures contained in the Genesis genealogies provided by simple addition a chronology from the beginning of the world up to later stages in the biblical story (c) Noah’s flood was understood to be world-wide and extinguish all human and animal life except for those in the ark. Or, to put it negatively, the apologetic arguments which suppose the ‘days’ of creation to be long eras of time, the figures of years not to be chronological, and the flood to be a merely local Mesopotamian flood, are not taken seriously by any such professors, as far as I know.”

This is the opposite side of the coin we just discussed. The idea that the heavens and earth destroyed at the eschaton were the old law, naturally led to the idea that the new heavens and earth are the New Testament. King taught it; I taught it; many of us taught it. Unfortunately, it just is not true. Just as world before the eschaton was not defined by Jerusalem and the old law (although they were part of it), so the world after the eschaton is not defined by the new Jerusalem and gospel. John is very clear that the church is the new Jerusalem, and that the saved reside within this covenantal habitation. But without the city, in the new heavens and earth, the wicked still dwell, just as they did in Old Testament times. Again, a single passage is sufficient to set the record straight:

*And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband...Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. Rev. 21:2; 22:14, 15*

The nations of them that are saved walk in the city's light and enter its portals. (Rev. 21:24-27) Outside the covenantal habitation of the city are the lost and unsaved. These dwell in the new heavens and earth, but are not numbered among the saved. Since the new heavens and earth include the lost, it is impossible that they represent the New Testament. What then do the new heavens and earth represent? Foy E. Wallace Jr., put it this way:

*The new heaven and earth, and trouble[d] sea, having passed away and represented as being no more, indicated the changed conditions within the existing governments and society to make them favorable for the prosperity of the cause of Christ and his church throughout the empire...the vision represented the new conditions to surround the church in the changed world.<sup>2</sup>*

A close reading of Isaiah sixty-five and sixty-six will show that Wallace is correct.

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<sup>2</sup> Foy E. Wallace, *The Book of Revelation* (1963, Wallace Publications, Ft. Worth), p., 426.

*The former troubles are past forgotten...they are hid from mine eyes. For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. Isa. 65:16-19*

Although the prophet looks unto New Testament times, it is not the New Testament he is describing, but the happy estate of God's people in the world where they are free from the yoke of their oppressors and the Messiah rules all nations with a rod of iron.

#### 4. The Power of Sin and Death Were the Mosaic Law

The misconception that the power of sin and death were the Mosaic law is fairly wide spread. If asked what law Paul was referring to when he said "without the law sin was dead" (Rom 7:8), many would likely answer "the law of Moses." In most instances, this would be "harmless error," resulting in no untoward doctrinal issues. But, in Preterist circles, where there is an undue tendency to interpret everything in terms of Judaism and the AD 70 fall of Jerusalem, this error has taken on fairly serious implications. I refer here to Max R. King, who has developed a whole system of theology based upon the premise that the power of sin and death was the law of Moses. King's belief that the eschaton was essentially covenantal, has caused him to interpret almost *everything* in terms of Judaism's fall. Not just his eschatology, but even his soteriology is steeped in bizarre and absurd notions about Judaism and the law of Moses. To give some idea of the danger involved in interpreting the eschaton in terms exclusively local and Judaistic, let us review part of King's soteriology.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The following material is taken from the author's work *Building with Wood, Hay, and Stubble - An Examination of King-Frost Resurrection Errors*, originally published in 2004.

## King/Frost Soteriology

According to King, and Sam Frost who learned it from him, the resurrection is the peculiar possession of Israelitish flesh; viz., the lineal descendants of Jacob. King states, for example, that man's redemption and salvation is "**of Israel through Christ.**"<sup>4</sup> Notice that King did not say redemption is of Christ through Israel, but *of Israel through Christ* – a very significant difference, indeed! A misstatement? Hardly. For King, God's salvation of the world was not merely *through* fleshly Israel; rather it belonged to Israel; apart from fleshly Israel the world had no hope – the promised redemption was Israel's promise, the covenants were Israel's covenants, the hope of the gospel is Israel's hope, the body of Christ (the church) is actually Israel's "resurrected, consummated body"<sup>5</sup> "Resurrection was Israel's hope that awaited fulfillment in the last days through their Messiah."<sup>6</sup> Paul needed to "remind the Gentiles constantly of their provisionary or 'not yet' status in Christ. **Their perfection** in terms of the 'coming of that which is perfect,' **was contingent on Israel's consummation.**"<sup>7</sup> Thus, we are not perfected in Jesus (Col. 1:10), but in Israel! Israel, not Christ, is the first-fruit that sanctifies the harvest.<sup>8</sup> Israel, not Christ, is the root that sustains the whole. To be saved, Gentiles must be grafted onto Israel, not Christ. The gospel to the Gentiles derived its "substance and validity" from Israel.<sup>9</sup> "The Jewish root is a necessity to Gentile Christians; they can not live without it."<sup>10</sup> "Gentile perfection is necessarily tied to Jewish perfection, for Gentiles 'do not bear the root, but the root bears you.'" (Rom. 11:18)<sup>11</sup>

Frost is to the same effect. The hope of resurrection originates with Israel, there is no hope of attainment apart from them.<sup>12</sup> The resurrection hope is "a Jewish hope."<sup>13</sup> "The resurrection life enjoyed by those who 'received' the gospel message is *dependent* upon, and a

result of Israel's resurrection to glory."<sup>14</sup> Jesus was fleshly Israel's Messiah; he died on behalf of the sins of the fleshly Jews;<sup>15</sup> the promise of resurrection was made only to fleshly Israel;<sup>16</sup> the apostles preached the hope of Israel's redemption; the Spirit was promised only to Israel.<sup>17</sup> "It was not the 'hope of the Gentiles,' but the 'hope of Israel' whenever 'resurrection of the dead' was discussed."<sup>18</sup> The salvation of Gentiles resulted from the initial salvation of Israel.<sup>19</sup> Israel is the root that supports the Gentiles. If the Gentiles would be saved, they must be grafted onto Israel.<sup>20</sup> "For Paul, resurrection of the dead is covenantally tied to Israel."<sup>21</sup> "The New Covenant was made *only* with Israel."<sup>22</sup> Christ saves Israel because "he was covenantally tied with them in the flesh."<sup>23</sup> "God forgave Israel's sins, and through them, the sins of the world."<sup>24</sup>

This brief survey of King's and Frost's beliefs should make clear that, for them, salvation and resurrection is totally dependant upon Israelitish flesh. Hear Frost again: "Israel, then, must enter in through the body of Christ and be incorporated in it. Christ was the way of their redemption because he was **covenantally tied to them in the flesh...Israel 'after the flesh', being of the same seed as Christ (seed of Abraham),** could enter in through his death...into their glorious sin-free life with God forever...God forgave Israel's sins, and through them, the sins of the world." Thus, it was an "organic bond," consisting in Israelitish flesh that enabled Christ to save the Jews! Gentiles, who are not tied covenantally to Christ in the flesh, must be grafted onto Israel that *through the Jews* God they may obtain remission of sins! Let those words sink down in your ears: "God forgave Israel's sins, and through them, the sins of the world." Hence, according to Frost, we come to Jesus only *indirectly* through the Jews. But there is more.

<sup>4</sup> Max R. King, *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*, p. 674; emphasis added.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 674, 675.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 645.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 677; emphasis in original.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 396, 476, 489, 490.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 456.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 301.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 579; cf. 273

<sup>12</sup> Samuel M. Frost, *Exegetical Essays on the Resurrection of the Dead*, p. 172.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48; emphasis in original.

<sup>15</sup> "Messiah died on behalf of the sins of His people according to the Scriptures of the Jews." Samuel M. Frost, *Exegetical Essays on the Resurrection of the Dead*, p. 89.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90; cf. Max R. King, *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*, p. 649, 650, 652.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 65, 66.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75; cf. 77.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

Flesh based redemption also figures in the resurrection of the Old Testament dead. According to King and Frost, Old Testament Jews who died under the law are saved by their *fleshly connection* to New Testament Jews who obeyed the gospel. Here is how Frost puts it: “Therefore, the baptism of those Jews into Christ tied Israel, of which those Jews were related to according to the flesh, to Christ. The firstfruits are intimately bound with the harvest, being of the same lot, and if the firstfruits is holy, then so is the whole lump (Rom 11.5). This is the corporate dimension of baptism...Thus, **if part of the whole is washed, then the whole is washed.** Since Israel under the old covenant was not washed, then those Jews coming in through baptism could be washed by God through Christ, and through their washing, ‘all Israel’ would be saved...**The response of the part brought about the salvation of the whole.** If part is holy, then so is the whole.”<sup>25</sup>

This is nothing if not a wedding of Catholic Purgatory to Mormon baptism for the dead! The fleshly “organic bond” between New Testament Jews and the Old Testament dead was such that baptism of the one washed and sanctified the other! Hear him again: “It was God’s design to save Israel by bringing them into the body of Christ through the firstfruits... the firstfruits obtained what Israel so earnestly sought for, and the whole is holy because of the firstfruits, then those being baptized ‘on behalf of the dead’ are clearly, organically connected to the dead whose behalf they were being baptized for.”<sup>26</sup> King is to the same effect: “In this sense, the destiny of the dead...was being worked out through the participation of the firstfruits in Christ’s age-changing death and resurrection. **The solidarity between the firstfruits and historical Israel was such that the perfection of the one was grounds for the perfection of the other.** (Hence, the thrust of Paul’s baptism for the dead motif.)” **“Were it not for the response of the baptized remnant or firstfruit Jews to the**

**power of God through Christ, Israel would have been left to perish.”**<sup>27</sup>

Thus, for King and Frost Israelitish flesh is the *sine qua non* (“without which not”) of mankind’s salvation; it is the hinge upon which all things turn. However, virtually every point they rest their position upon is without scriptural support. Contrary to Frost’s assertion that the resurrection was “a Jewish hope” based upon a promise to Israel,<sup>28</sup> the promise of the resurrection originates in the garden at the very fall of the race. God promised the woman, who became a symbol for his spiritual people, a “seed” that would crush the head of the serpent, whose poison, lying beneath its tongue, became a symbol for death: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” (Gen. 3:15) The promise of a redeemer to Adam and Eve was of a universal nature; it was not to Jews, or the seed of Abraham, but to the father of the *whole race* of mankind.

Frost states that the Spirit, which for him is the “beginning” of the resurrection, was promised only to Israel.<sup>29</sup> But what says the prophet Joel? “I will pour out my spirit upon ALL FLESH.” (Joel 2:28) “All flesh” means all races of men. “All flesh” would see the salvation of God. (Lk. 3:5; cf. Isa. 40:5) “All flesh” is as grass. (Isa. 40:6; cf. I Pet. 1:24) “All flesh” would know the Lord is God. (Isa. 49:26) The Lord would plead with “all flesh” and “all flesh” would worship before him. (Isa. 66:16, 23) Where is the “priority” of Israelitish flesh among these? Frost claims that Jesus was Israel’s Messiah; that Jesus died specifically for the sins of the Jews. Contrary to Frost, Haggai calls Jesus the “desire of all nations.” (Hag. 2:7) All nations looked for God’s salvation; the whole creation groaned and travailed in pain looking for redemption, not just the Jews. (Rom. 8:19-23) John described Jesus as the Lamb of God which “taketh away the sins of the world.” (Jno. 1:29) “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.” (Jno. 3:16) Jesus was sent to save men of every race and language from sin, not merely the Jews.

<sup>25</sup> Samuel M. Frost, excerpts from a debate with the author. The whole text is posted at <http://www.preteristcentral.com/articles-preterist-frost-simmonsII.htm>. Note how close this comes to universalism – “the response of the part brought about salvation of the whole.”

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Max R. King, *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*, p. 516, 593; emphasis in original.

<sup>28</sup> Samuel M. Frost, *Exegetical Essays on the Resurrection of the Dead*, pp. 49, 52.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 41.

For King and Frost, remission of sins is the peculiar property of Israel. Gentiles must be grafted onto the root of national Israel if they would be saved. “God forgave Israel’s sins, and through them, the sins of the world.”<sup>30</sup> But Jesus, not Israel, is the root that sustains the tree of God’s people. Frost and King make this error from a misreading of Rom. 11:16-18: “For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partaketh of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.” The “braches” that were broken off were unbelieving Jews; believing Gentiles were being grafted into the tree of God’s people. That Jesus is the root is easily seen from the fact that the Jews cannot be both the branches and the root; they cannot be the source of life for themselves. Christ is the root that gives life to the whole. Paul makes clear who the root is; right in the very book of Romans itself Paul reveals that Jesus is the “root of Jesse” which rises to bring life to the Gentiles. (Rom. 15:12) John also refers to Jesus as the “root of David.” (Rev. 5:5; 22:16) Nowhere are the Jews ever called anything but a “root of bitterness.” (Heb. 12:15) The very notion that they are the root of life is stunningly erroneous and betrays their fundamental misreading of scripture. King and Frost claim that believers from fleshly Israel were the firstfruit that sanctified the whole. But Jesus is the firstfruit. It is Jesus who is foreshadowed by the Jewish feast of firstfruits, not Israel. According to the law of Moses, the sheaf of firstfruits was to be waved by the priest “on the morrow after the Sabbath.” (Lev. 23:9-14) This pointed to Jesus’ resurrection upon the first day of the week. (Jno. 20:1) Hence, Paul calls Christ the firstfruit of them that slept. (I Cor. 15:20, 23) There is no sanctifying power in Israelitish flesh that requires Gentiles to approach Christ indirectly through the Jews.

Frost says that Jesus was “covenantally tied to Israel in the flesh.” According to Frost, this becomes the sole basis for being eligible to receive remission of sins. Let’s have that quote again. “God forgave Israel’s sins, and through them, the sins of the world.” Thus, everyone else must be grafted onto Israel to obtain the benefits of Christ’s blood! Was Christ of Jewish flesh?

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 78.

What of it? He was also tied covenantally to every other race of people through the promise to Adam. (Gen. 3:15) That is why Luke traces Jesus’ genealogy to Adam, demonstrating that he is the savior of all mankind, not just the Jews. (Lk. 3:38) Frost asserts that salvation of Gentiles resulted from the initial salvation of Israel.<sup>31</sup> But even here Frost is wrong. On the first Pentecost after Christ’s resurrection, the gospel of salvation was first proclaimed. Luke records that there were present in Jerusalem “devout men out of every nation under heaven.” (Acts 2:5) Seventeen different nations of people are named by Luke. (vv. 9-11) These were the first to respond to the gospel call to “repent and be baptized” for remission of sins. (Acts 2:38)

Frost claims that “the new covenant is made *only* with Israel.”<sup>32</sup> Here is perhaps his most profound error of all. “They are not all Israel which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, but In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” (Rom. 9:6-8) *Thus, fleshly Israel is not the Israel of the New Testament, and, in fact, never was.* Fleshly Israel was always a type and foreshadow of the true Israel of God; believers are counted for the seed and are the true Israel (Gal. 6:16); it is with them, not fleshly Israel, that the New Testament is made; it is they who have the promises, not fleshly Israel. Fleshly Jews were never the object of God’s promised salvation; the promises belonged to “spiritual” Jews, to those who were “Jews” inwardly, in heart, not in flesh. (Rom. 2:28, 29) The whole King/Frost edifice, built upon the erroneous assumption that “Israel” was the Old Testament nation, thus collapses upon itself.

These bizarre and absurd doctrines are the product of misinterpreting the eschaton in exclusively local and Judaistic terms. The whole King/Frost soteriology is deformed and twisted because of it. Interwoven with the idea that salvation belongs to Isrealitish flesh, is the concept that the power of sin and death was the Mosaic law. This comes through in the King/Frost notion that historical (Old Testament) Israel was sown in imperfection under the law, but would be saved through the “perfection of

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 178.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 158; emphasis in original.

the first fruits” by the baptism of New Testament Jews into Christ. This is where King’s “corporate body” view of the resurrection comes into play. As we shall see, this false system of theology also holds the seeds of Universalism.

### **Corporate Body View of the Resurrection and Universalism**

According to King and Frost, the *primary application* of passages touching the resurrection should be interpreted *corporately* and *covenantally*. According to King the resurrection is *corporate* in that it spoke to the collective body of believers being raised out of Judaism. The meaning of Paul’s statement, “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body” refers to Judaism and Christianity.<sup>33</sup> “The natural body that was sown answers to the fleshly or carnal system of Judaism.”<sup>34</sup> “New Testament Christians...were in that natural body...anticipating their coming forth into a fully developed spiritual body.”<sup>35</sup> “When the natural body died, there arose from it a spiritual body clothed with incorruption and immortality.”<sup>36</sup>

It is *covenantal* because “the primary application of the resurrection is applied to the death of Judaism, and to the rise of Christianity.”<sup>37</sup> In the New Testament, the “resurrection has reference many times to the change from the Jewish system to the Christian system, where the material body of Judaism is put off in death and the spiritual body of Christianity is resurrected in life.”<sup>38</sup> For example, in I Cor. 15:1-18, “the primary application deals with the development and rise of the Christian system itself.” II Cor.5:1-10 “primarily...applies to the fall of Judaism and the rise of Christianity.”<sup>39</sup> Indeed, the fall of Judaism and rise of Christianity is *the* “primary resurrection.”<sup>40</sup> **“One must look to the Jewish system as the state and power of death to be destroyed by the reign of Christ.”**<sup>41</sup> “Paul is conscious that death’s defeat hinges upon sin’s

defeat, and that the defeat of sin is tied to the annulment of the old aeon of law...For Paul, **death is abolished when the state of sin and the law are abolished.**”<sup>42</sup> “When the ‘ministration of death written in tables of stone’ was finally destroyed, death was swallowed up in victory.”<sup>43</sup>

Of course, the whole notion that the eschatological resurrection was “corporate” is nonsense. The eschatological resurrection was from hades, not from Judaism or even from sin. A simple reading of Rev. 20:11-15 will prove that this is so. The root of King’s error is a confusion of justification with resurrection. It is true that the New Testament sometimes speaks of man’s justification as a type of resurrection, but these passages are merely figurative and soteriological, not literal and eschatological. (See Jno. 5:25; Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 2:11, 12; Eph. 2:1, 6) However, notice King’s belief that mankind’s problem of sin and death originates in the Mosaic law, and that by removal of the Mosaic law that his problem is solved. It is no secret that the King camp is host to a strong contingency of Universalists. King and others in the circle of his influence have expressed their inclination toward universalism in no uncertain terms. The reason should now be apparent: if the state and power of sin and death was the Mosaic law, then removal of the law would result in *universal justification*. Notice King’s statement: **“the state of sin and the law are abolished.”**<sup>44</sup> Thus, the logical implication of King’s Jewish soteriology and eschatology is the complete abolition of the state of sin and death for all mankind; *viz.*, universalism!

Of course, anyone who knows their Bible knows immediately that that is false. The power of sin was not in the Mosaic law, but the law of *sin and death*. (Rom. 7:23; 8:2) The law of sin and death exists entirely independent of the law of Moses. This may be seen from the fact that sin and death obtained before Moses’ law and exists even now, though the law of Moses has been removed. The law of sin and death was extant in the garden and underlay the commandment, saying, “in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Gen. 2:17) The law of sin

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p. 200.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p.207.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p.207.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 202.

<sup>37</sup> Max King, *The Spirit of Prophecy* (Warren OH, 1971 ed.), p. 204.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p. 191; cf. 210, 212.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p. 210.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, p. 212.

<sup>41</sup> Max R. King, *The Spirit of Prophecy* (Warren, OH, 1971), pp. 144.

<sup>42</sup> Max R. King, *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*, p. 644.

<sup>43</sup> Max R. King, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, p. 145

<sup>44</sup> Max R. King, *The Cross and the Parousia of Christ*, p. 644.



and death reigned in the ages following Adam's transgression until the law of Moses. Through the fallen nature inherited by Adam's transgression, all men are "made sinners." (Rom. 5:19) Hence, death (*viz.*, condemnation of death) passed upon all men in that all sin. Paul speaks to this when he says "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." (Rom. 5:12, 13)

Paul is not saying there was no law between Adam and Moses. Before the Mosaic law, sin was in the world. Sin was imputed during the period from Adam to Moses, but not on the basis of the Mosaic law. All sorts of moral commandments existed prior to Moses, including prohibitions against criminal homicide (Gen. 4:1-15; 23, 24), apostasy (Gen. 6:1-4), idolatry (Gen. 31:19, 30), violence and oppression (Gen. 6:5-13), sodomy (18, 19), adultery (Gen. 20); and incest. (Gen. 19:30-38) These laws were not necessarily written or communicated by divine revelation, as they were by Moses, but they were known to man nevertheless. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." (Rom. 2:14, 15)

Man is able to recognize that some things are inherently evil even without the benefit of divine revelation. Death reigned from Adam to Moses through the violation of unwritten moral precepts extant in man's conscience (whatsoever is not of faith is sin). Under the law of Moses, these precepts were written and codified, not brought into existence; the law of Moses was *superimposed* upon the law of sin and death, it did not create it. Other laws were added, including laws regarding ceremonial feasts, forms of worship, the temple and priesthood, and others necessary to the health and safety and orderly arrangement of society. Paul called the law of Moses a "ministration of death" (II Cor. 3:7, 9), not because it created sin where sin did not previously exist, but because the law

elucidated sin that already existed. (Rom. 7:7, 13) Moreover, the law of Moses made no provision for pardon; the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. (Heb. 10:4) Although the law of Moses has been taken away, the law of sin and death exists even today. All who sin come under condemnation of this law (albeit, in Christ, man can find grace upon repentance). *If sin were imputed only on the basis of the Mosaic law, then grace would be universal and unconditional for the Mosaic law is now annulled.* But as it is, even though the Mosaic law is annulled, men continue to come under condemnation of the law of sin and death.

By his substitutionary death, Christ satisfied the law of sin and death, he did not destroy it or take it away. By participation in Christ's death, man is justified before God and made a partaker of eternal life as a matter of law. As long as he continues in a state of grace, the blood of Christ preserves him spotless before the throne. When he finally experiences physical death, he will then, and not before, enjoy resurrection life in glory. The assertion of King and Frost that death reigned by the Mosaic law is without scriptural basis and must be rejected.

### Conclusion

The four errors discussed here are all related, each more or less shares basic suppositions giving rise to the others. The notion of a local and essentially or exclusively Jewish eschaton is the fount whence they all flow. It has lent itself to numerous errors, including the regional flood, old-earth creationism, and the Universalism of Max King. If Preterism is to continue free from error, it must expand its view of the eschaton to accord with that presented in scripture.



# The Name of Jesus

Are we to baptize in the name of the "Father, Son and Holy Ghost", or in the name of Jesus? The following list would seem to be dispositive of the question: Baptism is in the name of *Jesus only*. The formula, "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost" was never once used by the New Testament church. Not once. If we are to follow the pattern of faith and practice in the New Testament, we too will baptize in the name of Jesus only. *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."* (Acts 4:12)

Men were to prophesy **in his name**. (Matt.7:22)  
Men cast out devils **in his name**. (Matt. 7:22; Mk. 9:38,39; Lk.9:49)  
The gentiles would trust **in his name**. (Matt. 12:21)  
We are to receive each other **in his name**. (Matt.18:5)  
Jesus is present where two or three gather **in his name**. (Matt. 18:20)  
We will be rewarded for every act of kindness done **in his name**. (Mk. 9:41)  
Devils were subject to the seventy **in his name**. (Lk. 10:17)  
\* We are to preach repentance and remission of sins **in his name**. (Lk. 24:47)  
He has given power to become sons of God to all that believe **on his name**. (Jn. 1:12)  
Men are condemned who do not believe **in the name** of the only begotten Son of God. (Jn. 3:18)  
We have whatsoever petitions we ask **in his name**. (Jn. 14:13,14;15:16; 16:23,24,26)  
The Comforter and Holy Ghost was sent **in his name**. (Jn. 14:26)  
\* We have life **through his name**. (Jn. 20:31)  
\* We are saved **by his name**. (Acts 2:21; Rom. 10:13)  
\* **We have remissions of sins by baptism in his name**. (Acts 2:38)  
Peter healed the lame man **in his name**. (Acts 3:6; 4:7,10)  
The apostles prayed that wonders might be done **in his name**. (Acts 4:30)  
The apostles taught **in his name**. (Acts 4:17,18; 5:28)  
The apostles suffered **for his name**. (Acts 5:41)  
The Samaritans believed Philip's preaching concerning the kingdom of God and **Jesus' name**. (Acts 8:12)  
\* The Samaritans were baptized **in his name**. (Acts 4:16)  
Saul persecuted all that called upon **his name**. (Acts 9:14)  
\* To him all the prophets bear witness that men receive remission of sins **through his name**. (Acts 10:43)  
\* The household of Cornelius was commanded to be baptized **in his name**. (Acts 10:48)  
\* The Ephesians were baptized **in his name**. (Acts 19:5)  
\* Men's sins are washed away by invoking **his name** in baptism. (Acts 22:16)  
Paul charged the churches **in his name**. (I Cor. 1:10; 5:4; II Thess. 3:6)  
\* We are justified **in his name**. (I Cor. 6:11)  
We are to give thanks to the Father **in his name**. (Eph. 5:20)  
Jesus' name is **above every name** that is named. (Phil. 2:9)  
Whatsoever we do in word or deed, do all **in the name** of the Lord. (Col. 3:17)  
Disciples are to be called **by his name** (i.e., "Christian") (Acts 11:26; 26:28; Jm. 2:7; I Pet. 4:16)  
Men are commanded to believe **on his name**. (I Jn. 3:23)  
\* Those that believe **on his name** have eternal life. (I Jn. 5:13)  
Men were martyred **for his name**. (Rev. 2:13; 6:9)