



The Sword & The Plow

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Review of

John S. Evans'

The Prophecies of Daniel 2

John Evans has recently published a new book on the prophecies of Daniel two and the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. This is Evans' second book on Daniel; his first was entitled "*The Four Kingdoms of Daniel: A Defense of the Roman Sequence with AD 70 Fulfillment.*" In his newest book, Evans continues his defense of the Roman sequence, but also devotes considerable space to the growth of the Messianic mountain (kingdom), which he equates with the thousand years of Revelation twenty.

Evans and the Roman Sequence

Evans' greatest contribution by far is his analysis and critique of liberal theologians' traditional position regarding the book of Daniel. It is clear Evans has invested considerable time in mastering their positions. Because they are morally disposed to overthrow the word of God, liberals deny the prophetic element in scripture (the Bible is more comfortable if it is of purely human providence). They assign a late date to the book of Daniel,

claiming it was written during the intertestamental period as a patriotic response to the persecutions of Antiochus Epihanes. The very existence and historicity of Daniel is denied. According to liberals, the book of Daniel is little more than a *pseudepigraphical* forgery, falsely attributed to a fictitious character of the sixth century B.C. in order to clothe it with a prophetic authority. In short, liberals deem the book of Daniel a sort of "pious fraud."

Evans drives a wooden stake in the heart of liberal interpretation by exploiting its total lack of historical concordance. According to liberals, the four world empires of Daniel two represent Babylon (the head of gold), Media (chest and arms of silver), Persia (belly and thighs of brass), and Greece (legs and feet of iron). Evans refers to this as the "regular Greek sequence." A variation upon this is the "modified Greek" sequence of Babylon (head of gold), Mede-Persia (chest and arms of silver), Greece (Alexander) (belly and thighs of brass), and the Hellenic kingdoms of Egypt and Syria (legs and feet of iron). The clay mingled with the iron is said to

be the political affinity and intermarriages between the Ptolemaic and Seleucid dynasties.

The liberal approach dismisses the Messianic aspect of the vision. Yet, the Stone that strikes the image is clearly Messianic and the kingdom that grows up in place of the four world empires is just as plainly connected with Christianity. It is only by dismissing the divine origin and prophetic aspect of scripture that the obvious reference to Christ can be avoided. The number of times and places the Messiah is referred to as a Stone are multitudinous. Instead, liberals attempt to apply Daniel's prophecies to Judas Maccabaeus and the revolt that overthrew the power of Antiochus Epiphanes. According to liberals, Judas Maccabaeus is the rock that smites the image. However, Evans points out that this approach quickly loses plausibility. Although Judas Maccabaeus defeats Antiochus Epiphanes, nothing more happens; no mountain-kingdom grows up. Just the opposite, a new world power rises in the West and the Jews come under the dominion of Rome and the nation is destroyed. Of course, if the book is of purely human origin, this is the sort of "prophetic" failure we would expect. But for those that accept the Bible as the word of God, the failure of the liberal approach to accord with history requires that it be rejected.

Evans argues that the image is a type of timeline and that its divisions should bear some relationship to the kingdoms they represent. Hence, the head of gold (Babylon) should represent a period proportionately shorter than the chest and arms; the chest and arms should represent a period proportionate in relation to the belly and thighs of brass, and so forth. In the case of the "regular Greek sequence," the Babylonian dominion is attributed sixty-six years (605-539 B.C.), but Media only two (539-537 B.C.). Thus, the comparatively smaller head represents a period *thirty-three* times longer than the larger chest and arms of silver! Moreover, Evans points out that in reality the *Median Empire fell to the Persians over a decade before the Babylonian Empire was supplanted*. How can the chest and arms of silver be replaced by the belly and thighs of brass before the head of gold that precedes it? Moreover, secular and Biblical testimony is clear that it was Cyrus (a Persian) who overthrew Babylon. Thus, liberal interpretation makes the head of gold give place to the brass, skipping over entirely the silver! In the words of Evans "*The historical fact that the Babylonian kingdom survived that of Media is obviously a major problem for the Greek sequence.*" Evans' Roman sequence corrects all this. According to Evans, the time periods allotted the several empires should look something like this:

Head of Gold - Babylon (66 yrs, 605-539 B.C.)
Chest & Arms of Silver - Mede-Persia (207 yrs, 539-332 B.C.)
Belly & Thighs of Brass - Greece (168 yrs, 332-164 B.C.)

Legs of Iron - Rome (119 yrs, 164 B.C. - A.D. 45)
Feet of Iron & Clay - Roman Judea (74 yrs, 45 B.C. - A.D. 30)

Evans argues that this scheme of succession bears a reasonable relationship to the divisions of the image and that its agreement with history makes it the one that should be accepted. Evans argues further that the metals of the image should have an historical association with the kingdoms they represent. In Evans words, "*the metals must be understood as symbolizing four specific kingdoms, each of which was closely identified historically with the metal that symbolizes it.*" According to Evans, Babylon was uniquely and historically associated with gold, Mede-Persia with silver, Greece with brass or bronze, and Rome with iron. Evans urges further that the clay of the feet and toes represents the Jews. Hence, the iron mingled with clay signifies the Roman rule in Judea beginning with Herod the Great in 45 B.C. Evans has the Stone strike the image in A.D. 30, which he dates as the resurrection of Christ. This event, he feels, is the terminal point of the dominion of the four world empires and the beginning of the dominion of Christ.

Although we fully agree with Evans on the Roman sequence, which is the interpretation understood Josephus and confirmed by the Lord himself, we do not agree that Herod or the Jews figure at all in the imagery of Daniel two (or Dan. 7 & 11), or that A.D. 30 is the point at which the Stone struck the image. Further, we feel the asserted historical association of the kingdoms with their respective metals is in some cases weak. Although Babylon may have been the richest and therefore possessed the most gold, yet the only historical association of silver with the Persian Empire is that it was allegedly used it to pay the army. However, it is probable that each of the empires used silver this way and that Persia was not unique in this regard. In any event, the historical association seems too tenuous for this to be an identifying feature of the Persian Empire. But even if an historical association exists and could be adequately demonstrated, this ignores the symbolical association of the metals. Daniel says that the fourth empire would be "strong as iron" (Dan. 2:40) not that it made the most abundant use of that metal. Thus, it is the inherent *symbolism* of the metals that should guide us, not an ambiguous historical association. Moreover, why are only the metals historically associated with their respective kingdoms? Shouldn't the clay have an historical association also? Yet, there is nothing in history that makes "clay" an identifying feature of the Jewish nation.

Evans' relies instead upon an asserted *biblical* association identifying clay with the Jews. However, we found this unpersuasive. For example, Isaiah says "we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand" (Isa. 64:8). We would suggest that it

would be a case of one's paradigm driving his interpretation to say that this passage is uniquely applicable to the Jews. Isaiah uses the same parable elsewhere saying "Woe to him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands" (Isa. 45:9). The context of this passage suggests that it refers to Cyrus and the Persians whom God would raise up and ordained to release the captives (Isa. 45:1, 13). The point of the parable is the impropriety of men and nations questioning God's judgment in raising the powers of the earth. God has a purpose and it is not for man to call God to account for his work among the nations. The other passage cited by Evans is Jeremiah's famous parable of the potter. But this parable is expressly applied to *all nations* by the prophet, not just the Jews. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a kingdom to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it," etc (Jer. 18:7-10).

Clearly, these verses provide no basis for identifying the Jews as the clay to the exclusion of other people and nations. Allowing one's paradigm to drive his interpretation is a common mistake. Attempting to retrofit the "covenantal heavens and earth" model to the Genesis creation, arguing that it represents the covenant creation of Israel, is a recent example among Preterists of this sort of error. Obviously, a "good argument" can always be made, but the test is *what did the author intend?* It seems fairly obvious that neither Isaiah nor Jeremiah intended to uniquely identify the Jews with clay. Rather, *all peoples and nations are clay in God's hands*, and this is precisely how Daniel uses it. In any event, the biblical association is beside the point. It is the *historical* association Evans builds his case upon and here there simply is none connecting the Jews with "clay."

Regarding Evans' assigning the resurrection to the stone smiting the image, we feel the image is clearly *eschatological* and thus points to the cataclysmic judgments meted out by Christ in the Roman civil wars and related events between A.D. 68-70. It is after all the Roman Empire that is the subject of the vision, not the Jews, who, to our mind, are not directly alluded to at all.

The eschatological nature of the king's dream has been recognized for centuries among Biblical scholars of every stripe. By making the terminal event the resurrection of Christ, Evans cuts the imagery short of the critical event when Christ fell upon his enemies, grinding them to powder, and transferred the kingdom to the saints (Matt. 21:43, 44; cf. Ps. 2: 8, 9). This is fully corroborated by Daniel seven, which is a companion prophecy to the four kingdoms of Daniel two. Daniel seven depicts Christ's resurrection and ascension in vv. 13, 14

where one like the Son of man comes to the Ancient of Days, but *postpones* the time at which the saints obtain the kingdom until the eschatological judgment and defeat of the fourth beast following the persecution of the little horn (Dan. 7:27). Since the judgment of the fourth beast equals the Stone smiting the feet and toes, the *terminal event is not Christ's resurrection, but his second coming.*

This is not contradicted by the fact Rome continued to exist and exercise world-government following A.D. 70. Evans correctly points out that the kingdoms continue to exist even though dominion has passed to the next world-power. We agree and this is confirmed in the case of Rome. The image represents *Gentile dominion* over the world and people of God. The point of the vision is to signify the time when *world dominion would turn to the saints through Christ seated upon the Davidic throne.* Christ was given dominion in law at his ascension, but it was not until the events culminating in the Roman civil wars and fall of Jerusalem that his enemies were put beneath his feet as a matter of fact. It is to this that the "dashing to pieces" of the image refers. Thus, although Rome continued to exist following A.D. 70, it was a mere vassal state to Christ who rules the nations with a rod of iron.

Evans' analysis comes up slightly short in Daniel seven, too. Here he adopts the approach that the ten horns are *successive* emperors; the "little horn" he assigns to Vespasian. But as Evans believes this horn rises only after the others are *gone*, making it the eleventh *in sequence*, he is forced to begin his count with Pompey (Pompey, Julius Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian). However, Pompey was not a king or emperor, but was the general of the republic in the civil war against Julius Caesar. No Roman historian has ever deemed Pompey a king or emperor; all universally ascribe the beginning of the empire to Julius Caesar. Moreover, although Dan. 7:25 says the little horn arose "after" the ten horns, Dan. 7:8 says it rose up "among" them. Thus, the little horn is clearly *contemporaneous* with the ten horns, even though it makes its initial appearance after them. Our position is that the "little horn" is Nero whose three and a half year persecution of the saints preceded Christ's second coming. Evans' position that the time, times, and half a time (3 ½ yrs.) of Dan. 7: 25 refer to Vespasian's war with the Jews is simply untenable. The rest will have to wait until release of our book.

Despite our difference over some details, we nevertheless agree with Evans' overall approach and feel he capably defends the Roman sequence in Daniel.

Evans' Millennial Growth of the Mountain

Evans observes that the Stone that smote the image does not become a mountain-kingdom instantaneously, but “grows up” to fill all the earth. Evans interprets the immanence of the mountain as pointing to the cultural, economic, political, and military dominance of the “Christian” West. Evans does not feel that the millennial paradigms current among many Preterists provide plausible explanations of John’s imagery in Revelation twenty. The probable majority of Preterists interpret the thousand year period(s) of Revelation twenty as symbolizing the forty years from Christ’s earthly ministry to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This interpretation was originally floated by Max King and has become an integral part of his theological system. According to King, the “first-fruit” Jews are portrayed in Revelation twenty, living and reigning with Christ though baptism into his death. These Jews then provide “vicarious atonement” to Gentiles and preceding generations of Jews through baptism for the dead. The corporate nature of King’s vicarious atonement through the “first fruit” Jews connects up with his spiritualized, corporate body resurrection (acquittal from the law’s universal condemnation by its annulment), which has led King into Universalism.

Although most Preterists do not subscribe to King’s view about the “first-fruit” Jews, baptism for the dead, a spiritualized resurrection or Universalism, King’s basic interpretation of the thousand years continues to find adherents. Evans opines instead that the thousand years represent the period during which the Stone grew up into a mountain, *viz.*, the Christian West attained world dominance. According to Evans, the Jewish war with Rome preceded the binding of the dragon: “*In effect, therefore, the Jewish war of 66-70 entailed a satanic deception of the nations that paralleled the situation described in Revelation 20:7-10, where Satan is released from prison for a short time and the nations are deceived into attacking God’s people.*” This idea connects up with Evans’ notion that Vespasian is the little horn that made war against God’s people. How the apostate Jews qualify as God’s people he does not explain. The better view is that the “camp of the saints” in Rev. 20:9 is the church. The “little period” following the binding of the dragon during which it makes war against the saints Evans sees as modern day attack upon Christianity by government, media, academia, and, especially, Islam’s attack upon the West.

Although Evans’ survey of the economic development of the West and his prognostication for the future is admirable and can be read with much profit (we would encourage John to write a series of articles about Islam with specific quotes to the Koran showing its violent and bloody nature), in the end his

approach to Revelation’s millennia is untenable. Evans’ admits that the resurrection of the dead was in A.D. 70. But death (Hadean death) was the *last enemy* (I Cor. 15:26, 55). John thus portrays the resurrection as *following* the “little season” during which the dragon is loosed and makes war upon the church (Rev. 20:11-15). Daniel does too. In Daniel twelve, the time of “great tribulation” precedes the resurrection (Dan. 12:1, 2). We take this tribulation in reference to the persecution under Nero. John refers to it in Rev. 7:14, where he describes the innumerable crowd from every tribe and nation as those that have come through “the great tribulation.” *Thus, the resurrection followed the great tribulation, and the great tribulation was the persecution under Nero.* But if the resurrection follows the persecution under Nero, and if in Revelation the resurrection follows the final offensive of Satan depicted in Rev. 20:7-10, then the offensive portrayed in Rev. 20:11-15 was the persecution under Nero, not modern terrorism by Islam.

Admittedly, the idea that the millennia of Revelation twenty represent short periods of time like forty years or less is difficult to reconcile with Western associations attached to such term. However, this overlooks audience relevance; Revelation was not written to modern Western readers. Moreover, applying the symbol of the thousand years to *earthly* time misses the point at the start and creates the incongruity Evans’ finds so implausible.

In Greco-Roman mythology, the dead went to Hades for a thousand years and then were reincarnated to earthly life.¹ John is writing to Greek and Latin speaking peoples in Asia and the Roman world. He lays before his readers two subjects who undergo death: the dragon and the martyrs. To what would the Greek and Roman mind run? What association would they make of the thousand years? Obviously, they would most naturally associate it with Hadean death. The dragon underwent death by the mortal wound it received to its head (Rev. 13:4); it then descended to

¹ “The belief in this reign of a *thousand years* was long prevalent among the Christians. This period was also in great credit among the Gentiles. The souls of the Egyptians returned to their bodies at the end of a *thousand years*; and, according to Virgil, the souls in purgatory were exorcised for the same space of time—*et mille per annos.*” Voltaire, *The Works of Voltaire. A Contemporary Version. A Critique and Biography* by John Morley, notes by Tobias Smollett, trans. William F. Fleming (New York: E.R. DuMont, 1901). In 21 vols. Vol. 3. Chapter: *APOCALYPSE*.

the bottomless pit (Hades Tartarus) where it was bound a “thousand years.”² Identical language and imagery occurs in both the Old and New Testaments. Ezekiel mentions the armies of uncircumcised nations going down to the “pit” in judgment and defeat (Ezek. 31, 32). Peter mentions fallen angels being bound by chains under darkness until the judgment of the last day (II Pet. 2:4). Both passages refer to *Sheol* or *Hades Tartarus* and it is clear that this is where the dragon *and beast* (Rev. 7:11; 17:8) were symbolically bound. The saints on the other hand have suffered actual martyrdom under the beast and are in *Hades Paradise* (“Elysium” to Greeks and Romans). The dragon is loosed for a final assault upon the church before being cast into the lake of fire (Gehenna); the saints are loosed *in the resurrection of the last day* (Rev. 20:11-15). The fact that the dragon is loosed *before* the resurrection of the saints at the last day proves that the “thousand year” periods are not the same, for the one is shorter than the other. The one marks the period during which the dragon (imperial Rome) is prevented to persecute the saints; the other the period the martyrs (and all the saints) must wait until the general resurrection.

There has been no meaningful interaction with this explanation in the five years since we first published it. The only objection offered to date is that Rev. 20:7 seems to say there is only one thousand year period when it says that after “*the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed,*” etc. However, while it is easy to mistakenly include the martyrs’ thousand years in this verse, the fact that they are not raised until the general resurrection shows that this is wrong. Further, we have shown that King’s “forty-year-transition” model produces two millennia also. By its own terms, the dragon is loosed *before* the saints are raised so that the dragon’s thousand year internment is clearly seen to end before the martyrs’ thousand year reign. Indeed, Evans’ model produces two millennia, for he has the saints raised in A.D. 70, but the dragon is bound until modern times! In fact, we are not aware of *any* millennial model that doesn’t produce two separate thousand year periods!

The “forty-year-transition” model of King and other Preterists is identical with Tyconius’ and Augustine’s Postmillennialism compressed into forty years, rather than strung out over several thousand. The basic premise behind each is that the millennia began with Christ’s earthly ministry when he supposedly bound

² The only event in Revelation that even remotely qualifies as wounding the dragon’s head is the collapse of the persecution in Rev. 12, which we hold was the persecution that arose over Stephen. Thus, the dragon is bound beginning with the collapse of the persecution over Stephen, and is loosed at the persecution under Nero.

the “strong man” (Matt. 12:29) and ends at his return when the dead are resurrected. Augustine interpreted the reign of the saints as conversion and regeneration by which the church is identified with the reign of Christ. However, Augustine admitted that the thousand year periods of his system *do not match up*, tacitly admitting there are two millennia in the text.

*“This last persecution by Antichrist will last for three years and six months, as we have already said, and as is stated both in the Apocalypse and by the prophet Daniel. Though this time is brief, it is rightly debated whether it belongs to the thousand years during which it is said that the devil is bound and the saints reign with Christ, or whether this short span is to be added to those years and is over and above them. For if we say that it belongs to the thousand years, then it will be found that the reign of the saints with Christ extends not for the same length of time as the binding of the devil, but for a longer time...How, then does Scripture include in the same limit of a thousand years both the binding of the devil and the reign of the saints, if the binding of the devil is to cease three years and six months before the reign of a thousand years of the saints with Christ?”*³

What Augustine is saying here is that the single millennium model cannot be squared, and that people 1600 years ago had noticed that fact! Simple arithmetic shows that the reign of the saints “*extends not for the same length of time as the binding of the devil.*” If the one is bound a thousand years, and the other reigns a thousand years, yet the one’s thousand years ends before the other, how can they be the same thousand years? This flaw is so basic and so obvious we marvel that more people do not take notice of it. We once made a \$1000 challenge if anyone could refute our charge that the King “forty-year-transition-period” model produces two millennia. To date, the challenge has never been met. We would suggest it is time the single millennium model be jettisoned. If Augustine who fathered it noted that it was defective, what possible motive can there be to cling to it still? We would encourage the reader to join Bengel, Wesley and others in the opinion that there are two one thousand year periods contemplated by the text.

Questions of the millennia aside, Evans is correct that the mountain did not grow up overnight, but came on gradually. Assuming “filling the whole earth” contemplates social, economic and military domination of the sort opined by Evans, we would suggest that this was fully in place within less than 500 years of Christ. Christianity quickly became the dominate religion in both Europe and the East early on. Constantine’s conversion to the faith (A.D. 313) put the full force of

³ Augustine, *The City of God*, XX, xiii; Loeb ed.

the empire behind the new faith. After the fall of Rome in A.D. 476, Byzantium, the seat of Eastern Christianity, went on to become the most powerful empire in the world for over 1,000 years (not to be confused with the millennium). During this same period, Christianity also grew up to become the dominant (almost exclusive) faith in the West. The idea there can never be any opposition or reversals does not impress us as being required by the imagery. Christ's people stray and must be chastened, too. Historically, this has been affected by war and similar catastrophes. Hence, there will likely always be opposition; the idea of a Christian utopia is totally foreign to the text. There is no need or justification to project the thousand years into our modern era. Besides, the context of the new Jerusalem and new heavens and earth are clearly show by Isaiah to follow the fall of the old Jerusalem (Isa. 65, 66; Rev. 21, 22). Hence, it would be anomalous indeed if all of Revelation were fulfilled save a few verses imbedded in the midst of chapter twenty.

Evans' book does an admirable job explaining and refuting liberal interpretations of Daniel. Despite what we feel are some small defects in his analysis, his newest book makes a valuable contribution to our knowledge of Daniel and helps us along the path toward a more perfect understanding of the book.



Conclusion



THE TOWER OF HIPPICUS, A FORTIFICATION OF JERUSALEM.

Pilate's Images and the Christian State

If polls are to be believed, America is on the verge of electing a man who, if he is not a closet Muslim, nevertheless has a Muslim *name*, Muslim *background*, and Muslim *family*, and must therefore have a tolerance and sympathy for Islam that will make his presidency as dangerous as it will be unprecedented in the history of Western Civilization. One would not think 9/11, or the dozens of other Islamic atrocities over the last 25 years could be forgotten so quickly. Yet, here we stand, ready for "change" by electing a first term senator with Islamic background to the presidency.

Former Secretary of State, Colin Powell, in endorsing Obama remarked that he did not like the "narrowness" of Republican leaders who expressed concern over Obama's Muslim background and connections. Powell stated:

"Is there something wrong with being a Muslim in this country? The answer's no, that's not America. Is there something wrong with some seven-year-old Muslim-American kid believing that he or she could be president?"

According to Powell, then, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are all "just the same;" there are no ideological differences between them that should be considered when casting one's vote, or that maybe, *just maybe* ought to disqualify someone for the office of president. I believe such view is perfect lunacy and ultimately must result in the spiritual suicide of the West.

Would a Muslim nation – one that is predominately Islamic – allow a Christian or Jew to be elected president over itself? Would Israel allow a Christian to be elected Prime Minister? Would they allow a Muslim? Why then must *we* sit by and open the doors of public office to men whose religious sentiments are inimical to our own and whose very occupation of office must tend to the injury of Christ's cause in the land? Are Christians the *only* people on earth's face who are not to be allowed a nation where our faith enjoys the sole protection of law and its adherents alone are enfranchised with the power to hold office?

We are a nation of 300 million, the overwhelming majority of whom are nominally Christian. Yet, let one atheist or Jew complain about a manger scene

upon the court house lawn and the whole community is supposed to capitulate the right to express its religious faith to accommodate the sensibilities of a Christ-denying Jew! Not only do we effectively renounce our faith to accommodate the atheist when we remove our religious symbols, we are deluded enough to suppose we are somehow morally and ethically *beholden* to do so! Men's notions of political "separation" of church and state completely subvert their loyalty to Christ. Christianity is quietly kept out of view, and we made to apologize for having infringed on the minority's right to a secular, atheistic state.

I remember when a federal court told Judge Roy Moore and the people of Alabama that they could not acknowledge God by a display of famous quotations, including the Ten Commandments, in the foyer of the Alabama State Courthouse Building. This usurpation of reserved state rights, nay, this denial of the *most fundamental* of individual and community rights, should have sparked mass protest as people filled the streets to demonstrate their unwillingness of surrender the right to acknowledge God and Christ in the public sector.

Josephus tells the story about how Pilate sought to introduce images into Jerusalem by seeking them in by night. When the city awoke to the images the next morning, the whole nation was beset with horror. When a delegation of Jews besought Pilate to remove the images, he had soldiers suddenly surround the delegation and threaten immediate death unless they retracted the request. The Jews bared their necks and offered them to the Roman swords rather than permit the images to remain. Shocked by their tenacity, Pilate gave orders that the images be removed.

We would do well to learn from this example. We should be willing to bare our necks to Caesar's sword rather than permit the unlawful order of a federal judge to be enforced. Instead, the federal court order was met with sheepish obedience as the whole state of Alabama (indeed, the entire nation) offered oblation to the emperor's statue and bent the knee to Nero. With this sort of watered-down faith and commitment to what we believe, it is no wonder that we daily loose more of our freedoms and our land becomes polluted with Pilate's idols. Let us resolve that the "C" in Christian be for "courage" and "conviction," not "cowardice" and "capitulation."

If our faith means so little to us, if we are unconcerned about preserving Christian institutions in the land, if economic security and personal comfort are what rate highest in our “book of life,” perhaps Colin Powell is right, and it *is* just as well that a Muslim be elected president. What difference does it make? To most Americans, apparently none.

My sincere belief is that future generations will retrace the steps of the last 200 years and someday give all Christian sects – *and them alone* – the protection of law and entitlement to hold high office in the land. Anything else is sheer folly and must sooner or later result in cultural and spiritual suicide.



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Roman Procurators over Judea

<p>Coponius (A.D. 6-9) Marchus Ambivius (A.D. 9-12) Annius Rufus (A.D. 12-15) Valarius Gratus (A.D. 15-26) Pontius Pilate (A.D. 26- 35) Marcellus Marullus Cuspius Fadus (A.D. 44-46) Tiberius Alexander (A.D. 46-48) Cumanus (A.D. 48-52) Felix (A.D. 52-60) Pocius Festus (A.D. 60-62) Albinus (A.D. 62-64) Gessius Florus (A.D. 64-66)</p>	<p>Augustus emperor (31 B.C. – A.D. 14) Tiberius emperor (A.D. 14-36) Caius Caligula emperor (A.D. 36-42) Agrippa I, king (A.D. 36-44) Claudius emperor A.D. 42-54) Nero emperor (A.D. 54-68)</p>
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A.D. 1684

THE
REVELATION of JOHN
Bishop John Lightfoot

As it will be easily admitted, to place this book last of all the New Testament, because it stand so in all Bibles, so on the other hand it will be caviled at, that I have brought in the writing of hit so soon [viz, AD 66], as before the fall of Jerusalem; since it hath been of old and commonly held, that it was penned in the reign of Domitian, far after these times that we are upon. But the reasons, by which I have been induced thereunto, will appear out of some passage in the book itself, as we go through it.

As God revealed to “Daniel, the man greatly beloved,” the state of his people, and the monarchies that afflicted them, from his own time, till the coming of Christ; so doth Christ to “John, the beloved disciple,” the state of the church, and story in brief, of her chief afflictors, from thence to the end of the world. So that where Daniel ends, the Revelation begins; and John hath nothing to do with any of the four monarchies that he speaketh of, but deals with a fifth, the Roman, that rose, as it were, out of the ashes of those four, and swallowed them all up. [Editor’s note: Lightfoot erroneously believed that Daniel’s four kingdoms reached only to Antiochus Epiphanes and the Greco-Syrian dynasty of the Seleucids, and not to the earthly ministry of Christ or the Romans. This error comes from confounding the little horn in Daniel seven under the fourth empire with the little horn (Antiochus Epiphanes) of Daniel eight, which appeared in the time of the third empire. It also comes from mistakenly identifying the “abomination of desolation” in Daniel 12:13 with that of Daniel 11:35. But as Christ applied the former of these to the fall of Jerusalem, it plainly cannot have reference to Antiochus Epiphanes.]

The composure of the book is much like Daniel’s in this, that it repeats one story over and over again, in varied and enlarged expressions; and exceeding like Ezekiel’s, in method and things spoken. The style is very prophetic, as to the things spoken; and very Hebraizing, as to the speaking of them. Exceeding much of the old prophet’s language, and matter adduced to intimate new stories: and exceeding much of the Jew’s language, and allusion to their customs and opinions, thereby to speak the things more familiarly to be understood. And as Ezekiel wrote concerning the ruin of Jerusalem, when the ruining of it was now begun, so, I suppose, doth John of the

final destruction of it; when the wars and miseries were now begun, which bred its destructions.

REVELATION I, II, III

The three first chapters refer to that present time, when John wrote: and they contain the story of his obtaining this Revelation, and of the condition of the seven churches of Asia at that time, declared in the Epistles directed to them.

John, travelling in the ministry of the gospel up and down from Asia, westward, cometh into the isle Patmos, in the Icarian sea, an Island about thirty miles’ compass: and there, on the Lord’s day, he hath these visions; and an angel interprets to him all he saw.

He seeth Christ, clothed like a priest, podere (see the LXXX in Exod. 28:4), and girded over the paps, as the priests used to be, with the curious girdle. His appearance, full of majesty hand gloriousness, described in the terms of Daniel. Amongst other his divine titles, he is called, “Alpha and Omega,” terms ordinarily used by the Jews (only uttered in their Hebrew tongue) to signify “the beginning and the end, or the first and the last.” “Abraham and Sarah performed all the law from Aleph to Tau.”⁴ “He walks in integrity is as if he performed all the law, from Aleph to Tau.”⁵

He directs epistles to be sent to “the seven churches of Asia;” who are “golden candlesticks,” though very full of corruptions (it is not a small thing that unchurches a church); and inscribed to “the angels of the churches.” This phrase translates **שליח צבור** “Sheliach Tsibbor,” the title of the minister in every synagogue, who took care for the public reading and expounding of the law and prophets: and these epistles are sent, accordingly, to the ministers of the several churches, that they might be read openly in their congregations.

⁴ Midr. Tillim, fol. 47. 2.

⁵ Marg. Tripl. Targ. In Deut. 28:13.

There are seven several epistles, to the several churches, dictated immediately and sent by Christ; and another general one from John, to them all, in which he shows that warrant and way of writing those seven.

He terms the Holy Ghost, “the seven spirits,” according to the Jews’ common speech, who, from Isa. 11:2, speak much of “the seven spirits of Messias.” And, speaking of Christ’s “coming with clouds,”⁶ from Dan. 7:13, and from the words of Christ himself,⁷ he at once teacheth that he takes at Daniel, and speaks of Christ’s coming and reigning, when the four monarchies were destroyed; and especially referreth to the first most visible evidence of his power and dominion, in coming to destroy his enemies, the Jewish nation, and their city. And here is one reason that induceth me to suppose this book written, before that city was destroyed.

Coming to read the present condition of these Asian churches, in the epistles written to them, we may pertinently think of that saying of Paul, “This thou knowest, that all they that are in Asia, are turned from me;” a great apostasy, of which there is too much evidence in these churches, as also mention of some sad fruits of it, and means and instruments inducing to it. As, 1. Unbelieving Jews, which the Holy Ghost, all along, calls, “a synagogue of Satan;” with these, the church of Smyrna was pestered, and, more especially, Pergamus, where their mischievousness is styled, the very throne, or “seat of Satan;” and where they had murdered Antipas, a faithful martyr already. 2. False apostles and seducers; some that pretended apostolic power and commission, and, it may be, coloured their pretences with magical wonders, that they might act more apostle-like. These the church of Ephesus was trouble with, but had discovered their delusions and found them liars. 3. Other seducers, that, it may be, came not in the demonstration of such devilish power; but answered that, by their horrid devilish doctrines, “the doctrines of the Nicolaitans,” which taught to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. In Thyatira, a woman-seducer cried up this doctrine, a whore and witch, a Jezebel; wherefore, she and her children, that is, her disciples, are threatened to be destroyed by the plague; the vengeance upon the fornicators with Baal-Peor.

REVELATION IV, V

Now cometh a second vision. That before, was of “things then being,” but this, and forward, of “things

⁶ Rev. 1:7

⁷ Matt. 24:30

to come.”⁸ “A door open in heaven, and the voice of a trumpet talking with John,” out of it. The scene of John’s visions, said to be “in heaven,” is according to the scheme of the temple and the divine glory there. And hence you have mention of the altar, candlesticks, sea of glass (the brazen laver made of the women’s looking-glasses), the ark of the covenant, and the like. And as, at the opening of the temple-doors, a trumpet sounded, so is the allusion here. The door in heaven opened, and a trumpet calls John to come in and see what was there. “And immediately he was in the spirit.”⁹ Why, was he not in the spirit before?¹⁰ And was he not in the spirit, in seeing the door in heaven opened? &c. But we may observe a double degree in rapture; as inspired men may be considered under a double notion; viz. those that were inspired with prophecy, or to be prophets and to preach, and those that were inspired to be penmen of divine writ, which was higher. John hath both inspirations for revelations to both ends, both in the vision before, and this: then he was in the spirit, and saw the vision; and was in the spirit, and inspired to pen what he saw, and what to be sent to the churches. And, in the first verse of this chapter, he is in the spirit, or hath a revelation; and, in ver. 2, he is in the spirit; and is inspired so as to take impression and remembrance of these things, to write them also. He seeth Christ enthroned in the middle of his church, in the same prophetic and visionary emblem that Ezekiel had seen;¹¹ and this is a commentary and fulfilling of that scene that Daniel speaketh of.¹² In Ezekiel, the Lord, when Jerusalem was now to be destroyed, and the glory of the Lord that used to be three, and the people were to flit into another land, appeareth so enthroned, as sitting in judgment, and flitting away, by degrees, to another place: as, compare Ezek. I and x, well together. So Christ here; when the destruction of Jerusalem was now near at hand, and his glory and presence to remove from that nation, now given up to unbelief and obduration, to reside among the Gentiles, he is seated upon his throne, as judge and king, with glorious attendance, to judge that nation, for their sins and unbelief, and stating the affair of his church, whither his glory was now removing.

The scheme is platformed, according to the model of Israel’s camp: 1. The tabernacle was in the middle

⁸ Chap. iv. 1

⁹ Chap. iv. 2

¹⁰ Chap. i. 10

¹¹ Ezek. 1, and x

¹² Dan. vii, 9, 10, 22

there; so is the throne here. 2. There, the four squadrons of the camp of Levi next the tabernacle; so here the four living creatures. 3. The n the whole camp of Israel; so here, twenty-four elders, representatives of the whole church, built from twelve tribes, and twelve apostles.

In the hand of him, that sat on the throne, was a book, sealed, which no creature could open. This justly calls us back to Dan. xii ver. 4, where “words are shut up, and a book sealed unto the time of the end,” and now, that that is near drawing on, the book is here opened.

REVELATION VI

The opening of the six seals in this chapter, speaks the ruin and rejection of the Jewish nation, and the desolation of their city; which is now very near at hand.

The first seal, opened,¹³ shows Christ setting forth in battle array and avengement against them, as Psalm xlv. 4, 5. And this the New Testament speaketh very much and very highly of; one while calling it, “his coming in clouds;” another while, his “coming in his kingdom;” and sometime, his “coming in power and great glory,” and the like. Because his plaguing and destroying of the nation that crucified him, that so much opposed and wrought mischief against the gospel, was the first evidence, that he gave in sight of all the world, of his being Christ; for till then, he, and his gospel, has been in humility, as I may say, as to the eyes of me, he persecuted whilst he was on earth, and they persecuted after him; and no course taken with them, that so sued both; but now he awakes, shows himself, and makes himself known by the judgment that he executeth.

The three next seals, opening, show the means by which he did destroy, namely, those three sad plagues, that had been threatened so oft, and so sore, by the prophets, “sword, famine, and pestilence.” For,

The second seal, opened, sends out one upon a red horse, to take peace from the earth, and that men should destroy one another; he carried a “great sword.”¹⁴

The third seal, opening, speaks of famine, when corn for scarcity should be weighed, like spicery, in a pair of balances.¹⁵

¹³ Rev. vi. 2

¹⁴ Ver. 4

¹⁵ Ver. 5, 6

The fourth seal sends out one, on a pale horse, whose name was Death (the Chaldee very often expresseth the ‘plague,’ or “pestilence,” by that word מוֹתָא and so it is to be taken, (Rev. ii, 23); and hell, or hades, comes after him.¹⁶

The opening of the fifth seal, reveals a main cause of the vengeance, namely, the blood of the saints which had been shed, crying, and which was to be required of that generation.¹⁷ These souls are said to cry from under the altar, either in allusion to the blood of creatures sacrificed, poured at the foot of the altars, or according to the Jews’ tenet, That “all just souls, departed, are under the throne of glory.” Answer to their cry is given, that the number of their brethren, that were to be slain, was not yet fulfilled; and they must rest till that should be; and then avengement in their behalf should come. This speaks suitable to that which we observed lately, that now times were begun of bitter persecution, “an hour of temptation,”¹⁸ the Jews and devil raging, till the Lord should something cool that fury by the ruin of that people. The opening of the sixth seal (ver. 12, 13), shows the destruction itself, in those borrowed terms, that the Scripture useth to express it by; namely, as if it were the destruction fo the whole world:¹⁹ the sun darkened, the stars falling, the heaven departing, and the earth dissolved; and that conclusion (ver. 16), “They shall say to the rocks, Fall on us,” &c. doth not only warrant, but even enforce, us to understand and construe these things in the sense that we do; for Christ applies these very words to the very same thing, Luke xxiii, 30. And here is another, and, to me, a satisfactory reason, why to place the showing of these visions to John, and his writing of this book, before the destruction of Jerusalem.



¹⁶ Ver. 8

¹⁷ Matt. xxiii, 35, 36

¹⁸ Rev. ii, 10, and iii, 10

¹⁹ Matt. xxiv, 29, 30

How Men Were Saved in the New Testament

“Baptism Doth Also Now Save Us” I Pet. 3:21

	Hear	Believe	Repent	Confess	Baptized
Pentecostians- Acts 2:38	X	X	X		X
Samaritans – Acts 8:12	X	X			X
Simon Magi - Acts 8:13	X	X			X
Eunuch – Acts 8:36, 37	X	X		X	X
Cornelius – Acts 10:47, 48	X	X			X
Lydia – Acts 16:15	X				X
Philipian Jailer – Acts 16:30-33	X				X
Corinthians – Acts 18:8	X	X			X
Ephesians – Acts 19:5	X				X
Saul (Paul) – Acts 22:16	X		X		X

Any attempt to conform the church and gospel to the pattern of teaching we find in the New Testament must place a high premium on baptism as an integral part of the gospel message and means by which men attain salvation in Christ. John was not called the “faith-only-izer” but the “Baptist” or “baptizer.” John came preaching baptism and repentance for remission of sins (Mk. 1:4). During his earthly ministry, Jesus’ disciples overtook John in the numbers they baptized (Jn. 4:1). The Lord’s final instructions to his disciples before he

ascended to heaven were that they continue the work of teaching repentance and baptism for remission of sins in his name (Mk. 16:15, 16).

As Preterists, we are attempting to restore to the 21st century church the *primitive* faith and teaching of the Lord about eschatology. But what is restored eschatology if we fail to understand the very plan of salvation itself, and how men come to salvation in Christ?

GREETINGS FROM LIVING PAUROSIA MISSION -BANGALORE

Dear Sir

KURT SIMMONS

Greetings to you and your family in the name of our savior LORD JESUS CHRIST. Sir I am not able to contact you immediately, because I don’t own a computer, I am Using public computers to contact you, and print my tracks, that is only during holy Day times, because in week days I am working as a sales man in Tiles shop, this job Is the only support to my family & my ministry also, this is the reason way I am not Able to contact you immediately.

Sir, though I done theological studies, when I came to know this TRUTH’ from then Onwards I am labouring to proclaiming this “truth of preterism” which is in a Crawling stage in INDIA, in this part I faced severe opposition also, Sir, for this work I need much of your kind encouragement, mainly material support.

Here “futurists” are publishing more material against (me) the “truth of preterism” Any how I am happy to say people are thinking about this “TRUTH” when I am Conducting public meetings and conferences. Again I am planning to conducting Retreat at end of this month, it is my humble request for you to pray for this,

With kind regards
 B.S.RAJU-preterist minister
 # 112, 6th main-Road
 New colony Domlur layout
 BANGALORE-71, INDIA