

# The Sword & The Plow

Newsletter of the Bimillennial Preterist Association

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## Preterism in India

*Prabhu Das*

It's a privilege and an honor to share with you about the Lord's work in India. I am very grateful for this ministry and feel privileged to be used by God in this way as a minister of fulfilled Bible prophecy.

Christianity in India is not new! It arrived here shortly after Jesus Christ gave his disciples the universal commission to preach the gospel. Even though it has a long history, it's still struggling to spread, because of Hindu domination and caste discriminations in the country. After the Vatican in Rome, *Tirupati* (which is in our state) is the *world's* most visited pilgrim place, and hosts the richest Hindu temple in the world. To please the dominant Hindu groups and to preserve vote banks, our politicians are adding up new amendments to impede gospel preaching in pilgrim places in our State, Andhra Pradesh.

During the time people were discriminated by their Castes (lower caste), thankfully, Christianity gave them life by educating them by teaching the truth of the Lord Jesus and His love. This started in late 19<sup>th</sup> century when some protestant missionaries started breaking the caste system down by their evangelization. Now millions of people

in India are open to Jesus Christ as never before. Praise the Lord!

### **Preterism in India**

Preterism in India is at a crossroads. Preterism has gained much attention among evangelicals and Reformed Circles, and is spreading like a wild fire!

We, a group of people started officially preaching preterism almost 7 years ago. We are the FIRST GROUP or FIRST CHURCH who started teaching Preterism in India. As it is completely new to India, we are struggling a lot to spread the truth. During these years, our ministry has faced many challenges; but we have been greatly encouraged by its' gradual advance! Preteristic concepts were first preached in India in 1976 (?) by a batch students of Bear Valley Bible School, *Victor D Thuraka D.D* (India) and *Argol F Drollinger* (Australia). In his frequent visits, brother *Drollinger* introduced fulfilled concepts to the members of the Lord's church. But this didn't bring success, because, visiting once in a year lacked the constant nourishing of souls to flourish.

Following these great students of the Bible, I have decided and dedicated myself to educate my fellow brethren by proclaiming the message of FULFILLED Bible prophecy along with the gospel message. I therefore started a small monthly magazine titled "THE WORDS OF TRUTH-THE GOSPEL" with the help of few individuals supporting my effort. It was great a breakthrough in (South) India for someone to introduce preterism to the public through statements of faith and published and translated journals. Preaching preterism resulted in great anger that broke-out among conservatives and caused much opposition to our work. Our magazines were burnt in some areas and some refused to read them, even when we are sending it free of charge. But, also, it has some positives consequences in bringing out likeminded people under one roof! Its noteworthy that, although an academic (systematic) approach to the preterism may be new to Indians, some kind of partial-Preteristic thoughts were already prevalent, but were never expressed for fear of expulsion from Church fellowship.

I thank God, for His gracious hand was upon us that he enabled us to proclaim His Truth in India. Our ministry includes **Bible classes, open meetings, group discussions, house visiting's and literature printing.** Lord is willing, soon we would like to open a **public Christian library** to make available of Christian books, along with preterists stuff!

### **Our Present Challenges**

First, I thank God for the gospel work in a nation of idol worshippers. Our church family consists of people from all lifestyles and from various religious backgrounds. For many generations, they had practiced idol worship. But, now they are free from this bondage of fear and confusion. Now, though our ministry, I have greatly enjoyed and have been blessed beyond measure by my relationships with other Christians.

When it comes to the Churches of Christ in India, Preterism is considered as a heresy and receives less attention and much opposition! I think it is our special ministry to bring the Lord's truth to the people, so that they, too, can study and learn the ways of truth diligently, as Bereans did in the Acts 17. Otherwise, it would be a failure! In India, half of the Christian preachers are not well educated, so they can't read English books. Also, in India there is a separate language for each state.

We don't have even one preterist book available in our native language/s to learn or advance the cause of preterism. If we succeed in producing this kind of materials in India, the church in India will advance and can send missionaries to other foreign lands. But right now we are under great need of **preterist**

**books, materials, and literature,** as well as **hymn books** in our regional language. (Most of the hymns we sing today are **futuristic!**) We need to correct and reprint them. This would really help us to fuel the present preterist movement in India.

On the other hand, an Indian preacher is a symbol for poverty, starvation, shelterlessness and persecution. So, he has to look after his wife and children and get into the gospel work. They really depend on their potluck. Because ours is a country of Hinduism as the main religion, a preacher has no encouragement for his living. Moreover there have been endeavors to root out Christianity from India.

### **Pray for our Work**

The work in India is quite challenging! So far, we were succeeded in our mission with the great blessings of God and prayers of our friends and brothers. Even though we are in some struggles, we are moving ahead with the help of prayers. My goal in life is to know God and make Him known through the careful study and exposition of His Word. In 2006, we have introduced a new way of getting introduce the challenging concepts of preterism by conducting annual preterist meets, dealing with challenging Questions posed by live audience. It's always a great pleasure to see a new face where we went to introduce fulfilled Bible prophecy. Some of our previous participants have asked for more of these kind seminars. I have been greatly encouraged by the results of our meetings, but, yet, I strongly believe that we have a long way to go!

But for now, we are wholly dependent upon the generosity of others who can help with our needs. I am requesting you all to join our ministry and help us to spread the truth. We would greatly appreciate any support (Books, CDs' DVD's and financial Contributions) that God might lead you to give. Please remember our ministry in your regular prayers. May God bless you with His presence and equip you to love and serve others.

*[Editor's note: Prabhu has translated our popular and informative booklet, **The Road Back to Preterism**, into his native Indian tongue for distribution in India and the east. We are presently attempting to raise \$400 to help pay the expense of typesetting and printing. If you would like to help in this effort, please send a check to Kurt Simmons, 4409 Ferguson, Carlsbad, NM, 88220, or directly to Prabhu at the address below.]*

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# Benighted Hindus Need Christ!

## INDIA: Hindus: A gift from the gods: bottled cow's urine

[Drining their own Urine. Chilled Urine drinking hot in India. From Gandhi to Prime Minsiter Desai to common man](#)

*[Editor's Note: India is a benighted country like none other in the world today. Idolatry is everywhere. Men's minds are so darkened that they drink urine, eat dung, and worship cows as something holy. We do not say this soley out of cruel mockery, but to call attention to the great need for the gospel of Christ. India is home to **1.6 billion souls**, and will overtake China as the most populated country in the world in the next 15 years. These souls are precious to Christ, who died to save them! American's may be apathetic toward the gospel, but there is a great need in India to rescue souls from hell.]*

Drinking Cow Urine: By Julian West in New Delhi



<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2001/09/02/wcow02.xml>



HINDU nationalists in India have launched a marketing exercise to promote cow's urine as a health cure for ailments ranging from liver disease to obesity and even cancer.

The urine, which is being sold under the label "Gift of the Cow", is being enthusiastically promoted by the

government of Gujarat, one of three states in India dominated by Hindu nationalists.

The urine is collected daily from almost 600 shelters for rescued and wounded cattle set up by the Vishwa Hindu Parisad (VHP), or World Council of Holy men, as part of a government cow-protection programme to save the country's sacred, but often maltreated, beasts.

Advertised as being "sterilised and completely fresh" it is available for 20 rupees (30p) a bottle at about 50 centres run by the VHP in Gujerat, from 200 of their outlets in neighbouring Madhya Pradesh, and at fairs and religious festivals throughout India.

It also comes in tablets or a cream mixed with other traditional medicinal herbs. Demand is currently outstripping supply.

Dr Jadi Patel at the VHP's headquarters in Ahmedabad said: "It's very popular because the results are very good, but we've got a shortage." He explained that the cow protection centres had been formed after the last grand gathering of saddhus, or holy men, to save cows from "unofficial slaughter by Muslims".

Killing cows is illegal in most Indian states but there are an estimated 32,000 illegal abattoirs and 13.7 million cows are believed to be slaughtered by Muslims for the leather industry.

Animal rights activists in India also claim that the doe-eyed, hump-backed white Brahma cattle that are to be found on almost every Indian street are subjected to various abuses, including forced pregnancies to produce more milk.

The cow protection commission was set up to protect the holy cows, and research conducted by doctors involved in the project revealed that the cows' urine had medicinal properties.

The idea of using it came from the central Indian headquarters of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the powerful Hindu nationalist ideologues behind the country's Bharata Janata Party (BJP), where five scientists are researching its beneficial effects.

Like all devout Hindus, RSS members believe that all cow products are sacred. Ghee, or clarified butter, is used in Indian cooking and to light lamps during temple ceremonies, and milk is commonly poured over sacred idols as an offering.

The healing properties of cow dung and cow's urine are also mentioned in ancient Hindu texts. The research conducted by doctors at the cow-protection commission indicates that the urine can cure anything from skin diseases, kidney and liver ailments to obesity and heart ailments.

Although most Indian doctors view the medicines as eccentric, several advocates of the treatment have come forward in Gujarat, have come forward to support the doctors' claims.

They include Vidhyaben Mehta, a 65-year-old woman with a cancerous tumour on her chest who has been taking cow's urine for the past three years. She says she is no longer in pain and has survived in spite of medical predictions that she would die two years ago.

So enthusiastic is the Gujarat government about its cows' urine medicines that it has asked the Indian Institute of Management to compile a database of traditional cures and verify the Hindu nationalists' findings.

The academics have also discovered that cow's urine is an extremely effective pesticide and plant fertiliser and are now developing for human consumption new drugs that contain the "gift of the cow".

Prof Anil Gupta at the institute said: "This isn't just a religious thing. If it's useful we shouldn't stop it simply because we think it has religious connections."

## Cow's Urine As Medicine!

Written by [Guest Post](#) · February 21, 2008 · 299 views

February 21, 2008, Ram Puniyani

Recently the BJP ruled Uttarakhand Government (Feb 2008) has announced that it will procure cow's urine, on the pattern similar to the procurement of milk by dairies, refine it and sell it to Ayurvedic pharmacies. Other BJP ruled Governments are also working on similar lines.

Cow has been having a central place in the political symbolism of RSS combine. The place of this symbolism may be only next to Lord Ram. On these premises, so far

cow has been projected as mother. In its major campaign against minorities' right since 1950s, BJP predecessor Bharatiya Jansangh, had undertaken a nationwide, *Desh Dharm ka nata Hai Gau Hamari mata hai* (Cow is related to us through our religion and nation as mother) and also *Janm Janm Ka Nata hai Gau hamari Mata hai* (Cow is our mother in our every birth). Since Muslims, one does not know why Christians were not targeted for it, are not prohibited from eating beef and since many a butcher belong to Kasai (butchers) occupation, this fact has been used to demonize the Muslim community. We worship cows, they eat, they butcher cows! This has been used to rouse the sentiments of majority community time and over again.

With Uma Bharati becoming the chief minister of Madhya Pradesh (2005) for a brief while, she introduced cow based economy, funds for Goshalas (cow sheds) were given from Government treasury, and her official residence became the first such Goshala. Cow based economy aimed at promoting cow products as the core of economy. The present effort now transcends the earlier efforts as faith is being transformed into blind faith. The Government's move to collect urine, to procure it, refine it and sell it as a medicine defies all the logic of science and medicine. It is converting the political symbolism into health related prescription which is fraught with dangers.

As such urine is a product excreted through kidneys and contains the waste metabolites. It can also contain the bacteria, bovine tuberculosis for example, and other harmful germs and metabolic products. The biochemical studies of urine have clearly shown its composition. There are some who claim magic healing powers of drinking one's own urine, called Shivambhu, the most famous consumer of the same was Morarji Desai. Some claim that it contains antibodies which act against the harmful diseases affecting our body, but analytically and biochemical it has not been proven so far. Physiologically kidneys do not let the antibodies pass out of the body as the molecular weight of antibodies is much more than the pore of the kidney membrane. Of course when kidney is damaged, these antibodies can pass out, not when the cow is healthy.

Murali Manohar Joshi, who as MHRD minister initiated the introduction of faith based disciplines like Astrology, Paurohitya (Ritualism) also diverted some of the funds for doing cow research. One CSIR lab went to the extent of obtaining a patent on a pharmaceutical composition containing cow urine distillate and an antibiotic. Another CSIR lab, in collaboration with a NGO undertook a study to see the effectiveness of cow urine in cancer treatment. Our own ayurveda does not mention any medicinal use of cow urine. Ayurveda as such has lot of valuable empirical observations which can be deepened by rooting them on firmer rational grounds but that is shrouded in mystery and faith and any questioning of it meets angry protesters,

who claim their faith is under threat. Baba Ramdeo does claim that his 'Ramdeosim' is scientific but forgets that the basic premise of science is peer review, facing the questions and a constant transcendence of inadequacies in our knowledge system. The faith based enterprise of Ramdeo is too individualistic, too much dipped in faith and has too little to offer on rational grounds. Same is the method of cow medicine, too much faith, and that too of blind variety, too much assertion and zero scientific research. One will like to explore the veterinary sciences to see if there is something drastically right in cow's excreta in contrast to the excreta of bullock or buffalo or a dog for that matter. Also one does recall the claims of the section that cow dung has purifying effect. Impurity brought in by the shudras touching of water was undone by mixing cow dung with the water touched by a dalit.

The basic difference between medical sciences, empiricism, and grandma's medicine needs to be understood before state Government investing and promoting cow excreta, urine, for human consumption and application. Mercifully one has not heard so far of such efforts to promote cow dung. The present effort by the BJP government is an extension of RSS combine's cow politics. It is totally against the understanding of modern medicinal sciences and also has no mention in the traditional wisdom gained over a period of time. In a way it is the translation of RSS combine's political understanding in to the arena of application to human society. In some Islamic countries, on similar lines, state sponsored research to undertake the study on djinns to solve the energy problem. As per mythology djinns are supposed to be infinite source of energy so why bother about oil and electricity when these blessed beings can solve our problems for good. Surely these will also prevent the wars which are taking place in the globe for controlling the energy reserves. And not on a very different track, Christian right is asserting creation science to oppose the theory of evolution.

These efforts have no rational and scientific basis, something which our constitution ordains us to follow in the public domain. Social auditing of efforts, which affect human health are mandatory, control by bodies sanctioning the drugs and other medicinal means are an absolute must for public safety, all the claims of politics notwithstanding.

As such enough of politics has been woven around cow. Just a few years ago, one of the eminent historians of Ancient India, Prof. D.N. Jha, came out with a book on the dietary habits in ancient India, which showed that beef was one of the major items consumed in Ancient India. The move to project Cow as holy animal, mother, was a

response to the non violence propounded by Lord Gautam Buddha. With the rise of agricultural society the cattle wealth was to be preserved. As people started embracing Buddhism, the aggressive reaction of Brahmanism came up at theological, social and political level. Cow was projected as the symbol of rising Brahmanism, as a counter to the non-violence of Buddha, and has remained so through centuries. Many a Mughal kings in deference to these sentiments, to respect the feeling of the section of society, advised against cow slaughter. Babar in his will writes to his son Humayun to avoid the slaughter of cows.

In Hindutva politics also there are many streams. While Savarkar called cow as a useful animal, the other sections ignited the emotions against Muslims around cow. Irrespective of that many a poor Hindus and Adivasi did consume beef. Incidentally it is amongst the cheapest source of protein for the poor. Many a surveys showed that a vast number of Indian communities consume beef. RSS combine's propaganda went on to assert that Muslims are violent and one of the reasons is that they consume beef. This is so much against the psychosociological understanding of the human mind and the violence. While one knows that beef is a staple diet in major parts of the World, one also knows and modern psychological theories demonstrate that violence does not emerge from diet but from social and political situations. Beef can surely build muscle power in conjunction with proper exercises, but violence is in the mind.

Undoubtedly one should respect those regarding cow as their mother. RSS combines' many followers devote their lives organizing fodder and other supports for Gaushalas. Some of them, the upholders of Cow as mother, non violence, go to the extent of justifying violence against dalits on the ground that they were skinning a dead cow as happened in the killings of dalits in Gohana. This cow urine in the pharmacy shops defies all the logic and faith and is directly a threat to health of people of the society. Faith can take such dangerous turns is to be seen to be believed.



# Restored Israel

## and the Kingdom of the Messiah

by

*Kurt Simmons*

One does not have to move in dispensationalist circles long before he hears that the establishment of modern state of Israel in Palestine fulfills prophecies that mark the imminent return of Christ. Underlying this doctrine is the belief that modern state of Israel has a continuing claim upon God's special favor and occupies an important place in future pages of redemption's story. However, this view is sorely mistaken. The modern state of Israel is antichrist; it is a cursing and execration; its very existence stands in denial of the Sonship, Kingdom, and Priesthood of Christ, and has no further role to play in the sacred history of salvation. It is not the *political* restoration of Israel the prophets spoke to, but the *spiritual* restoration of man in Christ.

### **The Tower of Babel and the Call of Abraham**

Scripture records that, early into the history of the race, God was required to divinely intervene to save mankind. The first such instance was the flood of Noah. The circumstance bringing on the flood was a general turning away of men from God, but, more especially, the apostasy of the world's few believers, called the "sons of God," by profanely marrying the daughters of unbelieving men. The children of these unions grew up to be "giants" (Heb. *Nephil*, a "tree-feller" e.g., a tyrant or despot, cf. Isa. 14:8 where the like term is used of the king of Babylon), who filled the earth with violence and oppression. (Gen. 6:1-4, 11) By their marriages to unbelieving women, the existence of a righteous seed was threatened, requiring God's divine intervention lest the righteous perish from the earth. The absolute necessity for the flood may be seen in the fact that, out of all mankind, only eight souls were brought through its waters. (I Pet. 3:20; II Pet. 2:5)<sup>1</sup>

After the flood, scripture records that the earth was of one tongue and lived and dwelt together in the plain of

Shinar. (Gen. 11:1, 2)<sup>2</sup> The people's manner of life at this juncture can only be described as one of disbelief and disaffection from God, epitomized by the erection of a tower whose height they intended to reach to very heaven itself. (v. 4) Like weeds choking out the goodly herbs and vegetables of a garden, the commingling of the righteous and the wicked in a single social and political organization threatened extinction of the godly seed. Hence, God divinely intervened to save mankind a second time by confounding their language, causing them to part asunder and populate the remote places of the earth and the isles of the sea in order that, by scattering abroad mankind, the goodly seed might have room to grow unaffected by the habits and customs of the wicked. (Gen. 11:1-9) It is against this background that we are introduced to Abraham.

The call of Abraham is given in Gen. 12:1-3:

*"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."*

The evil manners of the wicked are transmitted more readily than the righteousness habits of the believing are learned. The commingling of the righteous and wicked, whether by marriage before the flood or in a single social structure after the flood, had threatened the existence of a righteous seed altogether. The significance of our introduction to Abraham at this juncture of sacred history is to show God's work in preserving a goodly seed in the earth by making of Abraham a *separate* nation unto

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<sup>1</sup> These same men are probably the "angels" that sinned and were cast down to tartarus under chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment. (II Pet. 2:4)

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<sup>2</sup> The crisis requiring confounding the people's tongue came only 101 years after the deluge. This is seen from the genealogies in Gen. 11:10-16 tracing the offspring of Shem unto Peleg, in whose days the earth was divided. (Gen. 10:25)

himself. However, this work would not culminate in the founding of national Israel under Moses, but in the *church* of the Lord Christ. National Israel was merely *provisional*; it served to nurture and keep alive a righteous seed until the kingdom of the Messiah, into which people of *every* race and language would be gathered. This is the meaning of the promise that in Abraham *all nations* of the earth would be blessed. (Gen. 12:3) Under the Mosaic economy, one's ability to participate in the blessings of Israel depended upon his status under the law; to inherit a paternity and be enrolled in the congregation depended upon whether one was slave or free, male or female, Jew or Greek. In Christ, none of these distinctions affect one's hope of salvation. Through obedience to the Gospel, every race and language of men are made heirs of the promise to Abraham: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heir according to the promise." (Ga. 3:27-29; cf. Jno. 1:13; 3:3-5)

No nation can exist as a separate entity without laws defining its borders, organizing its powers, and enforcing its decrees. God instituted Israel as a nation separate from the heathen by the ordinances of the Mosaic law, which served as a "wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile. (Eph. 2:14; cf. Isa. 5:1-7) However, in Christ, the wall of partition was broken down that he might create in himself one new man, and reconcile both Jew and Gentile to God in *one body* by the cross. (Eph. 2:14-16; cf. 1:10) If all soteriological distinction between Jew and Gentile is abolished in Christ, what basis is there for believing that national Israel occupies some favored place in the divine scheme after the institution of the church?

Nationhood consists in the sum total of the laws and institutions which mark a people off from the rest of mankind. Abolition of the law separating Jew from Gentile of necessity meant the termination of fleshly Israel as a nation before God. To be a Jew, if such is to have any Biblical meaning at all, must find its origin in the sacred scriptures. Therefore, if the law was abolished under scripture, so was Biblical Judaism. Having been thus dissolved like so many grains of salt in the sea, Judaism can only be restored by reinstatement of the Mosaic law. But the temple service and sacrifices of the law pointed to Christ; they were merely the types and shadows of which Christ is the body and substance. (Col. 1:19; 2:16, 17; Heb. 10:1-4) Hence, reversion to the law of Moses is an implicit *denial* of the Sonship and priesthood of Christ. And this is nothing if not apostasy.<sup>3</sup> "For if I build again the things which I

destroyed, I make myself a transgressor." (Gal. 2:18) Indeed, it was their obstinate adherence to the temple and its service that marked the Jewish nation for destruction in A.D. 70 by the hand of Rome:

*"He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not. Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompence to his enemies."* (Isa. 66:3-6)

Jesus made the like prophecy regarding destruction of Jerusalem and Judea (Matt. 23:34-24:34; Lk. 19:41-44; 23:27-31), as did both Peter and Stephen. (Acts 2:20, 40; 6:14) God was pleased to destroy the nation for rejecting Christ; the Old Covenant is abolished, the Jews have *no* covenantal relationship with God today. The modern state of Israel is founded in very denial of the Lordship of Christ. Far from being a token of God's continuing favor toward the Jews, the reestablishment of the modern state of Israel is a token of their continuing rebellion against Christ and God. We may fairly assume that, in God's own time, they will again suffer wrath and destruction.

### **Restored Israel in the Prophets**

So much for the big picture of Israel's provisional place in God's redemptive purpose, how does this picture bear out in the prophets? Does the image given in the prophets accord with the one we have just sketched? Listen to Isaiah:

"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. 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,

<sup>3</sup> Apparently some accommodation was made for Jewish Christians living in Palestine during the transition period, permitting them to continue certain customs and observances associated with the Mosaic

law that Gentiles were prohibited to keep as denying the truth of the Gospel. (Cf. Acts 21:20-25; Gal. 5:1-4; Col.2:14-17)

and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.” Isa. 11:10, 11

The Messianic context of this prophecy is seen in the reference to the “root of Jesse,” which points to the promise that Christ would spring from the fruit of David’s loins. (II Sam. 7:12-14) The catalogue of nations mentioned reflect the places where Israel and Judah were scattered in the desolations suffered under Assyria and Babylon and show that a modern-day fulfillment is beyond the contemplation of the text. The point of the prophecy is that, as God gathered his people a *first* time in the return of the captivity under Ezra and Nehemiah, so he would gather them a *second* time into Christ. Jesus is the standard or ensign around which all men would rally, a beacon to give light to those in darkness, providing glorious rest from the labor and anguish of sin. John the Baptist spoke to the gathering of Israel by the Messiah when he said: “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Matt. 3:11, 12) The “garner” is Christ’s kingdom-church, into which are gathered all who obey the gospel message; the “chaff” consisted of unbelieving Jews who were consumed in the conflagration (“baptized with fire”) that enveloped the nation in A.D. 70.

In Hosea we read concerning the restoration of Israel:

*Now when she had weaned Loruhamah, she conceived, and bare a son. Then said God, Call his name Loammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God. Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel. (Hos. 1:8-11)*

This prophecy spoke to the Assyrian invasion and carrying into captivity of the northern tribes. For their abominations they “were not God’s people” and hence were cast away. However, in time to come, God would gather his people together again from all the places where they had been scattered. Although presumably this began to be fulfilled in the return of the captivity from Babylon, the prophecy looks beyond national restoration unto the spiritual restoration of *all* mankind in Christ. We may be certain of this inasmuch as the New Testament writers, by

the Holy Ghost, apply this passage unto the conversion of the Gentiles. (Rom. 9:25, 26; I Pet. 2:10) “For they are not all Israel which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: 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) The children of “Israel” who would be united with the children of Judah were not the *physical* descendants of Abraham carried away by the Assyrians. The children of Israel were the *spiritual* seed and progeny of Abraham, the children of the Promised Seed, Jesus Christ. Thus, the prophecy of Hosea did not have in view the political restoration of national Israel at all, but the gathering together of earth’s peoples under the “one head” of Christ. (Eph. 1:10; 2:16)

Ezekiel made the like prophecy of Israel’s restoration:

*“Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all...And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them...and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.” Ezek. 37:21-26*

Ezekiel is not saying that Christ would be an earthly king over restored Israel in Judah. Indeed, when Jesus perceived that the people would come to take him by force to make him king, he hid himself apart in a mountain alone (Jno. 6:15) – conduct inconsistent with one appointed to reign from an earthly throne. The Jews wanted a national liberator to free them from the yoke of Rome, but Jesus came to free men, not from political or military rule, but from the bondage of *sin and death*. Having brought his people back from Babylon and the places they were scattered, their true King would reign over them *spiritually*, not nationally or politically. Thus, when Christ was conceived in the womb of the Virgin, Gabriel said “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” (Lk. 1:32, 33) The angel’s prophecy was fulfilled in Christ’s resurrection and ascension. At his ascension, Jesus received coronation as King of kings and Lord of lords, and was given the throne of David. Peter makes this plain in the very first gospel sermon preached after the Lord’s ascension:

*“This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the*

*Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” (Acts 2:32-36)*

Thus, by the plain statement of Peter by the Holy Ghost, Jesus sat down upon the David’s throne in *heaven*, thenceforth to await his enemies to be made a stool beneath his feet.

Amos provides the following picture of restored Israel and the Davidic throne:

*“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this...and I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.” Amos 9:11-15*

The Davidic throne had been thrown down in the captivity under Babylon and the Gentiles ruled over God’s people. Amos thus looks to a time when the Davidic throne would be restored and its occupant rule over the Gentiles in restored Israel. Although this prophecy may well have begun to be fulfilled in the return of the captivity from Babylon, it is clear that the idealized picture it represents looks beyond national restoration unto spiritual restoration in Christ. Hence, James indicates fulfillment of this prophecy by the bringing in of the Gentiles into the *church*. (Acts 15:13-17)

The union of men from every race and language under the kingship of Christ bespeaks a reversal of the division made at Babel. Hence, we may expect language pointing to a time when a common tongue would be restored to mankind. Just such a picture is given in Zephaniah: “For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.” (Zeph. 3:9) The first, faint glimmerings of the fulfillment of Zephaniah’s prophecy occurred on Pentecost after Christ’s resurrection, when people from the whole inhabited world heard the apostles speak to them the wonderful works of God in their own tongue.

(Acts 2:1-11) Of course, Zephaniah’s prophecy is merely poetic and not intended to indicate that all languages would one day vanish and single tongue obtain again among mankind. The “pure language” the prophet mentioned is better understood as the *word of the gospel*. Rather than the babble of confused religious profession that formerly obtained, the nations would be turned the pure faith of the gospel, and Jew and Gentile “with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 15:6)

### **The Destruction of Jerusalem**

The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 marked the final earthly scene in the restitution of all things. This is because the kingdom of the Messiah had to be purged of all who refused to serve Israel’s King before it could properly be deemed restored. “And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.” (Acts 3:21-23) Hear Isaiah:

*“And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness. And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinner shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed.” (Isa. 1:25-28)*

The restoration of Israel’s judges and counselors would be effected by the purging of her dross and the destruction of her sinners. Then would the kingdom be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. But this never happened in national Israel’s history. Even after the return of the captivity the people never recovered their national piety and devotion. Malachi speaks to the apostasy of the children of the captivity and prophesies the coming of a second “Elijah” (John the Baptist) to restore the spiritual foundations of the kingdom and prepare a people for the Lord. (Mal. 3:7-4:6; *cf.* Matt. 11:14) It is therefore manifest that Isaiah’s prophecy looks beyond national restoration from the captivity unto the kingdom of the Messiah. (*Cf.* Isa. 2:1-4) Numerous parables of Jesus make plain this aspect of Israel’s restoration.

*“A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return...But his servants hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having receive the kingdom, then he commanded...those mine enemies, which would*

*not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me.” (Lk. 19:12-27)*

This parable speaks directly to the destruction of Jerusalem. The King’s enemies were the Jews who did not want to live under Christ’s reign. Having received the church-kingdom, Jesus caused the unbelieving Jews to be slain. “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never save suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?” (Lk. 23:28-31) Jesus was the green tree, the unbelieving Jews were the dry tree. If Jesus suffered such things, what would the Jews suffer? “Trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots” (Jude 12), the disobedient were cut down and cast in the fire. (Matt. 3:10)

*“As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of his world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” (Matt. 13:40-42)*

The “end of the world” (*Gk., aion*) is the end of the Mosaic age and dispensation. At the end of the age, Jesus would cause all the rebellious and unbelieving servants to be gathered out of his kingdom and cast into a “furnace of fire.” The furnace here answers to the “unquenchable fire” that John the Baptist said would consume the chaff. (Matt. 3:12) The angels are the ministers of God’s wrath, the Romans: “For he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” (Rom. 13:4) The Lord of the vineyard came and destroyed the husbandmen, and gave the vineyard to others. (Lk. 20:9-16) The kingdom would be taken from the Jews and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. (Mat. 21:43)

### Conclusion

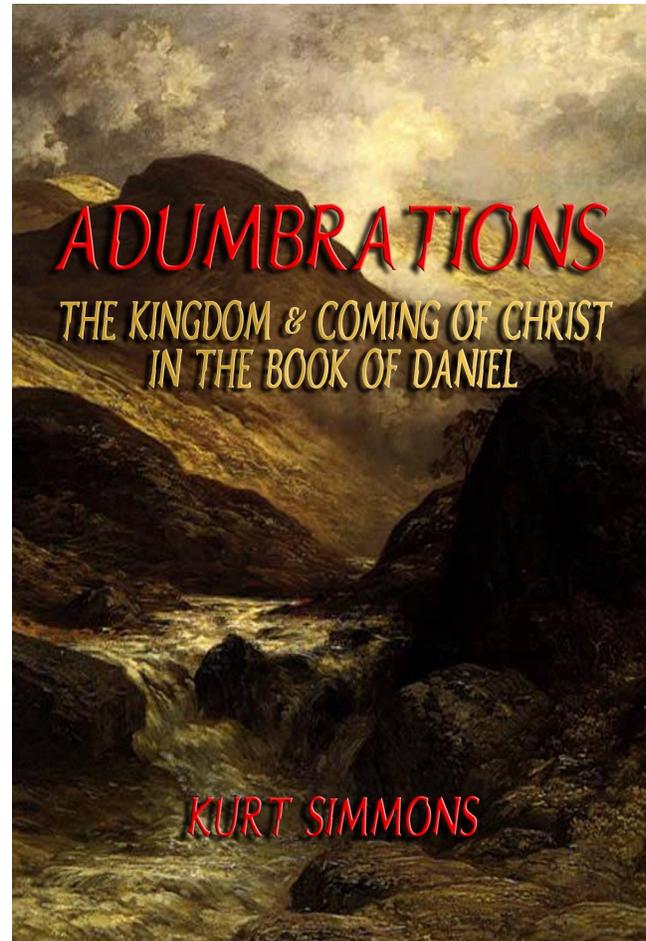
The restoration of Israel was spiritual, not national or political. National Israel’s place in the divine economy was merely provisional. They were “vessels of wrath” (Rom. 9:22) fitted for destruction, which God bore with over long centuries of rebellion and disobedience. They filled up the measure of their national sin when they crucified the Lord of Glory and persecuted his church and, hence, were destroyed. Today, the church is the Israel of God. (Rom. 9:6; Gal. 6:16) It consists of men of every race and language who men are gathered into the

Messianic kingdom where they worship and adore their Saviour.

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## Coming Soon!

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**Ad-um-brate** (ad um´ brāt , ad´em brāt´) 1. To give a faint shadow or resemblance of; to outline or sketch. 2. To foreshadow; prefigure. 3. To darken or conceal partially; overshadow. [<L adumbrāt(us) shaded (ptp. of adumbrāre) = ad- AD + umbr(a) shade, shadow + - adtus – ate]

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# Simmons' Response to Tim Martin's "Covenant Creationism"

Tim Martin is a great guy and I consider him a friend and brother. Our families have much in common, in both size and values, and our children played long hours together when Tim attended the Carlsbad Eschatology Conference last March. However, I strongly disagree with Tim's hermeneutical methods and theory of "Covenant Creationism." In the brotherly spirit of open discussion, I offer this short critique of Tim's recent article in *Fulfilled Magazine* (Winter 2009).

## Faulty Methodology

The basic methodology of Martin's "Covenant Creation" theology can briefly be described as *a priori*. *A priori* (Latin, "from an earlier") is a method of reasoning that is usually deemed tenuous or defective and can be defined as

- involving deductive reasoning ***not supported by fact***; for example, "an *a priori* judgment"
- derived by logic, ***without observed facts***
- ***based on hypothesis or theory rather than experiment***

In other words, an *a priori* argument is one that bases subsequent premises and conclusions upon the assumed soundness of earlier premises and conclusions, but for which there is *no direct or substantive proof*. This describes Tim's method perfectly. Consider "Covenant Creationism's" basic assumptions:

- The "end" treated of by the prophets was figurative; therefore, the "beginning" must also be figurative.
- The "heavens and earth" that passed away at the eschaton were figurative; therefore the "heavens and earth" of the creation must be figurative.
- The "new heavens and earth" are the New Testament and its people; therefore the old "heavens and earth" of the Genesis creation were the Old Testament and its people.

In each case, there is no direct evidence to support the ultimate conclusion. The truth of each proposition regarding Genesis and the beginning rests upon conclusions abstracted from the end. Direct proof sustaining his conclusions about Genesis does not exist!

*No prophet, no apostle, not Christ or any other inspired writer, or any ancient source can be cited in support of the position Tim takes.* The whole panalogy of sacred writers and every page of the sacred text assumes the literalness of the Genesis creation. That is why Tim is forced to build his case from *a priori* arguments about the end.

Normal methods of proving the poetic nature of a passage would entail demonstrating that an inspired author spoke of the Genesis creation as if it were parabolic or a mere allegory. For example, if it could be shown that Moses treated the creation account in terms suggesting it was symbolic, this would stand as good evidence against its literalness. But, to the contrary, Moses *always* treats Genesis in very literal terms. From the commandment to keep the Sabbath to the chronologies of men's births and the rise of the separate nations, Moses always treats Genesis as a fully literal, historical account of how the physical cosmos began. In Exodus, Moses thus writes "For in six days God created the heavens, the earth, the sea and all that in them is" (Ex. 20:11). The whole debate about the literalness of Genesis can just about be debated upon the strength of this one verse. Moses' language simply allows no room to argue for an old earth or long ages of time in creation. Nor does it admit of an allegorical treatment that would make the heavens and earth, or stars and planets mere symbols. Moses repeats himself in Exodus 31:16: "It is a sign [*viz.*, the Sabbath] between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in **six days** the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed." The Jews were commanded to keep the seventh day because God did. Can Moses' intention to set out a literal account of creation seriously be disputed? If Moses wanted to be understood literally, is there language he could use that would better convey the point? No. On the other hand, if Moses wanted us to understand he was speaking in metaphors, there are many ways he could have made it know. But on the contrary, nowhere does Moses suggest Genesis is merely an allegory or symbolic. And all subsequent writers agree, never once departing from the literalness of the account (*cf.* Ps. 33:6; Heb. 1:10; Mk. 10:6).

Another method of proving that language is figurative would be to show that similar language and imagery is employed elsewhere to describe similar conditions or events. For example, it is no secret that the Old

Testament prophets made liberal use of metaphoric language to describe times of national and world judgment. When we encounter identical language and imagery in the New Testament in connection with times of judgment, we are justified in our estimation that it is intended to be understood the same way. Our decision in this case rests upon a sound hermeneutical principle called the *analogy of faith and scripture*: Like interprets like; analogous passages should be interpreted in an analogous way. But we would NOT be on safe ground to use apocalyptic language of judgment and destruction as proof that the *creation* is figurative. The two are *not* similar (indeed, they are opposites) and therefore cannot be compared or serve as guides for interpreting one another.

Moreover, figurative language of creation (*e.g.*, the new heavens and earth) in an *obviously* symbolic context such as Isaiah 65, 66 or Revelation 21, 22 cannot be marshaled as proof that the creation in a predominately historical book, which is *not* obviously symbolic, was intended to be understood in a figurative way. The two are not similar and therefore may NOT serve as interpretative guides to one another. There are books of poetry and books of history. One cannot interpret the other. Poets use the things of nature in non-literal and figurative ways. But the opposite is not true; historians and scientists do not employ metaphors and similes to describe what is real. If they did, we could never interpret their writings; the use of metaphors and similes would throw all into doubt. But this is precisely what Tim does; he uses the highly charged imagery of apocalyptic prophecy as an interpretive guide to the historical. For example, Daniel and other writers refer to the armies of Israel in symbolic terms as the host of heaven (*e.g.* groups of stars or constellations). Other writers make the ruling orbs of the sun and moon similes for earthly kings and potentates. Tim points to these examples and turns them *back* on Genesis and says “see, the creation account is a metaphor!” But this is absurd. Does the occurrence of figurative language in books of poetry make books of history and science mere fictions? According to Tim’s method, every book of history and science would be turned into a metaphor the moment some later writer used its language in a figurative way.

Reduced to a logical syllogism, Tim’s argument looks like this:

Major Premise: The prophets used figurative language borrowed from creation (nature) to describe the end.

Minor Premise: Language describing nature occurs in the creation account; therefore

Conclusion: The creation account is figurative.

It does not take a logician to see that the conclusion does not follow from the premises. “All crows are black. This bird is black. Therefore, this bird is a crow.” Really?

Does being black make a bird a crow? What about ravens, black birds, grackles, and vultures? All preterists recognize the use of figurative and symbolic language in the prophets. The fact that a book of history like Genesis refers to objects in nature that prophets and poets used figuratively does not make the creation account symbolic, no more than books of history make books of mythology real. Each stands alone and cannot serve as a basis for interpreting the other. Moreover, the presence of covenants, promises, or even prophecies does not consign Genesis to the literary genre of the apocalyptic or justify interpreting its language figuratively. Almost every book of the Bible records at least *some* prophetic material, but no one would affirm that histories of Exodus, Leviticus, or Numbers are therefore “apocalyptic” or intended to be understood other than according to their literal terms.

This is the fundamental failure of Covenant Creationism’s methodology: it assumes *a priori* the existence of one fact, based upon the presumed existence of another fact. Evolution assumes that because living species change over time that therefore life developed independently from nothing over time. But this conclusion does not follow nor is it sound. Men’s atheism drives them to this position because they are unwilling to accept God. In the same way, “Covenant Creationism” (driven by extraneous assumptions about the age of the earth) assumes that, because later prophets and writers employed figures of speech, therefore the first sacred writer used figurative speech. Because Tim’s conclusions do not follow from the premises, “covenant creationism” is logically and academically unsound.

### Poorly & Inconsistently Reasoned

In the first edition of his book, Tim floated his “local, covenant creation” idea. He there *admits* that it was invented by Old Earth Creationists as an alternative to the gap theory, as a way of “rewriting” Genesis to avoid a young earth and the six days of creation. Tim states, “*in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century another view was presented that explains the creation account of Genesis 1 as a local creation event...The Local Creation View as presented by John Pye Smith is a variation on the gap theory.*”<sup>4</sup> Of course, if the “local creation” theory originated in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, no one would be silly enough to suggest that it was in the mind of God when Moses penned Genesis. Moses would have known and his subsequent writings, as well as other sacred authors, would have reflected this fact. However, Tim cannot cite a single inspired author who agrees with him or who treats Genesis as an allegory. Hence, that should be the end of the matter. Case closed: the local creation idea is a modern innovation and we need not give it a moment’s entertainment. Unfortunately, Old Earth Creationists

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<sup>4</sup> Timothy P. Martin, *Beyond Creation Science* (2005), pp. 199.

never let the originality of their theories deter them from imposing them on us or the Bible. We are treated to a constant flow of new theories to explain away the Bible.

After admitting the “local creation” is a novel idea whipped up by Old Earthers to avoid Genesis’ obvious meaning, Tim goes on to reject it. That’s right, *reject it*, saying it makes no sense and would require taking all occurrences of “heavens and earth” symbolically, leaving no account of God’s creation of the universe. He also notes that it violates important Biblical hermeneutical principles and patterns:

“A Local Creation interpretation is possible once we understand the covenant use of “heavens and earth” but it is *not textually required* in Genesis 1...There are some *theological challenges* for a Local Creation interpretation as well. Preterists rightly emphasize the common biblical pattern in redemptive development of ‘first the physical, then the spiritual.’...A Local Creation approach *violates this Biblical pattern* by limiting the original creation to covenantal and spiritual realities. A creational, cosmological reading of the ‘heavens and earth’ in Genesis 1 fits with the overall pattern in Scripture of ‘first the physical, then the spiritual.’”

After noting these objections and surveying other passages, Tim concludes that “a local creation interpretation in Genesis 1 is *highly doubtful*.”<sup>5</sup>

Highly doubtful! Tim states that the local creation theory is a *highly doubtful*; that it is *dubious*; that it will *not* withstand normal scrutiny; that it’s *not* to be credited by men of normal intelligence. Yet, Tim now embraces what he formerly urged us to reject! What caused him to change? The Bible? No! His lifelong commitment to the errors of Old Earth Creationism that will not allow him to accept the Biblical account of creation! He thus goes about to *rewrite Genesis* so it will be consistent with his extra-biblical views. *That*, dear reader, is the long and short of the whole thing. We are not dealing with a question of preterism or eschatology or even hermeneutics, but Old Earthism and Tim’s unwillingness to receive the Biblical account of creation. Nothing more; nothing less. In the new edition of his book, he all but admits this of his coauthor, Jeffery Vaughn: “*Jeff realized that the two issues of prophecy and creation are related, and has dedicated his theological study to developing a common and consistent view of both ends of the Bible.*”

This is not the method of science or academia; we do not go about “to develop a common and consistent” interpretation of writings. Rather, we interpret writings

according to *intention of the author*. The ONLY interpretation that is correct is the one God intended it to have. For Old Earth Creo-evolutionists (for this is what they truly are, requiring billions of years for God’s creation to *evolve* and come to perfection before it was suitable for man), for Old Earth Creo-evolutionists, I say, the intent of the author *will never do*. The Bible MUST be reinterpreted according to a forced paradigm that will accommodate billions of years.

### A Brief Detour

It is my belief that men’s inability to receive the Biblical account of creation is because they judge the universe too large and God too small; they imagine that anything so vast must be billions of years old. But let us take an imaginary journey to the beginning and see if the need for billions of years to create the universe cannot be dispelled. Let us imagine God seated upon his throne. Let us next imagine that he speaks, and by the breath of his mouth calls into existence a small cloud like those we are accustomed to see on a cold day when a man speaks, a cloud, hardly more than a puff of air, about the size of a man’s hand. This cloud does not disappear into vapor like men’s breath, however. Instead, it lingers, hovering before the throne. The angelic host crowds around to view with awe this new wonder. Let us next imagine that in this cloud are billions of particles of dust and vapor swirling aimlessly about. Now let us imagine that these particles are whole galaxies. Contained within these galaxies are smaller particles, containing suns and planets. Amongst these myriad galaxies is one called the Milky Way, home to planet earth. As the angelic host gazes with amazement upon the small cloud, God speaks again and says “let there be light.” Suddenly, flashes are seen here and there within the cloud, like tiny static electric sparks crackling in a blanket in a dark room. So begins the creation of our world. Can it be imagined that God, whose breath brought this small cloud, this puff of air into existence required billions of years to make it so? It is such a small, trivial thing, after all. From the inside looking out, it seems terribly great. We are told that for light to travel from the nearest star requires millions of years before it arrives at earth. Yes, from the inside looking out it may seem vast and that it surely has existed for eons. But, when we recall that the whole physical universe is less than a puff of breath, spoken into existence by the Word and Spirit of God, no larger than a man’s hand, then the very idea of its great age and immensity suddenly becomes horribly absurd, and the notion that it has been around for billions of years becomes a sorry joke. Yes, I am convinced that our all too human perspective causes us to fall into many errors regarding how truly great God is.

### We Return

Tim, unable to receive the Biblical account of creation, wants to rewrite Genesis. Thus, Genesis is about the

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<sup>5</sup> Timothy P. Martin, *Beyond Creation Science* (2005), pp. 199-106.

creation of a local “covenant relationship with Adam and Eve” and with one fell swoop he opens the door to evolution and an earth billions of years old. *The creation of whales, fish, birds, sun, moon, stars, and light is all window dressing and has no literal meaning.* According to Martin, Genesis provides no account of God’s creation of the physical universe at all!

*“The original ‘heavens and earth’ is the creation of God’s people, using symbolic animals and elements of creation.”*

God’s people are the “original” heaven and earth? God made people first, then the world to put them in, so that the figurative and spiritual preceded the actual and physical? *And we are supposed to take this seriously?* I do not say this unkindly. Remember, Tim says that the local creation model is “*highly doubtful.*” It just happens that I agree with him. But Tim cannot make up his mind. Earlier in the *same article* he affirms that the Genesis creation is actual and literal, using real people and events:

*“The Genesis creation is a symbolic statement, involving real people in real history, describing the ‘beginning of God’s covenant world.’”*

Tim says Adam and Eve were literal people and the account is fully historical (“real history”), but then turns right around and affirms that the animals and everything else in the narrative are symbolic and figurative. Which is it? He cannot have it both ways. Either it is real history or it is allegory, but not both. What basis is there for saying Adam and Eve are actual, but everything else is figurative? Can actual people inhabit a figurative world? If they are not living in an actual world, surrounded by real animals and trees, under the real canopy of heaven, where are they living? Please tell us. What is the basis for choosing those parts that are literal and those that are figurative? One’s private judgment? The mere circumstance that the phrase “heavens and earth” occurs? Because God enjoins a covenant upon the couple?

This sort of discrepancy is all through “Covenant Creationism.” For example, Genesis actually describes in *literal terms* the covenant God made with Adam and Eve. Moses is very plain that God charged the couple not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16, 17). *This was the covenant imposed upon the couple.* But if Moses has described in literal terms the covenant God made with the first couple, then it is plain that language describing the creation of the sun, moon, stars, whales, cattle and creeping things cannot be descriptive of the same events in symbols! What would be the purpose in that? Yet, if we follow Tim, Moses goes through this elaborate metaphor of God’s creating light, air, water, earth, plants, trees, animals, fish, whales, cattle, creeping things, and men, all this we say, without ever hinting that it is a metaphor we are about. All this Tim asserts is mere

window dressing whose only purpose is to teach us that God entered a covenant with Adam and Eve.

### **Mistaken Premises**

The basic premise underlying all of Tim’s “Covenant Creation” theory is that the eschaton was merely “local and covenantal”; that is, that it was somehow principally concerned with the AD 70 fall of Jerusalem and end of the “old covenant world,” which Tim equates with the “heavens and earth.” Therefore, to prove his thesis, Tim must show that

- the eschaton was primarily concerned with events in Palestine,
- involved primarily the removal of the old law and mosaic economy,
- the “heavens and earth” that passed away at the eschaton referred only to Palestine and the mosaic economy.

Conversely if it can be shown that the eschaton was

- not merely local or covenantal,
- was in fact *world-wide* and that
- the “heavens and earth” of prophecy do *not* refer to the Old Testament, but
- embrace the thrones and dominions of world governments and powers

if, we can prove these things, I say, then Martin’s *whole hypothesis* is in error, together with everything built thereon. Indeed, while Tim must prove EACH point to sustain his proposition, because they are interdependent, I can overthrow his entire thesis by negating only ONE! This is a heavy burden for Tim to carry and we believe that no reasonable interpretation of scripture can sustain it. Let us proceed.

### **Local Eschaton**

Martin consistently ignores important passages and whole chapters of scripture that show the second coming was *world-wide*.<sup>6</sup> We have shown these to Tim in the past, but to my knowledge he has failed to refute or respond to them even once. Not once! His academic methodology seems to be to simply ignore whatever does not fit his paradigm. I do not say that uncharitably. Tim is a beloved brother for whom I have great affection. But the word of God is sacred and cannot be dealt with in such cavalier manner. We want the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth! *Ignoring passages of scripture that show the eschaton was world-wide will not do!*

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<sup>6</sup> Throughout this article we define “world-wide” in reference to the civilized world of the greater Mediterranean man, including the Roman Empire and peoples bordering thereon.

Some of the most obvious passages showing the eschaton was world-wide occur in Daniel. Daniel chapters two and seven deal with the latter days and time of the end. Yet, both chapters fail *once* to so much as mention Israel, Judea, Jerusalem or the Jews. Rather, they deal exclusively with the world-dominion of the Gentiles from Babylon to Rome, Rome's persecution of the church in the last days, and Christ's second coming against the Roman power. These two chapters alone are sufficient to stand Martin's whole theory upon its head! We encourage the reader to study Daniel two and seven for themselves. There simply is no avoiding the fact that these chapters have *nothing* to do with the AD 70 fall of Jerusalem or the Old Testament ritual.

James Jordan, in his new commentary on Daniel, falls into the common error of novice preterists of attempting to explain *everything* about the "latter days" in terms of the fall of Jerusalem and the Old Testament. He attempts to explain the "clay" of the feet and toes of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in relation to Herod the Great and Roman dominion of Judea. John Evans, in his book on Daniel 2, does the same thing. The proof text relied upon is the parable of Jeremiah 18 where the prophet watches a potter forming a pot on his wheel. When the pot is marred in the potter's hand, he took the lump and made it into something new. God then propounds a parable, saying, "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter?...At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it...etc" (Jer. 18:6, 7).

We preterists often focus on only one part of a passage and say "Aha!" but in our haste overlook the rest of the text. How many times have we seen this?! In this case, preterists (Jordan, Evans, and others) see the clay and God's reference to Israel and say "Aha, the Jews are in Daniel two; the Jews are the clay!" But, the passage is very clear that *all nations* are typified by clay in God's hands, not just the Jews. God expressly states as much. "At what instant I shall speak concerning *a nation*, and *a kingdom*." The armies of Nebuchadnezzar conquered the entire ancient world, from Elam in the east to Egypt in the west. As God punished other nations by Nebuchadnezzar's armies, so he punished the Jews. And as God punished the Jews in AD 70, he also punished other peoples and nations, particularly the Romans and persecutors of his church. Thus, it is an extremely selective reading that attempts to force the Jews into Nebuchadnezzar's dream; it is a case of our hermeneutic driving our conclusions. We correctly identify that the second coming was in AD 64-70 and that the fall of Jerusalem was deeply involved with the eschaton. In our desire to validate this conclusion, we attempt to explain *everything* by those terms. But this is wrong. The eschaton was *world-wide*. Consider these passages from scripture, which clearly show that Jesus' second coming was also against the heathen. We have produced these before. We produce them here again because, in order for

"Covenant Creationism" to be valid, Tim must negative these texts and prove that the eschaton was not world-wide (e.g., did not embrace the whole *oikumene* world of Rome and civilized man). He cannot, and therefore his theory is invalid.

- Ps.2:8, 9 – Ask of me, and I shall give thee *the heathen* for thine inheritance, and the *uttermost parts of the earth* for thy possession. Thou shalt *break* them with a rod of iron; thou shalt *dash them in pieces* like a potter's vessel.

This Psalm is about the resurrected, glorified Christ and the kingdom given him of the Father. Christ's kingdom is more than just the church; it includes all earth's nations, which he rules with a rod of iron, dashing to pieces those that disobey. *The dashing here corresponds to the dashing of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. It is world-wide and is eschatological.*

- Ps. 110:5, 6 – The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the *day of his wrath*. He shall *judge among the heathen*, he shall fill the places with the *dead bodies*; he shall wound the heads over *many countries*.

The "day of wrath" is the second coming. The Psalmist thus states that Christ's second coming would be *world-wide*; it would entail judgment upon the heathen and fill many countries with death bodies.

- Hag. 2:6, 7; 3:21, 22 – 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...I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will *overthrow the throne of kingdoms*, and I will *destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen*."

This verse is important because it is quoted by the Hebrew writer as about to be fulfilled in his day. Its first application is to the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple under Zerubbabel; its second and ultimate application was to the kingdom and church of Christ.

Haggai foretold a time when the wealth and power of the nations would accrue to the benefit of the Jerusalem temple, by the fall of worldly powers. This became a type of the victory of the church at the eschaton.

As preterists we have read this passage as quoted by the Hebrew writer (Heb. 12:26) only in terms of Jerusalem's fall, but, as we see, its *actual, original, and intended* scope was universal – the eschaton would be a time when *all nations* were shaken and the throne of *heathen kingdoms* overthrown.

We should also note that the *heavens and earth* in this context point to higher powers and earth's governments; they have *no covenantal significance*.

- 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.

This last passage can be translated in more narrow terms to say “*all the tribes of the land* shall wail because of him.” But no translation in print does this, nor would it fit within the imagery of Revelation which portrays the eschaton in universal terms, far surpassing Judaea and Jerusalem (the dragon and beast and clearly Roman). Moreover, the word “also” – *they also which pierced him* – meaning the Jews, signifies that they *too* would see him in *addition* to earth's other peoples.

- Matt. 25:31, 32 – When the Son of man *shall come* in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him *shall be gathered all nations*: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.
- 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 *is about* to judge (*melle krinein*) *the world* (*kosmos*) in righteousness.

These are just a few of the passages holding out a world-wide coming. Nobody who is willing to deal honestly with the scriptures can deny it. Yet, Tim ignores these passages, never once attempting to interact with them in a meaningful way. How can “Covenant Creationism” recommend itself to critical thinkers if it does not meet normal academic standards? How can we subscribe to a theory that *ignores* vast portions of scripture in order to make it work? Let me emphasize again that I have a great affection and respect for Tim. I say none of this with the least anger or malice. But let also say that I fear God and reverence his holy word! As Christians we simply have to demand higher standards of academic scrutiny than “Covenant Creationism” will withstand or has demonstrated thus far.

### Heavens & Earth NOT “Covenantal”

The second basic assumption of so-called Covenant Creationism is that the “heavens and earth” are symbols for the Old Testament and that the “new heavens and earth” are symbols of the New Testament. We have already shown in other articles that the wicked are in the new heavens and earth and therefore they cannot symbolize the New Testament (Rev. 21:8; 22:15; *cf.*

21:27). We have also shown that those who do affirm that the new heavens and earth symbolize the New Testament have historically ended up teaching Universalism (e.g., Tim King and Presence Ministries). The better view is that the city, the new Jerusalem is the covenantal habitation of the saints, not the new heavens and earth. *The new heavens and earth are symbols for the world under the dominion of the reigning Christ.* The briefest review of Isa. 65, 66 and II Pet. 3 will confirm this. The world that formerly was under the dominion of the Gentile powers (including apostate Jews) who oppressed and persecuted God's people is now under the reign of Christ, who rules in righteousness from God's right hand with a view toward the advancement of his gospel and the chastisement of those that resist and disobey. But if the new heavens and earth are not the New Testament, then it stands to reason that old heavens and earth are not the Old Testament, and “Covenant Creationism” collapses upon itself.

Tim relies upon passages like Rom. 8:19-23 in support of the idea that God's people are the covenantal “heavens and earth.” He asserts that the “creation” of that passage is the God's people, the Jews. But, this is mistaken. Paul says “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:22, 23).

Notice that *two* groups are under contemplation; those who have the first fruits of the Spirit; and those that do not. Those with the firstfruits are the Jews; the gospel was first preached to them and they are specifically named by John as the first fruits to the Lamb in Rev. 14:4. Other passages confirm this priority of the Jews (Eph. 1:12,13; *cf.* Acts 3:26; 13:46; Rom. 2:9; James 1:18). The “whole creation” is given as “every creature” in the margin and refers to the Gentiles. The Greek is *πασα η κτισις*. The identical phrase occurs in the great commission in Mark: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to *every creature* (*παση τη κτισει*) he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mk. 16:15, 16). The identical phrase occurs in Colossians when Paul says that the gospel had been preached in to “every creature” (*παση τη κτισει*) which is under heaven (Col. 1:23). Therefore, what Paul is saying in Romans is that every race and people—both Jews and Gentiles—were groaning together in pain looking for salvation from the bondage of sin and death. God subjected the human race to vanity; not willingly, but in hope that they might seek after him and follow after his promises. In the gospel, the creature is delivered from the bondage of corruption; not all men, for not all will obey. But those that do obey attain unto the adoption and glorious liberty of the children of God, Jew and Gentile alike. Hence, there is nothing to the idea that the

“creation” or “heavens and earth” of Genesis speaks to the Jews or the Old Testament.

There are numerous passages in the Old Testament where the symbolism of the “heavens and earth” is employed in the fall of Gentile kingdoms and powers. It is not used exclusively this way; sometimes it is also used of the Jews. But, Tim must prove that it is used ONLY of the Jews or people of God if his theory is to hold up, which he cannot do. Use of the “heavens and earth” to describe the fall of Gentile dominions precludes entirely the interpretation that they are symbols for the covenant people of God. A single example will suffice:

“Come near ye *nations*, to hear; and hearken, ye *people*: let the *earth* hear, and all that is therein; the *world*, and all things that come forth of it. The indignation of the Lord is upon *all nations*, and his fury upon all their armies; he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the *host of heaven* shall be dissolved, and the *heavens* shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree” (Isa. 34:1-4).

This is one of preterism’s chief passages; it is solid evidence that the heavens and earth of the prophets are poetic and figurative for the world’s *thrones and dominions*. The nations of this passage are not Jewish; they are Gentile. Verse six specifically names Idumea as among those to come under a time of wrath. This completely flies in the face of Covenant Creationism’s basic premise that the heavens and earth have specific reference to God’s covenant people and *only God’s covenant people*. Yet, Tim simply ignores this and other passages that don’t fit his paradigm (Isa. 13:10, 13 - *Babylon*; Ezek. 32:7, 8 - *Egypt*; Hag. 2:7, 21 - *Persia and miscellaneous Gentile nations*; Nahum 1:3-6 - *Nineveh*). There simply is no credible way to maintain that these nations are in covenant relation to God or that the symbolism of the heavens and earth in these passages have reference to the Old Testament or mosaic economy or any other covenantal relationship. Thus, the second basic assumption of “Covenant Creationism” is seen to be patently false.

Isaac Newton gives the following correct explanation of the heavens and earth in prophetic language. We have produced this before, but include it here for new readers:

“The figurative language of the prophets is taken from the analogy between the world natural and an empire or kingdom considered as a world politic. Accordingly, **the world natural, consisting of heaven and earth, signifies the whole world politic, consisting of thrones and people, or so much of it as is considered in**

**prophecy**; and the things in that world signify the analogous things in this. For the heavens and the things therein signify thrones and dignities, and those who enjoy them: and the earth, with the things thereon, the inferior people; and the lowest parts of the earth, called Hades or Hell, the lowest or most miserable part of them. Great earthquakes, and the shaking of heaven and earth, are put for the shaking of kingdoms, so as to distract and overthrow them; the creating of a new heaven and earth, and the passing of an old one; or the beginning and end of a world, for the rise and ruin of a body politic signified thereby. The sun, for the whole species and race of kings, in the kingdoms of the world politic; the moon, for the body of common people considered as the king’s wife; the stars, for subordinate princes and great men; or for bishops and rulers of the people of God, when the sun is Christ. Setting of the sun, moon, and stars; darkening the sun, turning the moon into blood, and falling of the stars, for the ceasing of a kingdom.” (*Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel*, Part i. chap. ii)

### Conclusion

Each basic assumption of Covenant Creationism is erroneous. The eschaton was *not* primarily confined to Palestine, but was world-wide. Christ’s second coming involved *more* than the removal of the mosaic economy and included a time of wrath upon Rome and the persecutors of his church wherever they were found; the symbolism of the heavens and earth NEVER refers to the Old Testament, but ALWAYS speaks to thrones and dominions of the world’s governments and powers. Covenant Creationism cannot withstand close scriptural scrutiny and should be rejected.



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